

The Shell AIDS Schools' Challenge 2006

The support of global initiatives concerning HIV & AIDS, such as the commemoration of World AIDS Day, is one of the cardinal thematic focuses of the Community Health department of Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC). The department marked the 2006 World AIDS Day in style. **A regional HIV & AIDS quiz competition among secondary schools in the Niger Delta, tagged “Shell AIDS Schools’ Challenge,” was staged.**

Strategy

The aim of participating in this yearly global initiative was to raise awareness and knowledge about HIV & AIDS, and dispel myths about other sexually transmitted infections among vulnerable groups, in particular, young people. It was observed that there was a dearth of well-packaged television and radio programmes that could rouse the interest of large numbers of youths. ‘Edu-tainment’ is a well-recognized and veritable way of influencing young people’s thought process and of positively channeling energies. The strategy also used competition and quiz as a means of reinforcing positive education.



Description

After a competitive process, an internationally recognized, local media organization, Prex Limited and a sister television production company, Eastend-AV.Com Productions, were engaged to execute the project. Prex Ltd led a consortium of six media agencies comprising 34 crew members and 15 backroom staff to deliver the program from concept to end stage. Advocacy with various stakeholders and ‘gatekeepers’ such as the Ministries of Health and Education, and the State Action Committees on HIV & AIDS (SACAs) were part of the initial groundwork. Forty-five secondary schools from Abia, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta and Edo States participated; 15 recordings (radio and television) were done for three contests in each of the States, and eight sessions were recorded from the regional stages. To elicit community excitement and awareness of the programme, advertisements were run in four regional and national newspapers daily for 3 days before commencement of broadcast on both TV and Radio. The 15 recordings of the preliminaries, state finals, regional quarterfinals and semi finals were aired daily in the two weeks preceding the 1st of December 2006 on Delta Broadcasting Service (DBS FM, DBSTV), Edo Broadcasting Service (EBS FM, EBS TV),

Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation (RSTV, Radio Rivers FM), NTA Port-Harcourt, Broadcasting Corporation of Abia (BCA), NTA Aba, NTA Yenagoa and Glory FM. The final was aired on the National Network of the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) on the 1st of December to coincide with the Worlds AIDS Day.

Target Group

The primary beneficiary of the program were students of the 45 schools (nine from each of five States) that participated in the quiz competition and the five host schools; Each school had at least 10 students along with the two that took the quiz stand, making up 530 students. For the radio and television broadcast of the preliminary rounds including the quarter finals and semi-finals, listenership and viewership in the Niger Delta States was estimated at 12.2 million by MediaRich®, an independent media facts company. National viewership for finals aired on 1st December 2006 on National TV was estimated at 15 Million.

Impact

For the target group, the program succeeded in bringing issues regarding HIV & AIDS to the front burner for public discussion and debate. The use of radio and television ensured not only a large number of beneficiaries but also a wide range of audience.

Desktop computers, generators to provide electricity, and HIV & AIDS books and teachers' guides were presented to the schools; DVD sets and HIV & AIDS educational films for students that participated in the finals; and hair barbing clippers for each teacher whose school qualified for the quarterfinals. The program also afforded SPDC the opportunity to contribute to the pursuit of a desirable level of health for the members of the community in the area where it operates, to perform its corporate social responsibility.

