How to make a digital campaign inclusive

Lessons from our inclusive family planning project in Nigeria

Who is this document for? This document is addressed to anyone involved in planning, designing or delivering digital communication campaigns — whether you work in the charity sector, in government, in a communications agency, or as an independent content creator. If you're setting up a digital campaign and want to make sure it reaches and resonates with everyone, including people with disabilities, this guide is for you.

Introduction

Running an inclusive digital campaign means always keeping in mind the different needs that your audience might have, including people with disabilities. Inclusive design allows you to strengthen the impact and substantially expand your reach. Globally, 1 in 6 people experience significant disability[1]. If your communication is not accessible or relevant to people with disabilities, you're missing out on a large audience – compromising the success of your campaign.

At Sightsavers, we keep inclusion and accessibility at the heart of everything we do, and we want to share our five tips to run an inclusive digital campaign. Why should you trust us? We have run a successful multi-platform communication campaign to promote inclusive family planning in Kaduna state, Nigeria, that reached over one million people, with an engagement rate of 4.60%. You can learn more about this project by visiting **our webpage.**

Why disability inclusion and family planning?

People with disabilities have the same right to the highest attainable standard of health as any human being yet experience worse health outcomes compared to the rest of the population. Adolescent girls and young women with disabilities face significant barriers to free and informed choice and bodily autonomy related to the use of use of contraceptives and the choice of contraceptive methods – and experience a higher risk of forced and coerced sterilisation and contraception.

[1] https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health

Data from Kaduna has shown only 13.7% of women report using a modern method of family planning.[2] Further analysis shows that the met need for family planning was almost 10 percentage points higher amongst women without disabilities (28%) than for women with disabilities (19%). There is an unmet need for family planning for people with disabilities due to a range of barriers including: limited knowledge of family planning methods, misconceptions on methods and side effects, low perceived need of family planning by health professionals compared to their peers without disabilities and cultural and social norms.

Our inclusive digital campaign

Our family planning project, funded by UK aid under the Inclusive Futures consortium initiative, is working to ensure people with disabilities in all their diversity, particularly women and girls, can make informed choices on their own sexual and reproductive health and rights' needs – empowering them to feel able to access and use modern contraceptives and practice child spacing.

In 2024, we co-developed an inclusive Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) strategy with diverse participants from local partners, including organisations of people with disabilities. You can read more about that the lessons from our inclusive SBC approach here.

As part of that strategy, we worked with AIfluence, a behavioural intelligence and audience engagement platform powered by AI, to design and deliver a two phased digital campaign across Kaduna state in northern Nigeria. Results show the benefits of applying an inclusive approach to its planning and delivery.

Campaign overview

Objectives

To address harmful myths and misconceptions around disability and family planning and increase awareness and uptake of modern contraceptive methods among people with disabilities, particularly women and girls with disabilities, in Kaduna State

Use of nano and micro influencers:

The campaign partnered with 55 nano and micro influencers, including individuals with disabilities, disability rights bloggers, and women's rights advocates. These influencers were selected using AIfluence's AI-powered platform, which identified individuals who were highly trusted and close to our target audience. Influencers created and shared content in their own voice, besides using provided assets, making the messaging feel authentic and relatable.

[2] Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey 2018. Abuja, Nigeria, and Rockville, Maryland, USA. National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria] and ICF. 2019. **https://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR359/FR359.pdf**.

The role of AI

AIfluence's AI-powered platform was used to identify influencers that could get more engagement from our target audience. The platform also tracked campaign performance in real time, measuring reach, engagement, and sentiment to continuously optimise the campaign.

The assets we used

The campaign used a variety of digital assets, including:

- 15 social media cards featuring inclusive visuals and plain language
- A 5-minute animation (also broken into 30-second reels)
- WhatsApp group discussions led by influencers with disabilities
- A live Q&A session with a healthcare provider on X (formerly Twitter)

Campaign reach

The first phase of the digital campaign was delivered in 2024 by 55 influencers, who were identified in Kaduna from the AI platform. Over a 16-week period the campaign reached 1.04 million people with 47,960 engagement rates, approximately 3%. Nearly 60% of the influencers were female and the profile included persons with disabilities, disability issue bloggers and activists and women's rights educators. An average of 350 people with disabilities were reached weekly.

Tip 1: Create a diverse consultation group

Your target audience is your best ally: they're the ones who can best advise on your campaign strategy, content and channels as you start planning and throughout development and delivery. However, always keep in mind the diverse experiences within your target audience including disability, religion and literacy levels By ensuring you consult with a diversity of individuals, you will be able to capture if not all, at least most of the perspectives within your target audience.

