

Springer Business Cases

M. Mercedes Galan-Ladero  
Helena M. Alves *Editors*

# Social Marketing and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Case Studies for a Global Perspective

 Springer


---

# Springer Business Cases

## Editorial Board Members

Mehtap Aldogan Eklund, Department of CBA - Accountancy, University of Wisconsin–La Crosse, La Crosse, WI, USA

Karuna Jain, Shailesh J Mehta School of Management, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Mumbai, India

Dilip S. Mutum , School of Business, Monash University Malaysia, Subang Jaya, Malaysia

Henry Shi, Faculty of Arts, Business, Law and Economics, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia

Marianna Sigala, Department of Business Administration, University of Piraeus, Athens, Greece

Springer Business Cases is a book series featuring the latest case studies in all areas of business, management, and finance, from around the world. The well-curated case collections in each of the books represent insights and lessons that can be used both in the classroom as well as in professional contexts. The books also place a focus on regional and topical diversity as well as encouraging alternative viewpoints which bring the knowledge forward. Both teaching cases as well as research cases are welcome.

---

M. Mercedes Galan-Ladero •  
Helena M. Alves  
Editors

# Social Marketing and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Case Studies for a Global Perspective

 Springer

*Editors*

M. Mercedes Galan-Ladero  
University of Extremadura/Universidad  
de Extremadura  
Badajoz, Spain

Helena M. Alves  
Departamento de Gestão e Economia  
University of Beira Interior  
Covilhã, Portugal

ISSN 2662-5431

ISSN 2662-544X (electronic)

Springer Business Cases

ISBN 978-3-031-27376-6

ISBN 978-3-031-27377-3 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2023

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors, and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG  
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*To all the people who believe that it is possible  
to build a better world and work to achieve it.*

---

## Preface

In a globalized world, social marketing has become essential to solve problems related to public health, global warming, education, social issues, traffic safety, etc. Thus, social marketing has become a key tool for all types of organizations worldwide.

Social marketing is characterized by the coordination of different complementary approaches to achieve the realization or modification of ideas, attitudes, or behaviors, and therefore, can be used in order to progress toward the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2015, the United Nations approved the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, with the purpose of *improving the lives of all, leaving no one behind*. It included 17 Sustainable Development Goals, *to build a better world*: Goal 1 – No Poverty; Goal 2 – Zero Hunger; Goal 3 – Good Health and Well-Being; Goal 4 – Quality Education; Goal 5 – Gender Equality; Goal 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation; Goal 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy; Goal 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth; Goal 9 – Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure; Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities; Goal 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities; Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production; Goal 13 – Climate Action; Goal 14 – Life Below Water; Goal 15 – Life on Land; Goal 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; and Goal 17 – Partnerships.

This book approaches the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations from a social marketing perspective, including case studies from different regions around the world.

Therefore, this book is structured as follows:

- A theoretical initial chapter: to introduce the concepts of social marketing and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the link between them.
- 23 case studies: brief but sufficiently complete, to understand how social marketing can contribute to achieve the SDGs. These case studies have been grouped into several thematic sections, focused on:
  - Education:
    - For gender equality: fighting against harmful cultural practices such as dowry, or sexual harassment of women and girls.

- For equal opportunities: to access to education, to access to the labor market – for underrepresented groups, such as women or the disabled.
- For the creation of more inclusive and SDG-oriented societies.
- Territories:
  - For the fight against depopulation (of rural areas, especially).
  - For the promotion of local development and consumption of local products.
  - For the development of sustainable tourism.
- Environment, healthy lifestyles, and responsible consumption:
  - For the care of the environment and its contribution to the welfare of people and animals.
  - For the promotion of healthy lifestyles and responsible consumption of resources (food, clothing, water, etc.) and waste reduction.
  - For the visibility of the fight against diseases (e.g., cancer) and the need to raise awareness of the importance of prevention and early detection.
- Within their diversity, a similar organization of all the chapter has been sought:
  - An introduction to the topic.
  - The development of the case.
  - Conclusions.
  - Discussion questions.
  - References.
  - Teaching notes.

This book is aimed at undergraduate and graduate students in marketing courses in general, and social marketing in particular. It is also intended for social marketers and practitioners who work in this discipline, so that they know different experiences of social marketing campaigns and interventions, carried out somewhere in the world, and to know their effects and results obtained. Thus, they can compare them and/or take them as a reference, improving their ability to design and implement new social marketing campaigns and strategies in their specific contexts.

As editors, we would like to especially thank the work of all the authors who, with their case studies, have made this book possible. Their collaboration and availability to make changes to homogenize all chapters have been key to bringing this project to fruition.

We would also like to thank the International Association of Public and Nonprofit Marketing (AIMPN-IAPNM), its members, and participants in its Conferences, for the support they have given us, collaborating as authors in many of the case studies and/or helping to spread the call for chapters of this book.

And, of course, we would like to thank Springer and its entire team for their trust and support during these years to carry out this series of case study books, which we have already published three books, in addition to this one.

We hope this book will be useful and enjoyable for readers and will help to highlight the importance of social marketing around the world. And we also hope



---

that it will encourage more research and work in this field, to spread the benefits that social marketing can provide to achieve the SDGs.

We invite readers to contact us if they wish to send us their comments or make suggestions for improvements for future editions of this book.

Badajoz, Spain  
Covilhá, Portugal  
November 2022

M. Mercedes Galan-Ladero  
Helena M. Alves

---

# Contents

<b>Theoretical Background: Social Marketing &amp; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b> . . . . .	1
M. Mercedes Galan-Ladero and Helena Alves	
<b>Part I Cases on Social Inequality</b>	
<b>Social Marketing for Improving Women’s Rights: The Case of Dowry in Pakistan</b> . . . . .	27
Hina Yaqub Bhatti, M. Mercedes Galan-Ladero, and Clementina Galera-Casquet	
<b>“No es de Hombres” (“That’s Not Manly”): a Campaign for Gender Equity in Mexico</b> . . . . .	47
Lucirene Rangel-Lyne, Saúl Emmanuel Alonso-Olivares, Karla Paola Jiménez-Almaguer, and José Ignacio Azuela-Flores	
<b>An Open-Source Solution for Social Change: The Goodpush Alliance</b> . . .	61
Doreen E. Shanahan and Clark D. Johnson	
<b>“We Know What We Are Doing”: Campaign Toolbox against the Shortage of Young People in Skilled Crafts Professions</b> . . . . .	79
Answin Vilmar	
<b>Corporate Social Marketing and the Labor Inclusion of People with Disabilities. A Case Study of Ilunion Hotels</b> . . . . .	95
Carmen Dueñas-Zambrana and Marco Antonio Cruz-Morato	
<b>“You Can’t Ask That”: Asking and Understanding to Achieve more Inclusive Societies</b> . . . . .	111
Ana Isabel Polo-Peña, Dolores M. Frías-Jamilena, and Francisco Peco-Torres	
<b>The Use of Events to Achieve Social Change: The Case of ILGA Portugal</b> . . . . .	123
Inês Santos, Inês Veiga Pereira, Carla Pereira, Diana Moreira, and Sandra Santos	

<b>Integrating the Environmental, Social, and Economic SDGs into an Educational Organization . . . . .</b>	<b>133</b>
Sergio Barta, Daniel Belanche, Marta Flavián, and M. Cruz-Terré	
<b>Part II Cases on Regional Inequalities</b>	
<b>Social Marketing Strategies to Attract Immigrants to Depopulated Areas: The Case of Hyogo Prefecture in Japan . . . . .</b>	<b>155</b>
Bình Nghiệm-Phú	
<b>Inland Paladins or Wanderlusts? Fighting Rural Depopulation and Promoting Sustainable Development in an Inland City of Portugal . . . . .</b>	<b>169</b>
Marisa R. Ferreira and Beatriz Casais	
<b>A Social Marketing Program for Local Products and a Local Market: The Case of Setúbal, Portugal . . . . .</b>	<b>179</b>
Duarte Xara-Brasil, João Pedro Cordeiro, Luísa Cagica Carvalho, and Pedro Pardal	
<b>The “Smart Destinations” Model from the Perspective of Social Marketing. The Case Study of Gijón as an Example . . . . .</b>	<b>193</b>
Alba Marín-Carrillo and M <sup>a</sup> Victoria Carrillo-Durán	
<b>Colors and a Pinch of Salt: The “Sustainable Mexico Reborn” Strategy for Enhancing Quality Education . . . . .</b>	<b>215</b>
Luis Manuel Cerda-Suarez	
<b>Part III Cases on Environment, Healthy Lifestyles, and Responsible Consumption</b>	
<b>Supporting Well-being in People and Helping Pollinators Through a Community Garden Project . . . . .</b>	<b>233</b>
Felicity Small, Alain Neher, and Lucia Wuersch	
<b>Corporate Social Marketing for Sustainable Animal Well-Being: The Pedigree Promotion of Homeless Dog Adoption . . . . .</b>	<b>255</b>
Elísabet Mora, Natalia Vila, and Inés Küster	
<b>The Power of Our Diet: Less Meat for a Healthier Life and Planet . . . . .</b>	<b>265</b>
Antonio Chamorro-Mera and M. Manuela Palacios-González	
<b>The Green Button: Social Marketing for a Government Seal to Support more Sustainable Purchasing Decisions when Buying Textiles . . . . .</b>	<b>281</b>
Answin Vilmar	

---

**Reducing Salt Consumption through a Nudge Technique: The Case of PÃO.COMÉ** . . . . . 299  
Beatriz Casais and Marisa R. Ferreira

**Social Marketing and SDG 12 on Social Networks: A Case Study of Carrefour on Instagram and Twitter** . . . . . 309  
Pedro Cuesta-Valiño, Azucena Penelas-Leguía, and Patricia Durán-Álamo

**How Can Social Marketing Help the Sustainability of Water Use in Tourism? The Case of Tourist Accommodation** . . . . . 321  
Carla Rodríguez-Sánchez, Franco Sancho-Esper, and Fernando Campayo-Sánchez

**The Spanish Cancer Association: Supporting SDGs** . . . . . 339  
M. Soledad Janita-Muñoz and M. Manuela Palacios-González

**The Central Lechera Asturiana Women’s Race: A Case of Social Marketing Oriented to the Practice of a Healthy Lifestyle for Women and Girls** . . . . . 359  
Nuria García-Rodríguez, Noelia Salido-Andrés, and Silvia Cachero-Martínez



# Theoretical Background: Social Marketing & Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

M. Mercedes Galan-Ladero and Helena Alves

## Learning Objectives

1. To define social marketing and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), linking both terms.
2. To discover the importance of social marketing for achieving SDGs.
3. To describe social marketing approaches and strategies.
4. To consider the importance of ethics and culture in social marketing campaigns and interventions to achieve SDGs, especially in an international context.

---

Part of this chapter is an adapted and updated version of Alves et al. (2021).

Alves, H., Galan-Ladero, M.M., Rivera, R.G. (2021). Theoretical Background: Social Marketing and Quality of Life. In: Galan-Ladero, M.M., Rivera, R.G. (eds) Applied Social Marketing and Quality of Life. Applying Quality of Life Research. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83286-5\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83286-5_1)

---

M. M. Galan-Ladero (✉)

University of Extremadura/Universidad de Extremadura, Badajoz, Spain

e-mail: [mgalan@unex.es](mailto:mgalan@unex.es)

H. Alves

University of Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal

e-mail: [halves@ubi.pt](mailto:halves@ubi.pt)

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2023

M. M. Galan-Ladero, H. M. Alves (eds.), *Social Marketing and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, Springer Business Cases, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3_1)

# 1 Introduction: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Social Marketing

*Sustainability* has become a key term in the twenty-first century. *Sustainability* means “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (The United Nations Brundtland Commission—in Brundtland & Khalid, 1987). Thus, *sustainability* is understood in a global, interdisciplinary, and multifaceted dimension, focusing on people’s lives and their values (Loorbach et al., 2017), covering all its dimensions so that the world achieves, as a priority, greater well-being socially inclusive for all.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 objectives that are part of the 2030 Agenda.<sup>1</sup> They were approved by all United Nations member states, who agreed that they are essential to a better life for all. They recognize that “ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth—all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests” (The United Nations, 2022).<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, social marketing has been used to respond to social problems in different areas like health, nutrition, environment, citizen engagement, education, employment, sustainability, among many others. In any case, the search for social good<sup>3</sup> and its impact on people’s quality of life is significant (Alves et al., 2021: 3).

In the following sections, we will introduce the main theoretical concepts that will help to understand how social marketing can be a key tool to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

---

## 2 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2000, the 189 member countries of the United Nations adopted the Millennium Declaration, which included 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015 (The United Nations, 2008)<sup>4</sup>—(Fig. 1): (1) To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; (2) To achieve universal primary education; (3) To promote gender equality and empower women; (4) To reduce child mortality; (5) To improve

---

<sup>1</sup>The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 25, 2015, is “a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity, intended to strengthen universal peace and access to justice. The 2030 Agenda sets out 17 SDGs with 169 targets of an integrated and indivisible nature, covering the economic, social, and environmental spheres” (The United Nations, 2015a, b). This Agenda is intended to be the reference framework for global development programs until 2030.

<sup>2</sup>For more information, visit the United Nations website: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

<sup>3</sup>For more information, see French and Gordon (2020).

<sup>4</sup>For more information, see: <https://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators/OfficialList.htm>

**Fig. 1** 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).  
Source: The United Nations (2022)



maternal health; (6) To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; (7) To ensure environmental sustainability; and (8) To develop a global partnership for development. The Millennium Declaration sought to combine, in a holistic approach, all the efforts of the previous decades to address poverty and promote economic and social development (Jackson, 2022). However, the terrorist attacks against the Twin Towers in New York (USA) on September 11, 2001, “*truncated the good intentions of the international community*” (Medicus Mundi, 2022).

Some years later, in 2015, the United Nations approved the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, with the purpose of “*improving the lives of all, leaving no one behind*” (The United Nations, 2022). It included 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), “*to build a better world*” (The United Nations, 2022)—Fig. 2.

The 17 SDGs are as follows (The United Nations, 2022):

- Goal 1—No poverty: “*End poverty in all its forms everywhere.*”
- Goal 2—Zero hunger: “*End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.*”
- Goal 3—Good Health and Well-Being: “*Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.*”



**Fig. 2** UN Sustainable Development Goals (Facebook). Source: The United Nations (2022)

- Goal 4—Quality Education: *“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”*
- Goal 5—Gender Equality: *“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”*
- Goal 6—Clean Water and Sanitation: *“Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.”*
- Goal 7—Affordable and Clean Energy: *“Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.”*
- Goal 8—Decent Work and Economic Growth: *“Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.”*
- Goal 9—Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure: *“Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.”*
- Goal 10—Reduced Inequalities: *“Reduce inequality within and among countries.”*
- Goal 11—Sustainable Cities and Communities: *“Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”*
- Goal 12—Responsible Consumption and Production: *“Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.”*
- Goal 13—Climate Action: *“Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.”*
- Goal 14—Life Below Water: *“Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.”*



- Goal 15—Life on Land: “*Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.*”
- Goal 16—Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: “*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.*”
- Goal 17—Partnerships: “*Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.*”

Advances are currently being made, to a greater or lesser degree, on each of these SDGs, although not at the desired level and pace. In addition, the COVID-19 global pandemic has been a major setback and has diverted attention from the SDGs, although as of 2022, once the most critical stage of the pandemic has been overcome, they are being resumed and driven forward again.

---

### 3 Social Marketing<sup>5</sup>

*Social marketing*, also called *marketing of social causes*, or *marketing of ideas*, has become essential to solve problems related to public health, global warming, energy efficiency, education, social issues, traffic safety, sustainability, etc. Thus, social marketing has become a key tool for all types of organizations (not only public and non-profit organizations, but also businesses<sup>6</sup>—Galan-Ladero & Alves, 2019) to achieve the SDGs.

#### 3.1 Definitions and Core Concepts. Some Areas for Its Application

The first academic definition of *social marketing* was proposed by Kotler and Zaltman in 1971, who were very innovative at that time, transferring the marketing mix scheme (the 4 Ps) to a new type of products (ideas)—Alves and Galan-Ladero (2019). They considered *social marketing* as “*the design, implementation and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptance of social ideas and implies considerations of product planning, price, communication, distribution*

---

<sup>5</sup>This section is an adapted and updated version of Alves et al. (2021).

Alves, H., Galan-Ladero, M.M., Rivera, R.G. (2021). Theoretical Background: Social Marketing and Quality of Life. In: Galan-Ladero, M.M., Rivera, R.G. (eds) Applied Social Marketing and Quality of Life. Applying Quality of Life Research. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83286-5\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83286-5_1)

<sup>6</sup>In this latter case, authors such as Kotler and Lee (2005) prefer to call it “Corporate Social Marketing,” considering it a CSR initiative that also provides positive perceptions toward the company, its brand/s and benefits its bottom line (French & Gordon, 2022).

e.g., when a company encourages healthy habits (e.g., physical exercise, healthy eating, hand washing/hand hygiene, etc.) or sustainable ones (e.g., recycling, saving energy, etc.).

*and marketing research*” (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971: 5). Later, social marketing was also defined as “*the use of marketing techniques and principles to influence a specific public that voluntarily accepts, rejects, modifies or abandons behavior for the benefit of individuals, groups or society as a whole*” (Kotler & Lee, 2005: 115). Finally, the Boards of the International Social Marketing Association (iSMA), European Social Marketing Association (ESMA), and Australian Association of Social Marketing (AASM) also defined it, in 2013, and established that “*Social Marketing seeks to develop and integrate marketing concepts with other approaches to influence behaviors that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good. Social Marketing practice is guided by ethical principles. It seeks to integrate research, best practice, theory, audience, and partnership insight, to inform the delivery of competition sensitive and segmented social change programs that are effective, efficient, equitable and sustainable.*” (Boards of the International Social Marketing Association [iSMA], European Social Marketing Association [ESMA], and Australian Association of Social Marketing [AASM], 2017). Other definitions are included in Table 1.

However, *social marketing* is frequently confused with other communication strategies and socially responsible initiatives, such as *cause promotion, cause-related marketing, corporate social responsibility, health marketing, non-profit marketing, social advertising, social communication, social media marketing, social propaganda, socially responsible marketing, or societal marketing* (Table 2).

Thus, differently to other communication strategies and socially responsible initiatives, social marketing focuses on accepting, influencing, modifying, discouraging, or abandoning ideas, beliefs, attitudes, values, practices, and behaviors (Andreasen, 1994), to “*benefit the individual, their community, or the environment, achieving an individual and societal well-being*” (Basil et al., 2019: 4). Targeted publics’ needs, quality of life, social value creation, and social change for achieving social good (French & Gordon, 2020) are top priorities in social marketing.

During this time, social marketing has evolved from being an operational concept to being considered a concept with a broader approach: strategic, holistic, and interdisciplinary (French & Gordon, 2020). Table 3 shows the key milestones of its evolution.

To sum up, social marketing tries to “*encourage a certain social behavior, foster a specific value, promote a specific attitude, facilitate a conduct, or try to accept a certain idea, all of which are considered beneficial for society, or for a part of it; or, on the contrary, it can also try to discourage or stop that behavior, attitude or idea that is not socially desirable, because it is considered harmful*” (Galan-Ladero & Galera-Casquet, 2019). Some areas where social marketing has been applied are summarized in Table 4.

At the same time, Schmidtke et al. (2021) carried out a review of social marketing interventions in low- and middle-income countries, from 2000 to 2019. They used the social marketing national criteria (NSMC, 2020), revealing that, in these types of countries, the main interventions were family planning, health, health and environment, sanitation and hygiene, environment, and gender equality. Thus, they showed that social marketing interventions are on more basic human needs in these countries.

**Table 1** Other definitions about social marketing

Authors	Definitions
Moliner (1998: 27)	Social marketing is an extension of marketing that studies the relation of exchange that arises when the product is an idea or social cause.
Weinreich (2006)	Social marketing is the use of marketing techniques to promote the adoption of healthy or pro-social behaviors.
Santesmases (2007: 1036)	Social marketing is a part or aspect of marketing whose purpose is to stimulate and facilitate the acceptance of ideas or social behaviors that are considered beneficial to society or to stop or discourage those other ideas that are considered harmful.
French and Russell-Bennett (2015: 142)	Social marketing is a multidisciplinary branch of marketing. Social marketing is concerned with the social marketplace and making a significant contribution to solving social challenges. Social marketing seeks to make this contribution through the application of marketing principles, methods, and systems to influence not only the behavior of citizens but also the behavior of social service providers, policymakers, politicians, and other stakeholders associated with particular social issues including the for-profit sector, the not-for-profit sector, and the media sector. Social marketing is defined by its central focus on social value creation using exchange, relationship building, and the provision of social offerings to influence behavior that will result in positive social change.
Newton-Ward (2016: 1)	It is a systematic way to understand the determinants of health and social problems, and to address these causes with an array of interventions—in a way that makes change “ <i>fun, easy, and popular.</i> ”
Hastings and Domegan (2018: xxxiii)	Social marketing is a discipline that aims to systematize not just behavior change, but also social change. Social marketing involves the application of marketing techniques to social ends.
Basil et al. (2019: 23)	Social marketing is the application of commercial marketing and other principles to influence behavior for the good of the individual and society.
French and Gordon (2020: 6–7)	Social marketing is a comprehensive organizing set of principles and concepts, through which to strategically assess, design, deliver, and evaluate social programs that seek to influence behavior for social good. Social marketing is a set of core organizing principles, concepts, and techniques that can be used to develop effective, efficient, and citizen-responsive social program design. Social value creation is the central principle of social marketing.

Source: own elaboration, from the cited authors

The relevance of social marketing is obvious by its impact for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). However, as we can see in Table 1 and Schmidtke et al. (2021)’s review, it is more evident in certain SDGs (e.g., SDG 3—Good health and well-being, SDG 4—Quality education, SDG 5—Gender equity, SDG 12—Responsible consumption and production, and SDG 13—Climate action).

**Table 2** Other concepts related, but different, to social marketing

Concepts	Definitions
Cause Promotion	<i>"It is a CSR initiative whose objective is to build awareness and concern for social causes. The core element of the effort is promotional in nature. Persuasive communications are usually used"</i> (Kotler & Lee, 2005: 80)
Cause-Related Marketing	<i>"It is a CSR initiative that consists of an agreement between a company and an NGO to collaborate in a social cause and obtain a mutual benefit. The company's commitment is focused on contributing (financially or in kind) to the cause based on the sales or transactions made (the donation will depend, therefore, consumer behavior). Normally, the campaign is carried out for a specific product, for a specific period and with a particular NGO"</i> (Galan-Ladero, 2011: 97; Kotler & Lee, 2005: 23; Santesmases, 1999: 1004).
Corporate Social Responsibility	<i>"It is a commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources"</i> (Kotler & Lee, 2005: 3). <i>"It is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis. CSR concerns actions by companies over and above their legal obligations towards society and the environment"</i> (Commission of the European Communities, 2001).
Health Marketing	<i>"It is a multidisciplinary area of public health practice that promotes the use of marketing research to educate, motivate and inform the public on health messages"</i> (CDC, 2011).
Non-profit Marketing	<i>"It is the marketing that aims to improve the exchange activities of all non-profit institutions, although with more restrictive criteria this name is reserved for private NPOs or NGOs"</i> (Santesmases, 1999: 899–902).
Social advertising	<i>"It consists of applying the techniques and methods of commercial advertising to social causes"</i> (Quintanilla et al., 1988: 140).
Social communication	<i>"It is the use of language in social contexts. It encompasses social interaction, social cognition, pragmatics, and language processing"</i> (ASHA, 2020)
Social media marketing ("social marketing")	<i>"Marketing via online tools and platforms that people use to share information with each other, such as blogs, social networking sites, wikis, podcasts, and shared media sites"</i> (Weinreich, 2006).
Social propaganda	<i>"It deals only with strengthening of beliefs and is entirely didactic in nature"</i> (O'Shaughnessy, 1996).
Socially Responsible Marketing	<i>"It is a marketing philosophy where the company should take into consideration the best interest of society in the long term"</i> (Armstrong & Kotler, 2011).
Societal Marketing	<i>"It is a marketing concept that holds that a company should make marketing decisions not only by considering consumers' wants, the company's requirements, but also consumers' and society's long-term interests"</i> (Kotler et al., 2000: 921).

Source: Alves et al. (2021)

**Table 3** Key milestones in social marketing

Years	Key Milestones
1970s	Earlier work in the social marketing domain
1971	Academic origin of social marketing
1980s & 1990s	Social marketing programs—participant (consumer) orientation, and a systematic planning approach
21st century	Expansion and consolidation of theory and concepts that influence social marketing
	2002: Andreassen identified six benchmarks for good social marketing interventions: behavior change, consumer research, segmentation and targeting, marketing—mix, exchange, and competition
	2013: Consensus definition of social marketing (iSMA, ESMA, AASM)
	2020: French & Gordon propose 3 key ideas: citizen orientation, exchange theory, and value creation

Source: Own elaboration, based on French and Gordon (2020)

At the same time, while in developed countries some social marketing interventions are on, for example, reducing meat consumption, or fat, sugar, and/or sodium levels, in underdeveloped countries interventions are on how to reduce hunger and poverty. While in developed countries social marketing interventions are on water and energy saving and waste reduction, in underdeveloped countries are on clean water and sanitation and affordable energy. Interventions on decent work conditions, and economic growth, as well as reduced inequalities, have happened for a long time in developed and developing countries, but they are almost nonexistent in underdeveloped countries. In this sense, it seems that, in order to achieve the SDGs, social marketing interventions should first pay more attention to problems faced by underdeveloped countries so that some of the most basic human needs can be fulfilled.

Social marketing is a framework for the planning and implementation of social change, which seeks to achieve a social good (French & Gordon, 2020); that is, greater degree of well-being in people and in their quality of life. Thus, it can occur in four levels (Quintanilla et al., 1988: 142):

- A cognitive change (beliefs): understanding of something concrete, by the target audience.
- A change of action: specific actions to be carried out by the target audience.
- A behavior change: creating a new pattern of behavior in the target audience.
- A change in values: trying to alter some type of belief or value deeply ingrained in the target audience.

As an approach to social change and innovation, social marketing strategies are not ruled by market demand and economic value (Sirgy et al., 1985). Contrary to other types of marketing, ideas or causes could be controversial, painful for the public, but beneficial to their quality of life in the long term.

**Table 4** Some areas where social marketing has been applied

Areas	Examples
Health & Welfare	<p>To avoid health problems (obesity, diabetes, cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart attack, ictus, etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promotion of healthy food consumption.</li> <li>– Promotion of fat, sugar, and/or sodium reduction.</li> <li>– Promotion of physical activity and healthy habits.</li> <li>– Promotion mandatory social distance and isolation in the pandemics.</li> </ul> <p>To reduce child mortality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Prenatal &amp; postnatal care.</li> <li>– Breastfeeding promotion.</li> <li>– Implementation of hygienic measures.</li> <li>– Vaccination promotion.</li> <li>– Improvement of potable water access.</li> </ul> <p>To reduce maternal mortality (during the pregnancy or the birth):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Prenatal/postnatal care.</li> <li>– Avoidance of child marriage.</li> </ul> <p>To prevent diseases (such as cancer, HIV infection, measles, etc.), or detect it on an early stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promotion of periodic revisions and tests.</li> <li>– Vaccination.</li> <li>– Social distance and isolation.</li> </ul> <p>To save lives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Encouragement of blood donation.</li> <li>– Promotion of organ donation.</li> <li>– Awareness about antibiotics use, to avoid becoming ineffective.</li> <li>– Reduction of smoking, drinking, or drug use.</li> </ul>
Governance	<p>Citizenship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To promote civic participation.</li> <li>– To enforce democratic attitudes and behaviors.</li> <li>– To improve safety and reduce street violence.</li> <li>– To implement mobility restrictions (e.g., lockdowns in pandemics).</li> <li>– To promote the consumption of local products.</li> <li>– To encourage shopping in small stores, in traditional commerce.</li> </ul> <p>Cities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To promote green and sustainable urban planning.</li> <li>– To foster smart cities models.</li> <li>– To develop sustainable tourism.</li> <li>– To foster local development.</li> <li>– To fight against depopulation in rural areas.</li> </ul> <p>Social Responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To encourage social entrepreneurship.</li> <li>– To implement social responsibility in public administrations.</li> </ul>
Education	<p>Vial education (road safety):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To use the seat belt.</li> <li>– To respect speed limits.</li> <li>– To promote sustainable social behaviors.</li> <li>– Not to drink or use drugs when driving.</li> <li>– To rest from time to time.</li> <li>– Not to use mobile phones when driving.</li> <li>– To use a child protection chair.</li> <li>– To improve cyclist security.</li> </ul>

(continued)

**Table 4** (continued)

Areas	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To enhance pedestrian security.</li> <li>- To reduce speed in school zones.</li> <li>- To check tires.</li> <li>- To wear helmets (motorcyclists, bicyclists, and electric scooter riders).</li> </ul> <p>Desirable social values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full inclusion of diverse and migrant people.</li> <li>- Full inclusion of people with disabilities (encouragement of social and labor integration; awareness of the need of correct accessibility to buildings and other spaces; etc.).</li> <li>- Gender equality (to avoid gender violence, or gender discrimination in the work; to offer opportunities in the labor market, equal access to education, etc.).</li> </ul> <p>Traditions and cultural practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To avoid child marriage.</li> <li>- To stop female genital mutilation.</li> <li>- To abolish dowry.</li> <li>- To stop persecution against religions.</li> </ul> <p>Consumer protection and rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To provide information about consumer rights and awareness of consumer protection.</li> <li>- To offer correct information about the products for sale.</li> <li>- To correctly inform about prices.</li> <li>- To provide complete labeling, in accordance with the regulations in force.</li> <li>- To protect economic and social interests.</li> <li>- To compensate for damages and losses suffered.</li> </ul> <p>Tax payment (VAT).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Right to representation, consultation, and participation.</li> <li>- Right to health and safety.</li> <li>- To inform about administrative and technical protection.</li> <li>- To offer consumer education and training.</li> </ul> <p>Tax payment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To avoid tax evasion.</li> <li>- To prevent tax fraud.</li> </ul> <p>Preservation of the natural environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To protect flora &amp; fauna.</li> <li>- To recycle and reuse.</li> <li>- To encourage the circular economy.</li> <li>- To avoid animal mistreatment and pet abandonment.</li> <li>- To use water, and other natural resources, responsibly.</li> <li>- To reduce consumerism, which impacts on economic wealth (e.g., consumption of electricity).</li> </ul>
Environment	<p>To protect and preserve the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To protect forests.</li> <li>- To stop desertification.</li> <li>- To diminish consumption of natural resources.</li> <li>- To increase recycling and reuse.</li> <li>- To fight against climate change.</li> </ul> <p>To reduce pollution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To reduce waste.</li> <li>- To reduce plastic use.</li> </ul>

(continued)

**Table 4** (continued)

Areas	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To improve air, water, and soil quality.</li> <li>– To encourage the use of clean, renewable, and/or sustainable energy.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Alves et al. (2021)

Thus, for example, to avoid overweight and obesity, and to fight against sedentary lifestyles, it is necessary to foster physical exercise, use the stairs (and not the elevator), spend less time sitting or lying on the couch (watching TV and drinking soft drinks and eating snacks), avoid fast food and ultra-processed food (replacing it with healthier foods), etc. But all this entails more effort and, consequently, more fatigue and less comfort, and it is necessary to dedicate time to it (to go out to do sport, to prepare a healthier meal, etc.). The same happens with energy saving: this implies not turning on the heating or turning it down; or, in the case of air conditioning, the same (not using it, or turning it on for a short time and cooling just enough).<sup>7</sup>

Thus, social marketing “*is not about exchanges that produce short-term satisfactory emotional states, but moral goods or values (directly related to publics’ needs, affects and culture) that facilitate human flourishing in the long-term*” (Alves et al., 2021: 10).

### 3.2 Social Marketing Streams

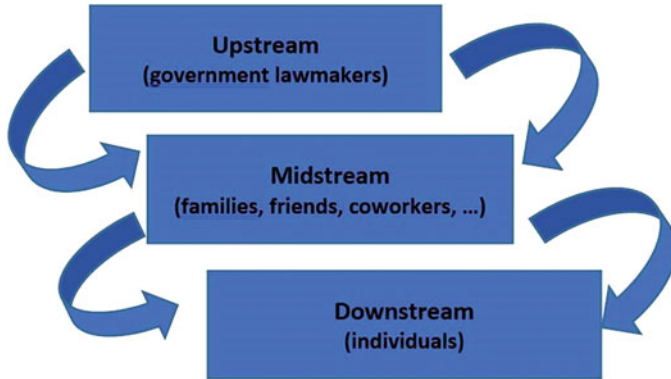
Donovan and Henley (2010) propose that “*the goal of social marketing is not just to encourage individual voluntary behavior and modify the environments that facilitate such changes, but also trying to influence and transform the social structures that will facilitate individual changes.*” This will mean “*targeting the individuals that have the power to change policies and legislation*” (Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019: 3). To achieve that, a combination of three approaches is advisable<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 3):

- *Downstream approaches*: addressing the problem by facilitating access to solutions, influencing the behavior of individuals directly. That is, efforts are focused on those individuals whose behavior is wanted to be directly influenced (Basil et al., 2019: 3).

<sup>7</sup>Thus, for example, in the summer of 2022, the Spanish Government published a Royal Decree-Law (14/2022, of August 1) that included energy saving and efficiency measures. Among others, it imposed the obligation to limit cooling to 27 °C (minimum) and heating to 19 °C (maximum) in public buildings, commercial establishments and malls, cultural spaces, and passenger transport infrastructures (such as stations and airports). It also included the obligation to close doors in buildings and stores with access from the street, and a limitation on the lighting of shop windows (they should be turned off from 10 p.m. onwards). Although society in general was aware of the need to save energy, this Royal Decree-Law generated controversy and complaints.

<sup>8</sup>For more information, see Donovan and Henley (2010) and Basil et al. (2019).





**Fig. 3** Three streams in social marketing. Source: Alves et al. (2021)

e.g., smoking, drinking, overeating, sedentary lifestyle, water and energy consumption, driving, recycling, etc. Informational and educational programs for these target individuals might be useful.

- *Midstream approaches*: acting upon those that can help behavior change, like families, friends, coworkers, among others.  
e.g., giving incentives, subsidies, grants, etc. if they collaborate to reach the socially desirable behavior (e.g., to promote family tourism, there is the family tourism seal in Spain—discounts and offers for families going on vacation with children).
- *Upstream approaches*: identifying and acting upon the main causes of the problem, by “*influencing social and environmental policies, structures, and decision makers that can help to alleviate the problem*” (Basil et al., 2019: 12). That is, efforts are focused on those who can influence the system within which the behavior occurs (e.g., decision makers, politicians, [local, regional, national, or international] authorities, experts, and others whose decisions could influence the social environment), in order to encourage or discourage the behavior (Basil et al., 2019: 3).  
e.g., to restrict or ban the sale and/or advertising of some products considered socially undesirable (tobacco, alcohol, drugs; guns and other weapons; junk food, sugary and energy soft drinks, processed meat, industrial pastries, etc.).

A social marketing intervention could include a combination of all these approaches. Thus, for example, to reduce the consumption of soft drinks with high sugar levels, actions could focus on (French & Russell-Bennett, 2015):

- Manufacturers (to make healthier products).
- Politicians (to regulate the sugar level of these products, by law; or its advertising; or the places of sale—e.g., to ban the sale of soft drinks in vending machines in schools; or to increase taxes for these products).

- Families (to reduce the consumption of these soft drinks at home, replacing them with healthier products).
- Individuals/Consumers (to be aware of the health risks that its consumption implies).

For social marketing to become effective, four dimensions must be present (Hastings & Domegan, 2014):

- “*Customer*” (citizen) orientation: identification of people’s needs, aspirations, values, and priorities. To be effective, “*marketers first must understand the elements that determine people’s current behaviors*” (Basil et al., 2019: 9): the demographic, economic, social, environmental, technological, legal, cultural, historical, and political forces that influence individuals’ behavior. But, also, the barriers to behavior change (to identify, reduce, or eliminate them).
- *Creative orientation*: finding imaginative ways to engage people (target audience).
- *Collective orientation*: recognizing that social and cultural context matters.
- *Competitive orientation*: critically addressing the competition while reducing the efforts (price) that target has to afford.

Academics and professionals have supported these orientations, both from research and from their implementation, based on different theories and models of behavioral change.<sup>9</sup>

### 3.3 Social Marketing Approaches & Strategies

Social marketing is characterized by the coordination of different complementary approaches, to achieve the realization or modification of ideas, attitudes, or behaviors (Alves et al., 2021)<sup>10</sup>: *a legal approach* (based on regulations, sanctions, rules, laws, etc.), *a technological approach* (using innovations to facilitate the desired behavior), *an economic approach* (reducing the cost of carrying out the desired behavior, or increasing the price to discourage unwanted behavior), *an*

<sup>9</sup> Authors such as Donovan and Henley (2010), Hastings and Domegan (2014), or Basil et al. (2019) reviewed the main theories and models: the Health Belief Model, Stages of Change or the Transtheoretical Model, Community Readiness Model, Extended Parallel Process Model, Hierarchy of Effects and AIDA Model; the Protection Motivation Theory, the Social Learning Theory, the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Theory of Trying, the Theory of Interpersonal Behavior, the Exchange Theory, the Social Cognitive Theory, and the Social Capital Theory, Product Differentiation Theory, Consumer Choice Theory, Diffusion of Innovation Theory, Involvement Theory, Co-creation Theory, Self-efficacy Theory, Social Norms Theory, Utility Theory, Behavioral Theory, Systems Theory, among many others. All these models and theories contribute to understanding the influences on behavior and hence provide a framework to develop the strategy and campaigns to fight social problems (Alves & Galan, 2019: 3–4). They arise from a variety of fields including marketing, psychology, and sociology (Basil et al., 2019: 72).

<sup>10</sup>For more information, see, for example, Santesmases (1999) and Rivera et al. (2016).

**Table 5** Some examples of social marketing approaches

---

To reduce the tobacco consumption:

Legal approach: many governments have banned smoking in public places, the sale of cigarettes to minors, or any kind of tobacco advertising—directly (ads) or indirectly (sponsorship).  
 Relational approach: to promote non-smoking lifestyle among teens, their peers can influence.  
 Technological approach: medicines are created (e.g., nicotine gum, nicotine patches, pills, etc., which are, in some cases, subsidized and included in the National Health System).  
 Informative approach: much persuasive information has been offered, also in the cigarette packs (e.g., warning labels, fear-appeal messages, cancer images, etc.).  
 Economic approach: the price is also increased.

---

To reduce plastic pollution:

Legal approach: some governments have banned single-use plastic bags and others have mandated, by law, that each bag be charged.  
 Technological approach: new recyclable and/or reusable plastic bags have also been created, as well as new materials (e.g., potato starch) that are less harmful to the environment, in addition to the traditional ones made of paper or cloth.  
 Informative approach: information on the damage that plastic bags cause to nature.  
 Relational approach: information is segmented according to the reference groups.  
 Economic approach: the cost of the plastic bags (they are no longer free, to discourage their use).

---

To avoid the spread of COVID-19:

Legal approach: the governments of many countries decreed a state of alarm and the lockdown of the population, restricting the mobility, and also making the use of masks and social distance mandatory.  
 Technological approach: hydroalcoholic soaps, gels, and sprays, PCR tests, new drugs, vaccines, as well as mobile applications to track population demographic movements and, using big data, artificial intelligence, and geolocation, defining the spread patterns of the virus and evaluating the effects of the lockdown measures imposed (to review and, consequently, relax or tighten quarantine orders).  
 Informative approach: official and expert information on prevention measures and the correct use of masks, as well as the benefits of wearing them.  
 Relational approach: responsibility toward one's family, friends, coworkers, and/or fellow students.  
 Economic approach: the regulation of the price of gloves, hydroalcoholic products, and masks (with fixed prices to avoid speculation and facilitate access to them by everyone; and even being free, in some cases, for vulnerable people and/or without resources); free vaccines, etc.

---

Source: Alves et al. (2021)

*informative approach* (focused, above all, on persuasive information), and a *relational approach* (based on interpersonal interactions and the impact of social behaviors and experiences). Some examples are summarized in Table 5.

Consequently, different strategies can be applied in social marketing, depending on the purpose sought (Alves et al., 2021)<sup>11</sup>:

- To reinforce ideas, attitudes and/or behaviors: a *reinforcement strategy* (e.g., using awards, rewards, social recognition, economic incentives, legal norms, training programs, educational activities, information reports, etc.).

---

<sup>11</sup> For more information, see, for example, Santesmases (1999) and Penelas et al. (2012).

e.g., public recognition and awards for people with the highest number of blood and bone marrow donations.

- To induce the accomplishment of a desirable behavior: *an induction strategy* (e.g., establishing social controls, facilitating material and human means to carry out desired behavior, providing economic incentives, legal regulations, etc.).

e.g., some UK councils gave free special bags to citizens for organic garbage; or some Spanish councils gave free special kits (bags, bottles, etc.) to citizens to pick up their pets' waste, and to clean up them on the street furniture.

Or some NGOs, such as the Red Cross, have mobile units to travel to certain places (workplaces and universities, for example) and thus facilitate blood donation; others, such as AECC (Spanish Association against Cancer), also have mobile units to go to rural areas to perform mammograms and to raise awareness of the importance of prevention and early detection of breast cancer, or to beach areas in summer to raise awareness of skin cancer due to exposure to sunlight.

- To generate a change in attitude (when it is negative toward a desirable social behavior, although it is practiced): *a rationalization strategy* (e.g., giving more information, trying to persuade with controls, advertising, etc.).

e.g., in some countries where some vaccines are compulsory (parents should vaccinate their children to maintain high rate of population's immunization), experts can make parents aware of the benefits that their children will have if they are protected against some diseases, such as measles (and not only to lose public economic support—e.g., Australia -, or avoid fines—e.g., Italy).

- To generate a change in attitude and behavior: *a confrontation strategy* (e.g., applying economic sanctions, using coercive actions, or persuasive information). e.g., persuasive and/or fear-appeal information, fines, and even jail sentences, for drivers that do not respect traffic laws and rules (e.g., exceeding speed limits, parking in double row, or in prohibited areas, drunk driving, not wearing seatbelt, using mobile phone, etc.).

e.g., in some countries, garbage is not collected if it is not correctly classified for recycling, and even can be given fines if it is not removed from the street in a determined period of time (e.g., in Germany).

e.g., to fight against female mutilation. In countries such as Spain, female genital mutilation has been classified as a crime of injury since 2003 in the 1995 Penal Code (art. 149) and is punishable by imprisonment for 6 to 12 years and disqualification from parental authority in the case of minors.<sup>12</sup>

e.g., to achieve schooling for all children. In some countries, such as Spain, parents who do not take their children to school face prison sentences.

---

<sup>12</sup>Médicos del Mundo (2022). See more in: <https://www.medicosdelmundo.org/que-hacemos/espana/mutilacion-genital-femenina>

### 3.4 Marketing Mix Strategies (The 4 Ps)

Like commercial marketing, social marketing also applies the marketing mix strategies (the 4Ps)<sup>13</sup>:

#### First P: Product

The core product is intangible: an idea, belief, cause, attitude, or behavior. But it can also involve supporting products (e.g., a tangible support—goods, or even another intangible support—services).

e.g., to adopt healthy habits (core product), healthy food (for example, fruit) is given to the children, so they can have breakfast at school; and, as physical exercise is recommended, councils can offer garden areas for walking, bikes for rent, and sports facilities.

But these social marketing products sometimes focus on complex, multifaceted problems that involve individuals, communities, institutions, and society (French & Gordon, 2020: 101–103). Sometimes it can be difficult, if not impossible, to solve them, due to different factors and because they require individual and collective actions, stakeholder engagement, interactions, partnerships, etc.

However, some causes seem to attract more attention and receive more funding (French & Gordon, 2020: 152). Thus, for example, during the most critical phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, this infectious disease was the main cause of most social marketing campaigns and interventions at that time, to the detriment of other causes (e.g., prevention of other diseases).

In any case, the product should be clearly defined (Basil et al., 2019: 23). Marketing research is essential for this, and to understand what benefits the target audience values most (Grier & Bryant, 2005) and adopt a holistic orientation (including a stakeholder orientation in general, and a “customer” orientation in particular).

#### Second P: Price

Price can be monetary (the costs for the promised benefits—although many times they are offered for free or subsidized<sup>14</sup>) and/or non-monetary (e.g., waste of time,

<sup>13</sup>The 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion), proposed by McCarthy in 1960, is the most common model used to analyze the marketing strategy, also in social marketing. Authors, like Kotler and Lauterborn, have proposed similar models but including other components (like people, processes, programs and performance; customers, convenience, cost, communication). For a review, see Constantinides (2006).

<sup>14</sup>There is a debate about whether certain products linked to social marketing should be offered for free or charged a certain amount. Sometimes, having to pay a monetary price gets participants more engaged (French & Gordon, 2020: 498). And conversely: when offered for free, beneficiaries may not value it.

Thus, for example, many people receive citations from the National Health Service for free tests to prevent breast, cervical, colon, or prostate cancer. But they ignore them, letting the appointment go by without canceling it, with the consequent loss of that service (health personnel on duty at that time, facilities open, and machines on, etc.), which could have been used by other people who did want to take the test.

effort, sacrifice, embarrassment, diminished pleasure, psychological hassle, or psychic discomfort, etc.<sup>15</sup>) in social marketing, for achieving the wanted behavior, or changing or abandoning the behavior. That is, there can be monetary and non-monetary incentives and disincentives.

It is important to identify all the costs that the target audience perceives regarding the behavior (Basil et al., 2019: 32). In any case, the required considerations must be reduced to the maximum, so that the desired attitude or behavior is carried out (Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019: 8)—reducing barriers (that is, try to minimize price - Basil et al., 2019: 23). On the other hand, using barriers could be necessary to discourage unwanted attitude, or behavior to be carried out. That is, *“that the rewards of a behavior are always higher than the cost or effort to be made”* (Quintanilla et al., 1988: 146).

e.g., In countries such as Spain, no money is paid to donors of blood, marrow, or organs. On the contrary, donors, in exchange for showing solidarity and gratitude for their donation, “pay” a non-monetary price, such as the discomfort caused by the puncture or the extraction process, as well as a certain subsequent discomfort, and even the risk of suffering a complication or contracting an infection when donating. However, sometimes they receive a consideration: a soft drink and/or snack (or sandwich) after donating blood, a small gift (a keychain, a pen, a beach ball, etc.), or even a plaque or medal to recognize the work and commitment of the big donors.

A common feature in social marketing is that there is rarely an immediate, explicit payback to target audiences in return for their adoption of the desired behavior (Grier & Bryant, 2005).

### **Third P: Place**

Place focuses on providing appropriate distribution and response channels to transform motivations into actions (e.g., physical location where achieving the desired behavior—Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019—to consider its location, accessibility, comfort, operating days and hours, decoration, cleaning, among others).

As social marketers must make the behavior change as easy as possible for the target audience (Basil et al., 2019: 33), sometimes social marketing can involve efforts to increase the availability of items that encourage to achieve the desired behavior and benefit social welfare.

e.g., to recycle, it is necessary that there are differentiated containers and collection points close to homes, to facilitate this action. It is also important that these collection points are safe and do not give off bad odors and detract from the

---

If they had to pay a small fee for booking the test, they would probably not miss the appointment. But it is also possible that, if they had to pay for these tests, many people without symptoms would not take them.

<sup>15</sup>For example, the effort of going to a “clean point” to recycle small household appliances and electronic devices, or the time it takes to go for a medical test to prevent cancer, or putting up with peer pressure not to drink, or taking longer to reach the destination by car (stopping every two hours or every 200 kilometers, as advised by Traffic authorities).

appearance of the street (for example, subterranean containers are more inconspicuous, do not take up too much space and therefore do not clutter the street or have as much visual impact on pedestrians).

Channels can be direct or indirect (if intermediaries are needed to facilitate the behavior change)—Alves and Galan-Ladero (2019: 8). In the latter case, the channels can be short (with one intermediary) or long (with several intermediaries).

e.g., Sometimes the Administration subcontracts or gives certain services to an NGO to reach the target audience. Thus, to prevent the homeless from sleeping on the street or spending the coldest winter nights or the hottest summer days in the open, or for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts, organizations such as Caritas or the Red Cross take care of them.

#### **Fourth P: Promotion**

Promotion is the most visible part of the marketing mix (Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019: 8). Communication with the audience is essential in order to encourage them to adopt the desired behavior, or to persuade them to change or abandon it.

Social advertising (like commercial advertising) is emphasized, above all (Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019: 8). But the other elements of the communication mix should be also considered (such as public relations, promotional activities, personal [face-to-face] attendance, and direct marketing, among others). Mobile phone Apps, gamification, internet, social networks, and celebrities and influencers can help to achieve larger audiences, quickly sharing the social marketing campaigns (Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019: 8). Thus, selecting communication channels is a key decision for the success of a social marketing campaign.

Messages used to encourage or discourage behaviors can be informative and persuasive, but they can also include fear, humor, irony, imperative, or emotional appeals (Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019: 8), or even storytellings and testimonials (stories can transmit values and ideas in an easy and simple way—French & Gordon, 2020). Messages should focus on communicating the benefits of the desirable behavior and how to overcome the barriers (Basil et al., 2019: 33). The language (formal or informal) and the information process route (peripheral or central) used are also essential to reach the target audience.

Therefore, depending on the target audience, it will be necessary to decide the type of language to use (formal or informal), the message (direct or indirect, and what aspects to highlight: the benefits of the behavior sought, the effects of that behavior, the consequences to carry it out/not to carry it out, the problems caused by carrying it/not carrying it out, etc.)—Table 6, the means of communication to be used (television, radio, press, print & online newspapers & magazines, social media, brochures, posters, apps, etc.), as well as who transmits it (people: one or more celebrities, influencers, one or more unknown people, nobody; animals or things. Cartoons can also be another option).

**Table 6** Some examples of messages related to SDGs in social marketing campaigns

- SDG 1 (No Poverty): “Stop poverty,” “Fight poverty not the poor,” “We fight against poverty, do you join us?”
- SDG 2 (Zero Hunger): “Share food, save lives,” “Feed our future,” “If you can’t feed a hundred people, then just feed one.”
- SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being): “Flu is here!”, “Be a donor, be a hero,” “You can get HIV!”, “Stop COVID-19,” “Stay home. Save lives,” “How many cigarettes a day does your child smoke?”, “Let’s move!”, “Eat healthy, live longer,” “Fast food, fast death,” “Every mind matters,” “Don’t worry, your child doesn’t drink, right?”, “Every time you get drunk, you get a little dumber.”
- SDG 4 (Quality Education): “United for Quality Education. Better education for a better world,” “Quality Education for All,” “Education is Top Priority,” “Quality Education is ~~luxury~~ human right.”
- SDG 5 (Gender Equality): “We are equal,” “I ~~They~~ decide who I want to be,” “No to violence against women,” “Domestic violence happens!”, “End femicide.”
- SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation): “Clean Water for all,” “Save water, save life,” “Every drop counts!”, “Water is priceless,” “Clean water changes lives,” “Sanitation and hygiene for all.”
- SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy): “Lighting up lives,” “#Endthedarkness,” “Make a good choice—save energy, save money,” “Save gas for a safe winter,” “Energy efficiency matters. Doing more with less.”
- SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): “Decent work, decent life,” “Decent work for all,” “Decent Work for Domestic Workers begins at home,” “Rights for all season” [for seasonal workers], “Red card to child labor.”
- SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure): “stop piracy” [intellectual property rights], “moving your world” [promoting the use of public transportation], “digital transformation: the evolution of mobility that improves your quality of life,” “technology: the engine for progress.”
- SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities): “all different, all the same,” “free bank account” [against financial exclusion], “break the wall” [breaking down prejudices toward migrant and refugee children], “Why not the same rights?”, “Stop racism.”
- SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities): “Help us to be a sustainable city,” “Healthy mobility. Walk, pedal, enjoy your city,” “Safe mobility. Less cars. Less accidents,” “Show off your city,” “Your clean city. We count on you,” “Working for a smart and sustainable city.”
- SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production): “At Christmas, we’re all about responsible consumption,” “For you, for me, for all of us, responsible consumption,” “For a local, trustworthy and safe consumption,” “Be a sustainable consumer,” “Are you a sustainable consumer?”, “Practice sustainable consumption,” “Think,” “For fair trade and responsible consumption,” “Your future, your choice,” “We are green.”
- SDG 13 (Climate Action): “the hour of the planet,” “I reuse, how about you?”, “Climate change, a real threat,” “Fighting climate change, an intergenerational challenge,” “You can stop the countdown,” “Better without plastic,” “Recycling is in your hands,” “Recycling is everyone’s business,” “Act now,” “Recycle,” “Let’s save our planet,” “The commitment is today. No excuses.”
- SDG 14 (Life Below Water): “Help us fight against plastic!”, “Stop ocean pollution,” “let’s take the commitment to save our seas,” “small scale, big value” [artisanal fishing], “support sustainable fishing.”
- SDG 15 (Life on Land): “overcoming droughts together,” “The land is valuable. Invest in it,” “Let’s save our planet,” “Endangered forests!”, “We care for the forests,” “Forests are our home,” “Crimes against wildlife are savage crimes against life. Let’s stop them,” “Stop wildlife trafficking,” “Animal abuse is unacceptable.”
- SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions): “against trafficking in women, raise awareness,” “no clients, no trafficking,” “human trafficking is modern day slavery,” “do not invest in suffering,” “sexual abuse of children and adolescents is a crime,” “And you! What have you done to stop corruption?”, “United against corruption,” “I am incorruptible,” “I choose to live

(continued)



**Table 6** (continued)

---

without weapons,” “Guns? No, thank you,” “For freedom of information.”  
 – SDG 17 (Partnerships): “It is time to rebuild society. Check the ‘solidarity company’ box on your corporate tax return,” “0.7 now!”, “Now, we are all taxpayers. Let’s not fool ourselves,” “Together, we add up,” “Pay your taxes and demand transparency,” “What are my taxes for?”

---

Source: Own elaboration (Based on messages found in the Google search engine (2022).)

### 3.5 The Social Marketing Program

To create a successful social marketing program, Kotler and Lee (2008) proposed several steps in the planning process (Table 7).

The ethical orientation of communication strategies, because of its impact on people’s quality of life, is a critical component of any social marketing program.

---

## 4 Conclusions

The importance of social marketing in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is unquestionable. Social marketing, by influencing people’s beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors to promote social change and value creation, is a key instrument to engage all stakeholders (individuals, communities, governments, companies, NGOs, political parties, etc.) in the challenge of achieving the SDGs.

Moreover, social marketing interventions related to SDGs can be adapted, depending on whether they are applied in developed, developing, or underdeveloped countries. However, more attention should be paid to the problems of underdeveloped countries, which are the ones that need to cover the most basic needs, a key aspect to really achieve sustainable development worldwide.

**Table 7** Steps in the planning process for a successful social marketing program

Steps	Actions
1	Define the problem, the purpose (behavior to change), and the focus (who the target public is). Marketing research is key in this step.
2	Conduct a situation analysis and summarize it in a tool like SWOT analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats.
3	Select target audiences (e.g., according to demographic & socioeconomic, psychographic, or behavioral criteria). Aspects to consider when selecting a target: who has the greatest need for change, who will be receptive to change, who is reachable, who is affordable, if the group size is sufficient/appropriate, if it fits with the organization, if it will be cost effective to reach. Segmentation is key, because people have different needs, values, interests, and motivations.
4	Set marketing objectives and goals (specifying desired behaviors and changes in knowledge, attitudes, and/or beliefs—e.g., reinforcing, inducing, rationalizing, or confronting them). Objectives should be clear, realistic, and measurable. Goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time sensitive.
5	Identify factors influencing behavior adoption (e.g., the barriers that prevent the audience of adopting the new behavior; the benefits they may realize when adopting the new behavior; the influencers of the desired behavior, who can help the persistence of the current behavior or help to change it, etc.). Barriers, benefits, influencers, facilitators, and “competitors” with your efforts (turning a competitor into a complementor or collaborator).
6	Craft a positioning statement (according to the target audience’s feelings and primary benefits sought when performing the desired behavior) to appeal the target.
7	Develop marketing mix strategies (the 4Ps): product, price, place, promotion.
8	Outline a plan for monitoring and evaluation (identifying which processes and outcomes will be measured, what methods will be used to measure them, when the measurements will take place, and the costs involved in carrying out the measurements).
9	Establish budgets (total costs of the program: including implementation costs, and control and evaluation costs) and find funding sources (to support the costs).
10	Complete the plan for campaign implementation and management (conceptualizing the outline of the task division: who will perform every task, how much it will cost, and when they should be carried out, including the partners’ roles).

Source: Adapted from Kotler and Lee (2008), Alves and Galan-Ladero (2019), Basil et al. (2019), and Alves et al. (2021)

## References

- Alves, H., & Galan-Ladero, M. (2019). Theoretical background: Introduction to social marketing. In M. Galan-Ladero & H. Alves (Eds.), *Case studies on social marketing. A global perspective*. Springer.
- Alves, H., Galan-Ladero, M., & Rivera, R. (2021). Theoretical background: Social marketing and quality of life. In M. Galan-Ladero & R. Rivera (Eds.), *Applied social marketing and quality of life. Applying quality of life research series*. Springer.
- Andreasen, A. R. (1994). Social marketing: Its definition and domain. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 13(1), 108–114.

- Armstrong, G., & Kotler, P. (2011). *Introducción al marketing* (3rd ed.). Pearson-Prentice Hall.
- ASHA - American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2020). Social communication definition. <https://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/social-communication/>
- Basil, D. Z., Diaz-Meneses, G., & Basil, M. D. (2019). *Social marketing in action. Cases from around the world*. Springer.
- Boards of the International Social Marketing Association, European Social Marketing Association, and Australian Association of Social Marketing. (2017). *Social marketing definition*. In Morgan, W. <https://www.i-socialmarketing.org/> (November 07, 2017).
- Brundtland, G. H., & Khalid, M. (1987). *World commission on environment and development: Our common future*. Oxford University Press.
- CDC—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). *What is health marketing?* In <https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/toolstemplates/WhatIsHM.html> (Accessed: 29th August, 2020).
- Commission of the European Communities. (2001). Green paper: Promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility. Bruselas, 18.7.2001. COM (2001) 366 final.
- Constantinides, E. (2006). The marketing mix revisited: Towards the 21st century marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 22(3–4), 407–438. <https://doi.org/10.1362/026725706776861190>
- Donovan, R., & Henley, N. (2010). *Principles and practice of social marketing: An international perspective*. Cambridge University Press.
- French, J., & Gordon, R. (2020). *Strategic social marketing. For behaviour & social change* (2nd ed.).
- French, J., & Russell-Bennett, R. (2015). A hierarchical model of social marketing. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 5(2).
- Galan-Ladero, M. (2011). Variables que influyen en la actitud hacia el marketing con causa y determinantes de la satisfacción y la lealtad en la “compra solidaria”. Doctoral thesis. University of Extremadura.
- Galan-Ladero, M., & Alves, H. (2019). *Case studies on social marketing. A global perspective*. Springer.
- Galan-Ladero, M. & Galera-Casquet, C. (2019). Capítulo 11: Marketing para el cambio social. In Cerdá, L.M.; Ramírez, M. (coord.): *Fundamentos para un nuevo marketing*, pp. 251–284. : Sínderesis.
- Grier, S., & Bryant, C. A. (2005). Social marketing in public health. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 26, 319–339.
- Hastings, G., & Domegan, C. (2014). *Social marketing. From tunes to symphonies*. Routledge.
- Hastings, G., & Domegan, C. (2018). *Social marketing. Rebels with a cause* (3rd ed.).
- Jackson, P. (2022). *Crónica ONU: Antecedentes de los objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio: Cuatro decenios de lucha en pro del Desarrollo en las Naciones Unidas*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/es/chronicle/article/antecedentes-de-los-objetivos-de-desarrollo-del-milenio-cuatro-decenios-de-lucha-en-pro-del> (Accessed on: December 4, 2022).
- Kotler, P., & Lee, N. (2005). *Corporate social responsibility*. Wiley.
- Kotler, P., & Lee, N. (2008). *Social marketing influencing behaviors for good* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Kotler, P., & Zaltman, G. (1971, July). Social marketing: An approach to planned social change. *Journal of Marketing*, 35, 3–12.
- Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Saunders, J., & Wong, V. (2000). *Introducción al Marketing* (2nd European ed.). Prentice-Hall.
- Loorbach, D., Frantzeskaki, N., & Avelino, F. (2017). Sustainability transitions research: Transforming science and practice for societal change. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 42(1), 599–626.
- Medicus Mundi. (2022). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://medicumsmundi.es> (Accessed on December 3, 2022).
- Moliner Tena, M. A. (1998). *Marketing social: La Gestión de las Causas Sociales*. ESIC.

- National Social Marketing Centre—NSMC. (2020). *Social marketing national benchmark criteria*. Retrieved from [www.thensmc.com/content/nsmc-benchmark-criteria-0](http://www.thensmc.com/content/nsmc-benchmark-criteria-0) (Accessed on October 1, 2020).
- Newton-Ward, C. M. (2016). *Syllabus: Social marketing in Public Health PUBH 731 (Spring)*. North Carolina University (USA).
- O'Shaughnessy, N. (1996). Social propaganda and social marketing: A critical difference? *European Journal of Marketing*, 30(10/11), 54–67.
- Penelas-Leguía, A., Galera-Casquet, C., Galan-Ladero, M., & Valero-Amaro, V. (2012). *Marketing Solidario. El Marketing en las Organizaciones No Lucrativas*. Pirámide.
- Quintanilla, I., Berenguer, G., & Díaz, R. (1988). Problemas y desafíos del marketing social. *Esic Market*, 61, 137–151.
- Rivera, R., Santos, D., Brändle, G., & Cárdbaba, M. Á. M. (2016). Design effectiveness analysis of a media literacy intervention to reduce violent video games consumption among adolescents: The relevance of lifestyles segmentation. *Evaluation Review*, 40(2), 142–161. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193841X16666196>
- Santesmases, M. (1999). *Marketing. Conceptos y Estrategias* (4th ed.). Pirámide.
- Santesmases, M. (2007). *Marketing. Conceptos y Estrategias* (5th ed.). Pirámide.
- Schmidtke, D. J., Kubacki, K., & Rundle-Thiele, S. (2021). A review of social marketing interventions in low-and middle-income countries (2010–2019). *Journal of Social Marketing*, 11(3), 240–258.
- Sirgy, M. J., Morris, M., & Samli, A. C. (1985). The question of value in social marketing: use of a quality-of-life theory to achieve long-term life satisfaction. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 44(2), 215–228. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1536-7150.1985.tb02336.x>
- The United Nations. (2008). *Millennium development goals indicators*. Retrieved from <https://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators%2fOfficialList.htm> (Accessed on December 3, 2022).
- The United Nations. (2015a). *La Asamblea General adopta la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible*. September 25. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/2015/09/la-asamblea-general-adopta-la-agenda-2030-para-el-desarrollo-sostenible/> (Accessed on December 3, 2022).
- The United Nations. (2015b). *We can end poverty*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> (Accessed on December 3, 2022).
- The United Nations. (2022). *The 17 Goals*. Retrieved from <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> (Accessed on December 3, 2022).
- Weinreich, N. K. (2006). *Spare change: Social marketing vs. "Social Marketing" Smackdown*. 09.06.2006. In <http://www.social-marketing.com/blog/> (Accessed on: 02/01/2008).

---

## Part I

### Cases on Social Inequality

This part includes the following:

Campaigns for gender equality (avoiding dowry requirements for women and their families in order to marry as well as fighting sexual harassment against women and girls): “Dowry” case and “It’s not for men” case

Campaigns on equal opportunities (access to education, for people without resources; access to work, by gender or disability): “Skateistan” case, “Toolbox” case, and “Ilunion Hotels” case

Campaigns to achieve more inclusive and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)-oriented societies: “You can’t ask that” case, ILGA case, and “Educational center” case



# Social Marketing for Improving Women's Rights: The Case of Dowry in Pakistan

Hina Yaqub Bhatti, M. Mercedes Galan-Ladero,  
and Clementina Galera-Casquet

## Learning Objectives

1. To study how social marketing serves to improve women's rights and to fight against harmful cultural practices.
2. To discover the key role of UN Women Pakistan in raising awareness and promoting SDG 5 (Gender Equality) in a developing Muslim country.
3. To analyze the “*Stop Jahezkhori*” campaign, which has marked a turning point in the dowry culture in Pakistan, raising awareness in Pakistani society about the need to eradicate this ancestral practice.
4. To observe how with a subsequent campaign (“*Numaish*”) UN Women Pakistan continues its long-term commitment to SDG 5 in general and to the struggle for the abolition of dowry culture particularly.

## 1 Introduction

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century and especially in the last decade, globally, more girls have been able to go to school, fewer girls have been pressured by their families into early marriage, more women have gained access to leadership

---

H. Y. Bhatti

University of Extremadura, Badajoz, Spain

Riphah International University, Lahore, Pakistan

e-mail: [hyaqubbh@alumnos.unex.es](mailto:hyaqubbh@alumnos.unex.es)

M. M. Galan-Ladero (✉) · C. Galera-Casquet

University of Extremadura, Badajoz, Spain

e-mail: [mgalan@unex.es](mailto:mgalan@unex.es); [cgalera@unex.es](mailto:cgalera@unex.es)

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2023

27

M. M. Galan-Ladero, H. M. Alves (eds.), *Social Marketing and Sustainable*

*Development Goals (SDGs)*, Springer Business Cases,

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3_2)

positions, and laws have been reformed to develop gender equality. Despite these important advances, many challenges still remain in quite a few countries, where discriminatory social norms and laws remain in place, women continue to be undervalued in the workplace and in political leadership, child marriage is still practiced, and one in five girls and women aged 15–49 have reported physical or sexual violence (UN, 2021). Therefore, the implementation of new laws concerning women's equality (e.g., in all workplaces) and the elimination of any kind of violence against women in all countries of the world are necessary.

The United Nations (UN) considers that “*gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large*” (UN, 2021). A consequence of the lack of gender equality is violence against women. The United Nations (UN) defines “*violence against women*” as “*any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life*” (UN Women, 2022). This violence against women is often widespread and reflected in cultural practices such as female genital mutilation<sup>1</sup> or honor killing,<sup>2</sup> or stems

---

<sup>1</sup>Female genital mutilation “*is a social norm, often seen as a necessary step to prepare girls for maturity and marriage. It is usually due to beliefs associated with gender and its relation to ‘appropriate sexual expression.’ It includes procedures intended to intentionally alter or cause damage to female genitalia for non-medical reasons. Both the practice and the motivations behind it vary from place to place. Female genital mutilation was first classified as violence in 1997 through a joint statement by WHO, UNICEF, and UNFPA*” (UN Women, 2022).

<sup>2</sup>Honor killing “*is an act of violence that involves killing a family member, often a woman or girl, on the grounds that the person in question has brought dishonor or shame to the clan*” (UN Women, 2022). The cause “*is usually related to sexual purity and alleged transgressions by female relatives*” (UN Women, 2022): for having relations with someone the parents or siblings do not approve of, for asking for a divorce, for engaging in sexual relations, or simply for dressing inappropriately (Ortiz, 2022). It is usually agreed upon within the family and, for this reason, several male family members are usually involved in the murder (Ortiz, 2022).

from illiteracy and deeply rooted customs such as child marriage,<sup>3</sup> arranged marriage,<sup>4</sup> compensation marriage,<sup>5</sup> or dowry.<sup>6</sup>

The eradication of violence against women is a priority objective of the United Nations and, therefore, they have included it in the Sustainable Development Goals—SDGs (specifically in SDG 5 “Gender Equality”). Previously, in 2010, UN Women, the United Nations organization dedicated to promoting gender equality, defending women’s human rights and their empowerment, was created.<sup>7</sup>

This case study will focus on dowry as a specific example of a practice that generates violence against women and stems from the lack of gender equality.

---

## 2 Dowry

Marriage plays a vital role in human life. Singlehood, although accepted in some cultures, is a real tragedy in others because society considers it a failure.<sup>8</sup> In the latter case, moreover, they are usually cultures where gender equality does not exist and superstition “*links the gestation of girls with bad luck, so the care and education of girls is very different from that enjoyed by boys of their age . . . And there are even families that punish the woman who gives birth to a girl!*” (Olazábal, 2014). It is in these cultures where dowry acquires a key importance and can become a turning point in people’s lives, sometimes creating too many problems in later married life.

The custom of dowry, defined as “*an amount of money, property or things (jewelry, cars, motorcycles, houses, appliances and electronic devices, furniture, etc.) that, by social convention, the bride’s family must give to the groom’s family*”

---

<sup>3</sup> A child marriage is any marriage in which one or both spouses are under 18 years of age. It is considered a harmful practice and therefore constitutes a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN Women, 2022) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Vega-Gomez and Galan-Ladero, 2019). Although, according to UNICEF (2020), child marriages have decreased by 30% in recent years thanks to international pressure, it is still practiced in different areas of the world.

<sup>4</sup> An arranged marriage is a union organized by the family (the families of both spouses reach an agreement for the celebration of the marriage—the spouses, especially the woman, do not participate in the choice).

<sup>5</sup> A compensation marriage is a type of forced marriage. It consists of giving, in marriage, one or more women (usually girls) from the family of a man who has committed a crime (e.g., murder), as compensation to the offended family. The intention is to treat the girl badly in order to punish her entire family (e.g., by forcing her to do housework, wear old clothes, walk barefoot, live as the wife of an older man, and suffer all kinds of physical and emotional abuse as the daughter of a murderer). The decision is usually made by the village Tribal Council (this practice, although illegal, still occurs, for example, in some rural areas of Pakistan) - UN Women (2022).

<sup>6</sup> Dowry is all money, goods, and rights contributed by the woman (or her family) to the marriage.

<sup>7</sup> The United Nations General Assembly created UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, in July 2010 (UN, 2020). For more information, visit their website: <https://www.unwomen.org/en>

<sup>8</sup> EFE (2007).



before the wedding<sup>9</sup> and that are commensurate with the family's social standing,"<sup>10</sup> is prevalent around the world. It is known by different names, depending on geographical and cultural locations<sup>11</sup>: *Dahej*, in Hindi; *Varadhachanai*, in Tamil; *Jahez*, in Urdu and Arabic; *Joutuk*, in Bengali; *Jiazhuang*, in Mandarin, *Ceyiz*, in Turkish; *Dot*, in French; *Daijo*, in Nepali; *dote* or *ajuar*, in Spanish; or *Idana* (in several African countries). Its origin is due to the fact that, in many societies, women did not participate in inheritances. With the dowry, daughters were given a material basis,<sup>12</sup> thus guaranteeing their economic security and protection for the future. In this sense, it is very frequent in South Asian cultures (for example, in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, or Sri Lanka) that there is a great agreement before marriage. This agreement can affect and determine people's lives after the celebration of the engagement and the marriage itself.

Some people give dowry because they can afford it, but others demand dowry as if it were a reward (there are families who "sell" their sons and demand the money they have invested in their education). With the rise of consumerism, in some of these countries, dowry began to be seen as a means to get rich and obtain the comforts of a developed country.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, the demands for marriage gifts increased,<sup>14</sup> and weddings in style began to be demanded by the groom's family, in order to maintain status.

Therefore, dowry has become "*a practice that indebts families and works against women*" (Aceprensa, 1995). Dowry has led many families to ruin. Middle- and lower-class families have taken out loans for their daughters'/sisters' weddings in order to meet the dowry demands of the groom's family. To repay these loans afterward, they live a life of slavery (which may even extend to the next generations).

Due to these demanding and greedy dispositions, it is common for the groom's family to delay the wedding, maintaining this situation even over the years. Thus, when the bride's marriageable age has passed, the engagement is broken off and the girl is left with the only possibility of marrying a divorced or widowed man. Because of the high dowry demands and, consequently, the inability to marry, many young women of middle and lower classes commit suicide; in other cases, brides are harassed by the groom's family and are even attacked with acid or burned because they cannot meet the dowry demands. Or, even after the marriage, the woman is abused or even killed if her family does not continue to pay more money or hand over more property to her husband ("*for marriage-related expenses or as confirmation of a certain social status*"—EFE, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> Although it is usually the bride's family who delivers the dowry to the groom and his family, some examples can be found throughout history in which the groom was the one who made the payment (for example, in some Germanic peoples of the Middle Ages) - Wikipedia (2022).

<sup>10</sup> By Rojas (2008) and Olazábal (2014).

<sup>11</sup> Harrell and Dickey (1985), Comaroff and Roberts (1986).

<sup>12</sup> Aceprensa (1995).

<sup>13</sup> Aceprensa (1995).

<sup>14</sup> Olazábal (2014).

As a result of harassment, blackmail, extortion, humiliation, mistreatment, and torture (physical and/or psychological), suicide and murder, the payment of dowry has been prohibited in some of these countries where it is an integral part of their culture, or laws related to this practice have been passed. Thus, for example, in India, in 1961, the so-called Dowry Prohibition Act was passed, which applies when a married woman, within the first seven years of marriage,<sup>15</sup> dies in strange circumstances (the accused, usually the husband, “*is considered guilty until proven innocent*”—EFE, 2007). In the 1980s, the penal code was tightened in this country, with the intention of reducing violence against women within marriage (and which, in many cases, is linked to the nuptial payment).<sup>16</sup>

However, these prohibitions have not ended this custom; on the contrary, it is still something very common in all social classes and castes, it is still present in the family tradition,<sup>17</sup> and the law is not enforced.<sup>18</sup> Dowry has simply been disguised as “gifts” for the groom’s relatives or it has become a “moral obligation” of the bride’s family to have to pay the wedding expenses<sup>19</sup> (EFE, 2007). This is because there is still a widespread belief in these countries that the woman is worth less and must pay the husband to support her.

In addition, the request for the dowry is made verbally (so that there is no record of the demands and thus they cannot be punished by law) and after the announcement of the engagement (so that the bride’s family suffers more pressure to pay it).<sup>20</sup> In cases where the bride or her family have decided to break the engagement because of this, they have suffered the rejection of society (it is usually thought that the cancellation of the marriage engagement is because “*the bride has some serious defect or problem that has led her fiancé to repent,*” being already marked forever and, practically, with no possibility of re-engagement and marriage. . .).

Moreover, in these countries, there is strong corruption in the system, which does not protect women who report suffering from this practice,<sup>21</sup> which generates a sense of impunity among families who demand dowry.<sup>22</sup> “*Many dowry murders (especially when the woman is burned alive) are difficult to prove, because the family registers it as an accident or suicide, leaving that death in oblivion . . .*” (Olazábal, 2014). What really happens is that the husband’s family bribes the police to declare

<sup>15</sup>This period was set because “*it is considered the time period in which women are most vulnerable to dowry-related abuse*” (EFE, 2007).

<sup>16</sup>Olazábal (2014).

<sup>17</sup>Olazábal (2014).

<sup>18</sup>Rojas (2008).

<sup>19</sup>In India, for example, wedding expenses can be double or triple the annual per capita income, because they include, in addition to the wedding reception, jewelry, dresses, and material goods for the groom and the groom’s family (EFE, 2007).

<sup>20</sup>Rojas (2008).

<sup>21</sup>Rojas (2008).

<sup>22</sup>Olazábal (2014).

an accident what is really a murder, and only a few cases have been taken to court and even fewer have been solved.<sup>23</sup>

### 3 Contextualization of the Case: The Situation in Pakistan

#### 3.1 Violence against Women in Pakistan

Pakistan's population has increased rapidly in recent decades (243 million people in 2022).<sup>24</sup> As a result, Pakistan has become the fifth most populous country in the world and the second largest country in South Asia. But it is also one of the lowest ranked for gender equality in the world<sup>25</sup> and one of the most dangerous for women to live in.<sup>26</sup> However, recently, different provinces in Pakistan have received different responses of violence against women (Table 1).

Women's subjection to violence in Pakistan is due to their dependence on male family members and the submission they owe them, as well as the high percentage of illiteracy among the female population, especially in rural areas.<sup>27</sup> In addition, they think that domestic violence is a women's problem.<sup>28</sup>

However, the police system has also slowed down the process of combating violence, as the police put obstacles in the way so that, in the end, the victim gives up and does not report. Consequently, women do not report because (1) such reporting could, in terms of their marital life, play a determining role in ruining their future; or (2) because of people's backwardness (it would be thought to be a disgrace to society). This leads to the fact that almost 56% of women do not seek any help after suffering physical and sexual violence.<sup>29</sup> In turn, the police and the judicial system are blamed for impeding the progress of these cases and, consequently, for women's loss of confidence in the police, which pushes them not to go even to file a

<sup>23</sup> Aceprensa (1995).

<sup>24</sup> According to CIA (2022). In addition, more than one-third (38%) of this population is under age 15, and the fertility rate is high (women in Pakistan have an average of 3.6 children)—National Institute of Population Studies—NIPS (2019).

<sup>25</sup> Asia Pacific. UN Women (2020).

<sup>26</sup> Aparicio-Merideño (2021).

<sup>27</sup> According to the CIA (2022), the average female illiteracy rate in the country is 53.5%, although there are large differences between urban and rural areas.

<sup>28</sup> According to National Institute of Population Studies—NIPS (2019), “about 4 in 10 ever-married women (42%) and men (40%) agree that a husband is justified in beating his wife for at least one of the following reasons: if she burns the food, argues with him, goes out without telling him, neglects the children, or refuses to have sex with him. Both women and men are most likely to agree that wife beating is justified if the wife argues with him or goes out without telling him.” Thus, “more than 1 in 4 ever-married women (28%) have ever experienced physical violence since age 15,” with the husband being the most common perpetrator of physical violence (80%) and sexual violence (78%).

<sup>29</sup> According to National Institute of Population Studies—NIPS (2019).

**Table 1** Responses of different provinces of Pakistan to violence against women

Province	Responses
Punjab	<p>The provincial government of Punjab, the largest province in the country, has taken some concrete steps in legislation, as women represent 49% of Punjab's population, with a life expectancy of 62.2 years, a literacy rate of 52%, and a labor force participation rate of 27.8%.</p> <p>Punjab's legislation includes protection against harassment of women in the workplace, the Punjab Land Revenue Act, the Punjab Women's Fair Representation Act, the Punjab Women's Status of Women Act, and the Punjab Women's Protection Authority Act.</p> <p>The Punjab assembly has also passed the early child marriage restriction law to reduce child marriages.</p> <p>To develop female human capital, it is necessary to work for the welfare of women and safeguard their rights as a vulnerable and marginalized group in society.</p>
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	<p>It is the third largest province by population. In this province, 49.32% are women. It has a low literacy rate (50%).</p> <p>After two unsuccessful attempts by the previous two governments, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Domestic Violence against Women (Protection and Prevention) Bill was finally passed. However, the passage of the bill has only been the beginning of something very complex, as the real struggle is to enforce it through the administration of the day.</p>
Baluchistán	<p>It is the fourth largest province in Pakistan. It has a literacy rate of 16%, with a total female population of 47.47%.</p> <p>The Balochistan Assembly has passed a bill for the women of Balochistan (the Balochistan Harassment of Women at Workplace Bill, 2015). However, despite its passage, efforts still need to be made to create awareness of their rights among women.</p>
Sindh	<p>It is the second largest province in Pakistan. The population of women in Sindh is 47.93%, with a literacy rate of 43%.</p> <p>The Sindh Assembly has passed a bill called "The Sindh Commission on the Status of Women" in 2015, with a vision to provide equality, dignity, and fearless contribution to the society. Thus, women can advance their lives and also contribute to the community.</p>

Source: The News (2018), Pakp (2020), Dawn (2016), and Tribute (2018)

complaint. This results in women not disclosing to anyone and becoming emotionally and psychologically ill.

### 3.2 UN Women Pakistan

SDG 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been welcomed in Pakistan and initiatives have been undertaken that *"have included the establishment of national and provincial commissions on the status of women (which are led by women) and contribute to legislation and policies for women's empowerment and gender equality"* (UN Women, 2020).

**Table 2** Muniba Mazari

Muniba Mazari is an advocate for UN Women’s “*Step It Up for Gender Equality*” initiative and other campaigns promoting women’s empowerment.

Muniba Mazari said, “*I am a strong supporter of UN Women and the role we have to end gender discrimination, work towards gender equality and make it a lived reality by 2030. This is the time to empower women and girls because when a woman is empowered, the whole generation is also empowered.*”

Source: Asia-Pacific. UN Women (2020)

UN Women Pakistan appointed Muniba Mazari<sup>30</sup> (Table 2) as its first national ambassador “*to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls*” (UN Women, 2020). This announcement was made in Islamabad, Pakistan, during an event to mark the end of the “*16 days of activism against gender-based violence.*”

### 3.3 Dowry Culture in Pakistan

Pakistan is an Islamic country and dowry has become important and necessary for all social classes. In Pakistan, some castes do not marry their son to a girl until her family has not given them, in addition to money, a car, an expensive motorcycle, electronic devices, jewelry, or any other good they have previously requested.

