

# IEC Campaigns and Behavioural change

## What are IEC Campaigns?

Information, Education, and Communication, abbreviated as IEC, is a strategy to spread awareness through communication channels to a target audience to achieve a desired positive result. IEC aims to increase awareness, change attitudes and bring about a change in specific behaviours. It focuses on sharing information and ideas in a way that is culturally sensitive and acceptable to the community, using appropriate channels, messages and methods. IEC is a broad term that's often misunderstood to be just materials and collateral such as posters, flyers, banners, and hoardings, but these are mere components of IEC. Effective IEC initiatives must have a clear objective, target a specific audience, address a specific problem, and set a timeframe within which the desired change in behaviour is expected to occur.

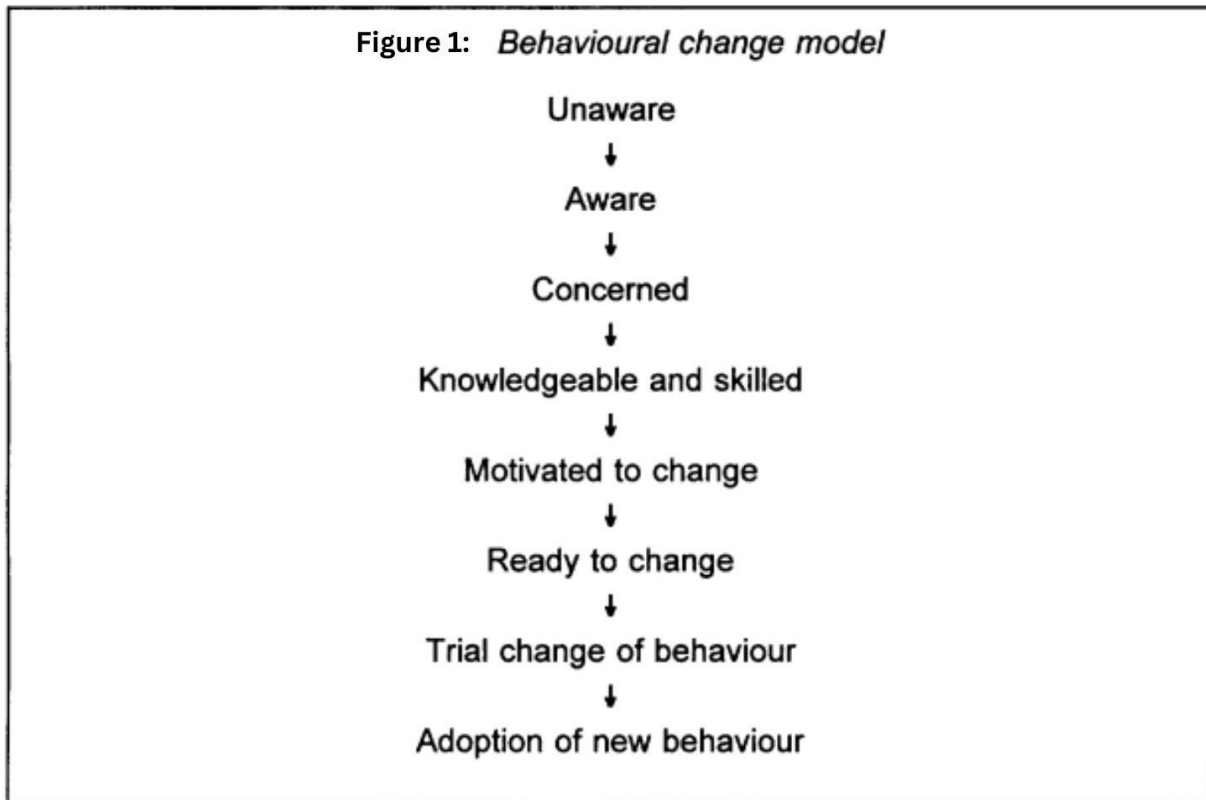
IEC campaigns comprise a range of approaches, activities, and outputs that strive to achieve:

- ❖ Mobilising communities through the dissemination of information.
- ❖ Fostering awareness and driving action through educational efforts.
- ❖ Facilitating enduring behavioural shifts through targeted communication.