In practice: For our digital campaign, we consulted with a group including media and communication experts, including our partners, BBC Media Action, social media influencers and representatives of organisations of people with disabilities (OPDs), including the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities and the Network of Disabled Women. We consulted them consistently from planning to delivery of the campaign, ensuring to ask for their advice on every critical decision. This allowed us to sense check our strategy and ensure we captured the perspectives of the people we wanted to reach through our campaign.

Tip 2: Ensure your content is accessible

Accessibility starts at the very beginning of the communication process: it should never be an afterthought. When you start defining messages and campaign channels, ask yourselves who you might be leaving behind and think of ways to adjust your content so that it can be accessed by more people. Everyone will have different needs at different times and in different circumstances. By removing barriers for people with disabilities, you will make the experience better for everyone. To check that your campaign is accessible you can rely on your diverse consultation group, but also on free online resources, such as the **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** (WCAG).

In practice: When designing content for our campaign on inclusive family planning, we kept accessibility in mind as we ensured, among other things:

- To use plain, simple language that could be understood by people with varying literacy skills
- To keep visual content easy to access by people with dyslexia, colour blindness or visual impairments, by using a minimum of 12-point size for the text on a contrasting, clear background, and by avoiding use of different fonts, italics or underlining, as well as large blocks of text
- To train the influencers involved in the campaign on accessibility best practice, such as the use of alt text and the inclusion of subtitles for videos.
- To include visual representation of diverse disabilities, genders and faiths to ensure our target audiences feel represented.

Tip 3: Differentiate your approach

When planning your campaign strategy, diversifying channels and ways to communicate means being able to reach more people. Perhaps part of your target audience prefers one social media channel over another, or they engage more with video rather than visual content (because it is more accessible or for personal preference). By covering different social media channels and choosing different ways to communicate you'll be able to maximise your reach.

Engagement is crucial too. Choosing big influencers for your campaign might help you to secure a high reach, but also working with carefully selected nano and micro influencers that are personally close to your target audience can help make your engagement rate soar.

In practice: We worked with the digital media platform **Alfluence** to select micro and nano influencers for our communication campaign. Their algorithm allowed us to identify individuals with the strongest connections to our target audience within their trust network. The campaign was run on multiple platforms, including WhatsApp, Facebook, X, TikTok and Instagram. The content shared included visual posts, videos, animations and live sessions.

Tip 4: Test

Testing your content before executing your campaign is crucial to understanding how it will be perceived by your target audience. Your consultation group can certainly help with getting a sense of that, but through testing you can create a situation that simulates your actual digital campaign. This will allow you to see how users truly experience your content and how they might react to it. Good practice when testing includes:

- Hearing from people with different experiences and needs within your target audience
- Recreating the final user experience as closely as possible. For example, requesting your testers to interact with the content independently using their own devices
- Preparing questions in advance but also listening carefully to your testers' feedback and being ready to ask follow-up questions to intriguing comments. For example, through testing, we learned we needed to change the colour of condoms shown in our content so they would match the colour of packaging used by the main brand of condoms in Kaduna represented condoms in our content didn't reflect what they look like in the area we were targeting. As a result, we changed the packaging colour from white to gold, which is the shade used by the mainstream brand of condoms in Kaduna.

Tip 5: Carry everyone along

Inclusion doesn't stop at planning: it must be embedded throughout implementation. This means ensuring that everyone involved in the campaign understands and applies accessibility and inclusion. It also means being responsive to feedback and ready to adapt your campaign in real time.

In practice: For our campaign, we trained the influencers on inclusive communication and accessibility best practices. We also created weekly content themes to maintain consistency and relevance. We encouraged influencers to engage directly with their audiences, including through WhatsApp groups, where they facilitated discussions and answered questions. WhatsApp groups, co-led by influencers with disabilities, achieved a 68% increase in facility visits for family planning services, underscoring the untapped potential of peer-driven, hyper-local trusted networks and digital platforms in hard-to-reach communities. This helped us ensure that our campaign remained inclusive, relevant, and impactful throughout its duration.

Tip 6: Evaluate and adjust

At the end of the campaign, take some time to reflect on it with all stakeholders involved and create a safe, non-judgmental space where everyone can express their thoughts. Cross reference the feedback you receive and sense-check the recommendations to see what can realistically be done differently in the future. Share your learning with stakeholders to demonstrate the value of their contribution and make sure to mention next steps.

In practice: We followed our first campaign in 2024, with a second campaign in 2025.Before planning started, we consulted on multiple occasions and in multiple settings with all stakeholders, including the media agency we worked with, the influencers, and our consultation groups. We made sure to gather feedback and proposed changes from everyone, which we consolidated into a plan for the next campaign. Changes that we were able to implement thanks to the feedback received included:

- Creating content on the specific concerns that emerged from users during the first campaign, such as side effects or financial burden linked to use of contraceptives
- Featuring testimonials from individuals who have used contraception and experienced positive impacts, whether related to health, autonomy, or family planning
- Providing training to influencers on accessibility and social media best practice