The age-old practice of dowry in Pakistani culture, so ingrained in their culture, has made several laws against dowry dysfunctional, causing 95% of families to continue to manifest dowry. There are 2000 dowry-related deaths per year in Pakistan (Shah, 2016), the highest in South Asia, and annual rates increase by 2.45 per 100,000 women, due to dowry-related violence (Daily Times, 2018).

A bill on dowry and marriage gifts (restricting, though not banning them)<sup>31</sup> was passed in Pakistan in 2008. Moreover, according to the law, public display of dowry and demand for dowry is illegal. However, despite this law, the demand for dowry and material goods by the groom’s family from the bride’s family is still common today.

The dowry issue is one of Pakistan’s greatest challenges. Today, a growing number of for-profit and nonprofit organizations are working to eliminate the dowry culture in this country. UN Women is one of the nonprofit organizations that is leading this fight and has conducted successful campaigns against dowry in Pakistan. The most prominent has been the 2018 campaign (“*Stop Jahezkhori*”—“*Stop dowry mongering,*” in English), carried out by the agency BBDO Pakistan on behalf of UN Women Pakistan, and which has marked a turning point in the attitude toward dowry by Pakistani society. Subsequently, in 2021, another campaign also had a strong impact and continued the debate on dowry.

<sup>30</sup>Muniba Mazari is a Pakistani artist, writer, singer, and activist (UN Women, 2020).

<sup>31</sup>This bill states that dowry expenses should not exceed the limit of PKR 30,000, while the total value of the bride’s gifts should not exceed PKR 50,000.

## 4 “Stop Jahezkhori” Campaign

In an effort to eradicate the social evil of dowry and abolish it, UN Women Pakistan launched a campaign in 2018 entitled “*Stop Jahez Khori*” (meaning “*Stop Dowry Mongering*,” in English, and seeking to “*stop the practice of dowry*”)—Figs. 1 and 2, aimed at people involved in the practice of accepting dowry (its target audience was men and grooms’ parents), although it was also intended to reach out to Pakistani society as a whole.

“*Jahez Khori*” is a new term in the Urdu language that was created for the campaign as an insult to stigmatize the practice of dowry and change attitudes and behavior toward it. With this term, the campaign message was intended, rather than reminding men of the existing law against dowry (which would not be enough), to appeal to their honor (the most important asset for Pakistani man), to their self-respect. In other words, it sought to connect the message with the consequence of losing self-respect, rather than of breaking the law.<sup>32</sup> The main objective of this campaign was, therefore, to trigger negative perceptions among people about this practice and to shame those who demand dowry by insulting them (“*anybody demanding dowry from hereon would be known as a dowrymonger*”—BBDO, 2021). In short, the aim was to change people’s mentality and, above all, their behavior regarding dowry.

UN Women Pakistan started the #StopJahezKhorī campaign on December 19, 2018, coinciding with Pakistan’s winter wedding season.<sup>33</sup> It was featured by the actor Ali Rehman (considered the most desired bachelor in the country at the time), who, surprisingly, announced on social networks (specifically, on Instagram) that he was getting married and that he would like to introduce his girlfriend to everyone the next day, on the morning show on GEO TV. The live broadcast of the program was followed by millions of people, who were eager to know what the most envied woman of the moment was like. But instead of showing off his bride, Rahman focused on opening a wedding palanquin to display the gifts of the dowry (which included everything from a sewing machine to car keys, kitchen gadgets, and jewelry).


This performance aims to show how the dowry culture measures the value of the bride only in terms of material goods. In addition, it encouraged discussion about how the expectation of a dowry can add financial pressure, psychological stress, and threats to the bride’s family. The program also broadcast a special recorded message from the Chairman of the Islamic Ideology Council, Dr. Qibla Ayaz, in which he said that “*Islam categorically discourages the practice of demanding or expecting a dowry from the bride’s family . . . Islam strictly forbids the flaunting of wealth, extravagant spending on weddings and other ceremonies, and burdening the bride’s family with demands for material goods*” (UN Women, 2020).

<sup>32</sup> BBDO (2021).

<sup>33</sup> Pakistan’s winter wedding season covers the months of October, November, and December.


unwomenpakistan  
14.1 mil seguidores

# Jahezkhori





/dʒʌheɪz 'kɔːri/ 

*verb*

The customary practice of asking for and accepting durable goods, cash, and real or movable property, from the bride's family by the groom's, as a condition for the marriage.



Ver más en Instagram


500  
unwomenpakistan

#StopJahezkhori

Do you know how we coined this term?

Just like we use the names for practices such as 'Rishwat Khori' 'Muft Khori', we are introducing Jahezkhori for those who ask for dowry or show entitlement to the gifts received by a bride.

There is a need to call for an end to this practice as it also leads to violence against women and girls. The most common forms of dowry-related violence are emotional abuse, domestic violence, acid throwing, stove-burning, and other forms of violence.



**Fig. 1** “Stop Jahez Khori” Campaign. Source: UN Women Pakistan/BBDO (2020)



**Fig. 2** Different images from the campaign. Source: UN Women Pakistan/BBDO (2020)

Following the show, UN Women coordinated a series of posts from the “Stop Jahez Khori” campaign and its hashtag #StopJahezkhori by influencers, bloggers, celebrities, and leading women’s rights activists and experts on major social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter). They challenged the dominant narratives about the practice of dowry, appealed to critical thinking, and pointed out its serious and harmful consequences. Several videos of the campaign were also uploaded to YouTube.<sup>34</sup>

For this campaign, henna stencils<sup>35</sup> were designed (Fig. 3), which were then printed on posters (500 individually created posters by henna artists were illustrated) and distributed and strategically placed in high-traffic areas in general, and in wedding shops, in particular. Special labels were also designed for retail stores to

<sup>34</sup><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ok3a7M6J6dA>

<sup>35</sup>In South Asian weddings, happiness and fertility are often symbolized by henna designs placed on the bride’s palms.





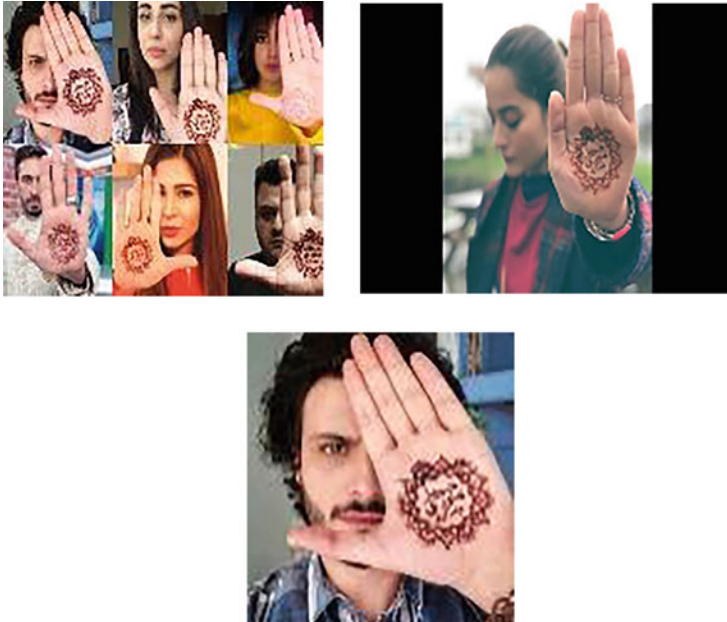
**Fig. 3** Symbol of the campaign. Source: UN Women Pakistan/BBDO (2020)

display on items typically purchased for dowry: furniture, electronics, jewelry, etc. It was also prepared as an image that could be downloaded from the website.

The country's celebrities (women and men),<sup>36</sup> civil society activists, influencers, and government officials, in addition to many citizens, put these henna stencils on their hands and displayed them as a symbol of solidarity and support for the UN Women's campaign (Fig. 4).

The campaign set social media on fire and became a hot topic in Pakistan during the wedding season, sparking a huge community debate about dowry and its effects. In that time, 495 million impressions of the campaign symbol were made (UN Women, 2020). Ultimately, this campaign was highly successful and recognized, not only nationally (all major national news channels featured the

<sup>36</sup>Many stars and celebrities, such as Iqra Aziz, Ahmed Ali Butt, Osman Khalid Butt, Yasir Hussain, Sana Javed, Juggan Kazim, Ayesha Omar, Ushna Shah, Haroon Shahid, Adnan Siddiqui, and others, took a stand against this practice and tried to raise awareness about how harmful it is and how it ruins the lives of millions of people.



**Fig. 4** Pakistani personalities collaborating with UN Women. Source: UN Women Pakistan/BBDO (2020)

campaign in the news), but also internationally (world’s leading media such as BBC, Gulf News, etc., echoed the campaign and valued its importance in generating debate on the subject). It has also won several international awards.<sup>37</sup>

This campaign was the beginning of a cultural shift (some parents even went so far as to cancel their daughters’ weddings if someone demanded a dowry), although the most shocking result of the campaign was the statement made by the Islamic Council (the most influential body in Pakistan) that forced dowry is against Islam. Several clerics joined in the condemnation, making dowry not only a loss of self-esteem, but also a completely un-Islamic practice (and, consequently, a sin).

Despite the widely recognized success of the campaign, some criticisms were also made. Some pointed out that sometimes the bride’s family also demands material goods from the groom or his family; or that many families only want to marry their daughters to wealthy grooms. And many people commented on their personal experience with dowry pressure (UN Women, 2020).

<sup>37</sup> In September 2019, at the Spikes Asia Festival of Creativity in Singapore, creative agency BBDO Pakistan, which had produced the campaign for UN Women, took home the Grand Prix for Good award. The campaign also won the Glass Spike award because it “*aimed to positively impact entrenched gender inequality, imbalance or injustice*” (Asia Pacific. UN Women, 2020). In 2021, it also won the prestigious Identity Design Award, at the 2021 ADA-Architecture Design Art Awards (BBDO Pakistan, 2021).

## 5 The Road to Change: From “Stop Hahezkhori” Campaign to “Numaish” Campaign

In 2021, the UN Women Pakistan launched a second campaign entitled “Numaish,” with one of Pakistan’s fashion designers, Ali Xeeshan. As in the previous campaign, this new one was intended to trigger negative perceptions among people about the practice and shame dowry-seekers, also improving gender equality and women’s rights.

The campaign kicked off with the launch of the “Numaish” collection, designed by Ali Xeeshan, at the “Pantene HUM Bridal Couture Week 2021.” The staging was intended to highlight the sad and harsh reality of dowry culture, in an artistic way (a model, dressed as a young traditional bride, pulled a cart full of gifts, with her adult groom sitting on it—Fig. 5), but which greatly surprised the audience. The presentation ended with a note urging people to take an oath against dowry. The shocking photos of this campaign were subsequently uploaded to social media (#StopDowryMongering #NumaishNaLagao #JahezkhoriBandKaro”) and videos were also posted.<sup>38</sup>

This second campaign created more controversy than the first. While many people applauded this collaborative initiative and the social message behind it, others criticized it as hypocritical and the result of regressive practices. Some even went so far as to say that “*the opinion of anyone dealing with Pakistan’s opulent wedding business had no right to criticize the dowry culture*” (Jain, 2021). They felt that the designers themselves are part of the problem because the luxurious dresses they create are very expensive<sup>39</sup> (“*parents have to save for years before they can afford to buy wedding dresses from such designers and there is constant competition*”). Others felt it was simply an advertising strategy using social issues to draw public attention to the newly launched luxury collection. Anyway, this second campaign has reinforced this awareness against the dowry requirement.

---

## 6 Conclusion and Final Thoughts

For centuries, dowry has existed in Pakistani society. It has been practiced by all types of people, irrespective of caste or educational background (it is not only practiced by illiterate people, educated people also engage in it). Therefore, UN Women Pakistan has focused on discouraging the practice of forced dowry and related violence.

The dowry system is acceptable if it is considered as a voluntary gift given by the bride’s parents to the prospective husband. But if the groom’s parents demand

---

<sup>38</sup>The video was posted by Xeeshan and directed by Abdullah Haris. It features a young bride pulling a cart, heavily loaded, along with her groom sitting in it and she is barely able to move it. The post read, “*It’s time to put an end to this overburdened tradition!*”.

<sup>39</sup>The main expense of marriage is the bride’s and groom’s dress and the marriage ceremony.

UN Women Pakistan ✓  
February 7, 2021 · 🌐

UN Women Pakistan supports NUMAISH - a pledge against dowry by Ali Xeeshan Theater Studio .  
Share this powerful message and join us to [#StopDowryMongering](#)  
[#NumaishNaLagao](#) [#JahezkhoriBandKaro](#)  
UN Women UN Women Asia and the Pacific

693 117 comments 787 shares

Like Comment Share

**Fig. 5** Second campaign (“Numaish”) [#StopDowryMongering](#) [#NumaishnaLagao](#) [#DowryFree-Pakistan](#). [#SayNoToDowry](#) [#CapitalismThrives](#). Sources: UN Women Pakistan (2021)

money as “dowry” to get married, that is completely wrong, unethical and, moreover, illegal.

After these kinds of campaigns against dowry culture, which have been most effective through digital platforms and social networks, people have learned about this practice, its effects (which include violence and abuse, and can even lead to the bride being thrown acid or burned if her family does not give the dowry; or the murder of the wife, if the family does not continue to give more money or property after the wedding; or selective abortion and female infanticide, so as not to be “burdened” with daughters—they are considered a burden, rather than an asset—and have to pay their dowry when they reach marriageable age; or the suicide of the bride or her relatives, unable to pay the dowry). All these constitute some of the most detrimental dowry-related evils perpetrated against women.

After the UN Women’s first campaign in Pakistan, the dowry system and the demand for dowry by the groom’s family became an illegal procedure in Pakistan. Thanks to this campaign, the provisions and acts against dowry in Pakistan or in the global legal code have mainly become more effective.

Due to this first awareness campaign and the laws against the dowry system, the number of suicides of women due to this system was reduced, as well as the number of child marriages at very young ages (many families used to marry off their daughters as children to avoid a higher dowry later on).

The campaign “*helped disprove the misperception that the practice of dowry is lawful by religion*” by being endorsed by the Council of Islamic Ideology, which declared this practice of dowry as completely un-Islamic (UN Women, 2018). The second campaign has continued the line of the first and has continued to reinforce this awareness.

However, much remains to be done. Changing people’s mindset, attitude, and behavior in the face of deeply entrenched practices in society takes time, even generations. That is why social marketing is key to achieving this change.

---

## 7 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What do you think about dowry? Do you agree/disagree with this practice?

**Question 2**—How is the situation in your country? Is it like Pakistan, or is it completely different? If similar, has any action been taken? And if so, what kind?

**Question 3**—What other social marketing campaigns could have been carried out? Suggest some actions that could have been taken.

**Question 4**—Do you think it will be possible to eradicate the practice of dowry, especially in countries where it is deeply rooted and part of their culture? Why?

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

UN Women Pakistan has been the first organization in this Asian country to focus on SDG 5 “Gender Equality.” In 2018, UN Women Pakistan launched a campaign against dowry culture, entitled “Stop Jahezkhori” (“Stop Dowry Mongering,” in English), which means “to stop the practice of dowry demands.” Thousands of people, women and men, wore a henna stamp on the palm of their hand, designed specifically as a symbol for this campaign. It ran from December 2018, coinciding with the wedding season in Pakistan.

The main objective of this campaign was to trigger negative perceptions about the practice of dowry and stigmatize it. Although the campaign specifically targeted those who continue to ask for dowry (appealing to their honor), it was also aimed at Pakistani society as a whole, to change attitudes and, above all, people’s behavior toward this long-standing—but very harmful and damaging—custom, which, although illegal, is still in full force today.

Given the great impact this campaign had, and the significant results obtained, later, in 2021, UN Women Pakistan launched a second campaign, entitled “Numaish,” continuing with the same objective: “to trigger negative perceptions among people about the practice and shame dowry-seekers, also improving gender equality and women’s rights.”

With these campaigns, UN Women Pakistan seeks to ensure that the dowry culture will soon be abolished, and the long-desired gender equality can be achieved in the country, guaranteeing women’s rights and empowering them.

### Potential Audience and Instructor’s Material

This case has been developed for use in the framework of Marketing Management courses in general and Social Marketing seminars particularly. The potential audience for this case study is twofold:

- Undergraduate students pursuing degrees in Business Administration or Marketing.
- Graduate students pursuing MBA and Masters in Marketing, Corporate Social Responsibility, or Social Marketing; or Executive Programs and Seminars (about Marketing in general and Social Marketing particularly).

### Learning

1. To study how social marketing serves to improve women’s rights and to fight against harmful cultural practices.

2. To discover the key role of UN Women Pakistan in raising awareness and promoting SDG 5 (Gender Equality) in a developing Muslim country.
3. To analyze the “Stop Jahezkhori” campaign, which has marked a turning point in the dowry culture in Pakistan, raising awareness in Pakistani society about the need to eradicate this ancestral practice.
4. Observe how with a subsequent campaign (“Numaish”) UN Women Pakistan continues its long-term commitment to SDG 5 in general and to the struggle for the abolition of dowry culture particularly.

### **Time Frame for Class Discussion**

This case can be taught in one session of 60–100 minutes, depending on the number of students participating in the discussion activities, as well as the previous work that students have done before class.

### **Suggested Discussion Questions**

**Question 1**—What do you think about dowry? Do you agree/disagree with this practice?

**Question 2**—How is the situation in your country? Is it like Pakistan, or is it completely different? If similar, has any action been taken? And if so, what kind?

**Question 3**—What other social marketing campaigns could have been carried out? Suggest some actions that could have been taken.

**Question 4**—Do you think it will be possible to eradicate the practice of dowry, especially in countries where it is deeply rooted and part of their culture? Why?

### **Analysis**

***Answer to Question 1—What do you think about dowry? Do you agree/disagree with this practice?***

This is an open-ended question for students to give their opinion on this topic and reflect on this practice.

***Answer to Question 2—How is the situation in your country? Is it like Pakistan, or is it completely different? If similar, has any action been taken? And if so, what kind?***

This question is also open-ended. The answer will depend on the culture and country to which the student belongs. Comparisons can be made between countries in the face of this practice.

***Answer to Question 3—What other social marketing campaigns could have been carried out? Suggest some actions that could have been taken.***

This question is open-ended, so that students can consider other possible actions that could be taken in response to this practice and its possible effects.

***Answer to Question 4—Do you think it will be possible to eradicate the practice of dowry, especially in countries where it is deeply rooted and part of their culture? Why?***

This question is also open-ended, so that students can reflect on the ease/difficulty of changing attitudes and behaviors that are strongly linked to a particular culture or cultural practice that is deeply rooted in society.

---

## References

- Acerensa. (1995, April 5). India: la dote, una costumbre que oprime a la mujer. Retrieved from <https://www.acerensa.com/sociedad/india-la-dote-una-costumbre-que-oprime-a-la-mujer/> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- Aparicio-Merideño, A. (2021, April 19). Ser mujer en India: dote, matrimonio y “talaq”. A Xanela. Retrieved from <https://xanelaorg.wordpress.com/2021/04/19/ser-mujer-en-india-dote-matrimonio-y-talaq/> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- Asia Pacific. UN Women. (2020). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/es/news-and-events/stories/2015/12/un-women-pakistan-appoints-muniba-mazari-as-first-national-goodwill-ambassador> (Accessed on October 3, 2020).
- BBD0. (2021). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://bbdo.com/> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- CIA. (2022). *The World Factbook*. Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- Comaroff, J. L., & Roberts, S. (1986). *Rules and processes*. University of Chicago Press.
- Daily Times. (2018). *Dowry: a corroding system of the society*. Retrieved from <https://dailymtimes.com.pk/266171/dowry-a-corroding-system-of-the-society-2/> (Accessed on July 12, 2018).
- Dawn. (2016). *Balochistan adopts bill against harassment of women*. Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1233545> (Accessed on January 17, 2016).
- EFE. (2007, May 23). La dote, rito mortal en la India. *El Mundo*. Retrieved from <https://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2007/05/21/solidaridad/1179746513.html> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- Harrell, S., & Dickey, S. A. (1985). Dowry systems in complex societies. *Ethnology*, 24(2), 105–120.
- Jain, S. (2021, February 10). *UN Women Pakistan's Anti-Dowry Campaign Divides Twitter*. NDTV. Retrieved from <https://www.ndtv.com/offbeat/why-some-people-are-criticising-un-women-pakistans-anti-dowry-campaign-2367135> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- NIPS - National Institute of Population Studies. (2019). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://nips.org.pk/> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- Olazábal, V. (2014, October 30). La dote se paga con la vida. *El Periódico Extremadura*. Retrieved from <https://www.elperiodicoextremadura.com/internacional/2014/10/30/dote-paga-vida-44579938.amp.html> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- Ortiz, A. M. (2022). Los ‘crímenes de honor’, una práctica vigente que se cobra la vida de al menos 1.000 mujeres al año en Pakistán. *El Mundo*, May 25. Retrieved from <https://www.elmundo.es/espana/2022/05/25/628d01f521efa0923f8b45b2.html> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- Province Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (2020). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://www.pakp.gov.pk/bills/the-khyber-pakhtunkhwa-domestic-violence-against-women-prevention-and-protection-bill-2019/> (Accessed on October 3, 2020).
- Rojas, A. G. (2008, March 16). La dote o el acoso hasta la muerte. *El País*. Retrieved from [https://elpais.com/diario/2008/03/16/sociedad/1205622007\\_850215.html](https://elpais.com/diario/2008/03/16/sociedad/1205622007_850215.html) (Accessed on September 8, 2022).



- Shah, S. (2016, March 3). *Women have little relief from harassment despite laws*. The News International. Retrieved from <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/102419-Women-have-little-relief-from-harassment-despite-laws> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- The News. (2018). *Steps taken for women's empowerment: minister*. Retrieved from <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/284505-steps-taken-for-women-s-empowerment-minister> (Accessed on February 23, 2018).
- Tribune. (2018). *Education in Sindh*. Retrieved from <https://tribune.com.pk/letter/1781604/education-in-sindh-2#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20Pakistan%20Survey,%25%20and%2046%25%2C%20respectively> (Accessed on August 16, 2018).
- UN. (2020). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/07/un-women-the-united-nations-entity-for-gender-equality-and-the-empowerment-of-women/> (Accessed on October 3, 2020).
- UN. (2021). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- UN Women. (2018). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://www.unwomen.org/en> (Accessed on October 19, 2020).
- UN Women. (2020). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/step-it-up/commitments/pakistan> (Accessed on October 3, 2020).
- UN Women. (2022). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://www.unwomen.org/en> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- UN Women Pakistan. (2021). *Official website*. Retrieved from <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/pakistan> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- UN Women Pakistan/BBDO. (2020). *Images*. Retrieved from <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org> (Accessed on September 8, 2022).
- UNICEF. (2020). *Official website*. Retrieved from [https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/child\\_marriage\\_and\\_other\\_harmful\\_practices\\_unfpa\\_apro\\_and\\_unicef\\_rosa\\_2020.pdf](https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/child_marriage_and_other_harmful_practices_unfpa_apro_and_unicef_rosa_2020.pdf) (Accessed on October 19, 2020).
- Vega-Gomez, F. I., & Galan-Ladero, M. M. (2019). The role of social marketing in a controversial cause: The eradication of child marriage. In M. M. Galan-Ladero & H. Alves (Eds.), *Case studies on social marketing. A global perspective* (pp. 135–148). Springer.



# “No es de Hombres” (“That’s Not Manly”): a Campaign for Gender Equity in Mexico

Lucirene Rangel-Lyne, Saúl Emmanuel Alonso-Olivares,  
Karla Paola Jiménez-Almaguer, and José Ignacio Azuela-Flores

## Learning Objectives

1. Understand the concept and purpose of social marketing through a case study.
2. Identify a case of social marketing related to SDG 5 (Gender Equality).
3. Examine the situation of gender violence and analyze the social marketing campaign carried out to solve it and educate people.

## 1 Introduction

Regarding the problems that interest and involve the world population, it is possible to refer to those debated in international organizations according to their importance for the nations. In the context of social progress for a more peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable life, the member countries of the United Nations (UN) have agreed to establish 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). One of the most important objectives in Latin American countries is the one that refers to gender equality. According to the United Nations Development Program in its report for Latin America and the Caribbean 2010, Latin America includes 10 of the 15 countries with the highest levels of inequality. Public safety is a primary concern, as new forms of violence against women and femicide are increasingly common. In the 2019 Human Development Report published with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) was stated that along with climate change, gender inequality and

---

L. Rangel-Lyne (✉) · S. E. Alonso-Olivares · K. P. Jiménez-Almaguer · J. I. Azuela-Flores  
Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas (UAT), Tampico, Tamaulipas, Mexico  
e-mail: [lucirene.rangel@uat.edu.mx](mailto:lucirene.rangel@uat.edu.mx); [a2203320378@alumnos.uat.edu.mx](mailto:a2203320378@alumnos.uat.edu.mx);  
[kjimenez@docentes.uat.edu.mx](mailto:kjimenez@docentes.uat.edu.mx); [iazuelaf@docentes.uat.edu.mx](mailto:iazuelaf@docentes.uat.edu.mx)

violence continue to cause and consolidate gaps, and new ones are emerging. Having equal rights for men and women is equivalent to having gender equity, including equal access to resources and services. Mexico is among the Latin American countries with the highest inequalities in this regard. The gender gap is increased by sexual violence against women in this country. The National Survey on the Dynamics of Relationships in Households shows that 66% of women have suffered violence at least once (ENDIREH, 2016).

This vulnerability increases when accessing to public transport services. According to the Survey on Sexual Violence in Transportation and Other Public Spaces in Mexico City, 72.9% of women who have suffered an act of violence referred to the subway as the main place where these types of acts occur (one or more of the acts suffered by them) (ONU Mujeres, 2018). Mexico City subway is the place with the highest rate of sexual violence against women. For that reason, within the “Let’s Travel Safely on Public Transport program,” the campaign “No es de hombres” (“That’s not manly”) was launched to generate a cultural change and also to reduce the harassment practices that thousands of women and girls suffer every day.

Launched in 2017 by Mexico City’s Government with the support of the United Nations Organization, the J. Walter Thompson agency, and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation financing the campaign “No es de hombres” (“That’s not manly”) reached an unprecedented high impact. Through social marketing strategies, it was possible to reflect the most common forms of harassment and aggression faced by women in Mexico City’s subway. The campaign’s objective was to “denormalize” sexual violence against women on public transport and generate empathy among men.

---

## 2 Case Development

### 2.1 Campaign Background “No es de Hombres” (“That’s Not Manly”)

According to official data from the Collective Transportation System (CTS), in the year 2000, based on continuous complaints from women, the Mexican authorities decided to separate the wagons of Mexico City’s subway for the exclusive use of women and girls. The Mexico City’s Mobility Regulations established the exclusive use of wagons in Mexico City’s subway. Invading cars exclusively for women in any of the 12 lines of the CTS causes some penalties by the Law of Civic Culture (Art. 29 Fraction XI and Art. 31), which ranges from 25 to 36 hours of arrest or from 12 to 18 hours of community service.

This campaign was launched after several preceding efforts. On October 4 of 2007, the Distrito Federal Government launched the “Harassment Zero” program, which included assigning one third of the train for exclusive use of women, children under 12, and handicapped persons.

Later, the "Let's Travel Safely on the Public Transport" program was implemented and recognized as a pioneer program in Latin America according to institutions such as ECLAC, UN Habitat, and UNIFEM (Martínez & Micher, 2016). This program was inaugurated on October 4 of 2007, to prevent, address, and punish sexual violence against women who travel on public transport in a timely and effective manner, promoting women's rights, social development, law enforcement, citizen attention, and vigilance. This program brought together various actions to prevent, attend to, and access justice. Therefore, as of January 2008, the service of Attention Modules for Cases of Sexual Abuse began in different stations of the subway (Inmujeres, 2012).

In 2013, the Mexico City's Government and UN Women signed the Memorandum of Understanding. Both parties committed to jointly carrying out inter-institutional actions related to technical cooperation, programs, and projects for women's empowerment and gender equality that contribute to the implementation of international commitments on women's human rights.<sup>1</sup>

With the signing of the memorandum in March 2015, Mexico City joined the UN Global Initiative "Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces." By doing so, the Mexico City's Government (through the Institute of Women of Mexico City and UN Women) implemented a joint work scheme to carry out diagnoses and measures for the preparation and implementation of a program aimed at preventing and addressing sexual violence against women and girls in public spaces and transport (Inmujeres, 2017; ONU Mujeres, 2015).

On April 24, 2016, various social organizations marched in Mexico City to make visible, questioning and denouncing all the violence of which women are victims every day (Paullier, 2016). After this historic march, the Government of Mexico City implemented the 30/100 Strategy, which responded to the claims raised by women on April 24. This march intended to demand security, freedom, and respect for their rights and freedoms in public spaces and transportation, with the commitment to deliver results and be accountable to citizens within 30 and 100 days. Its objectives concentrated on five axes: (1) The safety of women and girls in their transfers and trips on public transport; (2) Attention to victims; (3) Access to justice; (4) Social participation in the promotion of the right of women to live without violence and safe mobility in Mexico City; and (5) The communication of the measures and the promotion of the complaint. These lines of action were a result from the program presented in 2015 (Secretaría de las Mujeres, 2016).

A year after the "National March against Violence against Women," whose slogan was *#VivasNosQueremos* (*#WeWantOurselvesAlive*, in English), the National Institute of Women (Inmujeres) of the Mexico City and the Subway Collective Transportation System (STC) issued a commemorative ticket. The institutions promoting this issue endorsed with this ticket the commitment that the

---

<sup>1</sup>"Memorandum de Entendimiento entre el Gobierno del Distrito Federal y la Representación en México de la Entidad de las Naciones Unidas para la Igualdad de Género y el Empoderamiento de las Mujeres, ONU Mujeres" (2013).

Mexico City's Government maintains through security and transportation entities to eradicate all types of violence against women and girls (Secretaría de mujeres, 2017). The campaign "*No es de Hombres*" (translated into English as "*That's not manly*") was launched by UN Women Mexico on March 21, 2017. This campaign was supported by the advertising agency J. Walter Thompson and financed by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID). This campaign was launched within the framework of the UN Women Global Program Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls, implemented in Mexico City (CDMX).

## **2.2 The Campaign "No es de Hombres" ("That's Not Manly")**

### **2.2.1 Objectives**

To contribute to the fight against gender violence, primarily regarding the issue of "sexual harassment," the campaign "No es de Hombres" ("That's not manly," in English) had a general objective: "denormalize" sexual violence against women in public transport and generate empathy among men; having four specific objectives (ONU Mujeres, 2020): (1) Generate conversation, public debate, and awareness around the issue of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls in public spaces, with emphasis on public transportation; (2) Contribute to preventing and reducing sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence suffered by women and girls in public spaces, focusing on the conduct of men; (3) Contribute to generating changes in cultural practices on sexual harassment, specifically in the behavior and attitudes of men, and (4) Promote a zero-tolerance culture and call witnesses and victims of sexual violence to action in the public transportation in Mexico City. These objectives were aligned with the framework of the Mexico City's UN Safe Cities program (ONU Mujeres, 2020).

### **2.2.2 Target Audience**

This campaign was addressed to men between 20 and 50 years of age, from different socioeconomic strata, and regular users of public transport in Mexico City (ONU Mujeres, 2020). The campaign mainly sought men's empathy, especially from those identified as "switchers" (those who can change if they know that their behavior is a form of sexual violence and has an impact on women's lives) (ONU Mujeres, 2020). Although, the campaign did not exclude the rest of the men.

Before its implementation, the campaign was presented to various civic organizations, well-known feminist activists, journalists, and researchers. Their perceptions and recommendations were integrated into the campaign. Such elements were tested and analyzed with men of different ages and socioeconomic levels (ONU Mujeres, 2020).



**Fig. 1** The uncomfortable seat. Source: ONU Mujeres (2020)

### 2.2.3 Phases

According to the official report, the “No es de Hombres” (“That’s not manly”) campaign was divided into two phases. The first phase began on March 21, 2017. It consisted of two experiments (ONU Mujeres, 2020):

1. Screens: Videos were launched through several social media platforms, in which experiments showed the acceptance of different forms of sexual violence that women suffer daily in public transport. For example, a video exposed a man’s buttocks while waiting to board public transport with the phrase “*Thousands of women suffer from this every day.*”
2. The awkward seat: An exclusive seat was located for men on line 7 of the subway, simulating the parts of a naked male body. The backrest was the torso and the seat was designed as it had two legs with the respective male genitalia.<sup>2</sup> This seat had a plaque with the phrase: “*It’s annoying to travel here, but it doesn’t compare to the sexual violence suffered by women in their daily commutes.*” This phase sought that men could feel what women experience every day (empathy); the experiment went viral on social networks in record time (ONU Mujeres, 2020) (Fig. 1).

The second phase was launched on March 30 of 2017 and lasted three months. This phase showed the institutions that supported the campaign: UN Women,

<sup>2</sup>The images are available in the following link:

<https://mexico.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Mexico/Documentos/Publicaciones/2018/6/NOESDEHOMBRES/onu-mujeres-mexico-noesdehombres-brief-250618-LR-web-v3%20%281%29.pdf>



**Fig. 2** Posters with messages about the sexual violence suffered by women. Source: ONU Mujeres (2020)

Mexico City's Government, and the J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency (JWT). This second part of the campaign consisted of advertising posters with messages about the sexual violence suffered by women (Fig. 2). Such messages included phrases with different types of harassment suffered by women and girls as part of men's families and circles of friends. Likewise, the campaign posters invited women to report abuses to the 911 telephone number. These signs could be found in Mexico City's Subway, Metrobus, under bridges, and at bus stops. There were placed 219 advertising areas in 70 stations on ten lines of Mexico City's subway (ONU Mujeres, 2020).

*Translation:*

*This is the way they look at your girlfriend every day.*  
*This is the way they look at your girlfriend every day.*  
*This is how they look at your female classmate every day.*  
*This is how they look at your daughter every day.*  
*This is how they look at your mom every day.*  
*This is how they look at your sister every day.*  
*Sexual violence is a crime and can land you in jail. Respect.*

## 2.2.4 Place

It focused mainly on 10 of the 12 subway lines, in a total of 70 stations that included 219 free advertising spaces (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 Advertising on the subway. Source: ONU Mujeres (2020)

### 2.2.5 Broadcast Media

The campaign was promoted through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube; in addition to international mass media such as *El Mundo*, *People*, *Le Figaro*, *BBC*, *EFE*, *The New York Times*, *Fox News*, *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Playground*, *The Sun*, *BuzzFeed*, *CNN*, and *Forbes*.

### 2.2.6 Scope

In less than a week, the “awkward seat” experiment racked up more than 800,000 views. In general, the statistics showed that it was an unprecedented campaign, along with the coverage of 623 articles in the media, both national (*El Universal*, *Radio Formula*, *Reforma*, *Televisa*, *Tv Azteca*, *La Jornada*, *Grupo Imagen*) and international news from around 16 countries (*Le Figaro*, *BBC*, *EFE*, *The New York Times*, *Fox News*, *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Playground*, *CNN*, and *Forbes*). Therefore, the campaign reported that around 12.7 million dollars were saved in media (social networks, press, radio, and television). As for social media, the campaign obtained 654,647 interactions on Facebook. On Twitter, 141, 382,678 people generated 23,951 Tweets, and the hashtag #NoEsDeHombres on Twitter was a trending topic at least three times between March 21 and May 31, 2017. On the other hand, the videos reached 45 million views on YouTube and other social media (ONU Mujeres, 2020).

In the same year of its launch, this campaign was awarded the “Sol de Bronce,” from the Ibero-American Festival of Advertising Communication. Influencing through empathy how sexual harassment is perceived. The campaign fed specific segments of the society on social media, mainly the public that is more alert and aware of this problem, as well as some audiences with ideologies opposed to gender equality.



### 2.2.7 Assessment

The campaign's effectiveness was assessed using multiple methodologies and mutually reinforced. It allowed the evaluation of different parts of the campaign. This evaluation involved organizations such as Analytics (UN Women/JWT), the Institute of Social Research, Kantar Millward Brown, Data Cívica, and external consultancy. The evaluation team consisted of the central components of the campaign, among which stands out the UN Women (2020): (1) Media and digital results of the campaign (Analytics). (2) Pre-campaign/baseline survey and post-campaign survey (quantitative analysis). (3) Group sessions (focus groups) for qualitative evaluation. (4) Neuroscience Analysis (intuitive associations) to know the intuitive response around the campaign materials. (5) Analysis of social media (Social Listening) on digital conversation (qualitative analysis).

Additional components included the (1) Analysis of institutional records on complaints of sexual harassment. (2) Interviews with the different actors involved in the design, execution, and evaluation of the campaign. The evaluation criteria included diffusion/notoriety, relevance/pertinence, efficacy, impact, efficiency, gender equality/human rights, and sustainability. All these evaluation guidelines and criteria are aligned with the evaluation policy of UN Women at the global level (ONU Mujeres, 2020).

In 2018, a year after launching the “No es de Hombres” (“That’s not manly”) campaign, different reports were published on its achievements. These indicated that the campaign generated a positive change in common and normalized perceptions, attitudes, and harmful behaviors on sexual harassment against women.

This campaign reached 28% of the population of Mexico City’s subway, equivalent to an approximate estimate of 1,812,701 people (895,239 men and 917,462 women), positively influencing changes in the previous perception they had regarding sexual harassment (Villaseñor, 2018).

Professor Pérez<sup>3</sup> affirms that this campaign was a victory because it admitted that violence against women exists and that the perpetrators are, potentially, the men who read the advertisement. At the same time, it was also symbolic as it did not mean a change in the incidence of those same crimes that sought to attack (Torreblanca, 2018).

## 2.3 Subsequent Campaigns

In August of 2017, the campaign “It is not the same” was launched and developed by the French publisher Larousse with signs that informed the user about the meaning of the words or create awareness about them. The motto of this editorial enclosed

---

<sup>3</sup>Catalina Pérez Correa is a Researcher Professor at the Legal Studies Division of the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE). She holds a Master’s and a Doctorate in Law from the Stanford University School of Law in California (USA). She studies topics such as law enforcement in Mexico, the functioning of the criminal justice system, drug policy in Latin America, the observance of social and legal norms, and criminal punishment and its effects.

phrases such as "No means No," "Bonbon is a sweet fluffy candy, not a woman," "Repulsion is what you provoke when you harass someone," and "A skirt is a female garment that should not be worn with fear." This marketing campaign applied the fact: "knowing changes your life."

In 2019, the Mexico City's Government launched the campaign "Stop violence against women." It scattered through visual signs in the subway and on social media with the hashtag #DateCuenta ("*Realize*," in English). This campaign focused not only on the desire to eradicate sexual violence in Mexico City's subway, but also in the metrobus and the Passenger Transportation Network, in trolleybuses, and in the light railway. It indicated the sanctions and reasons why the women's and girls' wagons have been separated, motivating respect. Thus, the objectives of this campaign extend to problems of gender violence at home, at work, and in public spaces.

In March of 2021, the "No is No" campaign was launched in Mexico City's subway, to emphasize the separation of wagons that are exclusively for women and girls. Signs with the phrases "No is No" and "Behind the line" were placed on sticky mats.

---

### 3 Conclusions

After almost ten years of the realization of programs, care modules, communications, initiatives, and marches of different institutions and entities in Mexico City, the campaign "*No es de Hombres*" ("*That's not manly*," in English) was successfully launched to fight against gender violence experienced by women and girls in public transport. It is admirable that the efforts of national and foreign institutions have been brought together to develop this initiative. This campaign consisted of two phases that were adequate to reach its target audience (men from 20 to 50 years of age): the first of these phases consisted of the spread of videos on social media and the uncomfortable seat on a subway line. The second phase developed posters with messages alluding to sexual violence. These posters were placed in significant influx areas in public transport to avoid attacks of sexual violence against women and girls.

Although all the actions had high exposure in the media, the dissemination of the videos through social media and posters was the most successful. The first reached more people, not only in Mexico City but throughout the world. The second phase promoted awareness among men by showing them images with phrases of what the women and girls in their family members or friends may be experiencing. Therefore, the combination of both actions achieved a greater extension of the message promoted by the campaign, thereby extending its importance.

The campaign obtained the "Sol de Bronce" award in the same year it was launched, which indicates its great relevance and scope. Using various communication evaluation methods helped to achieve its goal. One of the most outstanding achievements of this campaign was the convenient placement of posters about the risk for women in the main areas of public transport.

Although to achieve gender equity there are diverse elements that need to be trained, this example was chosen because it carefully analyzed sexual harassment. Unfortunately, this case indicates that gender violence is a reality many women still suffer, not only in Mexico City. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the impact and evolution of society after this campaign. It is necessary to know if more actions are required to help raise awareness about the seriousness of harassment and gender violence that is suffered not only in public transport but in various areas of the society that affect its expansion.

After analyzing this case, it is clear that social marketing is an effective tool that can obtain successful results, especially if its message wants to change actions. However, to allow the measurement of these results, information that provides feedback is required, which will guide the actions to achieve the purpose of similar campaigns.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What impact did the campaign “*No es de Hombres*” (“*That’s not manly,*” in English) have on the rates of violence against women?

**Question 2**—What previous or simultaneous actions to the campaign “*No es de Hombres*” (“*That’s not manly*”) may have added or subtracted its impact?

**Question 3**—In line with the previous question, what factors could be added to create a social marketing strategy that reduces sexual harassment as gender violence?

**Question 4**—Under the previous context and background, Was the audience of this campaign convenient? Do you think that this segment addresses the root problem? Why?

**Question 5**—Are there gender equality problems in your city or country? If your answer is affirmative, continue answering the following: Have similar or different campaigns been carried out in your city or country? What social marketing strategies and what actions do you propose to develop an intervention in favor of gender equality in your area of residence?

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

Mexico faces a gender inequality issue stressed by sexual violence against women. There is a high probability that Mexican women experience violence throughout their lives, especially in public transport services. The campaign “*No es de Hombres*” (“*That’s not manly*”) was created to build a cultural change to tackle the harassment practices suffered by thousands of women and girls in Mexico City’s subway. It was launched in 2017 by the Mexican Government with the support of the United Nations Organization, the J. Walter Thompson (JWT) agency, and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation financing. Through

social marketing strategies, it was possible to reflect the most common forms of harassment and aggression faced by women in public transport, reaching a high impact. Winner of the "Sol de Bronce" award from the Ibero-American Festival of Advertising Communication, it was evaluated as a powerful communication tool that transcends the perception of sexual harassment in Mexico.

## Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case study can be analyzed by college and postgraduate students, mostly in programs that include content related to Strategic Marketing, Social Responsibility, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

## Learning

1. Understand the concept and purpose of social marketing through a case study.
2. Identify a case of social marketing related to SDG 5 (Gender Equality).
3. Examine the situation of gender violence and analyze the social marketing campaign carried out to solve it and educate people.

## Time frame for Class Discussion

First, it is suggested to carry out a class session (50 minutes) reading and assimilating the case based on the teacher and student interaction. After a research assignment, a second study session is suggested to discuss the questions posed. Contexts with similar problems could enrich the discussion in such an analysis. Some guidelines for answering the overhead questions above are listed below.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What impact did the campaign "*No es de Hombres*" ("*That's not manly*," in English) have on the rates of violence against women?

**Question 2**—What previous or simultaneous actions to the campaign "*No es de Hombres*" ("*That's not manly*") may have added or subtracted its impact?

**Question 3**—In line with the previous question, what factors could be added to create a social marketing strategy that reduces sexual harassment as gender violence?

**Question 4**—Under the previous context and background, Was the audience of this campaign convenient? Do you think that this segment addresses the root problem? Why?

**Question 5**—Are there gender equality problems in your city or country? If your answer is affirmative, continue answering the following: Have similar or different campaigns been carried out in your city or country? What social marketing strategies

and what actions do you propose to develop an intervention in favor of gender equality in your area of residence?

## **Analysis**

***Answer to Question 1—What impact did the campaign “No es de Hombres” (“That’s not manly”) have on the rates of violence against women?***

- “No es de hombres” (“That’s not manly”) had a high impact on raising awareness of the violence suffered by women in Mexico City’s public transportation systems. This campaign reached, through different media and social networks, more than 50 million people around the world, which is in line with its objectives. However, and despite the scope and importance of this campaign, there were previous and alternative efforts that, in principle, block a completely objective evaluation of the impact of “No es de hombres” (“That’s not manly”), concerning the registered harassment statistics.

***Answer to Question 2—What previous or simultaneous actions to the campaign “No es de Hombres” (“That’s not manly”) may have added or subtracted its impact?***

- These types of campaigns are launched where different factors coexist corresponding to the context, culture, education, or situation. For example, analyzing if there were several campaigns implemented in the same place and time to assess whether they were compatible with the “No es de hombres” (“That’s not manly”) campaign. Or how much could they have subtracted from the attention and impact on it, for pursuing different purposes.

***Answer to Question 3—In line with the previous question, what factors could be added to create a social marketing strategy that reduces sexual harassment as gender violence?***

- For example, we suggest strategic alliances between the government and entrepreneurs that encourage collaborators and employees of the centers identified as those with the highest risk. Additionally, a factor to be carefully analyzed is the development and implementation of new information technologies that monitor in real time this gender violence.

***Answer to Question 4—Under the previous context and background, Was the audience of this campaign convenient? Do you think that this segment addresses the root problem? Why?***

- The campaign “No es de hombres” (“That’s not manly”) targeted men between ages 20 and 50. This campaign excluded males under the age of 20. A future

strategy to raise awareness and decrease the problem would be to create this kind of campaigns for teenagers.

**Answer to Question 5—Are there gender equality problems in your city or country? If your answer is affirmative, continue answering the following: Have similar or different campaigns been carried out in your city or country? What social marketing strategies and what actions do you propose to develop an intervention in favor of gender equality in your area of residence?**

- If there are pending issues regarding gender equity in your city or country, you can propose a social marketing strategy according to the place, and the precise problems you have. For example, if there is evidence of a discrimination problem due to gender, you would have to inquire about the causes, contextual, cultural, political factors, etc. and then be able to propose an ideal strategy.

**Additional Activity Suggested—**The Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System (<https://www.gob.mx/sesnsp>) offers information on violence against women. Take statistics from before and after the intervention "No es de Hombres" ("That's not manly") and compare the means (t-test) to identify if there was a decrease in the rate of gender violence and if this was statistically significant. Consider these points and develop an intervention proposal for gender equality in one area.

---

## References

- Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares. (2016). Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares (ENDIREH) 2016 ([inegi.org.mx](http://inegi.org.mx)).
- Inmujeres. (2012). Informe de actividades. Programa interinstitucional Viajemos Seguras en el sistema de transporte público de la Ciudad de México. Retrieved on March 5, 2022, from <https://www.semujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/uploads/public/594/ab7/e41/594ab7e4154fc514736631.pdf>
- Inmujeres. (2017). Ciudad Segura y Amigable para Mujeres y Niñas. Retrieved on March 5, 2022, from [https://www.semujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/media/Publicaciones/01\\_Ficha\\_CiudadSegura\\_2017.pdf](https://www.semujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/media/Publicaciones/01_Ficha_CiudadSegura_2017.pdf)
- Martínez, D., & Micher, M. L. (2016). Políticas para las mujeres en el transporte público: repensando el Programa Viajemos Seguras de la Ciudad de México. *O Social em Questão*, 19(36), 123–147. Retrieved from <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=552264396006>
- ONU Mujeres. (2015). Palabras de Ana Gúezmes en el Evento Ciudades Seguras Libres de Violencia contra las Mujeres y Niñas del Gobierno del Distrito Federal. Retrieved on March 5, 2022, from <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/noticias-y-eventos/articulos/2015/10/ana-guezmes-ciudades-seguras-cdmx>
- ONU Mujeres. (2018). Encuesta sobre la Violencia Sexual en el Transporte y Otros Espacios Públicos en la Ciudad de México. <https://mexico.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Mexico/Documentos/Publicaciones/2018/Safe%20Cities/AnalisisResultadosEncuesta%20CDMX%20f.pdf>

- ONU Mujeres. (2020). Campaña: No es de Hombres. Retrieved on March 12, 2022, from <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2020-nuevo/diciembre-2020/campana-no-es-de-hombres>
- Paullier, J. (2016). “Estoy harta, harta, harta, y frustrada”: el drama del imparable hostigamiento sexual en México. Retrieved on March 5, 2022, from [https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2016/04/160412\\_mexico\\_mujeres\\_acoso\\_sexual\\_jp](https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2016/04/160412_mexico_mujeres_acoso_sexual_jp)
- Secretaría de las Mujeres. (2016). Estrategia 30–100. Retrieved on March 5, 2022, from <https://www.semujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/estrategia-30-100>
- Secretaría de mujeres. (2017). Emiten Inmujeres CDMX y STC boleto conmemorativo por la “Marcha Nacional contra la Violencia a las Mujeres”. Retrieved on March 5, 2022, from <https://www.semujeres.cdmx.gob.mx/comunicacion/nota/emiten-boleto-conmemorativo-por-la-marcha-nacional-contra-la-violencia-a-las-mujeres>
- Torreblanca, C. (2018). El efecto de la campaña #NoEsDeHombres. Retrieved on March 19, 2022, from <https://www.animalpolitico.com/el-foco/noesdehombres-y-su-efecto-contra-la-violencia-en-el-metro/>
- Villaseñor, A. (2018). Campaña #NoEsDeHombres genera cambio de actitud hacia el acoso sexual. Retrieved on March 19, 2022, from <https://multipress.com.mx/publicidad/campana-noesdehombres-genera-cambio-de-actitud-hacia-el-acoso-sexual/>



# An Open-Source Solution for Social Change: The Goodpush Alliance

Doreen E. Shanahan and Clark D. Johnson

## Learning Objectives

1. To study how social marketing is being used by Skateistan, an international non-government organization, to globally scale social impact.
2. To understand how a social marketing effort can and should adapt to the backgrounds and ethnicities of the international communities that it works with and the importance of bridging these differences.
3. To analyze how digital technologies can facilitate change through social marketing efforts.
4. To understand how multiple stakeholders co-engage to co-create solutions.
5. To recognize the role played by social marketing to alleviate gender inequalities.

## 1 Introduction

While potential is equally distributed across lines of race, ethnicity, and class, opportunity is not. The United Nations outlined a bold agenda “to end poverty and set the world on a path of peace, prosperity and opportunity for all” (United Nations, 2020). Within this agenda, education has been viewed as a pathway for achievement and upward socioeconomic mobility. Ensuring quality education for all is critically important because of its transformative effects on other outcomes, such as gender equality, poverty reduction, and reducing inequalities within and among countries. The foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world hinges on every

---

D. E. Shanahan (✉) · C. D. Johnson  
Pepperdine University Graziadio Business School, Malibu, CA, USA  
e-mail: [doreen.shanahan@pepperdine.edu](mailto:doreen.shanahan@pepperdine.edu); [clark.johnson@pepperdine.edu](mailto:clark.johnson@pepperdine.edu)



**Table 1** SDGs addressed by skateboarding-for-youth programs

Sustainable development goal	Description
Goal 4: Quality education	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5: Gender equality	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 10: Reduce inequalities	Reduce inequality within and among countries

Source: United Nations (2020)

child receiving a quality education. Yet, globally in 2018, nearly one in five children and youth remain excluded from education, particularly girls and children in poorer or marginalized populations (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019).

Making education inclusive and equitable to characteristically disadvantaged populations is more difficult. Thus, there is recognition that effective outreach requires innovative, coordinated, multilevel solutions. One such example is skateboarding-for-youth-development programs which principally operate in disadvantaged communities where children and youth are particularly at risk of exclusion from education. These programs use skateboarding as a tool to engage youth, so that *more* becomes possible: education, community, and leadership. These types of programs are novel examples of an interlinked solution toward achievement of three Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs; United Nations, 2020): quality education, gender equality, and inequality reduction (see Table 1).

This case outlines the development of an international non-government organization (NGO) called Skateistan, its launch of the Goodpush Alliance, and the NGO's approach to support a global community of skateboarding-for-youth-development programs spanning 60 countries through social marketing.

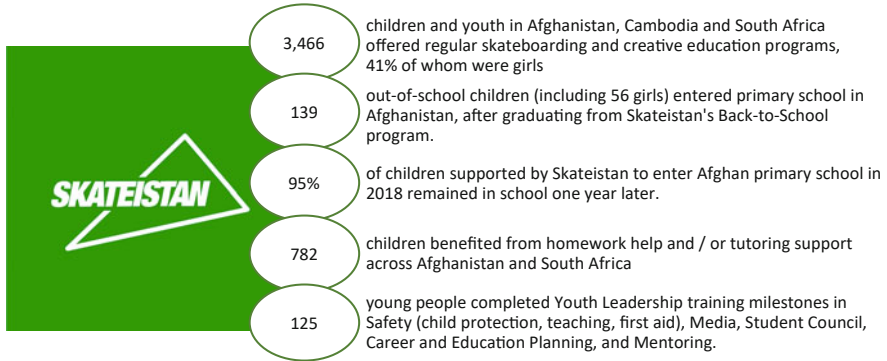
The aim of this case is to demonstrate how social marketing is being used to engage multiple stakeholders at multiple levels—individual (micro), communities, non-government organizations, and networks (meso), and government, policy, and societies (macro)—to co-create solutions to address disparities in marginalized populations through social skateboarding projects. This case highlights how social marketing is embracing a wider use of digital technologies, beyond promotion and communication, to influence human behavior for the betterment of society.

---

## 2 Case Development

### 2.1 The Founding of a New Sport-for-Development Program

*I thought to myself, 'How is it possible that I've been skateboarding with girls in the street, but they're not allowed to play these other sports?... and I realized, skateboarding was a loophole. It was so new that no one had had a chance to say girls couldn't do it'. (Ollie Percovich; Medium.com, 2014).*



**Fig. 1** Skateistan Impact. Source: Statistics from Skateistan Annual Report (2019)

With skateboard in tote, Oliver “Ollie” Percovich landed in Kabul, Afghanistan in 2008 looking to secure a job there as a researcher with a development organization. To pass time, he explored the city on his skateboard and encountered children eager to take a turn. These children had never seen a skateboard and were willing to cross traditional Afghan social and economic boundaries for a chance to try it themselves—particularly girls who were traditionally not allowed to participate in any sports. While aid and development funds poured into the region, Ollie observed that there seemed to be little progress in addressing the exposed and vulnerable street children. He believed skateboarding might be the key to opening the door to develop education opportunities that could transform a society. From this vision, Skateistan (the fusion of the words “skateboarding” and “Afghanistan”) was created: An NGO that combined skateboarding with educational outcomes—beginning with its flagship Skate School facility in Kabul, Afghanistan.

In the decade that followed the launch of its flagship Skate School, Skateistan opened additional Skate School facilities in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Johannesburg, South Africa. Skateistan’s social impact was increasing (see Fig. 1). The NGO engaged 3466 children and youth in skateboarding and creative education programs in Afghanistan, Cambodia, and South Africa, 41% of whom were girls.

Skateistan employed a centralized governance approach which provided an overarching structure, resources, defined processes, and programs. The NGO’s five core programs—Skate and Create, Back to School, Youth Leadership, Outreach, and Dropping In—are described in Table 2. Engaging the individual beneficiaries—the children—in program co-creation is central to the organization’s approach to addressing behavioral change and educational outcomes (see Table 3 for example). This dynamic systems approach to problem-solving led to the development of Skateistan’s Dropping In program, as described here by Percovich, the organization’s Founder and Executive Director:

*Shaped in South Africa, Dropping In began because our students told us they wanted to spend more time at the Skate School and use it for more than just their regular classes.*

**Table 2** Skateistan Programs

Program	Description
Skate and Create	<p>“The Skate and Create program helps students build life skills through a balance of social sports and structured learning. In the skatepark and in the classroom, Skateistan’s Educators guide activities to promote wellness, equality, creative expression, and knowledge of natural sciences. Four annual curriculums develop a global perspective through local actions. The program is accessible to all levels of literacy and ability. It aims to provide a safe space for young people to develop relationships and skills that overcome deep social barriers to feed positive growth.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “People of the World” explores the stories of peoples and international cultures that make up the world.</li> <li>– “Natural Balance” helps students learn about the cycles of the natural world and how we can manage balance within it.</li> <li>– “Creation and Innovation” examines how people use tools and technology to create innovative solutions.</li> <li>– “Act Local” looks at the resources and challenges in our local communities and how we can take action to change our world.</li> </ul> <p>[Within these curriculums, educators chose from 48 existing lesson plans developed in 2018 and used a template to create their own lesson (Skateistan Annual Report, 2019).]</p>
Back to School	<p>“To help out-of-school children enter the public education system, Skateistan partners with the Ministry of Education in Afghanistan to align our students with the national curriculum. Children who don’t go to school join our Skate School five days a week to cover up to four years of public-school education in 11 months. Upon completing our accelerated learning program, we enroll students into public schools, usually in the 3rd or 4th grade.”</p>
Youth Leadership	<p>“Motivated students are invited to join the Youth Leadership program to become more involved in developing our community at Skateistan. Students work together on weekly media training, event planning, international culture exchanges, and foundational safety skills to assist Educators in class. With flexible participation, students learn from the skillsets of our Educators and prepare for the opportunities of tomorrow. The Youth Leadership program helps participants develop a sense of investment in the Skate Schools and creates role models for the other students and wider community. The program aims to create leaders for Skateistan and for a better world.”</p>
Outreach	<p>“Outside of our Skate Schools, Outreach brings Skateistan Educators to children with limited resources. We introduce new communities to skateboarding through creative activities and develop partnerships to connect young people and their families with important social services. Children are invited to register and join other weekly programs.”</p>
Dropping In	<p>“The Dropping In program provides learning spaces and resources where students can develop their aspirations and discover their potential. Children ‘drop in’ for organized skateboarding and sports sessions, read in our Skate School libraries, join weekly book clubs, and study groups, or use computers and quiet spaces to study. Even when public school is not in session, holiday programs, field trips, and events keep students learning and moving ahead.”</p>

Source: What We Do. Skateistan (n.d.)

**Table 3** Example of Skateistan’s Impact



**Ethan’s Story**

“All my life I had to toughen up to protect myself and keep myself and my little sister safe. I felt like I had to start my life all over again and my school grades were not great. I decided to join the science club at Skateistan to help me with my grades. Educators encouraged me to see that I had the potential to improve my skating and grades at the same time. I enjoyed participating in the science club and skate sessions because they are fun and provided me with academic support.” (Source: Skateistan Annual Report, 2019, pp. 26–27)

*Educators began running homework help sessions for students, and this offer gradually expanded to cover extra skateboarding, library sessions, help with computers, singing and dancing. What’s great about Dropping In is that it’s entirely adaptable to the needs of our students and their communities. In South Africa, they might run a career planning workshop, while in Cambodia, children are practicing the Khmer alphabet and in Afghanistan, girls are learning to ride bicycles for the very first time. (Skateistan Annual Report, 2019, p. 2).*

Skateistan partnered with local institutions in the various communities they served, such as the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, to attract volunteers and adapt program activities to the specific needs of children in each region. Nonetheless, opportunities in sports and education for children living with disabilities and marginalized youth, particularly girls, were lacking in many other parts of the world. Opening and managing a new Skate School required significant resources. While the NGO’s centralized governance and branching approach for opening new Skate Schools defined their early success, it was also hampering wider spread social impact.

**2.2 Making a Bigger Impact**

**2.2.1 The Start of the Goodpush Alliance Initiative**

Since its founding a decade earlier, Skateistan had grown to become one of the largest social skateboarding projects in the world and had learned many valuable lessons along the way. Concurrently, more and more social skateboarding projects sprung up around the world. Many of which turned to Skateistan to ask for advice. Responding to the local need, Skateistan freely passed on its knowledge. And by empowering other projects, Skateistan was indeed scaling its social impact. With the



**Fig. 2** Make Life Skate Life—Building a Skatepark with the Community. Source: Make Life Skate Life (2022a)

aim of serving more people and communities, Skateistan launched its Goodpush Alliance initiative in 2018. Rhiannon Bader, who serves as the program manager, describes the starting point of the Goodpush Alliance here:

*There was an award that was actually run by WeWork back in 2017 that was funding different social initiatives and Skateistan went for it and ended up winning the biggest prize. The original idea was a bit more of a one-directional advising, but it very quickly shifted to be multi-directional knowledge-sharing because it was pretty obvious that Skateistan learns a lot and benefits from having the Goodpush Alliance and from being more connected with the social skateboarding community around the world. (Bader, 2022)*

In the initial phase of development, Bader provided direct support through tailored consulting working alongside the founders, project directors, staff, and volunteers of three social skateboarding projects: Make Life Skate Life’s Suli Skatepark in Iraq, 7Hills Skatepark in Jordan, and SkateQilya’s Jayyous Skatepark in Palestine. These three social skateboarding projects shared a similar aim—reaching marginalized children and youth who were at risk of being left behind. They also shared similar challenges—many of which Skateistan had gained experience addressing in their projects.

Make Life Skate Life was founded by Arne Hillerns. Throughout his professional career, he had worked with NGOs focused on human rights, youth, and innovation. In 2013, Hillerns secured funding from Levis® Skateboarding to build the first public skatepark in India. His idea was not to build it *for*, but rather hands-on *with* local youth (see Fig. 2). That first skatepark inspired a community of skaters in India that would come to build more than 20 other skateparks. This sparked Hillerns’ passion for co-creating skate spaces in marginalized communities in developing countries where recreation and public safe spaces for children and youth are often nonexistent. Continued sponsorship allowed Hillerns to undertake a second project. In early 2014, he organized the co-building of a skatepark in La Paz, Bolivia. Over the next four years, his Make Life Skate Life NGO turned to online fundraising and crowdsourced the co-construction of skateparks in Jordan, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Nepal. In 2018, the NGO had successfully crowdfunded to co-build Iraq’s first skatepark. Following the Iraq war, the population in Sulimaniyah surged with

refugees, including many children and youth, from other parts of Iraq and Syria fleeing from violence. Lacking was any meaningful way to positively interact with others outside their communities.

After the skatepark was completed in Sulimaniyah, they now needed to lay the foundation for a sustainable project. As the long-term goal is to have locals independently manage the skatepark and programs, Hillerns reached out to Skateistan for guidance. The “Suli Skatepark” project site was selected for Skateistan’s Goodpush initiative pilot. Bader assisted the organization with strategizing on community engagement and partnerships, participated in outreach events, as well as shared best practices and tools for child protection, monitoring and evaluation, fundraising, and general organizational development. During her visit, she arranged a video meeting via Skype between the local “Suli skaters” and youth leaders from Skateistan’s Mazar-e-Sharif Skate School in Afghanistan. “The partnership [with Goodpush] provided us with the knowledge and tools to implement successful programming,” stated Hillerns (Make Life Skate Life, 2022b). “*Apart from daily loaner board sessions and weekly skate classes at the skatepark, the local coaches created an outreach program at the Barika Refugee Camp in partnership with the NGO Un Ponte Per. More than 50 young Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons in Iraq take part in the program every week.*”

Make Life Skate Life also partnered with a local non-profit in Amman in 2014 to build the 7Hills Skatepark. 7Hills seeks to bridge the gaps between people of different cultures, social and racial backgrounds, religions, gender, and age, through the outlet of skateboarding and free-of-charge youth empowerment program in Jordan. Given the mission fit with Goodpush, this skatepark was also chosen to be one of the three initial advisory partners involved in the Goodpush Alliance. Bader recounts:

*I spent the week with [7Hills’ staff] Mo and Kas, who organize several skate sessions a week at the park for partner NGOs as well as children who come to use the loaner boards. Kas and Mo had both visited Skateistan Cambodia for a week of Goodpush workshops this past May, and it was super cool to see how that visit had inspired them to get a youth leadership program off the ground, as well as provided tools like Cambodia’s skate lesson plan template which they’d adapted for use at the 7Hills skatepark. The 7Hills skatepark is a hub for young Jordanians and refugees. Their youth leaders took part in skate training and child protection workshops while Mo and Kas also worked on strategy and program structure so that 7Hills can reach even more children in need. (Bader, 2018)*

Lastly, SkateQilya was selected as the final initial partner for Goodpush. This organization is a youth empowerment program, which uses skateboarding and art (e.g., photograph and video) to teach community building and leadership skills to Palestinian girls and boys in the West Bank. SkateQilya constructed the Jayyous Skatepark (see Fig. 3), which was designed in conjunction with The Community Collective and Eastbywest (two skatepark consulting non-profit organizations), built with the help of 20 international volunteers from the Scottish-based non-profit SkatePal, and was funded by those volunteers, a grant from Skate-Aid, and ongoing funding from their partner Playgrounds for Palestine.



**Fig. 3** The Jayyous Skatepark—A Collaboration Between SkateQilya and SkatePal. Source: Jayyous Skatepark—Facebook (2017)

Again, Bader recalls her initial involvement:

*I joined for the first week of their month-long camp, in which they combined skate lessons with life skills, meditation and media training. During this time, I took part in the camp activities and ran some workshops for SkateQilya's founders (Moh, Adam and Kenny) and 10 youth counselors [see Fig. 4] on managing skateboard sessions and child protection. It was amazing to see the SkateQilya team integrate some of the lessons into their camp right away. Everyone was really excited to learn about new activities for the skate sessions and built the skate games from our training into the summer camp. One major highlight was the SkateQilya counselors taking initiative to run their own workshops about child protection and skatepark safety with the 65 girls and boys attending the summer camp. (Bader, 2018).*

### 2.2.2 Creating an Open-Source Platform

*Not only can we learn a lot from the information provided, but I'm really excited to see what we can contribute to your efforts. Going through the toolkit, I see how aligned we are with you all and the other awesome organizations using skateboarding as a vehicle for making the world a better place.— Impact Skate Club, Toronto, Canada (Skateistan Annual Report, 2019, p. 30)*

Skateistan had learned first-hand, to sustain a largely volunteer-run social skate project an organization needed to have defined processes, tools, training, and programs in place. While there are hundreds of social skateboarding projects operating around the world, most are grassroots endeavors launched by passionate skaters wanting to make a difference. While these organizations made use of various



**Fig. 4** SkateQilya Workshop with Counselors. Source: About Us. Goodpush (n.d.-a)

digital technologies to communicate with stakeholders and promote their organizations, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, blogs, websites, email, texts, and video conference (e.g., Skype), there was not a central alliance for connecting this social skateboarding community and sharing resources.

Following the initial advising pilot with the three social skateboarding projects, Skateistan partnered with the Pushing Boarders conference for skateboarding NGOs and academia to conduct an online survey to better understand the goals, impact, and activities of various projects using skateboarding for social change. Reaching out to volunteers, board members, and other Skateistan partners, volunteers, and collaborators and soliciting participation through online blogs, the survey obtained 120 responses in the first year via outreach through email, social media, and the Pushing Boarders conference in London, UK. The learnings from the pilot and survey informed the development of an online Goodpush toolkit featuring videos, resources, and how-to guides which were published in January 2019 as part of Goodpush's open-source platform to be used to connect and share best practices with the hundreds of social skate projects around the world. The platform also houses the Goodpush Members' Community which provides a forum and interactive map for members to communicate with each other and network (shown in Fig. 5). Shortly after the initial launch, Skateistan hosted its first Goodpush Summit at its South Africa Skate School attended by 35 participants from social skateboarding projects in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America.

Today, the Goodpush Alliance connects and engages over 300 international skateboarding-for-youth-development projects—most of which operate on budgets





**Fig. 5** Global Map of Social Skateboarding Projects. Source: Project Map. Goodpush (n.d.-c). Note. To view the Goodpush interactive global map of 300+ skate projects, go to <https://www.goodpush.org/project-map>

of less than \$50,000 per year (Goodpush, 2022). The Goodpush Alliance focuses on four key areas:

- improving child protection and safety
- increasing inclusion of girls and children living with a disability
- integrating skateboarding with educational outcomes
- building a network of support among social skate projects.

Membership in the Goodpush Alliance is free. Skateboarding-for-youth-development projects gain access to a wide range of resources and tools enabled by digital technology (see Figs. 6, 6, 7, and 8). The Goodpush online toolkit is organized in three areas: programs, building community, and behind the scenes. Within the programs section, guidance is provided on a wide range of topics from teaching skateboarding skills, to conducting arts-based education, to constructing child protection policies and safety guidelines, to structuring ways to involve local or foreign volunteers as youth leaders and role models. Members can read organized and hyperlinked information provided on the website, watch tutorials, download lesson plans, print booklets and tools, and download customizable templates. In the building community section of toolkit members are provided guidance on community engagement (covering topics such as methods of engagement, needs assessment, and partnerships) and social inclusion. While many of these tools are from programs and materials created by Skateistan for the operation of their Skate Schools, materials also include collected advice and instruction from members as well as external



**Fig. 6** Goodpush Online Toolkit. Source: The Goodpush Toolkit. Goodpush (n.d.-d)

sources. For example, for additional guidance on effective partnering an external link to a free PDF of The Partnering Toolbook,<sup>1</sup> produced by The Partnering Initiative in cooperation with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, The United Nations Development Programme, and the International Atomic Energy Agency, is provided. In the behind-the-scenes section of the toolkit, members are provided guidance on child protection, social skate program monitoring, evaluation, and learning, and building organizational capacity and fundraising.

In 2021, Goodpush added online learning courses to their platform to provide additional knowledge and training to the social skateboarding community (see Fig. 9). Further, a searchable library was added including research, curriculum, videos, and member content contributions such as an anti-racism lesson plan created by Women Skate the World, a mental health coaching guide created by Waves of Change, and creative education curriculum on plastic pollution created by Bangladesh Street Kids Aid.

<sup>1</sup><https://thepartneringinitiative.org/the-partnering-toolbook/>



**GOODPUSH**  
SOCIAL INCLUSION

### Resources and Templates

**Goodpush**  
[Inclusive Skateboarding Programs – Worksheet \(.docx\)](#)

**External**  
[Blog: How to get more girls skating at your skatepark \(Women Skate the World\)](#)  
[International Guide to Providing Sport Programs for Girls \(Women Win\)](#)  
[The Facts: Gender Inequality and Violence Against Women and Girls around the World](#)  
[UNESCO Guidelines for Inclusion](#)  
[Gender Mainstreaming \(European Institute for Gender Equality\)](#)  
[Keep Girls In Sport E-Course \(Adidas / U2Us\)](#)  
[Guide for Girls' Sport Programming in Humanitarian Settings \(Women Win\)](#)





GOODPUSH Skate Tricks – Beginner		GOODPUSH Skate Tricks – Intermediate		GOODPUSH Skate Tricks – Advanced	
Name _____	Name _____	Name _____	Name _____	Name _____	Name _____
1. Push	6. Crab walk	1. Manual	6. Shuvit	1. 180	6. Grind front
2. Stop	7. Up ramp	2. Half cab turn	7. Drop in (small)	2. Half cab	7. Ollie off ledge
3. Tic tac	8. Down ramp	3. FS Kick Turn	8. Rock fakie	3. Rock and Roll	8. Kickflip
4. Carving	9. BS Kick turn	4. Drop off curb	9. Tail stall mini	4. 50-50 stall	9. Heelflip
5. Flip board	10. Pumping	5. Ollie	10. Drop in (big)	5. Grind back	10. Boardslide

**SKATE TRICK CARDS – QUICK TIPS**

These cards are a fun and easy way to track the progress of your students. When they learn a new trick you can mark it with a stamp, sticker, hole punch, or pen. Here are a few suggestions:

- To protect the cards from damage, print them on thick paper and/or laminate them.
- We recommend that the group leader/coach keep track of the cards for the students.
- Each group leader should carry a folder or small box to keep the cards organized in the skatepark for the group they are working with.
- Use a pen to mark an 'A' for any attempted tricks that a student is working on.
- It's useful to have a rule that students have to land a trick three times before marking the trick as completed (this keeps them engaged and focuses on quality/consistency of the trick, not just ticking a box – make it harder – land it three times in a row).
- To avoid chaos, spend some time with the students before the skate session to look at the cards together and help each student decide what they want to work on that day, then put the cards aside so they don't become a big distraction or get lost or damaged.
- At the end of each session mark the card with an 'A' for attempting or a stamp for completing the trick. You can do this together with the kids so they can help you remember what they landed or worked on.

If you have any ideas or feedback, contact [goodpush@skateistan.org](mailto:goodpush@skateistan.org) and tag @thegoodpush in your posts of the Skate Trick Cards in action!

Fig. 7 Goodpush Online Toolkit. Source: The Goodpush Toolkit. Goodpush (n.d.-d)

### 3 Conclusions

Beyond communication and promotion, use of digital technologies is central to Goodpush’s efforts to support member collaboration, as it enables partnerships for long-term strategic and operational change.<sup>2</sup> By utilizing technology and taking a

<sup>2</sup>Domegan (2021).



## SKATEISTAN LESSON PLAN

### “Recycled Garden Series”

Recycling, Gardening, Invention, & Creation

Curriculum	Environment & Gardening	Date	January 2017
Project Site	All Sites	Time	60 min. Lessons X 4
Authors	PO Team	Abilities	2A & 2B





#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

- Learn about recycling
  - Key vocabulary
  - Environmental impact
  - Economic impact
- Invent & Create Designs
  - Drawings & designs for recycled materials
  - Create unique & useful artwork from recycled materials
- Learn about gardening process
  - Students experience their plants grow.

MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT		RESOURCES & REFERENCES	LESSON PREPARATION			
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center; background-color: #f0f0f0;">REQUIRED</th> <th style="text-align: center; background-color: #f0f0f0;">(OPTIONAL)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Plastic Bottles (various sizes) Large water tub, Soap &amp; water Newspaper &amp; Cardboard A5 Paper (A4 ripped in half) Pencils / Pens Paint &amp; Brushes Scissors Rope Soil &amp; Seeds Laptop</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Spray paint Hot Glue Gun Projector</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	REQUIRED	(OPTIONAL)	Plastic Bottles (various sizes) Large water tub, Soap & water Newspaper & Cardboard A5 Paper (A4 ripped in half) Pencils / Pens Paint & Brushes Scissors Rope Soil & Seeds Laptop	Spray paint Hot Glue Gun Projector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Cambodia Media Album</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Afghanistan Media Album</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">South Africa Media Album</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Plastic Pollution Visuals</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">3P's video for lower fitness</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">3P's video for higher fitness</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Plastics in the Environment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Plastic Bottle Inventions</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Phanel Williams &amp; Plastic</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">A Story of 3 plastic bottles</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Plastic bottle design</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Macrame knot tutorial</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure lessons will be taught during the growing season; Spring is perhaps the best option, depending on which plants are used.</li> <li>• Collect enough bottles so each student can have their own bottle for the activity.</li> <li>• Prepare a bottle washing station with soap and water</li> </ul>
REQUIRED	(OPTIONAL)					
Plastic Bottles (various sizes) Large water tub, Soap & water Newspaper & Cardboard A5 Paper (A4 ripped in half) Pencils / Pens Paint & Brushes Scissors Rope Soil & Seeds Laptop	Spray paint Hot Glue Gun Projector					
ACCESSIBILITY		KEY VOCABULARY	ASSESSMENT			
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center; background-color: #f0f0f0;">LOWER FITNESS</th> <th style="text-align: center; background-color: #f0f0f0;">HIGHER FITNESS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Review videos to find those most suitable for your group. Add additional resources if video's aren't appropriate for audience                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">3P's video</a></li> </ul> </td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Watching additional videos can challenge your group to think more in depth about concepts from class                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">A Story of 3 plastic bottles</a></li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	LOWER FITNESS	HIGHER FITNESS	Review videos to find those most suitable for your group. Add additional resources if video's aren't appropriate for audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">3P's video</a></li> </ul>	Watching additional videos can challenge your group to think more in depth about concepts from class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">A Story of 3 plastic bottles</a></li> </ul>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot, Compost, Oxygen Cycle, Biodegradable,</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">Reflections on the activity can be structured call &amp; response discussions with the group throughout the lessons, and can be documented if need be. An example is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise your hand if you feel your plastic bottle plant is helping the world to be a cleaner place. Keep your hand raised if you feel good about this.</li> </ul> <p style="font-size: x-small;">This can be reported: "15 of 16 children in the class reported feeling good that their work is helping the world to be a cleaner place"</p>
LOWER FITNESS	HIGHER FITNESS					
Review videos to find those most suitable for your group. Add additional resources if video's aren't appropriate for audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">3P's video</a></li> </ul>	Watching additional videos can challenge your group to think more in depth about concepts from class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">A Story of 3 plastic bottles</a></li> </ul>					





**Fig. 8** Goodpush Online Toolkit. Source: The Goodpush Toolkit. Goodpush (n.d.-d)

participative approach to social marketing in the various cultural and institutional environments in which it operates, Goodpush is able to provide adaptable services and create a network of social skateboarding programs from around the world that shares knowledge and resources to maximize social change and the impact that its partners can make.

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What SDGs did the Goodpush Alliance seek to address? How?

**Question 2**—How did the Goodpush Alliance use social marketing to scale the social impact of their organization?

**Question 3**—How did the Goodpush Alliance facilitate and nurture collaborative impact in a local-to-global context? Describe the differences among the nations they



**Fig. 9** Goodpush E-Courses. Source: E-Courses. Goodpush ([n.d.-b](#))

operate in, their backgrounds, and ethnicities. What is the importance of bridging these differences?

**Question 4**—Who are the multiple stakeholders co-engaged in the Goodpush Alliance? How do they co-create solutions?

**Question 5**—What role did digital technologies play in fueling system change through Skateistan’s Goodpush Alliance?

**Acknowledgements** The authors are very grateful to Rhianon Bader, Program Manager for Skateistan’s Goodpush Alliance for her availability to provide us with an interview and information used to develop this case.

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

Social marketing is embracing a wider use of digital technologies, beyond promotion and communication, to influence human behavior for the betterment of society. This case outlines the development of a novel international non-government organization called Skateistan, its launch of the Goodpush Alliance, and the organization’s approach to support a global community of skateboarding-for-youth-development programs spanning 60 countries through social marketing. The aim of this case is to demonstrate how multiple stakeholders co-engage at multiple levels—individual (micro), communities and networks (meso), and non-government and societies (macro)—to co-create solutions to address disparities in marginalized populations through skateboarding. Highlighted are the interlinkages and progression toward achievement of three Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2020): quality education (Goal 4), gender equality (Goal 5), and inequality reduction (Goal 10).

## Potential Audiences and Instructor’s Material

This case has been developed for use in a variety of marketing classes, such as core marketing, corporate social responsibility, marketing innovation, and social innovation at the undergraduate and graduate level (e.g., MBA and masters in marketing).

### Learning

1. To examine how social marketing is being used by Skateistan, an international non-government organization, to globally scale social impact.
2. To understand how a social marketing effort can and should adapt to the backgrounds and ethnicities of the international communities that it works with and the importance of bridging these differences.
3. To analyze how digital technologies can facilitate change through social marketing efforts.
4. To understand how multiple stakeholders co-engage to co-create solutions.
5. To recognize the role played by social marketing to alleviate gender inequalities.

### Time Frame for Class Discussion

The time frame for this case discussion is 60–75 minutes, depending on the class size and students’ prior knowledge of social marketing and the Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations. Below are links to videos that the instructor may choose to use along with the case:

- Skateistan Youth Leadership: <https://youtu.be/ACZRmLpKSYU>
- Skateistan Educational Youth Programs: <https://youtu.be/GUysBRC9D7A>

### Suggested Discussion Questions

The following is a suggested sequence of discussions questions to achieve the stated learning objectives.

**Question 1**—What SDGs did the Goodpush Alliance seek to address? How?

**Question 2**—How did the Goodpush Alliance use social marketing to scale the social impact of their organization?

**Question 3**—How did the Goodpush Alliance facilitate and nurture collaborative impact in a local-to-global context? Describe the differences among the nations they operate in, their backgrounds, and ethnicities. What is the importance of bridging these differences?

**Question 4**—Who are the multiple stakeholders co-engaged in the Goodpush Alliance? How do they co-create solutions?

**Question 5**—What role did digital technologies play in fueling system change through Skateistan’s Goodpush Alliance?

## Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—What SDGs did the Goodpush Alliance seek to address? How?*

The Goodpush Alliance sought to address:

- Goal 4: Quality Education, by ensuring an inclusive and equitable quality education through their programs and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5: Gender Equality, by including and empowering women and girls to engage in skateboarding activities and educational opportunities that would not be available to them otherwise and
- Goal 10: Reduce Inequalities, by offering social skating programs in some of the least developed areas in some of the least developed countries.

