

Preventing HIV in Nepal

December 2022



CAMPAIGN GOAL: Reaching Populations Where Need is High

In **Nepal**, the goal of our campaign was to increase use of daily pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) — which is the use of medicine (a pill taken once per day) to prevent HIV — among men who have sex with men, transgender women and sex workers living in selected cities. These populations have a higher likelihood of exposure to HIV but have a relatively low uptake of PrEP. Through FHI 360's EpiC project, we worked to reach these populations to increase knowledge and social acceptability of PrEP and increase the number PrEP appointments booked through Merosathi.net, an online reservation and case management platform in Nepal.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Goal:** To increase awareness and use of HIV prevention services among populations with a high likelihood of exposure to HIV.
- **Results:** We reached 10 million users, saw an increase in queries about services over Messenger and boosted the popularity of the Facebook page for our service-booking and information platform.
- **Top Lesson:** Understand what images and messages appeal to your audience and encourage their engagement.

Project Background

FHI 360 and Meta entered a collaboration to support selected FHI 360 projects working towards social and behavior change objectives; this case study showcases one of five such projects. Information about the other four projects can be found at www.fhi360.org/projects/meta-program-scaled-support. In addition to providing other metrics, this case study presents findings from Meta's Brand Lift Study (BLS) tool, which analyzes campaigns based on users' ad recall and responses to questions relevant to behavior change goals. BLS determines if there was a significant "lift" for users who saw ads compared with those who did not in *recall* of ads, as well as in *knowledge*, *attitudes* or *agency* around a behavior.



RESULTS: Translating Ad Reach into Information-Seeking

To date, we have completed phase one of a two-phase campaign. Our first phase reached almost 1 million people, with each user reached an average of four times a month. In phase two, we reached over 9 million people over a month, reaching users an average of seven times. In phase one, our total campaign reach was not high enough to generate significant BLS results for recall or the questions we asked about social approval for and side effects of PrEP. However, almost 200,000 people clicked on the "chat with us" link in our ads — following a key campaign call to action to start a conversation with Merosathi staff through Facebook messenger, and 200 sent a message asking for more information about PrEP. This represented an increase compared to an average of 30 messages per month before the campaign. In phase two, we saw a marginally significant lift for both recall and our question about how confident the respondent was in getting PrEP if they wanted it. In all, it is possible that an additional 102,410 people who saw our ads expressed confidence about accessing PrEP compared with those who didn't see them. In addition, 300,000 of those we reached clicked on a link to reach the Merosathi webpage, of whom under 20 placed bookings for PrEP and other services.



SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT: Understand Your Audience; Trust Past Experience

During our campaign, we saw increased chats to Merosathi staff through Facebook messenger. This gave us the opportunity to engage members of our target audience, learn about and address their concerns, and guide them toward seeking PrEP when they showed interest. The insights we garnered here — for example, that some users may not need or use PrEP but could give their friends with information — will inform phase two of our campaign. In addition, we saw an increase in popularity of the Merosathi Facebook page over our campaign. We will draw on this increased familiarity with Merosathi resources in our next phase and in future work.

What's PrEP? Is it free?



I don't need it, but I'll tell my friends



Figure 1: Sample messages sent to Merosathi through Facebook messenger*

*Actual messages are confidential and have not been shared.



LESSONS LEARNED: Understand Appeal in Your Setting

During phase one of our campaign, we noticed that our illustrated ads — which were designed to reflect Nepali settings but used English text — were not getting the kind of traction we had expected. Reviewing our Ads Manager, we learned our ads ranked “below average,” with low engagement and clicks. We learned that ads using local languages and photographs of people resembling our target audiences would likely have performed better. See Figure 2 for a phase one ad and our phase two ad (one of our best performing) with changes based on these learnings. We recommend using initial A/B testing for ads to determine which types of images and messaging appeal to your target audience in your setting and will perform best.



Figure 2: Phase 1 (left) and phase 2 (right) PrEP campaign ads from Nepal

What's Next for Us?

We learned a lot during the first phase of our campaign — about ad design, how to use Ad Manager, and the needs of our audience. We also saw an increase in the popularity of the Merosathi Facebook page over the course of the campaign. We plan on drawing on our experience, and leveraging audiences' increased familiarity with our resources, as we move forward in our work.