



Outreach Module

Introduction

This outreach module is designed to be used by a team, not only to understand the basics of outreach, but also to design an outreach project that you can carry out together. Activities are built into the module to give you the opportunity for group discussion and personal development. If you are working alone on this module, you may find it helpful to talk over some of the discussion questions with someone else.

What is outreach?

- Outreach is any activity that takes the knowledge and experience of an organization out into the local community, the nation, or the world, to build awareness and the capacity to act
- Outreach involves building relationships -- with individuals, community groups, institutions (like schools and churches), civil society, and others.
- Outreach might be a single action or event, like speaking at a school or running an information display at public gathering place, or it may involve building a long-term working relationship with a partner group, community of clients or other association of people.

YOUR TURN

Have you ever been involved in any kind of outreach event? Share your experiences with your team.

Here's an example...

April 4, 2012 was International Day for Mine Awareness, when countless people around the world rolled up a pant leg to show their support for the victims of mines and other explosive devices used in times of war. With the simple gesture of rolling up a pant leg, people joined forces in declaring NO MORE LANDMINES!

The Lend Your Leg campaign, started in 2011 by the Archangel Foundation in Colombia, went global, doing an amazing job of raising awareness of the landmine issue and drawing public attention to the urgent need to continue removing mines from affected areas before further lives are lost and damaged. It began as a grassroots campaign in Colombia, where more than 9,000 people have been injured or killed by mines. Spreading through the social media, the campaign grew and gained the support of celebrities, other NGOs, private companies, government officials, and major international organizations.

Watch the campaign video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGduCYrPIAo>

Let's think about this outreach event:

- What issue does the Lend Your Leg campaign, described above, address?
- Who is the target audience?
- What behavioural/attitudinal change is this campaign aiming for?
- What methods are being used to get the word out?
- How can we help?

Lend Your Leg is great inspiration to all of us, but outreach doesn't have to be so big. So now you want to do some outreach. What do you need to know first?

Know the beneficiaries

A good deal of mine ban outreach should be directed toward helping landmine survivors.

- You may live in a country affected by landmines and know a survivor personally. If so, ask them to tell you their story. How were they injured? How did this affect their life? What services are available to them? What kind of help could they use? Do they want to get involved in your outreach event?
- You may live in a country free of landmines, but you should still attempt to learn about the issues that landmine survivors face.

Know the issue

- What issue do you want to address in this outreach?
- How important is this issue in the overall work of your organization? Does it support key goals?
- Who are the stakeholders? Who is affected by or involved in this issue?

Know your target audience

- Who are they? Where do they live? How easily can they be reached with the outreach message?
- How do they get the information they need on a daily basis? (Word of mouth? Radio? Internet?)
- Who do they respect and look up to? Who are their role models? Who do they listen to?
- What do they already feel, think, or know about the issue? How do they currently behave in relation to the issue?
- How influential are they? Can they help spread the message? Do they have money to donate? Will they join the movement and help do the work?

Know the change you want

- In what way do you want the target group to change as a result of the outreach?
- What things could keep them from changing in this way?
- What things could help motivate them to change in this way?

Know Yourself

- What skills and personal strengths do you bring to outreach work? (communication skills? organizational skills? people skills? networking skills?)
- How much time do you have to put into this work?
- Who do you know that can help you?

YOUR TURN

Working on your own, make a list of the strengths and skills you could bring to outreach work. Afterwards, share your ideas with your team.

Choosing an outreach activity

Outreach activities come in all shapes and sizes. They can be as far-reaching and influential as the Lend Your Leg campaign, or as simple and local as a fund-raising barbecue for friends. If you were asked to design and carry out a local outreach event for mine action, what would you want its purpose to be? In general, what kind of outreach event or activity appeals to you? Some ideas: public information, fund-raising, community service, special appeal.

YOUR TURN

- Working with a partner, brainstorm possible mine-action outreach events that match the personal outreach preference(s) and purpose you've already identified. Try to come up with 4-5 different ideas. Don't get bogged down at this point with how do-able these ideas are. Just write them down.
- Now talk these ideas over in more detail with your partner. Which ones are the most easily carried out? Which one lends itself best to accomplishing your primary purpose?
- Now that you're narrowed your outreach ideas down to one, answer these questions: Who is your target group? Where would it take place?

Develop Your Message

Now that you've decided on an outreach idea and thought through some of the details, you need to decide on your message.

Elements of a good message

- Clear and simple (try to capture the message in a short phrase or sentence)
- Noticeable and memorable (stands out, catches people's attention, sticks in their minds)
- Personal (challenges people as individuals; they can't shrug it off)
- Consistent (with your outreach goal and the overall goals and message of your organization)

Different appeals

- A **rational** message seeks to change how people think about an issue
Example: You may not think that you as an individual can have any influence in the movement to ban mines and cluster munitions, but the movement has gained momentum and grown strong because of the interest and help of ordinary people like you.
- An **emotional** message produces a strong positive or negative emotional response
Example: Civilians, including many children, are tragically killed or injured by mines and cluster munitions, and often struggle with daily living afterwards.
- A **moral** message encourages people to take a stand on something that is already recognized as right or wrong
Example: Landmines and cluster munitions do not make a distinction between soldiers and civilians. They continue to do their damage long after the war is over.

YOUR TURN

Working with your partner, come up with a simple and clear message for your outreach event. Write it out and see how it looks. Imagine it on a t-shirt or a button.

Pull It All Together

Now it's time to put some details into your outreach plan. This step is where you think through how you're going to make it happen.

YOUR TURN

- Working with your partner, make a list of all the things you need to organize for your outreach event.
- Choose a venue (home? restaurant/pub? conference centre? virtual space?)
- How will you spread the message? (video clip? flyer? exhibit? speaker?)
- What materials and equipment do you need? (A/V equipment? sound? display?)
- How will you make the event accessible, welcoming and completely inclusive?
- Will you need funding? Where will it come from?
- Who could help you? (family? friends? club? church? community group?)
- Other things to consider?
- Once you've got the logistics roughed out, put the whole plan together and report back to your group. Each pair should make a short presentation of their outreach plan to the group, and then get their feedback. They'll help you identify trouble spots and give you more good ideas.

Get Out There!

Now it's time to get out there and put some of your ideas to work. Don't let your plans just sit there on paper. Get started! You are a vital link in reaching people with the message to ban landmines and cluster munitions.

- Use your social network. Use Facebook or other social media to spread awareness, invite people to events, and raise money (use the "Causes" application)
- Share your story. Write an internet blog. Contact journalists. Go on the radio. Contribute newsletter articles. Make a video or online photo gallery.
- Report back to the Y2Y Network