*Answer to Question 2—How did the Goodpush Alliance use social marketing to scale the social impact of their organization?*

Goodpush is an exemplar of co-discovering, co-designing, and co-delivering value with stakeholders to (1) authentically engaging stakeholders without exploitive intent, (2) represent the genuine interests of all stakeholders, and especially those which are the most disadvantaged, (3) commit to long-term behavior change and relationship management and consider their part in that process through taking a systems perspective (Kennedy & Santos, 2019, p. 533). Goodpush and its partners seek to bring about system wide change through changing the institutional norms that perpetuate the problem (e.g., demonstrating inclusivity and gender equality through its programs) and look at shaping the social context for change at a societal level in the communities that it serves.

Goodpush’s programs include many different interventions, at the individual (micro), organizational and community (mezzo), and society and policy (macro) levels together with the goal of instilling long-lasting systemic change. As Domegan (2021) argues, social marketing does not change behavior through one single intervention at one single level at one point in time, but rather change happens over time across these three levels (micro, mezzo, and macro), and Goodpush is engaging both top-down and bottom-up stakeholders through social mechanisms, including cooperation, collaboration, and self-organization. Also important is the highly participatory approach that Goodpush and its partners (e.g., Make Life Skate Life involving the community in building parks and developing programs) use to drive behavioral change as a result of their social marketing efforts. Again, Domegan (2021) states “Group model building is a highly participatory and successful way of involving community participants and other stakeholders in problem definition to

intervention design and implementation” (p. 3). Instructors may wish to discuss with the class how this participatory approach enables successful adaptation to the various cultural contexts in which Goodpush finds itself.

Below are links to websites of Goodpush’s First Three Partners that the instructor may choose to use along with the case:

- Make Life Skate Life’s Suli Skatepark in Iraq: <https://www.makelifeskatelife.org/iraq>
- 7Hills Skatepark in Jordan: <https://www.makelifeskatelife.org/jordan>
- SkateQilya’s Jayyous Skatepark in Palestine: <http://www.skateqilya.org/>

***Answer to Question 3—How did the Goodpush Alliance facilitate and nurture collaborative impact in a local-to-global context? Describe the differences among the nations they operate in, their backgrounds, and ethnicities. What is the importance of bridging these differences?***

The instructor may discuss the tensions, benefits, and drawbacks in the standardization vs. adaptation decision. Taking the participative approach discussed in the answer to question 2 allows Goodpush and its partners to adapt their services to the cultural and institutional environment of each community in which it operates. Instructors may have students briefly research a few of the cultures and institutional environments in which Goodpush operates to identify some critical differences that would have to be bridged or adapted for. Then, the class can discuss the underlying values and objectives of Goodpush, which may be shared by all the communities in which they operate (e.g., child protection and safety, positive educational outcomes, inclusion, and equality). Focusing on the underlying *interests* that are shared by each community can act as a bridge across the more surface-level *issues* that may divide the various communities, so that Goodpush can make a positive global impact.

***Answer to Question 4—Who are the multiple stakeholders co-engaged in the Goodpush Alliance? How do they co-create solutions?***

Goodpush’s multiple stakeholders include, among others, (1) their various non-profit organization partners at the local level (e.g., 7Hills), (2) skateboarding brands who fund and sponsor many programs (e.g., Lenovo, WeWork), (3) governmental agencies (e.g., The Embassy of the United States in Kabul, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation), (4) related NGOs, who provide funding and consulting resources (e.g., Tony Hawk Foundation, SkatePal), (5) volunteers who build skateparks and advise the NGOs (e.g., Tony Hawk, SkatePal volunteers), and (6) the individuals in the communities in which their programs operate (e.g., Qalqilya). Each of these stakeholders plays its own role (funding, manpower, knowledge resources, etc.) in the ongoing operations of Goodpush and the programs that it supports, and this should be discussed by students.

***Answer to Question 5—What role did digital technologies play in fueling system change through Skateistan’s Goodpush Alliance?***

Some critical technologies for Goodpush include social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, Internet and mobile phones, text messaging, websites, online programs, blogs, discussion boards, and emails which facilitate formative research,



online services, delivery, and access and monitoring intervention engagement. As Domegan (2021; p. 3) suggests:

Such digital technologies pave the way for multilevel, multistakeholder interactions and collaborations to take place that can fuel systems change. These digital technologies unlock positive behavioural change outcomes. . . in numerous ways. Digital technologies facilitate diversity of self-organisation, connect topdown decision-makers with bottom-up citizen and community lived experiences, reframe old self-interest values into new shared values based on mutuality and morality and facilitate and nurture co-operation and collaboration for collaborative impact in local-to-global contexts. In effect, digital technologies in social marketing drive the macro-meso-micro-micro-meso-macro social mechanisms in social systems.

---

## References

- Bader, R. (2018). *Supporting social skate projects in Iraq, Palestine, and Jordan*. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.goodpush.org/blog/supporting-social-skate-projects-iraq-palestine-and-jordan>
- Bader, R. (2022). Interview. Conducted by Doreen Shanahan and Clark Johnson, March 30, 2022.
- Domegan, C. (2021). Social marketing and behavioural change in a systems setting. *Current Opinion in Environmental Science & Health*, 23, 100275.
- Goodpush. (2022). *2021 social skateboarding survey results are out!* Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.goodpush.org/blog/2021-social-skateboarding-survey-results-are-out>
- Goodpush. (n.d.-a). *About us* [website]. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.goodpush.org/about-us>
- Goodpush. (n.d.-b). *E-Courses* [website]. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.goodpush.org/elearning>
- Goodpush. (n.d.-c). *Project Map* [website]. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.goodpush.org/project-map>
- Goodpush. (n.d.-d). *The Goodpush Toolkit* [website]. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.goodpush.org/#toolkit>
- Jayous Skatepark—Facebook. (2017). *Official profile*. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.facebook.com/jayouspark/photos>
- Kennedy, A. M., & Santos, N. (2019). Social fairness and social marketing: An integrative justice approach to creating an ethical framework for social marketers. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 9(4), 522–539.
- Make Life Skate Life. (2022a). *Our story* [website]. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.makelifeskatelife.org/about>
- Make Life Skate Life. (2022b). *Projects* [website]. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.makelifeskatelife.org/iraq>
- Medium.com. (2014). *Citizen profile: Oliver Percovich, founder, and executive director of Skateistan*. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://medium.com/@Skateistan/citizen-profile-oliver-percovich-founder-and-executive-director-of-skateistan-3f8cfd116bb4>
- Skateistan. (n.d.). *What We Do* [website]. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://skateistan.org/what-we-do>
- Skateistan Annual Report. (2019). Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://www.skateistan.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/Skateistan%20Annual%20Report%202019.pdf>
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2019). *Information Paper No. 61*. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/ip61-combining-data-out-of-school-children-completion-learning-offer-more-comprehensive-view-sdg4.pdf>
- United Nations. (2020). *The sustainability development goals report*. Accessed April 12, 2022, from <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/>



# “We Know What We Are Doing”: Campaign Toolbox against the Shortage of Young People in Skilled Crafts Professions

Answin Vilmar

## Learning Objectives

The main learning objectives of the case are:

1. To understand why qualified and equal training is important both for each individual and for the society as a whole.
2. To explain how employers from the crafts sector can use targeted marketing measures to attract young people to the skilled crafts profession in order to counteract the local shortage of skilled workers.
3. To recognize how the still frequently existing perception of “typical” male professions can be positively influenced in terms of equality by specifically addressing younger women.
4. To describe which means of communication and individual measures within an integrated communication concept can be combined to form a campaign toolbox and thus enhance the overall effect.

## 1 Introduction: High-Quality Vocational Training to Address the Looming Skilled Labor Shortage

Education plays a key role in providing individuals with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to participate effectively in society and the economy. And that is why attention should be paid not only to school education but also to vocational

---

A. Vilmar (✉)

Founder of VILMARKETING/good.marketing IST University of Applied Sciences, Duesseldorf, Germany

e-mail: [avilmar@ist-hochschule.de](mailto:avilmar@ist-hochschule.de)

training. Because in particular qualified vocational training can significantly increase the likelihood of finding a job, earning enough money to support not only oneself but also family members. Furthermore, in most societies the state levies taxes on earned income in order to finance the social infrastructure (transport, education, health care, etc.). In this respect, a well-educated population is essential not only for the individual, but also for the social and economic well-being of a country.

In Germany, more than half of the school leavers start a classical dual vocational education and training. This vocational education model, based on a dual training system, has a long history and is widely respected. In the dual system, students divide their time between school-based training and on-the-job training. Schools provide both general education and job-specific skills, while employers supervise and provide on-the-job training. This perfectly combines learning theory and practice. Both the government and employers are heavily involved and play a central role in shaping these trainings. The involvement of employers in the dual system also means that programs can be adapted to local needs. The government regulates the quality of jobs through standardized, mandatory national curricula, so that the short-term needs of employers do not interfere with the educational and economic long-term goals of the system. Training contracts are also protected by collective wages.

However, access to dual vocational education and training in Germany—in contrast to school-based or university-based training and to vocational education and training systems in most other countries—is organized in a market-like manner. This means that companies are free to decide how many training places they offer and with whom they fill them (Granato & Ulrich, 2013, p. 315). Usually, all costs incurred by the training, including the training allowance, are paid by the companies themselves (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2016).

Slightly more than half of an age cohort (2019: 54.4%) starts training in one of the total of 323 state-recognized training occupations. Nationwide, there were around 1.33 million apprentices at the end of 2019. In the following years, however, social and economic life in Germany was significantly determined by the corona pandemic. And the training market also had to cope with considerable restrictions. In 2020, the number of newly concluded training contracts fell significantly by  $-11\%$ , due to decreasing demand from potential applicants. For the first time since 1992, the number of newly concluded training contracts was thus below 500,000, according to the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training. And in 2021, the number of newly concluded training contracts dropped by a further  $-11\%$  (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung BIBB, 2022).

In order to counteract the threatening future shortage of skilled workers, chambers as public corporations and associations have initiated various marketing campaigns with the aim of filling vacancies with suitable applicants. One of these campaigns was launched by the Chambers of Skilled Crafts (in German: *Handwerkskammern*), whose member sectors are particularly affected, and is examined in more detail in the following case study.

## **2 Case Development: Craft Sector Seeks Suitable Applicants for Apprenticeship Occupations**

### **2.1 Initial Situation**

In the competition for talented young people in Germany, just under half of school leavers start university studies. The remaining 54% opt for an apprenticeship. Among them, the occupational fields “transport and logistics,” “IT and multimedia,” and “engineering and electronics” are particularly popular. The skilled crafts occupations, on the other hand, come in a distant ninth place in terms of popularity among trainees (Azubi.Report, 2021). This is causing many craft enterprises to worry about finding new recruits. Especially since the skilled crafts sector has long been regarded as a typical male domain, which means that half of the potential trainees in the German population, namely the younger women, did not feel addressed. But women already contribute to the success of craft enterprises in all areas, be it as apprentices, as journeywomen, or as master craftswomen, collaborating businesswomen or entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, women make up only 18.3% of trainees in the skilled crafts sector—a very low figure compared to the approx. 50% share of women in the German population. In the industrial-technical professions, the picture looks even gloomier: For example, the share of women among bricklayers and concrete builders (1.1%), information technicians (1.9%) and plumbers/fitters (2.1%) is only in the lowest single-digit percentage range (ZDH, 2021).<sup>1</sup>

### **2.2 Objective of the Campaign**

With the campaign presented here, the skilled crafts sector would like to meet the challenge of securing a sustainable supply of skilled labor. First of all, the skilled crafts professions are to be brought more into the focus of public attention and the skilled crafts are to be communicated as what they are: future-oriented, modern, and internationally recognized. This is intended both to increase the popularity of the skilled crafts as apprenticeship occupations and to highlight the importance and meaningfulness of the skilled crafts for the individual and society. And finally, the campaign is intended to appeal to all potentially eligible school leavers, regardless of their gender. The aim of the campaign is thus to counteract the acute problem of finding a new generation of talents.

The campaign is supported by the local chambers of skilled crafts, trade associations, guilds, district craft associations, and the Central Association of German Skilled Crafts (ZDH). All craft firms in the respective chamber districts are allowed to use the campaign materials for their own marketing work. In this way, they can show their regional affiliation to the skilled crafts sector and benefit from

---

<sup>1</sup><https://www.handwerk.de/presse/frauen-im-handwerk-die-glueckliche-minderheit>

the joint appeal of a supra-regional campaign within the framework of cross-sector employer branding.

### 2.3 Target Group

The core target group covers all potential apprentices. These are primarily post-millennials of the so-called Generation Z (PEW Research Center, 2019) between the ages of 14 and 21 who are either about to graduate from school or have recently successfully completed school.

In particular, however, the aim is to get more women interested in the skilled trades. “We want to encourage women to choose a career beyond stereotypes. Getting women excited about industrial-technical professions is not only important with a view to securing skilled labor. There is great potential for our companies in a more diverse workforce,” explains Hans Peter Wollseifer, President of the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (ZDH, 2021).<sup>2</sup>

### 2.4 Campaign

The campaign presents the diverse occupational fields of the skilled crafts, shows the numerous development and career opportunities in the skilled crafts and thus wants to encourage both male and especially female young people to train in one of the many apprenticeship occupations.

The core of the campaign is the website [www.handwerk.de](http://www.handwerk.de). The crafts campaign is presented with many different motifs off- and online, both in classic media, but also on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter.

In 2021, the different motifs with male and female protagonists were evenly distributed across the entire campaign in the paid media (OOH, digital, TV). The distribution therefore corresponded to the German population. According to the media agency, there was no predefined gender weighting in the selection of the respective environment or in the digital targeting in the social media channels (ZDH, 2022).

The numerous motifs show younger women and men in the context of their work. Even though there are about the same number of motifs with male protagonists, and therefore aims for gender equality, in the following mainly some campaign motifs with female protagonists from technical-commercial trades are presented. It is precisely with these motifs that gender equality in the labor market can be achieved. All motifs can be used in a wide variety of formats.

The campaign slogan, “Wir wissen, was wir tun” (“We know what we are doing,” in English) stands for a healthy self-confidence of female and male craftspeople.

---

<sup>2</sup>[www.handwerk.de](http://www.handwerk.de)

**Fig. 1** Campaign sender “Das Handwerk.” Source: ZDH (2021)



**Fig. 2** OOH 18/1—Group motif. Headline: What we do makes us who we are. (“Was wir tun, macht uns zu dem, was wir sind,” in German). Source: ZDH (2021)

The campaign’s sender is “Das Handwerk” with the subline “Die Wirtschaftsmacht von nebenan” (“The economic power from next door,” in English), as shown in Fig. 1.

In addition, each individual craft firm can add its own logo. The space for this option is marked, “Ihr Logo” (“Your logo”) in the following individual motifs and thus facilitates the cross-sectoral employer branding of the individual training companies.

## 2.5 Out Of Home (OOH) Advertising

Outdoor advertising (OOH) includes, among other formats, standard posters (18/1) as well as larger Megalight panels with glare-free backlighting (Figs. 2 and 3).



**Fig. 3** Megalight Board—Jule Janson, Concrete and ferroconcrete builder. Headline: What I do makes me sovereign. (“Was ich tue, macht mich souverän,” in German). Source: ZDH (2021)

## 2.6 Print Ads

In addition to eye-catching outdoor advertising, the campaign also includes print ads in a wide variety of formats, as the following examples show (Figs. 4 and 5).

## 2.7 Online

Parallel to the classic offline channels, the campaign is continued in the same look and with the same tonality in various online channels that are relevant to the target group, e.g. Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube. This ensures a high level of recognition across all media (Figs. 6 and 7).

On the occasion of International Women’s Day on 8 March 2021, the craft sector also published an “Ode to female craftspeople” on its social media channels. It called for compliments to be shared with fellow craftswomen via Insta-story under the tag “@dashandwerk.” (Fig. 8)

## 2.8 Advertising Portal

An advertising portal specially developed for the image and recruitment campaign provides additional support to craft firms in drawing attention to themselves with

Luisa Buck  
Klempnerin/Spenglerin

**Wo dein Wille ist,  
ist auch dein Weg.**

**Wir wissen, was wir tun.**

**IHR LOGO**

**DAS HANDWERK**  
DIE WIRTSCHAFTSMACHT VOM NEBENAN

MUSTERBETRIEB.DE

HANDWERK.DE

**Fig. 4** Print Ad full page—Luisa Buck, Plumber. Headline: Where your will is, there is also your way. (“Wo dein Wille ist, ist auch dein Weg,” in German). The headline of this ad alludes to the German proverb “Wo ein Wille ist, ist auch ein Weg” (“Where there is a will, there is a way,” translated into English) and adds the letter “d” (→ [d]ein) to the indefinite article. The resulting possessive pronoun “your” achieves a more direct address of the target group. Source: ZDH (2021)

professional advertising. Companies can quickly and free of charge create their own advertisements from the templates in the campaign design. There is a wide range of templates for advertisements, posters, or videos. But social media posts and even cinema spots can also be provided with their own logo, descriptive text, and company data.



**DAS HANDWERK**  
DIE WIRTSCHAFTSMACHT VON HEUTEN

**Was wir tun, macht uns selbstbewusst.**

**Wir wissen, was wir tun.**

**WIR SIND HANDWERKER UND HANDWERKERINNEN.**  
Wir suchen nicht nach einem Sinn im Leben – wir erschaffen ihn jeden Tag. Für uns. Für andere. Für alle. Und was die Zukunft bringt, das haben wir selbst in der Hand. Denn wir wissen, was wir tun.

**Heinz Mustermann**  
Muster Weg 13 / 28757 Bremen Vegesack  
Tel.: 070 - XXX XX XXX  
www.musterbetrieb.de

**IHR LOGO**

**Fig. 5** Print Ad full page—Multipicture 3. Headline: What we do makes us self-confident. (“Was wir tun, macht uns selbstbewusst,” in German). Source: ZDH (2021)

In this way, many of these offers can be easily customized for the individual craft business. Often, current topics are also taken up here, such as training, COVID, and other topics that impact the skilled crafts sector. In this way, training companies can simultaneously benefit from the visibility of the nationwide campaign with its high recognition value and draw attention to their own craft with little effort. This component is also part of cross-sectoral employer branding.

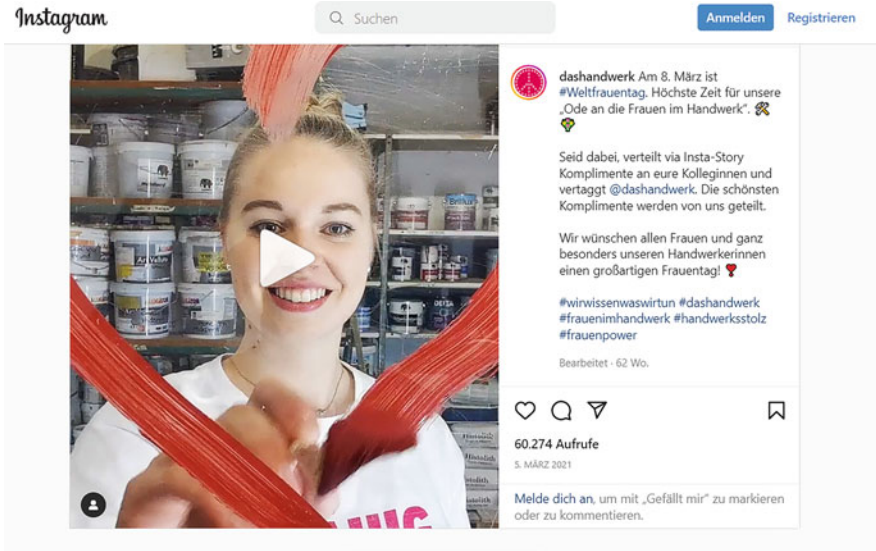
In addition to the templates on offer, a separate shop area of the Handwerk advertising portal offers various promotional items to support the development of young talent (Fig. 9).



**Fig. 6** Banner 16:9—Karina Koch, Butcher. Headline: Maturity takes time. And a good education. (“Reife braucht Zeit. Und eine gute Ausbildung,” in German). Source: ZDH (2021)



**Fig. 7** Social Media Post—Carina Harders, Electronics technician. Headline: What I do makes me inventive. (“Was ich tue, macht mich erfinderisch,” in German). Source: ZDH (2021)



**Fig. 8** Insta-Story (Screenshot from <https://www.instagram.com/p/CMClzJxDD16/>). Source: ZDH (2021)

## 2.9 Media Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

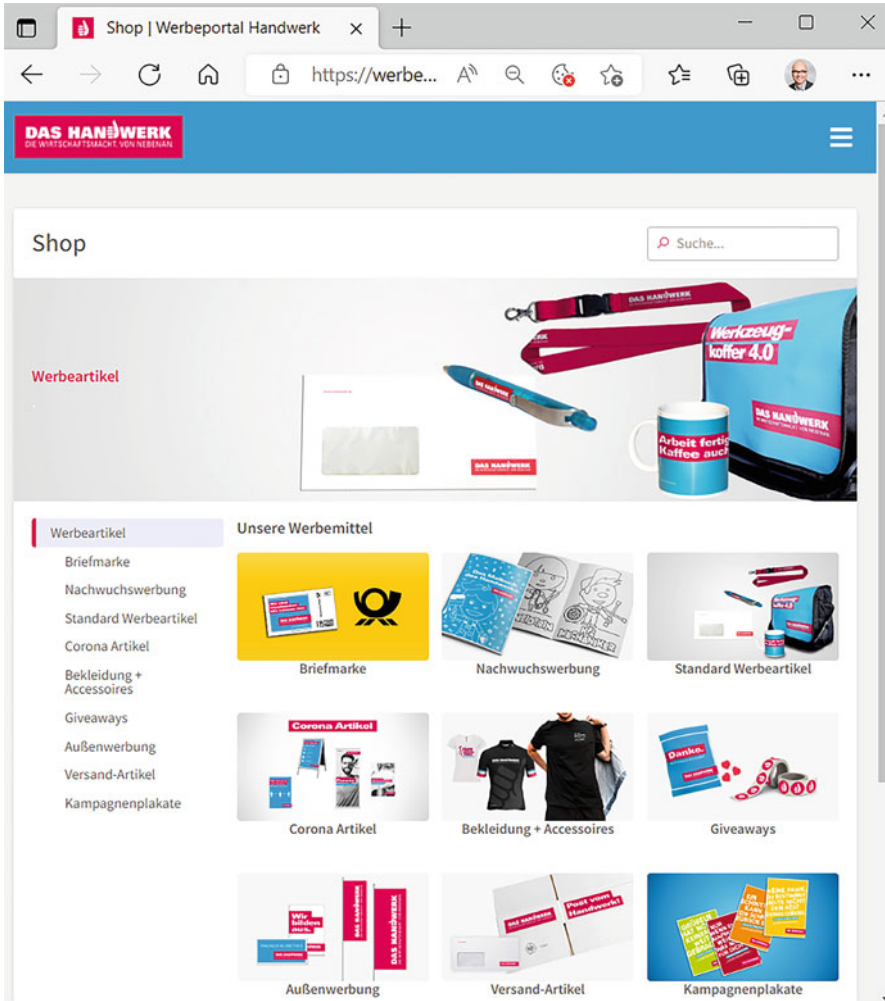
The campaign already generated over one billion contact opportunities across channels in paid media only in 2021 (Table 1).

In addition, numerous other contacts (from earned media) that came about via the social media channels and additional forms of advertising are to be credited to the campaign.

In the coming years, the craft campaign as well as the accompanying offer on the portal will be continuously developed and expanded. Portal users can receive regular information about new templates and promotional items by e-mail via the newsletter “Infos für Betriebe” (“Info for businesses”).

## 3 Conclusions

Well-planned social marketing measures are needed to counteract the shortage of young talent in the German skilled crafts sector. The success of such a campaign depends not only on the relevance of the message but also on the uniqueness of the design in the communicative environment, an internal consistency of the individual measures, and continuity over time. The presented campaign can score points in all aspects. Above all, it also contributes to a more conscious gender equality in the craft sector.



**Fig. 9** Portal “Handwerk”—Shop for promotional products (Screenshot <https://werbeportal.handwerk.de/de/Shopmain/770>). Source: ZDH (2021)

**Table 1** Media key performance indicators

Media channel	Number of contacts (in Millions)	Target group
OOH	700	Aged 14+ y
Digital (incl. Social Media)	43	Aged 16–59 y
TV	317	Aged 14+ y
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.060</b>	

Source: ZDH resp. Media Agency (2022)

If more women than before decide to take up a skilled trade occupation in the future, they will not only have very good prospects for the future, but will also often be particularly satisfied with their choice of occupation. This is also confirmed by a study conducted by the Chair of Economic Policy and SME Research at the Georg-August University in Göttingen (Germany), in which almost 2000 craftswomen and craftsmen were surveyed. Women express particularly high levels of satisfaction with their profession in the “Handwerksstolz” (“Pride in craftsmanship,” in English) study: 86.6% of the women surveyed feel good about their craft profession. 86.8% of the female craftspeople surveyed see their profession as their passion.<sup>3</sup>

In this respect, the success of the campaign is not only shown by the “hard” and easily measurable advertising impact criteria, but ultimately also by the high level of satisfaction of the addressed target group with their career choice.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Why has equality between women and men in craft professions not yet been achieved satisfactorily in many countries, including Germany? And how can equality be better promoted?

**Question 2**—What are the advantages of a multi-motif campaign like the one presented compared to a campaign that is limited to only a few different motifs but penetrates them more?

**Question 3**—What criteria beyond media contact key performance indicators (KPIs) can also be considered to measure the success of the campaign?

**Question 4**—Would this campaign concept work in other countries outside Germany if the problem is similar? If yes, why? If no, why not?

**Acknowledgements** The author wishes to thank the ZDH, in particular Kerstin Seehawer, and the implementing agency for the information provided to develop the case study and for permission to use the campaign images. At the ZDH, Stefan Koenen, Head of Communication and Coordination of Craft Policy, is responsible for the campaign.

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

In Germany, the demand for well-trained skilled workers is very high. However, many skilled crafts enterprises in particular are suffering from the decline in demand for apprenticeships in typical skilled crafts occupations. In order to counteract the looming shortage of skilled workers in the future, the German Chambers of Skilled Crafts, with the support of the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts (ZDH) and

---

<sup>3</sup>Blankenberg and Binder (2020).

other associations, have initiated in 2021 an overarching employer branding campaign that focuses on the general attractiveness of skilled crafts careers.

Part of this social marketing campaign is aimed at young women to attract them to "typical" male professions (e.g., electrician, carpenter, roofer). In this way, gender equality in working life is underlined at the same time. The individual craft enterprises can use the campaign materials and many other offers in the accompanying advertising portal to design their own advertising. In this way, they show their affiliation to the skilled crafts, benefit from the joint appeal and attract the urgently needed young talents.

The purpose of this case study is to show how to tackle the problem of a lack of junior staff with a joint sector campaign on attractive apprenticeship occupations in the skilled crafts sector and, in particular, to question traditional occupational clichés in the interest of gender equality.

## **Potential Audience and Instructor's Material**

This case study was designed to show to what extent marketing tools, especially marketing communication, can contribute to the achievement of selected SDGs. Accordingly, both bachelor and master students studying marketing, social marketing, or media studies are addressed. The case study can also be used in general business administration or MBA courses.

## **Learning**

1. To understand why qualified and equal training is important both for each individual and for the society as a whole.
2. To explain how employers from the crafts sector can use targeted marketing measures to attract young people to the skilled crafts profession in order to counteract the local shortage of skilled workers.
3. To recognize how the still frequently existing perception of "typical" male professions can be positively influenced in terms of equality by specifically addressing younger women.
4. To describe which means of communication and individual measures within an integrated communication concept can be combined to form a campaign toolbox and thus enhance the overall effect.

## **Time Frame for Class Discussion**

This case can be taught in 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the students' prior knowledge and enthusiasm for discussion.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Why has equality between women and men in craft professions not yet been achieved satisfactorily in many countries, including Germany? And how can equality be better promoted?

**Question 2**—What are the advantages of a multi-motif campaign like the one presented compared to a campaign that is limited to only a few different motifs but penetrates them more?

**Question 3**—What criteria beyond media contact key performance indicators (KPIs) can also be considered to measure the success of the campaign?

**Question 4**—Would this campaign concept work in other countries outside Germany if the problem is similar? If yes, why? If no, why not?

## Analysis

***Answer to Question 1—Why has equality between women and men in craft professions not yet been achieved satisfactorily in many countries, including Germany? And how can equality be better promoted?***

This question can be answered freely. The answers may vary depending on the cultural group, the understanding of gender roles, the situation on the labor market (especially in the craft sector), or the marketing environment in place, etc. It is more important than just having a certain opinion to be able to justify it well in an argumentative way. The following reasons can indicate that the intended learning objectives are achieved.

Prejudices and an outdated understanding of gender roles are often deeply rooted in a society. Even the best marketing campaign cannot change this overnight. Nevertheless, especially in the field of education, marketing campaigns can contribute to a greater social awareness of gender equality. After all, education is often the starting point for social rethinking. However, it takes staying power to get the message across that women can be at least as successful as men in “typically” male occupations, which in Germany mainly include the skilled trades.

***Answer to Question 2—What are the advantages of a multi-motif campaign like the one presented compared to a campaign that is limited to only a few different motifs but penetrates them more?***

This question can also be answered in different ways. Some examples:

- **Individuality:** With many different motifs that can address the diverse occupational profiles, it is possible for the individual crafts company to pick out those motifs that exactly cover their occupational field or recruitment needs. This means that the relevant local target group can be addressed much better. This increases the likelihood that the campaign will also be accepted and used by the companies.
- **Flexibility:** Training companies that include different crafts can switch between individual motifs, depending on the applicants’ situation.

- Synergy effects: By using different motifs, the individual messages accumulate into a strong overall message ("A fist has more strength than just five fingers").
- Additionally, the uniform layout achieves a strong national recognition effect in the sense of a cross-sector employer branding campaign.
- Less wear-out effects: A greater variety of motifs leads to fewer signs of weariness and boredom in the target groups addressed ("series effect" instead of penetrative repetition).

In answering this question, however, advantages from the perspective of the target groups (e.g., more individually relevant messages, greater inspiration for one's own career choice, etc.) can also be mentioned.

***Answer to Question 3—What criteria beyond media contact key performance indicators (KPIs) can also be considered to measure the success of the campaign?***

In answering this question, the aim is to reflect more precisely on marketing communication with regard to the (purchase) decision-making processes of the target group ("awareness-decision funnel") and to name suitable KPIs.

Contacts as media KPIs ultimately only indicate opportunities for the message to reach the intended target group. The extent to which the opportunity also leads to a conscious perception of the message, and the offer is considered appealing or attractive enough to lead to a positive decision (purchase or use, etc.) in the final step, remains unanswered by measuring the mere contact opportunity. For this, the degree of awareness and familiarity, sympathy values and purchase intentions would also have to be measured. If these measurements are carried out directly before, during, and after a campaign, changes can—*ceteris paribus*—better be attributed to the campaign.

This means that both quantitative and qualitative KPIs can be used to evaluate the success of campaigns. In this respect, care should be taken in the discussion to provide a balanced mix of relevant KPIs and to be able to explain their respective meaningfulness.

***Answer to Question 4—Would this campaign concept also work in other countries outside of Germany if the problem were similar? If yes, why? If not, why not?***

This is also a question with a free answer. The answer depends essentially on the prevailing socio-cultural framework conditions of the target country. In particular, the understanding of gender and roles is decisive. But other factors of equality, such as access to jobs, equal pay for equal work, also play a decisive role in whether such a campaign concept could be successful internationally. And finally, it must be possible to finance the campaign, e.g. through chambers of crafts, associations or even the government. Depending on the degree of organization of the craft sector, the answer is therefore quite differentiated.

When moderating the discussion, care should be taken to make value-free intercultural comparisons. After all, cultures have their own history and development. In this respect, there is no such thing as a "better" or "worse" culture. However, ideally each culture should be able to make its contribution to achieving the SDGs.



## References

- Azubi.Report 2021 – Was Corona für Azubis bedeutet. (2021). Accessed May 2, 2022, from <https://www.presseportal.de/pm/57966/4865032>
- Blankenberg, A.-K. & Binder, M. (2020). Zum beruflichen Selbstbild und zur Arbeits- und Lebenszufriedenheit im Handwerk in Deutschland. Göttinger Beiträge zur Handwerksforschung (Heft 42). Göttingen.
- Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung BIBB. (2022). Datenreport 2021 – Indikatoren zur beruflichen Ausbildung. Accessed January 31, 2022, from [www.bibb.de/datenreport/de/2021/140176.php](http://www.bibb.de/datenreport/de/2021/140176.php)
- Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung. (2016). Der Ausbildungsmarkt. Accessed May 25, 2022, from [www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/bildung/zukunft-bildung/228395/der-ausbildungsmarkt](http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/bildung/zukunft-bildung/228395/der-ausbildungsmarkt)
- Granato, M., & Ulrich, J. G. (2013). Die Reformierbarkeit des Zugangs in duale Berufsausbildung im Spannungsfeld institutioneller Widersprüche. *Swiss Journal of Sociology*, 39/2, 315–339.
- PEW Research Center. (2019). Defining generations: Where Millennials end and generation Z begins. Accessed May 25, 2022, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>
- ZDH. (2021). Frauen im Handwerk: Die glückliche Minderheit. Accessed February 24, 2023, from <https://www.handwerk.de/presse/frauen-im-handwerk-die-glueckliche-minderheit>
- ZDH. Neues Werbeportal jetzt online. Accessed May 5, 2022., from <https://www.zdh.de/ueber-uns/imagekampagne-handwerk/neues-werbeportal-jetzt-online/>



# Corporate Social Marketing and the Labor Inclusion of People with Disabilities. A Case Study of Ilunion Hotels

Carmen Dueñas-Zambrana and Marco Antonio Cruz-Morato

## Learning Objectives

1. Understand the importance of Corporate Social Marketing (CSM) and its potential impact on behavior change for social purposes, as well as its contribution to the SDGs.
2. Realize the need to promote an integrating vision between economy and society, with the development of tools such as social companies, which also have certain synergies and higher potential impact implementing CSM actions.
3. Analyze in depth the characteristics and development of a CSM campaign, both in its content and in the online results that it is achieving, as well as its repercussion in terms of engagement, and the importance of certain psychological aspects that can influence to achieve the social objectives pursued.

## 1 Introduction

Even in developed economies such as Spain, People with Disabilities (PWD from now on) are suffering a persistent problem of labor exclusion (INE, 2019 and 2022), that is getting worse due to the pandemic (Gupta et al., 2021). Some authors have

---

C. Dueñas-Zambrana (✉) · M. A. Cruz-Morato  
Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain  
e-mail: [cdz@uma.es](mailto:cdz@uma.es); [macruz@uma.es](mailto:macruz@uma.es)

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2023  
M. M. Galan-Ladero, H. M. Alves (eds.), *Social Marketing and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, Springer Business Cases,  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3_6)

**Table 1** Activity, employment, and unemployment rates of PWD by sex, year 2020

2020	Man (%)	Woman (%)
Activity rates	34.1	34.6
Employment rates	26.6	26.9
Unemployment rates	22.1	22.4

Source: Own elaboration, according to INE (2022)

pointed to labor discrimination as a relevant limitation,<sup>1</sup> especially in tourism sector (one of the most important Spanish industries).<sup>2</sup>

Thus, fighting the social stigma usually suffered by their disability condition, and improving positive coping responses (in order to reduce their labor exclusion), Social Marketing (SM) in general, and Corporate Social Marketing (CSM) particularly, are proposed as powerful tools, being an innovative line of research.<sup>3</sup>

Focusing on the Spanish context, the Ilunion Hotels social company has achieved a great impact in the labor participation of PWD in the tourism sector in the last years.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it has been included in the “Top Ten disability networks” of the “Global Diversity List” (considering their sustainable human resources practices) in 2016 and 2018 (Global Diversity List, 2018), being one of the ten best companies in the world in terms of diversity management, inclusion, and corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Thus, the objective of this case study is to analyze the CSM campaign “Hotels with all inclusive,” carried out by Ilunion Hotels in Spain, to reduce the inequalities of PWD (improving their labor inclusion and fighting against the social stigma), in relation with the SDGs considered. The methodology developed to carry out this case study is content analysis and descriptive statistics analysis.<sup>5</sup> The study of this kind of SM cases could draw some important and useful lessons to reshape the economy recovery to the pandemic crisis in a more sustainable way.

## 2 Case Development

### 2.1 The Spanish Situation: A Brief Empirical Analysis

In order to correctly describe the problem, some data should be highlighted at first, before the description of the case study itself. In this sense, if we analyze Table 1, it is seen that activity and employment rates, as well as unemployment rates, are worst for PWD rather than people without disabilities. Comparing with the previous data

<sup>1</sup> See Vormholt et al. (2018).

<sup>2</sup> See De Sá et al. (2017) or Madera et al. (2020).

<sup>3</sup> See Cruz-Morato, García-Mestanza and Dueñas-Zambrana (2021).

<sup>4</sup> See Cruz-Morato, Dueñas-Zambrana and García-Mestanza (2021).

<sup>5</sup> According to the measurement of social media engagement developed by Egaña et al. (2021) or Matosas-López and Romero-Ania (2021).

**Table 2** Activity, employment, and unemployment rates of PWD by age, year 2020

2020	16–24 years-old (%)	25–44 years-old (%)	45–64 years-old (%)
Activity rates	19.9	49.5	30.6
Employment rates	8.9	36.6	24.9
Unemployment rates	55.5	26.1	18.6

Source: Own elaboration, according to INE (2022)

of 2018 (INE, 2019), some labor statistics are more negative in 2020 (it is also necessary to consider the effect of the COVID-19 pandemics).

Considering the age (Table 2), a higher unemployment (as well as reduced activity and employment rates) is observed in the youngest People With Disabilities (PWD), being the 25–44 years-old group the segment with better activity and employment outcomes (although the PWD between 45–64 years show the lowest unemployment rates, 18.6%).

However, although the same situation is happening with women and young people without disabilities, it is necessary to highlight that, in a general way, the labor situation of PWD is worse than for people without disabilities (INE, 2022). Furthermore, “the most remarkable thing about the group of PWD is their low participation in the labor market” (INE, 2022, p. 3), as we have been pointing out previously.

Focusing on the importance of the tourism sector, it is necessary to say that its relevance has been increasing in the global economy in the last few years, in a constant growth. It is one of the main industries in Spain, even despite the effect of the COVID-19 crisis. Thus, in 2021, tourism contributed 88,546 million euros to the Spanish Gross Domestic Product (GDP), representing 7.4% of the country’s total GDP (Exceltur, 2021), with high importance of the hotel sector.

Talking about accessible tourism, it could become an opportunity to train and enter the labor market for PWD, ensuring, therefore, the adaptation of facilities for easy accessibility for all the people (with and without disabilities, workers as well as customers). That is why this type of tourism could act as a source of employment for PWD (Almonte, 2014). Therefore, improving the infrastructures of establishments related to tourism, the flow of tourists and workers with some type of disability would be increased. However, accessible tourism is not really widespread yet (beyond meeting mandatory regulatory requirements), in spite of its huge potential (also in economic terms). The only company really worried about accessible tourism in Spain is, precisely, Ilunion Hotels.

Moreover, according to the data from the Observatory on the Labor Market and Statistics for People with Disabilities (ODISMET, 2020), it can be observed that, as in 2018, the service sector is the one that most hires people with some types of disability. Specifically, we are mainly talking about cleaning staff. The jobs that have fewer workers with disabilities are, on the one hand, salaried drivers of cars, taxis, and vans, and, on the other hand, other elementary occupations (see Table 3).

**Table 3** Employed PWD by type of occupation, year 2020

	Number of contracts	PWD hired (%)
Cleaning staff for offices, hotels, and other similar establishments	39,092	15.7
Laborers of the manufacturing industries	23,143	9.3
Agricultural laborers (except in orchards, greenhouses, nurseries, and gardens)	12,561	5.1
Salaried waiters	7739	3.1
Building custodians	7546	3.0
Other cleaning staff	5942	2.4
Freight transport laborers and unloaders	5416	2.2
Salespeople in stores and warehouses	5299	2.1
Salaried truck drivers	4363	1.8
Telemarketers	4231	1.7
Administrative employees with customer service tasks not classified under other headings	4224	1.7
Official workers and craftsmen of other trades not classified under other headings	3882	1.6
Other elementary occupations	3861	1.6
Salaried drivers of cars, taxis, and vans	3841	1.5

Source: ODISMET (2020)

Nevertheless, jobs in the tourism sector are normally of low quality (rigid hours and timetable, long working hours, and highly changing working conditions),<sup>6</sup> being these circumstances especially difficult for PWD.

## 2.2 The Ilunion Hotels Company

As member of the Ilunion group of companies, which belongs to the ONCE Social Group (one of the main organizations of PWD in Spain),<sup>7</sup> the Ilunion Hotels company (Fig. 1) has its origin in the late 80s. According to Financial Times (2021), it is positioned in the ranking of European companies “Leaders of Diversity,” being the first one in its sector.

Ilunion Hotels is not a usual company, it is a social company<sup>8</sup> that, beyond the economic objectives of every business, it also has the social aims of promoting inclusive tourism, as well as the labor inclusion of PWD. According to French

<sup>6</sup>See Lee et al. (2007) or Deery and Jago (2015).

<sup>7</sup>Some Social Marketing (SM) campaigns directly developed by this association can be found in Cruz-Morato and Dueñas-Zambrana (2021),

<sup>8</sup>According to European Commission (2022), “a social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives.”

**Fig. 1** Ilunion Hotels name and logo. Source: Ilunion Hotels (2022)



(2013), it is necessary to highlight the importance of social business to promote Social Marketing (SM) interventions that could face social challenges. This hotel chain has 29 hotels in Spain (in places such as Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Málaga, Badajoz, Cádiz, Bilbao, San Sebastián, Girona, Zaragoza, Menorca, Huelva, and Sevilla), offering a diversified product (both urban and holiday hotels), but always emphasizing in the inclusive design and equal treatment of PWD (workers as well as customers).

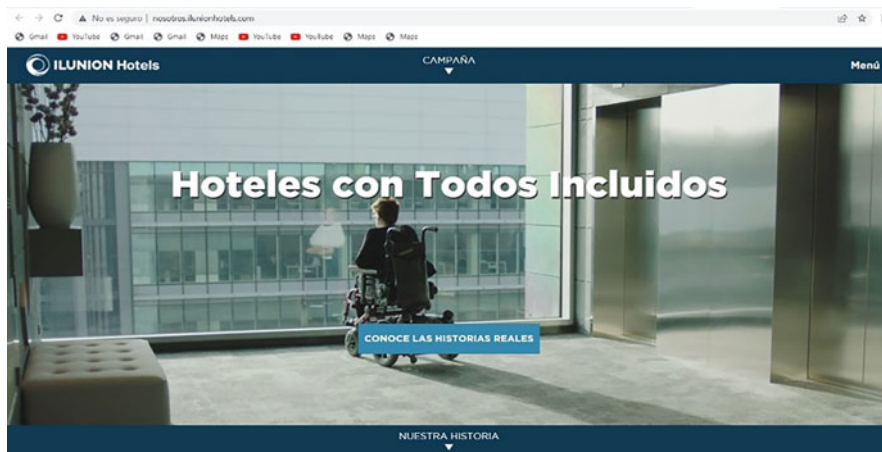
After some changes in the brand name since its creation in 1988, the company was renamed as Ilunion Hotels in 2015, taking part of the group of companies that, under the Ilunion brand denomination, includes all the ONCE companies and its Foundation. The mission of Ilunion Hotels is to offer customers an excellent, innovative, and sustainable experience, with the commitment of a unique human team. Its vision is to continue proving to the sector, its shareholders and society, that success can be achieved through a unique and sustainable business model which combines economic and social profitability. Furthermore, among the main values of this social company are labor integration of PWD, quality and customer orientation, integrity, openness to physical and communication barriers, excellence, commitment, and responsibility with a diverse society (Ilunion Hotels, 2022).

This company is also the first hotel chain in Spain with the EFQM 500+ European Seal of Excellence (the highest level of this certificate). Moreover, focused on the importance given to accessible tourism, all the Ilunion Hotels establishments are also certified in accessibility (UNE 170001-2) and the QSostenible seal. Among their 29 hotels, they currently have 12 Special Employment Centres,<sup>9</sup> in which more than 70% of their employees are PWD. Moreover, this social company is working on a global strategy to promote the transformation of all its hotels into Special Employment Centres.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, before the COVID-19 crisis, this hotel chain turnover was 117 million euros and their average workforce was 1243 employees (40% of them were PWD) in the year 2019. Although the pandemic was a difficult challenge (as for all the tourist

<sup>9</sup>Protected employment tools of the Spanish legislation, oriented to promote labor inclusion and the improvement of the employment situation of PWD (Gutierrez-Martínez et al., 2021).

<sup>10</sup>See Ilunion Hotels web (2022).



**Fig. 2** Ilunion Hotels web. Source: Ilunion Hotels (2022)

sector), and some hotels of this chain had to temporarily close in the worst periods of the crisis, their solid social business project, and the economic recovery initiated, have allowed that this company could even open a new hotel in Barcelona in 2022.

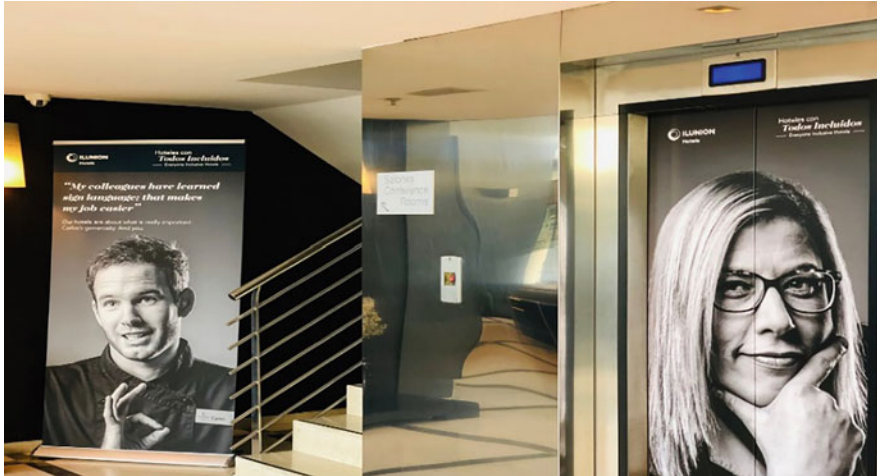
### 2.3 The “Hotels with all Inclusive” Campaign

In this subsection, we are going to describe the Corporate Social Marketing (CSM) campaign “Hotels with all inclusive” (“*Hoteles con todos incluidos*” in Spanish), developed by Ilunion Hotels during the years 2019 and 2020. Thus, it is the most important recent campaign of this company (although they have developed other CSM and CSR actions in the last few years) and part of their corporate slogan. In this sense, it is located in the main webpage of the company (Fig. 2), and it is also physically present in all their hotels, which are themed with posters and different merchandising related to this campaign (see Fig. 3).

Focusing on the content of the different videos and online material developed to carry out this CSM campaign, the following aspects can be highlighted.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, regarding to the message, four workers with disabilities tell their disability situation in detail (the characteristics, or the main causes and consequences). Furthermore, they also describe the experience working in this social company, how they feel included as any other Ilunion Hotels worker (with or without disabilities), with the aim of normalizing disability (and also develop an inclusive image, valued by clients, employees, and possible workers with disabilities, consolidating employer branding).

<sup>11</sup> According to the content analysis methodology carried out by Galán-Ladero and Rivera (2021).



**Fig. 3** “Hotels with all inclusive” themed facilities. Source: Ilunion Hotel Aqua 4, Valencia (2022)

The positive and emotional tone of the “Hotels with all inclusive” campaign is strengthened with a really personal style. To do so, deep interviews to these four workers with disabilities (who open their feelings) and emotive classical music are used. Furthermore, the graphic design is colorful and optimistic (in spite of the fact that some disability problems are exposed in detail, they are faced with normality and in a positive way). And there are several videos<sup>12</sup> as part of this CSM campaign, all with similar characteristics.

The targeted audience is mainly the general public, because the main objective is to fight against the social stigma suffered by PWD in the labor market, as well as promoting positive coping responses to it in PWD. However, especial interest is also shown in the stakeholders of the company. Thus, they also focus specifically on the customers, the Ilunion Hotels workers, and even potential employees (as it has been exposed before), to show the social concerns of this company. In this sense, it has to be remembered that one of the main elements of their mission is the labor inclusion of PWD.

The hashtag usually used in this campaign is “#HotelesConTodosIncluidos.” In Table 4, it can be found the main online communication actions developed about this CSM campaign in the most important social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube).<sup>13</sup>

In order to analyze the online impact of this campaign, in Table 5, we could find the total number of views and engagement rates, comparing the total interactions (shares/retweets, comments and likes, discounting the dislikes when it was necessary), with the number of total views of each communication action in the most important social media platforms. Thus, following the general recommendations

<sup>12</sup>See Table 4.

<sup>13</sup>According with authors such as Smith et al. (2012) or Sánchez-Cobarro et al. (2021).



**Table 4** Social media platform, publication and consultation date of the different communication actions

N <sup>o</sup>	Social media platform	Publication date	Link
1	Facebook	22/01/2019	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ilunionhotels/videos/348198619105953">https://www.facebook.com/ilunionhotels/videos/348198619105953</a>
2	Facebook	15/04/2019	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ilunionhotels/videos/578719019203953/">https://www.facebook.com/ilunionhotels/videos/578719019203953/</a>
3	Facebook	01/04/2019	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ilunionhotels/videos/287219585547471/">https://www.facebook.com/ilunionhotels/videos/287219585547471/</a>
4	Facebook	24/02/2019	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ilunionhotels/videos/384796508979601/">https://www.facebook.com/ilunionhotels/videos/384796508979601/</a>
5	Facebook	04/02/2019	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ONCE.org/videos/381904552595604/">https://www.facebook.com/ONCE.org/videos/381904552595604/</a>
6	Facebook	26/12/2018	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ONCE.org/videos/209315190005068/">https://www.facebook.com/ONCE.org/videos/209315190005068/</a>
7	Twitter	29/04/2019	<a href="https://twitter.com/search?q=(%23TodosIncluidos)%20(from%3Ailunionhotels)&amp;src=typed_query&amp;f=top">https://twitter.com/search?q=(%23TodosIncluidos)%20(from%3Ailunionhotels)&amp;src=typed_query&amp;f=top</a>
8	Instagram	15/04/2019	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/tv/BwSjtUEnia7/">https://www.instagram.com/tv/BwSjtUEnia7/</a>
9	Instagram	06/05/2020	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/tv/B_12BOajDfq/">https://www.instagram.com/tv/B_12BOajDfq/</a>
10	Instagram	12/05/2020	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/tv/CAfhGzCDhLz/">https://www.instagram.com/tv/CAfhGzCDhLz/</a>
11	Instagram	28/05/2020	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/tv/CAvLwOXDov3/">https://www.instagram.com/tv/CAvLwOXDov3/</a>
12	YouTube	03/06/2019	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndS9k4oaJRE&amp;t=23s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndS9k4oaJRE&amp;t=23s</a>

Source: Own elaboration with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube data (2021)

about engagement rates, it is considered a high engagement rate if it is more than 3.5%, acceptable if it is between 1 and 3.5%, and low if it is under 1%. Therefore, there are high general engagement rates in all the social media platforms considered (except an acceptable level in YouTube, although the higher absolute number of views is observed in the communication action number 12, of this platform). It is also outstanding the higher figures in Twitter and, especially, in Instagram, with almost 20% of engagement rates for some communication actions.

Grouping the figures of all the communication actions of the different social media platforms (and calculating, this way, the engagement rates in an aggregate manner), Table 6 reinforces what has been observed in Table 5. However, it could be pointed out that, adding all the views of the different communication action, Facebook has a higher number of views than YouTube.

Finally, it is necessary to highlight that the Ilunion Hotels campaign “Hotels with all inclusive” continues with the positive message about disability and labor market of other SM actions such as the campaign “Working is a story,” developed by ONCE Foundation in 2019.<sup>14</sup> This positive view of the situation, focusing on the problem with normality and avoiding blaming the society about their social stigma (as it happened in the SM campaign “Don’t be my limit” of ONCE Foundation in 2016)

<sup>14</sup>See Cruz-Morato and Dueñas-Zambrana (2021).

**Table 5** Social media information and engagement rates

N°	Social media platform	Views	Likes	Dislikes	Shares/retweets	Comments	Engagement rate	Engagement level
1	Facebook	3061	88	N/A <sup>a</sup>	76	4	5.49%	High
2	Facebook	519	30	N/A <sup>a</sup>	10	0	7.71%	High
3	Facebook	598	22	N/A <sup>a</sup>	15	0	6.19%	High
4	Facebook	1621	37	N/A <sup>a</sup>	43	0	4.94%	High
5	Facebook	3495	113	N/A <sup>a</sup>	121	3	6.78%	High
6	Facebook	3405	103	N/A <sup>a</sup>	104	0	6.08%	High
7	Twitter	171	13	N/A <sup>a</sup>	6	1	11.70%	High
8	Instagram	220	42	N/A <sup>a</sup>	N/A <sup>a</sup>	0	19.09%	High
9	Instagram	417	81	N/A <sup>a</sup>	N/A <sup>a</sup>	2	19.90%	High
10	Instagram	461	68	N/A <sup>a</sup>	N/A <sup>a</sup>	1	14.97%	High
11	Instagram	435	66	N/A <sup>a</sup>	N/A <sup>a</sup>	0	15.17%	High
12	YouTube	4408	48	1	N/A <sup>a</sup>	2	1.11%	Acceptable

Source: Own elaboration with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube data (2021)

<sup>a</sup>Not available because this social media platform does not include this variable

seems to be more effective to really fight this kind of discrimination, and not perpetuate it, improving positive coping responses as well. Furthermore, the engagement of the Ilunion Hotels campaign seems to be far higher than the other ones (although the absolute number of views is higher in the ONCE Foundation campaigns).

---

### 3 Conclusions

- The most important problem of PWD in the labor market still seems to be their labor exclusion (in developing and developed countries, such as Spain, and in all industries, especially in tourism sector, where labor conditions are very difficult). The social stigma about disability and the coping responses to it are key elements to understand this situation.
- Social Marketing in general, and Corporate Social Marketing particularly, are useful and powerful tools to overcome the problem in a solid and sustainable manner (changing behaviors in all society, employers, clients, and potential or current workers with disabilities).
- The Spanish social company Ilunion Hotels is a global reference in accessible tourism and the labor inclusion of PWD, having implemented CSM strategies in this sense, among other human resources and CSR interventions. Thus, it is observed the importance of social business to promote SM interventions that could face social challenges.
- According to the previous points, their most important CSM campaign “Hotels with all inclusive” is a good example to study. Thus, it has been analyzed their main physical and online elements, studying the kind of message, tone, music, graphic design, targeted audience, or the main social media platform used. It is highlighted the high engagement rates observed and the positive orientation of this campaign (which would be more adequate to fight the social stigma and promote coping responses, rather than a negative or blaming perspective).
- Dealing with this issue would help to promote a better post-pandemic world, strongly based on equality and sustainable growth, according to the SDGs number 10 (Reduce Inequalities) and number 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all).

---

### 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think that labor conditions in tourism sector are more difficult, especially for people with disabilities? Why?

**Question 2**—Do you consider that Social Marketing in general, and Corporate Social Marketing particularly, are useful to improve the labor inclusion of people with disabilities? Which risks do you think Corporate Social Marketing interventions have? Provide some reasons.

**Table 6** Social media information and engagement rates grouping by social media platform

Social media platform	Views	Likes	Dislikes	Shares/retweets	Comments	Engagement rate	Engagement level
Facebook	12,699	393	N/A <sup>a</sup>	369	7	6.06%	High
Twitter	171	13	N/A <sup>a</sup>	6	1	11.70%	High
Instagram	1533	257	N/A <sup>a</sup>	N/A <sup>a</sup>	3	16.96%	High
YouTube	4408	48	1	N/A <sup>a</sup>	2	1.11%	Acceptable

Source: Own elaboration with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube data (2021)

<sup>a</sup>Not available because this social media platform does not include this variable

**Question 3**—What are the main differences between a social company as Ilunion hotels and the Corporate Social Responsibility actions carried out by a traditional company? Give a full explanation.

**Question 4**—Based on the case information, explain the main reasons why a positive orientation of the campaign could be more adequate to fight the social stigma and promote coping responses, rather than a negative or blaming perspective.

**Question 5**—Do you agree that this topic is related to SDGs 10 and 8? What other SDGs you consider could it be related to? Reason why.

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

People with disabilities are suffering a persistent and generalized problem of inequality and labor exclusion, not only in developing economies, but also in developed ones, such as Spain. Labor discrimination has pointed to be one of the main reasons of this negative situation, especially in tourism sector. Therefore, to face this issue, Social Marketing has been proposed as a powerful tool, promoting the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well. Thus, the objective of this case is to study the Corporate Social Marketing campaign “Hotels with all inclusive,” carried out by the Spanish social company Ilunion Hotels (leader in the social inclusion of people with disabilities in the hotel industry in Spain). The aim of this campaign is the reduction of the inequalities of this collective, fighting the social stigma that they use to suffer in the labor market. Therefore, the study of this Corporate Social Marketing case would help to understand how a sustainable recovery to the pandemic crisis could be possible, also trying to achieve the SDGs (especially goals 10, reduce inequalities; and the number 8, promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all).

### Potential audience and Instructor’s Material

This specific case study has been oriented for use in courses and graduate or postgraduate teaching about Social Marketing (and, specifically, Corporate Social Marketing) and/or innovative social interventions. The potential audience areas are Marketing, Corporate Social Responsibility, Management and even Social Work.

### Learning

1. Understand the importance of Corporate Social Marketing (CSM) and its potential impact on behavior change for social purposes, as well as its contribution to the SDGs.

2. Realize the need to promote an integrating vision between economy and society, with the development of tools such as social companies, which also have certain synergies and higher potential impact implementing CSM actions.
3. Analyze in depth the characteristics and development of a CSM campaign, both in its content and in the online results that it is achieving, as well as its repercussion in terms of engagement, and the importance of certain psychological aspects that can influence to achieve the social objectives pursued.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

The case can be studied in a 50-90 minutes session. The final time required would depend on the number of students and their previous study of the case situation.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think that labor conditions in tourism sector are more difficult, especially for people with disabilities? Why?

**Question 2**—Do you consider that Social Marketing in general, and Corporate Social Marketing particularly, are useful to improve the labor inclusion of people with disabilities? Which risks do you think Corporate Social Marketing interventions have? Provide some reasons.

**Question 3**—What are the main differences between a social company as Ilunion hotels and the Corporate Social Responsibility actions carried out by a traditional company? Give a full explanation.

**Question 4**—Based on the case information, explain the main reasons why a positive orientation of the campaign could be more adequate to fight the social stigma and promote coping responses, rather than a negative or blaming perspective.

**Question 5**—Do you agree that this topic is related to SDGs 10 and 8? What other SDGs you consider could it be related to? Reason why.

## Analysis

**Answer to Question 1**—*Do you think that the labor conditions in tourism sector are more difficult, especially for people with disabilities? Why?*

As it has been exposing, jobs in the tourism sector are normally of low quality (rigid hours and timetable, long working hours, and highly changing working conditions). Possible reasons that the students would provide are the following: a) it is a highly demanding service; b) there are different segment of clients, with particular needs and requirements; c) competition is really high, there are a lot of companies; d) it is usually a physically hard job; or e) there are peaks in demand in which the pace of work is too high (seasonality in the sector). These circumstances

are even more difficult for PWD due to the needs of adaptation to the position that are not always faced by the companies.

***Answer to Question 2—Do you consider that Social Marketing in general, and Corporate Social Marketing particularly, are useful to improve the labor inclusion of people with disabilities? Which risks do you think Corporate Social Marketing interventions have? Provide some reasons.***

Corporate Social Marketing is a type of Social Marketing, so it could be as useful as it (even more, due to the potential impact of their actions among their clients), if it is well planned and implemented, and always that the objectives of the Corporate Social Marketing campaign would be similar than the company. If they are very different, people could suspect, and the campaign would be a failure (it could even damage the image of the company).

***Answer to Question 3—What are the main differences between a social company as Ilunion hotels and the Corporate Social Responsibility actions carried out by a traditional company? Give a full explanation.***

Ilunion Hotels is a social company (therefore, it has not only economic objectives, but also social ones). It is necessary to remember that, as it has been exposed during the case, according to European Commission (2022), “a social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders, operating. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives.” CSR is about the responsible actions that companies have in the development of their economic objectives, but it does not imply that their main objectives (mission) include social aspects.

***Answer to Question 4—Based on the case information, explain the main reasons why a positive orientation of the campaign could be more adequate to fight the social stigma and promote coping responses, rather than a negative or blaming perspective.***

A negative message and orientation, which could be blaming the rest of society of the situation of labor exclusion of PWD, would be useless fighting this social stigma (it could even reinforce it). That is because it is a way to confront PWD with the rest of society, instead of focusing on the lack of information about this issue and the need of normalization and empathy. So that, a positive approach, facing the situation from normality and in a proactive way, could help to fight better against discrimination and improve positive coping responses on PWD.

***Answer to Question 5—Do you agree that this topic is related to SDGs 10 and 8? What other SDGs you consider could it be related to? Reason why.***

Regarding what the student considers more appropriate, the most important thing is that they adequately justify their answer. Although objectives number 10 (Reduce Inequalities) and 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all) seems to be more related with this issue, other SDGs could also be directly or indirectly involved.

## References

- Almonte, J. M. J. (2014). El turismo accesible en Andalucía y Portugal. *Cuadernos de turismo*, 33, 121–150.
- Cruz-Morato, M. A., & Dueñas-Zambrana, C. (2021). Disability, labour inclusion and social Marketing in Spain: The ONCE foundation case. In M. M. Galan-Ladero & R. G. Rivera (Eds.), *Applied social marketing and quality of life. Applying quality of life research (best practices)* (pp. 347–361). Springer.
- Cruz-Morato, M. A., Dueñas-Zambrana, C., & García-Mestanza, J. (2021). Disability, human resources and behavioral economics: The labour inclusion case of Ilunion Hotels of the Costa del sol (Spain). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18, 7932. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18157932>
- Cruz-Morato, M. A., García-Mestanza, J., & Dueñas-Zambrana, C. (2021). Special employment Centres, time factor and sustainable human resources Management in Spanish Hotel Industry: Can corporate social marketing improve the labour situation of people with disabilities? *Sustainability*, 13, 10710. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su131910710>
- De Sá, M. A. D., Oliveira, M. I. M., Calado Dias, S. M. R., & Barbosa, M. L. A. (2017). Human resources practices and inclusion of people with disabilities in the hotel industry of Belém, Brazil: A multiple case study. *REGE-Revista de Gestão*, 24, 13–23.
- Deery, M., & Jago, L. (2015). Revisiting talent management, work-life balance and retention strategies. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 27(3), 453–472. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijchm-12-2013-0538>
- Egaña, F., Pezoa-Fuentes, C., & Roco, L. (2021). The use of digital social networks and engagement in Chilean wine industry. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 16, 1248–1265. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer16050070>
- European Commission. (2022). Social enterprises. Available online: [https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/social-enterprises\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/social-enterprises_en). Accessed 29 July 2022.
- Exceltur. (2021). PIB turístico español. Available online: <https://www.exceltur.org/pib-turistico-espanol/>. Accessed 24 March 2022.
- Financial Times. (2021). Europe's Most Inclusive Companies—As Ranked by Employees. Available online: <https://www.ft.com/content/cb8978ea-f901-4842-9957-cca0cb3fe7cc>. Accessed 29 June 2021.
- French, J. (2013). Social business, social behaviour and social marketing: Three cornerstones of future social development. *Social Business*, 3(4), 285–296.
- Galán-Ladero, M., & Rivera, R. (2021). *Applied social marketing and quality of life*. Springer.
- Global Diversity List. (2018). Top 10 Disability Networks – 2018. Available online: <https://www.globaldiversity-list.com/top-10-disability-networks1.html#>. Accessed 30 November 2021.
- Gupta, A., Kavanagh, A., & Disney, G. (2021). The impact of and government planning and responses to pandemics for people with disability: A rapid review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18, 6505.
- Gutiérrez-Martínez, I., González-Santos, J., Rodríguez-Fernández, P., Jiménez-Eguizábal, A., del Barrio-del Campo, J. A., & González-Bernal, J. J. (2021). Explanatory factors of burnout in a sample of workers with disabilities from the special employment Centres (SEC) of the Amica Association, Spain. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18, 5036.
- Ilunion Hotel Aqua 4 Valencia. (2022). Available online: [https://www.tripadvisor.es/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g187529-d609646-i428143391-Hotel\\_ILUNION\\_Aqua\\_4-Valencia\\_Province\\_of\\_Valencia\\_Valencian\\_Country.html](https://www.tripadvisor.es/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g187529-d609646-i428143391-Hotel_ILUNION_Aqua_4-Valencia_Province_of_Valencia_Valencian_Country.html). Accessed 30 July 2022.
- Ilunion Hotels. (2022). Available online: <http://nosotros.ilunionhotels.com/es/ilunion-hotels>. Accessed 19 June 2022.



- Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE). (2019). El Empleo de las Personas con Discapacidad. Notas de prensa 2019. Available online: [https://www.ine.es/prensa/epd\\_2019.pdf](https://www.ine.es/prensa/epd_2019.pdf). Accessed 22 September 2021.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE). (2022). El Empleo de las Personas con Discapacidad. Notas de prensa 2020. Available online: [https://www.ine.es/prensa/epd\\_2020.pdf](https://www.ine.es/prensa/epd_2020.pdf). Accessed 18 June 2022.
- Lee, S., McCann, D., & Messenger, J. C. (2007). *Working time around the world: Trends in working hours, laws, and policies in a global comparative perspective*. Routledge.
- Madera, J. M., Taylor, C., & Barber, N. A. (2020). Customer service evaluations of employees with disabilities: The roles of perceived competence and service failure. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 6(1), 5–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1938965519882315>
- Matosas-López, L., & Romero-Ania, A. (2021). How to improve customer engagement in social networks: A study of Spanish Brands in the Automotive Industry. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 16, 3269–3281. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer16070177>
- ODISMET. (2020). Volumen de contrataciones a personas con discapacidad por principales ocupaciones y actividades económicas. Available online: <https://www.odismet.es/indicador-basico/1111volumen-de-contrataciones-personas-con-discapacidad-por-principales-ocupaciones>. Accessed 21 March 2022.
- Sánchez-Cobarro, P. H., Molina-Castillo, F.-J., & Alcázar-Cáceres, C. (2021). The brand-generated content interaction of Instagram stories and publications: A comparison between retailers and manufacturers. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 16, 513–524.
- Smith, A. N., Fischer, E., & Yongjian, C. (2012). How does brand-related user-generated content differ across YouTube, Facebook, and twitter? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 6, 102–113.
- Vornholt, K., Villotti, P., Muschalla, B., Bauer, J., Colella, A., Zijlstra, F., & Corbiere, M. (2018). Disability and employment—overview and highlights. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.*, 27, 40–55.



# “You Can’t Ask That”: Asking and Understanding to Achieve more Inclusive Societies

Ana Isabel Polo-Peña, Dolores M. Frías-Jamilena,  
and Francisco Peco-Torres

## Learning Objectives

In this case study, learners have an opportunity to:

1. Understand how social marketing can contribute to social wellbeing and promote behaviour change to achieve more egalitarian societies.
2. Identify problems related to inclusion and equality in advanced societies such as the existence of vulnerable groups subject to stereotypes and prejudices that require actions to improve their social wellbeing.
3. Learn about the design and implementation of public social marketing programmes to promote the social wellbeing of vulnerable groups through social engagement.
4. Reflect on decisions by companies and public organizations regarding the problems of society and the improvement of the social welfare of vulnerable groups.
5. Find out how online television entertainment provides opportunities for learning and social change to promote understanding and inclusion of vulnerable groups.
6. Learn how information and communication technologies (ICTs) enable the co-creation of entertainment-education programmes with society and in which the general public can interact with vulnerable groups.

---

A. I. Polo-Peña (✉) · D. M. Frías-Jamilena · F. Peco-Torres  
University of Granada, Granada, Spain  
e-mail: [apolo@ugr.es](mailto:apolo@ugr.es); [dfrias@ugr.es](mailto:dfrias@ugr.es); [fpeco@ugr.es](mailto:fpeco@ugr.es)

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2023  
M. M. Galan-Ladero, H. M. Alves (eds.), *Social Marketing and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, Springer Business Cases,  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3_7)

## 1 Introduction

To ensure social wellbeing for all citizens, the inclusion of people of diverse backgrounds and circumstances is crucial. Due to stereotypes and prejudices, however, certain groups suffer situations of social exclusion that impede both their labour market and broader social integration, causing them to experience poorer quality of life and lower wellbeing. Therefore, to achieve a society that offers equal opportunities to all, it is important to identify actions that promote greater inclusion and equitability.

Social marketing can help to achieve these aims, by offering strategies and tools geared towards facilitating social change that seeks to foster positive behaviours and a reduction in negative behaviours (Dann, 2010). At the same time, all forms of media, not only digital media and related platforms, are now available online, rendering it increasingly easy for the public to access entertaining audio-visual content that could be orientated towards positive social change and more just and inclusive societies (Peñaranda-Casablanca, 2021). One major example of this orientation is the television programme “*You can’t ask that*” (“*Eso no se pregunta*”, in the Spanish version), which features people from stigmatized collectives. It aims to combat prejudice and discrimination, and to better understand certain groups that sometimes find themselves excluded or misunderstood by society. On this programme, individuals from such minorities give their spontaneous answers to questions that have been posed anonymously, in a bid to help the general population to become more familiar with the reality of stigma and comprehend how the individuals concerned would like to be treated by society.

The aim of this case study is to raise awareness of social stereotypes and how social marketing can contribute to a more inclusive and tolerant society. To this end, a format similar to the “*You can’t ask that*” television programme is used. This entertainment-based approach offers viewers the opportunity to learn about the needs of socially excluded groups as well as a values-based education that can bring about behaviour change to achieve a more egalitarian society.

---

## 2 Case Development

### 2.1 Online Television Entertainment-Education Contents for Social Change

The role media plays in social development and change has attracted much research attention over the years. Early communication scholars relied on social learning theory,<sup>1</sup> which holds that individuals can learn new information and behaviours by observing other people (either in person or in the media). Singhal et al. (1993, pp. 1–2) defined entertainment-education as “the process of putting educational

---

<sup>1</sup>Proposed by Bandura (1977).

content in entertainment messages in order to increase knowledge about an issue, create favorable attitudes, and change overt behavior concerning the educational issue or topic". Considered a media strategy, entertainment-education draws on various theories from the social sciences and communications fields, among them social learning theory, audience involvement, and the elaboration likelihood model.<sup>2</sup> The entertainment-education approach to media content deliberately uses explicit and implicit messages to educate audiences and achieve behaviour change.

Additionally, several scholars and practitioners<sup>3</sup> began researching and developing more strategies for participatory communication in which communities took an active role in the development of media messages and approaches. In a parallel manner, entertainment-education also became more participatory as producers recognized the complex nature of social problems and the importance of audience feedback.

The effectiveness of entertainment-education can be enhanced by social media because of their interactive content and rapid dissemination in society. Indeed, the globalization of digital technologies is now a reality in all countries and has brought with it a revolution in telecommunications, new forms of socialization, and knowledge of different societies worldwide. Social media represent with particular importance a major space in this phenomenon of globalization, because they enable massive, efficient, and immediate socialization, communication, and learning.

There are many benefits of the use of social media, both in educational and work environments as well as in the purely social and entertainment settings. For example, it has been shown that viewers who have strong ties to television programmes interact more with the content than those without such ties (Hoffner & Cantor, 1991) and that social media enable the general public to interact with and even co-create the programmes with which they feel most connected (Tully & Ekdale, 2014). Seizing on this notion, governments and NGOs produced media with the goal of "entertaining", "educating", "developing", and "co-creating" the masses.<sup>4</sup> This is the case of the "*You can't ask that*" programme, which is broadcast on both traditional television channels and social media platforms.

## 2.2 "You Can't Ask That": Entertainment-Education for a More Egalitarian Society

"*You can't ask that*" was produced by the ABC Australian public TV channel and has run since 2016.<sup>5</sup> In the programme, little understood social groups always take centre stage. Because the programme format is versatile, it allows addressing diverse groups with different needs. In each episode, the public can ask members of

---

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Moyer-Gusé (2008), Singhal and Rogers (2004), and Sood et al. (2004).

<sup>3</sup>For example, Mpofu and Salawu (2012), and Servaes (1995).

<sup>4</sup>e.g., Peñaranda-Casablanca (2021), Tully and Ekdale (2014).

<sup>5</sup><https://iview.abc.net.au/show/you-can-t-ask-that>

marginalized or vulnerable groups controversial questions, such as people of short stature, Muslims, sex workers, or transgender people.

Due to the programme's enormous success and its ability to adapt to different cultures and societies, "*You can't ask that*" has been produced in many other countries, including Israel, Canada, Italy, France, Holland, Norway, the USA, and Spain (ABC TV, 2022). In addition, the programme has received awards and recognitions in several countries for its originality and social value, among them the prestigious EBU Rose d'Or award for Reality and Factual Entertainment in 2017 recognizing the best international television and online entertainment (ABC TV, 2022).

### 2.3 The Spanish Version: "*Eso no se pregunta*"

In addition to the above versions of the programme, it has also been aired in Spain on the TeleMadrid public television channel (in collaboration with Globomedia) under the title "*Eso no se pregunta*".<sup>6</sup>

"*Eso no se pregunta*" has a strong social component and aims to raise society's awareness of the most vulnerable groups in an entertainment format. Each programme is designed for a specific group in which around 11 people of different ages, genders, levels of education or income take part. Participants may include a public figure who serves as a point of reference. In addition to the participants, the programme also involves other members of society, who, through questions, show their interest in learning more about the group that is the focus of the programme.

Since it was first broadcast, groups of people subject to stereotypes or prejudices have been invited to the programme: functionally diverse people (such as people with Down's syndrome, Asperger's syndrome, blindness, etc.); people with racial, cultural, ethnic, and/or religious diversity (such as those of Roma-Gypsy ethnicity or Muslims); people with certain illnesses or disorders (such as AIDS or Alzheimer's); people with difficult pasts or in need of a second opportunity (such as formerly incarcerated people, people with a past history of substance abuse, or people without housing); people who have suffered a tragedy or survived traumas (such as victims of bullying or first responders); and people with intriguing life experiences (from Olympic/Paralympic champions to centenarians) or those with different lifestyles or who find themselves at a crucial moment in their lives (Drag Queens, volunteers, or young people who want to become independent) (Table 1).

During the programme, several participants respond to the same anonymous question. They offer their opinions, share their experiences, express their desire to be understood by society, or explain how they can be helped in situations they encounter in their daily lives. The responses vary depending on the age, gender, or experiences of each person. Table 2 shows some of the aspects discussed by members of these groups, who stand out for their sincerity and capacity to find solutions to situations they experience on a day-to-day basis.

<sup>6</sup><https://www.telemadrid.es/programas/eso-no-se-pregunta/>

**Table 1** Groups that have participated in the programme

	Groups that have participated in the programme	
Functional diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Asperger’s syndrome</li> <li>– Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)</li> <li>– Blind people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Down’s syndrome</li> <li>– Obsessive compulsive disorder</li> <li>– Short stature/Achondroplasia</li> <li>– Wheelchair users</li> </ul>
Racial, cultural, ethnic, gender, and/or religious diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Black people</li> <li>– Members of holy orders: Priests and nuns</li> <li>– Muslims</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Roma-Gypsies</li> <li>– Transexuals</li> </ul>
Illnesses/disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– AIDS</li> <li>– Alcohol use disorder</li> <li>– Alzheimer’s</li> <li>– Depression</li> <li>– Eating disorders</li> <li>– Gambling disorder</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Internet addiction disorder</li> <li>– Mental disorders</li> <li>– Multiple sclerosis</li> <li>– Obesity</li> <li>– Rare diseases</li> </ul>
With difficult pasts, in need of a second opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adoptees</li> <li>– Former substance abusers</li> <li>– Long-term unemployed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Migrants</li> <li>– People without housing</li> <li>– Reintegrated people</li> </ul>
Suffered a tragedy, survived traumas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Bullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– First responders</li> </ul>
With intriguing life experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Former elite athletes</li> <li>– Foster parents</li> <li>– Identical twins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– People with high intellectual capacity</li> </ul>
Lifestyles and/or life moments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Children</li> <li>– Drag queens</li> <li>– Fairground workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Villagers</li> <li>– Volunteers</li> <li>– Young people who want to become independent</li> </ul>

Source: Telemadrid (2022a)

Each episode of the programme runs for about 40 minutes and attracts a large audience, especially when it addresses issues such as Asperger’s syndrome, Down’s syndrome, or mental disorders (3,223,891 views and 83,783 likes for the programme on Asperger’s syndrome; 2,247,845 views and 83,900 likes for Down’s syndrome; and 1,556,655 views and 53,063 likes for the one on mental disorders) (*Eso no se pregunta*, 2022). The programme’s large audience and viewing figures on social media show that people want entertainment that contributes to the understanding and inclusion of vulnerable groups. Many viewers share opinions about why they like the programme and highlight the value of this type of entertainment not only for their own personal growth but for all members of society (Table 3).

Moreover, digital and social media function as additional mechanisms of co-creation as they allow the audience to interact further with the programme in two ways. Firstly, through social media, viewers can suggest topics to be addressed on the programme and which groups to be invited (e.g. people with depression, people who want to become independent, or people with a technology addiction). And, secondly, because social media allow viewers to submit questions and bring up

**Table 2** Examples of participants' responses by group

<b>Down's syndrome:</b> "Maybe they look at me because I'm pretty".
<b>People in wheelchairs:</b> "The chair isn't a burden, it's the tool that makes us free, that gives us wings".
<b>Mental disorders:</b> "We're treated like things, like useless objects, and we have feelings and are human beings like everyone else."; "The only drugs I've ever taken were given to me by my psychiatrist".
<b>Former substance abusers:</b> "It's great to get off drugs by looking at the past and living in the present to build a future".
<b>People without housing:</b> "I'm not invisible to others, the truth is that they look down on me".
<b>Foster parents:</b> "You never have a made-to-measure child at home".
<b>Adoptees:</b> "Every child who has suffered a history of abandonment, in the end has a wound. In fact, even if you are treated well, somehow it remains".
<b>Bullying:</b> "It's not something that happens in a day. It's one day after another for quite a long time. It's usually months or even years".
<b>Volunteers:</b> "Enjoy life to the fullest but share a little with others".
<b>I want to be independent:</b> "A few years ago I wanted to have children, but now I've ruled it out in the short term. Maybe if I'd become independent, I would've pursued that goal".
<b>Children:</b> "I'd be a teacher to help children who have forgotten their worksheets or homework".

Source: Telemadrid (2022a)

issues in which they are particularly interested in a direct and anonymous manner.<sup>7</sup> The use of online media also increases viewers' understanding about each of the invited groups as the programme's website provides objective information and data about them.

Finally, it is important to mention that the Spanish version of the programme has also enjoyed wide recognition nationally: it received the Ondas 2020 Award in the category of Best Programme broadcast by non-national channels for the episode on mental illness, and the Iris Award in 2018 for combining public service with entertainment and for "giving a voice to groups that are less visible in the media and providing a sincere response to their daily problems" (Telemadrid, 2022a).

### 3 Conclusions

"*You can't ask that*", or "*Eso no se pregunta*" as the Spanish version is known, is an example of how social marketing has the capacity to promote behaviour change and achieve a more inclusive and tolerant society. The format of the programme allows vulnerable groups to interact with society at large. It is based on entertainment-education content that can be broadcast on television, but also through online platforms. This type of content can serve to raise awareness among society of the circumstances and perspective of vulnerable groups and identify mechanisms that promote their inclusion in society.

<sup>7</sup>e.g. at <https://www.telemadrid.es/programas/eso-no-se-pregunta/envia-tu-pregunta/>

**Table 3** Examples of comments shared by viewers

**Blind people:** "I like watching this type of documentaries because it makes me see the world from a different perspective, and also makes me empathize with people and informs me".

**Asperger's syndrome:** "Well, I tell you one thing, many of us who don't have this syndrome, we should learn a lot from these people in the video, from their dignity, their courage, their honesty and their generosity in opening up to us, I take my hat off to them, very good, brave people!!!!!!".

**Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD):** "Listening to testimonies helps you better understand what each person goes through. But above all, seeing that it is not bad but difficult to have this disorder lightens my heart a lot".

**Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD):** "The misinformation we all have about mental disorders and illnesses is appalling... it makes it twice as hard for people who suffer from them".

**Muslims:** "I'm Catholic and I liked this video about Muslims a lot; in fact it clarified a lot of my doubts. The problem I see, and it happens in all religions, is that there are good and bad followers, prejudices and labels, and it is true that I feel that as a society they suffer from being singled out and discriminated against due to the global image they have been given and cultural intolerance".