In essence, IEC campaigns can be characterised as a comprehensive framework that embraces diverse channels such as mass media, digital platforms, strategic alliances, and grassroots interventions. It adopts a multidisciplinary approach tailored to its intended audience's specific needs and preferences. Effective implementation of IEC involves skilfully blending these various methods to achieve desired outcomes.

Bringing about behavioural change is, however, a difficult process. A variety of approaches and messages need to be adopted to promote the movement of individuals and populations along the continuum of behavioural change.

The figure below illustrates the different stages of behavioural change in a population -



Source: <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/205344/B0224.pdf>

Considering the people's resistance to accepting behavioural change, the messaging of the campaigns needs to be repeated multiple times for them to be incorporated by the people. By utilising diverse communication channels and strategic approaches, they empower individuals to make informed decisions and contribute to positive societal transformations.

## How Have Past IEC Campaigns Impacted Our Society?

Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaigns in India have proven highly effective in bringing about positive behavioural changes among the population. These campaigns leverage a variety of communication tools and strategies to raise awareness, educate the public and promote healthy behaviours. A prime example is the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan, which focuses on comprehensive antenatal care for pregnant women. IEC activities like awareness camps and health check-ups, led to a significant improvement in maternal health, as demonstrated

by the decline in maternal mortality from 384 in 2000 to 103 in 2020, as per the Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group.

Here is a list of various studies that have shown that IEC campaigns have had a positive behavioural impact across different health and social sectors in India:

### National AIDS Control Organisation

- The National AIDS Control Organisation, in 2007-2008, organised a multimedia campaign to promote voluntary counselling and testing, and to increase the service-uptake at Integrated Counselling and Testing Centres (ICTCs) and Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS (PPTCT) centres. The activities under the campaign were coordinated by NACO through Doordarshan (Government Television Channels) and All India Radio services, Song and Drama Division of Information and Broadcasting Ministry, Satellite Television Channels, Print Medium, Internet, FM radio stations and Cinema Halls.
- In 2009, the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) conducted a study to evaluate the impact of the multimedia campaign. For the study, a sample of 1,200 respondents was randomly selected from the urban and semi-urban locations in three states with high prevalence of HIV, namely Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. To assess the impact of the campaign, the level of knowledge, attitude and practice was measured regarding the prevention and symptoms, testing at ICTCs and ART treatment of AIDS.
- The study found that and found that the initiative significantly impacted public behaviour towards HIV prevention. According to the study, 79.2% of the 1,200 respondents were exposed to HIV/AIDS programming in the six months prior to the study. Notably, respondents displayed vivid recall of messages advocating condom usage and promoting access to ICTC services. Further, 58.6% of the 950 respondents who were exposed to the campaign knew that the use of untested blood could transmit HIV as compared to 51.6% in the unexposed category (i.e. 250 respondents).

### AYUSH Multimedia Campaign

- IEC strategies in promoting AYUSH treatments revealed that the campaign effectively generated curiosity in the people and led to behavioural changes. As per an IIMC study conducted in 2011-12, out of the total 660 respondents surveyed (330 in Dehradun and 330 in Bengaluru), 66.37% were exposed to AYUSH programming. The primary goal of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of various IEC strategies in promoting AYUSH as a viable and effective preventive and curative healthcare option, focusing on their planning,

design, management, and monitoring aspects. Exposure to AYUSH advertisements was through print media, electronic media (radio and TV), the internet, and outdoor publicity efforts like hoardings and posters.

- Among these exposed individuals, 47.5% in Bengaluru and 31.3% in Dehradun tried AYUSH treatments during the campaign. Additionally, 62.7% of exposed respondents affirmed they would seek AYUSH for curative purposes, while 35.5% indicated a willingness to explore AYUSH for preventive reasons, underscoring their conviction in the curative qualities of the Indian system of medicine.