**Transsexuals:** "My thanks to all those who made this video possible; honestly, I'm over 50 years old and just getting interested in understanding who transsexuals are, I feel very ashamed and apologize for my ignorance... (so many topics are silenced in this humanity!!), my sincere wishes that these topics are spread more and more every day and that you are people who can feel integrated in this society like everyone else".

**Black people:** "I don't think I've ever heard black people talking about themselves and how they experience racism. A big step".

**People with obesity:** "They've been very brave to talk about it, I hope they manage to feel good, in whatever way they can. I hope society matures and accepts all of us with respect, without discriminating on the basis of superficial aspects".

**Mental disorders:** "This video should be shown in high schools, universities and everywhere! The general public needs to have information and the mentally ill deserve all our respect and empathy".

**Rare diseases:** "Sometimes people aren't evil but they don't know how to behave towards those with disabilities—we'd like to act in the best and most natural way possible, but don't know how".

**Reintegrated people:** "Thank you for such a great programme, I really enjoyed the topic. Having the possibility to learn about the life stages of these people is very enriching. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to put myself in the shoes of these people and having the chance to learn so many things we often ignore."

**Migrants:** "I loved it. As a Spaniard I'm very happy that there are people like this in my country. You are all great. And I apologize for some small-minded compatriots with little compassion".

Source: Telemadrid (2022b)

Some of the keys to the success of "You can't ask that" (or "Eso no se pregunta", in Spanish) are:

- **The programme offers entertainment-oriented content.** This type of content is demanded by the public and provided to them in the form of episodes where the entertainment and amusement of viewers is ensured.
- **Content that increases the social visibility and understanding of the circumstances of vulnerable groups is offered.** Each episode offers content that enables learning about the circumstances and characteristics of the



participating groups, as well as a vision of how each group wishes to be treated by society and the solutions and opportunities they need.

- **Additional content is available about the vulnerable groups that participate in the programme.** To draw society’s attention to and raise awareness about these groups, the programme’s website publishes information about each one, their personal circumstances, the intervention programmes available to them, and the most important organizations that represent them.
- **The programme can be broadcast via television and other digital platforms** in line with current trends in leisure and entertainment consumption.
- **The programme is co-created with society and enables interaction.** The philosophy of the programme is oriented towards the participation of society. Each programme is produced on the basis of questions that are sent in anonymously by viewers who are curious or want to know more about the participating groups. This allows the programme to become a dialogue without intermediaries between society and the participating groups. In addition, the use of social media (such as having its own YouTube channel) makes it possible for viewers to share their opinions and emotions after watching each episode.
- **Ability to adapt to the specific needs of each society.** The programme can be adapted to the demands of each society at any given time. Thus, for example, if we compare the groups in societies such as Australia and Spain, we can identify some common themes (such as people in wheelchairs or with Down’s syndrome) and others that differ (for example, in the Australian version, a group of “recent war veterans” participated in the programme, but not in the Spanish version; while the programme in Spain invited a group of “young people with a desire for independence”, while Australia did not). The programme also allows the topics to be adapted according to the educational objectives to be achieved.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think entertainment programmes are effective in promoting social change and achieving more egalitarian societies?

**Question 2**—Do you think that the objectives of “*You can’t ask that*”, or “*Eso no se pregunta*” in the Spanish version, are important?

**Question 3**—What factors do you think have contributed to the success of “*You can’t ask that*” or “*Eso no se pregunta*” in the Spanish version?

**Question 4**—Do you think that society’s participation and co-creation through ICTs are important for the programme’s success?

**Question 5**—How can the use of social media and new technologies contribute to making the programme more innovative?

**Question 6**—What new groups could future editions of the programme focus on? Why?

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

Societal wellbeing demands that we include people with different profiles and circumstances. One major example of this orientation is the television programme "You can't ask that" ("Eso no se pregunta" in the Spanish version), which features people from stigmatized collectives. On this programme, individuals from such minorities give their spontaneous answers to questions that have been posed anonymously, in a bid to help the general population to become more familiar with the reality of stigma and comprehend how the individuals concerned would like to be treated by society.

The proposed case study examines how entertainment can be used to address prejudices and stereotypes with a view to achieving a more inclusive and tolerant society. The case study will demonstrate that "You can't ask that" offers a versatile format that brings together entertainment and values-based education that can be widely and readily disseminated.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case has been developed for use in the framework of Marketing and Social Marketing courses in general and Wellbeing of the society and SDGs seminars in particular. The potential audience for this chapter would be: undergraduate students pursuing degrees in business administration or marketing and graduate students pursuing MBA and master's in marketing or in Social Marketing; or Executive Programmes and Seminars (about Social Marketing, Wellbeing of the society or SDGs).

### Learning

1. Understand how social marketing can contribute to social wellbeing and promote behaviour change to achieve more egalitarian societies.
2. Identify problems related to inclusion and equality in advanced societies such as the existence of vulnerable groups subject to stereotypes and prejudices that require actions to improve their social wellbeing.
3. Learn about the design and implementation of public social marketing programmes to promote the social wellbeing of vulnerable groups through social engagement.
4. Reflect on decisions by companies and public organizations regarding the problems of society and the improvement of the social welfare of vulnerable groups.
5. Find out how online television entertainment provides opportunities for learning and social change to promote understanding and inclusion of vulnerable groups.

6. Learn how information and communication technologies (ICTs) enable the co-creation of entertainment-education programmes with society and in which the general public can interact with vulnerable groups.

### **Time Frame for Class Discussion**

This case can be taught in one session of 60–120 minutes, depending on the number of students participating in the discussion activities, as well as the previous work that students have done before class.

### **Suggested Discussion Questions**

**Question 1**—Do you think entertainment programmes are effective in promoting social change and achieving more egalitarian societies?

**Question 2**—Do you think that the objectives of “*You can’t ask that*”, or “*Eso no se pregunta*” in the Spanish version, are important?

**Question 3**—What factors do you think have contributed to the success of “*You can’t ask that*” or “*Eso no se pregunta*” in the Spanish version?

**Question 4**—Do you think that society’s participation and co-creation through ICTs are important for the programme’s success?

**Question 5**—How can the use of social media and new technologies contribute to making the programme more innovative?

**Question 6**—What new groups could future editions of the programme focus on? Why?

### **Analysis**

**Answer to Question 1**—Do you think that entertainment programmes can be effective in fostering social change and achieving more egalitarian societies?

Based on the case study on “*You can’t ask that*”, and specifically the social learning theory of Bandura (1977) and entertainment-education process as explained by Singhal et al. (1993, pp. 1–2), students will be able to identify entertainment-education as a deliberate effort involving explicit and implicit educational messages to increase audience knowledge and often to elicit behaviour change. Students can do research to learn more about the application of entertainment-education and find other examples where they think it is being used.

**Answer to Question 2**—Do you think that the objectives of the “*You can’t ask that*” or “*Eso no se pregunta*” in the Spanish version, programme are important?

In this question, students link the needs of the groups that participate in the programme with current data about their situation in terms of level of social inclusion, education, health, employment, and wellbeing. The students can also reflect on the position that these groups should achieve in an egalitarian society in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, and what these groups could contribute to society.

***Answer to Question 3—What do you think have been the success factors of the “You can’t ask that”, or “Eso no se pregunta” in the Spanish version, programme?***

After reading the case study, students identify key factors that may have contributed to the programme’s success, such as: (a) it offers entertainment-oriented content and content that increases the social visibility and understanding of the circumstances affecting vulnerable groups of interest to society; (b) the programme is flexible, since in addition to being broadcast on television, it is also shown on digital platforms; (c) members of all walks of society can participate in the programme; and (d) it has a versatile format that can be adapted to the demands of each society (so that the participating groups can be selected accordingly).

***Answer to Question 4—Do you think that engaging the public and co-creation through ICTs is important for the programme’s success?***

To answer this question, students should apply their knowledge of social marketing and its orientation towards users and/or society and the potential of ICTs for co-creation with society. This will allow them to identify that a success factor of the programme is that in each of the countries where it is broadcast, means are provided for orienting the programme towards society and for co-creation (by allowing members of society to participate, i.e. by proposing the topics to be addressed, posing questions to the participating groups, or establishing mechanisms so that viewers can share their thoughts and emotions after each episode).

***Answer to Question 5—How could the use of social media and new technologies contribute to innovating the programme?***

This question can be answered by students who identify an opportunity for innovating and improving the programme through the use of social media and new technologies. To answer this question, students could investigate how other entertainment programmes use social media and new technologies and propose the ones they consider most appropriate for a programme like “You can’t ask that”.

***Answer to Question 6—What new groups could be the focus of future editions of the programme?***

Like the previous question, this question can be answered by students who identify an opportunity for including new groups, realities, or objectives to be addressed by the programme. To answer this question, students could investigate the reality of other currently stigmatized groups for whom social inclusion is particularly difficult to achieve.

***Additional Suggested Questions—Based on the answer to the previous question, create and design a “You can’t ask that” submission about a group that you consider to be vulnerable in your social environment and for whom you think greater social inclusion is important.***

This question can be answered by students who identify an opportunity for fostering the inclusion of a group in their social environment that they consider to be currently stigmatized and vulnerable and for whom they consider that greater visibility through a programme such as “You can’t ask that” would be positive.

***Additional Suggested Questions—Find information and learn about the group you have identified, the associations or institutions that represent it, and the profile***

*of the people you think should participate in the programme. Prepare the necessary materials to communicate your proposal to those in charge of the programme so that they can evaluate whether to broadcast it in the future.*

At this stage, the teacher could mentor the students to ensure they have the necessary knowledge about the reality of the selected group and the possibility of improving the group's social inclusion. Based on this information, the students could prepare a proposal to submit to those in charge of the programme.

This can be a motivating opportunity for students' personal growth and for the improvement of the society.

---

## References

- ABC TV. (2022). *You can't ask that*. Available at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/You\\_Can%27t\\_Ask\\_That](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/You_Can%27t_Ask_That). Accessed 25 April 2022.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice-Hall.
- Dann, S. (2010). Redefining social marketing with contemporary commercial marketing definitions. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(2), 147–153.
- Hoffner, C., & Cantor, J. (1991). Perceiving and responding to mass media characters. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Responding to the screen: Reception and reaction processes* (pp. 63–101). Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Moyer-Gusé, E. (2008). Toward a theory of entertainment persuasion: Explaining the persuasive effects of entertainment-education messages. *Communication Theory*, 18, 407–425.
- Mpofu, N., & Salawu, A. (2012). Investigating the use of social networking sites and their implications for HIV/AIDS communication amongst Rhodes University students. *Communicatio*, 38(1), 103–121.
- Peñaranda-Casablanca, B. F. (2021). Micro documentary “prevention on the web” for school children in the City of El alto (Bolivia)—A proposal for its improvement. In M. M. Galan-Ladero & R. G. Rivera (Eds.), *Applied social marketing and quality of life, applying quality of life research* (pp. 143–154).
- Servaes, J. (1995). Development communication—For whom and for what? *Communicatio*, 21, 39–49.
- Singhal, A., & Rogers, E. M. (2004). The status of entertainment-education worldwide. In A. Singhal, M. J. Cody, E. M. Rogers, & M. Sabido (Eds.), *Entertainment-education and social change: History, research, and practice* (pp. 3–20). Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Singhal, A., Rogers, E. M., & Brown, W. (1993). Harnessing the potential of entertainment-education telenovelas. *Gazette*, 51, 1–18.
- Sood, S., Menard, T., & Witte, K. (2004). The theory behind entertainment-education. In A. Singhal, M. J. Cody, E. M. Rogers, & M. Sabido (Eds.), *Entertainment-education and social change: History, research, and practice* (pp. 117–150). Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Telemadrid. (2022a). *Eso no se pregunta*. Available at: <https://www.telemadrid.es/programas/eso-no-se-pregunta/>. Accessed 25 April 2022.
- Telemadrid. (2022b). *Eso no se pregunta*. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=eso+no+se+pregunta](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=eso+no+se+pregunta). Accessed 25 April 2022.
- Tully, M., & Ekdale, B. (2014). The team online: Entertainment-education, social media, and cocreated messages. *Television & New Media*, 15(2), 139–156.



# The Use of Events to Achieve Social Change: The Case of ILGA Portugal

Inês Santos, Inês Veiga Pereira, Carla Pereira, Diana Moreira,  
and Sandra Santos

## Learning Objectives

1. To understand the impact of social marketing on behavioural change.
2. To understand the importance of the communication in social marketing.
3. To analyse the importance of events as a communication action in social marketing.

## 1 Introduction

The ILGA Portugal Association was founded in 1995, in Lisbon. It is the largest and oldest association fighting for its ideals, that is, for equality and against discrimination of the LGBTI+ community in Portugal. Its main objective is the integration in society of the LGBTI+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex) through a broad programme of support, in the social sphere, which ensures the improvement of their quality of life, through the fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (ILGA, 2022a). It should be mentioned that its Board of Directors is mainly made up of volunteers and a body of 10 leaders is

---

I. Santos · C. Pereira · D. Moreira · S. Santos  
ISCAP, Polytechnic of Porto, Porto, Portugal  
e-mail: [2210935@iscap.ipp.pt](mailto:2210935@iscap.ipp.pt); [carla.pereira@centrojuvenilcampanha.com](mailto:carla.pereira@centrojuvenilcampanha.com);  
[2210933@iscap.ipp.pt](mailto:2210933@iscap.ipp.pt); [sandra.santos@cm-feira.pt](mailto:sandra.santos@cm-feira.pt)

I. Veiga Pereira (✉)  
ISCAP, Polytechnic of Porto, CEOS.Porto, Porto, Portugal  
e-mail: [ipereira@iscap.ipp.pt](mailto:ipereira@iscap.ipp.pt)



**Fig. 1** Start screen of the official ILGA Portugal website. *Translation: Having Support/Helping ILGA/Help and be part of it/Denounce discrimination.* Source: ILGA Portugal (2022)

elected, which makes up the General Assembly and the Fiscal Councils, elected by the members themselves. However, there is also a technical team, consisting of four people, which ensures the normal functioning and services of the association (Silva, 2021). The work they develop is above all a work of education, interaction, and empowerment, thus allowing their beneficiaries to participate and intervene in the protection of LGBTI+ rights and in the fight for equality, not only in sexual matters, but also in issues such as racism, xenophobia, or disability (ILGA, 2022a).

In order to facilitate the dissemination of its activities, ILGA Portugal has its own institutional website and uses other dissemination tools such as billboards. However, it also participates in several national and international projects, with themes ranging from the promotion of safe spaces for all people to raising awareness of the LGBTI+ issue in the various areas of action of public entities (ILGA, 2022a).

ILGA also organises annual events such as Arraial Pride and the Rainbow Awards, as well as monthly events such as conferences, lectures, training, and others, all with the same objective: to ensure that LGBTI+ people live in a world with much more equality. The association also has a solidarity shop, where its products can be bought at affordable prices and its delivery is fast and efficient (ILGA, 2022a). Information about the organisation can be found at its website (Fig. 1).

With its work the organisation helps to achieve SDG 10 (“Reduced inequalities”), in particular in order to reach the target “by 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status”.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup><https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030-goal10.html>

## 2 Case Development

### 2.1 Events as a Communication Action in Social Marketing

An event is an occurrence with a certain agenda and schedule, which brings together a certain group of people and aims to achieve certain objectives. “*From a communication point of view, each and every event has as its main objective to carry a message in favourable conditions, at the right time, and in an environment conducive to the reception of said message. The event assumes itself, therefore, as a language and a communication tool*” (Gomes, 2015).

The event, as a public relations tool, emerges to achieve social, cultural, or political changes (Giacomo, 2007; Duarte, 2009; Theaker, 2012).<sup>2</sup> According to Martins (2013), events can be divided into two major groups: public and private.

- Public events: (i) Cultural Celebrations: Festivals, Carnival, Parades, Religious Events, and Tributes; (ii) Art/Entertainment: Concerts, Exhibitions, Award Ceremonies, and Other Shows; (iii) Trade/Business: Fairs, Markets, Exhibitions, Meetings and Conferences, Advertising/Promotional Events, and Fundraising Events; (iv) Sports Competitions: Professional or Amateur; (v) Educational and Scientific: Seminars, Workshops, Congresses, and Interpretative Events; (vi) Recreational: Games and Sports from a fun perspective and Entertainment Events; (vi) Political: Inaugurations, Investments, VIP Visits, and Rallies.
- Private events can be differentiated into: (i) Personal Celebrations: Birthdays, Family Holidays, and Rituals; (ii) Social Events: Parties and Meetings.

### 2.2 ILGA Portugal

The main aim of the ILGA Portugal Association is the integration into society of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex population through a broad programme of support in the social sphere to ensure improvement in their quality of life: by fighting against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, promoting citizenship, human rights, and gender equality (ILGA, 2020). It also has a strong diversity policy and interest groups dedicated, namely, to lesbian women, transgender people, and Rainbow Families. To mention that it is a member of the Advisory Board of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality; of the *Fundamental Rights Platform of the Fundamental Rights Agency* ILGA—*International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association*; NELFA—*Network of European LGBT Families Associations*; ILGA-Europe’s *Advocacy Network*.

As an association dedicated to LGBTI+ activism, ILGA Portugal developed one of its campaigns to celebrate its work since 1996, focusing on three concepts: movement, action, and collective. It should be noted that this action and many others

---

<sup>2</sup>Giacomo (2007), Duarte (2009) and Theaker (2012).





**Fig. 2** ILGA's Mupi advertisement. Source: ILGA - Marketeer (2021)

are in favour of the rights of LGBTI+ people and their families present in the genesis of the formation of ILGA Portugal. In the organisation and participation of events, ILGA Portugal relies on the support of its communication team (Fig. 2 shows one Mupi about one manifestation ILGA has organised).

### 2.3 ILGA's Events

Events are languages and communication tools that aim to achieve specific and previously outlined objectives (Marketeer, 2021). However, ILGA Portugal intends through its events, namely, the Rainbow Awards and Arraial Lisboa *Pride*, to disseminate its fight for equality and against discrimination of LGBTI+ people and their families. Therefore, the events and communication campaigns in general are essential for ILGA Portugal to spread its message, attract supporters, and gradually change mentalities. All the events produced by ILGA Portugal represent a privileged moment of visibility for brands that have in their core of social responsibility the concern for the rights of LGBTI+ people and their families. They are political moments of celebration and visibility, where they celebrate conquered rights (ILGA, 2022b).

ILGA Portugal organises annual events such as Arraial *Pride* Lisboa and Arco-Íris Awards. However, besides these events, it also organises other more specific events such as conferences and debates and cultural events such as film cycles or the book fair. This case focuses on the two first events.



**Fig. 3** ILGA’s advertisement about Pride Festival. Source: ILGA Portugal (2022b)

### 2.3.1 Pride Festival

Arraial Lisboa Pride is the largest LGBTI+ event in Portugal. Since 1997, it has been organised by ILGA Portugal, in partnership with the Lisbon City Council and EGEAC (Empresa de Gestão de Equipamentos e Animação Cultural, A.M.—an event’s company), and gives visibility to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender population, in a celebration of pride in equality. It is an event intrinsically linked to an associative, political, and social positioning, where all Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex (LGBTI+) people, families, and allies are welcome. There are no barriers in their entry, leaving out only discrimination, stigma, prejudices associated with health, affections in public, or any other dimension of the lives of each one (Pride, 2021). It is held in the city of Lisbon—the Terreiro do Paço, is integrated in the Lisbon Festivities, as it aims to mark Lisbon’s identity as a city that values and cherishes diversity and equality, saying no to discrimination and giving visibility to the LGBTI+ population and their families.<sup>3</sup> The inclusion of Lisbon in the event’s name reinforces this commitment and, also, places Lisbon in the itinerary of the main

<sup>3</sup>Lisbon (2019) and ILGA (2022a).

LGBTI+ tourist destinations (Pride, 2021)—see Fig. 3 (it shows the call for Pride Festival).

We are talking about an annual event, with 12 hours of operation, but an event that not only has a very large social and recreational component, but also has a component of awareness to many issues. We have an area in the festival that we call the *Welcome Center*, which is basically a replication of the centre, we transport the centre there, the Terreiro do Paço, and so we have awareness raising, demystification and socializing activities for 12 hours in the most touristic square in the country. This is the event that has much more impact, not only because of the number of people, but because there are people who every year show up there and never show up again in another context, because of a logic of ‘there are so many people that the person is not visible’. Therefore, it is much easier for the person to leave and go there than to come to the door, one thing is to pass by and stay, to enter here you have to want to and you know what you are coming for, it is a whole logic of visibility (Ramos, 2020).

## 2.4 *Arco-Íris Awards*

The Rainbow Awards are, since 2003, given annually, usually in January, by the ILGA Portugal Association, as a form of recognition and incentive to personalities and institutions that, through their work, have distinguished themselves in the fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sexual characteristics, such as homo, trans and biphobia, and intersexism, thus contributing to the affirmation of the rights of LGBTI+ people in Portugal.<sup>4</sup>

In 2021, for the first time the ILGA Portugal Association’s Rainbow Awards were broadcast simultaneously on television, on the Q channel, and multiplatform online *streaming*, thus allowing decentralising the event and taking it to more and more people, all over the world (Fig. 4).<sup>5</sup>

## 2.5 Purpose for Holding the Events

In organising its events, ILGA aims to draw attention to the behaviour of the community at large. However, it has specific objectives for each target group (ILGA, 2022a):

- For Associations: to motivate the participation of other associations present in the parish and to motivate them to be propagators of ILGA services in the community.
- For Traders: to make them aware of the importance of developing an environment of diversity and respect for the customers and employees of their establishments.

---

<sup>4</sup>Wikipedia (n.d.).

<sup>5</sup>e-cultura (2020); Dezanove (2022) and ILGA (2022a).



**Fig. 4** Television broadcast of ILGA’s Rainbow Awards. Source: dezanove—online newspaper (2018)

Make them aware of the well-being of LGBTI+ people and how this can associate value to their service.

- For Locals: draw attention to the LGBTI+ struggle and the importance of public debate and advocacy, introducing them to and bringing them closer to the association.
- For Workers: draw attention to the services, need, and importance of having an association like ILGA in the community.
- For Visitors: create a climate of general well-being and safety for visitors and frequenters of the community.

---

### 3 Conclusion

We can conclude that the events organised by ILGA Portugal are an essential PR (Public Relations) tool for its communication and for the pursuit of its objectives as an association that defends the rights of LGBTI+ people.

These aim to change social behaviours, both of its primary audience—LGBTI+ people—and of society in general. The aim is for LGBTI+ people to change their perception of themselves and create a sense of community. Society is expected to change its attitudes and behaviours towards LGBTI+ people.

It is (also) with party and celebration, with pride, as opposed to the shame instilled in LGBTI+ people, that ILGA Portugal intends to pursue its social marketing to change mentalities and transform Portugal into a more just and equal country. These activities and goals have a very important contribution for the achievement of SDG 10.

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What is the relation between events and social marketing?

**Question 2**—How important are events for behavioural change?

**Question 3**—How important are these events for LGBTI+ people?

**Question 4**—How important are events for ILGA Portugal?

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

This case study refers to ILGA Portugal. ILGA Portugal Association is the largest and oldest association fighting for equality and against discrimination of LGBTI+ community, in Portugal.

Its main objective is to integrate the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex population into society through a broad programme of support in the social sphere that guarantees the improvement of their quality of life: through the fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the promotion of citizenship, human rights, and gender equality. ILGA has a Communication Department, which is responsible for the management and development of existing communication supports, events and for social marketing.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case has been developed for use in the framework of Marketing for Non-profits courses in general, and Social Marketing seminars, in particular.

The potential audience for this chapter is twofold:

- Undergraduate students pursuing degrees in marketing and management.
- Graduate students pursuing MBA and master's in marketing, NPOs management; or Executive Programmes and Seminars (about NPOs marketing in general, and Social Marketing in particular).

### Learning

1. To understand the impact of social marketing on behavioural change.
2. To understand the importance of communication in social marketing.
3. To analyse the importance of events as a communication action in social marketing.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case can be taught in one session of 60–100 minutes, depending on the number of students participating in the discussion activities, as well as the previous work that students have done before class.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What is the connection between events and social marketing?

**Question 2**—How important are events for behavioural change?

**Question 3**—How important are these events for LGBTI+ people?

**Question 4**—How important are events for ILGA Portugal?

## Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—What is the connection between events and social marketing?*

Access the importance of events for social marketing, using the case study as an example.

- Do these events promote social marketing concepts?
- Which other events could be organised to reach social marketing goals?

Other suggestion could be included.

*Answer to Question 2—How important are events for behavioural change?*

In this question, students should reflect on the role of events in behaviour change and its link with social marketing.

Some concepts that could be developed:

- Effectiveness of these events to these goals
- What behavioural changes are expected after these events?

*Answer to Question 3—How important are these events for LGBTI+ people?*

This is also a question with a free response. The idea is that students think about whether these events contribute to improve LGBTI+ people's lives. And what other options ILGA could have to achieve their goals.

Discussion topics:

- Social acceptance and minority groups.
- Social marketing and improving society.
- Promotion and events to build a community and increase acceptance.

***Answer to Question 4—How important are these events for ILGA Portugal? What is the return for the association of creating these two events?***

This is a question with a free response (there are no correct or incorrect answers). Each student can give their opinion. The most important aspects of this question are that students strongly argue their opinions, whether they are favourable or unfavourable towards this campaign, and that they reflect on what the strengths and weaknesses might be (or pros and cons).

Discussion topics:

- Brand awareness
- Brand associations

---

## References

- Duarte, J. (2009). *Public relations in sporting and leisure events as promoters of social change: A view from Portugal*. Tripodos.
- e-cultura (2020). *Prémios Arco-Iris 2019 da ILGA Portugal*. Retrieved from <https://www.e-cultura.pt/evento/16852>
- Giacomo, C. (2007). *Everything ends in a party. Event, opinion leader, motivation and audience*. Summus.
- Gomes, F. (2015). *Eventos em Portugal: uma perspectiva das Relações Públicas*. ESCS-IPL.
- ILGA. (2020). *Annual Report 2019*. Retrieved from [https://ilga-portugal.pt/ficheiros/pdfs/observatorio/ILGA\\_Relatorio\\_Discriminacao\\_2019.pdf](https://ilga-portugal.pt/ficheiros/pdfs/observatorio/ILGA_Relatorio_Discriminacao_2019.pdf)
- ILGA. (2022a). Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/ilgaportugal/>
- ILGA. (2022b). Retrieved from <https://ilga-portugal.pt/patrocinar-ou-apoiar-eventos/>
- Lisbon, A. C. (2019, June 22). *Lisbon Cultural Agenda*. Retrieved from <https://www.agendalx.pt/events/event/arraial-pride-lisboa/>
- Marketeer. (2021, May 10). Retrieved from <https://marketeer.sapo.pt/ilga-vai-para-a-rua-pedir-mais-amor-inclusao-e-proteccao/?photo=1>
- Martins, M. (2013). *Influence of event sponsorships on purchase intention: O Caso da super bock nos Festivais de Música*. Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril.
- Dezanove. (2022). *Dezanove*. Retrieved from <https://dezanove.pt/premios-arco-iris-distinguem-cm-lousa-1391687#cutid1>
- Portugal, I. (2022). *ILGA*. Retrieved from <https://ilga-portugal.pt/associacao/porque-existimos/>
- Pride, A. L. (2021, June 9). Retrieved from Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/arraialpridelx/>
- Ramos, M. (2020). *Entrevista. [Entrevista concedida à Isabella Dias da Silva] in Silva, I. (2021) Ativação da relação: consolidação da organização ILGA Portugal na comunidade da freguesia de Santa Maria Maior*. ESCS-IPL.
- Silva, I. (2021, June). Retrieved from <https://repositorio.ipl.pt/bitstream/10400.21/13188/1/Relat%C3%B3rio%20de%20Est%C3%A1gio%20-%20In%C3%AAs%20Veiga%209439.pdf>
- Theaker, A. (2012). *The public relations handbook*. Routledge.
- Wikipedia. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pr%C3%A9mio\\_Arco-Iris](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pr%C3%A9mio_Arco-Iris)



# Integrating the Environmental, Social, and Economic SDGs into an Educational Organization

Sergio Barta, Daniel Belanche, Marta Flavián, and M. Cruz-Terré

## Learning Objectives

1. To identify the social marketing activities of an organization.
2. To analyze how organizations can integrate the SDGs in social marketing campaigns.
3. To analyze the challenges faced in, and benefits provided by, the implementation of the SDGs by organizations and their effects on society.
4. To raise awareness among students of the importance of undertaking actions that contribute to achieving a more just and supportive society.
5. To promote debate and awareness among students about the importance of the environmental, social, and economic SDGs in terms of rights, responsibilities, and opportunities.
6. To inform, educate, and change harmful behaviors of students through campaigns of social marketing that generate a positive impact on society.

## 1 Introduction

This chapter examines the role of the SDGs as a social marketing tool in the education sector, specifically in vocational training. The education sector is a very suitable context to study the implementation of the SDGs, given that it focuses on training people and has a multiplier factor in the society of the present and the future (Melewar et al., 2018). A case study was undertaken which analyzed the different

---

S. Barta · D. Belanche (✉) · M. Flavián · M. Cruz-Terré  
Faculty of Economy and Business, University of Zaragoza, Zaragoza, Spain  
e-mail: [sbarta@unizar.es](mailto:sbarta@unizar.es); [belan@unizar.es](mailto:belan@unizar.es); [mflavian@unizar.es](mailto:mflavian@unizar.es); [maricruzterre@economistas.org](mailto:maricruzterre@economistas.org)





**Fig. 1** Process diagram of the integration of the SDGs into the value chain. Source: Own design, based on SDG Compass (2015)

steps taken by a Spanish vocational training center in its implementation of the SDGs, the campaigns it developed over the period, and the results it obtained. In short, this work shows how commitment to the fulfillment of the SDGs in an educational center, allied to the participation of the entire community, can generate trust among its users and increase their feeling of belonging toward the organization. In this way greater awareness of, and commitment to, the environmental, social, and economic values that permeate the SDGs can be achieved.

## 2 Case Development

Given the growing importance of social marketing for organizations, they need to adapt their corporate strategies toward the new paradigm championed by the SDGs, goals that address broader commitments and aims than corporate social responsibility. The organizations' commitment to the SDGs can be shown through their inclusion in their strategy and the social impact of social marketing actions carried out by each organization. To do so organizations must integrate the SDGs social marketing activities and align them with their business objectives.

The process diagram (see Fig. 1) shows the process of implementing the SDGs in the entity's value chain. Through these processes, the SDGs are integrated into the organizational culture, ensuring its users value social benefits over individual benefits through the social marketing actions carried out.

### 2.1 Initial Training on the 2030 Agenda

The first stage in the implementation of the SDGs in the educational center was oriented toward training the main agents, the students, teachers, and administration and services staff. The training addressed the concept, scope, and opportunities offered by the SDGs both from a business perspective and from an educational viewpoint. The main objective of this stage was to make the educational community aware of the 2030 Agenda to motivate them to participate in SDG-related activities. A presentation was made to the community, and they were provided audiovisual materials (see Image 1). The educational institution's commitment to the implementation of the SDGs was disseminated to the whole community through the center's website and social networks.



**Image 1** Slide from the SDG presentation. Slide translation: “On 25 September 2015 the Assembly General of the UN approved the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, with the goals of eradicating poverty, fighting inequality and injustice and curbing climate change, among others.” Source: Own elaboration based on The Global Goals (2015)

## 2.2 Definition of the Organization’s Strategic Objectives and Priority Action Lines in the SDG Field

After this first stage, the center’s Marketing Department in collaboration with the Corporate Social Responsibility Committee prepared a report setting out the organization’s priority strategic objectives and the key SDG lines on which it would work more intensively. Defining the strategic objectives allowed the organization to specify the contribution it could make to the 2030 Agenda, while strengthening and maximizing its positive impacts, and eliminating or minimizing its negative impacts. This process does not entail ignoring SDGs not directly related to the organization’s core strategies, since objectives were also established for these more peripheral (in terms of the center) goals. Among the priority objectives identified were environmental care, the management of waste generated in the center, the reduction of polluting emissions, the responsible use of resources, such as reducing water and energy consumption, and raising social and environmental awareness; many actions were identified to achieve these objectives.

Subsequently, it was necessary to integrate the priority SDGs into the entity’s business strategy by designing appropriate, effective organizational actions of social marketing. The organization included social marketing actions related to several dimensions of the SDGs in its business strategy to position itself as a benchmark in the education sector for societal improvement through environmental, social, and economic projects and awareness campaigns that contribute to achieving the goals of

**Table 1** Priority lines established

Environmental SDG	Social SDG	Economic SDG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Raising awareness in society of the effects of climate change</li> <li>– Implementation of programs for the optimization and rational use of water</li> <li>– Minimization of waste generation</li> <li>– Improvement of waste management throughout its life cycle</li> <li>– Implementation of circular economy processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Awareness of situations of social vulnerability</li> <li>– Equality between men and women</li> <li>– Health care and disease prevention, promoting healthy lifestyle habits</li> <li>– Quality education based on qualified and competent vocational training adapted to the demands of the labor market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Training for responsible financial decision-making</li> <li>– Promotion of entrepreneurial skills in students</li> <li>– Sharing of entrepreneurship projects</li> <li>– Improving the professional qualifications of students for their incorporation into, and development in, the labor market</li> </ul>

Source: Own design, based on the organization's CSR strategy

the 2030 Agenda. Table 1 shows the priority lines established for each of the SDG dimensions. These priority lines were developed with the support of the management team.

## 2.3 Specific Actions to Achieve the Priority SDGs

### 2.3.1 Actions Linked to the Environmental SDGs

The actions in this line focused on three fundamental pillars: SDG 6 (“clean water and sanitation”), SDG 13 (“climate action”), and SDG 15 (“life on land/terrestrial ecosystems”). Below are the activities carried out to achieve these goals.

To minimize the center's water footprint a program of water consumption reduction was implemented through the introduction of automatic disconnection systems. This reduced the center's impact on the natural water cycle and sensitized its users to responsible water consumption. A water footprint calculator was introduced. After observing their personal consumption, the teachers and students discussed measures to reduce it. As to climate action, a poster contest and exhibition were organized which allowed the participants to express their creativity and promoted the arts (see Image 2); this had the aim of mobilizing the education sector and raising awareness throughout wider society of the effects of climate change and global warming. The posters produced dealt with various themes: recycling of resources, renewable energy, communal transport, sustainable agriculture, and reduction of greenhouse gases. In line with the stated objective, a conference was held to discuss means of reducing the center's carbon footprint. The teaching staff developed practical cases in class to quantify the impact of an activity, people, and countries on greenhouse gas emissions. Finally, the students made presentations about new sustainability trends, such as product development and companies' use of



**Image 2** Some posters in the exhibition. Source: Own design

biodegradable packaging. Through undertaking activities that seek to meet the environmental SDGs the entity transmits its concern for the environment and contributes to the goals, as many daily actions can be carried out in homes to fight climate change and to preserve the environment.

### 2.3.2 Actions Linked to the Social SDGs

Various campaigns were carried out to achieve the social SDGs; they focused on SDG 1 (“end poverty”), SDG 2 (“zero hunger”), SDG 3 (“health and well-being”), and SDG 5 (“gender equality”).

First, food collection campaigns were carried out. The non-perishables collected in these campaigns were taken to the local food bank for later distribution to vulnerable families with food needs. This activity promotes solidarity with families in vulnerable situations. To contribute to the general health and well-being of society blood donation days, using mobile units and qualified health personnel, were organized. This activity raised awareness and created visibility of the importance of regular blood donation. Finally, gender equality was promoted, first, by recording videos for the TikTok social network and, second, by holding exhibitions, for example, on Women's Day (March 8; see Image 3), to promote access and gender equality in the field of science. Through these actions the organization transmitted its concern for social causes, which influences society in general. Its fight to achieve these SDGs shows that the center’s work does not end with the training of students; it provides much more value by contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of the wider society.



**Image 3** Woman's Day campaign. Source: Own design

### 2.3.3 Actions Linked to Economic SDGs

In this SDG dimension the center focused on carrying out activities to address SDG 4 (“quality education”), SDG 8 (“decent work and economic growth”), and SDG 12 (“responsible production and consumption”).

To address SDGs 4 and 8 a series of workshops were held to discuss entrepreneurship projects; qualitative techniques, such as focus groups, were employed. Similarly, through the Erasmus Project students can undertake their internships in other countries, learning their cultures and languages, which improves their employability by developing their multiculturalism. Being a vocational training center, the commitment to decent work is an objective where the organization can have a very positive impact given that its *raison d'être* is to provide students with job qualifications to facilitate their insertion into the labor market. To this end, it maintains an ongoing relationship with the business fabric of its host city (or alliance, as suggested in SDG 17), which allows it to identify the most requested professional qualifications, which it then provides through a wide and varied offer that allows students to be trained in the profiles most in demand. Similarly, to address economic SDG 12, responsible consumption was promoted by installing containers that classify waste into different categories (see Image 4). In this same line, fluorescent lamps were replaced by LED lights, which have lower energy consumption, and greater durability, and an automatic light switching (off and on) system was introduced. These actions led to more efficient energy consumption, which reduced the center's spend. To extend the life cycle of products, used classroom furniture and computer equipment in good condition were donated to not-for-profit organizations. These activities foster the circular economy process and promote awareness of responsible consumption and of the possibility of a second life for products that would previously have been discarded.



**Image 4** Waste management containers installed. Source: Own design

## 2.4 Analysis, Results, and Dissemination

Previous studies have indicated that socially responsible actions and, more specifically, social marketing activities carried out by private companies and public institutions have a key impact on the behavior of the society around them (Lämsä et al., 2008; Velte, 2020). In addition, these types of actions have been observed to have a positive impact on user-entity relationships (Aaker, 1996; Maignan et al. 1999).

To assess the impact of the actions carried out by the educational entity, at the end of the course a questionnaire was distributed among the students, teachers, and administration and services staff. Thus, it was possible to measure its users' perceptions of the fulfillment of the environmental, social, and economic SDGs, and key aspects such as the trust and user-organization identification (Bansal & Voyer, 2000) that determine individuals' attitudes and behaviors (e.g., loyalty).

The data collected showed that its fight to fulfill the SDGs had increased the trust of its users in the organization. This result is consistent with previous research since increased trust has been shown to be one of the most immediate consequences of a company's social performance (Martínez & Bosque, 2013). Its fight to attain the SDGs went further than just improving its users' trust in the organization. The users felt more identified with the organization, which increased their feeling of belonging to this educational community. When its users believe that an educational entity is predominantly altruistically motivated, they want to identify with it, and feel part of it, as they share the values it espouses, and want to behave like it (Sen et al., 2006). This will promote concerns for the environmental, social, and economic issues that affect society and prompt individuals to seek out how to make their own contribution.

Finally, the campaigns carried out raised awareness of the 2030 Agenda by incorporating its messages into the organization's communication campaigns. The actions taken were publicized through the organization's various existing

communication channels to transmit to the wider society its commitment to addressing environmental, social, and economic issues. This dissemination hugely increased the scope of the educational entity's actions and provided greater knowledge of its activities. Details of the campaigns were also posted on social networks such as Instagram and TikTok. TikTok's users are predominantly young, and the diffusion enhanced the visibility of the organization among this sector, resulting in an increase in requests for information about the center's educational offer. The visibility of the campaigns can influence and modify individuals' behaviors by orienting them toward values such as environmental preservation, appropriate management of resources, responsible consumption, and gender equality. This will improve society as a whole in environmental, social, and economic terms.

Communications about the center's environmental, social, and economic actions were not limited to social networks. The initiatives were publicized on the organization's website and regional newspapers carried news about them. Due to the center's commitment to the three SDG dimensions, it was awarded by the Government of Aragon a seal of quality that accredited the social commitment of its activities. This accreditation must be renewed annually, the center's plan cannot be based on isolated actions, it must reflect a real and continuous commitment to the fulfillment of the SDGs. Therefore, the organization's activities must not simply be a set of superficial practices designed to project a favorable image to the wider society, that is, not fit within the meaning of the term "greenwashing" (Seele & Gatti, 2017). The actions carried out by the educational center, and its continuous commitment to the priorities established in its strategic and marketing objectives, can provide long-term benefits to its stakeholders and society as a whole from an environmental, social, and economic perspective.

---

### 3 Conclusions

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda the SDGs have begun to be included in companies' strategies and social marketing actions. Achieving these objectives is the shared responsibility of all stakeholders. Organizations, particularly education sector entities that promote worker training, play important roles in sustainable development in countries and societies, since their activities influence and affect society. In this context, the social marketing campaigns that aim to integrate the SDGs and contribute to their achievement promote the acceptance of their inherent values among students, teachers, administrative staff, organizational stakeholders, and wider society (Kotler & Lee, 2008).

In conclusion, it is worth highlighting the importance of implementing the SDGs in educational institutions based on the development of continuous action plans over time. These actions contribute to the achievement of the goals and promote changes in the attitudes and behaviors of individuals in their daily lives. First, the actions contribute to the preservation and care of the environment. Campaigns that promote recycling, the responsible use of resources, and awareness of responsible water consumption can reduce the environmental impact that each individual has on the

planet. In the same way, these actions also contribute to the well-being of society as a whole. Collaboration with institutions which provide aid to the most disadvantaged, and social awareness about the need to participate in altruistic activities, such as blood donation, are good examples. Finally, the organization's goals, such as providing quality education, contribute to the economy. High-quality training produces efficient workers, which increases productivity.

The implementation of the SDGs in entities can transfer their organizational values and the philosophy of the 2030 Agenda to their stakeholders, increase trust toward the organizations and user-organization identification. This increases loyalty toward, and recommendations for, the educational center, very important issues. However, the benefits of the campaigns do not end here, they are also transmitted to wider society through the impact of the fulfillment of the SDGs and the publicization of the campaigns. This will help the citizenry be more aware of the challenges set by Agenda 2030, which can help them change their values, attitudes, and behaviors. In recent years social networks have become dynamic social marketing axes, given that their users contribute to the publicization of social causes through the platforms (Hestres, 2014). Thus, carrying out social marketing actions in an educational institution and publicizing them through social networks multiplies the effect of awareness raising and modification of attitudes and behaviors.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think that the integration process of the SDGs and the social marketing campaigns into the corporate strategy of this organization can be extrapolated to other entities? Why?

**Question 2**—Can the actions cited in this case inspire good business practices related to social marketing campaigns carried out by organizations integrating SDGs into their management models? What would be the advantages in terms of the environmental, social, and economic SDGs?

**Question 3**—Do you believe that integrating the SDGs into organizations' value chains will increase their users' loyalty? Why?

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

This case study examines the role of the SDGs as a social marketing tool in the education sector, specifically in vocational training. The education sector is a very suitable context for the study of the implementation of the SDGs, given that it focuses on training people and, thus, has a multiplier factor in the society of the present and the future. In the case study undertaken, an examination is made of an educational organization in the process of integrating environmental, social, and economic responsibilities into its value chain. This case describes the different steps



taken by the organization, the campaigns it developed over the period, and the results it obtained. The findings suggest that when its users believe that an educational entity is predominantly altruistically motivated in its implementation of the SDGs, they share the values it espouses and want to behave like it. The dissemination of the campaigns hugely increased the scope of the educational entity's actions and provided greater diffusion of the SDG among its stakeholders and the wider society. This will promote concerns for the environmental, social, and economic issues that affect society, and prompt individuals to seek out how to make their own contribution.

## Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

The potential audience for this chapter will be:

Undergraduate and master students coursing subjects regarding company management or courses take deal with social marketing, corporate social responsibility, and environmental awareness.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case can be taught in one 90-minute session. Previous formation on the UN's SDG would be beneficial.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think that the integration process of the SDGs and the social marketing campaigns into the corporate strategy of this organization can be extrapolated to other entities? Why?

**Question 2**—Can the actions cited in this case inspire good business practices related to social marketing campaigns carried out by organizations integrating SDGs into their management models? What would be the advantages in terms of the environmental, social, and economic SDGs?

**Question 3**—Do you believe that integrating the SDGs into organizations' value chains will increase their users' loyalty? Why?

## Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—Do you think that the integration process of the SDGs and the social marketing campaigns into the corporate strategy of this organization can be extrapolated to other entities? Why?*

Yes, both the SDG integration into the center's corporate strategy and the social marketing campaigns can be extrapolated to other entities. Organizations that decide

to apply this model for the implementation of the SDGs in their value chains must direct their efforts toward understanding the 2030 Agenda, and disseminating it to all the entity's agents, then analyze which of the agents, depending on the scope of their activities, will be susceptible to change. In the next phases, they must integrate the SDGs into their value chains by making a series of specific commitments in their corporate strategies. Thereafter, they should carry out actions in the three SDG areas, social, environmental, and economic, while maximizing the positive impacts, and minimizing the negative impacts, of these activities. Same is suggested in the case of the social marketing campaigns, these campaigns are easy to extrapolate to other entities. The entity can choose a social marketing campaign that matches with the values of the organization and organize different events with this purpose. Finally, they must analyze the effects of communicating their actions to all members of the organization and to society in general.

***Answer to Question 2—Can the actions cited in this case inspire good business practices related to social marketing campaigns carried out by organizations integrating SDGs into their management models? What would be the advantages in terms of the environmental, social, and economic SDGs?***

Yes, the actions cited in the text are examples of good business practices that can serve as references to continue disseminating the 2030 Agenda among organizations, given that they take account of the 2030 Agenda guidelines; they can be extended to all entities, and embrace the concept of doing more with less, which is very important as entities today must adapt to operating with scarce resources.

In the social field of the SDGs and social marketing campaigns, companies can follow the model of the center's actions by raising the awareness of their stakeholders and society in general about social vulnerability, the promotion of equality between men and women, avoiding gender discrimination, and by promoting health care and disease prevention. For example, in the case of avoiding gender discrimination several actions were made by the company such as building a huge bow and place on the center's façade in March 8th (International Women's Day). Creating videos discussing gender equality for the TikTok platform and then posting them.

In the environmental field of the SDGs, the educational center's actions can inspire other organizations to raise society's awareness about the effects of climate change, to implement programs to optimize the rational use of water, to minimize waste generation and to adopt circular economy processes. Actions such as the installation of automatic water supply disconnection systems to raise awareness about the inappropriate use and consumption of water. The introduction of a personal water footprint calculator and similar proposals to reduce the footprint. The development of awareness-raising activities about water scarcity and the need to adopt measures to achieve rational water use.




In the economic field of the SDGs, the center can serve as a reference for other educational centers that want to improve the economic situation of society in general. The center promotes its users' entrepreneurial skills, guides them to make responsible decisions in financial matters, and improves the work-related qualifications of its students to insert and promote them in the labor market.

**Answer to Question 3—Do you believe that integrating the SDGs into organizations’ value chains will increase their users’ loyalty? Why?**

Yes, users of organizations value actions motivated by reasons other than maximizing profit, that are philanthropic and altruistic and that provide social benefits. An orientation toward sustainability on the part of organizations helps develop a user-organization emotional connection that enhances the users’ trust in, and loyalty toward, organizations and increases their involvement in organizational activities. In addition, users become more prone to spread positive word-of-mouth to other potential customers in reviews and social networks.

Potential users value this form of personal communication, which they usually regard as more reliable than formal organizational advertising, and which they take account of when choosing services. This is particularly important in the educational context, where it is expected that students will be exposed, in addition to academic training, to ethical values that develop social commitment and critical thinking.

**Final activity.** *The table below shows some of the 2030 Agenda SDGs. Complete the table, indicating: (a) whether the SDG is social, environmental, or economic; (b) the actions that the entity carried out in relation to the SDG; (c) other actions it might have carried out.*

SDG	SDG: Social, environmental, or economic	Actions taken by the entity in this field	Other actions that could have been undertaken with this SDG
			
			
			

(continued)

SDG	SDG: Social, environmental, or economic	Actions taken by the entity in this field	Other actions that could have been undertaken with this SDG
			
			
			
			
			
			
			
			




(continued)

SDG	SDG: Social, environmental, or economic	Actions taken by the entity in this field	Other actions that could have been undertaken with this SDG
			
			
			
			
			
			




## Answer

SDG	SDG: Social, environmental, or economic	Actions taken by the entity in this field	Other actions that could have been undertaken with this SDG The answers are open. Some suggestions are made of possible proposed actions
	SOCIAL		


(continued)

SDG	SDG: Social, environmental, or economic	Actions taken by the entity in this field	Other actions that could have been undertaken with this SDG The answers are open. Some suggestions are made of possible proposed actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaign to collect products for the Aragon Food Bank to promote solidarity with vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer discounts on the entity’s services to vulnerable groups.</li> <li>• Introduce clothing donation campaigns for delivery to special employment centers, which can remodel the clothes and market them, as part of the circular economy.</li> <li>• Introduce campaigns to collect used toys for donation at Christmas to families without resources.</li> </ul>
	SOCIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blood donation day aimed at motivating regular donors to continue collaborating, and to encourage young people who had never donated to start doing so.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct first aid workshops.</li> <li>• Organize conferences to raise students’, teachers’, and workers’ awareness of the consumption of healthy foods.</li> <li>• Introduce disease prevention programs (e.g., anti-smoking programs).</li> <li>• Organize sports days.</li> </ul>
	SOCIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction by all center users of a large, purple fabric bow that was hung out on March 8 (International Women’s Day) on the center’s façade. The aim was to disseminate gender equality importance among students.</li> <li>• Videos discussing gender equality issues recorded by students and posted on the “TikTok” social network to avoid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement projects that enable both men and women to combine work and family life.</li> <li>• Hire women in vulnerable situations.</li> <li>• End gender stereotypes in the entity’s advertising.</li> <li>• Offer the center’s workers training courses on gender equality.</li> </ul>

(continued)



SDG	SDG: Social, environmental, or economic	Actions taken by the entity in this field	Other actions that could have been undertaken with this SDG The answers are open. Some suggestions are made of possible proposed actions
		gender discrimination among young people. • Exhibition of works on women and girls in science to reduce gender gap in STEM degrees.	
	ENVIRONMENTAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of automatic water supply disconnection systems to raise awareness about the inappropriate use and consumption of water.</li> <li>• Introduction of a personal water footprint calculator, proposals made to reduce the footprint.</li> <li>• Awareness-raising activities about water scarcity and the need to adopt measures to achieve rational water use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calculate the water footprint of the entire entity.</li> <li>• Install rainwater collectors.</li> <li>• Disseminate infographics through social networks about the rational use of water in one's daily life.</li> <li>• Institute fundraising campaign to aid NGOs working in countries with populations without access to safe drinking water.</li> </ul>
	ECONOMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebration of Entrepreneurship Week, entrepreneurship workshops and focus groups to discuss business ideas. The aim was to promote entrepreneurship among students.</li> <li>• Erasmus Projects, work placements in other countries, learning their culture and language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce finance training programs to improve workers' professional qualifications.</li> <li>• Offer promotion and professional development opportunities to employees.</li> <li>• Hire groups with job insertion challenges.</li> <li>• Hire local suppliers to promote local economic development.</li> </ul>
	ECONOMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of an innovation scheme to create business projects in the educational field that can be applied in the real world, motivating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce innovation into the entity's values, dedicating a percentage of the working day to carrying out innovation projects.</li> </ul>

(continued)

SDG	SDG: Social, environmental, or economic	Actions taken by the entity in this field	Other actions that could have been undertaken with this SDG The answers are open. Some suggestions are made of possible proposed actions
		students to participate in company seedbeds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the introduction of new technologies into the entity and train its workers so the technologies can be effectively implemented.</li> <li>• Invest in R&amp;D&amp;I to promote technological development and innovation in the entity's activities.</li> <li>• Promote business relationships with small-/medium-sized enterprises through processes that promote digitalization and business innovation.</li> </ul>
	ECONOMIC	<p>A series of efficient production and consumption measures were undertaken. The aim was to change consumption patterns toward a more responsible consumption and production.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fluorescent lamps were replaced by LEDs.</li> <li>• Installation of automatic time-based on/off switching system for the center's lighting and computer equipment.</li> <li>• Promotion of the circular economy through the donation of used furniture and computer equipment to not-for-profit organizations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use biodegradable, recyclable, or reusable materials in all organizational activities.</li> <li>• Invest in sustainable technologies.</li> <li>• Gradually remove products with high energy consumption (boilers, machinery, etc.).</li> <li>• Participate in conferences to disseminate the center's good practices in responsible production and consumption.</li> </ul>

(continued)



SDG	SDG: Social, environmental, or economic	Actions taken by the entity in this field	Other actions that could have been undertaken with this SDG The answers are open. Some suggestions are made of possible proposed actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of containers for recycling paper, cardboard, plastics, packaging, and batteries.</li> <li>• - Management of sanitary waste.</li> </ul>	
	ENVIRONMENTAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contest and exhibition of posters featuring proposals to address the effects of climate change. The purpose was to encourage people reconsider their daily habits in order to mitigate climate change and its harmful effects.</li> <li>• Development in class of practical cases to quantify the impact of an activity, people, and countries on greenhouse gas emissions. The aim was to avoid global warming, a challenge that involves all the agents in the society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the use of communal transport to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.</li> <li>• Use of renewable energies in the supply chain.</li> <li>• Investment in more sustainable and less carbon-intensive technologies.</li> <li>• Implement environmental management systems certification.</li> </ul>
	ENVIRONMENTAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation prepared by the students about new sustainability trends in companies which have developed biodegradable products and packaging. The aim is to improve society's opinion about companies that develop a sustainable value chain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy products made with recycled material.</li> <li>• Increase the use of biodegradable products and packaging.</li> <li>• Reduce paper use to avoid tree felling.</li> <li>• Undertake reforestation projects</li> </ul>

## References

- Aaker, D. A. (1996). *Building strong brands*. The Free Press.
- Bansal, H. S., & Voyer, P. A. (2000). Word-of-mouth processes within a services purchase decision context. *Journal of Service Research*, 3(2), 166–177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/109467050032005>
- Hestres, L. E. (2014). Preaching to the choir: Internet-mediated advocacy, issue public mobilization, and climate change. *New Media & Society*, 16(2), 323–339. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444813480361>
- Kotler, P., & Lee, N. (2008). *Social marketing: Influencing behaviors for good* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Lämsä, A. M., Vehkaperä, M., Puttonen, T., & Pesonen, H. L. (2008). Effect of business education on women and men students' attitudes on corporate responsibility in society. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 82(1), 45–58. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9561-7>
- Maignan, I., Ferrell, O., & Hult, G. (1999). Corporate citizenship: Cultural antecedents and business benefits. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 27(4), 455–469. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070399274005>
- Martínez, P., & Bosque, I. R. (2013). CSR and customer loyalty: The roles of trust, customer identification with the company and satisfaction. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 35, 89–99. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.05.009>
- Melewar, T. C., Foroudi, P., Dinnie, K., & Nguyen, B. (2018). The role of corporate identity management in the higher education sector: an exploratory case study. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 24(4), 337–359. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2017.1414073>
- SDG Compass. (2015). *The SDG Compass provides guidance for companies on how they can align their strategies as well as measure and manage their contribution to the realization of the SDGs*. Retrieved from: <https://sdgcompass.org/>
- Seele, P., & Gatti, L. (2017). Greenwashing revisited: In search of a typology and accusation-based definition incorporating legitimacy strategies. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 26(2), 239–252. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.1912>
- Sen, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Korschun, D. (2006). The role of corporate social responsibility in strengthening multiple stakeholder relationships: A field experiment. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 34(2), 158–166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070305284978>
- The Global Goals. (2015). 'We the people' for the global goals. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpqVmvMCmp0>
- Velte, P. (2020). Determinants and consequences of corporate social responsibility assurance: a systematic review of archival research. *Society and Business Review*, 16(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBR-05-2020-0077>

---

## Part II

### Cases on Regional Inequalities

This part includes the following:

Campaigns to fight against depopulation: Japan case and Portugal case

Campaigns to promote local development and the consumption of local products:  
Setúbal case

Campaigns for the development of sustainable tourism: smart cities (Gijón) case and  
“Colors and a pinch of salt” case



# Social Marketing Strategies to Attract Immigrants to Depopulated Areas: The Case of Hyogo Prefecture in Japan

Bình Nghiêm-Phú

## Learning Objectives

1. To explore the social marketing strategies that a prefecture in Japan is employing to attract people to immigrate to its depopulated areas to help sustain these communities.
2. To search for solutions for achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

## 1 Introduction

Depopulation is a serious problem that many developed countries face, including Japan. After reaching its peak in 2009 (128,555,189 people), the Japanese population decreased in 2010 (Worldometer, 2022). Low birth rates, impressive longevity, and unstable socioeconomic conditions are reasons behind this constant decrease. This trend seriously affects many areas since people, particularly the younger ones, want to live and work in bigger cities. However, due to COVID-19, people in urban areas in Japan have been seriously considering a lifestyle change. In 2021, the population of Tokyo, the most significant metropolitan, reduced for the first time in 26 years because many had left there to live in less populated places (Kobayashi, 2022).

Hyogo, a prefecture in the West of Japan, has been one of the most popular immigration destinations (ITmedia, 2021). Hyogo is a large prefecture (approximately 8400 square kilometers) with a considerable population (about 5.4 million

---

B. Nghiêm-Phú (✉)

University of Hyogo, Kobe, Japan

e-mail: [binhnghiem@em.u-hyogo.ac.jp](mailto:binhnghiem@em.u-hyogo.ac.jp)

**Fig. 1** Kansai region map.

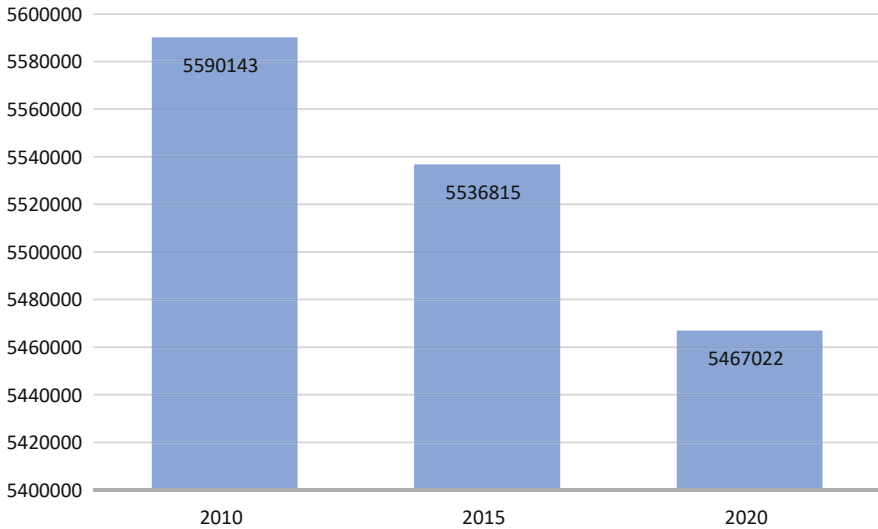
Source: 白地図専門店  
(Shirochizu senmonten)  
(2022)



people) (Fig. 1). Nonetheless, the people mainly concentrate in big cities like Kobe, Himeji, and Amagasaki. The situations of other cities and towns are less fortunate than these big cities. Therefore, Hyogo has been implementing many strategies to attract people from other prefectures or local areas to relocate to its communities.

This case analyzes the methods implemented by Hyogo Prefecture from the perspectives of social marketing theory and stakeholder theory to identify the appeals of such practices. It will provide important insights into the management of immigration to depopulated areas to help sustain these regions in the long term.

This case uses primary data gathered at two cities and secondary data found on official websites, promotional materials, and social media platforms. The stakeholder theory guides the data collection process to ensure that the voices of the local government, the locals, and the immigrants are all heard. In addition, the social marketing theory leads the data analysis process to identify the appeals of the immigration promotion methods implemented by the local government. Specifically, this case focuses on locals' and immigrants' attitudes toward such methods. The perspectives of the locals and immigrants involve the internal and external marketing efforts, respectively. If the attitudes are positive, the methods can be regarded as the strong ones, and vice versa.



**Fig. 2** Hyogo's population change. Source: City Population (2022) and Japan Statistic Bureau (2022)

## 2 Case Development

Hyogo's population has decreased over the last ten years (Fig. 2—see Table 2 in Appendix for more detail). Big cities like Kobe and Himeji have lost the most substantial numbers of people. Smaller towns, such as Ichikawa and Kamikawa, have also seriously reduced their sizes. Akashi, a tiny neighbor of Kobe, and Kato, a city located north of Kobe, are the few exceptions, with a somewhat healthy increase in population.

Hyogo Prefecture's government, in their 2030 outlook, predicts that Hyogo's population will keep decreasing. The only population fragments that will increase will be older people (over 75 years of age) and tourists. The prefecture has no feasible solution to improve its natural birth rate. Instead, it has relied heavily on strategies to attract people from other areas, especially those currently residing in larger cities (e.g., Tokyo), to immigrate to Hyogo.

Specifically, the prefecture has been running a website<sup>1</sup> emphasizing solely on this issue. Two offices in Kobe and Tokyo provided consultation to those interested, together with the online service. Advertisements and promotional events have been periodically undertaken, primarily via online channels such as YouTube.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup><https://www.yume-hyogo.com/>

<sup>2</sup>Some examples include:

Hyogo's video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QppJ\\_S8FZZ0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QppJ_S8FZZ0)

Itami's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C18YAutQJuw>

**Table 1** Immigration facilitation strategies

	Akashi	Itami	Kato
Housing		– Up to 500,000 yen for under-40 couples	– Support for newly married couples of up to 300,000 yen – Support for working households of up to 500,000 yen – Support for repairing vacant houses of up to 1,500,000 yen
Childcare	– Free for second and subsequent children	– Free for children aged 4–5 at licensed facilities or financial support of up to 25,700 yen at other facilities	– Free for children under five years old – Financial support of 30,000 yen for children under five years old
Healthcare	– Free for children under 15 years old (junior high schoolers)	– Free or reduced for children under 15 years old (junior high schoolers)	– Free for children under 15 years old (junior high schoolers)
Education	– Small classes in elementary school (up to 30 students per class) – After-class activities provided at 28 elementary schools – Intakes of up to 2000 children at childcare facilities		

Source: Adapted from 夢かなうひょうご (Yumekanau Hyogo) (2022)

In addition, each city has devised and implemented its strategies to attract immigrants better (Table 1). Overall, localities in Hyogo have been focusing on providing support in four major areas: housing, childcare, healthcare, and education. The specific support often depends on the budget and facilities available in each city. If the immigration or the post-immigration life is regarded as a product, such financial and structural support can be considered sales promotion strategies. The agents in charge of these strategies are the local governments and their staff.

Moreover, veteran immigrants have also been participating in these marketing campaigns. In a sense, they can help broadcast the information about immigration on

Kato's video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XW42Kn\\_Kx8Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XW42Kn_Kx8Q)

Toyoka's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UPciiyOV44&t=271s>

Taka's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IADelaFWz0c>



**Fig. 3** A glimpse of Akashi. Source: photo AC (2022)

social media platforms, such as YouTube and Twitter, or via word-of-mouth channels. In another sense, these individuals will support the potential immigrants and newcomers to gather trial experiences, find suitable land, house, and job, and settle in the new environments.

The marketing activities aiming at potential immigrants from the outside are part of the external marketing strategy. They are designed to affect immigrants' intentions and decisions concerning relocation in the short term. In the long run, they are expected to assist the immigrants' daily work, ensure their satisfaction with life, and improve their subjective well-being. Depending on the locality's natural and social conditions and the immigrants' expectations, the appeal of such activities may differ. For example, immigrants to Akashi appreciate the city's geographical location and other support for childbearing and rearing (Fig. 3). Alternatively, immigrations to Kato favor the natural environment guaranteeing a more relaxing lifestyle and the social environment created by the friendly residents (Fig. 4). These observations are obtained after cross-checking the information broadcasted by local governments on their official websites and social media platforms (e.g., YouTube) and the information contributed by the immigrants on their personal social media pages (e.g., Twitter). The following quotes help demonstrate the abovementioned observations.

*Family, 30s, currently residing in Akashi city: I [the husband] chose Akashi because it is easy to commute to our workplaces. Another reason was that Akashi is so close to the sea that my wife is fond of. In addition, I [the wife] heard that it is easy to raise children here. When I was pregnant, I got a free taxi ticket, which helped me to go to the obstetrics and*





**Fig. 4** A glimpse of Kato. Source: photo AC (2022)

*gynecology department. [When the baby was born] the diaper delivery staff checked the baby's condition, so I felt relieved. There also is financial support so you can raise your child with peace of mind.*<sup>3</sup>

Female, 20s, currently residing in Kato city: “*When I first came to the head office [of my company] in Kato, I was surprised because the city was more back-country than I expected. However, I decided [to relocate] without hesitation because the job offer was what I wanted to do. . . [Life here] is convenient because everything you need is within walking distance. Even though there is only one train from Kakogawa Station, the first train, it still is commutable. I think it's easier to have a car, but I'm not confident in driving . . . Maybe I will get in a car someday. [Overall,] Hyogo has a fashionable city of Kobe, is close to the sea, and has mountains and ski resorts in the north. Isn't it attractive that you can find everything in one prefecture, from shopping to the outdoors?*”<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, there should be some internal marketing initiatives targeting the locals to inform them about the goal regarding immigration and to gain their support on this issue. Usually, the goals are included in the development plans, and residents may be consulted about these contents to some degree. Nonetheless, the

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Akashi city's website <https://www.city.akashi.lg.jp/> (2022)

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Akashi city's website <https://www.city.akashi.lg.jp/> (2022)

actual internal marketing efforts are largely missing. This observation was reached after analyzing official documents released by the local governments and discussing the issue with a colleague researcher.

Surprisingly, the locals do not care much about the immigration issue. For example, there are only a few opinions of Akashi's residents, while there are none from the people in Kato on Twitter. Among the former's tweets, the majority have a positive attitude. However, one individual criticizes the overspending on immigrants, and another links immigration with tax revenue increase. To further confirm these observations, some fieldwork research was undertaken, interviewing the residents in Akashi and Kato.<sup>5</sup> Below are some relevant quotes.

Male, 40s, currently residing in Akashi city: *I favor [increasing the number of immigrants to Akashi City]. The more residents there are, the better the governmental services will probably be, and the more taxes will generate. . . I also think that the local government should provide some after-sales or follow-up services [in addition to the initial support]. It is necessary to create an environment where it is easy [for the immigrants] to get into local community associations.*<sup>6</sup>

Female, 30s, currently residing in Kato city: *I think it is good [to increase the number of immigrants to Kato City]. If the number of people increases, the service will improve, and the taxes will also increase. [Regarding the promotion policies], since child-rearing support is substantial, I have no complaints about this. However, as a local, I feel bad if people move here only because of governmental support.*<sup>7</sup>

---

### 3 Conclusion

Hyogo Prefecture and its communities are applying social marketing to help tackle the prominent issue of depopulation. There are specific strategies commonly implemented by the prefectural government and many policies initiated by the local administrations. Overall, they help attract outside immigrants to Hyogo and its cities and towns in the first place and ensure decent living and working conditions there later on.

However, although the marketing strategies are mostly positively evaluated, they are designed mainly for the attention and benefit of the immigrants, the external audience. An internal marketing approach aiming at the locals, those heavily involved in and affected by any immigration-oriented policies, is

---

<sup>5</sup>The author had an assistant who undertook some fieldwork research and interviewed the residents in Akashi and Kato.

<sup>6</sup>Author's fieldwork interview.

<sup>7</sup>Author's fieldwork interview.

largely missing. An extension in the social marketing efforts' focus is particularly needed.

Overall, social marketing strategies can support the promotion of immigration and life after immigration (the product). Nonetheless, the actual economic, sociocultural, natural, and political conditions must be created, maintained, and delivered correctly to guarantee the real product quality. The impacts of social marketing, then, can be maximized.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What do you think about the strategies implemented by Hyogo Prefecture and its cities? If you are a Japanese citizen or a foreigner permanently residing in Japan, are you willing to move to Hyogo? What do you think the local governments could do better to attract more immigrants in terms of external marketing? What do you think the local governments should do to inform the residents about their visions and ensure their positive attitudes toward long-term and large-scale immigration?

**Question 2**—Is your current place of living or origin facing the depopulation problem? What does the local government do to address this issue? What do you think they could do better?

**Question 3**—How much do you think social marketing can contribute to addressing the depopulation issue? Do you think similar strategies could be used to manage the overpopulation problem?

---

## Appendix

**Table 2** Hyogo population

	2010	2015	2020	2010–2015 change	2015–2020 change
Kobe	1,544,200	1,537,272	1525,152	−6928	−12,120
Himeji	536,270	535,664	530,495	−606	−5169
Nishinomiya	482,640	487,850	485,587	5210	−2263
Amagasaki	453,748	452,563	459,593	−1185	7030
Akashi	290,959	293,409	303,601	2450	10,192
Kakogawa	266,937	267,435	260,878	498	−6557
Takarazuka	225,700	224,903	226,432	−797	1529
Itami	196,127	196,883	198,138	756	1255
Kawanishi	156,423	156,375	152,321	−48	−4054
Sanda	114,216	112,691	109,238	−1525	−3453
Ashiya	93,238	95,350	93,922	2112	−1428
Takasago	93,901	91,030	87,722	−2871	−3308
Toyooka	85,592	82,250	77,489	−3342	−4761
Miki	81,009	77,178	75,294	−3831	−1884
Tatsuno	80,518	77,419	74,316	−3099	−3103
Tamba	67,757	64,660	61,471	−3097	−3189
Ono	49,680	48,580	47,562	−1100	−1018
Ako	50,523	48,567	45,892	−1956	−2675
Minamiawaji	49,834	46,912	44,137	−2922	−2775
Kasai	47,993	44,313	42,700	−3680	−1613
Awaji	46,459	43,977	41,967	−2482	−2010
Sumoto	47,254	44,258	41,236	−2996	−3022
Kato	40,181	40,310	40,645	129	335
Tamba- Sasayama	43,263	41,490	39,611	−1773	−1879
Nishiwaki	42,802	40,866	38,673	−1936	−2193
Shiso	40,938	37,773	34,819	−3165	−2954
Harima	33,183	33,739	33,604	556	−135
Taishi	33,438	33,690	33,477	252	−213
Inami	31,026	31,020	30,268	−6	−752
Inagawa	31,739	30,838	29,680	−901	−1158
Asago	32,814	30,805	28,989	−2009	−1816
Aioi	31,158	30,129	28,355	−1029	−1774
Yabu	26,501	24,288	22,129	−2213	−2159
Fukusaki	19,830	19,738	19,377	−92	−361
Taka	23,104	21,200	19,261	−1904	−1939
Kami	19,696	18,070	16,064	−1626	−2006
Sayo	19,265	17,510	15,863	−1755	−1647
Kamigori	16,636	15,224	13,879	−1412	−1345
Shin-onsen	16,004	14,819	13,318	−1185	−1501
Ichikawa	13,288	12,300	11,231	−988	−1069
Kamikawa	12,289	11,452	10,616	−837	−836
Total	5,590,143	5,536,815	5,467,022	−53,328	−69,793

Source: Adapted from City Population (2022) and Japan Statistic Bureau (2022)

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

This case adopts social marketing theory to analyze the strategies aiming at attracting immigrants to various localities in a depopulated prefecture in Japan. Also supported by stakeholder theory, this case assesses both external and internal customers' opinions about these strategies.

The lecturers and learners can use the design of this case to examine the situations in their preferred locations. After defining the involved stakeholders (the immigrants and the locals or the external and internal customers, respectively), lecturers and learners can visit these locations and the related organizations' websites and libraries to collect information about their immigration promotion programs. They then can analyze the collected materials to identify the specific strategies focusing on welcoming the immigrants and persuading the locals. Finally, lecturers and learners can refer to other websites, social media platforms, and probably actual fieldwork to gather and authenticate the stakeholders' opinions about these strategies.

This case is suitable for a group of 6–8 students. Two sub-groups of 3–4 students can be formed to address the issues of each of the two stakeholders (either the immigrants or the locals). They can compare or contrast their observations to validate and deepen their understanding.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

#### Target Audience

Undergraduate students interested in social marketing and sustainable development can use this case. It is also relevant for local administrators who want to understand better their customers (the immigrants and the locals) to provide more timely services and support for them.

#### Teaching Methods and Equipment

Each student should have a personal computer and access to the Internet. They can search for information and materials and save them in separate folders. If necessary, they can consider visiting the local immigration administration office or library to talk to the officers in charge and gather more information. They can further implement on-site or online fieldwork to talk to immigrants and locals to understand their opinions.

The instructor helps the students by explaining the purpose and method of the case. They also instruct students to collect and analyze the data. The instructor may also need to help their students contact and talk with the involved officers, locals, and immigrants.

#### Teaching Instruction

The instructor needs to get familiar with the location and its features in advance. They may also need to create and utilize connections with the involved stakeholders to facilitate their students' learning when necessary.

## Learning

1. To explore the social marketing strategies that a prefecture in Japan is employing to attract people to immigrate to its depopulated areas to help sustain these communities.
2. To search for solutions for achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

### Duration

The case requires three to four 60-minute sessions = 180–240 minutes (Table 3).

**Table 3** Teaching instruction plan

Discussion point	Time required (Minutes)	Teaching strategies
Introduction	10	The instructor begins the case by introducing the depopulation issue and the potential of social marketing in addressing this issue.
Briefing on the stakeholder theory	10	The instructor explains the stakeholder theory. They identify the two main stakeholders in the case: the immigrants and the locals.
Summary of the case	10	The instructor introduces the location. They explain to the students how to collect information about the immigration promotion strategies of the place.
Identification and collection of secondary information	30	The instructor helps the students to collect and store the information.
Analysis of secondary information	60	The instructor explains the analysis method. They show the students how to match the stakeholders' opinions with the specific immigration promotion strategies.
Additional information collection and analysis	60	The instructor asks the students to gather and analyze additional information to validate the previous observations <u>if necessary</u> .
Summary of key findings	50	The instructor asks the students to summarize the essential findings and discuss the discussion questions.
Conclusion	10	The instructor summarizes and concludes the sessions.

Source: Author's composition

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What do you think about the strategies implemented by Hyogo Prefecture and its cities? If you are a Japanese citizen or a foreigner permanently residing in Japan, are you willing to move to Hyogo? What do you think the local governments could do better to attract more immigrants in terms of external marketing? What do you think the local governments should do to inform the residents about their visions and ensure their positive attitudes toward long-term and large-scale immigration?

**Question 2**—Is your current place of living or origin facing the depopulation problem? What does the local government do to address this issue? What do you think they could do better?

**Question 3**—How much do you think social marketing can contribute to addressing the depopulation issue? Do you think similar strategies could be used to manage the overpopulation problem?

## Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—What do you think about the strategies implemented by Hyogo Prefecture and its cities? If you are a Japanese citizen or a foreigner permanently residing in Japan, are you willing to move to Hyogo? What do you think the local governments could do better to attract more immigrants in terms of external marketing? What do you think the local governments should do to inform the residents about their visions and ensure their positive attitudes toward long-term and large-scale immigration?*

This is an open-ended question with a free response. Each student can freely contribute their opinions. The critical point is that social marketing strategies' internal and external aspects should be acknowledged and adopted.

*Answer to Question 2—Is your current place of living or origin facing the depopulation problem? What does the local government do to address this issue? What do you think they could do better?*

This also is an open-ended question with a free response. Each student should use either their current place of living or origin to demonstrate the (non)existence of the depopulation issue and how it is tackled.

*Answer to Question 3—How much do you think social marketing can contribute to addressing the depopulation issue? Do you think similar strategies could be used to manage the overpopulation problem?*

This also is an open-ended question with a free response. Each student can freely contribute their opinions about the role of social marketing in addressing the depopulation issue. They can compare social marketing with other strategies adopted to tackle the same problem, such as economic and infrastructure development.

On the other hand, students can talk about the overpopulation issue if it exists in their current place of living or origin. They can discuss the use of social marketing to persuade people to move out of or not move into the overpopulated areas. They can

link the depopulation and overpopulation issues together to seek mutual strategies for both.

---

## References

- ITmedia. (2021, October 27). 「移住希望者の関心度が高い都道府県」ランキングTOP10! 1位は「長野県」【2021年上半期】 [Top 10 rankings of “prefectures with high interest of immigrants”! First place is “Nagano Prefecture” (1st half of 2021)]. Retrieved March 15, 2022, from ITmedia: <https://nlab.itmedia.co.jp/research/articles/431278/>
- Kobayashi, T. (2022, February 02). *Pandemic-hit Tokyo reports population drop, 1st in 26 years*. Retrieved March 15, 2022, from The Asahi Shimbun: <https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/14538387#:~:text=Due%20to%20the%20COVID%2D19,at%2013%2C988%2C129%20as%20of%20Jan.>
- Worldometer. (2022). *Japan population*. Retrieved March 15, 2022, from Worldometer: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/japan-population/>





# Inland Paladins or Wanderlusts? Fighting Rural Depopulation and Promoting Sustainable Development in an Inland City of Portugal

Marisa R. Ferreira and Beatriz Casais

## 1 Introduction

A healthy and sustainable planet is an essential foundation for the overall well-being and further advancement of humanity and to cope with a wide range of human-induced damages, including climate change, deforestation, or depopulation is a great challenge.<sup>1</sup> Young people can play a significant role in combating depopulation if they connect the relevant knowledge, science, and technology. Innovative approaches can bring young job seekers back to local communities, giving them an opportunity to create sustainable livelihoods while addressing several impacts.<sup>2</sup>

Portugal has faced, in the last decades, several challenges, like population loss, ageing, and unemployment, particularly in rural territories. Local proposals to deal with these problems, like depopulation, sustainable development, and territorial inequalities, include better networks, internationalization, jobs, and urban regeneration, and for most rural municipalities, the main issues are strategies to attract people and companies.<sup>3</sup>

With the purpose of striving the substantial reduction of population and territorial inequalities, a Portuguese inland city, from the Northeast of Portugal—Bragança,

---

<sup>1</sup>Ekins et al. (2019), United Nations (2020).

<sup>2</sup>United Nations (2021).

<sup>3</sup>Almeida (2018).

---

M. R. Ferreira (✉)

CIICESI, ESTG, Politécnico do Porto, Porto, Portugal

e-mail: [mferreira@estg.ipp.pt](mailto:mferreira@estg.ipp.pt)

B. Casais

University of Minho, School of Economics and Management, Braga, Portugal

CICS.NOVA.UMinho, Braga, Portugal

e-mail: [bcasais@eeg.uminho.pt](mailto:bcasais@eeg.uminho.pt)

wants to attract remote workers to the city. “Bragança—Freedom to Start Over” is the municipality campaign, in a contest/competition format, with the aim of promoting the city to persons with the possibility of developing their activity remotely. This chapter explores the case of a pilot experience, with the duration of one month—May 2021, which gave the opportunity to four remote workers/families to live in Bragança. The campaign was offering the accommodation and the Internet, free of charge, as well as a welcome basket with regional products and some vouchers for several activities and experiences that can be done in the region. This campaign is part of the URBACT Cooperation Program, a project funded by the European Union, which promotes the implementation of pilot actions as a way of learning and exchanging experiences to promote sustainable development in European cities, and its main aims are to make known all the potential of this region and inspire those who have the possibility to keep working remotely, even after the pandemic.

---

## 2 Case Development

In the beginning of 2021, Portugal, as well as many other countries, was living another difficult period, as a consequence of the pandemic period and the several lockdowns and mobility restrictions. Within this context, a small city from the Northeast of Portugal—Bragança—developed a program that invites people from any place to live in Bragança for one month, offering several benefits (accommodation, Internet, among others). The idea was to give an incentive to work remotely, using the argument that in a small city people can be in permanent contact with nature and find a good balance between professional activity and personal life.

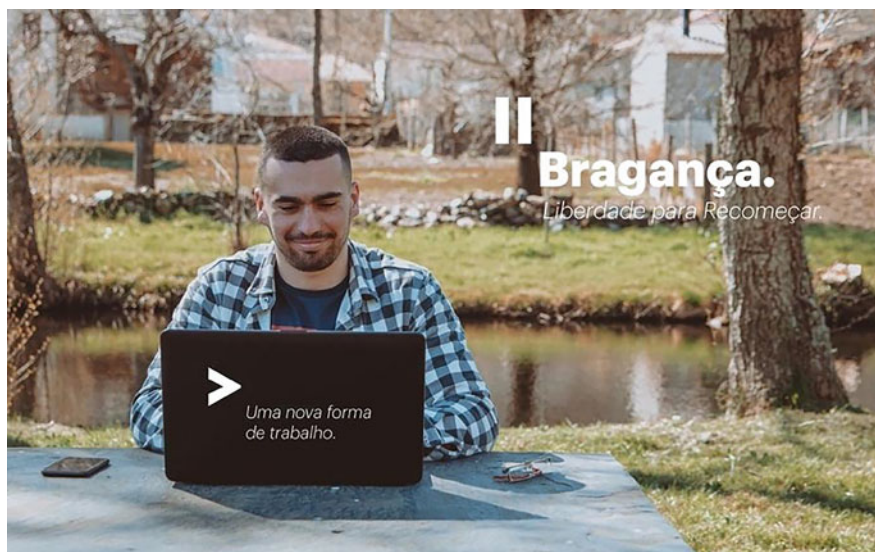
Bragança, is a city and municipality in the Northeast of Portugal, within the subregion of Trás-os-Montes, is at 255 km Northeast of Porto, 515 km from Lisbon, and 22 km from the Spanish border (of the 18 Portuguese district capitals, Bragança is the farthest from Lisbon). The municipality population, is at the moment 34,589 inhabitants, and in ten years the population decreased 1.7%. The senior population has grown 18.9% in ten years, and 28.1% of population has more than 65 years old, while only 21.5% of population is below 25 years old.<sup>4</sup> Approximately 16% of the population is involved in the secondary industrial sector, while 60% is associated with the tertiary service sector, although there has been a positive evolution, industrial activities still remain weak, hindered by the evolution of the market in this peripheric borderland region of Portugal.<sup>5</sup>

The city council, through its tourism office, in March 2021, launched the campaign “Bragança. Freedom to Start Over” and our chapter analyze it through the lens of a social marketing communication campaign identifying its consumer orientation, the exchange process and its main challenges.

---

<sup>4</sup>INE (2021).

<sup>5</sup>Porto Editora (2022).



**Fig. 1** Campaign image. Source: Bragança Municipality Website (March 2021)

Promoting a territory in the interior of Portugal as an ideal place to work at a distance, inviting young couples/families to a new beginning, was the motto for the municipality through this pilot project. The campaign was presented in several media (newspapers, TV, Facebook, and municipality website), showing general information<sup>6</sup> and a promotional video.<sup>7</sup>

The campaign shows people working outdoors, as shown in Fig. 1, referring to nature as a work context, so elements such as tranquility and silence are intended to work as attractions for a more pleasant working day, working as a reward. Aesthetic nature functions as the space in which professional possibilities are simultaneously for vacations and work, i.e. the relationships between people and space/nature become more visible. Nature assumes several configurations and geometries, where the pendular movement life–work is very organic and suggest a big empathy with nature, shared by the remote workers. The work gains a certain bucolic and quiet touch, generated by some kind of individual freedom and intends to present a good balance between professional and personal life. The professional life seems to be running quite smoothly (Fig. 1) and being inserted in a small country town allows





<sup>6</sup>We can see some examples here:

<https://www.meiosepublicidade.pt/2021/03/braganca-procura-nomadas-digitais-viverem-um-mes-no-concelho-video/>

<https://www.jpn.up.pt/2021/03/24/braganca-oferece-casa-e-internet-a-quatro-trabalhadores-durante-um-mes/>

<sup>7</sup>Available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UW7w3JqQi7s>

**Table 1** Family composition, professions, and place of living

Family 1	Family 2	Family 3	Family 4
			
Journalist Communication assistant 33 and 31 years old	Anthropologist Audiovisual producer 44 and 48 years old	Professional photographer Video producer 30 and 36 years old	Professional photographer Online yoga instructor 33 and 31 years old 4 years old
Bragança City Center	Rio de Onor	Santa Comba de Rossas	Montesinho

one to escape the traffic and stress of the end of the day, again emphasizing rewards that work has potential positive impacts of choosing to live in a more rural area.

### 3 Results

In just eight days the campaign received around 2000 applications from Portugal and other parts of the world such as Brazil, Spain, United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, Russia, Norway, and many others.<sup>8</sup> From Portugal, of the around 1500 applications, 43% were from Lisbon and 22% from Porto; the average age of the applicants was 36, around 60% were single and 33% married; and the candidates' areas of training and work were many: architecture, engineering, computer science, education, management, photography, literature, law, communication, among others.<sup>9</sup>

The selection procedure happened during April 2021, and in the end four families (see composition and place of living in Table 1) had the opportunity to enjoy the experience of living and working in Bragança, during the month of May 2021, in urban and rural areas. A social experience for active people with the desire to explore different work environments and the possibility to develop their work remotely, and a new approach to promote Bragança and the local economy, showing it as the ideal destination to work remotely, far from home, with the flexibility and freedom to enjoy life.

The families were invited to share their experiences, during the month, among their networks and social media and all their social media contacts were publicly available (@mariocunhaphoto, @theocean yoga, @ivoneto1988, @hugocarosa, @chiarapussetti, @mia\_freitas, @flicko and @cultourista). Also, the experience was recorded in a documentary, where these new members of the community shared their experiences.

<sup>8</sup>Stanciu (2021).

<sup>9</sup>Câmara Municipal de Bragança (2021).

“Bragança. Freedom to Start Over” is a small-scale Action of the project “Find your Greatness,” the first European program for the development of branding strategies for smart cities, under the URBACT Cooperation Program and the impact, associated with the territorial marketing strategy, allowed a Return on Investment (ROI) of €1,825,507.00.

---

## 4 Discussion and Lessons Learned

Challenges facing social marketing are very multifaceted,<sup>10</sup> and the complex problems we are facing call social marketing actions to extend its potential solutions to new problems. In this campaign the main goal is fighting rural depopulation and promoting sustainable development in an inland city of Portugal, through a short-term set of benefits that work as attractors to spend a period of time (one month) in an inland city. In terms of discussion and lessons learned, we should analyze the purpose and results of this social marketing campaign, so we should consider if (1) the regional promotion of Bragança is better off and (2) if the rural depopulation is being worked properly and effectively. We should also identify and understand the relevance of a link between rural depopulation and sustainable development in a rural area.

The first objective is linked with regional promotion. “Bragança. Freedom to Start Over” showed Bragança region—city and rural areas—as a territory where remote work can be enhanced and valued and, after the pandemic, can be aligned with a strategy of village revitalization, economic growth, and strengthening social cohesion. This campaign is also aligned with the increasing phenomenon of digital nomads, who choose Portugal to live, due to the peaceful environment and quality of life provided in the country. The unique features of inland territories, where nature, culture, and gastronomy are authentic, are presented as an asset for the future of these territories, which for years were places of departure and now have become places of opportunity and return.<sup>11</sup> All the participants, the ones that were chosen, and the ones that applied, as well as the general public who had contact with the campaign (1) heard about Bragança in a more detailed way and (2) a more positive image of the region was conveyed before and after the campaign. Before, through the campaign communication and after with the presentation of the selected participants, as well as a final documentary on how the experience went. The positive highlights include the importance and the role of a rural area; the positive impact of geography in the equilibrium of time to family and work; and the meaning of nature in day-to-day life. Generally, new narratives about the rural community life and development were emphasized, and the imaginative polyphony of contemporary societies now includes a more dynamic image from a rural area.

---

<sup>10</sup>Domegan et al. (2016).

<sup>11</sup>Martínez (2019).

The second objective was to show a friendly environment to live, to people that might consider settle their life far from big cities. The main question is if after the minimum settling-in period, people would effectively stay or if it is a temporary solution. Although the experience was considered extremely positive for the participants, none decided to stay in Bragança for (1) a longer period or (2) to live permanently in Bragança, although some families consider to buy a second house in the region. In this sense, the result is not exactly what was expected, although it is very positive in terms of awareness for the territory. Vitality and beauty from the region were important motifs that define the region, and the experience had a huge presence in social media, through the participants Instagram, during the month of the experience, and in more generic social media (for example, being part of the TV news during some days), so the image of the region was positively presented and we do not know if some medium-term effect will remain, causing a potential contagion effect, or whether other people (without incentives) may consider move to Bragança because the region became more known and eventually fashionable, so future research might investigate the existence (or not) of this impact. The city council announced in September 2022 the increase in tourism, namely the increase in stays and rewards in hospitality in 5.08% and 6.76%, respectively. These data respects, however to international markets and not an internal mobility from the main cities of Portugal to Bragança. The dynamics in tourism is particularly evident in rural tourism, what may show a trend of wanderlusts looking for adventure and experiences closed to nature. In a long term it may impact new life-styles, with mobility, but in a short term that outcome is not visible to sustain social marketing effectiveness of the campaign explored in this case.

Finally, the link between rural depopulation and sustainable development in a rural area is addressed by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (specifically SDG 11), which states that there must be a balance between urban and rural environments, because only then sustainability can succeed. The effect of rural depopulation goes beyond abandoned, as it affects both the environment and people's quality of life.<sup>12</sup> This campaign demonstrates that local authorities are concerned about the declining population in certain areas, and the campaign's goal is not only to create a positive image of the region but also to have an impact on repopulating those areas.

Reflecting on sustainable development goals, this case considers the importance of attracting the mobility of population from cities to rural environments with the purpose of fighting depopulation and developing inland territories. One important reflection is about the sustainability of the hug social marketing intervention by giving a prize to attract new citizens. It is important to understand whether the reward facilitates a deep motivation for that mobility in long term.

Also, after pandemic experience and the emergence of telework becoming a regular mode of professional activity, the reward may be questionable when the slow lifestyle in rural areas may become a new normal for busy and cosmopolitan professionals. The shortened working week may favor weekend escapes, reducing

---

<sup>12</sup>López-Penabad et al. (2022).

the need of whole change of life. However, the economic crisis which is expected with the scale of prices in food items may incentivize the proximity to farms and own agriculture production.

---

## 5 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think that social marketing intervention is adequate for fighting rural depopulation? Why?

**Question 2**—What do you think about the participants? Do you think they are inland paladins (true supporters of life in rural cities) or wanderlusts (adventurers trying new and diverse experiences)?

**Question 3**—Depending on your previous answer, what profile should be chosen for audience of this campaign?

**Question 4**—Is this campaign strategy sustainable? After the minimum settling-in period, people will effectively stay or is it a temporary experience?

**Question 5**—Does the campaign have the potential to become contagious to other persons? (are people—without incentives—willing to move, even temporarily, to a city with these characteristics)?

**Question 6**—What type of campaigns related to rural depopulation have been carried out in your country? How long did they last and what impacts they have?

**Question 7**—Are there any campaigns related to rural depopulation in your country? If yes, please, explain them.

**Acknowledgments** Marisa R. Ferreira gratefully acknowledges financial support from FCT—Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (Portugal), national funding through project UIDB/04728/2020.

Beatriz Casais gratefully acknowledges financial support from FCT—Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P., within the scope of the project «UIDB/04647/2020» of CICS.NOVA—Interdisciplinary Centre of Social Sciences of Universidade Nova de Lisboa.

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

The municipality of Bragança developed a campaign called “Bragança. Freedom to Start Over” with the purpose of attracting a new population moving from the seaside big cities of Portugal to the interior of the country, which is facing depopulation. Contextualized within a social marketing approach aimed at achieving SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), namely striving depopulation, this case study explores the communication tactics used to attract families to the region in the context of telework or being digital nomads, and discuss that in a short-term evaluation the campaign did not convert in new residents. However, it is visible an important impact in tourism, namely in the form of rural tourism, comparing to

pre-pandemic moments, showing that the campaign had influence in the awareness of the region for tourism purpose at a first glance.

## Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case has been developed for use in the framework of social marketing courses or public marketing courses or even tourism/territorial marketing courses.

The potential audience for this chapter is:

- Undergraduate and graduate students in business administration or marketing
- Students of executive courses about social impact and sustainability
- Students of master's in Public Administration

## Learning

1. Discuss the purpose and results of social marketing, particularly in a campaign related with rural depopulation.
2. Analyze the impacts/consequences of this specific campaigns—are the participants inland paladins or wanderlusts?
3. Understand the relevance of a link between rural depopulation and sustainable development in a rural area.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case may be analyzed in a class of 60 minutes, including the task of reading and discussion both in groups or among the whole students in class.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think that social marketing intervention is adequate for fighting rural depopulation? Why?

**Question 2**—What do you think about the participants? Do you think they are inland paladins (true supporters of life in rural cities) or wanderlusts (adventurers trying new and diverse experiences)?

**Question 3**—Depending on your previous answer, what profile should be chosen for the audience of this campaign?

**Question 4**—Is this campaign strategy sustainable? After the minimum settling-in period, people will effectively stay or is it a temporary experience?

**Question 5**—Does the campaign have the potential to become contagious to other persons? (are people—without incentives—willing to move, even temporarily, to a city with these characteristics)?



**Question 6**—What type of campaigns related to rural depopulation have been carried out in your country? How long did they last and what impacts they have?

**Question 7**—Are there any campaigns related to rural depopulation in your country? If yes, please, explain them.

## Analysis

***Answer to Question 1—Do you think that social marketing intervention is adequate for fighting rural depopulation? Why?***

The answer is free. However, it is expected that the strengths of social marketing tools may be highlighted in this case, though the results of this case study did not show evidence of success. The conditions to become the territory more attractive and the analysis of competition of big cities may also be explored, as well as target audience that should selected for these activities.

***Answer to Question 2—What do you think about the participants? Do you think they are inland paladins (true supporters of life in rural cities) or wanderlusts (adventurers trying new and diverse experiences)?***

The answer is also free, based on the analysis of success or unsuccess in the previous question. If the students tend to agree that the participants are wanderlusts, the discussion might focus on how adequate was the communication plan and media plan used for this campaign and the suggestions for improvement.

***Answer to Question 3—Depending on your previous answer, what profile should be chosen for audience of this campaign?***

This answer is free, but should focus on digital nomads, who are prepared to live in the countryside far away from big cities.

***Answer to Question 4—Is this campaign strategy sustainable? After the minimum settling-in period, people will effectively stay or is it a temporary experience?***

The case shows it is a temporary experience, which questions whether the audience of the campaign had been correctly targeted.

***Answer to Question 5—Does the campaign have the potential to become contagious to other persons? (Are people—without incentives—willing to move, even temporarily, to a city with these characteristics)?***

There is contagious potential, due to the awareness of the campaign in the media and the social norm of moving to the countryside. The social norm, the knowledge of other families, and the social movement of digital nomads may influence other people.

***Answer to Question 6—What type of campaigns related to rural depopulation have been carried out in your country? How long did they last and what impacts they have?***

This answer is free and requires a search of local contexts worldwide and the comparison of results with this case.

***Answer to Question 7—Are there any campaigns related to rural depopulation in your country? If yes, please, explain them.***

This answer is free and requires a search of local contexts worldwide and the comparison of results with this case.

---

## References

- Almeida, M. A. P. (2018). Fighting depopulation in Portugal: Local and central government policies in times of crisis. *Portuguese Journal of Social Science*, 17(3), 289–309. [https://doi.org/10.1386/pjss.17.3.289\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/pjss.17.3.289_1)
- Câmara Municipal de Bragança. (2021). A Aventura Começa Agora. *Nota de Imprensa*, 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.47456/sofia.v8i2.24811>
- Domegan, C., Mchugh, P., Devaney, M., Duane, S., Hogan, M., Broome, B. J., et al. (2016). Systems-thinking social marketing: Conceptual extensions and empirical investigations. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 32(11–12), 1123–1144. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2016.1183697>
- Ekins, P., Gupta, J., & Boileau, P. (2019). *GEO-6 - healthy planet healthy people*. Retrieved from <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/275>.
- INE. (2021). *Resultados Provisórios do XVI Recenseamento Geral da População*. Retrieved from [https://www.ine.pt/scripts/db\\_censos\\_2021.html](https://www.ine.pt/scripts/db_censos_2021.html)
- López-Penabad, M. C., Iglesias-Casal, A., & Rey-Ares, L. (2022). Proposal for a sustainable development index for rural municipalities. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 357, 131876. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2022.131876>
- Martínez, L. J. S.-M. (2019). Planning territorial policies against inner areas depopulation in Spain: Keys for sustainable management of cultural and environmental resources. *Il Capitale Culturale*, 19, 53–81.
- Porto Editora. (2022). Bragança. Infopedia. Retrieved from [https://www.infopedia.pt/apoio/artigos/\\$braganca](https://www.infopedia.pt/apoio/artigos/$braganca).
- Stanciu, L. (2021). Bragança. Liberdade para Recomeçar. URBACT. Retrieved from <https://urbact.eu/braganca-liberdade-para-recomecar>.
- United Nations. (2020). *The impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on Stakeholders Engagement for the SDGs*. Retrieved from <https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/COVID-19StakeholderPublication.pdf>
- United Nations. (2021). *Restored land, healthy people, green recovery*.



# A Social Marketing Program for Local Products and a Local Market: The Case of Setúbal, Portugal

Duarte Xara-Brasil, João Pedro Cordeiro, Luísa Cagica Carvalho, and Pedro Pardal

## Learning Objectives

1. Understand the concept of social marketing from the point of view of a Municipal Market.
2. Value the role of raising awareness for greater use of local products and buying from local retailers.
3. Benchmark the promotional activities of Municipal markets.
4. Reflect on ways to increase sales of local products at Municipal Markets.
5. Structure a social marketing program for the Livramento Market in Setúbal.

## 1 Introduction

Many countries have indicated their growing commitment to pursue the social changes necessary to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, aiming to respond to the issues of conservation of natural resources, climate change, and the promotion of more sustainable production and consumption practices. In this regard, there is a need for more structured approaches related to social marketing coordinated by various entities, including local governments and joining the efforts

---

D. Xara-Brasil (✉) · J. P. Cordeiro · P. Pardal  
Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal, CICE-IPS, Setúbal, Portugal  
e-mail: [duarte.brasil@esce.ips.pt](mailto:duarte.brasil@esce.ips.pt); [joao.cordeiro@esce.ips.pt](mailto:joao.cordeiro@esce.ips.pt); [pedro.pardal@esce.ips.pt](mailto:pedro.pardal@esce.ips.pt)

L. C. Carvalho  
Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal, CICE-IPS, Setúbal, Portugal

CEFAGE, Universidade de Évora, Évora, Portugal  
e-mail: [luisa.c.carvalho@esce.ips.pt](mailto:luisa.c.carvalho@esce.ips.pt)

of various local players in order to preserve and enhance the productive apparatus, ways of life, culture, existing social structure, and more sustainable attitudes and behaviors of the population.

The implementation of integrated processes of social marketing management presupposes increased planning for a structured intervention, given the complexity, diversity, and dispersion of existing marketing tools and stimuli to which consumers are subjected. Currently there is considerable diversity of means of promotion, including the Internet and digital tools that allow a more segmented interaction between organizations and the various audiences, directly and through digital influencers; more interactions between consumers, through e-word of mouth; and more digital media and thematic television channels. At the same time, consumers are subjected to increasingly sophisticated marketing actions, and it thus becomes complex for organizations to develop marketing stimuli and impactful marketing practices. Social marketing implies the coordination of different instruments that influence the behaviors and/or perceptions of a group of people, and that delivers benefits to society as a whole (Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019).

We report herein a case study focusing mainly on SDG 11 “Sustainable cities and communities” and SDG 12 “Responsible consumption and production.” We address the challenges faced in Setúbal, a medium-sized city in Portugal. The coastal region surrounding this community is very rich in local products and has one of the most important Municipal Markets in Portugal.

---

## 2 Case Development

### 2.1 Local Commerce and Municipal Markets: The Case of Setúbal

Local commerce is an important and valuable axis of life in cities and regions, contributing to the preservation of many jobs and providing a supply service to the region’s inhabitants and workers. It generates movement and local animation, counteracts the desertification of city centers, improves the security of the territories, and contributes to the preservation of urban heritage and local traditions, and in some cases boosts tourism. Simultaneously, it is in the small local retailers that local products are most often found, so their dynamization is also a way to preserve the sustainability of the productive system of the region, preserving jobs, avoiding the exodus of agricultural and related activities, and generating wealth.

Local commerce has suffered significant revenue losses with the growth of large national and international retail food chains, namely hypermarkets, supermarkets, and discount stores. Nevertheless, local retailers have managed to retain their important role in supplying communities (Machado & Dores, 2018):

- Many consumers consider local retailers an integral component of the community, establishing relationships of loyalty and trust. A greater effort is observed by retailers in the search for their revitalization and preservation of their identity,

developing mechanisms to adapt to competitive developments and customer expectations.

- Many local retailers have a deep understanding of the needs and desires of local consumers, the result of a long-standing relationship. These micro-businesses often sell local products that are very representative of the identity of the territory where they are located.
- Local Governments have been taking a more active role in the modernization and promotion of local commerce, supporting small local retailers in the development of skills, promoting the sustainability of their business and the regeneration of the local economy.

Municipal markets are usually spaces of strong geographical and social centrality where, beyond the buying and selling of products, there is a great diversity of relationships and events among the elements of a community (Costa et al., 2015). Due to their size and attractiveness, they are dynamizing spaces for the economy and communities in terms of job retention, sale of local products, generation of value, and tourist attraction. They also have a very differentiated and comprehensive commercial offer, allowing customers to meet a wide range of needs in a single place.

The greater dynamism of the Livramento Municipal Market has a tremendous social impact in the region, contributing to the preservation of jobs and local production, improving the skills of small economic agents, preserving the livelihoods of local residents, avoiding the abandonment of fields and farms, and improving the attractiveness of the region. From the point of view of sustainability, we also highlight the possibility of educational programs (e.g., study visits and work in collaboration with schools, aiming to raise awareness for better eating habits, recycling, and eliminating waste), the promotion of more sustainable and authentic lifestyles and consumption (e.g., seasonal products, local products, organic products), the appreciation of history, culture, and local ways of life (e.g., through storytelling and local animation actions), the inclusion of activities and operators with vulnerabilities (e.g., partnerships with social organizations), and the valuing of fair trade practices.

As references/models for these features we can look to the Barcelona Markets (Fig. 1) in Spain, which develop educational activities aimed at schools and young people to promote the purchase of healthier, fresh, and better-quality products in the markets by helping them to discover the specificities of these spaces, also inviting them to work and share purchasing and consumption experiences. Within this framework, several pedagogical materials have been developed that can be used in the research and teaching of these themes.

When looking at practices in other Portuguese regions, we find for example that the Matosinhos Municipal Markets (Portugal) organize “showcooking” events, called “From the Market to the Plate,” at which well-known chefs cook and share recipes using local and seasonal products that can be found for sale in those same municipal markets (Fig. 2). They also publish recipes and promote many other events, notably through their Instagram page.



**Fig. 1** Educational program of the Barcelona Markets. Translation: “we eat healthy, we eat from market.” Source: *Ajuntament de Barcelona* (2022)

In recent years, an effort has been made to revitalize many of these spaces, modernizing the infrastructure and the range of products and services they sell, often aiming to enhance the value of local products and traders and attract new, younger, sustainability-oriented audiences and tourists. Several international projects supported by local governments and the European Union have contributed to this improvement, adding value to these spaces, including the Urbact (2012–2015), Central Markets (2012–2014), and Marakanda (2009–2012) projects.

**Fig. 2** Matosinhos Market Showcooking Program.  
Source: *Município de Matosinhos (2022)*



Data from 2008 identify approximately 25,000 of these Markets in the European Union, with more than 45,000 traders, one million jobs, and a turnover of over 40 billion euros (Costa et al., 2015).

The local commerce and namely the Municipal Markets are important actors for the sustainability of the territories, as they are able to provide high-quality local products in the city centers while also being leisure and cultural spaces, generating employment and wealth for the community.

In the city of Setúbal, there is some traditional commerce, with small stores in the city center. There is also a space where many small producers and local traders are concentrated—the Livramento Market of Setúbal. The Livramento Market is the

most emblematic commercial space in the city. In addition to its commercial activity, it is a meeting point for traditions and residents of different generations. Existing since 1836, its building has been adapted and modernized, and currently has approximately 170 points of sale (a mix of stalls and stores). Most of the stores sell fish (53%), fruits and vegetables (30%), cheese (5%), and bread (5%). This is one of the main national municipal markets and also has substantial international relevance. In 2014, it was described as one of the most important fish markets in the world by the publication *USA Today*.

Over time, Setúbal's Livramento Market has preserved much of its identity, retaining traditional customers and attracting tourists visiting the city. Data show that many local inhabitants visit it often and show great satisfaction with their purchases and experiences.

## 2.2 Local Products and the Livramento Market in Setúbal

The demand for local food products has been growing in recent years, with an increasing number of consumers willing to pay a higher price for them (Willis et al., 2013). Their choice is related to some of their intrinsic factors such as quality, taste, freshness, appearance, uniqueness/authenticity, health benefits, and reasons related to supporting local producers, traders, and communities (Skallerud & Wien, 2019). Other factors such as the search for new experiences, the sense of belonging to the community, environmental concerns, traceability of food origins, food safety, proximity, and accessibility are also pointed out as being valued.

The Setúbal region has an enormous wealth of agricultural products, fisheries, dairy products, wines, etc., that are—or could be—represented in the Livramento Market. Some of these crops and activities have a small scale, which makes it difficult to market them on a large scale, but still allows for their presence in the Market, thereby increasing the attractiveness and exclusivity of the location and the satisfaction of the customer experience.

## 2.3 Marketing Management of the Livramento Market

The Livramento Market is owned by Setúbal Municipality (Local Government), which has the responsibility to promote and ensure the conditions of hygiene, safety, and comfort, and to interact with, attract, supervise, and value the small traders who carry out their activity there. It is also in the Municipality's interest to attract and retain customers through an appropriate marketing plan.

Although there are no significant resources allocated to the marketing management of the Livramento Market, efforts are made to promote it to national and international audiences (tourists), focusing on (1) the history, traditions, and physical characteristics and centrality of the building, (2) the richness of its offer, especially of fish and high-quality local agricultural products, (3) the inclusion of the Livramento Market in the gastronomic tourism route of the region, and (4) the use





**Fig. 3** Flash mob at Mercado do Livramento. Source: Município de Setúbal (2022)

of the Livramento Market as an educational space that involves the entire community and enhances local traditions.

The marketing actions of the Setúbal Livramento Market are usually developed in conjunction with the traders, as their involvement is beneficial in the preparation and operationalization, so that communication can be more effective and include the cooperation of different stakeholders. The process of converging the wills of so many stakeholders is sometimes a challenge, given the heterogeneity of expectations, priorities, and constraints of the various stakeholders. Among the actions taken, we highlight the organization of study tours and educational activities with schools in the region, the organization of visits by national and foreign journalists, efforts to include the Livramento Market in photographic and cinematographic productions and television programs (e.g., the soap opera “Mar Salgado”), the realization of flash mobs (Fig. 3), and other actions/features such as billboards, book publications, etc.

Retailers also develop an autonomous marketing activity, including the management of their Point of Sale—namely, the selection of the product range, merchandising, customer service, promotional activity, and in some cases the use of digital marketing tools for promotion and interaction with their customers. It should be noted that the use of social networks (especially Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp) was significantly enhanced by the mobility constraints related to COVID-19, despite the difficulties among most retailers related to their limited (or lack of) digital marketing skills.

Despite the lack of a structured marketing plan for the Setúbal Livramento Market, the difficulties in coordinating the marketing activities of all stakeholders, and the limitations of existing resources, the Livramento Market plays an important role as a central space in the life of the city, in the promotion and enhancement of

local and regional products, in supplying the population, and in attracting tourists to the city, as shown in the feedback obtained from customers (see Appendix 1) and in its inclusion in tourist guides and travel websites. On the Tripadvisor website, for example, a visit to the Livramento Market is considered the second most popular activity in the region, after the visit to the Arrábida Natural Park.

Regarding social marketing, a diverse range of actions have been carried out periodically, but sometimes without a systematized planning. These have included:

- organization of study visits of students from different study cycles, addressing various topics such as local products, sustainability, trade, culture, and traditions, among others
- awareness for traders and consumers to deepen recycling and circular economy practices, encouraging the maximum use of resources and reducing waste, as well as the development of cleaner fishing practices
- actions to enhance sustainable fishing, by promoting the catch of more abundant and/or less popular species, through the organization of showcooking and tasting, and sharing recipes and other informative elements
- promotion of healthier living habits through the dissemination of recipes
- creation of a permanent or seasonal space for local small-operation artisans to exhibit and sell their products, to allow for greater visibility and interaction with local products and producers, promoting greener purchasing and consumption behaviors
- social solidarity actions in collaboration with organizations that can use the market to hold occasional events.

## **2.4 The Competitive Situation of the Livramento Market in Setúbal**

### **2.4.1 SWOT Analysis**

Throughout 2021, an exhaustive diagnosis of the situation of the Livramento Market in Setúbal was carried out through focus groups with the various market stakeholders. It was possible to identify its main strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities.

The main *strengths* identified were the range and quality of products sold; the historical relevance and tourist appeal; the local and regional centrality; the close relationship between traders and customers; the levels of proficiency of traders in key skills (e.g., product knowledge, communication, or customer advice).

The main *weaknesses* identified were the short opening hours; the difficulty regarding car parking; the aging of the merchants; the low level of innovation; the lack of a systematized management system and marketing management (social marketing in particular).

The main *opportunities* identified were the trend toward a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle, with implications for healthy eating and the demand for local/authentic products; the growth of tourism and the attractiveness of the municipal

markets among many national and foreign visitors; the growing attractiveness of the city as an important gastronomic destination; the increasing importance of new concepts of promotion and sales (e.g., digital); and the support programs for the development of skills (e.g., vocational training).

The main *threats* identified were the growth and increased sophistication of the competition; the danger of some loss of authenticity; and the difficulty to attract new and innovative merchants.

#### **2.4.2 Axes of Strategic Action for the Market**

Considering the internal and external analysis of the Market and the expectations of its different stakeholders, *sustainability was considered as the focal point of the whole strategy and action of the Livramento Market in the future.*

In the specific case of the Setúbal Livramento Market, sustainability is articulated with several areas, namely:

- with the expectations of Setúbal's customers and residents, who want to preserve the exclusivity of this space
- with the growing trend for healthier eating habits
- with the expectations of merchants who have a great deal of experience in this area and some resistance to change
- with the expectations of tourists who seek to interact with the local people and habits in authentic and differentiated experiences
- with the growing centrality of these themes in central and local public policies

Regarding its marketing management, it was determined that the Livramento Market should center its priorities around the improvement of the shopping experiences, and interaction, learning, and discovery on the part of its customers. Thus, with the development of a specific Social Marketing program we can seek to improve the level of knowledge that the residents of Setúbal and visitors to the Livramento Market have about local products and about the Market, enhancing the value of these products and the shopping experience at this point of sale, increasing the consumption of local products, and promoting the sustainability of these economic activities.

This strategy assumes a clear investment in improving the promotion of local products and producers. The valuing of the market, traders, and products should be based on their specificity and exclusivity. Investment should be made in differentiated marketing actions that value these elements and reinforce the exclusivity of their range of products when compared to the large chains of food retailers.

Appreciation of local productions, producers and their commercial performance has a strong impact in the pursuit of SDGs regarding the sustainable development of the region and the country, namely in SDGs 11 and 12.

### 3 Discussion Questions

Considering the positive perception of local consumers toward local products and the Livramento Market in Setúbal as well as the potential to enhance the attractiveness of local producers in the region's sustainability practices, in the preservation of the productive apparatus and employment, in the dissemination and preservation of commercial traditions, and based on the sequential approach proposed in Chap. 1 for the design of a Social Marketing program, the following actions should be undertaken:

**Question 1**—Identify a relevant target audience for the Livramento Market in Setúbal and indicate what the main social marketing objectives associated with the Market should be, justifying your answer.

**Question 2**—Considering the proposed social marketing objectives, briefly elaborate a social marketing plan for the Livramento Market in Setúbal.

**Acknowledgments** The third author is pleased to acknowledge the financial support From Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia under the Project UIDB/04007/2020.

### Appendix: Setúbal Livramento Market: Results of a Consumer Survey

A questionnaire survey was conducted among the residents of Setubal over 18 years old, in order to analyze their perceptions about the Setúbal Livramento Market, the impact of their consumption options, and the purchase of local products. A 5-level Likert scale was used (from 1—strongly disagree to 5—strongly agree). The results obtained (Table 1) allow us to conclude that the respondents expressed considerable

**Table 1** Consumers' perception of sustainability by age (average)

	18–34 Y	35–54 Y	> 54 Y	AVG
(1) I am concerned about the depletion of resources on the planet.	4.3	4.6	4.3	4.4
(2) I would describe myself as environmentally responsible.	3.9	4.2	3.9	4
(3) My buying habits are influenced by my concerns about the environment.	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.8
(4) I believe that the products on sale at the municipal markets are fresher than the products on sale at supermarkets and hypermarkets.	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.3
(5) I believe that the products on sale at the municipal markets are of higher quality than the products purchased at supermarkets and hypermarkets.	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2
(6) I trust the products sold at municipal markets.	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.4
(7) I intend to buy more and more local products (produced in the region).	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.4

concern about sustainability issues, and a high preference for local products and for shopping at the Setúbal Livramento Market (responses close to or higher than 4).

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

The valuing of local products will allow a better management of sales channels and the establishment and consolidation of close relationships with consumers, which may boost sales, loyalty levels, and recommendations (word of mouth). The greater propensity of the population to prefer local products and fair trade, along with the efforts of local governments to promote local production/trade and sustainable development goals (SDG) create conditions to support producers in their marketing efforts through the establishment of social marketing programs that value them and inherently promote the sustainable development of the community.

It is intended that students contribute to the development of a social marketing program that promotes the purchase of more regional products in local markets, supporting these economic agents in the preservation of the local productive apparatus and in the promotion of the consumption of local products having higher quality and a smaller environmental footprint.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case has been developed for use in the framework of Marketing and Business Administration courses in general and Marketing and Digital Marketing in particular. The potential audience for this case is undergraduate students pursuing degrees in Business Administration or Marketing Graduate students pursuing the master's degree in Marketing and Digital Marketing

### Learning

1. Understand the concept of social marketing from the point of view of a Municipal Market.
2. Value the role of raising awareness of greater use of local products and purchasing from local retailers.
3. Benchmarking of promotional activities in Municipal markets.
4. Reflect on ways to increase sales of local products in Municipal Markets.
5. Structuring a social marketing program for the Livramento Market in Setúbal.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case can be taught in one session of 90–100 min, and it is recommended that students develop some preparatory work (reading and analyzing the case).

Introductory debate. To summarize the case and to briefly start the discussion, teachers may propose a 15 min debate on the following topics: (1) what do you think the potential is for local products and local markets? (2) how can those products be made more attractive through a structured marketing plan? (3) what are the potential benefits of the use of Digital Marketing in this specific case? (4) what kind of synergies may occur between a local producers' marketing program and a Municipal Market activity?

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Identify a relevant target audience for the Livramento Market in Setúbal and indicate what the main social marketing objectives associated with the Market should be, justifying your answer.

**Question 2**—Considering the proposed social marketing objectives, briefly elaborate a social marketing plan for the Livramento Market in Setúbal.

### Analysis

**Answer to Question 1**—*Identify a relevant target audience for the Livramento Market in Setúbal and indicate what the main social marketing objectives associated with the Market should be, substantiating your answer.*

This is a topic with a free response (there are no correct or incorrect answers). Each student or group of students can give their opinion. The most important aspects of this question are that students know the concept of a target group and can identify different possible targets (e.g., local young consumers, tourists, families). They also should be able to identify specific social marketing objectives that are linked to the selected target group.

**Answer to Question 2**—*Considering the proposed social marketing objectives, elaborate a social marketing plan for the Livramento Market in Setúbal.*

This is a topic with a free response (there are no correct or incorrect answers). Each student or group of students can develop a proposal for their social marketing plan, considering (1) the coherence between the proposed objectives for the Market and suggested activities, and (2) the necessary steps for the development of such social marketing plan, in line with the approach identified in Chap. 1.

---

## References

Ajuntament de Barcelona. (2022). Retrieved September 16, 2022, from <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/mercats>

- Alves, H. M., & Galan-Ladero, M. M. (2019). Theoretical background: Introduction to social marketing. In M. M. Galan-Ladero & H. M. Alves (Eds.), *Case studies on social marketing* (pp. 1–10). Springer Nature.
- Costa, N., Mackay, M., Perez, O. Navarro, G., Portinaro, A., & Scheffler, N. (2015). *Urban markets: Heart, soul and motor of cities*. [http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/urbact\\_markets\\_handbook\\_250315.pdf](http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/urbact_markets_handbook_250315.pdf)
- Machado, P., & Dores, V. (2018). O comércio a retalho em Portugal: uma perspetiva do comércio local e de proximidade. *Temas Económicos*, 60, 1–60. Lisboa: Gabinete de Estratégia e Estudos do Ministério da Economia.
- Município de Matosinhos. (2022). Retrieved September 16, 2022, from <https://www.instagram.com/mercadosmunicipaisdematosinhos/>
- Município de Setúbal. (2022). Retrieved September 16, 2022, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuDEzGbsJGg>
- Skallerud, K., & Wien, A. H. (2019). Preference for local food as a matter of helping behaviour: Insights from Norway. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 67, 79–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2019.02.020>
- Willis, D., Carpio, C., Boys, K. A., & Young, E. D. (2013). *Consumer willingness to pay for locally grown produce designed to support local food banks and enhance locally grown producer markets*. 2013 Annual Meeting, August 4–6 2013, Washington DC, 150288. Agricultural and Applied Economics Association.



# The “Smart Destinations” Model from the Perspective of Social Marketing. The Case Study of Gijón as an Example

Alba Marín-Carrillo and M<sup>a</sup> Victoria Carrillo-Durán

## Learning Objectives

The following are the main learning objectives in this case:

1. Reflect on the potential effect of the implementation of social marketing actions oriented towards changing the current tourism model for a new one that is more global and sustainable.
2. Explore the Smart Destination model, in its approaches to social marketing.
3. Identify the main advantages and disadvantages for destinations of the Smart Destination strategy.
4. Point to the main advantages and disadvantages of this model for society and particularly for tourists.
5. Analyse the application of this model in the context of social marketing through examining Gijón as a case study.

## 1 Introduction

Social marketing is characterised by the coordination of different complementary approaches to establish or modify ideas, attitudes, or behaviours with social objectives, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—(the United Nations, 2022). Although it has a long tradition of being applied in the field of tourism (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971), it has now gained special attention in the

---

A. Marín-Carrillo (✉) · M. V. Carrillo-Durán  
University of Extremadura, Badajoz, Spain  
e-mail: [albamarin@unex.es](mailto:albamarin@unex.es); [vicduran@unex.es](mailto:vicduran@unex.es)



development of sustainable tourism, seeking behavioural changes not only among tourists but also among all other political, administrative, and social parties involved (Truong & Hall, 2013).

The concept of social marketing is related to different aspects of tourism: altering the behaviour of tourists, of tourism management agents, tourism advertising and the behaviour of visitor host communities (Araújo & Sampaio de Sá, 2017). However, the main application of social marketing in tourism is aimed at the development of sustainable tourism.

This chapter presents a social marketing case study used to explain how tourism promotion strategies have evolved from a previous perspective that was merely institutional and focused on the institution itself, with corporate messages, towards one that is much more social and aligned with the SDGs, in order to capture the attention of tourist destinations and thus promote the creation of Smart Destinations (SDs) capable of boosting tourism by creating spaces and changing attitudes and behaviours.

Generally speaking, the case study involving creating SDs as a social marketing strategy is considered innovative for the following reasons: the first is that it aims to boost the tourism sector from the standpoint of sustainability, innovation, and technology, through the creation of a tourism model that is characterised by changing not only infrastructures, but also behaviours from the bottom up and not from the institutional top down. The second reason is that it is a pyramid model with four levels of behavioural change: central government, other levels of government, private companies, and the tourists at each destination. The third reason is that the strategy is in the form of a holistic solution arising from the analysis of the situation, creating a plan for the actions that must be fulfilled by the different parties involved simultaneously, so that the changes in attitude and behaviour are promoted at all levels and for all parties involved, giving priority to the tourist experience, but not only taking tourists into account.

---

## **2 Development of the Case Study**

### **2.1 The Smart Destination Model and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The Smart Destination (SD) model has been created as a way to encourage tourist destinations to meet a series of goals established and aligned with the SDGs. The starting point for this strategy was the analysis of the position of the tourism sector and the strategy was designed to create a model with five core elements: governance, innovation, technology, sustainability, and accessibility. These elements create the necessary alignment of the SDs with the following SDGs (Segittur, 2019):

- Governance: (1) No poverty, (2) Zero hunger, (4) Quality education, (5) Gender equality, (11) Sustainable cities and communities, (16) Peace and justice, and (17) Partnerships for the goals.

- Innovation: (4) Quality education, (5) Gender equality, (8) Decent work and economic growth, (9) Industry, innovation, and infrastructure, and (17) Partnerships for the goals.
- Technology: (6) Clean water and sanitation, (7) Affordable and clean energy, and (9) Industry, innovation and infrastructure.
- Sustainability: All.
- Accessibility: (3) Good health and well-being, (5) Gender equality, (9) Industry, innovation, and infrastructure, and (10) Reduced inequalities.

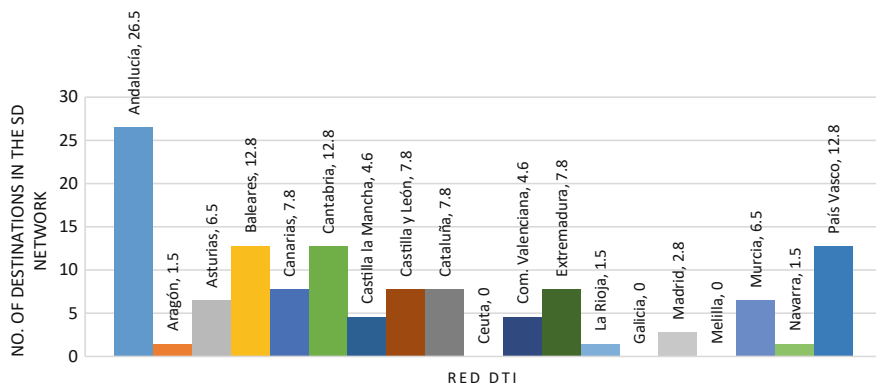
The focus is on promoting the sustainable development of the destination in its environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects, ultimately improving the quality of life of both visitors and residents (López de Avila Muñoz & Sánchez, 2013) and thus trying to promote local and social development.

## 2.2 The Smart Destination Model as a Case of Social Marketing

The Smart Destination (SD) model, taken as a whole, is a large-scale social marketing strategy that seeks to maximise social well-being, using a clear and detailed methodology and processes, so that the parties involved can apply the model by changing their behaviour and attitudes towards the sustainable development of the destinations (Alves & Galan-Ladero, 2019).

From this point of view, the implementation of the SD model as a case of social marketing is aligned with the perspective of Donovan and Henley (2010), who propose that the purpose of social marketing is not only to boost or encourage individual voluntary behaviour, but also to change environments and influence and transform social structures that will facilitate individual changes. The objectives are aimed at all parties involved in tourism and the residents of the destinations, seeking radical changes in their actions.

The existence of the model encourages destinations to want to become SDs and go through the different phases of the process until they achieve the objectives set. The achievement of these objectives leads destinations to transform the sector's infrastructures and promote a change in the behaviour of traditional tourists, so that they become tourists who are smart, more proactive, more open to change and more responsible. This is perceived through the proposals, applications, initiatives, and other work carried out by the parties involved (companies, councils, consortiums, etc.), which eventually has an impact on tourist behaviour, passing through the four levels at which voluntary change occurs in individuals. According to Quintanilla et al. (1988: 142; in Galán-Ladero & Rivera, 2022), these are cognitive change (starting with the tourist's decision whether or not to visit an SD, being aware of what this entails), change of action (decision-making relating to the planning of the stay will be determined by the choice of sustainable and ecological spaces, which implies the adoption of specific behaviours), change of behaviour (obviously, choosing an SD means understanding that the symbiosis between tourist and city must be one of respect and coexistence with the local inhabitants and the



**Fig. 1** Tourist destinations in the network by autonomous community. Source: Prepared by the authors based on data from Segittur (2022)

environment) and change of values (of course, the experience will radically change preferences and will help to guide future choices, from the conviction of having clearly contributed to social well-being).

The SD model has a *general strategic objective*, which is to transform the current tourist model into one that is responsible, innovative, and sustainable. The specific objectives for achieving this are: first, to transform the structures of the tourism sector, and second, to drive behavioural change. With regard to the implementation of the behavioural change strategy, three main actions stand out and are explained below: the creation of the SD network, the development of the SD model, and the creation of a digital platform that allows all the information to be gathered in one place and the process to be integrated.

### 2.3 The Smart Destinations Network

The Smart Destinations (SD) Network is a tool bringing together destinations and organisations interested in promoting themselves under this umbrella of sustainability and development. The specific objectives of this action are to promote the conversion of tourist destinations into SDs, to encourage public-private partnerships and to contribute to international leadership in Smart Tourism.

When a tourist destination joins this network, it is committing to begin the process of turning into an SD and is obliged to pass the first phase of the model, the “Diagnosis” phase. There are currently a total of 64 tourist destinations in the network, from all the autonomous communities (Fig. 1) and which, therefore, have completed the diagnosis phase and are moving forward with the second phase of the SD methodology.

The network has three types of associates: members, institutions, and partners. Members are those recognised entities that represent the population of the cities and

are directly responsible for their well-being, accounting for 68.13% of the total. Institutions represent 14.54% and are the public administrations working in the field of SDs. Finally, collaborating members account for 16.75% and are public or private companies that contribute value to the development of the SDs. Three international observers are also involved (0.5%).

## 2.4 The Smart Destination Model and its Methodology

The SD Model is an initiative that offers a guide for those who want to join the SD network. It is organised into two phases that will allow them to achieve the quality seal that underlies the SD model. The entire model is based on the aforementioned five core elements (technology, innovation, sustainability, governance, and accessibility) and a level of substantial change that can be sustained over time must be demonstrated for each of these.

Following these elements, a *methodology* has been developed with the aim of creating a common framework for the programme and offering the necessary tools for the destinations to first carry out a self-assessment and second start and complete the process of turning into an SD. The methodology is therefore divided into two cycles: Cycle 1 “Diagnosis and planning”, and Cycle 2 “Implementation and monitoring” (SEGITTUR, 2020).

In terms of its application, this conceptual map summarises the SD model (Table 1) and allows us to understand it from the initial proposal to its final results.

As can be seen in Table 1, the SD model establishes among its prerequisites the need for commitment and the involvement of the public and tourists in the changes implemented in order to achieve its three main results, directly related to the philosophy of social marketing: increase the quality of the visit and of the lives of the residents and improve competitiveness. Finally, its benefits include promoting

**Table 1** Conceptual map of the application of the SD model

<i>Prerequisites</i>	Commitment and willingness to change	Financial viability	Public-private partnership	Citizen and tourist participation
<i>Mission</i>	To turn a tourist destination into an SD			
<i>Lever</i>	Innovation (of processes and tools)		Technologies (information and communication, efficiency)	
<i>Results</i>	Increased business and public competitiveness	Increased quality of the visit	Increased quality of life for the residents	
<i>Outcomes</i>	Efficiency (savings)		Employment	
	Revenue (tax, salaries, business)		Satisfaction	
<i>Parties involved</i>	Public Administrations	Private Companies	Training Organisations	Host society and tourists

Source: Romero-Dexeus (2017)

efficiency such as savings in resources and greater satisfaction and well-being as a way of improving quality of life.

## 2.5 Digital Platform for Smart Destinations

The creation of a digital platform is an initiative aimed at bringing together in one place all the information and initiatives related to the SD project, which will be a powerful communication and training tool and become a guarantee for the tourism promotion of the cities, and also for the tourists and the residents who live in them. In addition to finding all the information related to both the SD model and the SD Network and the destinations involved, the user can access resources such as best practice guides, tools, activities, specific initiatives run by members of the Network and a directory of suppliers offering “solutions” to run specific initiatives in each of the five core elements of the project.

## 2.6 The Gijón Case Study: Towards a Responsible and Sustainable Form of Tourism

Only five destinations in Spain have managed to comply with the methodology used in this model and with the necessary requirements to establish themselves as an SD. These five destinations are the main result of the model: Benidorm, Gijón, Málaga, Tenerife Island and Santander. These destinations are also proof that the creation of the SD model as a social marketing strategy is working.

Below, we briefly describe the specific case study of the SD Gijón as a prime example that has successfully passed Cycle 1 “Diagnosis and planning”, has prepared a preliminary analysis of the destination based on the five elements in the model and has developed a strategy and looked at planning to create the action plan. The city of Gijón has passed not only the Diagnosis phase but also the Execution phase (Cycle 2), and is currently monitoring the initiatives, having been certified as an SD according to the UNE 178501 standard.

Cycle 2—“The implementation of the action plan”, contains the decisive phase that leads to the tourism transformation of the destination. Below are some of the main initiatives performed, which exemplify how real change has been achieved. As a whole, these initiatives are not only aimed at promoting the transformation of the sector and the behaviour of tourists, but also show that the infrastructures are being adapted to the new model, offering technologies and spaces so that the change in behaviour is global.

The initiatives are divided up following the five core elements of the model:

1. The first element, *Governance*: the new tourism management models place the planning focus on understanding tourism management in coordination with all its areas, meaning that synergistic and coordinated efforts are required from governments at different levels of society and the business sector. Governance



**Fig. 2** Treaty of *Gijonomía* Campaign, First Principle, 2022. Source: Gijón Council, <https://www.gijonomia.es/es/> (2022)

management in a smart destination is fundamental for the running of the initiative. Thus, in the case of Gijón, the following initiatives were performed in relation to this element:

- City Strategic Plan 2016–2026. A strategic plan for the city was drawn up through a process involving public participation. The objective was “*to transform the city into an open, well-connected and healthy city, where creativity and innovation can find their foundations for growth and where industry, services and education are capable of attracting, training and retaining talent*” (Segittur, 2022).
- Management of transparency and creation of “*Observa Gijón*”, as a tool for the analysis and display of information that facilitates the consultation of data on the city through open access.
- Tourism awareness campaigns for the public with slogans such as “Tourism involves everyone”, “Crazy about Gijón”, “Be a tourist in your city” and “Treaty of *Gijonomía*”.<sup>1</sup>

The “Treaty of *Gijonomía*” (Fig. 2) is the most significant tourist campaign to date and was carried out by the city’s council. The main objective is to help tourists understand the essence of the people of Gijón, so that they can see what living in the

<sup>1</sup> Website with the complete campaign on “Treaty of *Gijonomía*”: <https://www.gijonomia.es/es/>

city looks and feels like, with its little routines and daily pleasures. The campaign aims to show the customs and stories of the people through a series of principles that will make up the treaty, all with a touch of fresh and plain humour: “*Gijonomía is a way of being, living and feeling Gijón/Xixón. It is a passion. . . an obsession. It is the compendium of who we and our city are*”. The 8 principles that structure this “*set of laws that govern the life of Gijón and its people*” can be discovered little by little on the website set up for this purpose. By way of example, some of the principles included on its website are: (1) “*All bodies immersed in a fluid experience a rush never seen before*”; and (2) “*The intensity of the current is directly proportional to the amount of resistance*”.

2. *Innovation*, as the second element, means seeking ways to improve services, processes, and methods for marketing or internal organisation at the managing body, and external organisation in the relationship with residents and tourists, in order to enhance both gains and competitiveness. The most significant initiatives carried out in this area were the following:

- “*Gijón Smart Cities (Gijón-IN)*” Knowledge Chair to promote the development of technologies and infrastructures that guarantee an increase in the quality of life of the population.
- The “*Gijón Conecta*” and “*Smart Tourism*” Projects (as part of *Gijón/Xixón-IN*), which publicise the benefits of becoming a smart city and also inform about leisure resources located outside the central areas and main tourist attractions, in order to relocate the supply and redistribute tourist flows, avoiding overcrowding and disorderly behaviour for the population.

The “*Gijón Conecta*” Project was a temporary initiative that aimed to show the public and tourists the benefits of becoming a smart city through technology (Fig. 3). To this end, different digital urban experiences were run for Gijón’s visitors and inhabitants, with the aim of raising awareness about issues such as lighting, the irrigation system, parking for people with reduced mobility, electric vehicles, and environmental noise.

3. The element known as *technology* influences the new environment and plays an important role in the tourism sector, both from the viewpoint of destination management and from the viewpoint of the users. Thus, technologies play a leading role in the initiatives developed:

- Digital services. Creation and implementation of a citizen’s card for the integrated use of services such as transportation, payments, registrations, communications, administration, etc.
- Technological integration into the projects linked to the “*Gijón Smart Cities*” Knowledge Chair.
- Development of *VisitaGijón* and *AR Tour*, augmented reality routes for tourism promotion and information: *Secretos del Botánico (Botanical Secrets)*, *Cimavilla AR Tour (Cimavilla Neighbourhood AR Tour)*, *Entre siglos AR Tour (Across the centuries AR Tour)* and *Gijón romano AR (Roman Gijón Tour)*.



**Fig. 3** Gijón Smart Cities Chair website. Source: Gijón Smart Cities (2022)—<https://gijondemolab.es/>

VisitaGijón is a web portal that brings together virtual experiences to provide information about the city using technologies such as augmented reality and 360-degree videos. The 360-degree tours (Fig. 4) are designed to be taken remotely using a mobile device. AR Tours, or augmented reality tours, are designed to help people discover Gijón using self-guided routes complemented with augmented reality content that is superimposed on the real image of the streets to offer an enriched experience. For example, the Entre Siglos AR Tours offers a guide through the centre of Gijón, with historical information and local characters that tourists will find at points of interest.

4. The *Sustainability* element must guarantee the existence of economic activities that are viable in the long term, and which benefit all parties (stable employment opportunities, allowing for revenue and social services for residents, reduction in poverty, etc.). A number of initiatives were carried out in this area:

- Initiatives to integrate tourism into the city with social campaigns such as “Solidarity Visits” to promote interaction between residents and visitors.
- Commitment to the city’s organic and arts and crafts market as a way of promoting local culture and craftsmanship, encouraging more responsible tourism.
- Sustainable mobility regulations and Comprehensive Plan for Sustainable and Safe Mobility.

Specifically, the Arts and Crafts and Organic Market in Gijón is a commitment to local handicrafts and gastronomy, thus encouraging more responsible and sustainable consumption by tourists and by the public as a whole. Located in the main



## Rutas de realidad aumentada

Actualmente están disponibles tres rutas: Cimavilla AR Tour, Entre siglos AR Tour y Secretos del Botánico AR Tour. Descárgalas gratuitamente desde las tiendas de google o iOS o accede a ellas desde [visitagijon.com](https://www.visitagijon.com).

Abre la app y sigue las instrucciones.

En el plano de la app podrás visualizar los puntos de interés y guiarte hasta ellos. Durante el recorrido encontrarás en el suelo unas placas desde donde podrás lanzar las recreaciones de realidad aumentada.



**Fig. 4** Augmented reality routes proposed by Gijón Council. Source: Gijón Council (2022)—<https://www.visitagijon.com/>

square, Plaza Mayor, the market is a monthly event with craftspeople, livestock breeders, farmers, and small producers who come to offer their products, making it an attractive option for tourists and a meeting point for different activities.

5. The *Accessibility* element must ensure that everyone can have access, use, and enjoyment, without exclusions, guaranteeing the right to equal opportunities and to enjoy the environment in a safe way. Thus, the initiatives run were as follows:

- Comprehensive Accessibility and Non-Discrimination Plan and Comprehensive Plan for Sustainable and Safe Mobility. The aim has been to improve road safety and accessibility in the mobility of citizens.
- Commitment through the creation of a regulatory framework on accessibility (Sustainable Mobility Regulations), which is reflected in the improvement of the signs on urban and rural routes, the creation of new routes, applications based on augmented reality, the publicity for the Gijón Tourism Accessibility Programme and the creation of the Poniente Beach Accessible Point, among others. In fact, in 2021 Gijón received recognition for its work in the development of accessible tourism.

The Tourist Accessibility Programme developed by Gijón Turismo is available to tourism companies in the city and aims to improve facilities and raise awareness among all those involved in the sector so that the tourist offer is accessible to all. To do this, tools are offered to companies in the sector, such as training in accessibility, a recommendations report and a Universal Accessibility Seal issued by the Platform for the Representation of Disabled People to the companies that qualify.

To summarise, and taking into account the five elements and the initiatives run in each, in the case of Gijón, firstly, we clearly see an involvement of different parties in changing behaviour and, therefore, the efforts made by the different institutions to maintain the commitment and participation of the public and the tourists, among other relevant stakeholders, such as public bodies and companies.

Secondly, we can see how work is being done to achieve results directly related to social marketing, such as establishing new behaviours and new infrastructures that enhance the quality of the visit and the environment, without forgetting that it must be possible to evaluate real development that makes the destination more competitive.

Thirdly, its benefits include the search for an efficient use of resources and the satisfaction of the different stakeholders, while pursuing other outcomes that have an impact on the economy and employment.

---

### **3 Conclusions**

In conclusion, this current model of tourism promotion, based on the creation of Smart Destinations, differs from the previous models based on an institutional marketing perspective. This new model is more social and has been designed to be aligned with the SDGs, with the aim of capturing the attention of tourist destinations and boosting tourism through the creation of spaces and the modification of attitudes and ways of life so that they become more sustainable. Adopting this model therefore means adopting and participating in all the diagnosis and implementation of social marketing strategies promoted, driving changes in behaviour in this direction.

The idea of creating SDs from a social marketing perspective is based on the following reasons:

The first is the need to boost the tourism sector through sustainability, innovation, and technology, not only by changing infrastructures, but also by changing behaviour at all levels so that it results in a change of culture, and not only of specific habits.

The second reason is the need to address the change in the tourism model by influencing all stakeholders simultaneously: central government, governments at other levels, private companies, and the tourists at each destination as a key target audience, but not the only one.

The third reason is the importance of adopting new behaviours or abandoning others in a planned way, starting from an analysis of the situation, and offering a plan for the actions that must be performed by the different agents involved.

The fourth reason is the importance of promoting new tourist behaviour that ensures the development of the SDs, being the driving force for change and supported by the new perspective of “User Generated Content” as a key factor for the entire sector.

At this point, we can look at the case of the SD model, as a whole, and the example of Gijón in particular, a social marketing strategy that seeks to maximise social well-being, with a clear and detailed methodology and processes so that the agents involved can align themselves with the model by changing their behaviour and attitudes.

Thus, the SD model establishes, a priori, the need for a commitment and willingness to change and the involvement of the local public and tourists in the changes implemented, in order to increase the quality of the tourist experience and the quality of life of the residents. Its benefits include efficiency and well-being as a way to improve the visit and the city. Finally, the model also aims to improve economic outcomes and employment, which will only be possible if there is a change in the behaviour of all the parties involved in the actions to enhance the environment.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—From the context of social marketing, would you say that the creation of a Smart Destination model is a useful strategy to align with the SDGs?

**Question 2**—What would you say are the main characteristics of this model to be considered as a case of Social Marketing?

**Question 3**—What would you say are the main advantages of applying this model for tourist destinations?

**Question 4**—Do you think that the actions developed in Gijón’s case have been fortunate? Reflect on the main actions in the context of the complete strategy.

**Acknowledgements** Research funded by the Junta de Extremadura (Consejería de Economía, Ciencia y Agenda Digital) and by the European Union “European Regional Development Fund. A way of shaping Europe”. Aid GR21028.

<p><b>JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA</b> Consejería de Economía, Ciencia y Agenda Digital</p>	 <h1>Unión Europea</h1>
	<p>European Regional Development Fund A way of doing Europe</p>

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

This case analyses the Smart Destination model as part of the social marketing activities that cities can develop under the SDGs of Agenda 2030. The specific case of this model is considered as a paradigm for the new tourism. First, the model is described, and a reflection is made about the main inputs and outputs of its conceptualisation. Second, the application and examples of that from a social marketing point of view are detailed. Since its creation in 2020, many destinations have initiated the application of this model. During that trajectory, a clear two-phase evolution is apparent: an initial diagnostic stage with 64 destinations and a more consolidated application stage in which there are five cities currently. The model is a clear example of a global change of tourism from the base, where not only is there a change of infrastructure, technology, and particular behaviours, but also a global change from the root assuming a new way of thinking and encouraging different stakeholders to act according to the SDGs.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

The case is based on the Smart Destination (SD) model (2021). It could therefore be useful for undergraduate or graduate courses in Economics, Business, Marketing, or Advertising, among others.

### Learning

The case is structured to attain the following objectives:

1. Reflect on the potential effect of the implementation of social marketing actions oriented towards changing the current tourism model for a new one that is more global and sustainable.
2. Explore the Smart Destination model, in its approaches to social marketing.
3. Identify the main advantages and disadvantages for destinations of the Smart Destination strategy.
4. Point to the main advantages and disadvantages of this model for society and particularly for tourists.
5. Analyse the application of this model in the context of social marketing through examining Gijón as a case study.

### Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case can be taught in one session of 75 min.

**Table 2** Matching the five elements to the SDGs

SD elements	SDGs	
Governance	1	No poverty
	2	Zero hunger
	4	Quality education
	5	Gender equality
	11	Sustainable cities and communities
	16	Peace and justice
	17	Partnerships for the goals
Innovation	4	Quality education
	5	Gender equality
	8	Decent work and economic growth
	9	Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
	17	Partnerships for the goals
Technology	6	Clean water and sanitation
	7	Affordable and clean energy
	9	Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
Sustainability	All	All
Accessibility	3	Good health and well-being
	5	Gender equality
	9	Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
	10	Reduced inequalities

Source: Adaptation from SEGITTUR (2019)

### Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—From the context of social marketing, would you say that the creation of a Smart Destination model is a useful strategy to align with the SDGs?

**Question 2**—What would you say are the main characteristics of this model to be considered as a case of Social Marketing?

**Question 3**—What would you say are the main advantages of applying this model for tourist destinations?

**Question 4**—Do you think that the actions developed in Gijón’s case have been fortunate? Reflect on the main actions in the context of the complete strategy.

### Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—From the context of social marketing, would you say that the creation of a Smart Destination model is a useful strategy to align with the SDGs?*

The SD model has been created as a way to encourage tourist destinations to meet a series of goals established and aligned with the SDGs (Table 2). The starting point for this strategy was the analysis of the position of the tourism sector and the strategy

was designed to create a model with five core elements: governance, innovation, technology, sustainability, and accessibility.

*Governance:* the new tourism management models place the planning focus on understanding tourism management in coordination with all its areas, which requires *synergistic and coordinated efforts by governments at different levels*.

*Innovation:* ways to improve services, processes, and methods for marketing or internal organisation at the managing body, and external organisation in the relationship with residents and tourists, among others, in order to enhance both gains and competitiveness.

*Technology:* the new environment is marked by the diversity and rapid evolution of the technologies that play a prominent role in the tourism sector, both from the viewpoint of destination management and from the viewpoint of the users.

*Sustainability:* the existence of economic activities that are viable in the long term, which benefit all parties (stable employment opportunities, allowing for revenue and social services for residents, reduction in poverty, etc.) must be guaranteed.

*Accessibility:* everyone must have access, use, and enjoyment, without exclusions, guaranteeing the right to equal opportunities and to enjoy the environment in a safe way.

The elements and their definitions show the necessary alignment of the SD with the SDGs, as can be seen, for example, by taking the sustainability and accessibility element, which is based on SDGs 6 “Clean Water and Sanitation”, 7 “Renewable Energy”, 11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities” and 13 “Climate Change”, among others.

The focus is on promoting the sustainable development of the destination in its environmental and socio-cultural aspects, ultimately improving the quality of life of both visitors and residents.

***Answer to Question 2—What would you say are the main characteristics of this model to be considered as a case of Social Marketing?***

The concept of social marketing is related to tourism in different areas: changing the behaviour of the tourists and the tourism managers and operators, above all. However, the main application of social marketing in tourism is aimed at developing sustainable tourism, which allows the sustainability objectives to be achieved by changing behaviours.

Tourism promotion strategies have changed from a previous perspective that was merely institutional and focused on the institution itself, with corporate messages, to one that is much more social and aligned with the SDGs, in order to capture the attention of tourist destinations and thus promote the creation of smart destinations, capable of boosting tourism through the creation of spaces and the modification of attitudes and ways of life so that they become more sustainable.

Adopting this model therefore means adopting and participating in all the diagnosis and implementation social marketing strategies promoted, driving changes in behaviour in this direction.

The idea of creating SDs from a social marketing perspective is therefore based on the following points:

Firstly, the need to boost the tourism sector through sustainability, innovation, and technology, not only by changing infrastructures, but also by changing behaviour at all levels so that it results in a change of culture, and not only of specific habits.

Secondly, the need to address the change in the tourism model by influencing all stakeholders simultaneously: the central government, governments at other levels, private companies and the tourists at each destination as a key target audience, but not the only one.

Thirdly, the importance of adopting new behaviours or abandoning others in a planned way, starting from an analysis of the situation and offering a plan for the actions that must be performed by the different agents involved.

Fourthly, the importance of promoting new tourist behaviour that ensures the development of the SDs, being the driving force for change and supported by the new perspective of “User Generated Content” as a key factor for the entire sector.

At this point, we can look at the case of the SD model as a whole, a social marketing strategy that seeks to maximise social well-being, with a clear and detailed methodology for the agents involved to achieve this quality seal.

***Answer to Question 3—What would you say are the main advantages of applying this model for tourist destinations?***

It can be said that the advantages of SDs, listed in Table 1, are:

1. Starting a radical transformation of the destinations by involving all parties to achieve the starting prerequisites: the commitment of everyone to implement and complete the process, the necessary financial viability, the reinforcement of public and private partnership and the necessary participation of residents and tourists.
2. Making innovation and technology (among the other core elements) their levers of change, calling for an improvement in the processes and tools necessary for all parties and for maintaining the relationships between them, therefore improving information management and communication as the main point.
3. SDs will undoubtedly improve their public and private competitiveness, offering a better quality of life to the parties involved, residents and tourists, above all.
4. SDs will achieve benefits in terms of consumption efficiency, creating economic resource savings for companies and institutions. Employment will also increase and, therefore, the satisfaction of all parties is assured as the ultimate consolidated benefit.

***Answer to Question 4—Do you think that the actions developed in Gijón’s case have been fortunate? Reflect on the main actions in the context of the complete strategy.***

So far, of the 64 destinations that aspired to be SDs, and are in the Smart Destinations Network (SD Network), only five have managed to comply with the methodology and the requirements necessary to establish themselves as such.

Generally, all destinations listed in the SD Network have already passed Cycle 1 “Diagnosis and planning”, so they have already established a preliminary



diagnosis of the destination based on the five elements of the model (Governance, Innovation, Technology, Sustainability, Accessibility) and have developed a strategy and looked at planning to create the action plan.

Therefore, Cycle 2 “Execution and monitoring”, is what differentiates the applicant destinations from those that are already SDs. In this case, the city of Gijón has passed not only the Diagnosis phase but also the Execution phase, and is currently monitoring the initiatives, for their review and renewal, having been certified as an SD according to the UNE 178501 standard.

Cycle 2—The implementation of the action plan, contains the decisive phase that leads to the tourism transformation of the destination. In general, the main initiatives that exemplify how real change has been achieved are not only aimed at promoting the transformation of the sector and tourist behaviour, but also show that infrastructures are being adapting too, offering technologies and spaces so that the change in behaviour is global.

The actions are divided among each of the five core elements of the model so that the objectives are achieved across all of them:

*Governance:* tourism management is understood in coordination with all its areas, developing synergistic and coordinated efforts involving governments and society and the business sector.

*Innovation:* new improvements are included relating to services, processes and internal and external organisation models, promoting the development of technologies and infrastructures that guarantee an increase in the quality of life of citizens, raising awareness in matters of lighting, irrigation systems, etc.

*Technology:* This is undertaken from the viewpoint of destination and user management, with digital services for the integrated use of services such as transportation, payments, registrations, communications, administration, etc., and the use of augmented reality for tourism promotion and information.

*Sustainability:* this includes the different ways of guaranteeing the existence of economic activities that are viable over the long term, that benefit everyone, integrating tourism with social campaigns and promoting more responsible tourism.

*Accessibility:* this should be seen as a way of allowing everyone to have access, use, and enjoyment, promoting road safety and accessibility in the mobility of citizens and adopting regulatory commitments reflected in the improvement of signs on urban and rural routes and the creation of new routes.

In relation to the initiatives being run by Gijón, firstly we clearly see an involvement of different parties in changing behaviour and, therefore, the efforts made by the different institutions to maintain the commitment and participation of the public and the tourists, among other relevant stakeholders, such as public bodies and companies.

For example, in the Governance element, we have the government’s coordinated effort to create the city’s strategic plan through a community participation process.

We also have the tourism awareness campaign with slogans such as “Tourism involves everyone”, “Crazy about Gijón”, “Be a tourist in your city” and “Treaty of Gijonomía”,<sup>2</sup> which are clearly aimed at citizens and tourists.

In the *Accessibility* element, the Tourist Accessibility Programme involves other organisations, is available to the city’s tourism companies and offers them tools such as training in accessibility, a recommendations report, and the option to obtain a Universal Accessibility Seal.

Secondly, we can see how work is being done to achieve results directly related to social marketing, such as establishing new behaviours and new infrastructures that enhance the quality of the visit and the environment, without forgetting that it must be possible to evaluate real development that makes the destination more competitive.

For example, in the *Accessibility* element, a Comprehensive Accessibility and Non-Discrimination Plan and a Comprehensive Plan for Sustainable and Safe Mobility were created. The aim has been to improve road safety and accessibility in the mobility of citizens.

Moreover, a regulatory framework on accessibility was established (Sustainable Mobility Regulations), which is reflected in the improvement of signs on urban and rural routes, the creation of new routes and applications based on augmented reality.

In the *Governance* element, Regulations on transparency were introduced and we say the creation of *Observa Gijón*, as a tool for the analysis and display of information in open access.

In the *Innovation* element, it is worth highlighting the Gijón Smart Cities (Gijón-IN) Knowledge Chair, to promote the development of technologies and infrastructures that guarantee an increase in the quality of life of citizens, and the *Gijón Conecta* and *Smart Tourism* projects, which publicise the benefits of becoming a smart city, as well as provide information on leisure resources away from the city centres.

In the *Technology* element, we have the introduction of a citizen’s card for the integrated use of services such as transportation, payments, registration, communications, administration, etc., and the development of *VisitaGijón* and AR Tour, augmented reality routes for tourism promotion and information.

In the *Sustainability* element, it is worth highlighting the creation of sustainable mobility regulations and the Comprehensive Plan for Sustainable and Safe Mobility.

All these initiatives involve a major change in behaviour that improves the flow of the city in the framework of this context as an SD.

Thirdly, its benefits include the search for an efficient use of resources and the satisfaction of the different stakeholders, while pursuing other outcomes that have an impact on the economy and employment.

For example, where it is most clearly seen is in the *Sustainability* element. Initiatives to integrate tourism into the city with social campaigns such as “Solidarity Visits” and the commitment to the city’s organic and arts and crafts market,

---

<sup>2</sup>Website with the complete campaign on “Treaty of *Gijonomía*”: <https://www.gijonomia.es/es/>

promoting more responsible economic tourism, are clear examples of the search for resource efficiency and the satisfaction of the different stakeholders.

Specifically, the Arts and Crafts and Organic Market in Gijón is a commitment to local handicrafts and gastronomy, as a meeting point between craftspeople, livestock breeders, farmers, and small producers who come to offer their products to visitors and locals alike, also generating an economic profit.

## **Suggested Assignment Questions**

1. *From the context of Social Marketing, what are the main reasons for becoming a Smart Destination?*
  - (a) The main application of social marketing in tourism is aimed at the development of sustainable tourism, which makes it possible to achieve sustainability objectives by changing behaviour. Therefore, the first reason is the need to boost the tourism sector through sustainability, innovation, and technology, not only by changing infrastructures but also by changing behaviour at all levels so that it results in a change of culture, and not only of specific habits.
  - (b) The need to address the change in the tourism model, influencing all stakeholders simultaneously, requires the commitment of all parties: the central government, governments at other levels, private companies and the tourists at each destination as a key target audience, but not the only one.
  - (c) The importance of adopting new behaviours or ceasing others in a planned way, starting with analysing the situation and offering a plan for the actions that must be met by the different agents involved if they want to be recognised as an SD and take advantage of the other economic and competitive advantages this entails.
  - (d) The importance of promoting new tourist behaviour that ensures the development of the SDs, being the driving force for change and supported by the new perspective of “User Generated Content” as a key factor for the entire sector.
2. *What are the main advantages for destinations of being a Smart Destinations?*
  - (a) The first advantage is starting a radical transformation of the destinations by involving all parties to achieve the commitment of everyone and to implement and complete the process, under the umbrella of financial viability, the strengthening of public and private partnership and the necessary participation of residents and tourists.
  - (b) The second advantage is making innovation and technology (among the other core elements) their levers of change, calling for an improvement in the processes and tools necessary for all parties and for maintaining the relationships between them, therefore strengthening information management and communication as the main point.
  - (c) The third advantage is that SDs will undoubtedly improve their public and private competitiveness, offering a better quality of life to the parties involved, residents and tourists, above all.

- (d) The fourth advantage is that the SDs will achieve reputation and sustainability benefits due to their consumption efficiency and saving of economic resources for companies and institutions.

---

## References

- Alves, H., & Galan-Ladero, M. (2019). Theoretical background: Introduction to social marketing. In M. Galan-Ladero & H. Alves (Eds.), *Case studies on social marketing. A global perspective*. Springer.
- Araújo, C., & Sampaio de Sá, E. (2017). The importance of social marketing in tourism: Literature review. *Revista Turismo & Desenvolvimento*, 27(28), 713–731.
- Donovan, R., & Henley, N. (2010). *Principles and practice of social marketing: An international perspective*. Cambridge University Press.
- Galán-Ladero, M. M., & Rivera, R. G. (Eds.). (2022). *Applied social marketing and quality of life: Case studies from an international perspective*. Springer.
- Kotler, P., & Zaltman, G. (1971). Social marketing: An approach to planned social change. *Journal of Marketing*, 35(3), 3–12.
- López de Avila Muñoz, A. L., & Sánchez, S. G. (2013). Destinos turísticos inteligentes. *Harvard Deusto Business Review*, 224, 58–67.
- Romero-Dexeus, C. (2017). *Destinos turísticos Inteligentes: Visión estratégica*. Segittur.
- SEGITTUR. (2019). *Memoria annual, 2019*. <https://www.segittur.es/>
- SEGITTUR. (2020). *Informe Diagnóstico y Plan de Acción del destino Gijón para su potencial transformación en Destino Turístico Inteligente*. <https://www.segittur.es/>
- SEGITTUR. (2022). *Guía de las actuaciones más destacadas en los destinos distinguidos con el reconocimiento de Destino Turístico Inteligente*. <https://www.segittur.es/>
- Truong, V. D., & Hall, C. M. (2013). Social marketing and tourism: What is the evidence? *Social Marketing Quarterly*, 19(2), 110–135.



# Colors and a Pinch of Salt: The “Sustainable Mexico Reborn” Strategy for Enhancing Quality Education

Luis Manuel Cerda-Suarez

## Learning Objectives

1. To examine how ongoing trends in tourism marketing have led to a growing preference for sustainability.
2. To describe aspects of responsible consumption and sustainability in a tourism marketing initiative in Mexico.
3. To analyze how different forms of collaboration between tourism organizations and social stakeholders create value in a social marketing initiative.
4. To explore what marketers should focus on when designing tourism marketing interventions with an impact on sustainability and quality education.

## 1 Introduction

Over the last two years, the crisis caused by the SARS-CoV2 pandemic has revealed the fragility and vulnerability of society and its economic activities. Tourism is the sector most affected by the pandemic, which is the worst crisis ever faced by the industry and has highlighted its susceptibility and structural problems. By way of example, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimated that international tourism had fallen by 58–78% in 2020. In Mexico, by the end of April 2021, the crisis had caused losses amounting to 528,000 jobs (12.9%) and 1.6 billion Mexican pesos, which had a major impact given the recent growth of the Mexican tourism

---

L. M. Cerda-Suarez (✉)

International University of La Rioja, Logroño, Spain

e-mail: [luis.cerda@unir.net](mailto:luis.cerda@unir.net)

sector to become one of the largest contributors to the country's Gross Domestic Product (8.7% in 2018; OECD, 2021).

A recent report<sup>1</sup> has identified Mexico as the fifth most megadiverse country on the planet (with Brazil in the first place), placing it in the top ten most culturally rich countries worldwide due to the diversity of its Indigenous people. Mexico is reported to be the seventh most visited tourist destination in the world, although it ranks only 108th when it comes to sustainable tourism (Altinbasak-Farina & Burnaz, 2019). According to the Global Report on Adventure Tourism from the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the traditional tourism model in Mexico sees 80% of tourist spending go to international companies—hotels, airlines, and tour operators—, with only five out of every 100 American dollars (USD) staying in the local economy. These figures point to a social and economic model based on mass tourism that leads to major inequality in terms of national and regional wealth distribution, unfair discrimination against local communities, and destruction to the natural environment (Bhattacharyya et al., 2021a).

In terms of opportunity, tourism is an industry with great potential to bring together a range of different productive and economic sectors operating separately, such as fishing, agriculture, and forestry, which all form part of the tourism value chain (Gasper et al., 2019). The Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2030 is a joint effort by political actors, international organizations, universities, corporations, civil society, and local communities to develop a more sustainable approach to tourism for the future (Bhattacharyya et al., 2021b) and to improve social and economic conditions for communities (Galan-Ladero et al., 2021).

In Mexico, civil society institutions and organizations have helped raise public awareness of the issue by producing tourism marketing campaigns to offer new opportunities to communities and improve their quality of life (Galan-Ladero & Rivera, 2021). Designing social marketing interventions with an impact on sustainability and quality education is just one of many initiatives launched by SECTUR, the Mexican Secretariat of Tourism, as part of its “México Renace Sostenible” (Sustainable Mexico Reborn) strategy. This is made possible by a broad network of agreements and alliances with international organizations, other Mexican government agencies, universities, private sector corporations, and social stakeholders.

The “Roads of the Mexican Renaissance” initiative, which is being implemented in tourist destinations, Magical Towns, World Heritage Sites, Protected Natural Areas, and Indigenous communities, among other sites, is part of the “Sustainable Mexico Reborn” strategy. Linked to the “Quality Education” objective in the 2030 Agenda, the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” offers experiential education, enabling

---

<sup>1</sup>Source: Anáhuac University, Center for Research Competitiveness in Tourism (CICOTUR, 2021). *México Sostenible, 2030 Sustainable Tourism Strategy: Executive Summary*. Available at: <http://sistemas.sectur.gob.mx/dgots/04-estrategia-turismo-sostenible-2030.pdf>

visitors to enjoy the environment and learn from the places they visit (Pallant et al., 2020).

The “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” was designed to reflect a vision of sustainable, community, Indigenous, nature tourism and received the Award for Tourism Excellence in the “Green Mention” category from the Excelencias Group at FITUR 2021, the International Tourism Fair held in Madrid, Spain. This case study describes the race and its outcomes in 2021 in the context of the broader strategy.

---

## 2 Case Study

### 2.1 Background: The “Sustainable Mexico Reborn” Strategy

In recent decades, changing trends in consumer demand have emerged around the world as activism has influenced the way in which goods and services are produced and delivered to match consumer preferences and interests (Kumar & Dash, 2017). Although society continues to prioritize economic growth, ongoing issues with overconsumption suggest that responsible consumption that helps improve environmental and social well-being will become increasingly popular. This trend may be linked to sustainability (that is, the idea of enabling humankind to continue to coexist with the biosphere).

The 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly approved the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the aim of protecting nature and guaranteeing prosperity (Lubowiecki-Vikuk et al., 2021). The Agenda contains 17 goals and 169 targets that are universally applicable and govern countries’ efforts to achieve a sustainable framework by 2030. Although the 2030 Agenda identifies poverty eradication and economic growth as the greatest challenges facing the world, it also encourages participation from a wide range of industries, including the tourism sector, which have a direct impact on objectives 4 (quality education) and 12 (responsible consumption and production). Mexico has pledged to fulfill the Agenda, calling on all public, private, academic, and social actors in the country to work together to visualize a sustainable future and achieve the 17 SDGs (Perera & Hewege, 2016).

The aim of the “Sustainable Mexico Reborn” strategy is to transform Mexico into a world leader in sustainable tourism, with a focus on preserving cultural heritage and nature through high-value, low-volume tourism by diversifying the country’s tourist destinations, involving stakeholders in the value chain, and ensuring that the wealth generated by tourism is fairly distributed. The strategy is based on the following strategic objectives: 1) Build collaborative governance (by encouraging collaboration from all stakeholders in the tourism value chain, as well as the transport and agricultural sectors); 2) Showcase biocultural heritage (in a diverse, multicultural country like Mexico, unique destinations should be enhanced by providing local communities with tools and services); 3) Boost traveler confidence (ensuring that tourists recognize these destinations as safe by communicating the progress and achievements made to provide a reliable, responsible, authentic

service); 4) Promote sustainable destinations (with active participation from agents and stakeholders from the government, tourism service providers, hotels, universities, tourists, and producers); 5) Finance and fund projects (tourism has been severely affected by the pandemic and monetary mechanisms aimed at promoting sustainable, responsible tourism must be prioritized in order to conserve biodiversity and the nation's biocultural heritage); 6) Encourage innovation and development (making Mexico the world leader in sustainable tourism by 2030 by promoting innovation and development in the tourism sector, with collaboration from complementary sectors such as fishing, forestry, and agriculture), and 7) Make tourism an inclusive sector (transforming tourism requires inclusive policies that enable participation by local communities and social stakeholders, people with disabilities, the elderly, etc.).