### Bureau of Energy Efficiency Campaign

- A study conducted by IIMC in 2013 highlighted the success of the Bureau of Energy Efficiency's (BEE) campaign in raising awareness about energy conservation. This study aimed to assess the impact of the BEE campaign in raising the level of awareness regarding reducing energy consumption and promoting energy conservation. A multi-stage sampling design was used for the selection of the study area. Three areas—Delhi, Punjab (representing high per capita electricity consumption in North India), and Chhattisgarh (representing Central India)—were purposively selected for a comparative assessment of awareness regarding energy conservation. Within each city/town/district, five geographical clusters (east, west, north, south, and central) were chosen to ensure diverse socio-economic representation. A total of 300 respondents were selected in each city/district/town for the study.
- The study found that 68.9% of respondents agreed on the need to save electricity. The sources of exposure during the campaign included Television, Outdoor (Bus Panels, Hoardings, Banners, Wall Painting), Newspapers, Cinema Hall, and Radio. In Delhi, 78% of respondents emphasized the importance of energy-efficient devices.
- Cross-tabulation of beliefs, practices, and intentions with demographic characteristics was undertaken. It was derived that exposure to the campaign is less dependent on gender, occupation, and income. However, a significant relationship between campaign exposure and education level, as well as media habits, was observed within demographic categories.
- Additionally, the findings revealed that saving money is the prime objective of energy-saving practices. There was a high prevalence of curtailment activities such as switching off lights/fans/devices when not in use or when leaving the room among households. Interestingly, the study found that the exposed category did not show much difference in conservation activities compared to the unexposed category.

## Public Information Campaigns

- The Public Information Campaigns (PICs) of the Government of India disseminate information to create an image of 'Bharat Nirman' synonymous with a participatory and rights-based programme. The basic objective of the PIC is to empower citizens by informing them about various developmental schemes.
- A study conducted by IIMC in 2013 tried to assess the role of PICs in improving awareness, demand generation and uptake of development schemes and services. The study was designed to assess the impact of the campaign in rural and special category areas in the selected districts in the country. The study also assessed the design and delivery process of PICs. A multi-stage sample design was followed to select the regions, states, districts and the blocks from the sites where PICs were/would be conducted. Data triangulation and method triangulation were used to conduct the study.
- The study found that the campaign has been able to fulfil the agenda of information dissemination and generating interest for the development schemes among the target groups. The recall and retention test showed significant improvement in detailed knowledge of major schemes among the visitors to the PIC venues and among those who were exposed to the campaign.

## Jago Grahak Jago Campaign

- Wide economic disparity and varied levels of education and ignorance have made consumer education and awareness a herculean task. The Indian government has undertaken several initiatives to address the issue, and one such campaign is the Jago Grahak Jago multimedia publicity campaign. The multimedia campaign utilised different media and methods; electronic, print, outdoor, digital, new media etc, to raise awareness and to motivate consumers in asserting their Rights and to adopt proactive consumer behaviour and practices towards more informed purchases and legal redressal interactions.
- IIMC conducted a study in 2009 to evaluate the impact of the Jago Grahak Jago campaign, initiated by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, in improving consumer awareness and promoting proactive purchase behaviour. Addressing issues such as ISI certification, hallmark, labelling, MRP, and weights and measures through print and electronic media, the campaign proved effective.
- Of the 757 retailers surveyed, 75% agreed that consumers are more aware of their rights than before. Additionally, 98% of retailers noted that customers checked prices/MRP of goods, and 78% observed that consumers checked expiry dates on medicines and beauty products. The campaign also raised awareness of consumer redressal systems, with 31.6% of the population aware of how to seek redressal.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, IEC campaigns have a profound impact on society. From promoting maternal health to raising awareness about energy conservation and consumer rights, these initiatives have played a pivotal role in driving positive behavioural changes and fostering informed decision-making among the populace. By using diverse communication channels and strategic approaches, IEC campaigns empower the citizens to make informed choices, contribute to societal transformations, and ultimately, enhance the overall well-being of communities. As we continue to confront various social, health, and environmental challenges, the importance of effective IEC campaigns in driving positive change cannot be overstated. They serve as catalysts for progress, shaping attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes for the betterment of society as a whole.