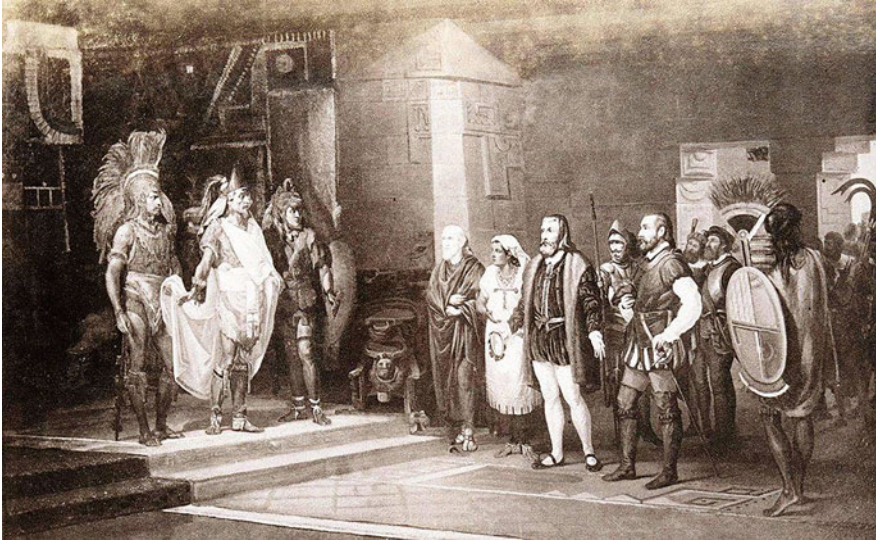
## **2.2 Case Study: The “Roads of the Mexican Renaissance” Initiative and the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race”**

The “Roads of the Mexican Renaissance” initiative, which is part of the “Sustainable Mexico Reborn” strategy, is among the best examples of the country's endeavors to promote sustainability by salvaging information about local legends, traditions, and festivities in Mexican destinations. The initiative raises awareness of the country's cultural traditions and history and is based on the following strategic goals: to develop tourist routes focusing on social welfare and nature, to enhance local cultural identity, and to promote a pedagogical approach to tourism via the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race,” which is intended to contribute to the social and economic development of several Magical Towns.

According to the Secretariat of Tourism, the route is inspired by a legend that tells of runners bringing Moctezuma fresh fish from Tecolutla beach in Veracruz all the way to Tenochtitlan, a site in Mexico City located 2250 meters above sea level. The route is also based on the journey taken by the Aztecs to bring fresh food from the sea before the Spanish Conquest (see Fig. 1). Federal, state, and municipal authorities are all involved in the initiative, along with the Secretariat of Public Education; the Otomi, Nahuatl, and Totonac communities; the National Guard; the National Institute of Anthropology and History; and the company Altius, which is implementing the route.

In the Aztec Empire, runners known as “Painanis” were responsible for communication within and between cities. It was a great honor to belong to the Painanis and only the strongest, youngest runners were selected and trained to be part of the “Aztec mail.” The Painanis had diplomatic immunity and were respected even by rival tribes. Messages from kings and generals in battle, news, laws, and even merchandise were carried to recipients in ten-kilometer relays. The god of the Painanis, Paynal, was a divine messenger and representative of Huitzilopochtli (primary Aztec god of the sun and war). He wore a shield called a Chimalli and carried a club called a Macuahuitl.

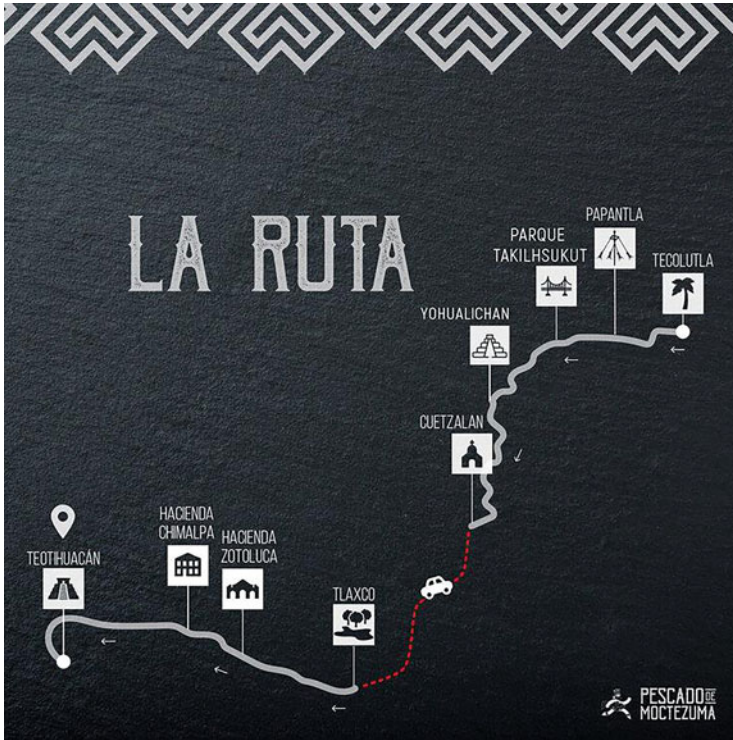




**Fig. 1** The “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” in Mexico: the legend. Source: *Diario El Universal* (2022)

The “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” is a collaborative program run by the federal Secretariat of Tourism, the Office of the Presidency, and the Ministry of Public Education. Other stakeholders involved in the program include the governments of the states of Veracruz, Puebla, Tlaxcala, Hidalgo, Mexico, and Mexico City; the authorities of 31 municipalities; alternative tourism companies, and eight Magical Towns: Papanltla and Zozocolco in Veracruz; Cuetzalan, Zacatlán, and Chignahuapan in Puebla; Tlaxco in Tlaxcala; San Martín de las Pirámides and San Juan Teotihuacán in the State of Mexico. By the end of 2021, the route covered eight Magical Towns, starting in Veracruz and ending in Mexico City. The states of Puebla and Tlaxcala were included in the new tourist route as part of the government’s aim to boost tourism in 2021. The route also encompasses five UNESCO World Heritage Sites—El Tajín archeological area; the ritual of the Voladores; the Aqueduct of Father Tembleque; Teotihuacan, and the Templo Mayor in the Historic Center of Mexico City –, the Center for Indigenous Arts, which has been recognized by UNESCO for its good practices, and five different ecosystems (see Fig. 2).

Today, the route is becoming a strategic destination for tourists seeking a unique experience. This traditional race is the oldest relay race on Earth and revives the legend of the Painani messengers, the elite runners in the Aztec Empire who brought Moctezuma fresh fish from the coast of Veracruz. In April 2021, the Mexican Secretariat of Tourism announced the second edition of the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race,” which was scheduled for November 4–6 that year. According to the Secretariat of Tourism, following the success of the first edition in 2020, the objective was now to position the route as a destination for Mexican and



**Fig. 2** The “Moctezuma Fish Route Race”: the route. Source: Pescado de Moctezuma (2022)

international tourists. The event features a cycling and walking race covering 271 kilometers of the total 403-kilometer route. The race can be run in two different formats: with a team of six or 12 people. The objective of the race is to carry a fish from the coast of Veracruz to Teotihuacan in Mexico City to honor the legend of the Painani messengers in the Aztec Empire. Some sections of the race are controlled, while others are open.

In the controlled sections, the route is divided into several stages (approximately 5–15 kilometers). Runners carry the fish throughout the stage they have been assigned, while the rest of the team travels ahead in a van or other vehicle to reach the relay handover point (each runner is assigned a stage by the organizers). Meanwhile, in the open sections, runners are accompanied by their team in the van and the distance covered by each runner is decided by the team. In some sections of the race, the relay handover can only take place at designated locations. In the open sections, vehicles will have access to the route, so the handover can take place whenever the team sees fit. Seventy percent of the route is paved road and 30% is wide dirt track. Passing through a diverse range of towns, ecosystems, and landscapes, the race is an interesting sightseeing activity and cultural experience (Fig. 3).



**Fig. 3** The “Moctezuma Fish Route Race”: the relay race in perspective. Source: Pescado de Moctezuma (2022). Note: Poster for the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” from Pescado de Moctezuma to announce the forthcoming relay race

With a focus on the event’s social impacts, our aim was to explore the potential of social marketing campaigns to raise awareness of sustainable tourism initiatives. Social marketing campaigns use education as an awareness-raising tool by sending messages to inform and persuade audiences to adopt a desired behavior, so one of the aims of this initiative was to provide experiential education and transform the tourist activity into a pedagogical event. In the case of this initiative, certified guides, printed materials, and digital dissemination of historical and geographical attributes contribute to tourist education and regeneration.

SECTUR drew on support from the Mexican Secretariat of Public Education to ensure that reliable sources of information were used in the initiative. As part of this process, SECTUR held meetings and workshops with stakeholders to inform them of the vision and anticipated impact of the project, specify objectives by area, and identify the strengths of each party involved in the tourism initiative. Approaching this tourism product as an important educational experience, institutions such as SECTUR, the National Association of Chroniclers of Mexican Cities, the National Commission for Free Textbooks, the Office of the Presidency, and the Coordination of Historical and Cultural Memory of Mexico worked together to invite chroniclers to participate in workshops and exchange experiences. A total of eight tourist guides to the main municipalities on the Moctezuma Fish Route have been published. The initiative has also received support from other government agencies, such as Canal Once (a Mexican educational television channel), the National Institute of



**Fig. 4** The “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” Challenge 2021. Source: Pescado de Moctezuma (2022)

Anthropology and History (IINAH), and the Institute for Social Security and Services for State Workers (ISSSTE), with a view to promoting the “3x1: 3 For My Health” program to inform the population of the importance of taking care of their physical well-being.

In 2021, a series of eight television programs about the Magical Towns on the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” was produced by Canal Once. Canal Once is available on open television channels throughout the country as a result of agreements with state governments, covering more than 70% of Mexican territory. It is also received in the USA through satellite TV systems. The campaign received positive feedback as it advertised local heritage and sought to promote cultural and environmental values. Given the event’s success at the FITUR 2021 International Tourism Fair in Madrid, Spain, it offers an opportunity for evaluating how sustainable tourism events can facilitate communication with members of the local community (see Fig. 4).

On the one hand, the event helped state governments, local governments, and SECTUR improve their educational value proposition and meet the needs of their target audiences. This tourism marketing initiative also provided Altius Citus S.A. de C.V., which is working to support a social, sustainable cause, with resources. In line with Stibbe et al. (2018), a range of indicators was established: good relations with the media and institutions, heritage awareness, and social marketing efforts demonstrate a company’s commitment to corporate social responsibility, with a focus on its stakeholders, including customers and partners (see Fig. 4). A summary of the main outcomes is shown in Table 1.

In terms of the main outcomes of this marketing program, a total of 700 competitors from 20 states in Mexico and a variety of other countries, including

**Table 1** Outcomes of the first campaign for the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” in 2020

Media	Releases	Impacts
Newspapers	54	1,810,274
Web portals	251	9,935,161
Magazines	2	185,326
Social networks	504	36,883,740
Radio and TV stations	13	2,110,227
<b>Total</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>50,924,728</b>

Source: Compiled by the authors using data from SECTUR and CICOTUR (2021)

Canada, the USA, Spain, Argentina, Germany, and France, took part in the 2020 race, spending approximately 26 million pesos. The collaboration between Altius Citus S.A. de C.V. and various nonprofit and government organizations to organize the race allowed the initiative to thrive.

### 3 Conclusion

This case study shows that social initiatives and programs are useful tools for attaining a wide range of sustainable, socially responsible objectives. Social marketing started out as a community activity, but it has evolved as a discipline and is now used to promote sustainability. Organizations and institutions have demonstrated their concern for social causes, moving beyond the level of relevant corporate strategies.

In a competitive tourism environment where organizations offer quality products and services, individuals are attracted by initiatives and promotions that appeal to their emotions. The aim of this case study was to enhance our understanding of the involvement of public and private stakeholders in a social marketing initiative promoting sustainable values: the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” in Mexico. The conclusions of this case study highlight the importance of finding more effective ways to communicate the underlying principles of social and tourism marketing initiatives to both nonprofit organizations, government organizations, and tourists.

In the social and tourism marketing program featured in this case study, environmentalism and sustainability function as the two primary levers of engagement. Individuals who are motivated by environmental concerns and the 2030 Agenda are more likely to support social marketing initiatives and participate in a race of this kind. In this type of initiative, it is important to ensure that social marketing programs make a positive impact on stakeholders yet do not undermine the initiative’s core objectives. The true impact of these programs can be seen more clearly in comparative studies after a number of events and initiatives have been held. These considerations influence the impact of programs of this kind on tourists, governments, and nonprofit and social organizations.

To sum up, this paper concludes that educational considerations are a relevant factor influencing organizations’ and institutions’ intentions to collaborate in social

and tourism marketing initiatives. The purpose of this case study was to present a series of insights into this kind of initiative and examine aspects of a specific social marketing campaign and the good practices it adopts.

This case study offers an understanding of how diverse types of promotional communication create value in a social marketing initiative. We have evaluated how recent environmental trends have led to a growing preference for heritage and tourism in general. Finally, we conclude that tourist marketers and regional and local governments should focus on cultural values when implementing a tourism marketing campaign, building positive feelings toward their initiative and identifying a value proposition with a significant degree of fit with their audience.

Due to recent events such as the pandemic, tourism is likely to change and shift toward a greater focus on generating positive impacts, reactivating local economies, and promoting nature.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Analyze how social marketing could be used on a large scale to respond to the opportunities and challenges relating to the SDGs described in this case study.

**Question 2**—Do you think social marketing campaigns have a positive influence on sustainability and education in general terms?

**Question 3**—In your opinion, how do these ongoing trends in tourism marketing create value by increasing preferences for sustainability and responsible consumption? How might a government agency such as SECTUR employ such an approach? What actions do you think SECTUR should consider?

**Question 4**—What social and tourism marketing initiatives should be implemented to meet the needs of social stakeholders and organizations with regard to sustainability?

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

The Mexican Secretariat of Tourism has developed the “Sustainable Mexico Reborn” strategy, which is a social marketing tool aimed at designing, implementing, and financing programs and actions to make Mexico a more sustainable destination. One of these initiatives, which is linked to the “Quality Education” objective in the 2030 Agenda, is “Roads of the Mexican Renaissance.” The “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” offers experiential education, enabling visitors to enjoy the environment in a biocultural sense and learn from the places they visit. The route is inspired by a legend that tells of the runners who brought Moctezuma fresh fish from Tecolutla beach in Veracruz to Tenochtitlan. The route passes through six states in Mexico, six World Heritage Sites, and eight Magical Towns. In the first two

editions, the initiative had a significant impact, attracting runners from the USA, Canada, Spain, Argentina, France, Germany, and Mexico.

## **Potential Audience and Teaching Materials**

This case study has been developed for use on Marketing Management courses, MBA programs, and Executive Development Programs, as well as advanced undergraduate courses. It is appropriate for courses examining social marketing and for specialized modules addressing communication, environmental analysis, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from a social marketing perspective.

The case study provides a detailed description of a specific educational initiative to support a social, sustainable cause implemented by SECTUR in Mexico in partnership with Altius Citus S.A. de C.V., the Office of the Presidency, the Ministry of Public Education, and several other institutions and social stakeholders. The aim of the initiative is to address the challenges posed by the cultural environment in relation to sustainable development in general while launching a social marketing campaign to build positive perceptions of sustainability and deliver quality education in tourist destinations. In executive programs, the discussion may also explore the importance of situational analysis in revealing how different forms of collaboration between tourist organizations and social stakeholders create value in a social marketing initiative.

## **Learning**

The case study is based around the following learning objectives:

1. To examine how ongoing trends in tourism marketing have led to a growing preference for sustainability.
2. To describe aspects of responsible consumption and sustainability in a tourism marketing initiative in Mexico.
3. To analyze how different forms of collaboration between tourism organizations and social stakeholders create value in a social marketing initiative.
4. To explore what marketers should focus on when designing tourism marketing interventions with an impact on sustainability and quality education.

## **Timeframe for Class Discussion**

This case study can be taught in one session lasting approximately 75 min.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Analyze how social marketing could be used on a large scale to respond to the opportunities and challenges relating to the SDGs described in this case study.

**Question 2**—Do you think social marketing campaigns have a positive influence on sustainability and education in general terms?

**Question 3**—In your opinion, how do these ongoing trends in tourism marketing create value by increasing preferences for sustainability and responsible consumption? How might a government agency such as SECTUR employ such an approach? What actions do you think SECTUR should consider?

**Question 4**—What social and tourism marketing initiatives should be implemented to meet the needs of social stakeholders and organizations with regard to sustainability?

## Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—Analyze how social marketing could be used on a large scale to respond to the opportunities and challenges relating to the SDGs described in this case study.*

In a social and cultural context driven by concerns for sustainability and environmental issues, responsible, ethical conduct is expected from public institutions, private organizations, and social stakeholders in general. In response to these opportunities and challenges, institutions must adopt practices to address environmental issues and base their strategies around the quest for sustainable development. Social marketing analyzes this situational context with the aim of incorporating sustainability and educational objectives and developing partnerships between educational and tourism institutions, public and private organizations, and society more broadly.

A social marketing plan is a tool for achieving objectives such as changing ideas, attitudes, or behaviors, improving reputation, and solving problems relating to educational and social issues, among others. The outcomes of marketing campaigns must be linked to the communication strategies used to promote social initiatives. In particular, the relevance of social marketing in this sustainable tourism initiative results from social specificity, targeting, and tourist involvement. In order to respond to the opportunities and challenges relating to the SDGs described in this case study, actions to be carried out on a large scale could include the following:

1. Raising awareness and boosting knowledge of cultural and environmental topics through education
2. Allocating funds for promoting content on social media
3. Investing in social media marketing
4. Establishing networks and relationships between different social stakeholders



***Answer to Question 2—Do you think social marketing campaigns have a positive influence on sustainability and education in general terms?***

Contributing to the body of knowledge on social marketing and sustainable tourism, this case study shows that campaigns of this kind have a positive influence on society by raising awareness of the initiative in question.

The case of the “Moctezuma Fish Route Race” offers recommendations for developing sustainable strategies to create successful marketing campaigns in countries around the world. The evidence described in this case study suggests that institutions and organizations working together must concentrate on raising awareness among their target audience and that the use of media in marketing campaigns is important to achieve their objectives.

In this educational initiative, selecting an important historical event is an effective way of arousing interest among tourists. This interest can enhance the impact of social marketing campaigns on sustainability education.

This case study suggests that although marketing campaigns can help institutions improve their image, the aspect that really matters is the topic selected for promotion. Working in partnership with institutions, organizations, and social stakeholders, the main message is that this initiative can drive sustainable development by raising awareness and creating positive attitudes and feelings among tourists and the general public.

***Answer to Question 3—In your opinion, how do these ongoing trends in tourism marketing create value by increasing preferences for sustainability and responsible consumption? How might a government agency such as SECTUR employ such an approach? What actions do you think SECTUR should consider?***

Tourism is an important industry both locally and globally, providing drivers for inclusive economic growth. The sector generates regional development, supports hundreds of jobs and businesses, and props up many companies and local communities. The recent pandemic has impacted travelers’ preferences and trends, positioning unconventional, less crowded destinations as favorites. Tourism is changing and there is a trend toward revitalizing and transforming local economies, promoting sustainable destinations, and regenerating nature.

Sustainable development in tourism is a key issue for policymakers, who recognize the need for coordinated efforts between government agencies, public institutions, social stakeholders, and the private sector. The practical challenge that remains is to ensure that economic development in local tourist destinations reinforces the policies in place at the national level.

Multilateral agreements can be effective when it comes to facilitating coordination. This has been the case in Mexico, where the tourism plan and programs are overseen by SECTUR with co-responsibility from relevant stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels. Developing a value proposition requires a marketing strategy selected from among the different strategies and actions available. An executive summary for a social marketing plan is structured as follows:

1. Strategic objectives: how to create value by raising awareness of an environmental and cultural area of interest. Here, the tourism product (the route) provides information to the public.
2. Strategic focus: the specific focus would be to attract the public to this value proposition.
3. Marketing mix: some authors mention the relevance of the 7Ps in terms of the experiences on offer. The 7Ps are people, process, physical evidence, product, promotion, price, and place.<sup>2</sup> 1) Product. This tourism product features a cycling, running, and walking race and can be accessed by people (runners). In this event, the tourism product is the experience of the race itself; 2) Promotion. The service is promoted through TV programs, social media, magazines, newspapers, etc.; 3) Price. The educational product will be available for free to anyone who is interested, but runners pay a fee to participate in the event; 4) Place. Users will be able to access the product from certain places and locations; 5) People. The event will be supported by organizers with expert knowledge; 6) Process. Guidelines for educating the public and runners will be established; 7) Physical evidence. The way in which staff will interact with interested groups and runners is highly relevant to this experience.

***Answer to Question 4—What social and tourism marketing initiatives should be implemented to meet the needs of social stakeholders and organizations with regard to sustainability?***

This is an open-ended question. The idea is that students think about what actions should be implemented to ensure that social stakeholders' needs and preferences with regard to sustainability are met.

In order to cater to the interests of social stakeholders and institutions, value must be created for them. A social marketing campaign should enable marketing managers to answer the following question: does the proposed social marketing program create value for the institution's stakeholders with regard to sustainability?

In tourism marketing, a series of actions can be implemented to create an experience based on product, price, place, promotion, physical evidence, people, and process. The tourism product purchased by the runner is their experience in the destination. Tourism products encompass tangible and intangible tourism resources. General purchase behaviors and positive attitudes toward sustainability depend on the availability of information, awareness, and tourist satisfaction achieved through experience, proper information, trained staff, and environment.

There may be differences of opinion in collaborations between different institutions and organizations, but managers always want immediate results. To a great extent, social marketing requires a communication strategy that institutions can adopt to showcase their involvement in social policies. This can benefit the

---

<sup>2</sup>Cuculeski, N., Petrovska, I. and Cuculeski, V. (2016) 'Sustainable marketing and consumers' preferences in tourism' *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 84–90.

reputation and image of corporations and municipal authorities, which are considered valuable assets in tourism.

---

## References

- Altinbasak-Farina, I., & Burnaz, S. (Eds.). (2019). *Ethics, social responsibility and sustainability in marketing*. Springer Nature. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-7924-6>
- Bhattacharyya, J., Dash, M. J., Hewege, C., Makam, S. B., & Lim, W. M. (2021a). *Social and sustainability marketing: A casebook for reaching your socially responsible consumers through marketing science*. Routledge.
- Bhattacharyya, J., Dash, M., Kundu, S., Sakshi, S., Bhattacharyya, K., & Kakkar, K. B. (2021b). No virus on me: The Indian ways of managing the COVID-19 pandemic, marine to mountain. *Asian Journal of Management Cases*, 20(2), 1–22.
- Anáhuac University, Center for Research Competitiveness in Tourism (CICOTUR, 2021). *México Sostenible, 2030 Sustainable Tourism Strategy: Executive Summary*. Available at <http://sistemas.sectur.gob.mx/dgots/04-estrategia-turismo-sostenible-2030.pdf>
- Galan-Ladero, M. M., Galera-Casquet, C., & Alves, H. M. (Eds.). (2021). *Cause-related marketing. Classroom companion: Business*. Springer Nature. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-65455-9>
- Galan-Ladero, M. M., Rivera, R.G. (Eds.) (2021). Applied social marketing and quality of life. Case studies from an international perspective.. Book Series “Applying Quality of Life Research: Best Practices”. : Springer Nature. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83286-5>.
- Gasper, D., Shah, A., & Tankha, S. (2019). The framing of sustainable consumption and production in SDG 12. *Global Policy*, 10, 83–95.
- Kumar, A., & Dash, M. K. (2017). Sustainability and future generation infrastructure on digital platform: A study of generation Y. In N. Ray (Ed.), *Business infrastructure for sustainability in developing economies* (pp. 124–142). Hershey, PA.
- Lubowiecki-Vikuk, A., Dąbrowska, A., & Machnik, A. (2021). Responsible consumer and lifestyle: Sustainability insights. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 25, 91–101.
- OECD. (2021, 26 January). Managing tourism development for sustainable and inclusive recovery. *OECD Tourism Papers*, 2021/01, OECD Publishing. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1787/b062f603-en>.
- Pallant, E., Choate, B., & Haywood, B. (2020). How do you teach undergraduate university students to contribute to UN SDGs 2030? In L. Filho, W. Salvia, A. L. Pretorius, R. W. Brandli, L. L. Manolas, & E. Alves (Eds.), *Universities as living labs for sustainable development* (pp. 69–85). Springer.
- Perera, C. R., & Hewege, C. R. (2016). Integrating sustainability education into international marketing curricula. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 17(1), 123–148.
- Stibbe, D.T., Reid, S., & Gilbert, J. (2018): *Maximising the impact of partnerships for the SDGs. A practical guide to partnership value creation*. The Partnering Initiative and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Accessed May 16, 2022, from UN DESA.

---

## Part III

# Cases on Environment, Healthy Lifestyles, and Responsible Consumption

This part includes the following:

Campaigns that affect the environment and their effect on the welfare of people and animals: Pollinators case and Pedigree case

Campaigns that promote healthy habits and responsible consumption (eating less meat and less salt, eating better and reducing waste, sustainable clothing, saving of water consumption): “The power of our diet” case, “Green Button” case, “Pao Come” case, “Carrefour” case, and “Water use in tourism” case

Campaigns that make visible the fight against cancer and the need for its prevention: AECC case and “Central Lechera Asturiana” case



# Supporting Well-being in People and Helping Pollinators Through a Community Garden Project

Felicity Small, Alain Neher, and Lucia Wuersch

## Learning Objectives

The students will be:

1. Able to describe and interpret a social marketing framework called the *Transtheoretical Model* of behavioural change and apply it to a case study
2. Able to explain the concept of well-being in relation to a pollinator and community garden and synthesise it based on a case study
3. Able to appraise the value of creating a pollinator and community garden; and
4. Inspired to design and create their own pollinator and community garden

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Community Gardening in Australia

Community gardens are social movements focused on interactions between people and nature (Foodwise, 2022). In Australia, the growth and depth of the community garden movement are reflected in the number of grassroots projects showcased in a range of online directories. Online sites such as The Australian City Farms and

---

F. Small (✉) · A. Neher · L. Wuersch  
Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, Australia  
e-mail: [fsmall@csu.edu.au](mailto:fsmall@csu.edu.au); [aneher@csu.edu.au](mailto:aneher@csu.edu.au); [lwuersch@csu.edu.au](mailto:lwuersch@csu.edu.au)

Community Gardens Network and Community Gardens Australia (CGA)<sup>1</sup> show different types of engagement. For example, the CGA reported the number of community garden projects that have been added to its network has grown from 60 to 600 in the last 20 years. These online community sites are not-for-profit organisations and are run for the people who are experiencing and benefiting from their membership in these groups. According to Sell (2021), there are several important personal and ecological benefits to forming and joining community garden groups, particularly in urban areas. One important urban project aimed at supporting habitat for pollinators and encouraging community is known as the B&B Highway.<sup>2</sup> This project aims to build a network of smaller green spaces that pollinators can use. The B&B Highway project was used to inspire various components of our own garden. Community gardening has been shown to help with personal well-being, create a feeling of belonging, and support the lifecycles of beneficial insects and other pollinators.

## 1.2 Pollinators, Well-being, Belongingness

Pollinators including birds, bees, butterflies, and various types of insects within broader ecosystems play an essential role in pollinating plants that support the natural environments as well as essential crops that provide our food (Baldock et al., 2015; Baldock, 2020). Yet scientists have observed that pollinator numbers are declining across the globe, including in Australia. Part of the issue is a lack of knowledge about the function of pollinators and the importance of biodiversity in creating a sustainable ecology.

Declining biodiversity can be addressed by having ready and easily accessible green spaces, which at the same time can contribute to people's well-being (SDGs 3 and 15). The concept of well-being is described as a state of feeling healthy and happy (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022). Such a state of feeling may be informed by a community garden, which can develop people's knowledge and understanding of the importance of pollinators by learning from experiences and peers and enabling people to connect with each other and nature. Hence, a community garden also creates a space of belonging. Belongingness is an essential human emotion and such feelings are linked to developing a positive sense of self and as a group or team member. 'Belonging' supports people in developing trust and responsibility (Mountain, 2016), which facilitates behavioural change.

---

<sup>1</sup>Please see the following sites for more information about [The Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network](https://dosomethingnearyou.com.au/cause/australian-city-farms-and-community-gardens-network/) (<https://dosomethingnearyou.com.au/cause/australian-city-farms-and-community-gardens-network/>) and [Community Gardens Australia \(CGA\)](https://www.communitygarden.org.au/) (<https://www.communitygarden.org.au/>)

<sup>2</sup>B&B Highway (2021) (<https://www.ps.org.au/bb-highway-about>)

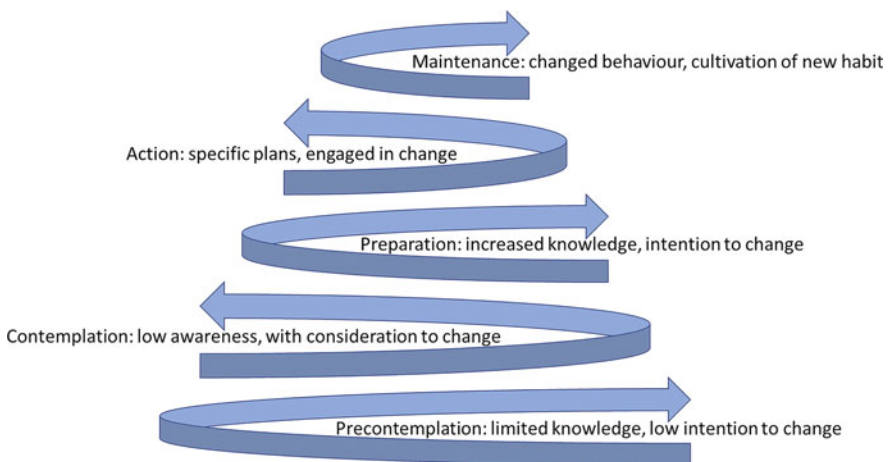
## 2 Case Development

The following real-world case study on a university campus uses the social marketing lens of the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) of behavioural change to demonstrate the link between the two SDGs (3 and 15) and social behaviours in the organisational context. The five stages of the TTM, as defined by Prochaska and Velicer (1997) and subsequently explored in this case study, are:

1. *Precontemplation*
2. *Contemplation*
3. *Preparation*
4. *Action*
5. *Maintenance*

Given the importance of well-being and belongingness, we explore how a university can develop a workplace where employees feel a sense of belonging and well-being. There is growing evidence that suggests that human interaction with nature through access to green spaces and engaging in community gardening projects is important for human health and well-being (Guitart et al., 2012; Frumkin et al., 2017). However, employees and students at a university often spend their days working inside with minimal time outside, reducing their engagement with nature.

A successful application for a sustainability grant allowed our team to address this question and issue by conducting a hands-on project and creating a pollinator and community garden. Throughout the following case study, we guide the students through our project. We apply our project experience to each step of the TTM (see Fig. 3) to provide structure for the context of our social marketing project and at the same time link to well-being and belonging. The case study starts with the precontemplation phase.



**Fig. 3** Upwards spiral model. Source: Design inspired by Dahlman & Heide (2020)

## 2.1 Precontemplation

Prochaska and Velicer (1997) argued that *precontemplation* exists when people are in one or more of the following states: They are unaware, underinformed, or unwilling to talk about issues. People in the precontemplation stage may have attempted to change their habits, but the experience was negative or may have resulted in failure and now they avoid actions related to change. In terms of motivation, they feel they are not ready to engage, unmotivated, or even resistant. For our pollinator garden, we assumed that the level of awareness of many of our stakeholders may vary significantly: From those who were likely to be underinformed about the importance of pollinators and the positive impact that engaging with nature could have on their well-being, through to people who would be engaged with the concepts and ready to think about the project. Thus, at the preliminary stages of the project, we explored the knowledge levels of the project team, the key stakeholders, and the broader community.

Within the project team, life experiences of gardening were positive and strong. Although our team's knowledge of native plants and the Indigenous ecology was not high, the members were enthusiastic and willing to learn. Also, while working in the garden was something the team innately understood to feel good from a personal perspective, the team again did not have a strong academic framework for the impact engaging with nature can have on human well-being. In contrast, local Indigenous Elders had a strong knowledge of local native plants and pollinators as this knowledge is handed down through their connection to country. This awareness resulted in immediate engagement with the social and environmental outcomes intended by the project.

To gauge the level of awareness, during our first engagement with a broader community group of stakeholders, we invited people to a morning tea and placed posters around a meeting room with insightful facts about pollinators. The aim of the morning tea and posters was to build awareness for this group, encourage people to ask questions, and sign up for later stages of the project. As this was a more diverse group, the range of awareness in the room was apparent, as was the willingness to engage in the next stages with some people asking for specific dates for the construction of the garden so they could add them to their calendars.

As positive engagement in the precontemplation stage determines whether people will continue with the change journey, three things were clear at this first stage of the project. First, the team building the garden had a strong passion; two, other key stakeholders had the knowledge to share; and three, the broader community was willing to listen and move to the next stages.

## 2.2 Contemplation

In the second stage of the TTM, *contemplation*, people experience a growing level of awareness and knowledge. However, they may also feel a sense of procrastination and prolonged delays in a more specific movement towards change (Prochaska &



Velicer, 1997). For our project team, the energy and enthusiasm of the pre-stage continued to bubble over as the contemplation stage began and the sense of belonging within the team increased. The team became acutely aware of the one-year time constraint they faced in terms of funding but were also very keen to develop the project. During the contemplation stage, the team arranged many meetings with experts to build their knowledge and ensure a successful project.

At this stage, we began our community radio broadcasts.<sup>3</sup> A fortnightly scheduled interview series was developed with each team member agreeing to be responsible for a session. The broadcasts could be conducted live in the radio studio or pre-recorded. To help calm nerves and ensure the messages were aligned with the stage of the project, the team shared a basic script before each radio session. Our scripts were reflections of our project, and the team was constantly being reinvigorated by reviewing our achievements as well as forcing us to articulate the actions we still needed to undertake to reach our main goals. The community radio program shared our social marketing plan with the broader community and hopefully ignited *contemplation* within others.

Also, during this stage of our change initiative, a key stakeholder, our campus management team, which had provided some advice during the precontemplation stage, became a prominent player. While initial discussions had identified a place on the campus for the pollinator garden, a change in staffing led to suggestions for other areas on campus to be considered. The process of contemplation for the location of the garden instigated a long delay as the project team, the campus management team and Indigenous Elders all held different opinions on the most appropriate location. Each stakeholder's perspective was articulated, including issues of human safety and interactions with pollinators, the best ecological location for the garden and the most appropriate place for the community to engage with the garden. In particular, the creation and location of bee habitats were significant areas of contention. The result of the contemplation stage was to return to the original garden space and adopt six other locations on campus (Fig. 1), which turned into our own 'bee highway'. The location of the bee habitat was a major compromise for the project team. However, to ensure human safety, it was agreed that bee hotels would be located away from commonly used community areas.

During the extended contemplation stage, and frustrated by inactivity, the project team engaged in an act of guerrilla gardening. We were aware of an empty balcony area in our building, and changes in staffing meant there were empty filing cabinets that were to be removed but were still awaiting collection. With this knowledge, the project team moved some unused cabinets onto the balcony and we began building our first (secret) garden (Pictures 1 and 2). This subversive act shifted the project team from contemplation into the preparation stage, as we needed to intensify our knowledge of the plants required for our native garden. This rather unconventional step of creating a secret garden also strengthened the team's bond and feeling of belongingness.

---

<sup>3</sup>Please listen to our [community radio broadcasts](https://2mce.org/podcastfilter/pollinator-garden/) (<https://2mce.org/podcastfilter/pollinator-garden/>)



**Fig. 1** Map of pollinator and community garden beds. Source: University Campus map modified by the authors (Oct, 2021)

### 2.3 Preparation

In the *preparation* stage, people are intending to take action in the near future as they have been developing knowledge and a clear action plan (Prochaska, 2008; Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). Our team’s knowledge about bees, butterflies, and birds and how to build a suitable and sustainable garden for pollinators had further increased from the contemplation phase. Hence, we were keen to iteratively plan our pollinator garden and communicate our plans to the community and a variety of stakeholders both within and outside the university. From an operational planning perspective, we had numerous conversations with the campus management team including negotiating the outline of the garden and the physical infrastructural elements (Fig. 2) to comply with occupational health and safety requirements and in agreement with ground staff’s operations and practices. Plans were also discussed with the First Nations Elders on campus, who explained the importance of the interplay and harmony between native plants—such as Sweet Bursaria, Grevillia or Melaleuca—and the local pollinators, for example, the Blue Banded Bee (Picture 3) or the Bathurst Copper Butterfly. We also gathered information and were fishing for ideas from the nursery on our campus and one of the local nurseries, both highly knowledgeable about the local flora and insects. These nurseries substantially contributed to the selection list of our plants based on the specifics of our garden spots (e.g., being in full sun or mainly in the shade). With a local landscaper, we bounced ideas on site and discussed suitable locations for the infrastructure considering the quality of the soil and character of the ground and landscape. By highlighting just a few examples, we illustrate how important it is to consult with close stakeholder groups including seeking assistance in the preparation stage. It is



**Picture 1** Garden beds made of old filing cabinets. Photographer: Lucia Wuersch (June, 2021)

only through collaboration and by identifying community needs, we can create both a safe space for pollinators and a space of well-being and belonging for people.

Before starting with the action stage, the implementation of the garden required detailed preparation. Planning the resources, such as human, finance, time, plants, and material, is particularly relevant. For example, we had to measure and calculate how many bricks were needed for the retaining walls of our raised beds; how much soil and mulch (including evaluating what kind of soil and mulch is most suitable) was necessary; how many trips with our utility vehicle were required; how much time we had to put aside to prepare the ground and then to build the infrastructure to be ready for the planting day with the community; and how much money could we spend for additional features such as an arch, birdbaths, and material (for example,

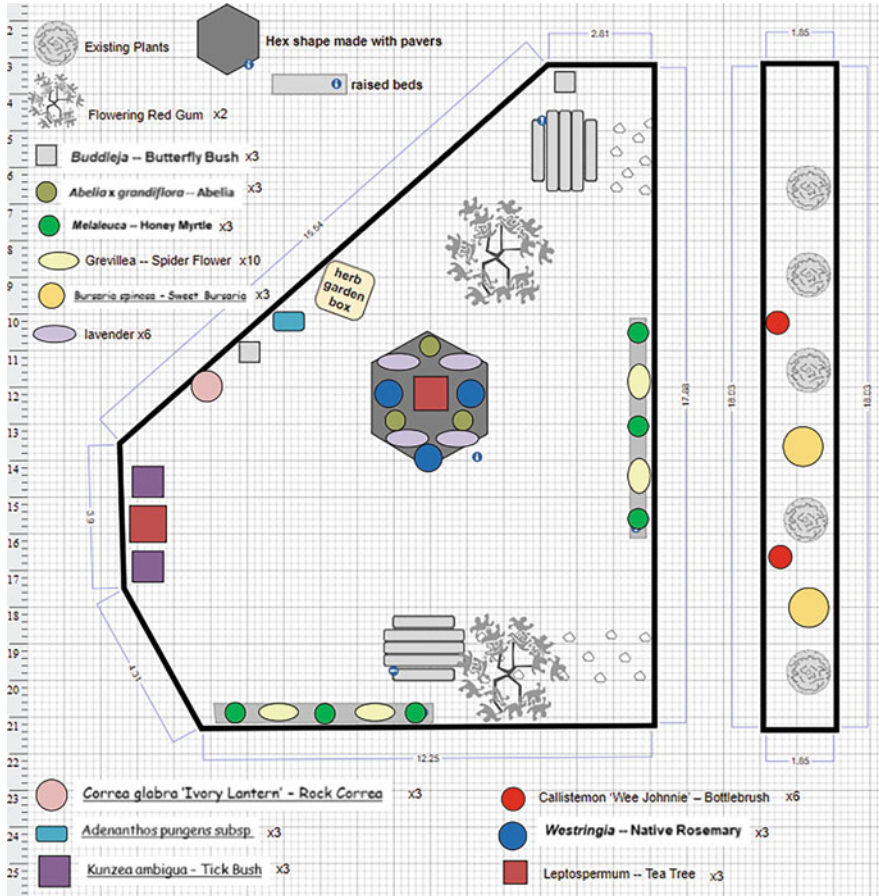


**Picture 2** Building the secret (guerrilla) garden. Photographer: Lucia Wuersch (June, 2021)

toolbox, gardening tools, hose, watering cans, etc., for maintaining the garden later on) to remain within the project budget. It is important to emphasise that the preparation stage does not end when the action stage starts. As mentioned earlier, planning is an iterative process and while putting the plans into action, further concurrent planning is frequently needed. For example, the soil and mulch we initially ordered were unavailable on the day we arranged for pickup. Hence, we immediately had to re-evaluate what other material to choose instead and re-calculate the budget based on the new prices.

## 2.4 Action

The *action* stage embraces specific overt modifications of people's lifestyles over about six months (Prochaska, 2008; Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). Hence, after several months of intensive planning and preparation, we finally were ready to physically build the garden. During previous planning sessions, the team realised that one day would not be enough to build the garden. Hence, we decided to proceed stepwise and start the action with an 'infrastructure day' (Picture 4). It was a day on which, also due to COVID-19 restrictions, we worked as a small team outdoors on site. We built raised and vertical garden beds, put in the soil, and installed the arch and a pathway. This first action day permitted us to physically come together as a



**Fig. 2** Draft of the garden design. Designer: Felicity Small (June, 2021)

team after several months of COVID-19 lockdown and communication via Zoom and email. Hence, finally meeting in person again and working in the actual garden and not in the online space were much-missed activities, which gave this infrastructure day a particular flavour.

One week later, the garden beds were ready, and the plants were lined up in the university's entrance hall waiting for the volunteers to arrive. Although we asked volunteers to sign in for the event, we were unsure of the exact participant numbers, particularly as we were just coming out of lockdown. How surprised were we when we saw about 20 people turning up—university staff and their family members, people from the local gardening club, and other community members. All volunteers wore waterproof garden clothes, and some brought their gardening tools and even plants. We learned that it is important to indicate an easily recognisable meeting



**Picture 3** Blue Banded Bee (*Amegilla*). Photographer: Christopher Eather (Sept, 2021)



**Picture 4** Team at the infrastructure day. Photographer: Matt Mumford (Oct, 2021)



**Picture 5** Secret (guerrilla) garden at the community event. Photographer: Alain Neher (Oct, 2021)

point as volunteers from outside the university may not be familiar with the campus locations.

We welcomed the volunteers and explained what was happening during the day. We shared a rough schedule, including times and location for morning tea and lunch, and provided orientation. A couple of volunteering staff cooked excellent food, which was an important success factor of the day, especially as the weather was cool and rainy. Hence, the volunteers used the breaks to warm up, meet each other and build relationships. On this occasion, some volunteers agreed to participate in a short research interview investigating their experience in the event. These interviews had ethics approval from the university's Ethics Committee and informed consent from the volunteers was obtained.

Highlights of the action day were teams organising their planting activities, one team installed a toolbox on the secret (guerrilla) balcony garden (Picture 5), and another team planted Lenny, the gumtree. Lenny would have ended up in a raised garden bed if not saved by a volunteer who recognised the future growth of the tree and insisted on finding an appropriate spot outside the main garden area near the pond. Other volunteers helped dig the hole, put the gumtree in the soil, and watered it. Belonging to the volunteer group standing in a circle around the freshly planted and named tree Lenny was a moving moment (Picture 6). The action day found its formal end when the whole group met in the main garden area and assembled for a final group picture (Picture 7). That picture was published on many different communication channels and platforms and in the media.



**Picture 6** Planting of Lenny at the community event. Photographer: Lucia Wuersch (Oct, 2021)



**Picture 7** Community event with volunteers. Photographer: James Siegert (Oct, 2021)

## 2.5 Maintenance

In the *maintenance* stage, people are working to prevent backslide (Prochaska, 2008; Prochaska & Velicer, 1997) and hence maintain what has been achieved in the change process. In our project, we differentiate between permanent and changing



**Picture 8** Signage in the main garden. Photographer: Alain Neher (Nov, 2021)



maintenance. *Permanent* maintenance is relatively stable over time. For example, after completing our pollinator and community garden, we designed six educational signs (as an example, see Picture 8) and poured them into concrete across all the garden locations. Also, we created our own website,<sup>4</sup> which includes information about our pollinator and community garden such as pictures, our radio interview podcasts or topical resources. To help track the progress of the garden, we also joined a citizen scientist online community called iNaturalist.<sup>5</sup> In this online database, we can record the plants and pollinators visiting our garden. These kinds of

<sup>4</sup>Please see our website <https://www.csu.edu.au/sustainability/pollinator-garden>

<sup>5</sup>A citizen scientist database called iNaturalist: <https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/>

permanent maintenance only require minimal maintenance such as periodically updating the website content and wiping the signage.

Changing maintenance, on the other hand, requires adaptive and ongoing care for the garden and engagement with stakeholders. The garden was completed and inaugurated in summer, which required regular watering. The team developed a roster for this hot period and adjusted it for the cooler and more humid season. Further garden maintenance includes weeding, replanting where plants were put together too closely, replacing plants that had issues growing in a certain spot, and taking care of damaged plants. For example, Lenny was ‘injured’ by a lawnmower, prompting the team to put a fence around the young well-growing gumtree (Picture 9). Cultivating relationships is another important area for a community space. The fluctuation of staff leads to building connections with new staff. For example, together with the new sustainability officer, we organised a morning tea event for world bee day. A special maintenance component of our garden is the

**Picture 9** Protection for Lenny. Photographer: Alain Neher (April, 2022)



ecological assessment conducted by an ecologist from the region. This assessment is testing the variety and quantity of pollinators in the early stages of our garden and after about six months. The results may indicate the impact this natural space has created for the local pollinators. As a last example of the maintenance stage, the team has planned to go back to the radio station after about six months to update the local community on the pollinator and community garden project, highlighting what has happened and the current situation.

As shown in the other four stages, the maintenance stage also contributes to the sense of belonging. By sharing the caring, the team members take responsibility and also rely on each other's task fulfilment to ensure a flourishing garden; trust is a driver for belongingness. Hence, team members also fill in when a member leaves the organisation, which has happened within our team.

Theoretically, the TTM contains a sixth stage, *termination*, in which individuals have zero temptation and complete self-efficacy, that is, people will not return to an earlier stage of the change process (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). Given our project is a living garden requiring continuing care, it will remain at the maintenance stage. Hence, we conclude the TTM after five stages and design our own model based on our pollinator and community garden project experience. Our *spiral model* (Fig. 3) illustrates the five TTM stages as a positive upwards spiral reflecting a successful outcome: Creating a green space, nurturing well-being, offering belongingness to the community and team, and landscaping a micro-ecosystem for pollinators to thrive.

---

### 3 Conclusion

This project has shown how building a pollinator and community garden as a shared activity can enhance a university's internal and external stakeholders' sense of belongingness. By reaching higher sustainability goals, people strengthen their awareness of pollinators and motivation to engage and care for people's well-being in a garden on campus. During the project, people undergo a dynamic five-stage process of TTM illustrated using the spiral model (Fig. 3). The process is iterative and while some stages can happen faster, other stages can be recurring processes and take longer. Our example illustrates some challenges of the TTM framework, such as external factors (e.g., the COVID-19 lockdown, organisational redundancies, conflicting stakeholder interests) and internal factors (e.g., project participants entering and leaving the process at different stages). Finally, the end of the project, our *maintenance* stage, can become the starting point of a new project (Picture 10).



**Picture 10** Main garden, six months post community event. Photographer: Alain Neher (March, 2022)

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Clear communication of the aims and stages of the project is crucial in getting community support. Explain how the pollinator and community garden project team communicated with its audiences. What suggestions would you make to enhance the communication strategy?

**Question 2**—Briefly summarise the stages of change for the TTM, and given the case study, which stage do you believe was the most crucial for the success of this community garden change initiative? Please explain.

**Question 3**—Considering the stages of the TTM, how can you design a project action plan to help move change participants through a program to build a community garden?

**Question 4**—Besides achieving sustainability goals and improving on campus well-being, the underpinning motivation of this project was to reach a higher sense of belongingness. Imagine you are starting a social marketing change program, what do you think the key motivations would be for you?

**Question 5**—If you critically reflect on the five stages of this *change project*, what recommendations would you make to others following this project as a model?

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

The purpose of this case study is to share the experience of building a habitat for pollinators and finding ways to support the well-being of people through community activities. The transtheoretical model of behavioural change was used as a framework to showcase the journey of the project team. The team's and community's knowledge, inventiveness, openness, and enthusiasm combined created a collective vision and inspired us to challenge ourselves. At each stage of the case study, we have incorporated images to illustrate our experiences and show the physical change in the landscape. We used a range of marketing techniques to communicate our progress and intentions during the project. We began our communication plan with stakeholder engagement meetings, community events, and radio broadcasts, and ended with informational location signage and a website hosted by the university. The pollinator and community garden project had many challenges; however, with reinvigorating teamwork and a supportive community spirit, the garden has blossomed into life, meeting our social and sustainability goals of habitat and hope.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material Classroom Notes

This case study is intended for undergraduate students enrolled in Social Marketing subjects.

### Learning

The students will be:

1. Able to describe and interpret a social marketing framework called the *Transtheoretical Model* of behavioural change and apply it to a case study
2. Able to explain the concept of well-being in relation to a pollinator and community garden and synthesise it based on a case study
3. Able to appraise the value of creating a pollinator and community garden; and
4. Inspired to design and create their own pollinator and community garden

### Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case study and discussion questions can be taught in one session of approximately one hour, depending on the number of students participating in the discussion. We recommend an additional two hours to complete the hands-on practical task or the digital online classroom activity depending on the mode.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Clear communication of the aims and stages of the project is crucial in getting community support. Explain how the pollinator and community garden project team communicated with its audiences. What suggestions would you make to enhance the communication strategy?

**Question 2**—Briefly summarise the stages of change for the TTM, and given the case study, which stage do you believe was the most crucial for the success of this community garden change initiative? Please explain.

**Question 3**—Considering the stages of the TTM, how can you design a project action plan to help move change participants through a program to build a community garden?

**Question 4**—Besides achieving sustainability goals and improving on-campus well-being, the underpinning motivation of this project was to reach a higher sense of belongingness. Imagine you are starting a social marketing change program, what do you think the key motivations would be for you?

**Question 5**—If you critically reflect on the five stages of this *change project*, what recommendations would you make to others following this project as a model?

## Analysis

**Answer to Question 1**—*Clear communication of the aims and stages of the project is crucial in getting community support. Explain how the pollinator and community garden project team communicated with its audiences. What suggestions would you make to enhance the communication strategy?*

The team used a range of broad and personalised communication tools. The broad tools included social media campaigns (Facebook and Twitter), radio broadcasts, out-of-home signage, public relations (news stories in the local paper) and a website. The personalised tools included direct email, face-to-face meetings with stakeholders and social events such as morning tea, garden events such as the building of the garden, and the garden launch, and a group training session using iNaturalist to develop our citizen scientist skills.

The communication strategies could have been enhanced with more personalised face-to-face interactions with certain stakeholders.

**Answer to Question 2**—*Briefly summarise the stages of change for the TTM, and given the case study, which stage do you believe was the most crucial for the success of this community garden change initiative? Please explain.*

The stages of the TTM, as defined by Prochaska and Velicer (1997) are:

1. *Precontemplation*—exists when people are in one or more of the following states: They are unaware, underinformed, or unwilling to talk about issues.
2. *Contemplation*—people experience a growing level of awareness and knowledge. However, they may also experience a sense of procrastination and prolonged delays in a more specific movement towards change.

3. *Preparation*—people are intending to take action in the near future as they have been developing knowledge and a clear action plan.
4. *Action*—Individuals embrace specific overt modifications to their lifestyles.
5. *Maintenance*—people are working to prevent backslide and hence maintain what has been achieved in the change process.
6. *Termination*—individuals have zero temptation and complete self-efficacy, that is, people will not return to an earlier stage of the change process.

For our project, the intervention was aimed at building the pollinator and community garden. Thus, the action stage was the most crucial stage of change for us. However, without the earlier stages of precontemplation, and contemplation, we would not have been able to recruit volunteers to participate in the garden development.

***Answer to Question 3—Considering the stages of the TTM, how can you design a project action plan to help move change participants through a program to build a community garden?***

TTM stages	Action Plan for each stage
Precontemplation	The key action for this stage was broad communication—focused on building exposure and awareness of the environmental and social issues.
Contemplation	The key actions at this stage were developing conversations, showcasing the intentions and purpose of the project, providing information about the team, and putting emphasis on the importance of the issue, and why change is needed.
Preparation	The key actions at this stage were to showcase the specific plans for the community event and the next steps towards building the garden (i.e., sending out invitations) working through all the event planning (risk assessment and approvals).
Action	The key action at this stage was the creation of the garden at the community event.
Maintenance	The key aim at this stage was to encourage continued adoption—we focused on a launch of the garden, and additional training showing techniques people could use to become citizen scientists. The key aim here is to enable the garden to thrive.

***Answer to Question 4—Besides achieving sustainability goals and improving oncampus well-being, the underpinning motivation of this project was to reach a higher sense of belongingness. Imagine you are starting a social marketing change program, what do you think the key motivations would be for you?***

Social Marketing change interventions are often focused on finding ways to resolve aspects or parts of larger wicked problems. While smaller grassroots community actions may not be scalable, they can be replicated from one community to the next, and have a significant impact on the lives of the individuals who are changed because of the intervention. The key motivations of change agents are to identify barriers to change, and to provide incentives for target audiences (especially reluctant ones) to act in ways that help them to achieve personal, societal, or environmental goals.

**Answer to Question 5—If you critically reflect on the stages of this change project, what recommendations would you make to others following this project as a model?**

Each stage of change presented its own challenges, we would recommend that we engaged in more personalised community collaboration activities at the *preparation* and *action* stages prior to the building of the garden. Thus, giving more capacity to build a collaborative co-design approach between the team and the different stakeholders. For example, we would suggest having different workshops to develop the garden design elements during the preparation stages, that brought key stakeholders together.

**Further Classroom Activities: For Digital Learning and On campus Classes**

Following the case study, we would encourage students to engage in some secondary research to develop their understanding of the concepts presented.

We recommend students consider some of the suggested sources listed *before* attending class:

- Secondary research on well-being, belonging, pollinators and bee highway
- Virtually collecting ideas of the concept of a community garden

Suggested secondary industry sources for students to investigate prior to the online workshop	Theory sources for community building—motivations behind community gardens
<p><i>Pollinator resources</i>                  B &amp; B Highway  <a href="https://www.pollinator.org/pollinators">https://www.pollinator.org/pollinators</a>  <a href="https://ourworldindata.org/pollinator-dependence">https://ourworldindata.org/pollinator-dependence</a>                  Charles Sturt’s Pollinator and Community Garden</p>	<p>Doyle, G. (2019). In the garden: Capacities that contribute to community groups establishing community gardens. <i>International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development</i>, 14 (1), pp. 15–32 <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/19463138.2022.2045997">https://doi.org/10.1080/19463138.2022.2045997</a></p> <p>Kingsley, J., Foenander, E. &amp; Bailey, A. (2019). You feel like you’re part of something bigger: Exploring motivations for community garden participation in Melbourne, Australia. <i>BMC Public Health</i>, 19, 1–12 <a href="https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7108-3">https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7108-3</a>  <a href="https://journals.openedition.org/factsreports/5778">https://journals.openedition.org/factsreports/5778</a></p>
<p><i>Sustainable Development Goals</i>  <a href="https://sdgs.un.org/goals">https://sdgs.un.org/goals</a>  <a href="https://developers.google.com/community/gdsc-solution-challenge/UN-goals#:~:text=All%20193%20United%20Nations%20Member,Development%20Goals%20using%20Google%20technologies">https://developers.google.com/community/gdsc-solution-challenge/UN-goals#:~:text=All%20193%20United%20Nations%20Member,Development%20Goals%20using%20Google%20technologies</a>  <a href="https://sdg-tracker.org/good-health">https://sdg-tracker.org/good-health</a></p>	

(continued)



Suggested secondary industry sources for students to investigate prior to the online workshop	Theory sources for community building—motivations behind community gardens
<p><i>Gardening sources</i></p> <p><a href="https://www.gardeningwithangus.com.au/">https://www.gardeningwithangus.com.au/</a>  <a href="https://communitygarden.org.au/">https://communitygarden.org.au/</a>  <a href="https://seewhatgrows.org/unique-urban-community-gardens-inspire-future-generations/">https://seewhatgrows.org/unique-urban-community-gardens-inspire-future-generations/</a>  <a href="https://www.planning.act.gov.au/planning-our-city/planning-studies/community_gardens_in_the_act/guide_to_community_gardens_in_the_act">https://www.planning.act.gov.au/planning-our-city/planning-studies/community_gardens_in_the_act/guide_to_community_gardens_in_the_act</a></p>	

### Online Class: Workshop

In an online workshop, smaller break-out rooms, having conducted the secondary research, students could proceed to design a community garden, creating a mission statement, choosing a location, and outlining an action plan to build the garden. Using the following tool <https://www.smartdraw.com/landscape-design/templates/>, in their groups, students could collaborate, share their screens and create a digital design layout for the garden.

### Practical Hands-on Immersive Learning Activity

We also recommend where possible, students undertake a physical activity to explore the idea of nature and the impact of building a garden on their own local natural ecosystem and community. The purpose of the task is to encourage students to think about the physical process of creating a change intervention such as building a community garden:

- Take a walk around your own campus and look for empty spaces that have the potential for a garden and/or visit a real-world community garden.
- Map out potential stakeholder groups and identify their interest and perceived influence.
- Sketch your own pollinator and community garden on paper (or on screen)—consider what it would look like to the pollinators who may visit.
- Outline and calculate the operational aspects of a community garden project such as time to build the garden, the infrastructure components, and costs.
- Create a communication strategy including emphasising the core Sustainable Development Goals of your own project.
- Share your project with the class and lead a discussion about how your garden can bring about change in the community.

## References

- Baldock, K. C. (2020). Opportunities and threats for pollinator conservation in global towns and cities. *Current Opinion in Insect Science*, 38, 63–71.
- Baldock, K. C., Goddard, M. A., Hicks, D. M., Kunin, W. E., Mitschunas, N., Osgathorpe, L. M., et al. (2015). Where is the UK's pollinator biodiversity? The importance of urban areas for flower-visiting insects. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 282(1803), 20142849.
- Cambridge Dictionary. (2022). *Well-being*. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/well-being>.
- Dahlman, S., & Heide, M. (2020). *Strategic internal communication: A practitioner's guide to implementing cutting-edge methods for improved workplace culture*. Routledge.
- Foodwise. (2022). *The community gardening movement*. <https://www.foodwise.com.au/the-community-gardening-movement>.
- Frumkin, H., Bratman, G. N., Breslow, S. J., Cochran, B., Kahn, P. H., Jr., Lawler, J. J., et al. (2017). Nature contact and human health: A research agenda. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 125(7), 075001.
- Guitart, D., Pickering, C., & Byrne, J. (2012). Past results and future directions in urban community gardens research. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 11(4), 364–373.
- Mountain, A. (2016). Developing trust and responsibility. In W. F. Cornell, A. de Graaf, T. Newton, & M. Thunnissen (Eds.), *Into TA: A comprehensive textbook on transactional analysis* (pp. 357–367). Karnac Books.
- Prochaska, J. O. (2008). Decision making in the transtheoretical model of behavior change. *Medical Decision Making*, 28(6), 845–849.
- Prochaska, J. O., & Velicer, W. F. (1997). The transtheoretical model. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 12(1), 38–48.
- Sell, N. (2021). *The rise of the community garden*. <https://bioweed.com.au/the-rise-of-the-community-garden>.



# Corporate Social Marketing for Sustainable Animal Well-Being: The Pedigree Promotion of Homeless Dog Adoption

Elísabet Mora, Natalia Vila, and Inés Küster

## Learning Objectives

1. To know which are the leading animal well-being problems worldwide.
2. To identify the most appropriate social causes to be selected by brands to be supported internationally as a long-term corporate ethical commitment.
3. To study successful corporate social marketing initiatives in the field of animal well-being.

## 1 Introduction

Treating animal companions as one more family member has grown the pet industry worldwide. However, animal causes like pet abandonment and low adoption rates of homeless pets are animal causes needing solutions. Companies like Mars Petcare, owning brands like Pedigree, have internationally become industry leaders in sales and corporate social marketing. Pedigree has established a successful long-term partnership with the social cause of dog adoption. As a result, the Pedigree Foundation has been created by the brand to launch different types of initiatives to promote dog adoption continually.

---

E. Mora (✉) · N. Vila · I. Küster  
University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain  
e-mail: [Elisabet.Mora@uv.es](mailto:Elisabet.Mora@uv.es); [Natalia.Vila@uv.es](mailto:Natalia.Vila@uv.es); [Ines.Kuster@uv.es](mailto:Ines.Kuster@uv.es)

## 2 Case development

### 2.1 Pet Industry and Animal Well-Being Figures

Worldwide, the care of dogs, cats, fish, and domestic birds create an industry of million euros in full expansion. The ownership of cats and dogs has been steadily increasing globally, including in emerging economies. In 2022 it was estimated that over 470 million dogs and 370 million pet cats are kept as pets around the world (Simply Insurance, 2022). Globally, dogs are the most popular pet in around one in three homes worldwide. Almost a quarter of pet owners have a cat. More than a billion pets live with families in the USA, Europe, Latin America, and Japan (PFMA—Pet Food Manufacturers Association, 2021).

The tendency to treat companion animals as children promotes an industry that has grown by over 66% in the last decade, while the global economy has expanded by just 43% (The Economist, 2020). Only in Europe, 90 million households owned at least one pet, of which 113,588,248 were cats and 92,947,732 dogs in 2021. That same year, pet food products had an annual sales volume of 10.2 million tons and reached a turnover of 27.7 billion euros in Europe, while pet-related products and services were valued at €23.5 billion: €9.5 billion for accessories and €14 billion for services also in Europe (Fediaf, 2022). It is estimated that 110,000 direct and 950,000 indirect jobs are related to the pet business throughout Europe. Europe has 150 pet food companies and 200 production plants, and this part of the pet food industry alone is growing at an annual rate of 3.1% (Fediaf, 2022).

Homeless companion animals are one of the main animal well-being problems worldwide. Although it is difficult to find official figures, some independent institutions provide rough data. Only in the USA, approximately 6.3 million companion animals enter animal shelters annually (3.1 million dogs and 3.2 million cats) (ASPCA—American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 2022). The European Union estimates that there are about 100 million abandoned companion animals in Europe and most of them living in the Union's Member States like Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and Spain (ESDAW—European Society of Dog and Animal Welfare, 2022).

In Spain, the abandonment of pets and their adoption at a low rate are causes of animal welfare that urgently require the search for solutions. In 2020 Spanish animal shelters collected 286,000 dogs and cats (162,000 dogs and 124,000 cats). Firstly, 49.3% were adopted in the dogs' case, 15.6% were returned to their owners, 20.2% remained in the shelter, 6.2% stayed in foster homes, 5.3% were transferred to another entity, and 3% died. Secondly, 42.6% were adopted in the cats' case, 15.1% remained in the shelter, 14.4% were relocated to cat colonies, 10.1% stayed in foster homes, 4.5% were transferred to another entity, and 9.7% died (Fundación Affinity, 2020).

**Table 1** Homeless pets index in different countries

Country	Total Cat & Dog Population	Total Homeless Counts	% Homeless Companion Animals
United States	185,407,416	47,700,000	26%
India	93,841,422	79,900,000	85%
Germany	28,460,000	2,060,000	7%
Greece	5,509,232	2,828,000	51%
China	257,738,944	75,000,000	29%
Mexico	38,895,368	7,600,000	20%
UK	20,953,432	1,079,400	5%
South Africa	14,915,084	4,050,000	27%
Russia	67,547,799	4,079,000	6%

Source: data from [endpethomelessness.com](http://endpethomelessness.com) (2022)

## 2.2 Raising Awareness About the Homeless Animal Problem: [endpethomelessness.com](http://endpethomelessness.com)

Homeless companion animals are one of the leading animal well-being problems worldwide. However, few countries provide official national figures, and it is not easy to study the phenomenon internationally. Because of this, some independent institutions have made considerable efforts to collect reliable data and visualize the magnitude of that problem. The company Mars Petcare, the owner of the pet food brand Pedigree, has developed the website “[endpethomelessness.com](http://endpethomelessness.com)” to provide data. Only in 9 countries (US, UK, India, Mexico, Germany, Russia, South Africa, China, and Greece) are 224 million dogs and cats in shelters or on the street.<sup>1</sup> This is a severe animal well-being problem in emergent economies like India or China, and in the USA or European countries like Greece or Spain (Table 1). The UK is one of the countries with a lower percentage of homeless animals and, at the same time, with high pet adoption rates (Mars Petcare, 2022).

The project “[endpethomelessness.com](http://endpethomelessness.com)” aims to address pet homelessness issues around the world with a wide range of programs, including responsible pet owner and breeder education, expanded access to veterinary care, shelter support, branded partnerships and donation. The last informational initiative of the website has been the development of the State of Pet Homelessness Index. This index is the first consistent, methodological measure of pet homelessness by country to identify the most impactful factors in each country (Mars Petcare, 2022).

<sup>1</sup>Map of countries available online for download at: [https://endpethomelessness.com/static/INFOGRAPHIC-2021-State-of-Pet-Homelessness\\_Index-6ffc70c761ddce2d99480d6c718c9722.pdf](https://endpethomelessness.com/static/INFOGRAPHIC-2021-State-of-Pet-Homelessness_Index-6ffc70c761ddce2d99480d6c718c9722.pdf)

### 2.3 Providing Comprehensive Non-Profit Solutions to Pet Homelessness: The Pedigree Foundation

The Pedigree Foundation was established in 2008 by the company maker of Pedigree food for dogs, Mars Petcare, to help increase dog adoption rates. It is a private foundation that supports shelters and rescue organizations and encourages people to adopt, volunteer, and donate.<sup>2</sup> Since 2008, Pedigree Foundation has given more than nine million dollars through 5700 grants, working with organizations that support its missions of ending pet homelessness and helping dogs find their forever homes. Shelters and rescues in the US can apply for annual and emergency grants specially addressed to programs such as temporary fostering, transport from overpopulated areas, and matching homeless dogs with their owners (Pedigree Foundation, 2022).

Only in 2021, a total amount of 782,067 dollars was dedicated by the Foundation to different types of grant programs. Firstly, 345,307 dollars were spent on “Development Grants,” for transport, foster, behavior, or matching programs that increase dog adoption rates. Secondly, 187,595 dollars were addressed to “Disaster Relief Grants” for an emergency response to natural disasters, hoarding, puppy mill seizures, or other crises. And thirdly, 100,000 were dedicated to the “Dogs Rule Grant,” providing 50,000 dollars a year for two years to the awarded shelters for an innovative initiative that could be a best practice model to increase dog adoption (Fig. 1).

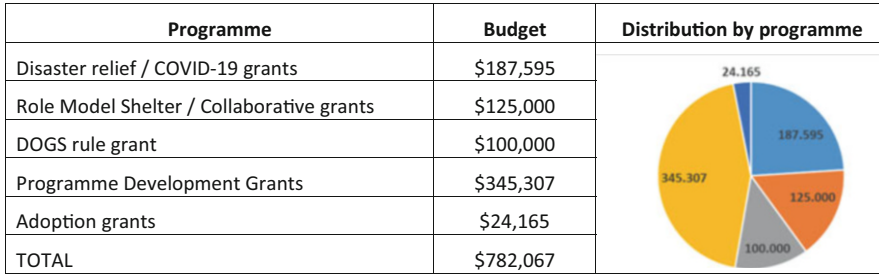
The Pedigree Foundation’s money to cover these different grant programs and the related management costs comes from various financial sources. Corporate donations are the primary source of financial support providing 167,885 dollars in 2021, followed by individual donations (225,665 dollars), in-kind contributions (167,885 dollars) and gear sales (114,144 dollars) (Fig. 2). Yearly Pedigree Foundation runs specific short-term programs and campaigns to collect funds and in-kind contributions.

### 2.4 Encouraging Dog Adoption: Creative and Emotional Communication

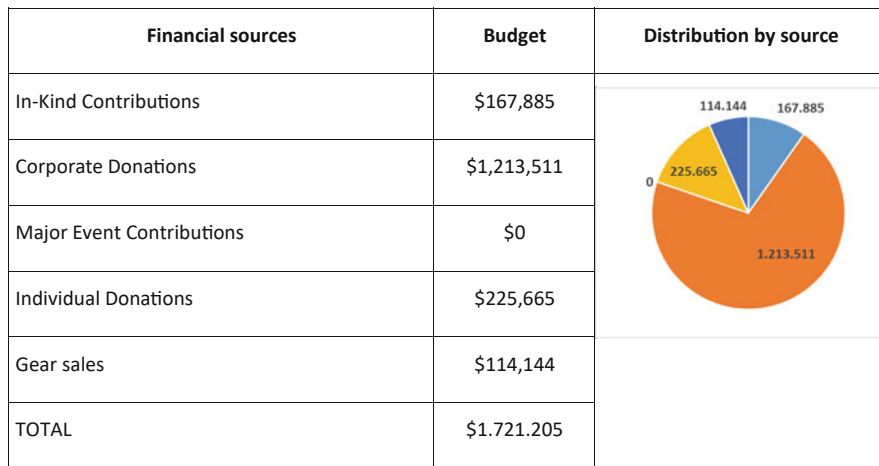
In January 2008, Pedigree launched “*The Pedigree Adoption Drive*” to help charities re-home over 100,000 abandoned dogs each year in the UK. This long-term social marketing initiative increased those who believed that Pedigree had the well-being of dogs at its heart (Marketing Society, 2008). Under the umbrella of “*The Pedigree Adoption Drive*” different renewed initiatives are developed year after year. The main goal of “*The Pedigree Adoption Drive*” is to promote dog adoption. However, the program also encourages alternatively donating, fostering, and volunteering (Pedigree.com, 2022).

---

<sup>2</sup>Pedigree Foundation website: <https://www.pedigreefoundation.org/donors/>



**Fig. 1** Budget distribution by different grant programs. Source: data from Pedigree Foundation Impact Record (2021)



**Fig. 2** Financial sources of Pedigree Foundation’s budget. Source: data from Pedigree Foundation Impact Record (2021)

The use of cutting-edge communication technologies has been a constant of the “Adoption Drive” program. On the one hand, the initiative “Dog-A-Like” was recognized with “The One Show” award given by The One Club for Creativity in the category of non-profit mobile applications in 2012. This tool used facial recognition technology to capture the details of each dog’s face in over 16 dimensions and compare them to human faces to achieve a similar match.<sup>3</sup> The application was launched in Australia (The One Club for Creativity, 2012). More recently, the “Dogs on Zoom” video-conferencing initiative, firstly used by Pedigree US, was implemented to minimize the negative impact of the COVID-19 crisis on dog

<sup>3</sup>Dog-a-like app image: <https://www.oneclub.org/awards/theoneshow/-award/18400/pedigree-dog-a-like-app>

adoption in 2020 by taking advantage of communication technologies<sup>4</sup> (Pedigree.com, 2022).

The brand Pedigree considers its social advertising as necessary as its commercial advertising. As a result, the most prestigious advertising agencies have created some of the most popular social campaigns for the brand. Also, independent institutions have recognized the high quality and innovativeness of Pedigree social advertising. A paradigmatic example of that was the campaign “*Tenemos que hablar*” (“*We need to talk*,” in English), promoted for several years under the common name of “*Adóptame*” (“*Adopt me*,” in English).<sup>5</sup>

This spot was made by the Mexican advertising agency BBDO and was the winner at the 2014 Cannes Lions International Festival of Advertising Creativity. The ad recreates the welcome a dog gives its owner when he arrives home. The action occurs in the kitchen, where the man nervously tells his dog that he must give him some news. In the face of the serious and attentive look of the dog, the man confesses with concern: “*You are adopted*.” The dog, far from being disappointed or angry with the revelation, reacts with signs of affection towards his owner. At the end of the video, the Pedigree brand logo appears, and a brief slogan in favor of dog adoption appears. This campaign carried out by BBDO Mexico for Mars Mexico won the bronze medal at the 61st Cannes Lions Festival 2014. The Cannes Lions Festival award constitutes an independent endorsement that the ad is a good example of advertising effectiveness suitable for academic research (Tapia et al., 2016). And the advertising of the brand Pedigree has been proposed several times as an advertising case study.<sup>6,7</sup>

---

### 3 Conclusions

Pedigree, a dog food brand of the company Mars Petcare, has internationally become a leader in the pet food industry. Its solid positioning as a brand concerned about dog adoption’s social cause has made it a referent of corporate social marketing.

The following could be critical points in the establishment of successful partnerships brand-cause:

---

<sup>4</sup>Dogs on Zoom campaign image: [https://d26eb5y2jukpbz.cloudfront.net/ebs/cache/ebs/archive/2021/thumbs/384x384/focus\\_point/OS\\_IN21\\_074M.jpg](https://d26eb5y2jukpbz.cloudfront.net/ebs/cache/ebs/archive/2021/thumbs/384x384/focus_point/OS_IN21_074M.jpg)

<sup>5</sup>“We have to talk” ad image: <https://elefantgrafico.com/publicidad/pedigree-mexico-tenemos-que-hablar/>

<sup>6</sup>See, for example, Ildikó (2009); Mora and Vila (2020); Mora et al. (2020); Mora et al. (2021).

<sup>7</sup>The level of creativity and emotiveness of the spot “*we have to talk*” were assessed by a sample of 1232 respondents (462 Spanish, 195 British, and 572 Ecuadorian). Measured in a 7-point Likert scale, this audience find this spot highly emotional ( $M = 5.85$ ;  $SD = 1.26$ ) and highly creative ( $M = 5.74$ ;  $SD = 1.34$ ) (Mora et al., 2020).



- The partnership between the commercial *brand Pedigree and the social cause of dog adoption* is an example of a *high fit*: animal brand and animal social cause. Congruence or fit brand-cause seems to be a critical factor in achieving successful partnerships brand-cause.
- The *international scope* of both allies, the brand, and the cause, seems to be another success factor. The global leader Mars Petcare owns 39 pet nutrition and pet health brands, including the dog food brand Pedigree. Pedigree products are sold in over 60 countries. At the same time, the problem of homeless pets is present in many countries, making it possible to keep this brand-cause partnership internationally.
- A *long-term strategic social marketing approach* reduces the perception of a commercial intention behind supporting a social cause. The suspicion of true altruistic motivation in developing social marketing campaigns could damage both partners.
- Developing *creative and emotional communication campaigns* to spread social marketing initiatives will generate more positive attitudes in audiences and even promote viral behaviors that will result in greater dissemination and participation.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Which animal well-being issues urgently require solutions based on social marketing initiatives?

**Question 2**—What relevant elements make the brand Pedigree and the social cause of dog adoption compatible?

**Question 3**—Which corporate social marketing initiatives Mars Petcare carry out could help solve animal well-being issues?

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

Partnerships between businesses and non-profit organizations through corporate social marketing initiatives will contribute to the SDG revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. Animal companion well-being should be included in sustainable development. However, low adoption rates of homeless pets need solutions. Companies like Mars Petcare, owning brands like Pedigree, have internationally become industry leaders in sales and corporate social marketing. The brand has created the Pedigree Foundation in charge of developing ongoing support campaigns. The partnership between Mars and Pedigree foundation contributes to sustainable development: firstly, by raising awareness about pet homelessness issues; secondly, by providing comprehensive solutions to support shelters; and thirdly, by encouraging dog adoption through creative and emotional communication.

## Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case has been developed as a successful example of a corporate social marketing initiative based on a profit and non-profit partnership. The potential audience of this chapter consists of:

- Undergraduate students pursuing degrees in business administration or marketing
- Graduate students pursuing MBA and masters in marketing or business ethics

### Learning

1. To know which are the leading animal well-being problems worldwide.
2. To identify the most appropriate social causes to be selected by brands to be supported internationally as a corporate long-term ethical commitment.
3. To study successful corporate social marketing initiatives in the field of animal well-being

### Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case can be taught in one session of 60–90 minutes.

### Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Which animal well-being issues urgently require solutions based on social marketing initiatives?

**Question 2**—What relevant elements make the brand Pedigree and the social cause of dog adoption compatible?

**Question 3**—Which corporate social marketing initiatives Mars Petcare carry out could help solve animal well-being issues?

### Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—Which animal well-being issues urgently require solutions based on social marketing initiatives?*

The most important thing is that students identify animal well-being issues like high homeless pet indexes and low adoption rates by reading the text. It is also advisable that students can search for other animal well-being problems like animal mistreatment or euthanasia, among others. A complete answer to this question should provide specific figures from at least one country to highlight the issue's magnitude. In this way, students become familiar with the field figures and the informational sources providing reliable data.

**EXAMPLE.** In Spain, the abandonment of pets and their adoption at a low rate are causes of animal welfare that urgently require the search for solutions. In 2020 Spanish animal shelters collected 286,000 dogs and cats (162,000 dogs and 124,000 cats). Firstly, 49.3% were adopted in the dogs' case, 15.6% were returned to their

owners, 20.2% remained in the shelter, 6.2% stayed in foster homes, 5.3% were transferred to another entity, and 3% died. Secondly, 42.6% were adopted in the cats' case, 15.1% remained in the shelter, 14.4% were relocated to cat colonies, 10.1% stayed in foster homes, 4.5% were transferred to another entity, and 9.7% died (Fundación Affinity, 2020).

These figures show the vast magnitude of the problem of dog abandonment and how dog adoption is the best long-term solution. However, current adoption figures are not enough to completely solve the question. As a result, the promotion of dog adoption is urgently needed to achieve the sustainable goal of animal companion well-being fully.

***Answer to Question 2—What relevant elements make the brand Pedigree and the social cause of dog adoption compatible?***

The main purpose of this question is that students practice their capacity to relate common elements between a commercial brand and a social cause. In this way, they will identify those congruence elements determinants in successful partnerships between profit and non-profit organizations.

Some ideas to work this question could be the following:

- Congruence or fit brand-cause seems to be a critical factor in achieving successful partnerships brand-cause. In this case, both partners are related to the animal industry and animal social causes.
- The international scope of both allies, the brand, and the cause, seems to be another success factor. Mars Petcare sells its pet products internationally, and the dog adoption issue is an animal well-being problem in many countries worldwide.
- The brand is a leader in its sector, and the animal cause is a priority in the animal social field. The partnership between a leading brand and a principal social cause in corporate social marketing initiatives could be critical.

***Answer to Question 3—Which corporate social marketing initiatives Mars Petcare carry out could help solve animal well-being issues?***

By answering this question, students should demonstrate they have learnt the most important types of corporate social marketing initiatives developed by Mars Petcare and the Pedigree Foundation. The main social marketing goal is promoting dog adoption and alternatively donating, fostering, and volunteering among brand audiences. To this end, the company primarily uses social marketing initiatives punctually complemented with specific fundraising actions. Some ideas to work this question could be the following:

- Raising awareness about animal well-being issues like the necessity to adopt homeless pets. In this regard, the website [endpethomelessness.com](http://endpethomelessness.com) provides reliable figures about the problem, and advertising campaigns promoting adoption indicate citizen contribution.

- Providing integrated non-profit solutions to pet homelessness issues. In this way, it is necessary to highlight the creation of Pedigree Foundation, a non-profit foundation in charge of collecting and distributing the helping resources individuals and corporations provide.
- Encouraging dog adoption in creative and emotional communication campaigns.

## References

- ASPCA. *American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals*. (2022). <https://www.aspc.org/>
- ENDPETHOMELESSNESS.COM. (2022). The State of Pet Homelessness Index. file:///C:/Users/Eli/Downloads/INFOGRAPHIC-2021-State-of-Pet-Homelessness\_Index-6ffc70c761ddce2d99480d6c718c9722-2.pdf
- ESDAW, *European Society of Dog and Animal Welfare*. (2022). <https://www.esdaw-eu.eu/the-stray-dogs-in-europe.html>
- Fediaf. (2022). Facts and figures 2021. European overview. In: Fediaf annual report 2022. <http://www.fediaf.org/who-weare/european-statistics.html>
- Fundación Affinity. (2020). *Él nunca lo haría. Informe sobre abandono y adopción de animales de compañía 2020*. <https://www.fundacion-affinity.org/observatorio/el-nunca-lo-haria-informe-sobre-abandono-y-adopcion-de-animales-de-compania-2020>
- Ildikó, V.-N. (2009). Corporate social responsibility and cause related marketing at Mars Inc. Hungary. *The Proceedings of the International Conference "Marketing-from Information to Decision"*, p. 503.
- Marketing Society. (2008). *Case study: Pedigree adoption drive*.
- Mars Petcare. (2022). *State of Pet Homelessness Index*. <https://endpethomelessness.com/>
- Mora, E., & Vila, N. (2020). Developing successful cause-related marketing campaigns through social-networks the moderating role of users' age. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 31(3–4), 373–388. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14783363.2018.1427504>
- Mora, E., Vila, N., & Küster, I. (2020). *Quantitative and qualitative approach to the cause-related marketing in social networks: A cross-cultural study*. University of Valencia. <https://roderic.uv.es/handle/10550/76431>
- Mora, E., Vila-Lopez, N., & Küster-Boluda, I. (2021). Segmenting the audience of a cause-related marketing viral campaign. *International Journal of Information Management*, 59, 102296. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102296>
- Pedigree Foundation. (2022). [www.pedigreefoundation.org](http://www.pedigreefoundation.org)
- Pedigree Foundation Impact Record. (2021). [https://www.pedigreefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/04.20.22b\\_PF\\_ImpactReport\\_2021\\_LR.pdf](https://www.pedigreefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/04.20.22b_PF_ImpactReport_2021_LR.pdf)
- Pedigree.com. (2022). <https://www.pedigree.com/helping-dogs/adopt>
- PFMA, Pet Food Manufacturers Association. (2021). *Pet population 2021*. <https://www.pfma.org.uk/pet-population-2021>
- Simply Insurance. (2022). *How many pets are in the world & the US?* <https://www.simplyinsurance.com/pet-statistics/#tve-jump-17649690b6d>
- Tapia, A., Martín, E., & Puente, J. E. (2016). Neurociencia y publicidad. Atención, emoción y su relación con los premios obtenidos en el Festival Internacional de Publicidad de Cannes. *Anàlisi: Quaderns de Comunicació i Cultura*, 75–95.
- The Economist. (2020). *Which country spends the most on its pets?* <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2020/02/11/which-country-spends-the-most-on-its-pets>
- The One Club for creativity. (2012). *Pedigree Dog-A-Like app*. <https://www.oneclub.org/awards/theoneshow/-award/18233/pedigree-dog-a-like-app/pedigree-dog-a-like-app>



# The Power of Our Diet: Less Meat for a Healthier Life and Planet

Antonio Chamorro-Mera and M. Manuela Palacios-González

## Learning Objectives

1. To reflect on the environmental impacts of our food-buying and eating decisions and to cause the reader to behave critically with the current economic model (as opposed to the green economy).
2. To understand the concept of ecological marketing from a social perspective, i.e. as a specific type of social marketing developed by ecological organisations.
3. To analyse how to design an ecological marketing campaign aimed to pressure and influence political decision-makers and public opinion in general.
4. To encourage debate about the readiness of consumers to change our food-buying and consumption habits and to meet several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), 3, 8, 12, 13 and 15.
5. To analyse the interconnection between different SDGs and understand the "One Health" concept.

---

A. Chamorro-Mera (✉)

Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales, Universidad de Extremadura, Badajoz, Spain  
e-mail: [chamorro@unex.es](mailto:chamorro@unex.es)

M. M. Palacios-González

Centro Universitario de Mérida, Universidad de Extremadura, Mérida (Badajoz), Spain  
e-mail: [mapalaciosg@unex.es](mailto:mapalaciosg@unex.es)

## 1 Introduction

Most people are aware of the positive and negative effects that their diet has on their health. Our diet should be varied and balanced in terms of the amounts and types of food that we eat. In this regard, eating meat provides us with basic nutrients like proteins or certain minerals such as iron and zinc. But consumption of meat, especially red meat, is also associated with obesity, type II diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Even the World Health Organization classifies some meat as “potentially carcinogenic”.

However, *have you ever asked yourself how your diet can be linked to the planet's health? You probably haven't . . .* But what we eat and how it is produced have a huge impact on the planet's decline and, more specifically, on climate change. By modifying consumption models, as consumers, we can influence the farming system to become more sustainable. We can have a positive impact by buying food items that are certified organic, giving preference to local, seasonal produce, minimising the carbon footprint resulting from globalisation, not buying foods with excessive packaging and substituting them with loose items, etc. But we can also have an impact by changing our diet. One of the main changes we can make is by reducing how much meat we eat.

This is just what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2020) stated when it recommended implementing policies aimed at reducing meat consumption by favouring a plant-based diet. This would reduce individuals' diet-related greenhouse emissions by 50%. Additionally, the EAT-Lancet Commission (2019) states that “transformation to healthy diets by 2050 will require substantial dietary shifts”. Global consumption of fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes will have to double, and consumption of foods such as red meat and sugar will have to be reduced by more than 50%. A diet rich in plant-based foods and with fewer animal-source foods confers both improved health and environmental benefits”.

In this context, the big question is: how can we get consumers to change their eating habits? Ecological marketing carried out by ecological organisations plays a very relevant role in meeting this goal. In this regard, ecological marketing is a type of social marketing that is defined as a series of non-profit activities undertaken by institutions (public administrations, environmentalist groups, consumers' associations, etc.) to promote more environmentally conscious ideas and behaviours among citizens and different social and economic agents.

---

## 2 Humans: *Homo Carnivorus*

Since prehistoric times, humans have eaten animal meat. We are meat eaters by nature, but the problem does not actually lie in the quantity of meat that we eat. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization Statistics Department

(FAOSTAT<sup>1</sup>), global per capita meat consumption has significantly increased from 26 kg/year in 1970 to approximately 42 kg in recent years. And if the trend does not change, there will be severe consequences in the future. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD/FAO (2021), world meat production was estimated to be 328 million tonnes in 2020. It also predicted that global consumption will grow by 14% in the coming decade (2020–2030). The main reasons are the increase in the population's income (more meat is eaten at homes with a higher purchasing power) and population growth.

But this increase in demand is also associated with important changes to the world's farming system. On the one hand, it has caused an increase in the area of land used to grow crops for fodder and animal feed production. On the other hand, small livestock farms have given way to the rise of intensive livestock farms and large industrial farms, known as mega-farms.

Extensive livestock systems,—i.e. those systems which involve cattle grazing on the land where they live and spending minimal time in stalls—are not as economically profitable. However, mega-farms are farms where the animal density is very high and the animals live in stables, crammed together with very little freedom to move. Their feed is specially designed to fatten them up rapidly. In this sense, each animal's profitability (and, therefore, for each kilogram of meat produced) is higher and the businessperson can offer lower prices. This ends up attracting a consumer whose buying decision is based on price without thinking about the meat's origin and production process.

---

### **3 A Mouthful of Steak Is like Taking a Bite Out of the Planet's Health**

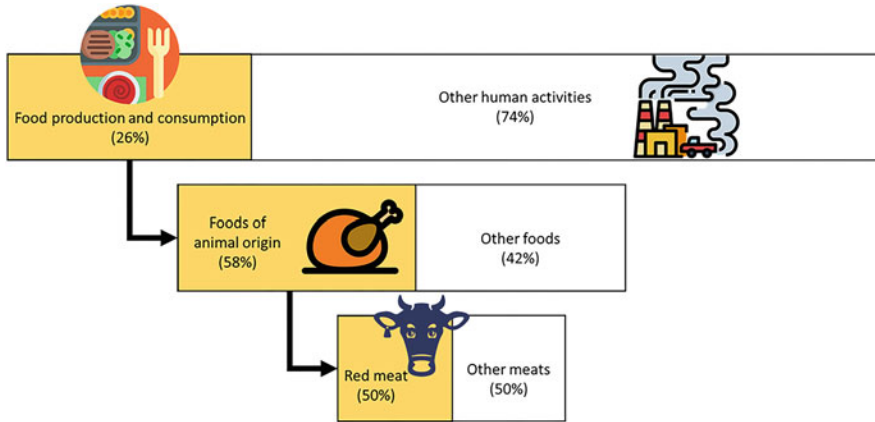
When we think about climate change, we generally think about pollution from large industries and modes of transport. We scarcely stop to think that food production, and more particularly cattle farming, has such an important impact on climate change.

According to a report written for Greenpeace,<sup>2</sup> “the food system, including changes in land-use linked to agriculture, is currently responsible for a quarter of all greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions that cause climate change. If we do nothing, by 2050 gas emissions from the food system will represent more than half of the total global emissions associated with human activities”. And on the other hand, animal products are responsible for approximately 60% of food-related climate emissions (Fig. 1). Several studies estimate that GHG emissions associated with livestock supply chains represent between 14.5% (FAO, 2013) and 19% (Xu et al., 2021) of all human-caused GHG releases.

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FBS](http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FBS)

<sup>2</sup> Tirado et al. (2018)



**Fig. 1** How food contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. Source: Own elaboration based on Poore & Nemecek (2018)

Using its Global Livestock Environmental Assessment Model (GLEAM),<sup>3</sup> the FAO estimates that the cattle supply chains emitted 8.1 gigatonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent in 2010 (this includes all meat-producing activities from growing crops for grazing and grains for feed to animal transportation and industrial processing, as well as animals' flatulence and faeces). Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) is the main gas linked to livestock emissions and represents 50% of total gases. Furthermore, cows are the largest GHG emitters, being responsible for 62% of all livestock emissions. Pigs, poultry, buffaloes, sheep and deer produce significantly lower emissions. In general, animal-sourced products generate between 10 and 50 times more GHGs than plant-based food items.

Besides their GHG emissions, livestock farming takes other "bites" out of the Earth's health, especially due to deforestation and water use and pollution.

The food system is responsible for approximately 80% of the world's deforestation. Not only must we take into account the land extensions directly used for cattle farming (raising animals and pastures), but those used to grow plants that can produce feed for animals. They are intensive monoculture plantations with a high demand for fertilisers and synthetic insecticides. For example, large areas of forest in South America are being felled to plant soy and create pastures for cattle, harming the biodiversity and indigenous communities. In that respect, the Greenpeace report states, "*animal farming in the EU uses roughly two-thirds of agricultural land in Europe and much of it depends on large-scale production and import of feed, such as soy, which is driving forest destruction, human rights abuses and aggressive pesticide use*".

The amount of water required to produce meat is also significant, taking into consideration the whole life cycle. It is estimated that a kilo of meat requires 15,000

<sup>3</sup> [www.fao.org/gleam/results/en](http://www.fao.org/gleam/results/en)





**Fig. 2** Beef burgers' bitter aftertaste. Source: Own elaboration based on Heller and Keoleian (2018) data

litres of water, while a kilo of wheat needs 1300 litres or 131 litres for a kilo of carrots. By way of example, Fig. 2 shows the main environmental impacts a beef burger has. The life cycle considered in the study includes “upstream ingredient and raw material supply (including farm production of crops), processing and packaging operations, cold storage, distribution to point of sale, and disposal of packaging materials” (Heller & Keoleian, 2018).

Given the severity of the situation, social and political debate on meat consumption is open. It is not so much a case of everyone adopting a “meatless diet” but developing a “meat consciousness” and reducing the level of meat in our diets. Different reports recommend implementing policies aimed at reducing meat consumption and favouring plant-based diets as a great opportunity to mitigate and adapt to climate change.<sup>4</sup>

According to research published in medical journal *The Lancet* (2019), by 2050 each person should be eating no more than 300 g of meat per week as part of a balanced, sustainable diet. It is a considerable reduction bearing in mind that the current average in the European Union is 1.58 kg. According to the aforementioned Greenpeace report, meat consumption in the European Union should drop by 71%

<sup>4</sup>UNEP (2021), IPCC (2020) and The Lancet (2019).

by 2030, and by 81% by 2050 to tackle farming's contribution to climate breakdown.

New technologies should also be adopted to reduce cattle methane emissions (for example, applied to their fodder) and change the type of meat that we eat, favouring poultry production. In fact, it is estimated that thanks to these changes, the increase in GHG emissions from the meat sector for 2030 will be just 5%, a lot less than the rise estimated for meat production (14% as mentioned before).

## 4 (Animal) Life on the Farm

So far, we have talked about the relationship between human health and the planet's health. But in reality, we must also consider the animals' health and welfare in this equation. For the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), health is more than just human health and uses the concept "One Health". It believes that human and animal health are interdependent and are linked to the health of the ecosystems in which they exist. For example, WOAH estimates that 60% of pathogens that cause human diseases come from domestic or wild animals, as we observed from the Covid-19 pandemic and other recent viral diseases. Healthy animals contribute to people being healthy and to the sustainable production of food.

In this context, many ecological and consumer groups have also revealed how poorly animals are treated on mega-farms. On the one hand, it is the veterinary treatment that they receive to cure some illnesses and to promote fattening. On the other hand, are their living conditions based on overcrowding in the factory farms where the animal density is very high and the lighting and temperature conditions are not optimal. Animals have little freedom of movement and their biorhythms are often altered due to the stables' lighting.

Few countries currently have legislation that requires products to include information about the animal's welfare on the labels. An example of such is the European Union's regulation for egg marketing standards that define different production methods (cages, free range, barn, etc.). But private initiatives are emerging to certify animal welfare and ensure that consumers are better informed about the farming conditions of animals (Fig. 3).



**Fig. 3** Examples of animal welfare labels. Source: Own elaboration from the websites of the eco-labelling systems

## 5 Social Marketing Campaigns to Change Policies and Behaviour

Ecological associations are conscious of the importance of changing intensive cattle farming models and reducing global meat consumption through diet. That is why they spearhead marketing campaigns with two goals in mind: to raise awareness and to increase pressure. One objective is to inform and raise awareness among consumers about the need to change what makes up their diets. A second objective is to increase pressure on governments and public powers so that they stop authorising new mega-farms and so that farming policies stop granting subventions to that type of business project or to those that require large surface areas to be deforested to plant monocultures for animal feed.

This type of marketing campaign is generally structured as follows:

**Phase 1. Scientific Reasoning** The ecological group collects scientific reports by international organisations and academic researchers that highlight the problem we are facing and the need to change production and consumption models. In some cases, the ecological group conducts the report, but in others, it commissions it to a group of experts. This was the case for the aforementioned report “Less is more: reducing meat and dairy for a healthier life and planet”, which Greenpeace commissioned to Tirado et al. (2018); the Greenpeace Denmark report (2021) “Dissected: the 7 myths of Big Meat’s marketing”, which criticises how major companies use advertising to link meat consumption to positive factors like happiness, health and welfare; or the WWF-UK (2021) report “Driven to waste: The Global Impact of Food Loss and Waste on Farms”.

**Phase 2. Broadcasting the Information** The marketing strategy is then centred around content marketing, i.e. creating articles and videos about the subject they want to broadcast via the ecological group’s website, blog or social media. As such and summarising the main conclusions from the scientific studies, they try to make citizens see the problem and the need to change our buying and consumption decisions.

**Phase 3. Requesting Collaboration** In this type of social marketing campaign, ecological groups try to involve consumers in putting pressure on governments, using the potential of online marketing. More specifically, via their website, social media and email marketing (using databases with their members’ and followers’ email addresses) ecological groups ask citizens to fill out an electronic petition with their data, agreeing that they are committed to supporting the cause and authorising that, in their name, they send a petition to the government to adopt a given measure. For example, to not authorise building a mega-farm (Fig. 4).

**Phase 4. Street Marketing** The previous actions are often accompanied by actions and protests that take place in very specific places, such as a public body’s headquarters, a meat-producing company’s headquarters or a rural town where intensive cattle farming takes place (Fig. 5).

**GREENPEACE**

## ¡Macrogranjas NO!: ni en Caparroso, ni en Noviercas, ni en ninguna parte



© Pedro Armestre / Greenpeace

**La ganadería industrial está devorando el planeta, y las macrogranjas son la cara más cruel y sucia de este negocio.**

Su modelo de producción se basa en una sencilla premisa: **alimentar y utilizar a los animales lo más rápidamente posible** y bajo cualquier condición para maximizar los beneficios. Y en España lo hacemos con una eficacia siniestra: el número de vacas se ha duplicado y el de cerdos se ha multiplicado por 5 en nuestro país desde los años 60. Y estamos hablando de millones de animales.

Pero no les basta con eso, y estas corporaciones quieren seguir expandiéndose: Valle de Odieta, la empresa detrás de la explotación de 5.000 vacas en Caparroso (Navarra), **ha proyectado una aún mayor en Noviercas (Soria) para (23.520 animales!** Sería la más grande de Europa.

**Las consecuencias son terribles:** contaminación de aguas, emisiones de efecto invernadero, uso de enormes extensiones de tierras, deforestación para pastos y para cultivo de alimento para ganado, daños a la salud y abusos a los animales. Además, son una **falsa solución** contra el despoblamiento rural.

No queremos este modelo que pone en riesgo al planeta, a las personas y a los animales. **Firma para que:**

- no se permita la construcción de la macrogranja de Noviercas, la ampliación de la de Caparroso **ni cualquier otro nuevo proyecto de macrogranjas o ampliación de los existentes**
- se reduzca el número de animales en intensivo
- se promueva una transición justa para las que se encuentran operativas

Las macrogranjas son enormes factorías de cambio climático, insostenibilidad y crueldad. Firma y exige que no se permitan ni en Caparroso, ni en Noviercas ni en ningún sitio.

**429.489** firmas. ¡Ayúdanos a conseguir **500.000!**

Nombre

Apellidos

Email

DNI o NIE

Teléfono

**Política de privacidad**

Desde GREENPEACE ESPAÑA trataremos los datos aportados en calidad de Responsable del tratamiento con la finalidad de gestionar nuestra relación contigo, en pro de nuestros objetivos fundacionales, incluyendo en algunos casos el envío de información sobre nuestras actividades, en base al consentimiento o a la ejecución de un acuerdo. Puedes ejercer tus derechos enviando un email a [contacto.es@greenpeace.org](mailto:contacto.es@greenpeace.org) con el asunto "Protección de Datos". [Más información](#).

Acepto la política de privacidad \*

**Firmar petición »**

© 2022 Greenpeace • Política de privacidad

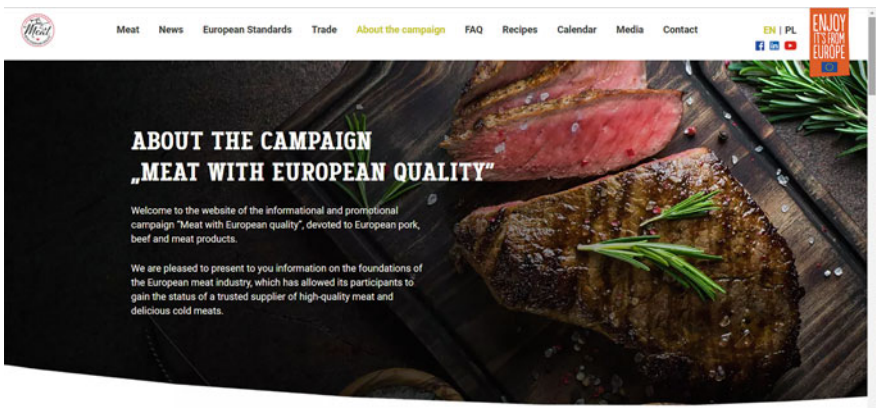
**Fig. 4** Screenshot from a Greenpeace Spain petition. Source: Greenpeace Spain website (2022)

Large meat industry organisation counterattack in response to the ecological groups. They use similar tactics but referring to other scientific research, they use means of communication to promote news stories that highlight the health benefits of including meat in our diet. In many cases, they focus on the nutritional value for specific consumer segments, such as young people, pregnant women or athletes. In some cases, sector associations also create television and press campaigns to encourage the consumption of a particular type of meat, selling its healthy properties (Fig. 6. More information in: [www.meatfromeurope.eu/about-the-campaign](http://www.meatfromeurope.eu/about-the-campaign)).

In countries with a high livestock population or an important meat industry, meat lobbyists also draw attention to the sector's economic benefits, emphasising the income it generates for many rural families and how it contributes to the livestock population in such areas.



**Fig. 5** Greenpeace protest on a mega-farm in 2022. Source: Greenpeace Spain free stock photo (2022)



**Fig. 6** “Meat with European quality” online campaign. Source: Union of Producers and Employers of Meat Industry (2022)

## 6 Conclusions

To summarise, what food and how much we eat and how that food is produced is crucial for a healthy lifestyle and a healthy planet. There is growing scientific consensus on the need to reduce the excessive consumption and production of meat, dairy and eggs. Other recommendations also mention replacing red meat with other types of meat, particularly chicken, which has similar nutritional benefits

but fewer greenhouse gas emissions. There is also the need to replace large intensive farm systems with smaller ones that do not have such an impact on the environment and guarantee better animal welfare.

These changes are directly linked to several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. Given the environmental impacts mentioned, reducing meat in the human diet will help meet Goal 12—Responsible consumption and production, Goal 13—Climate action and Goal 15—Life on land (to sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss). Changing our diet, therefore, contributes to the transition to a green economy. And, on the other hand, given its direct impact on individuals, the change in diet contributes to Goal 3—Good health and well-being.

However, from the defensive viewpoint of some industrial lobbies, we should consider the economic harm that would be caused to the rural population if intensive cattle farming and large farms are not supported. Not supporting these projects raises the question of how difficult it would be to feed an ever-growing population with meat at affordable prices. In other words, there is a need to strike a balance between previous sustainable development goals and others like Goal 2—Zero hunger and Goal 8—Decent work and economic growth, which identifies the need to support the economic growth of rural areas with depopulation trends.

In any case, changes to our diet require a process of consumer information and awareness, which is where social marketing plays an essential role. Are you convinced that change is needed?

---

## 7 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Are you willing to reduce the amount of meat or change the type of meat you eat?

**Question 2**—What are the most important criteria for buying meat?

**Question 3**—Do you think Goals 12 and 13 contradict with a rural area's economic development? In your opinion and given your country's and region's circumstances, which goal should be given priority? Would you authorise opening a mega-farm near where you live?

**Question 4**—Could you design a graphic campaign to encourage eating less meat?

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), per capita meat consumption worldwide has increased from 26 kilograms in 1970 to 41 kilograms in 2018. This growth in demand has gone in hand with the rise of intensive livestock systems and large industrial farms, also known as mega-farms.

These are facilities in which the density of animals is very high (many animals in a small space) and where the animals are stabled, with almost no freedom of movement and fed with feed specially designed for fattening. These livestock farms make meeting the world's growing demand possible and offer the consumer more attractive prices than extensive livestock farming can.

However, environmental groups and scientists are warning of the health problems for people and the planet caused by this excessive production and consumption of meat, especially that coming from mega-farms. This type of livestock farming and industrial facilities produce serious environmental problems, from soil and aquifer contamination to emissions of polluting gases, in addition to the implications for animal welfare. Some estimates indicate that livestock are responsible for 14.5% of all human-induced climate change emissions. For this reason, they believe that the expansion of large farms must be curbed and the consumption of meat in the human diet must be reduced.

This case analyses the campaigns carried out by the main environmental groups to, on the one hand, inform consumers and raise their awareness of the problem and, on the other hand, to pressure governments to halt the rise of this type of livestock farming and not to grant new licences for the opening of mega-farms. At the same time, the campaigns carried out by sectoral associations to counteract the messages of the environmentalist groups are discussed.

## Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

The case has been developed for use in "Marketing Management" course and is appropriate for MBA and Executive Development Programmes as well as advanced undergraduate courses. The case is appropriate for the courses that deal with the topics: "social marketing", "green marketing" or "agri-food marketing".

## Learning

The case is structured to achieve the following objectives.

1. To reflect on the environmental impacts of our food-buying and eating decisions and to cause the reader to behave critically with the current economic model (as opposed to the green economy).
2. To understand the concept of ecological marketing from a social perspective, i.e. as a specific type of social marketing developed by ecological organisations.
3. To analyse how to design an ecological marketing campaign aimed to pressure and influence political decision-makers and public opinion in general.
4. To encourage debate about the readiness of consumers to change our food-buying and consumption habits and to meet several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), 3, 8, 12, 13 and 15.
5. To analyse the interconnection between different SDGs and understand the "One Health" concept.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case can be taught in a session of between 60 and 90 min. Its duration depends on the number of students participating in the discussion activities, as well as the previous work that students have done before the face-to-face session.

Depending on the characteristics of the course, the teacher may consider the suggested activities to be carried out in the classroom or they may be proposed as activities to be carried out outside the classroom. In the same sense, the suggested activities can be carried out individually by each student or they can be carried out as team work.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Are you willing to reduce the amount of meat or change the type of meat you eat?

**Question 2**—What are the most important criteria for buying meat?

**Question 3**—Do you think Goals 12 and 13 contradict with a rural area's economic development? In your opinion and given your country's and region's circumstances, which goal should be given priority? Would you authorise opening a mega-farm near where you live?

**Question 4**—Could you design a graphic campaign to encourage eating less meat?

## Analysis

**Answer to Question 1**—*Are you willing to reduce the amount of meat or change the type of meat you eat?*

Debate about eating meat. Get into a group with other classmates or people you know and discuss whether you are willing to reduce the amount of meat or change the type of meat you eat. Discuss the hurdles that stop people from doing so.

The objective of this activity is to understand if we, as consumers, are willing to reduce our meat consumption and change the type of meat we eat. Students should identify the conditions in which we are willing to change and the hurdles that stop us from doing so.

This activity encourages students to reflect and debate. This activity can be carried out in two ways.

A. *In-class groups.* The activity can be carried out as follows:

- Invite the class to form groups or put the class into groups and give them a set time to discuss the topics (approximately 10–15 min). Groups of 4–6 are recommended.
- After 10–15 min, give the group another 3–5 min so they can summarise the opinions discussed. One of the students from each group will act as a spokesperson and will note down the summary.



- Then, all the students will come back together and each spokesperson will present their group's ideas.
  - Conclude the activity by summarising the main ideas and opinions.
- B. *Individual project.* Outside of the classroom, each student must ask 4–5 people their opinions about the subject matter, preparing a series of open-ended questions. Each student must hand in a report including:
- A brief description of the group: how many people, ages, sex, etc.
  - A summary of the main ideas and opinions. Recommend students to include direct quotes from the participants.

***Answer to Question 2—What are the most important criteria for buying meat?***

Debate about buying meat. *Get into a group with other classmates or people you know and discuss the most important criteria for buying meat. Pay particular attention to the importance given to price, the meat's origin and animal welfare.*

The objective of this activity is to understand the most relevant criteria we have in our meat-buying decisions—considering both fresh meat and processed meat products. Students should examine if the consumer is aware of the effects that meat has on their health and the environmental impacts. They must discuss the importance consumers give to the meat's origin, how it was produced and the animals' welfare.

This activity encourages students to reflect and debate. This activity can be carried out in groups in the classroom or as an individual project outside of the classroom.

***Answer to Question 3—Do you think Goals 12 and 13 contradict with a rural area's economic development? In your opinion and given your country's and region's circumstances, which goal should be given priority? Would you authorise opening a mega-farm near where you live?***

Debate about the economic dilemma versus protecting the planet's and animal welfare. *Do you think Goals 12 and 13 contradict with a rural area's economic development? In your opinion and given your country's and region's circumstances, which goal should be given priority? Would you authorise opening a mega-farm near where you live? Find arguments for and against both.*

This activity can be carried out in groups in the classroom or as an individual project outside of the classroom.

*Individual project.* Outside of the classroom, each student must write a document including the thoughts and opinions about questions like: Do you think Goals 12 and 13 contradict with a rural area's economic development? In your opinion and given your country's and region's circumstances, which goal should be given priority? Would you authorise opening a mega-farm near where you live?

*In-class group work.* This activity is designed to be carried out as a role play, based on the following scenario: A major multinational intends to build a mega-farm on land close to a small rural town. The economic investment is very high and will generate direct and indirect jobs. To this end, the town's council will significantly

increase its economic income thanks to the taxes that the new company will pay. The students will represent different groups (roles): company managers, a political party in favour of the mega-farm, people from the town and representatives from an ecological group. The council will hold a town meeting and invite all the groups. After hearing all the groups' opinions, the political representatives of both parties will vote on whether to issue the licence for the macro farm or not.

The role play is in two stages:

- (a) Divide the class into small groups and randomly assign each one a role as mentioned before.
- (b) Each group will discuss the arguments for their group's views and prepare the public intervention that will take place at the town hall. This stage of the role play can be carried out in the classroom (for example, for 15 min) or ask the students to prepare it outside of class time. You can give students tips on how to prepare a speech and how to effectively speak in public.
- (c) The town meeting takes place at the town hall. Invite each spokesperson to give their speech (you will let students know how long their speeches must be beforehand). A suitable classroom or area should be used for this type of activity.
- (d) After hearing all the speeches, the students will vote. Each participant can vote in line with their personal views without having to consider the role they were assigned. This way, there will be no way of knowing the results until the end.

***Answer to Question 4—Could you design a graphic campaign to encourage eating less meat?***

Designing a graphic campaign to encourage eating less meat. *First, describe the campaign outlining the following: who the campaign is targeted at, media channels where the advert would be shown, communication strategy type, the message's reasoning and the visual design. Then, present the poster you designed.*

Students must complete this activity outside of the classroom sessions. Then, each student, or group of students, can present their campaign to the class. You can simulate a situation in which a communications agency is presenting a campaign proposal to their client (in this case an ecological group).

Students must produce two written documents:

- (a) A document describing and justifying the campaign. It must include:
  - The campaign's target audience. For example, young consumers, citizens who are concerned about health, athletes, etc.
  - The media channels where the advert would be shown. For example, students can choose between suitable offline and online channels, including magazines, newspapers or social media that would be relevant for reaching the chosen targets.

- Communication strategy types employed. In this type of campaign, emphasis can be made on health problems and/or environmental impacts (the sick-baby strategy) or the solutions and benefits that can be obtained (well-baby strategy). The sick-baby strategy message is: Meat production contributes to climate change: eat less meat. With the well-baby strategy, the opposite message is conveyed, for example: if you eat less meat, you can enjoy a healthier planet. In both cases, students must choose whether to give preference to health or environmental arguments.
  - Justify the chosen message and the visual design.
- (b) Document that contains the poster. Before students start the activity, you should give them some tips:
- Before thinking about the graphic/visual design, they should spend enough time reflecting on what type of message they want to convey and how they are going to communicate said message (information and text to be included on the poster).
  - Students must ensure they use quality images, trying to use their own images or royalty-free images. You could recommend some websites where they can obtain free stock images.
  - Students should always think about the characteristics of their target audience when choosing images, colours and fonts.
  - They must play with different lettering sizes and fonts.
  - You could recommend free software or apps for designing posters, like Canva.

---

## References

- FAO. (2013). *Tackling climate change through livestock- a global assessment of emissions and mitigation opportunities*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).
- Greenpeace Denmark. (2021). *Dissected: the 7 myths of Big Meat's marketing*. Retrieved May 1, 2022, from [www.greenpeace.org/static/planet4-denmark-stateless/2021/11/dd8034bf-greenpeace\\_meat\\_report\\_en\\_final.pdf](http://www.greenpeace.org/static/planet4-denmark-stateless/2021/11/dd8034bf-greenpeace_meat_report_en_final.pdf).
- Heller, M. C. & Keoleian, G. A. (2018). *Beyond meat's beyond burger life cycle assessment: A detailed comparison between a plant based and an animal-based protein source*. Report No. CSS18–10. Retrieved May 1, 2022, from <https://css.umich.edu/sites/default/files/publication/CSS18-10.pdf>.
- IPCC. (2020). *Climate change and land*. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate. Retrieved May 1, 2022, from [www.ipcc.ch/srccl/](http://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/).
- OCDE/FAO. (2021). *OECD Agriculture outlook*. Retrieved May 1, 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.1787/agr-outl-data-en>.
- Poore, J., & Nemecek, T. (2018). Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers. *Science*, 360, 987–992.
- The Lancet. (2019). *Food in the Anthropocene: The EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems*. Retrieved May 1, 2022, from [https://eatforum.org/content/uploads/2019/07/EAT-Lancet\\_Commission\\_Summary\\_Report.pdf](https://eatforum.org/content/uploads/2019/07/EAT-Lancet_Commission_Summary_Report.pdf).

- Tirado, R., Thompson, K. F., Miller, K. A. & Johnston, P. (2018). *Less is more: Reducing meat and dairy for a healthier life and planet - Scientific background on the Greenpeace vision of the meat and dairy system towards 2050*. Retrieved May 1, 2022, from [https://www.greenpeace.org/static/planet4-international-stateless/2018/03/698c4c4a-summary\\_greenpeace-livestock-vision-towards-2050.pdf](https://www.greenpeace.org/static/planet4-international-stateless/2018/03/698c4c4a-summary_greenpeace-livestock-vision-towards-2050.pdf).
- UNEP. (2021). *Global methane assessment: Benefits and costs of mitigating methane emissions*. UN Environment Programme. Retrieved May 1, 2022, from <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/global-methane-assessment-benefits-and-costs-mitigating-methane-emissions>.
- WWF-UK. (2021). *Driven to waste: The global impact of food loss and waste on farms*. World Wildlife Fund. Retrieved May 1, 2022, from [https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/wwf\\_uk\\_driven\\_to\\_waste\\_the\\_global\\_impact\\_of\\_food\\_loss\\_and\\_waste\\_on\\_farms.pdf](https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/wwf_uk_driven_to_waste_the_global_impact_of_food_loss_and_waste_on_farms.pdf)
- Xu, X., Sharma, P., Shu, S., et al. (2021). Global greenhouse gas emissions from animal-based foods are twice those of plant-based foods. *Nature Food*, 2, 724–732. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-021-00358-x>



# The Green Button: Social Marketing for a Government Seal to Support more Sustainable Purchasing Decisions when Buying Textiles

Answin Vilmar

## Learning Objectives

The main learning objectives of the case are:

1. To realise that the fashion industry is responsible for a significant part of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
2. To explain why, in addition to environmental criteria, also social criteria must be met in order to receive in Germany the state-monitored “Green Button” (German: “Grüner Knopf”) seal.
3. To understand how the “Green Button” seal can contribute to more sustainable consumer purchasing decisions in the fashion sector.
4. To reflect which communicative messages can be used and how they can be orchestrated to convince consumers to make more sustainable choices when buying clothes.

## 1 Introduction

In many areas of everyday life, people have already changed to live more sustainably. The kitchen shelves are filled with organic cereal bars and spelt bread, the fridge is stocked with organic vegetables from controlled organic cultivation, and organic meat from species-appropriate animal husbandry, and in the bathroom, there are natural cosmetics without animal testing and chemical additives. But what about

---

A. Vilmar (✉)

VILMARKETING/good.marketing, IST University of Applied Sciences, Duesseldorf, Germany  
e-mail: [avilmar@ist-hochschule.de](mailto:avilmar@ist-hochschule.de)

the wardrobes? For many people in most western societies, the conclusion is probably: often too full . . . and usually not sustainable enough.

German consumers are front runners when it comes to buying new clothes. On average, 26 kilograms of textiles are bought in Germany every year, 12–15 kilograms of which are clothing. By comparison, the global annual average is 8 kilograms. Forty-three percent of Germans say they have 50–100 items in their wardrobe. And as many as one-third even own 100 to over 300 pieces. On average, women have 118 items of clothing—more than men, who own 73 items (Greenpeace, 2015). But are these quantities sufficiently sustainable?

In 2021, Germany imported textiles and clothing from China with a total value of about 11.4 billion Euros, of which clothing accounted for about two-thirds. This makes China the most important country of origin for textile and clothing imports in Germany, ahead of Bangladesh and Turkey. Other important production countries are India, Vietnam, Pakistan and Cambodia (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2022a). But is production in these countries always socially sustainable?

Many items of clothing are often bought on a spontaneous impulse, worn only a few times and then forgotten or left in the wardrobe because they no longer meet the fast-moving fashion demands. Is that sustainable?

Certainly not, because the serious ecological and social impacts of textile production are usually not taken into account. Pesticides used in the cultivation of cotton, immense water consumption, chemicals for further processing and CO<sub>2</sub> produced by the use of energy. Each of these factors has a negative impact on the environment. “Fashion accounts for around 10% of greenhouse gas emission from human activity” (Ro, 2020).

Furthermore, the fashion industry still has clear deficits in terms of social sustainability. In some production countries the workers work under unsocial working conditions: many overtime hours, low wages, no trade union organisation, just to name a few. Some even speak of modern slavery (Benstead, 2018). The shocking images of the biggest accident in the international textile industry in Bangladesh to date, in which more than a thousand people died on 24 April 2013 when the Rana Plaza factory collapsed, are certainly still remembered by many.

Unfortunately, consumers are often not aware of the disastrous production conditions of their clothes. However, with conscious and responsible purchasing decisions, consumers could support change in the textile industry—so that the environment is protected and the human rights and labour protection of the seamstresses and sewers are guaranteed. In this respect, buyers would only have to be able to more easily recognise to what extent the desired clothing meets these requirements.

To close this awareness gap, the federal government has initiated a social marketing campaign and introduced the “Green Button”. This state seal is an attempt to signal to German consumers at first glance which textiles come from responsible companies and have been produced in a socially and ecologically sustainable way.

## 2 Case Development

### 2.1 The Seal

The “Green Button” (Fig. 1), which was introduced in autumn 2019, is a state-monitored seal for sustainable textiles and was developed and implemented at the initiative of Gerd Müller, the former Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development. The associated claim is that anyone who wants to sustainably buy socially and ecologically produced clothing should look out for the “Green Button” (Grüner Knopf, 2021).

In order for the label to convey the desired message and be perceived as a second brand, the garment companies that wish to use the label on their products must prove that it meets its responsibility for people and the environment in the textile supply chain. Both company-related and product-related criteria are used for verification. Individual showcase products are not enough.

A total of 46 different social and environmental standards must be complied with, such as the payment of minimum wages, the prohibition of forced and child labour and the prohibition of hazardous chemicals (Grüner Knopf, 2021).



**Fig. 1** State Campaign Seal “Green Button”. “Green Button” (“Grüner Knopf”); Subline: Social. Ecological. Governmental. Independently certified. (Sozial. Ökologisch. Staatlich. Unabhängig zertifiziert.) (Source: BMZ, copyright: BMZ)

## 2.2 Company-related Audit Criteria

The basis of the 20 corporate criteria are the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the recommendations of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for the textile sector (OECD, 2021).

These corporate criteria examine the business practices of the entire company. This applies in particular to manufacturing in so-called risk countries, where human rights, environmental and social standards are often inadequately implemented. However, the company audit also applies to production sites within the European Union. Companies must demonstrate that any remaining risks within the EU are adequately addressed. And the distribution partners should also comply with the standards.

## 2.3 Product-related Audit Criteria

In addition to the company criteria, a further 26 product criteria have to be checked, which the textiles labelled with the seal have to fulfil. In doing so, however, the “Green Button” is guided by already recognised seals and does not test itself. This is a procedure that could be viewed critically. Moreover, the “Green Button” does not yet cover the entire supply chain. In the start-up respectively introductory phase, it only checks the production stages “cutting and sewing” and “bleaching and dyeing”. This is because there are already major social and environmental challenges here. However, as part of the further development of the label, it is planned to extend it to other supply chain stages (material and fibre use).

For a label to be recognised for the “Green Button”, it must not only fulfil the specified social and/or environmental criteria. It must also be classified as credible. This means, for example, that the standard-setting process must be public, the (financial) structure must be transparent and a review must take place regularly and independently. The criteria for the recognition of the seals are laid down in the statutes of the “Green Button”.

With the following seals (Fig. 2), which are recognised and considered credible in Germany, the social and ecological requirements for the “Green Button” could be proven in the introductory phase (Grüner Knopf, 2022):

Products certified with the state “Green Button” include fashionable clothing and basics for everyday use (such as T-shirts), homewear, accessories and shoes,



**Fig. 2** Various sustainability seals of the textile industry. Sources: Organisational websites (Blauer Engel, Fairtrade, GOTS, and Naturtextil)/ Grüner Knopf (2022)



children's clothing, but also home textiles, workwear and technical textiles as well as sports and outdoor clothing including accessories.

At the start of the two-year pilot phase in 2019, 27 companies, including Aldi, Lidl, hessnatur, Tchibo, Trigema and Vaude, were involved. Other companies also went through the auditing process and later joined the certification. For example, REWE and PENNY have labelled textiles accordingly in their approximately 5800 stores from mid-2020. In 2022, 78 companies were already certified. This means that the number of certified companies has already more than tripled within the first 3 years since the start. The strict criteria set the conditions that companies must fulfil in order to be allowed to use the "Green Button" as a sign of sustainable production. But what about the consumers?

---

### 3 The Social Marketing Campaign

In Germany, three-quarters of consumers already find sustainable fashion important. They do not want to wear clothes that were sewn in 16-h shifts under precarious conditions for a pittance or that have been treated with toxic chemicals (Bundesregierung, 2022). But people need reliable guidance as to whether the clothes they want to buy are at all in line with their attitude to sustainability. Hence and in addition to as many companies as possible that are to be encouraged to use the seal, consumers of course also need to know that the new label can give them guidance when shopping whether the desired item of clothing has really been produced sustainably.

That is why the accompanying social marketing campaign is intended to address both, companies and German consumers in order to make them aware of the "Green Button" seal.

---

### 4 Dual Target Groups

Business-to-Business (B2B): First of all, the Green Button campaign addresses all companies that produce or distribute textile goods. This includes both manufacturers of such goods and trading companies that sell third-party products as private labels (Grüner Knopf, 2021). Without a corresponding certifiable range of goods, the "Green Button" would remain empty and meaningless. In addition to the companies already participating, further companies are to be convinced of the benefits of the seal.

Business-to-Consumer (B2C): At the same time, in order to make the seal known to the general public and to ensure the necessary acceptance among consumers, mainstream consumers in particular will be addressed with a general publicity campaign. The "Green Button" is therefore intended to provide orientation for all mainstream consumers and, as an overarching government and state-monitored seal, to provide both confidence and decision-making support for future clothing purchases. In the section that follows, the general public campaign will be discussed in particular.

The launch campaign for the “Green Button” ran from September to December 2019, followed by two regular waves per year (spring and autumn). Online, there were numerous display placements, online advertorials and content cooperations with high-reach websites such as *sueddeutsche.de* or trade media such as *textilwirtschaft.de*. Furthermore, both target groups were addressed on social media via Instagram channel and LinkedIn. In parallel, advertisements and advertorials were placed in trade and consumer magazines. In addition, there was Outdoor advertising (city lights posters and large spaces (regional placement) as well as various on-site campaigns as below-the-line activities.

The “Green Button” campaign consists of several motifs both above-the-line (e.g. print ads, OOH) and below-the-line (e.g. flyers) as well as accompanying scatter material (e.g. tags on hangers in dry cleaners to draw attention to the Green Button)—Figs. 3 and 4. The motifs presented were used both in outdoor advertising and in print advertising, for example in trade magazines, consumer magazines and daily newspapers. Some of the motifs were also used online.



**Fig. 3** Motifs—Individuals. Headline left: Clothes may be loose-fitting, social standards not. (Kleidung darf locker sitzen, Sozialstandards nicht). Headline right: The must-have of every season: sustainability. (Das Must-Have jeder Saison: Nachhaltigkeit). Source: © Grüner Knopf (2021)



**Fig. 4** Motifs—Family. Headline left: Sustainability always fits. (Nachhaltigkeit sitzt immer). Headline right: Sustainability suits all ages. (Nachhaltigkeit passt in jedem Alter). Source: © Grüner Knopf (2021)



**Fig. 5** Seal as a garment label. Source: © Grüner Knopf (2021)

Industry events (e.g. on the occasion of the German Sustainability Award) as well as Open Days of the industry were also used intensively for the presentation of the “Green Button” concept. In an accompanying flyer, the individual audit criteria on which the certification is based are explained in more detail. The use of the licensees’ communication channels (e.g. customer newsletter from LIDL or Tchibo) to directly address their customers has additionally been able to increase the reach of the campaign.

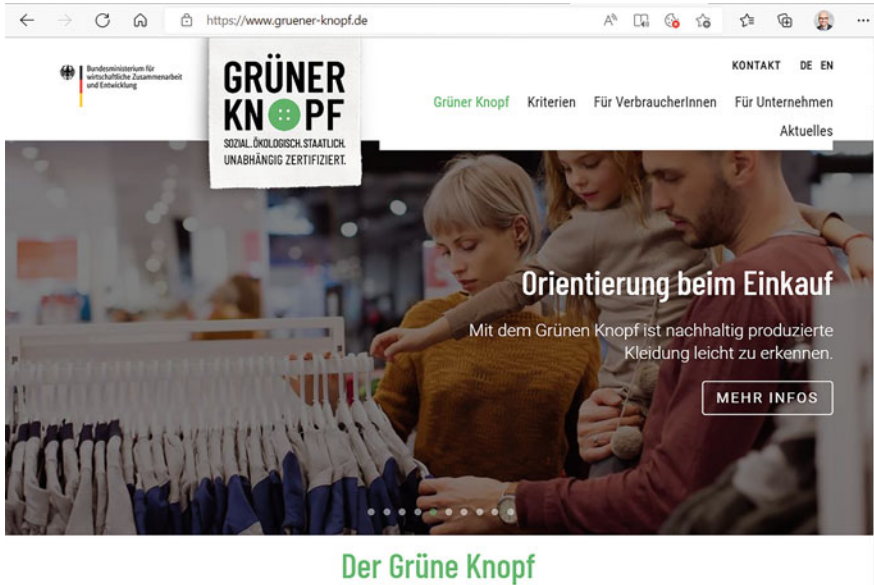
In order to introduce the seal widely and achieve as many contacts as possible, even the products of the participating companies were used as a medium. Attached directly to the clothing (Fig. 5), the “Green Button” seal is easy to find when shopping—reliable and consumer-friendly. The seal can be found on fashion, outdoor clothing, home textiles and workwear and is usually sewn directly into the products (BMZ, 2021). The “Green Button” certification sets binding requirements for companies and products to protect people and the environment.

Media cooperations were also integrated into the marketing campaign. Thus, in cooperation with ARTE Magazine and the Yorck Cinema Group, a Green Button cinema evening took place on 18.08.2020 as part of the ARTE Summer Cinema in Berlin. The first, completely sustainably produced film “3 Days in Quiberon” was shown. And in cooperation with the radio station FluxFM, the FluxFM Fair Fashion Week took place in December 2021. For one week, the theme week was about sustainable fashion and the Green Button.

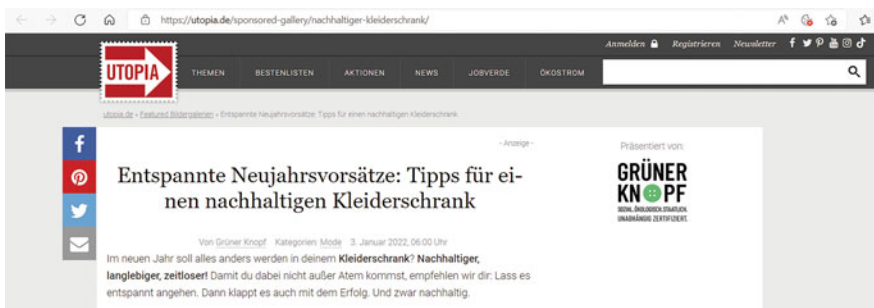
A dedicated website<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 6) completes the range of information on the state label and is intended to keep both consumers and companies informed about the label and its further progress.

---

<sup>1</sup>[www.gruener-knopf.de](http://www.gruener-knopf.de)



**Fig. 6** Screenshot from website <https://www.gruener-knopf.de/>. Source: © Grüner Knopf (2021)



**Fig. 7** Screenshot UTOPIA.de “Relaxed New Year’s resolutions: Tips for a sustainable wardrobe” (“Entspannte Neujahrsvorsätze: Tipps für einen nachhaltigen Kleiderschrank”). Source: utopia.de (2022), © Grüner Knopf

In parallel to the specific information on the “Green Button”, general hints and tips for the responsible use of textiles are also given and, for example, the possibilities of sharing, second-hand shopping, repairing or recycling are pointed out. The online offer is complemented by a knowledge quiz on the impact of the textile industry on people and the environment.

Furthermore, the “Green Button” was also visible with content on the website *UTOPIA.de* (Fig. 7), which is popular among sustainability-oriented consumers, be it product information, shopping tips or competitions. For this purpose, a wide

variety of topics related to sustainable textiles were offered on a separate channel on Utopia.

Active communication on Instagram and Facebook completes the campaign, targeting younger consumers in particular. Last but not least, there was intensive press and public relations work not only for the launch of the “Green Button” label. Three years after its introduction, the press office of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development still issues regular press releases that provide information on the further development of the label.

In addition to the use of paid media (e.g. OOH, print ads), owned media (e.g. own website) and earned media (e.g. through the social media channels), a fourth category was used with the companies’ clothing tags and customer newsletters, which could perhaps be called “borrowed media”.

Even though the “Green Button” initiative was launched in Germany, it is a global system with state supervision that is oriented towards European framework conditions and beyond. This means that companies in other countries can also use the “Green Button”.

---

## 5 Results

In the print sector, in addition to the diverse image motifs, a large number of special motifs were also used. For example, advertorials tailored to target groups or joint advertisements by companies whose products are certified with the Green Button. The total reach of print advertising alone was 343.9 million contacts. With a total German population of 73 million people aged 14 and over (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2022b), this means that every German aged 14 and over has come into contact with the “Green Button” on average almost five times via the print campaign alone.

The accompanying outdoor advertising (Fig. 8) generated an additional reach of 14.0 million and a total of 52.7 million contacts.

In addition to the classic media, there was also massive online marketing. The online display banners (Fig. 9) alone achieved a reach of 52.6 million impressions. Click-through rates were above benchmark at 0.18–0.21%. In addition to the display placements, whose goals were primarily visibility and awareness building, measures were also carried out to achieve greater depth of information in order to provide more detailed information about the “Green Button”. This included, for example, the online content hub of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (2021), on which six articles appeared highlighting the topics of the Green Button and sustainable textile production from different angles. The reach of the teasers was 2.4 million ad impressions, the click rate was also pleasingly high at 0.37%.

However, impressive media figures are only one side of the coin. The success of the attention-grabbing launch campaign is also evident on the consumer side. According to a survey by the GfK Consumer Panel Fashion, 93% of respondents think it is right for the federal government to use a state seal to check compliance with social and ecological standards in the textile industry. Forty percent of respondents are now aware of the seal and 44% have also already bought at least one certified product (Grüner Knopf, 2022).



Fig. 8 OOH. Source: © Grüner Knopf (2021)



Fig. 9 Diplay Banner. Source: © Grüner Knopf (2021)

## 6 From Seal Awareness to Change in Purchasing Behaviour

In total, more than 150 million textiles with the seal have already been sold only from 1/1/2020 to 30/6/2021. The total number of “Green Button” certified textiles sold increased by 45% to 57 million textiles in the first half of 2021 compared to the second half of 2020 (BMZ, 2021).

In the product group apparel textiles, the number of “Green Button” certified products sold increased by 49% in the first half of 2021 compared to the second half of 2020, in the group home and household textiles by 32% and in the group textile shoes and accessories even by 50% (BMZ, 2021).

In the meantime, the number of textiles sold has already risen to over 200 million (Grüner Knopf, 2022). The “Green Button” is now also internationally positioned: The “Green Button” is a protected EU brand—large German retailers with branches all over Europe already use it. But foreign companies can also certify their products with the seal.

Despite the successes achieved so far, the seal is constantly evolving. Because standing still would mean going backwards. The changes affect both the seal as the core of the social marketing campaign and the accompanying communication.

---

## 7 “Green Button” 2.0

“From the cotton field to the hanger”: With the promise to gradually develop the label until it covers the entire supply chain, the state-monitored textile label “Green Button” was launched in September 2019. Two years later, a revised, even more ambitious version of the Green Button was presented in autumn 2021. This further development was accompanied by exchange and information events as part of a public consultation. In a webinar at the start of this consultation, interested stakeholders had the opportunity to learn about the process of the consultation, its contents and opportunities to participate.

One result of the exchange: In the future, the improvement of the mechanisms for complaints is being driven forward. In the first version of the “Green Button”, a complaints mechanism must already be in place. However, the audit indicators will be further developed in order to make the requirements for companies in this area even more specific. Thus, the development of the “Green Button” 1.0 to the “Green Button” 2.0 includes the following key topics:

- Company-related criteria: First steps towards living wages, further development of grievance mechanisms, strengthening the interplay between policy and reporting, emphasis on stakeholder involvement, anchoring corporate due diligence in the company, deepening the requirements into the entire supply chain.
- Product-related criteria: Deepening and expansion of social and environmental requirements.
- Expansion of the requirements on the use of materials and fibres.

Product transparency is also to be further improved: The “Green Button” already includes a QR code on the product or packaging, which can be used to access information about the respective company and its audit. With the “Green Button” 2.0, the QR code will additionally provide information on the product supply chain. Steps towards living wages are also planned. So far, only minimum wages or higher industry wages are obligatory (Bundesregierung, 2022).

---

## 8 Conclusions

With the “Green Button” seal, a state-monitored seal was introduced in Germany in 2019 to provide consumers with additional guidance when buying textile products. Companies are allowed to label their products with this seal, provided they meet certain sustainability criteria. In this way, the seal highlights to consumers that all products labelled in this way meet both ecological and social sustainability requirements.

Many Germans are now familiar with the government’s “Green Button” label. Moreover, they are guided by it and make their decisions when buying clothes more consciously, responsibly and sustainably. In this respect, the social marketing campaign to introduce the seal has achieved its goals.

The further developed version “Green Button 2.0” presented in 2022 takes up initial points of criticism and is intended to protect people and the environment in the future even better—in the long term along the entire supply chain (Grüner Knopf, 2021).

Overall, the hope is that the seal will support SDG 12 by further raising awareness among the population for more responsible consumption. And companies should feel an incentive to make their production supply chains more sustainable. At the same time, this also brings SDG 8 into focus, because the production of clothing is usually outsourced to low-wage countries, where it is sometimes carried out under precarious working conditions.

Thus the “Green Button” seal and the social marketing campaign presented are certainly a step in the right direction. However, whether the chosen approach will be successful in the long term depends on various factors such as the further development of standards, market penetration—and ultimately also on continued high consumer interest. This must be kept high through further social marketing measures.

---

## 9 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What additional benefits can a governmental seal provide compared to the already introduced industry seals of NGOs—from the companies’ point of view and from the consumers’ point of view?

**Question 2**—To what extent can a seal like the “green button” manage to have a lasting influence on consumer behaviour—within the fashion industry and beyond?

**Question 3**—Which aspects of the social marketing campaign were particularly important for the success of the “Green Button”?

**Question 4**—Could the “Green Button” seal also be successfully introduced in other countries? What framework conditions would have to be considered for this?

**Acknowledgements** The author would like to thank Kristina Nolte and Martha Scheifel from the “Grüner Knopf” for the background information as well as for providing the campaign motifs and data used in this case study.



## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

Within the European Union, Germany, as the most populous country, is one of the largest sales markets for clothing. The purchase of clothing is often relatively spontaneous and all too thoughtless. Consumers still too rarely take into account both the negative social side effects and the harmful environmental impacts, especially at the beginning of the value chain in low-wage producing countries. This happens partly due to a lack of knowledge, but also partly out of sheer carelessness.

The seal “Der Grüne Knopf” (German for “The Green Button”) aims at further guidance when buying clothing. The seal was launched in 2019 by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development with a broad social marketing campaign, including the use of off- and online advertising media. The aim of this campaign was to raise awareness among consumers for more socially and environmentally responsible produced textiles and to facilitate their purchasing decisions in favour of more sustainable clothing.

The case study shows how different target groups were addressed within a 360-degree campaign and how a variety of social marketing measures were used and illustrates their contributions to success.

### Potential Audience and Instructor’s Material

This case study was designed to show to what extent marketing tools, especially the introduction of an easily recognisable seal and marketing communication, can contribute to the achievement of selected SDGs. Accordingly, both bachelor and master students studying marketing, social marketing or media studies are addressed. The case study can also be used in general business administration or MBA courses.

### Learning

1. To realise that the fashion industry is responsible for a significant part of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
2. To explain why, in addition to environmental criteria, also social criteria must be met in order to receive in Germany the state-monitored “Green Button” (German: “Grüner Knopf”) seal.
3. To understand how the “Green Button” seal can contribute to more sustainable consumer purchasing decisions in the fashion sector.
4. To reflect which communicative messages can be used and how they can be orchestrated to convince consumers to make more sustainable to make more sustainable choices when buying clothes.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case can be taught in 60–90 min, depending on the students' prior knowledge and enthusiasm for discussion. In addition, in a further teaching unit of 60–90 min, the possible transfer of the basic idea of a state label such as the “Green Button” to other markets or market segments can be analysed or discussed.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—What additional benefits can a governmental seal provide compared to the already introduced industry seals of NGOs—from the companies' point of view and from the consumers' point of view

**Question 2**—To what extent can a seal like the “green button” manage to have a lasting influence on consumer behaviour—within the fashion industry and beyond?

**Question 3**—Which aspects of the social marketing campaign were particularly important for the success of the “Green Button”?

**Question 4**—Could the idea of a state seal such as the “Green Button” also be successfully introduced in other countries? Or markets respectively market segments? What framework conditions would have to be considered for this?

## Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—What additional benefits can a governmental seal provide compared to the already introduced industry seals of NGOs—from the companies' point of view and from the consumers' point of view?*

There is no right or wrong in the answer. Rather, the question can be answered freely. The following aspects could play a role:

- Depending on the extent to which the state resp. government is seen as a superior authority and enjoys credibility among the population, a state seal for companies can certainly lead to a further positive image transfer (halo effect).
- However, this additional benefit diminishes from the companies' perspective, the better such a seal becomes established, as the differentiation vis-à-vis competitors decreases.
- Nevertheless, from the consumer's point of view—and ultimately also from the sustainability point of view—a high market penetration of such a seal, especially in the fashion industry, is definitely desirable, as it offers additional orientation alongside the brand in order to be able to make responsible and sustainable purchasing decisions.

***Answer to Question 2—To what extent can a seal like the “green button” manage to have a lasting influence on consumer behaviour—within the fashion industry and beyond?***

Here, too, the answer can be freely given. For example, the following points can be taken into consideration:

- First of all, the influence of a label on consumer behaviour depends on the extent to which the label is known and accepted by the target group as a credible orientation device.
- If the attitude then leads to corresponding actions, and if the fundamental support for sustainable products also leads to their actual purchase within a sector, spill-over effects on purchase decisions within other product categories are imaginable.
- That this does not happen automatically, however, can be seen in the currently still large differences between purchases of organic food and eco-fashion. While organic food is already firmly established in many places, the market segment of eco-fashion is still much smaller within its own sector.

***Answer to Question 3—Which aspects of the social marketing campaign were particularly important for the success of the “Green Button”?***

The answer can refer both to the seal as such and to the accompanying social marketing campaign. The following aspects have probably been the reason for the success of the campaign and can be mentioned:

- Easily recognisable logo with a message that is also very understandable for a heterogeneous target group
- Coordination of content, design and timing (in the sense of a holistically integrated communication approach) of the various individual measures
- Diverse off- and online activities, which cumulatively led to a very large reach with high contact chances
- Additional integration of the participating companies and use of their media (customer newsletters etc.) to significantly extend the campaign.

***Answer to Question 4—Could the idea of a state seal such as the “Green Button” also be successfully introduced in other countries? Or markets respectively market segments? What framework conditions would have to be considered for this?***

This question is primarily about critically reflecting on the conditions of sustainable consumption of clothing or other market segments in one’s own country and/or in neighbouring countries. And to what extent a seal like the “Green Button” could be promising as a core component of a social marketing campaign to make consumers even more aware of consuming sustainably and paying attention to humane working conditions in the producing countries. Very much in the spirit of

SDGs 12 and 8. In this respect, there is no universal yes/no answer, but the following aspects, for example, can be considered and discussed:

- Whether the idea of a sector-related state sustainability seal such as the “Green Button” can be successfully adapted to other countries depends on various framework conditions.
- On the one hand, the political-legal framework conditions must be taken into account. For example, the practised economic system and the role of the state within this very system obviously influence the chances of success of such a state seal. What status does sustainability play in day-to-day politics? Is the state perceived as a credible and competent sender on the topic of sustainability? What is the importance of the domestic garment industry in the respective country?
- Furthermore, the social and cultural framework conditions also matter. What general and current issues are people concerned about? How important is fashion for the self-image and external perception of the population as a whole and of individuals?
- Finally, there must also be a certain basic acceptance among the population that sustainable behaviour is not just “the business of others”, but is also reflected in each of their own purchasing decisions. Regardless of whether clothing or anything else is bought.

---

## References

- Benstead, A. (2018). *Reshoring and modern slavery in the supply chain: case study evidence and action research in the textiles and fashion industry* (PhD). Lancaster University. Accessed June 01, 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.17635/lancaster/thesis/507>.
- Blauer Engel. (2022). Accessed August 25, 2022, from <https://www.blauer-engel.de/de>
- BMZ Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung. (2021). *Government-run Green Button Textile-label celebrates second anniversary*. Accessed June 07, 2022, from <https://www.bmz.de/en/news/archive-press-releases/green-button-textile-label-celebrates-second-anniversary-92652>
- Bundesregierung. (2022). *Faire Mode. Wie wird der Grüne Knopf weiterentwickelt?* Accessed June 01, 2022, from <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/aktuelles/gruener-knopf-1665188>
- Greenpeace. (2015). *Wegwerfware Kleidung*. Accessed June 01, 2022, from [https://www.greenpeace.de/sites/default/files/publications/20151123\\_greenpeace\\_modekonsum\\_flyer.pdf](https://www.greenpeace.de/sites/default/files/publications/20151123_greenpeace_modekonsum_flyer.pdf)
- Grüner Knopf – Pressemitteilung vom 09.09.2021. Accessed May 31, 2022., from <https://www.gruener-knopf.de/presse/staatliches-textilsiegel-gruener-knopf-feiert-zweiten-jahrestag>
- Grüner Knopf – Orientierung beim Einkauf (2021). Accessed May 31, 2022, from <https://www.gruener-knopf.de/verbraucher>
- OECD. (2021). *Development co-operation Peer Reviews: Germany 2021 – Germany’s global efforts for sustainable development*. Accessed June 07, 2022, from <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/33f83767-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/33f83767-en>
- Ro, Ch. (2020). *Can fashion ever be sustainable?* Accessed June 01, 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200310-sustainable-fashion-how-to-buy-clothes-good-for-the-climate>

- Statistisches Bundesamt. (2022a). *Außenhandel 2022*. Accessed June 01, 2022 from <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/218179/umfrage/die-wichtigsten-importlaender-fuer-das-deutsche-bekleidungsgewerbe-nach-einfuhrwert/>
- Statistisches Bundesamt. (2022b). *Bevölkerung: Deutschland, Stichtag, Altersjahre 2021*. Accessed August 05, 2022, from <https://www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online?operation=abruftabelleBearbeiten&levelindex=2&levelid=1659724574776&auswahloperation=abruftabelleAuspraegungAuswaehlen&auswahlverzeichnis=ordnungsstruktur&auswahlziel=werteabruf&code=12411-0005&auswahltext=&werteabruf=Werteabruf#abreadcrumb>
- Süddeutsche Zeitung. (2021). *Kritik am grünen Knopf*. Accessed June 01, 2022, from <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/textilindustrie-kritik-am-gruenen-knopf-1.5166513>
- Utopia. (2022). *Entspannte Neujahrsvorsätze: Tipps für einen nachhaltigen Kleiderschrank*. Accessed June 14, 2022, from <https://utopia.de/sponsored-gallery/nachhaltiger-kleiderschrank/>



# Reducing Salt Consumption through a Nudge Technique: The Case of PÃO.COME

Beatriz Casais and Marisa R. Ferreira

## Learning Objectives

1. Discuss the purpose and results of nudge in social marketing, particularly in a campaign related with public health.
2. Analyse the impacts/consequences of involving partnerships and particularly food industry in public health campaigns.
3. Understand the relevance of social marketing in public health with sustainable goals related to health conditions.

## 1 Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 3 focused on “*ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all age*”, is a very demanding challenge, since it requires for example the availability of healthy food for all, regardless of the cosmopolitanism of the place and the economic situation of people to buy healthy options. Sometimes it is not easy for population to access healthy options due to the dimension of potential markets for healthy products and the lack of revenue on that case for food industry. In this sense, one important action that governments should

---

B. Casais (✉)

University of Minho, School of Economics and Management, and CICS.NOVA.UMinho, Braga, Portugal

e-mail: [bcasais@eeg.uminho.pt](mailto:bcasais@eeg.uminho.pt)

M. R. Ferreira

CIICESI, ESTG, Politécnico do Porto, Porto, Portugal

e-mail: [mferreira@estg.ipp.pt](mailto:mferreira@estg.ipp.pt)

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2023

299

M. M. Galan-Ladero, H. M. Alves (eds.), *Social Marketing and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, Springer Business Cases,

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3\\_19](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27377-3_19)

take to achieve SDG 3 is to assure access to healthy options and healthy lifestyles for all.<sup>1</sup>

Nudge is a social marketing technique focused on offering the social desired choices to citizens, through an opting-out condition in order to get the desired choice as the social norm.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, we present a case study where the nudge technique is explored by a project developed by the governmental health authority of the centre of Portugal in articulation with the food industry. The purpose was to assure healthy options to the consumer, namely the decrease of salt in bread below the maximum levels regulated.

In Portugal, the average daily consumption of salt was estimated at the beginning of the project, in 2006, at 12.3 grams—twice the maximum daily limit recommended by the World Health Organization—according to a study published in 2006 in the Portuguese Journal of Cardiology.

Portugal has, since 2009, introduced legislation that sets the maximum limit for the salt content in bread (1.4 g of salt per 100 g of bread). Regulating the levels of salt is an upstream social marketing approach. However, reducing salt to a lower level than the maximum regulated in the production of bread sold in bakeries drives to better health, involving important stakeholders such as the food industry to develop a project focused on nudge technique.<sup>3</sup>

---

## 2 Case Development

With the purpose of striving the reduction of salt consumption, the Regional Health Administration of the Centre of Portugal has been developing, since September 2006, a community intervention project called PÃO.COMÉ. The project's partners are the Portuguese Cardiology Foundation and the Association of Commerce and Industry of Bakeries. The case of PÃO.COMÉ is a community intervention project whose success led to a national level with the development of another project called "*Less Salt, Same Flavour*". As bread is one of the main sources of salt intake in the Portuguese diet, the main objective of the project was to reduce the salt added in bread, using a methodology to raise awareness, support and monitor bakery industries, as actors of a nudge social marketing project, by decreasing the salt in bread and acting in social norms of the levels of salt in the bread sold in bakeries.

Bakers were made aware of the problem of cardio and cerebrovascular diseases while local public health professionals were also involved, conducting presentations to create awareness of the problem and inform about the possible results in public health with a concerted salt decrease in bread. As support material for awareness and intervention actions, it was created a campaign with presentations and an explanatory brochure of the project for bakers, who were invited to become members of the

---

<sup>1</sup>Macassa (2021).

<sup>2</sup>French (2011).

<sup>3</sup>Kennedy et al. (2018).



**Fig. 1** Logo of membership PÃO.COME. Source: Report of PÃO.COME (2008) (Administração Regional de Saúde do Centro. IP: Projecto de intervenção comunitária Pao Come. Retrieved from: [https://www.arscentro.min-saude.pt/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2020/05/Pao.come\\_Dezembro2008\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.arscentro.min-saude.pt/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2020/05/Pao.come_Dezembro2008_FINAL.pdf))

project, receiving a membership certificate. There was a book with a list of evaluation indicators in the analysis of salt in bread. This awareness was raised through individual or collective approaches in the region.

The evaluation of the results of the bakeries involved in the project was carried out through analyses of the bread sold in each bakery. These laboratory analyses were carried out by the District Public Health Laboratory, monitoring the salt reduction targets set for each type of bread. The project coordinators were provided with a spreadsheet that allowed them to inform bakers of the amount of salt they had to reduce per 10 kg of flour. The bakers were also informed that the reduction should be done gradually, with small weekly reductions—since, as several studies prove, the population would not feel any difference in terms of taste, with no reason for complaints and no economic damage for bakeries.

The bakeries involved in the project received a membership certificate to show in front of the store and mid-term awards were delivered along the years to distinguish the success in public health contribution, which proved not to affect business and revenues (see Fig. 1).

---

### 3 Results

Pioneer at national level, publicly recognised and cited as an example at international level, the project PÃO.COME aimed at gradually reducing the salt content in bread, involving the participation of around 900 bakeries in the Centre of Portugal. Since the beginning, in 2006, 10,595 analytical monitoring/evaluation analyses of salt added to bread have been carried out: 76% of the bakeries in the project had NaCl





**Fig. 2** Milestones of Salt Reduction in the National Intervention. Source: Directorate General for Health (2018) (Directorate General for Health (DGS). In Facebook, July 2018. <https://www.facebook.com/direcaogeralsaude/photos/a.426922787330348/1871786469510632/>)

(sodium chloride) values equal to or less than 1 g of salt per 100 g of bread and 55% had analytical values equal to or less than 0.8 g of salt per 100 g of bread. In this region, and largely as a result of this project, about 76% of bakeries already have bread with salt levels below the value defined as a target for the year 2021 (less than 1 g of salt per 100 g of bread). Assuming that it is possible to further reduce the salt content in bread, and also that there are currently many Portuguese bakeries that have been developing excellent work in this area, having managed to produce bread with a salt content significantly below the currently defined value as limit, the project was extended to the whole country, with a protocol of collaboration between Directorate General for Health (DGS), the National Institute of Health Doctor Ricardo Jorge (INSA) and the Associations of Bakery, Pastry and Similar Industries. This new project established new goals for the reduction of salt in bread, with a final goal of a maximum of 1.0 g of salt per 100 g of bread (see Fig. 2).



**Fig. 3** Example of a video promoting the reduction of salt consumption. Source: National Programme for the Promotion of Healthy Nutrition (2022) (DGS, 2022). Programa Nacional para a Promoção da Alimentação Saudável da Direção-Geral da Saúde. Retrieved from: <https://alimentacaosaudavel.dgs.pt/pnpas/modificacao-da-procura-educacao/campanhas-sobre-alimentacao-saudavel/>

This new national project called “*Less salt, same flavour*” involved social advertisements in the media with public figures (see Figs. 3 and 4) and intends to grant a public distinction, through the attribution of a distinctive mention, to bakeries that meet the goal for the maximum salt content on bread and the attribution of a seal that can be affixed into the entrance of the bakery. The public disclosure of the entities adhering to the “*Less salt, same flavour*” project is also made in the local media, institutional websites and pages on social networks of the members of the protocol.

The attribution of the seal (see Fig. 5) identifies that the adhering establishment has bread for sale with a salt content of less than 1 g/100 g of bread, which is a value considered adequate by the health authorities. However, it does not mean any other attributes of the bread’s quality related to its composition.

This case study shows that the success of PÃO.COME allows the conception of a national other project called “*Less salt, same flavour*”, both with positive results in targeting the goal of reducing salt levels in bread below the maximum regulated. However, this case study does not measure the improvements in the health condition of population.



**Fig. 4** Social Advertising promoting the campaign “*Less salt, same flavour*”. Source: Directorate General for Health—DGS (2018) (Directorate General for Health (DGS). Facebook. April 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/direcaogeralсаude/photos/a.426922787330348/1746744448681502/>)

## 4 Discussion and Lessons Learned

This case study shows how partnerships with private stakeholders from the industry may be important for social marketing interventions. In fact, partnerships compound an important SDG (SDG 17) and in this case with important achievements in ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages (SDG 3).

Another important lesson in this case study regards the fact that industry food has an important role in driving the health of population through the choices of ingredients and its quality, salt, sugar and fat levels. The fact that consumers cannot choose these issues and these choices are made in industry there is a long way to be done with brands in order to conduct concerted changes in food production, without revenue loss, through a market-driving approach to healthier consumption.

However, the choice loose, and criticisms of paternalism developing a sanitising movement constitutes the dark side of nudge and upstream social marketing approach, although the argument that health is not an individual, but a social choice.



**Fig. 5** Seal of Excellence Together Against Salt. Source: Guide to the attribution of the Seal “*Less salt, same flavour*” (2018) ([https://r-3.sns.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Selo\\_Excelencia\\_Pao\\_com\\_menos\\_Sal\\_260418\\_Pfinal.pdf](https://r-3.sns.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Selo_Excelencia_Pao_com_menos_Sal_260418_Pfinal.pdf))

Finally, it is important to note that this case does not show indicators of decrease in deaths due to cardiovascular diseases. It requires a long-term analysis, which cannot be seen isolated due to a salt decrease in bread, but should analyse a whole change in public health policies, involving regulations, education, and new health lifestyles.

---

## 5 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think that nudge in social marketing is adequate for improving population health conditions? Discuss the ethical issues concerned with this social marketing technique.

**Question 2**—How do you describe the private stakeholder’s intervention and the way public managers involved the bakers to become actors of social marketing?

**Question 3**—Is this campaign strategy sustainable? Do you think that having the option to buy bread with more salt population would give up the consumption of bread with less salt?

**Question 4**—Could the involvement of partnerships with food industry be applied in other cases of social marketing for public health? Explore other examples or possible ideas.

**Question 5**—Do you think that a campaign like this one could have been done at a national level first? Explore the advantages of developing a pilot study.

**Acknowledgements** Marisa R. Ferreira gratefully acknowledges financial support from FCT-Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (Portugal), national funding through project UIDB/04728/2020.

Beatriz Casais gratefully acknowledges financial support from FCT—Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P., within the scope of the project “UIDB/04647/2020” of CICS.NOVA—Interdisciplinary Centre of Social Sciences of Universidade Nova de Lisboa.

---

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

The case shows a project promoted by health authorities to reduce salt levels in bread with the involvement of bakeries in the process aimed at reducing cardiovascular diseases, a major cause of death in developed countries, associated with excessive salt consumption. The project involved 900 bakeries and a big retailer and achieved the desired goals of salt reduction in bread. The success of the project, which showed that the progressive salt reduction did not have an impact on sales and the population got used to flavour, led to scaling up the intervention to a national level.

### Potential Audience and Instructor’s Material

This case has been developed for use in the framework of social marketing courses or public marketing courses or even public health courses.

The potential audience for this chapter is:

- Undergraduate and graduate students in business administration, marketing or public health
- Students of executive courses of public health

### Learning

1. Discuss the purpose and results of nudge in social marketing, particularly in a campaign related with public health.
2. Analyse the impacts/consequences of involving partnerships and particularly food industry in public health campaigns.
3. Understand the relevance of social marketing in public health with sustainable goals related to health conditions.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case may be analysed in a class of 60 min, including the task of reading and discussion both in groups or among the whole students in class.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Do you think that nudge in social marketing is adequate for improving population health conditions? Discuss the ethical issues concerned with this social marketing technique.

**Question 2**—How do you describe the private stakeholder's intervention and the way public managers involved the bakers to become actors of social marketing?

**Question 3**—Is this campaign strategy sustainable? Do you think that having the option to buy bread with more salt population would give up the consumption of bread with less salt?

**Question 4**—Could the involvement of partnerships with food industry be applied in other cases of social marketing for public health? Explore other examples or possible ideas.

**Question 5**—Do you think that a campaign like this one could have been done at a national level first? Explore the advantages of developing a pilot study.

## Analysis

***Answer to Question 1—Do you think that nudge in social marketing is adequate for improving population health condition? Discuss the ethical issues concerned with this social marketing technique.***

Nudge is a technique widely used in social marketing. However, there are many ethical issues concerned with the lack of choice, paternalism, and the occurrence of a sanitising movement. In this sense, it is important that nudge social marketing techniques allow the option of an alternative, since within the regulated limits.

***Answer to Question 2—How do you describe the private stakeholder's intervention and the way public managers involved the bakers to become actors of social marketing?***

It is very important to involve partnerships in social marketing and that is an important achievement of SDGs (SDG 17). The food industry is also a relevant stakeholder of upstream social marketing. When the food industry is involved in the same goal, it is possible to assure healthier options to the population.

***Answer to Question 3—Is this campaign strategy sustainable? Do you think that having the option to buy bread with more salt population would give up the consumption of bread with less salt?***

This campaign allows a gradual habit to new taste, with less salt. The campaign can become sustainable due to new habits, which can be reinforced by generational changes, and the increasing trends of healthy lifestyles.

***Answer to Question 4—Could the involvement of partnerships with food industry be applied in other cases of social marketing for public health? Explore other examples or possible ideas.***

The same could be applied for sugar, fat, calories, palm oil, etc. The answer is free, and the students can give ideas of how other campaigns could be implemented based on the knowledge of local campaigns they may know.

***Answer to Question 5—Do you think that a campaign like this one could have been done at a national level first? Explore the advantages of developing a pilot study.***

The importance of a pilot study should be reinforced in this question, because if the population did not accept the flavour with less salt, a national campaign would lose reliability. It was important to understand the impact of the intervention in business, determining the ideal reduction in salt levels by week without affecting taste sensitiveness and consequently sales and revenues.

---

## References

- French, J. (2011). Why nudging is not enough. *Journal of Social Marketing, 1*(2), 154–162.
- Kennedy, A.-M., Kemper, J. A., & Parsons, A. G. (2018). Upstream social marketing strategy. *Journal of Social Marketing, 8*(3), 258–279.
- Macassa, G. (2021). Can sustainable health behaviour contribute to ensure healthy lives and wellbeing for all at all ages (SDG 3)? A viewpoint. *Journal of Public Health Research, 10*(3), 2051.



# Social Marketing and SDG 12 on Social Networks: A Case Study of Carrefour on Instagram and Twitter

Pedro Cuesta-Valiño, Azucena Penelas-Leguía,  
and Patricia Durán-Álamo

## Learning Objectives

1. Understand the importance for food distribution chains of their orientation towards a commitment to SDG 12, which is aimed at more responsible production and consumption.
2. Identify what social marketing actions Carrefour Spain is carrying out to communicate its commitment to more sustainable production and consumption.
3. Analyse how Carrefour uses social networks—specifically Facebook, Instagram and Twitter—to communicate and convey its commitment to SDG 12.
4. Generate debate on whether, or not, society demands a real commitment from supermarkets and hypermarkets to ensure sustainable development both at the level of production and consumption.

## 1 Introduction

One of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) set by the 2030 Agenda to ensure the current and future needs of society as a whole (Fonseca et al., 2020), SDG 12, is focused on promoting the efficient use of resources and reducing the generation of residues and waste (Agenda, 2030). Based on this description, it is understood that the world's main production chains have a fundamental role in achieving this goal. For this reason, food production and distribution chains, including supermarkets and

---

P. Cuesta-Valiño · A. Penelas-Leguía · P. Durán-Álamo (✉)  
Universidad de Alcalá, Alcalá de Henares, Spain  
e-mail: [pedro.cuesta@uah.es](mailto:pedro.cuesta@uah.es); [azucena.penelas@uah.es](mailto:azucena.penelas@uah.es); [patricia.duran@uah.es](mailto:patricia.duran@uah.es)



hypermarkets, have a greater commitment than most, since—as has been highlighted by a range of studies—the food industry is one of the most polluting (Willett et al., 2019) together with the fashion, energy and distribution industries.

In this context, supermarket and hypermarket chains must have a real commitment to SDG 12 and carry out specific actions to minimise the environmental impact of their activity to make it more sustainable (Schmitt et al., 2017). At the same time, they must promote more responsible, sustainable and healthier consumption among their customers, since healthy consumption tends to have a lower environmental impact (Torstensson et al., 2021) and companies have the potential to influence the demand for certain products (Dawson, 2013).

In Spain, according to the data provided by Kantar Worldpanel in its 2021 Ranking, Carrefour is the second-largest chain of hypermarkets and supermarkets by market share. Over the last few years, the French company has opted for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies based on the different SDGs. Regarding SDG 12, Carrefour is engaging in different actions with which it intends to reduce the environmental impact of its production and encourage responsible consumption among its buyers.

To understand how these actions are being communicated, we will analyse how Carrefour is relying on social marketing strategies through social networks, and in particular Instagram and Twitter, to give visibility to the “*Act For Food*” project (or “*Acciones para comer mejor*”, in Spanish) where they share the keys to their Veggie, BIO, ECO product lines, among others, and the “*Zero Waste*” project (“*Zero desperdicio*”, in Spanish) with which the company aims to reduce food waste, the use of plastics, etc. All of this is based on the premise that the use of social networks can help increase the visibility of the SDGs and public awareness (Lee et al., 2013).

---

## 2 Case Development

To demonstrate its commitment to responsible consumption and production, Carrefour has created its own brands, such as Carrefour BIO, ECO-Planet, Carrefour Veggie and Nuestra Tierra. All of them show the commitment that Carrefour wants to demonstrate to SDG 12 and, in turn, to the 2030 Agenda. For example, within the BIO range, the chain offers products certified from organic production as a guarantee of food quality and safety. Meanwhile, Carrefour’s ECO-Planet cleaning and personal care brand offers products made with materials certified as respectful of nature or renewable.

Taking into account the importance of these new brands, this study will analyse the “*Act For Food*” social marketing actions, especially related to these Carrefour own brands and in particular their communication on the social networks Instagram and Twitter. Within this initiative, Carrefour works to promote products of national origin, bio and eco products, as well as promote healthy and sustainable eating habits among the national population.

Following this line, Carrefour also carries out other actions such as the “*Zero Waste*” initiative, with social marketing actions that aim to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions,

use biodegradable, recycled and/or more environmentally friendly packaging or create recipes from leftover food or with products that are close to their expiry date.

It should be noted that, although this case study only analyses the visibility that Carrefour gives to the “Zero Waste” and “Act for Food” projects through social networks, the hypermarket chain also uses its website as a loudspeaker to communicate these and other actions that are directly linked to SDG 12 (Carrefour, 2022a; Carrefour, 2022b). In fact, it is in this digital environment where the consumer can not only discover the large number of actions that Carrefour develops in line with SDG 12 but also many other actions that are related to other SDGs of recognised importance such as SDG 5 on “Gender Equality” or SDG 1 “No Poverty”.

## 2.1 “Act for Food” Project

“Act For Food” is the initiative with which Carrefour promotes, above all, a more responsible and healthy consumption among its customers and followers on social networks. With this project, the Carrefour Group demonstrates its commitment to leadership in the food transition “by providing healthy, tasty, environmentally friendly food at a fair price to all our customers” (Act for Food, 2022). This process of change rests on four pillars:

- Fresh and local products daily
- Guarantee of the quality of their own brand
- The democratisation of BIO
- Commitment to the environment

Thus, in Spain the “Act For Food” project uses a total of 136 initiatives (Act For Food, 2022) to make a visible commitment to actions to eat better while publicising the company’s “responsible” and “sustainable” lines (BIO, Veggie, ECO, etc.) at the same time.

During the months of January, February and March 2022, Carrefour published content related to sustainable and responsible production on its social networks to increase the weight and visibility of its commitment to SDG 12. Specifically, on Instagram (Carrefour, 2022c) the company shared 9 such posts in January, 13 in February, and 11 in March. In the case of Twitter (Carrefour, 2022d), it launched 9 in January, 8 in February, and 6 in March.

Carrefour relies on the strengths of each of the regions that make up the Spanish territory, highlighting the national origin of their products. The company even indicates the Autonomous Community of Spain in which the products are found and gives them a starring role in their posts. With the use of these resources, Carrefour seeks to link these designs, logos, and keywords to their brand, positioning them and relating them directly to the SDG 12 commitment and support for local products.

It is also important to note that Carrefour collaborates with well-known science communicators in food and sustainability to enhance their social marketing



**Fig. 1** Content published by @midietacojea on Instagram. Source: Mi Dieta Cojea (2022b)

campaigns on social networks. One of them is Aitor Sánchez García (@Midietacojea), who has more than 80,000 followers on Twitter (Mi Dieta Cojea, 2022c) and 290,000 on Instagram (Mi Dieta Cojea, 2022a) (see Fig. 1). This expert and scientific communicator has successfully positioned himself on various social networks, achieving great reach and becoming an “influencer” in this sector. Furthermore, he has written a book whose title and content are directly related to the commitments that are manifested in SDG 12: “*Tu dieta puede salvar el planeta*” (“*Your Diet can Save the Planet*”, in English). In this case, not only does Carrefour share its own content that it has created in collaboration with the influencer, but Sánchez himself also shares videos and special promos on his Twitter and Instagram feed using the hashtags and social marketing campaigns that Carrefour has developed, which is a clear example of the use of public relations actions in the digital environment.

Carrefour also includes the “Act For Food” social marketing action among its featured Instagram stories, a decision that reveals the considerable importance Carrefour attaches to this project. As its name suggests, this section is designed so that the profiles of the network bring together the stories by theme and give greater visibility to those they deem particularly important or noteworthy.

## 2.2 “Zero Waste” Project

Some of the initiatives related to “Zero Waste” are linked to the “Act For Food” project analysed previously and are included within it. However, given its relevance

within the corporation, this study analyses separately how the actions linked to “Zero Waste”, which is especially focused on reducing the consumption of plastics and paper, are communicated through social marketing on social networks.

Throughout the months of January, February and March 2022, Carrefour made several tweets and posts about this initiative. On Instagram, the company posted four posts in January, three in February and two in March. On Twitter, a total of nine tweets were shared in January, seven in February and two in March. On both networks, the hashtags created for this campaign were included in the publications together with the campaign’s insect-shaped mascot.

To position and give more visibility to the actions related to this project, the company has designed and standardised the use of hashtags such as *#SinPlásticoEsFantástico*, *#ComprometidosConElMedioAmbiente*, and *#ZeroPlásticos* (translated into English as “*#WithoutPlasticIsFantastic*”, “*#Committed to the environment*” and “*#ZeroPlastics*”). In addition, they carry out social marketing campaigns based on fun word games such as word searches to increase the recognition they give to such actions.

It is important to note that this activity seeks not only to give visibility to Carrefour’s commitments to society but also to promote ecological habits among their followers on social networks. That is why, among the publications shared by the company on social platforms, you can find posts that focus on encouraging customers to bring their own containers to hypermarkets, for example, thereby reusing existing resources. Again, these publications maintain the use of hashtags, the mascot, as well as the logos that represent “*Act For Food*” action, in turn encompassing “*Zero Waste*”.

---

### 3 Conclusions

Carrefour, the second-largest distribution company by market share in Spain,<sup>1</sup> is aware of the social interest in actions linked to SDG 12 and for years has performed different social marketing campaigns that the company carries out to comply with said SDG. Digital environments—especially the company website and its social networks—have become the ideal channels to develop these social marketing strategies, since, as different experts have highlighted, they are a channel that acts as a loudspeaker,<sup>2</sup> which is free, easy to use, effective and, in addition, generates opportunities for companies and users.<sup>3</sup>

Carrefour makes use of Instagram and Twitter to communicate its commitment to the 2030 Agenda, specifically to SDG 12. Using these channels, the company communicates and shares content created specifically for these environments, establishing collaborations with certain influencers linked to the world of healthy

---

<sup>1</sup>Kantar Worldpanel (2021).

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Tench and Jones (2015), and Jami Pour and Lotfiyan (2020).

<sup>3</sup>Belanche et al. (2019).

food. In this way, Carrefour ensures that its commitment to SDG 12 reaches new audiences, increasing the impact of its CSR strategies in general and its social marketing in particular.<sup>4</sup> The brand makes competent use of communication tools typical of social platforms such as hashtags, thanks to which it can obtain a greater reach among the consumers who use these platforms and encompass all the strategies carried out in the same framework, giving greater continuity to their actions and showing a commitment that transcends the platform used and the audience to which it is addressed.

It should be noted that Carrefour's commitment to compliance with SDG 12 covers the entire supply chain. To meet this commitment, the company has suppliers that ensure the quality and origin of the product—whatever it may be—as well as sustainable and environmentally responsible distribution and packaging systems. Given that their CSR actions cover the entire process, the social marketing campaigns Carrefour executes on social networks also try to give visibility to that commitment from the start to the end of the chain. That is why the company shares posts on Twitter and Instagram that highlight the national origin of their products, responsible packaging, and brand logos created with those philosophies in mind, promoted within “*Act For Food*” or Carrefour BIO.

This type of social marketing strategy in social networks shows the real commitment that Carrefour has with the CSR actions linked to SDG 12. It is also important to reach and raise awareness among the younger generations, who make daily use of these social platforms. Finally, it is worth highlighting that this is a very positive situation, since Carrefour is among the leading brands in the sector in terms of the volume of fans, followers, and subscribers,<sup>5</sup> meaning that the visibility of its actions is high and can help raise awareness of SDG 12 among the general population.

---

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—To what extent is it important for supermarket and hypermarket chains to commit to SDG 12 for it to be fulfilled?

**Question 2**—Is it easier for consumers to engage with and be more loyal to those brands and supermarkets that meet SDG 12? What role does social marketing play in this?

**Question 3**—Is it important that supermarkets and hypermarkets use social networks to carry out social marketing campaigns based on their commitments to SDG 12?

---

<sup>4</sup>Cheng et al. (2021).

<sup>5</sup>Interactive Advertising Bureau—IAB Spain (2019).

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

The use of social marketing strategies based on and focused on fulfilling one (or several) of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an increasingly common practice within companies. Enterprises' commitment to this type of social marketing actions causes an increase in commercial communications based on these social values. Social networks are one of the channels of the digital environment most frequently chosen by companies to reach their audiences. Taking this reality into account, this case study analyses how Carrefour Spain uses its social networks accounts—and specifically Instagram and Twitter—to communicate its social marketing actions based on SDG 12. Two social marketing projects are analysed: “Act for Food” and “Zero Waste”. Both projects show how Carrefour is applying social marketing strategies to change negative social behaviours in relation to SDG 12.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case has been developed for use in the study of marketing strategies and, specifically, of social marketing on social networks. The potential audience for this chapter is double:

- Students of degrees related to business administration and marketing.
- MBA students and those studying master's degrees related to marketing, CSR, and communication strategies in the digital environment.

### Learning

1. Understand the importance for food distribution chains of their orientation towards a commitment to SDG 12, which is aimed at more responsible production and consumption.
2. Identify what social marketing actions Carrefour Spain is carrying out to communicate its commitment to more sustainable production and consumption.
3. Analyse how Carrefour uses social networks—specifically Facebook, Instagram and Twitter—to communicate and convey its commitment to SDG 12.
4. Generate debate on whether or not society demands a real commitment from supermarkets and hypermarkets to ensure sustainable development both at the level of production and consumption.

## Timeframe for Class Discussion

This case can be raised in a 60- to 90-min session, depending on the level of depth desired in each of the answers, as well as the number of students participating in the debate:

### Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—To what extent is it important for supermarket and hypermarket chains to commit to SDG 12 for it to be fulfilled?

**Question 2**—Is it easier for consumers to engage with and be more loyal to those brands and supermarkets that meet SDG 12? What role does social marketing play in this?

**Question 3**—Is it important that supermarkets and hypermarkets use social networks to carry out social marketing campaigns based on their commitments to SDG 12?

## Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—To what extent is it important for supermarket and hypermarket chains to commit to SDG 12 for it to be fulfilled?*

- Ideally, students will reflect on the role of distribution chains and the consequences of this type of company not committing to compliance with SDG 12. It may also be interesting to give students a few minutes to seek information on the role of these industries in society. An indicative answer is that, given that large supermarket and hypermarket companies are the main points of sale where citizens buy basic necessities, it is important that they understand their role and are committed to society, not only to guarantee a daily supply of quality goods but also to ensure a supply that is sustainable and respectful of the environment and future generations. In addition, in the case of Spain, food waste accounts for 3% of fresh sales in distribution, while 49% of fresh products not suitable for sale but suitable for consumption end up in the rubbish bin (Food Retail, 2018). Taking this situation into account, it is necessary for supermarket chains to implement projects that are aimed at achieving SDG 12. In fact, the National Association of Large Distribution Companies (ANGEM, 2019) makes this commitment clear in its annual sustainability report.

*Answer to Question 2—Is it easier for consumers to engage with and be more loyal to those brands and supermarkets that meet SDG 12? What role does social marketing play in this?*

- It is important that students first reflect on what makes a consumer feel more or less loyal to a brand and that they look for real examples that they have seen related to the supermarkets where they shop. It would also be interesting to

analyse the steps that still need to be taken to achieve more loyalty from consumers. Moving on, an example response might state that the average Spanish consumer is committed to and aware of their social responsibility in their purchasing habits. Previous studies such as the 2021 Consumption Habits Survey (carried out annually by Mercadona in collaboration with other institutions in the food industry in Spain) reveal that 88% of consumers consider food waste to be important and do something to avoid it (Encuesta de Hábitos de Consumo, 2021). At the same time, 57% of the consumers surveyed positively value the ethical business responsibility of the food manufacturer. Such data reveal the real interest on the part of the Spanish consumer in such matters and a potentially greater interest in those distributors that comply with SDG 12.

- Students must analyse and understand the importance of the application of social marketing to achieve the SDGs in general and SDG 12 in particular. In the latter case, social marketing becomes a key element driving consumers to change their habits towards a more responsible consumption and, moreover, to demand a commitment and responsible behaviour from manufacturers and distributors, rewarding those that demonstrate and communicate their commitment to a sustainable future. In this process of changing behaviour towards the achievement of SDG 12, social marketing actions are essential, raising awareness of the need for responsible actions in all areas of manufacturing, distribution and consumption, making it possible to build the vision of a sustainable future that we want for everyone.

As a complementary exercise, students can propose social marketing actions, both online and offline, that can be carried out by the companies that make up the distribution sector. For example, giveaways linked to consumer experiences with SDG 12, collaborations with environmentally aware celebrities, etc.

***Answer to Question 3—Is it important that supermarkets and hypermarkets use social networks to carry out social marketing campaigns based on their commitments to SDG 12?***

- Students will have to reflect on the importance of these new channels and also think about what other networks could be used to enhance the visibility of these contents. For example, it could consider how to give visibility to these actions on Tik Tok or YouTube. Or what other influencers could become spokespersons for Carrefour. It is also interesting that they look for comparisons with other supermarket chains that operate in the country, to understand whether or not others use their social networks to give visibility to these actions. An indicative answer would be one in which it is indicated that in the Digital Report Spain 2022 report (We are social, 2022), nine out of ten Spaniards are present on social networks and spend an average of 2 hours a day on them. Other reports, such as the IAB Spain Brand Report (2019 and 2021), highlight the scope and positioning of the social network accounts of Spanish consumer goods distribution companies. These data, together with the growing demand and interest on the part of Spanish society in issues related to SDG 12 in supermarket chains, reveal



just how powerful these new communications channels are proving to be for such companies. It is clear that social marketing actions on social networks carried out to give visibility to projects linked to SDG 12 can increase the positioning and visibility of distribution chains. Communicating information on tips for eating better or actions related to avoiding food waste are just two examples of the type of content that these distributors could produce, following the demands and interests of consumers.

## References

- Act For Food. (2022). Retrieved from <https://actforfood.carrefour.es/>
- Agenda. 2030. Retrieved from <https://www.agenda2030.gob.es/objetivos/objetivo12.htm>
- ANGEM. (2019). *Informe de Sostenibilidad*. Retrieved from <https://www.anged.es/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Informe-sostenibilidad-anged-web.pdf>
- Belanche, D., Cenfor, I., & Pérez-Rueda, A. (2019). Instagram stories versus Facebook Wall: An advertising effectiveness analysis. *Spanish Journal of Marketing - ESIC*, 23, 69–94. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJME-09-2018-0042>
- Carrefour. (2022a). *Página web oficial sobre Responsabilidad Social Corporativa para Biodiversidad*. Retrieved from <https://www.carrefour.es/responsabilidad-social-corporativa/mas-info/biodiversidad/>
- Carrefour. (2022b). *Página web oficial sobre Responsabilidad Social Corporativa para Antidespilfarro*. Retrieved from: <https://www.carrefour.es/responsabilidad-social-corporativa/mas-info/antidespilfarro/>
- Carrefour. [@Carrefoures] (2022c). *Publicaciones* [Perfil en Instagram]. Retrieved on March 15, from <https://www.instagram.com/carrefoures/>
- Carrefour. [@CarrefourES] (2022d). *Tweets* [Perfil en Twitter]. Retrieved on March, 2022, from: <https://twitter.com/CarrefourES>
- Cheng, Y., Regina Yi-Ru, C., & Hung-Baesecke, C.-J. F. (2021). Social media influencers in CSR endorsement: The effect of consumer mimicry on CSR Behaviors and consumer relationships. *Social Science Computer Review*, 39(4), 744–761. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439320987184>
- Dawson, J. (2013). Retailer activity in shaping food choice. *Food Quality and Preference*, 28, 339–347. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2012.09.012>
- Encuesta de Hábitos de Consumo (2021). Retrieved from <https://info.mercadona.es/document/es/encuesta-habitos-de-consumo-2021.pdf>
- Fonseca, L. M., Domingues, J. P., & Dima, A. M. (2020). Mapping the sustainable development goals relationships. *Sustainability*, 12(8), 3359. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12083359>
- Food Retail. (2018, marzo 17). *Casi la mitad de los alimentos frescos acaba en la basura*. Retrieved from [https://www.foodretail.es/retailers/desperdicio-alimentos-distribucion-nielsen\\_0\\_1200179997.html](https://www.foodretail.es/retailers/desperdicio-alimentos-distribucion-nielsen_0_1200179997.html)
- IAB Spain. (2019). *VII Observatorio de marcas en redes sociales*. Retrieved from [https://iabspain.es/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/observatorio\\_rrss\\_2019\\_vreducidafinal.pdf](https://iabspain.es/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/observatorio_rrss_2019_vreducidafinal.pdf)
- IAB Spain. (2021). *Observatorio de Marcas en Redes Sociales*. Retrieved from <https://iabspain.es/estudio/observatorio-de-marcas-en-redes-sociales-2021/>
- Jami Pour, M., & Lotfiyan, Z. (2020). A new framework of electronic word-of-mouth in social networking sites: The system-based approach. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*, 14(1), 48–70. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIMA.2020.106044>
- Kantar Worldpanel. (2021). *Grocery market share*. <https://www.kantarworldpanel.com/es/grocery-market-share/spain>

- Lee, K., Oh, W.-Y., & Kim, N. (2013). Social media for socially responsible firms: Analysis of fortune 500's twitter profiles and their CSR/CSIR ratings. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 118(4), 791–806. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1961-2>
- Mi Dieta Cojea [@MiDietaCojea] (2022a). *Publicaciones*. [Perfil de Instagram] Recuperado el 18 de marzo de 2022. <https://www.instagram.com/midietacojea/>
- Mi Dieta Cojea [@MiDietaCojea] (2022b). *Publicación 19 de abril*. [Perfil de Instagram] Recuperado el 20 de abril de 2022. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CciCxToqs5W/>
- Mi Dieta Cojea [@MiDietaCojea] (2022c). *Tweets*. [Perfil de Twitter] Recuperado el 18 de marzo de 2022. <https://twitter.com/Midietacojea>
- Schmitt, E., Galli, F., Menozzi, D., Maye, D., Touzard, J.-M., Marescotti, A., Six, J., & Brunori, G. (2017). Comparing the sustainability of local and global food products in Europe. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 165, 346–359. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.07.039>
- Tench, R., & Jones, B. (2015). Social media: The wild west of CSR communications. *Social Responsibility Journal*, 11(2), 290–305. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-12-2012-0157>
- Torstensson, L., Johansson, R., & Mark-Herbert, C. (2021). Food dishes for sustainable development: A Swedish food retail perspective. *Foods*, 10, 932. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods10050932>
- We Are Social (2022, febrero 9). *Digital Report España 2022: nueve de cada diez españoles usan las redes sociales y pasan casi dos horas al día en ellas*. Retrieved from <https://wearesocial.com/es/blog/2022/02/digital-report-espana-2022-nueve-de-cada-diez-espanoles-usan-las-redes-sociales-y-pasan-cerca-de-dos-horas-al-dia-en-ellas/>
- Willett, W., et al. (2019). Food in the Anthropocene: The EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems. *The Lancet*, 393(10170), 447–492. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)31788-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)31788-4)



# How Can Social Marketing Help the Sustainability of Water Use in Tourism? The Case of Tourist Accommodation

Carla Rodriguez-Sanchez, Franco Sancho-Esper, and Fernando Campayo-Sanchez

## Learning Objectives

General objective: learn how to develop a social marketing program to conserve water in hotels.

1. Specific objective 1: learn the steps of the community-based social marketing (CBSM) framework.
2. Specific objective 2: learn how to use different behavior change tools.

## 1 Introduction

Tourism can contribute to socio-economic development, but it can also exert several negative impacts on the environment. Notably, water use and water consumption together form one of the most important challenges in the tourism sector because the demand for water can generate serious problems of overexploitation (Gössling, 2002). Technology-based efforts to improve efficiency in tourist accommodation can potentially save water (Warren & Becken, 2017). However, unlike in the home, in the lodging context (e.g., in hotels), the decision to install water-saving appliances does not depend on the users of water (i.e., guests). Therefore, a key element of any

---

C. Rodriguez-Sanchez (✉) · F. Sancho-Esper · F. Campayo-Sanchez  
Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales, University of Alicante, Alicante, Spain  
e-mail: [carla.rodriguez@ua.es](mailto:carla.rodriguez@ua.es); [franco.sancho@ua.es](mailto:franco.sancho@ua.es); [fernando.campayo@ua.es](mailto:fernando.campayo@ua.es)

conservation strategy in this context is the reduction in guests' consumption. Specifically, conservation strategies must focus on reducing consumption during guests' stays because approximately half of direct water consumption is related to guests' rooms (Warren et al., 2016).

Water conservation strategies in a lodging context should therefore be aimed at changing behaviors. This change is only possible if consumers make voluntary choices within an environment that helps them to do so (Dimara et al., 2017). However, traditional programs in the lodging sector have shown limited efficacy in fostering the adoption of pro-environmental behaviors (Terrier & Marfaing, 2015). Most of these programs have relied on information-intensive campaigns. Such campaigns focus on how important it is for tourists to act to protect natural resources and respect the environment. It is assumed that the problem is that tourists do not know or care enough, so providing them with more information will lead them to change their behavior. However, this assumption is often erroneous (Schultz & Kaiser, 2012). The ineffectiveness of such campaigns has led to new research approaches from the social and behavioral sciences. These new approaches search for more effective strategies to change tourists' environmental sustainability behavior (McKenzie-Mohr et al., 2012).

This chapter presents a case study where the marketing department of a hotel in the city of Benidorm (Spain) developed a social marketing program aimed at reducing the consumption of water in hotel rooms by guests using behavior change tools traditionally employed in social marketing. Specifically, these tools are widely used within the community-based social marketing (CBSM) framework developed by McKenzie-Mohr and Smith (1999).<sup>1</sup> This framework, which is rooted in the principles of social and environmental psychology, offers a step-by-step model that uses a predominantly professional perspective to encourage water-saving practices, as well as many other pro-environmental behaviors.<sup>2</sup>

---

## 2 Case Development

### 2.1 The Context

Benidorm is one of the most important tourist destinations in the Mediterranean area.<sup>3</sup> This city received a total of 11,503,039 tourists in 2018 (INE, 2019), before Covid pandemic, with an average occupancy rate of around 84% which generated over 1.2 billion euros a year with more than 300,000 direct and indirect jobs associated. Benidorm is a city focused on "sun, sand and sea" mass-tourism and it is located in an area of water scarcity, which posit special pressure of its tourism activity on water demand (Sánchez-Galiano et al., 2017). Demographically,

---

<sup>1</sup>For further information, also consult [www.cbsm.com](http://www.cbsm.com)

<sup>2</sup>See Tools of Change: <https://toolsofchange.com>

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Ivars-Baidal et al. (2013).



**Fig. 1** Images of Benidorm. Source: Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020)

Benidorm is located to the southeast of the Spanish Mediterranean coast, it has around 69,118 officially register inhabitants in 2021 (Diputación de Alicante, 2022) but the important flows of tourists and the seasonality of this activity increase its temporary population to an average of more than 102,000 water consumers. Furthermore, the urban design of Benidorm is highly concentrated with a high density of skyscrapers both for residential and hotel use (Casares Blanco et al., 2019) based on strategic urban policy since the 1960s (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2013) (see Fig. 1). As a result of this planning, Benidorm offers a unique urban model that is more environmentally efficient regarding energy, water, and land use, and it is also less dependent on private transport (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2013).

In this context, the managers of a hotel chain in Benidorm with 4 hotels in this city request the marketing department to design and develop a social marketing program to reduce water consumption by hotel guests' during the high season months of the year (June to September). To do so, they decide to follow the CBSM process proposed by McKenzie-Mohr (2000).

## 2.2 Social Marketing Program Development

The CBSM framework<sup>4</sup> has five steps: (1) Carefully selecting the behavior to be impacted; (2) Identifying the barriers and benefits associated with the selected behavior; (3) Designing a strategy that utilizes behavior change tools; (4) Piloting the strategy with a small segment of a community; and (5) Evaluating the impact of the program once it has been broadly implemented. Next, each of these stages is detailed for the case under study.

### 2.2.1 Selection of the Behavior

The behavior to be selected should be a non-divisible behavior (i.e., behaviors that cannot be further divided) and end state behavior (i.e., behaviors with a direct impact on the goal). For this program the behavior to be impacted (reduce) is water consumption in the shower. It could not be the consumption of water in the bathroom because this behavior is divisible (e.g., use of water when brushing the teeth, use of water when pulling the toilet chain, etc.).

Furthermore, prior to selecting which behavior is going to be promoted, it must be decided which audience to target. At this point segmentation analysis is a key process to be developed. This program is focused on all hotel room guests who stay overnight during the months of June to September.

### 2.2.2 Identifying the Barriers and Benefits

Barriers refer to internal or external factors to the individual that reduce the probability of engaging in the target behavior, whereas benefits refer to the positive outcomes associated with the behavior. At this point it is very important to carry out formative research. Thus, information about barriers and benefits usually comes from ad-hoc research (e.g., focus group, interviews, surveys, etc.) or literature review.

In this case, the hotel managers used the results of a survey carried out the previous summer where guests were asked about their showering habits at the hotel (e.g., estimated average time, whether they turned off the tap when soaping, etc.). It also asked them about the reasons why they would take a longer shower than normal and what barriers they perceived to being able to save water during the shower. The main findings of this study were that guests took longer showers than they did at home and the main reasons were because they were in a moment of relaxation (holidays) and they did not have to pay the water bill (they had already paid a lot for the price of the room). In addition, they also stated that they did not see any benefit on a personal level to reduce their comfort. Furthermore, they thought that with their behavior they did not get any difference to save water at hotel level.

---

<sup>4</sup>McKenzie-Mohr (2000).

**Table 1** Example of social norms messages

Descriptive norm (global)	Descriptive norm (same room)	Descriptive norm (fellow citizens)
<p>“JOIN YOUR FELLOW GUESTS IN HELPING TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. In a study conducted in Summer 2021, 75% of the guests participated in our new resource savings program by taking shorter showers. . . . etc..”</p>	<p>“JOIN YOUR FELLOW GUESTS IN HELPING TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. In a study conducted in Summer 2021, 75% of the guests who stayed in this room (#xxx) participated in our new resource savings program by taking shorter showers . . . etc.”</p>	<p>“JOIN YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS IN HELPING TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. In a study conducted in Summer 2021, 75% of the guests participated in our new resource savings program by taking shorter showers . . . etc.”</p>

Source: Own elaboration based on Goldstein et al. (2008)

**2.2.3 Designing a Strategy That Utilizes Behavior Change Tools**

There are a wide variety of tools that can help change behavior toward sustainability.<sup>5</sup> These tools should be chosen based on their suitability to remove the barriers or enhance the motivators obtained in the previous step.

In this sense, the hotel marketers are thinking of using some of the following behavioral change tools: social norms, commitment, incentives, or feedback. Next, it is explained what each one of them consists of and what their advantages and disadvantages are.

**Social Norms**

In general, social norms are defined as a set of “rules and norms that are understood by members of a group, and that guide and/or constrain human behavior without the force of laws” (Cialdini & Trost, 1998, p. 152). The use of social norms to promote pro-environmental behaviors in the tourism sector has proven highly effective.<sup>6</sup> Social norms are used in communication messages when individuals are told what another people’s behavior is like. See in Table 1 how it could be an example of messages of social norms for the case of the Benidorm hotel. Following it can be seen some of the advantages and disadvantages of using this behavioral change tool.

Advantages:

- Social norms are effective tools for promoting behavior change because individuals often prefer to go with the flow rather than deviate from group-accepted behavior.
- They are most effective when the target audience is not motivated to make the behavior change.

<sup>5</sup>See, for example, McKenzie-Mohr and Schultz (2014) or Schultz (2014).

<sup>6</sup>e.g., Terrier and Marfaing (2015), Tkaczynski et al. (2020).

#### Disadvantages:

- If the external reference group for which normative information is provided is disliked (because it is composed of extremists, fanatics, or fervent supporters), individuals will tend to perform the opposite pattern of actions (i.e., a distancing effect occurs).
- It is necessary to use social identities (such as neighborhoods or cities) or to allow individuals to personalize the referent through the use of social media or interactive tools.
- They are less effective when the target audience is already motivated to perform the intended behavior.

#### Commitment

Commitment consists of asking for a person's pledge or agreement to carry out the actions somebody is promoting, such as requesting that a person sign a statement or say a few words indicating her or his intentions. Commitment has been used from two perspectives in hotel sustainable tourism programs.

The first is the effect of hotel guests' commitment on environmentally friendly decisions.<sup>7</sup> For example, pinning hotel guests showing they are a "green guest" if a set water-saving goal is achieved.

The second is guests' perceptions of the hotel or tourism organization's commitment to the specific behavior to be changed.<sup>8</sup> That is, if hotel guests only perceive self-interest on the part of the hotel (egoistic attributions) in its reuse program (e.g., only cost reductions), they will be less motivated to participate. Conversely, guests may be more willing to participate if some of the savings from this reuse are donated to charity (altruistic motives or attributions).

The hotel managers are thinking of using the commitment tool following this last approach. An example of the design of this water-saving program can be seen in Fig. 2.

Following it can be seen some of the advantages and disadvantages of using this behavioral change tool.

#### Advantages:

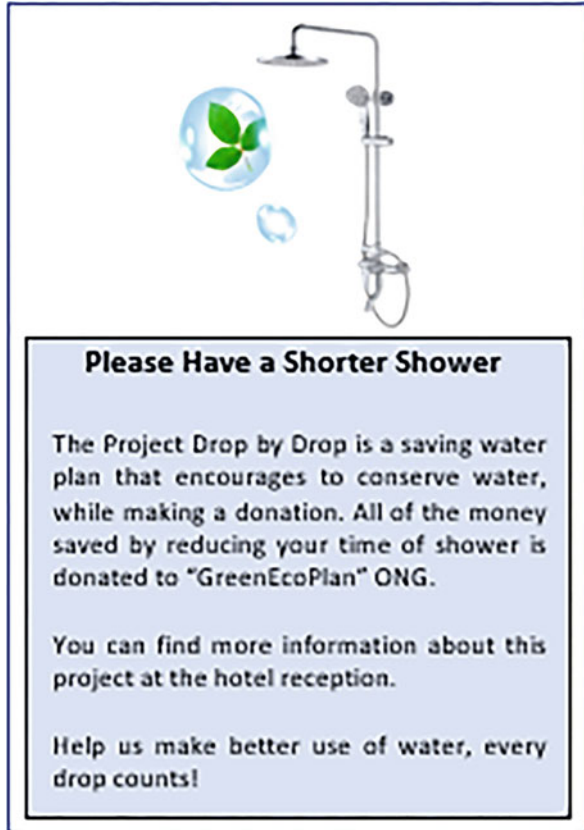
- It is an effective tool for promoting behavior change due to a process known as self-perception.
- It causes the individual to see himself as the type of person who believes he has a civic duty to perform a behavior (i.e., it alters the way we perceive ourselves).
- It is most effective when the individual is motivated to act.
- Written commitments are more effective than verbal commitments.
- Public commitments are more effective than private commitments.
- Lasting commitments have a greater impact in promoting behavior change.

<sup>7</sup>See, for example, Baca-Motes et al. (2013).

<sup>8</sup>See, for example, Shang et al. (2010).



**Fig. 2** Example of commitment. Source: Own elaboration

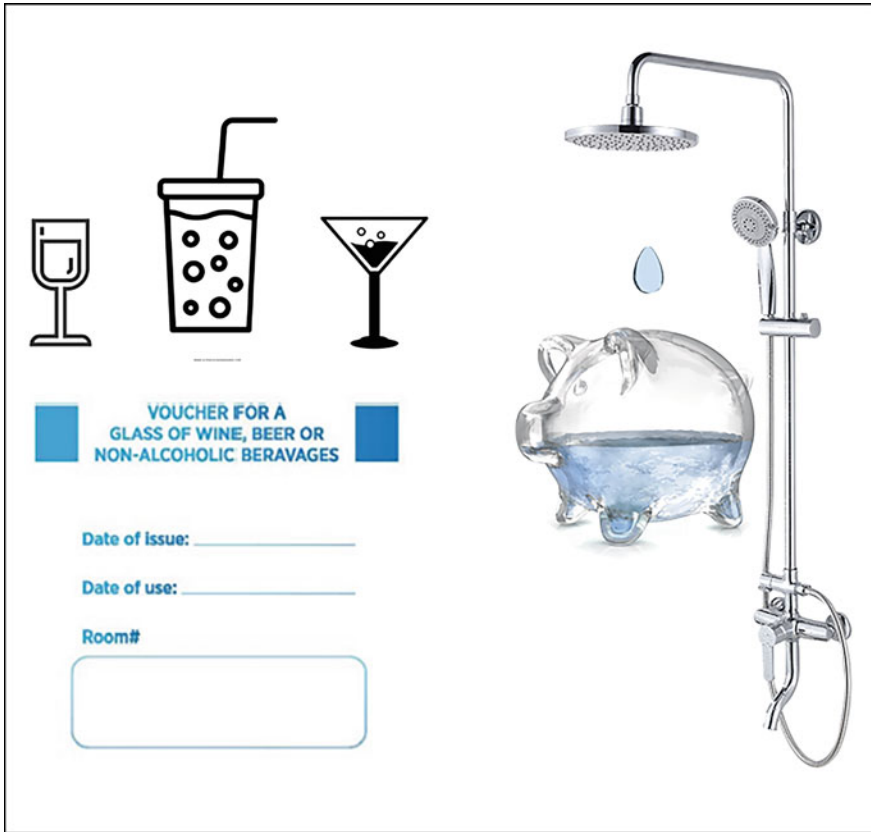


Disadvantages:

- If an individual feels coerced into making a commitment, the self-perception process is unlikely to occur.
- It is less effective if the individual is not motivated to act.
- Verbal commitments are less effective than written commitments.
- Private commitments are less effective than public commitments.
- Momentary commitments have less impact in promoting behavior change.

### Incentives

The literature on pro-environmental behavior in the hotel sector considers two types of guest motivations: intrinsic and extrinsic (Cheng et al., 2018). Extrinsic motivation derives from external incentives within the environment. In contrast, intrinsic motivation is the desire stemming from within an individual to perform sustainable behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Economic incentives are extrinsic motivations. That is, a pro-environmental program (intervention) that hotels promote to a sustainable



**Fig. 3** Example of incentive. Source: Own elaboration

behavior among guests will be more effective if individuals are compensated for their efforts or for any reduction in their comfort (Deci, 2016).

Following this idea, in Fig. 3 an example of a program designed by the hotel where they invite guests to a drink if they reduce the shower time is shown.

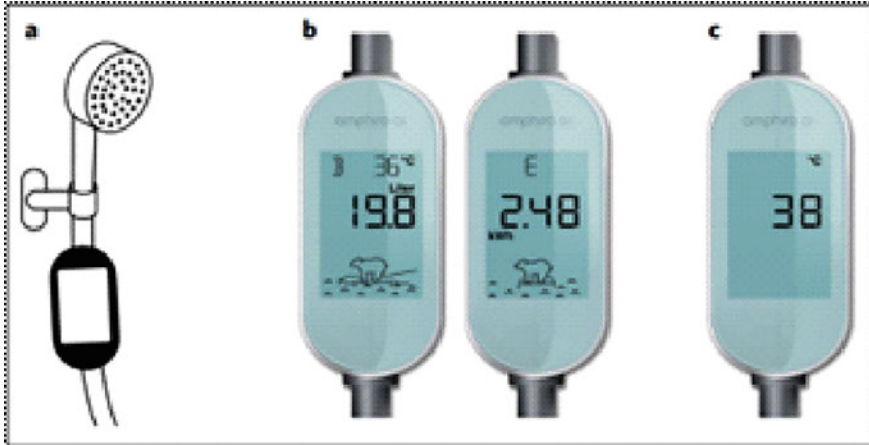
Following it can be seen some of the advantages and disadvantages of using this behavioral change tool.

Advantages:

- Incentives (or rewards) are effective tools for promoting behavior change because it reduces the difficulty of action.

Disadvantages:

- Repetitive behaviors that are changed through incentives often revert once the incentive is removed. It is even possible that an overjustification effect (decrease



**Fig. 4** Example of water smart meter *Amphiro*. Source: Amphiro smart meter device used in Tiefenbeck et al. (2019)

in intrinsic motivation) may occur, leading the behavior to fall below initial levels when the incentive is withdrawn.

- Behaviors that are changed through incentives generally do not spill over into other domains (specificity of change). For example, offering an incentive for the purchase of energy-saving light bulbs does not usually have an impact on other energy efficiency behaviors.
- Sometimes there is a rebound effect where a person who installs a more efficient appliance uses it more often because it is more efficient.
- They only work well when cost operates as a barrier to action.
- They need to be used sparingly.

**Feedback**

In social marketing, the use of “feedback” to promote pro-environmental behaviors means providing individuals with a series of updated reports on their behavior. Feedback on physical behaviors such as water consumption, energy consumption, or time spent carrying out an activity has proven to be an effective social marketing tool (McKenzie-Mohr & Schultz, 2014). Thanks to the development of new technologies, it is now technically possible to provide individuals with real-time information on their hotel activities.<sup>9</sup>

In Fig. 4 an example of this type of technology to be used by the hotel can be seen (*Amphiro* technology). Every time an individual took a shower, this smart meter, placed between the shower head and the shower hose, recorded the energy and water consumption, average temperature, interruptions, and duration of the shower. The device stored this information in its internal memory, enabling data collection and

<sup>9</sup>See, for example, Tiefenbeck et al. (2018) and Pereira et al. (2022).

processing. Following it can be seen some of the advantages and disadvantages of using feedback tool in social marketing programs.

Advantages:

- Feedback (or providing updates on our behavior) is an essential tool for promoting behavior change.
- Combining feedback with a meaningful referent (such as normative information or associated cost) can produce lasting changes in behavior.

Drawbacks:

- Feedback alone is rarely an effective tool for changing behavior.
- It is only effective when people want to achieve the outcome or are motivated to change their behavior. So, they must associate feedback with goal setting (e.g., save money, win a competition, reduce carbon emissions, etc.).
- When the costs associated with certain behaviors are low, feedback is often ineffective.

#### **2.2.4 Piloting the Strategy with a Small Segment of a Community**

Before implementing the social marketing program, it should be tested on a small scale to analyze its effectiveness for the desired behavior to be changed.

In the case of the hotel chain in Benidorm, the program can be tested in one of the four hotels that belong to the company. To do this, the pilot study (or experiment) should be developed under the same conditions that the social marketing program will be developed. Therefore, all extraneous variables that may affect the internal validity of the test must be controlled.

#### **2.2.5 Piloting the Strategy with a Small Segment of a Community**

The last step is to evaluate the program's progress. Process evaluations can be done by measuring a variety of variables.<sup>10</sup> For example, it may include examining the current levels of awareness and knowledge arising from the ongoing efforts of the implemented program. People's interest in the topic or motivations to do what is recommended can also be measured. Finally, other measures may be related to behavior, actual or reported, or any other factor of interest to the program.

To measure the effectiveness of the social marketing program in the Benidorm hotel chain, the data provided by the Smart water meter *Amphiro* will be used to analyze the average reduction in liters of water in the hotel rooms.

---

<sup>10</sup>See Basil (2019).

### 3 Conclusions

CBSM can be an effective approach to achieving reductions in hotel room water consumption by guests. This framework has shown to be effective at inducing behavioral change due to its pragmatic approach. CBSM is based on the idea that individuals do not engage in pro-environmental behavior because they do not know about the activity to be performed or its benefits, or even if they know it, they may perceive certain barriers to engage in it or perceive benefits associated with their current behavior (Lynes et al., 2014). For this reason, after an analysis of the perceived barriers and benefits of the behavior, it should be used behavior change strategies and tools such as social norms, commitment, incentives, or feedback for overcoming the barriers and increasing the perception of benefits. The use of these behavior change tools increases guests' water conservation behavior in hotels more effectively than other types of strategies focused on providing environmental information. This highlights the need to modify the sustainability strategies currently applied by most hotels. These existing strategies focus on providing information to change prevalent motivations, perceptions, cognitions, and norms, but not consumption behaviors.

Specifically, hotels mainly display three types of messages (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2002). The most common type of message focuses on basic environmental protection (e.g., "reusing towels will conserve natural resources and help save the environment from further deterioration"). Another form of intervention involves utilizing the social responsibility that guests feel toward future generations. A third form of intervention is to share information with guests about the savings that the hotel could potentially make. However, as earlier literature reviews consistently show, the behavior change model based on knowledge deficits is ineffective (e.g., Steg & Vlek, 2009).

Therefore, hotel managers should target guests by using a social marketing approach in their sustainability strategies to achieve a real, voluntary, and sustainable change in guests' water consumption over time. As can be seen in this case study, in order to achieve more environmentally friendly behavior change, it is not imperative for the Benidorm hotel chain to resort to advertising campaigns that disseminate information-intensive messages to its guests. There are a range of tools derived from the social sciences that are often much more effective in promoting sustainability (see, for example, social norms, engagement, incentives, or feedback). In this regard, the development of the program during the high season months (June to September) resulted in a 31.12% decrease in the average duration of showers for hotel guests compared to pre-intervention data (i.e., water run time fell by 71.56 s). This circumstance highlights the significant savings effects derived from the implementation of this type of initiative.

## 4 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—If the managers had chosen to simply install a smart meter in the rooms (providing real-time information to guests about their consumption patterns) to solve the problem of excessive water use in the hotel room, do you think it would have been a good strategy to achieve this goal? Reason your answer.

**Question 2**—The use of social norms to change sustainability behavior has been the most widely used approach in academic studies of tourism. It has been shown that there is a difference between descriptive and injunctive social norms. Search the definition of both type of norms and give an example of the application of each of them to water conservation in hotel rooms.

**Question 3**—This chapter describes some behavior change tools that are widely used in social marketing to achieve pro-environmental behavior. Could you name any others? What are their advantages and disadvantages?

---

## Teaching / Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

One of the keys to achieving sustainable tourism is the optimal use of environmental resources. These resources are a basic ingredient of tourism development and are necessary to offer a high-quality service. Regarding the conservation of natural resources, the tourism sector is a major consumer of water. In addition to consuming water for personal use, tourists also consume water through numerous leisure activities. Thus, a shortage of water can be a major obstacle for tourism. Social marketing programs are crucial to achieve behavior change among tourists and ensure the sustainability of this natural resource in tourist destinations. This chapter presents a case study of a hotel chain in the city of Benidorm (Spain) located in an area of the Mediterranean coast with major problems of water scarcity. A social marketing program is developed following the different steps of the community-based social marketing (CBSM) framework to achieve a reduction in water consumption in the hotel room. It is also examined several interventions in tourist accommodation (hotels) using different behavior change tools such as social norms, commitment, or feedback.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

The case study has been designed to be used in subjects and courses related to social marketing. The case has been developed for students of all levels.

- Undergraduate students accessing careers in marketing or business administration and management.
- Graduate students pursuing a master's degree in marketing or an MBA.

- The public participating in other types of degrees, courses, programs, or seminars related to social marketing.

The instructor can alter the nature of the classroom discussion to fit the profile of the students and the content taught in the course. This case was created to help students understand how to develop a program that follows the steps of the community-based social marketing (CBSM) framework to achieve environmentally friendly behavior change such as reducing water consumption in hotel rooms.

## Learning Objectives

General objective: learn how to develop a social marketing program to conserve water in hotels.

1. Specific objective 1: learn the steps of the community-based social marketing (CBSM) framework.
2. Specific objective 2: learn how to use different behavior change tools.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case study can be taught in a single 45–60-minute session, depending on the number of participants involved in the discussion activities and the work that the students have done independently prior to the class.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—If the managers had chosen to simply install a smart meter in the rooms (providing real-time information to guests about their consumption patterns) to solve the problem of excessive water use in the hotel room, do you think it would have been a good strategy to achieve this goal? Reason your answer.

**Question 2**—The use of social norms to change sustainability behavior has been the most widely used approach in academic studies of tourism. It has been shown that there is a difference between descriptive and injunctive social norms. Search the definition of both types of norms and give an example of the application of each of them to water conservation in hotel rooms.

**Question 3**—This chapter describes some behavior change tools that are widely used in social marketing. Could you name any others? What are their advantages and disadvantages?

## Analysis

***Answer to Question 1—If the managers had chosen to simply install a smart meter in the rooms (providing real-time information to guests about their consumption patterns) to solve the problem of excessive water use in the hotel room, do you think it would have been a good strategy to achieve this goal? Reason your answer.***

- Although feedback is an essential tool for achieving a goal (in this case, reducing water consumption by guests at the Hotel), it is no less true that by itself it is rarely enough to achieve it. Keep in mind that feedback is only effective when people are motivated or committed to change their behavior. This is why combining this strategy with other tools such as commitment is a better answer. With commitment, guests can be made to think of themselves as the kind of people who have a civic duty to reduce water consumption. By generating this self-perception in individuals, they will be more aware of the problem and will be much more responsive to the information disseminated through smart meters, which could ultimately be essential to achieve the intended behavioral change.

***Answer to Question 2—The use of social norms to change sustainability behavior has been the most widely used approach in academic studies of tourism. It has been shown that there is a difference between descriptive and injunctive social norms. Search the definition of both types of norms and give an example of the application of each of them to water conservation in hotel rooms.***

- Descriptive norms refer to what most people do, whereas injunctive norms describe what most people approve of doing. As explained by Farrow et al. (2017):  
 “Although descriptive and injunctive norms are distinct concepts, empirical evidence suggests that they are closely psychologically related. Injunctive norms are generally thought to be effective because they signal the likelihood of obtaining social approval or disapproval, and therefore enable individuals to update their expectations regarding the accompanying material and emotional payoffs associated with possible actions. Descriptive norms are thought to be effective by serving as an indicator of both injunctive norms (when there is uncertainty surrounding these) as well as payoff-maximizing behavior” (p. 2).

We can highlight the following examples of the application of each to water conservation in hotel rooms.

- Descriptive norms: Over 80% of guests follow towel reuse programs.
- Injunctive norms: Family members traveling with you do not approve of you wasting water in your room.

Pro-environmental behavior highly correlates with actual pro-environmental behavior.



***Answer to Question 3—This chapter describes some behavior change tools that are widely used in social marketing to achieve pro-environmental behavior. Could you name any others? What are their advantages and disadvantages?***

- Some of the behavior change tools that can be used in addition to those described in this chapter include the following:
  - Prompts: A cue that reminds people to carry out an action they might otherwise forget to do.
    - Advantages:
      - Prompts (or memory aids [visual or auditory] that are presented near the repetitive behavior) are effective tools for promoting behavior change.
      - Focusing on positive behaviors provides information to the individual about which behaviors are socially desirable.
    - Disadvantages:
      - They must be visible and self-explanatory and presented close to the behavior to be effective.
      - They must focus on beneficial behavior rather than encourage avoidance of harmful behaviors. Focusing on negative behaviors makes the individual aware of the existence of the undesirable behavior.
- Convenience: make easy the behavior change focusing on reducing barriers. If the target behavior can be made more convenient than the alternative, behavior change will naturally follow.
  - Advantages:
    - Convenience (or reducing the barriers associated with a behavior) is an effective tool for promoting behavior change.
    - When barriers are low relative to other options, even individuals with very low motivation will choose them.
  - Disadvantages:
    - It is necessary that the target behavior can be done more comfortably than the alternative for behavior change to occur naturally.
    - When barriers are extremely high very few individuals will have sufficient motivation to overcome the obstacles.
  - For more examples of behavior change tools, see Tools of Change.

---

## References

- Baca-Motes, K., Brown, A., Gneezy, A., Keenan, E. A., & Nelson, L. D. (2013). Commitment and behavior change: Evidence from the field. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(5), 1070–1084.
- Basil, M. D. (2019). Research and evaluation in social marketing. In D. Basil, G. Diaz-Meneses, & M. Basil (Eds.), *Social marketing in Action. Springer texts in business and economics*. Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13020-6\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13020-6_3)

- Casares Blanco, J., Fernández-Aracil, P., & Ortuño-Padilla, A. (2019). Built environment and tourism as road safety determinants in Benidorm (Spain). *European Planning Studies*, 27(7), 1314–1328.
- Cheng, J. C. H., Chiang, A. H., Yuan, Y., & Huang, M. Y. (2018). Exploring antecedents of green tourism behaviors: A case study in suburban areas of Taipei, Taiwan. *Sustainability*, 10(6), 1928.
- Cialdini, R. B., & Goldstein, N. J. (2002). The science and practice of persuasion. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 43, 40–50.
- Cialdini, R. B., & Trost, M. R. (1998). Social influence: Social norms, conformity and compliance. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (pp. 151–192). McGraw-Hill.
- Deci, E. L. (2016). Intrinsic motivation and self-determination. In *The curated reference collection in neuroscience and biobehavioral psychology* (pp. 437–448). Elsevier Science Ltd..
- Dimara, E., Manganari, E., & Skuras, D. (2017). Don't change my towels please: Factors influencing participation in towel reuse programs. *Tourism Management*, 59, 425–437.
- Diputación de Alicante. (2022). *Revisión Padrón Municipal*. Retrieved from <http://documentacion.diputacionalicante.es/4hogares.asp?codigo=03031> (Accessed 21/07/22)
- Farrow, K., Grolleau, G., & Ibanez, L. (2017). Social norms and pro-environmental behavior: A review of the evidence. *Ecological Economics*, 140, 1–13.
- Goldstein, N. J., Cialdini, R. B., & Griskevicius, V. (2008). A room with a viewpoint: Using social norms to motivate environmental conservation in hotels. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(3), 472–482.
- Gössling, S. (2002). Global environmental consequences of tourism. *Global Environmental Change*, 12, 283–302.
- INE. (2019). Hotel Occupation National Survey [in Spanish]. *Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE)*. Retrieved from <https://www.ine.es/dynt3/inebase/index.htm?padre=238&capsel=238> (Accessed 21/07/22).
- Ivars-Baidal, J. A. I., Sánchez, I. R., & Rebollo, J. F. V. (2013). The evolution of mass tourism destinations: New approaches beyond deterministic models in Benidorm (Spain). *Tourism Management*, 34, 184–195.
- Lynes, J., Whitney, S., & Murray, D. (2014). Developing benchmark criteria for assessing community-based social marketing programs: A look into Jack Johnson's "All at Once" campaign. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 4(2), 111–132.
- McKenzie-Mohr, D. (2000). Fostering sustainable behavior through community-based social marketing. *American Psychologist*, 55(5), 531.
- McKenzie-Mohr, D., Lee, N. R., Schultz, P. W., & Kotler, P. (2012). *Social marketing to protect the environment: What works*. Sage.
- McKenzie-Mohr, D., & Schultz, P. W. (2014). Choosing effective behavior change tools. *Social Marketing Quarterly*, 20(1), 35–46.
- McKenzie-Mohr, D., & Smith, W. (1999). *Fostering sustainable behavior: An introduction to community-based social marketing*. New Society Publishers.
- Pereira-Doel, P., Font, X., Wyles, K., & Pereira-Moliner, J. (2022). *Showering smartly in tourism accommodations*. SOC ARXIV Papers. Retrieved from <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/dwba3/>.
- Rodriguez-Sanchez, C., Sancho-Esper, F., Casado-Diaz, A. B., & Sellers-Rubio, R. (2020). Understanding in-room water conservation behavior: The role of personal normative motives and hedonic motives in a mass tourism destination. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 18, 100496.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54–67.
- Sánchez-Galiano, J. C., Martí-Ciriquián, P., & Fernández-Aracil, P. (2017). Temporary population estimates of mass tourism destinations: The case of Benidorm. *Tourism Management*, 62, 234–240.

- Schultz, P. W. (2014). Strategies for promoting proenvironmental behavior: Lots of tools but few instructions. *European Psychologist, 19*(2), 107–117.
- Schultz, P. W., & Kaiser, F. G. (2012). Promoting pro-environmental behavior. In S. Clayton (Ed.), *Handbook of environmental and conservation psychology* (pp. 556–580). Oxford University Press.
- Shang, J., Basil, D. Z., & Wymer, W. (2010). Using social marketing to enhance hotel reuse programs. *Journal of Business Research, 63*(2), 166–172.
- Steg, L., & Vlek, C. (2009). Encouraging pro-environmental behaviour: An integrative review and research agenda. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 29*, 309–317.
- Terrier, L., & Marfaing, B. (2015). Using social norms and commitment to promote pro-environmental behavior among hotel guests. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 44*(Dec.), 10–15.
- Tiefenbeck, V., Goette, L., Degen, K., Tasic, V., Fleisch, E., Lalive, R., & Staake, T. (2018). Overcoming salience bias: How real-time feedback fosters resource conservation. *Management Science, 64*(3), 1458–1476.
- Tiefenbeck, V., Wörner, A., Schöb, S., Fleisch, E., & Staake, T. (2019). Real-time feedback promotes energy conservation in the absence of volunteer selection bias and monetary incentives. *Nature Energy, 4*(891), 35–41.
- Tkaczynski, A., Rundle-Thiele, S., & Truong, V. D. (2020). Influencing tourists' pro-environmental behaviours: A social marketing application. *Tourism Management Perspectives, 36*(Oct.), 100740.
- Warren, C., & Becken, S. (2017). Saving energy and water in tourist accommodation: A systematic literature review (1987–2015). *International Journal of Tourism Research, 19*(3), 289–303.
- Warren, C., Becken, S., & Coghlan, A. (2016). Using persuasive communication to co-create behavioural change—engaging with guests to save resources at tourist accommodation facilities. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 1*–20.



# The Spanish Cancer Association: Supporting SDGs

M. Soledad Janita-Muñoz and M. Manuela Palacios-González

## Learning Objectives

The overall objective of this case study is to learn about and analyse some of the main social marketing campaigns developed in recent years by the Spanish Cancer Association (Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer—AECC) linked to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In particular, the following specific objectives were sought:

1. Analyse and reflect on a number of recent social marketing campaigns produced by the AECC aimed at improving health and reducing inequalities.
2. Reflect on the influence of the environment on health.
3. Study the messages conveyed in each campaign.
4. Establish which type of communication media was used to get the messages across.
5. Understand what the target audience was for each campaign.
6. Assess the impact of the campaigns and the results achieved.
7. Understand what the target audience was for each campaign.
8. Assess the impact of the campaigns and the results achieved.

---

M. S. Janita-Muñoz (✉)  
University of Extremadura, Badajoz, Spain  
e-mail: [msjanita@unex.es](mailto:msjanita@unex.es)

M. M. Palacios-González  
Centro Universitario de Mérida, Universidad de Extremadura, Mérida (Badajoz), Spain  
e-mail: [mapalaciosg@unex.es](mailto:mapalaciosg@unex.es)

## 1 Introduction

Good health and well-being, one of the SDGs (SDG 3), is a complex and multi-dimensional process that does not solely depend on a person but rather on multiple environmental factors, such as economic, social, environmental, and cultural factors. The environment can favour the emergence of different diseases but can also make it easier for a patient to receive the appropriate treatment (AECC, 2022b).

Health is important to people and is viewed as a positive thing by the international community. Indeed, 68.5% of the population aged 15 or over from 36 member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) described the state of their health as good (OECD, 2021). Data from Spain reflect the same trend and even demonstrate greater optimism with the figure rising to 75.1% (INE, 2021a).

Nevertheless, reality shows that diseases, such as cancer, do exist, and it is one of the world's leading causes of death, with almost ten million deaths from cancer in 2021 alone (WHO, 2022). In Spain, in the same year, 2021, this figure rose to 112,741 deaths, which gives a crude mortality rate of 238.1 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants (INE, 2021b). Of those cancers, the most common were colorectal (14.33%), prostate (12.30%), breast (12.02%), lung (10.37%), and skin (7.77%). The highest death rates were in lung and colorectal (INE, 2021b).

Furthermore, the 2019 COVID pandemic caused delays in perceived care for patients, including a reduction in cancer detection. So, for example, the proportion of women aged between 50 and 69 screened for breast cancer was reduced by almost 9% compared with 2017 figures (OECD, 2021). These statistics prompt reflection on the importance of the actions of the different social agencies, including those associations involved in the fight against the disease.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, associations have provided care and support to patients and their families, providing information, psychological support, prevention, and early detection education, as well as raising money for disease research. Internationally, these include the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), the American Cancer Society (ACS) and the most recently established (1980), Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL) (Janita-Muñoz and Palacios-González, 2021). In Spain, it is the AECC (Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer—Spanish Cancer Association, in English) that leads this work, a non-profit, public interest, private social entity founded in 1953, which works to combat cancer. The AECC brings together patients, family members, volunteers, and professionals who work together to prevent, raise awareness, get alongside those affected by cancer and fund research projects to foster improved cancer diagnosis and treatment (AECC, 2022a).

This case study analyses different social marketing campaigns carried out by the AECC, engaged in combating cancer (SDG 3) and also reducing the inequalities that exist in access to the treatment of the disease (SDG 10).

## 2 Cancer Is Equal for Everyone, But Facing Cancer We Are Not All Equal

As pointed out by the AECC (2022b), access to health is determined by multiple factors: socio-economic status, level of education, place of residence and housing, work environment, social and family network, environmental factors, etc. While genetic factors are important, environmental factors influence the opportunities relating to health access for the public. It must be recognised that, of these factors, many are beyond people's control. Therefore, the circumstances in which people find themselves relating to health access cause multiple inequalities, both in early detection and treatment of the disease.

Inequality is largely determined by the following factors (AECC, 2022b): (1) Place of residence and geographic location of health services in different parts of the country; (2) Cultural factors (some ethnic groups or migrants have poor access to early detection and health care); (3) The economic status of the patient (the employment and social situation of the patient when they are diagnosed with the disease can generate risk both for them and their family—e.g., loss of employment or reduced working hours, resulting in a reduction in household income); (4) Costs associated with patient care and the necessary adaptations (they may include, for example, house modifications, care equipment, home care for the patient, etc.).

In this regard, it is estimated that cancer costs Spanish society around €19.3 billion for people diagnosed with cancer each year, of which 45% is borne by the household (AECC, 2020a). Furthermore, costs are not the same for men and women, with women facing 12% higher costs. This reality can be explained by the important and active role of women in the home, perhaps less socially visible, but highlighted when they have the disease. Also, 34% of women compared to 18% of men have to leave their homes for a period of time for treatment, which can incur an increase in costs for the patient or their household (AECC, 2018).

Given this starting point, in recent years the AECC has been developing a series of social marketing campaigns linked to SDGs (see Table 1). In this respect and related to the SDG 3, key marketing strategies aimed at education and prevention of certain types of cancer were developed: “This shit could save your life” (“Esta mierda te puede salvar la vida”, in Spanish), in 2015; “The other test” (“El otro test”, in Spanish), in 2022; “The last casting”, in 2018; “Call it cancer” (“Llámalo cancer”, in Spanish), in 2020. Also, campaigns aimed at reducing inequalities between individuals and relating to the SDG 10 were “Breasts out” (“Saca pecho”, in Spanish), in 2020 and 2021; and “Facing cancer we are not all equal” (“No todos somos iguales frente al cancer”), in 2022.

**Table 1** AECC campaigns and their connection with SDGs

Campaign name	SDG	Message	Communication channel
“This shit could save your life” (“Esta mierda te puede salvar la vida” in Spanish), in 2015. “The other test” (“El otro test”, in Spanish), in 2022.	SDG 3 Good health and well-being	Colon cancer can be prevented.	Various social networking sites. YouTube: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55oVNjHadiA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55oVNjHadiA</a> On the AECC website: <a href="https://www.contraelcancer.es/es">https://www.contraelcancer.es/es</a>
“The last casting”, in 2018	SDG 3 Good health and well-being	Help with stopping smoking, improving health and cost savings.	5 video episodes on social networking sites. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvJKR1h8EbQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvJKR1h8EbQ</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0PMLVApzlw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0PMLVApzlw</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHsncDv-NzY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHsncDv-NzY</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9cPoNtgwys">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9cPoNtgwys</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9dCNCInH14">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9dCNCInH14</a> Final video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdybT3Q7cL8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdybT3Q7cL8</a> Stopping smoking guide (pdf). Group therapy. Free online seminars (20/5/2020).
“Call it cancer” (“Llámalo cancer” in Spanish), in 2020.	SDG 3 Good health and well-being	Highlighting and normalising a social reality.	<a href="https://www.contraelcancer.es/es/llamalo-cancer">https://www.contraelcancer.es/es/llamalo-cancer</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IG3vyZ79kzM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IG3vyZ79kzM</a> Video sharing on government social networking sites and social profiles (Roadshow).
“Breasts out” (“Saca pecho” in Spanish), in 2020 and 2021.	SDG 10 Reduced inequalities	Reduce financial inequalities relating to the disease.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aybz6Drcadg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aybz6Drcadg</a> The hashtag #SacaPecho

(continued)

**Table 1** (continued)

Campaign name	SDG	Message	Communication channel
			on social media AECC Observatory Report shared on social networking sites and specialist press and news channels.
“Facing cancer we are not all equal” (“No todos somos iguales frente al cáncer”), in 2022.	SDG 10 Reduced inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Your postcode has more impact than your genetic code.</li> <li>– Inequalities exist because your credit card has more impact than your health card.</li> <li>– Cancer survival depends on research.</li> </ul>	YouTube videos: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3isnm4AHFxE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3isnm4AHFxE</a> Other social networks Seminars (see video)

Source: Compiled based on data from the AECC (2022b)

### 3 Campaigns Contributing to the SDG 3

Through a series of campaigns launched periodically, the AECC informs the Spanish public about the symptoms of cancer and how to reduce the risk of developing it through prevention. Some of the most recent campaigns are discussed below.<sup>1</sup>

#### 3.1 Colon and Rectum Cancer Can Be Prevented: “This Shit Could Save Your Life”

This campaign was launched in 2015 with the slogan “this shit could save your life”. This campaign had a double objective: (1) The first objective was to encourage preventative action in combating colon cancer by raising public awareness of screening programmes available in certain autonomous communities; (2) The second objective was to get health authorities to introduce screening programmes in those areas where they do not currently exist or to accelerate programmes in the implementation phase.

The target audience for the campaign was groups most at risk of colon cancer, namely men and women aged between 50 and 69.

The message trying to be conveyed was that if colon cancer is detected early it can be cured in 90% of cases. Individuals need to undergo a simple Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT), which can reduce mortality from this type of cancer by a third. In

<sup>1</sup>The information for the campaigns was taken from AECC publications, specialist journals, and a range of social networking site publications.



**Fig. 1** “This shit could save your life” (“Esta mierda te puede salvar la vida”, in Spanish) campaign. Source: AECC (2015)



addition, these screening programmes can diagnose and treat precursor lesions of cancer, which can help to reduce the incidence of the cancer.

The message was disseminated on a large scale via social networking sites and the AECC website. The AECC together with the agency Mi Querido Watson (MQW)<sup>2</sup> made a 2:18 minute video which was shared on the different social networking sites (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc.). The creative campaign drew attention for its humour and aroused the public’s curiosity. The WhatsApp poo emoji was used (see Fig. 1) as the main character delivering the campaign message.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of the results obtained, the campaign quickly went viral with over a million shares on different social networking sites during the year. As a result, it reached 51% of the population at risk, over double the target set by the association at the start of the campaign. The AECC also reports successfully exerting social

<sup>2</sup>MQW is a communications agency. To find out more about the agency, go to <https://miqueridowatson.com/>

<sup>3</sup>Domínguez (2020).



**Fig. 2** “The other test” (“El otro test”, in Spanish) campaign. Source: AECC (2022b)

pressure so that the colorectal screening programme will be made available in all autonomous communities.

In recognition of the efforts of the AECC, the campaign was awarded a gold EFI prize in the Social Awareness category in the Effectiveness Awards 2015, organised each year by the Spanish Advertisers Association (AECC, 2015).

Continuing its colon cancer prevention work, the AECC (2022b) has recently launched a new campaign entitled “*The other test*” (“*El otro test*”, in Spanish)—see Fig. 2. Against a backdrop in which the word “test” has become a feature of daily life due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Association reminds the public that there is another type of test, the FOBT, which reduces mortality rates by between 30% and 35% in the short term for those with the disease. The campaign has been widely shared on its website as well as on social networking sites.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.2 How to Prevent Lung Cancer: “The Last Casting”

“The last casting” campaign was launched by the AECC in 2018. The objective of this campaign was to change the public’s behaviour and stop people smoking. To that end, smokers were made aware of the reality of the effects of tobacco use, which, according to health information, is a preventable cause of death (WHO, 2022).

The message of the campaign was for all smokers to be aware of the risks associated with smoking and understand that lung cancer and death are not unrelated, which sadly is what some people think. To bring about a mindset change, the campaign uses different advertising techniques such as impact, surprise, and fear.

The campaign went live in May 2018. One of the communication media used were social networking sites. To raise awareness about the risks of smoking, the AECC together with the agency VCCP Spain<sup>5</sup> produced five videos broadcast via

<sup>4</sup>For more information and campaign details, visit the website: <https://www.contraelcancer.es/es/todo-sobre-cancer/tipos-cancer/cancer-colon/prevencion>

<sup>5</sup>VCCP Spain is a Spanish communications agency created in 2002 which operates worldwide.



**Fig. 3** Respirapp. Source: AECC (2018)

YouTube, ranging in length from 1:52 and 2:33 minutes. In addition, a final video was released on 31 May of the same year to coincide with World No Tobacco Day.

“The last casting” drew attention as an innovative campaign that broke with traditional norms to bring about a change in behaviour. The videos show a series of smokers, of all ages, who start out thinking that they are at a real casting to choose the main characters for an advertising campaign for a new brand of tobacco. At the casting they are given information and shown images about the risks of being exposed to tobacco use. During the casting, the real reason for the event is finally revealed: the individuals will feature on the warning images printed on the tobacco packets. Following the reaction of disbelief from the participants, seeing themselves identified with the risks, it was suggested to them that the only response to the casting was to stop smoking. As a result of the impact of the experience, all those who took part said that they were going to change their habits and stop smoking.

As the head of marketing at the AECC pointed out, “smokers do not identify themselves with the warnings on packets of tobacco, we needed an attention-grabbing idea to show them that these warnings *did* relate to real health risks. A very real and powerful insight with excellent execution” (ReasonWhy, 2018, p. 1).

In addition to the video and to help achieve the objectives of the campaign, a guide to stopping smoking was produced, group therapy sessions were held and there were free online seminars open to all.

In 2018, to accompany the campaign, the AECC created the Respirapp (see Fig. 3), which was made available to smokers and designed to help them quit. It was an online application whose special feature was a “panic button”, which helped to prevent a relapse. When someone pressed the button, the app immediately offered advice and the option of direct contact with the “Infocáncer” 24-hour service, offering help and support in moments of crisis. Furthermore, the AECC offers



**Fig. 4** “Call it cancer, the reality behind the word” (“Llámalo cáncer, la realidad detrás de la palabra”, in Spanish). Source: AECC (2020)

in-person quitting smoking programmes, which have seen thousands of people attend. The success rate of these programmes is around 62% (AECC, 2018). Up to 2021, the Respirapp app has helped 26,000 people quit smoking and has succeeded in creating 22 smoke-free spaces in different Spanish provinces (AECC, 2022b).

### 3.3 “Call It Cancer. The Reality Behind the Word”

In 2020, the AECC together with the agency Arena Media<sup>6</sup> launched the campaign “Call it cancer. The reality behind the word” (“Llámalo cáncer. La realidad detrás de la palabra”, in Spanish) (see Fig. 4). The objective of this campaign was to remove the social taboos that surround cancer and highlight and normalise the social reality we all live with. Furthermore, it aimed to raise the profile of cancer compared with other social causes.<sup>7</sup>

The message of the campaign was to show the different realities behind cancer in order to tackle the silence and fear that still exists when the word cancer is mentioned. In this respect, the initiative highlighted that talking about the emotional and social impact of cancer helps to reduce the negative effect it can have on many people, these include isolation, a rise in conflict in family and work environments, and the development of serious self-esteem issues. In the words of the AECC’s head of marketing, “behind the word cancer there is fear, pain, but also courage to be able to ask for help. Using the word cancer and shedding light on the different realities that are often ignored by society is for many, without doubt, a first step towards getting past the fear and feeling less alone” (Marketing Directo 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Arena Media is a communications agency operating in Spain with 20 years’ experience in the sector.

<sup>7</sup> Domínguez (2020a).

To deliver the message to the target audience, different steps were taken (Domínguez, 2020). Firstly, to give a voice to those living with cancer, over several months a roadshow was staged in different locations around Spain and the message was shared with patients, family members, doctors, researchers, and care staff, giving them the chance to share their story on camera, making them the protagonists. 21 one-minute videos were recorded. Later, on 4 February 2020, the occasion of World Cancer Day was chosen to launch the campaign on social networking sites. It was also shared on the website created specifically to promote the campaign.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, there was government support for promoting the campaign, the president and several ministers shared photos and messages on their social media profiles. At a press conference, the Minister of the Treasury and government spokesperson urged Spanish society to “overcome their fear of saying the word cancer, to reduce the stigma and pain” of those who have the disease.

Noteworthy results achieved by the campaign include (Domínguez, 2020a, p. 1):

- Conversations about cancer increased by 110% in the first month, compared with the same period in the previous year. An average audience of 26 million people was reached and there were 23 million views in the first two weeks of the campaign.
- A sentiment analysis found the rate of positive sentiment was 81% compared with the average rate of AECC campaigns being around 20%.
- The AECC capitalised 75.2% of cancer conversations.
- In the first two weeks of the campaign recall around the initiative increased by 12.3 points and notoriety by 5.3 points.

Recognition received by the campaign includes the awarding of the title “Best Preventative Medicine Outreach Campaign” at the sixth edition of the La Sexta “Constant and Vital Awards”, designed to recognise biomedical research and health prevention projects in 2020. In addition, “Call it cancer” (“Lámalo cáncer”, in Spanish) was judged to be the best branded content<sup>9</sup> project at the second edition of the Branded Content Marketing Association (BCMA).<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup>Visit the website: [www.llamalocancer.com](http://www.llamalocancer.com)

<sup>9</sup>Branded content is any output fully/partly funded or at least endorsed by the legal owner of the brand which promotes the owner’s brand values and makes audiences choose to engage with the brand based on a pull logic due to its entertainment information and/or education value (BCMA, 2022).

<sup>10</sup>The Branded Content Marketing Association (BCMA) is a non-profit association, established in 2003, open to the involvement of all types of organisations involved in the Branded Content value chain.

## 4 Campaigns Contributing to the SDG 10

The different socio-economic characteristics of individuals (differences in income or place of residence) lead to inequalities in access to health care. The AECC designs campaigns which have a particular emphasis on the needs of disadvantaged and marginalised populations. Through these campaigns the organisation contributes to the SDG 10: reduced inequalities. Some of the related AECC campaigns are discussed below.

### 4.1 “Breasts Out for Them”

One of the most emblematic campaigns recently undertaken by the association was “Breasts out for them” (“Saca Pecho por ellas”, in Spanish), from 2020. The objective of the campaign was to raise awareness, provide emotional support, and restore the social position of women with breast cancer. The campaign sought to encourage an equality movement and restore the social position of women with breast cancer, highlighting the reality for this group to encourage collective support, from society as a whole, for women facing a cancer diagnosis.<sup>11</sup>

The message of the campaign is that not all women face the disease under the equal conditions, given that many of them belong to vulnerable groups. For this reason, there was a need to create a social movement that recognises and supports vulnerable women to highlight their economic, social, and emotional needs. The campaign aimed to communicate to women with breast cancer that they are not alone as there are thousands of people standing with them (AECC, 2020b).

To highlight the inequalities faced by patients relating to their economic situation, the AECC, through the Observatory,<sup>12</sup> carried out a study in 2020 entitled: “Financial toxicity in breast cancer”. The study revealed that this disease can lead to a reduction in income for those affected and those who care for and support them. In real terms, 15% of women with breast cancer face extreme economic and occupational vulnerability (unemployment, a salary below the national minimum wage or self-employed). 34% of women with the disease have lost their job or have been obliged to stop working and 63% have seen their income reduced. The association has estimated that, on average, the economic impact on families for the duration of the disease is €42,000. This figure represents spending on medical costs (post-treatment rehabilitation), medication, modifications and equipment (to adapt the home to the changing needs of the patient), and care and support in the home. Furthermore, according to the AECC, 7 out of 10 women face breast cancer alone

---

<sup>11</sup> Domínguez (2020b).

<sup>12</sup> The AECC Observatory is a research tool designed to uncover the reality about cancer in Spain (Cancer Observatory, 2018). Their reports are available from: <https://observatorio.contraelcancer.es/>



**Fig. 5** “Breasts out for them” (“Saca pecho por ellas” in Spanish) campaign. Source: AECC (2020)

and with only their own resources, and 4% of patients lack support from family and friends (AECC, 2020c).

The campaign was shared on different channels, media, and communication formats, in particular, it was publicised through the press, specialist new channels, and social networking sites. As regards the aforementioned distribution channel, social networking sites, it was the first time that the AECC has launched a campaign with a feminist and equality focus, aimed at calling on society as a whole to support a particular group of women. One of the images from the campaign shows social support for all these women with a simple gesture: a photo showing a woman with her hand on her breast (see Fig. 5). The hashtag #sacapecho was also used to publicise the campaign. Short videos were also produced and shared on social networking sites, with images of women asking for support for women with cancer and a show of solidarity through the purchase of an item from the AECC shop.

In 2020, the AECC reached more than 23,000 women with breast cancer, of those 6000 were reached through their free social care services which included employment advice, financial help, legal advice, and the loan of orthotic or prosthetic equipment and over 10,000 used their mental health services (AECC, 2021).

The campaign continued to run in 2021, under the new slogan “Breasts out for the most vulnerable” (“Saca pecho por las más vulnerables”, in Spanish). It appeared on different media (videos, images, hashtags, etc.) and was shared on social networking sites with a particular emphasis on 19 October, World Breast Cancer Day.

In December 2021, the “Breasts out” (“Saca pecho”, in Spanish) campaign received a Constant and Vital award<sup>13</sup> for the Best Preventative Medicine Outreach Campaign (Atresmedia, 2021).

<sup>13</sup>The Constant and Vital award is a corporate responsibility initiative from the communications channel La Sexta undertaken jointly with Fundación AXA.

## 4.2 “Facing Cancer We Are Not All Equal”

The most recent campaign by the AECC, launched in February 2022, goes under the tagline “Facing cancer we are not all equal” (“No todos somos iguales frente al cáncer”, in Spanish). Its objective is to highlight the existing inequalities facing those dealing with the disease, arising from differences in their socio-economic levels, the geographical location of the patient, and the lack of research into certain types of cancer. The campaign seeks to bring about equality, that is to say, for all patients to have the same opportunities in prevention, living with the disease and accessing research results.

One of the messages of the campaign is “*Your postcode has more impact than your genetic code*” (“*El código postal afecta más que el código genético*”, in Spanish). The aim being to emphasise that a patient’s geographical location affects them in three key areas: (1) pollution levels where they live; (2) access to treatment, which varies according to the region; and (3) prevention and diagnosis programmes, which also vary according to the place of residence.

On this theme, the AECC revealed that in the findings of a recent study, in seven Spanish Autonomous Communities and cities, not all at-risk populations (age 50–69) had access to colorectal cancer screening programmes. Furthermore, 42% of Autonomous Communities do not protect their populations from tobacco smoke through the lack of regulations on smoke-free spaces and almost 43% of those under 12 are exposed to tobacco smoke in public spaces (AECC, 2022b).

Another of the messages of the campaign is that inequalities exist “*because your credit card has more impact than your health card*”. Economic status is also one of the factors affecting inequalities between individuals and, therefore, this creates differences in the way they deal with the disease. In Spain, despite the healthcare system covering the treatment costs for the disease, there are other related costs involved for patients and these create inequalities. For example, there are major differences in access to adequate nutrition; the fact that they may or may not be able to stop work during treatment, recovery, or to care for a family member; in the costs incurred to make necessary home improvements or other costs incurred during treatment, etc. Furthermore, some occupations carry higher risks of developing the disease, such as employment which involves repeated exposure to toxic gases or smoke.

According to reports by the AECC (2022b), 30,000 people diagnosed with cancer have vulnerable employment status. What is more, the cost of the disease for 41% of families exceeds €10,000. These economic inequalities differ depending on gender, with greater inequalities for women than for men. In fact, 25.7% of women have an income below the national minimum wage compared with 11.1% of men (INE, 2021c).

The third message of the campaign is that “*cancer survival depends on research*”. The association, through this campaign, implores the public to help fund research for those types of cancer which are less visible and receive less funding.



The AECC has a Scientific Foundation, drawing together the social demand for cancer research, financing public scientific research programmes through public tenders. The aim of these programmes is to make scientific advances to improve the future for those who are unwell and their families, forging closer links between the whole of society and the progress achieved.

A wide range of communication media were used to disseminate this campaign: a blog<sup>14</sup> was created, explanatory videos, press publications, radio content, social networking site content, etc.

---

## 5 Conclusions

There are several conclusions that can be drawn after considering the different social marketing campaigns by the AECC linked to the SDGs 3 and 10 over recent years.

The AECC campaigns analysed in this chapter pursued a double social cause and, at the same time, sought to achieve two Sustainable Development Goals: good health and well-being (SDG 3) and reduced inequalities (SDG 10).

With the objective of improving health, the AECC, in its different campaigns, had both an informative and preventative approach. One of the messages it conveyed in its campaigns was that early detection significantly increased the chances of a cure for the cancer, and therefore, it encouraged the population at risk to take action. The association also highlighted the need for certain behaviours to change in order to prevent the disease, such as the need for screening for early detection. Other campaigns sought to change people's harmful behaviour such as smoking and reduce their fears and concerns and even encourage the use of support tools, as in the case of the Respirapp.

In relation to the campaigns that tackled inequalities, it is clear that they sought to make the public aware of this social reality. The AECC also reflects on how socio-demographic factors (gender, age, place of residence, and social class), as well as environmental and behavioural factors are risk factors and generate inequalities, both as regards prevention and treatment of the disease.

Concerning the definition of the messages used in the campaigns, some were found to be high impact, original, and creative. This was the case with the preventative message relating to colon cancer "*This shit could save your life*" ("*Esta mierda te puede salvar la vida*", in Spanish), which used the WhatsApp poo emoji. In the stop smoking campaign "*The last casting*" the powerful impact and surprise on the participants is clear to see, and after taking part in the casting they decided to stop smoking.

The messages used a combination of emotional and rational style. Campaigns such as "*The last casting*" show how the feelings of the participants were brought to the surface. Nevertheless, in other campaigns such as "*Facing cancer we are not all equal*" ("*No todos somos iguales frente al cáncer*", in Spanish), the way the

---

<sup>14</sup><https://blog.contraelcancer.es/no-todos-somos-iguales-frente-al-cancer/>

message was delivered was very matter-of-fact, appealing to the reason and logic of the receiver.

In delivering its messages and trying to change people's behaviour, the AECC uses a range of communication strategies, with a particular emphasis on information and communication technologies. Indeed, the internet was one of the channels most used to promote its campaigns, with the creation of websites in some cases ("*Call it cancer*"—"Llámalo cáncer", in Spanish), blogs ("*Facing cancer we are not all equal*"—"No todos somos iguales frente al cáncer", in Spanish), and an app ("Respirapp"). All the campaigns also used different social networking sites (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.). The use of these technologies has provided easier access to the target audience.

All the campaigns with a health focus have delivered good results, in the opinion of the association. Indeed, the importance of colon cancer screening was communicated with 51% of the at-risk population and the Respirapp app has helped 26,000 people stop smoking. In addition, the campaign "*Call it cancer*" ("*Llámalo cáncer*", in Spanish) managed to capture the attention of the public, achieving an average audience of 26 million people in Spain.

As regards the campaigns that reflected on inequalities, the public were given the facts and all of society was encouraged to act to reduce the inequalities faced by a large proportion of those affected. This is going to be the AECC's main battleground in the coming years, as stated in their strategic plan 2021–2024. The slogan of the document is "*Cancer is equal for everyone, but facing cancer we are not all equal*" ("*El cáncer es igual para todos, pero no todos somos iguales frente al cáncer*", in Spanish). Also, the president of the association points out that "our key objective for the next four years is to work towards guaranteeing equal opportunities for everyone to combat cancer, focusing our activities on helping everyone to have access to the resources they need in combating the disease, and looking to increase the impact of what we do by reaching more people, in particular those, who for whatever reason, find themselves in highly vulnerable situations" (AECC, 2022c, p. 1).

---

## 6 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Can you find a list of social marketing campaigns, released in your country, that contribute to the SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and the SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)? How did you react to the campaigns? Have they had an impact on your life, or not? Have they produced any change in your behaviour?

**Question 2**—Can you choose a specific theme from question 1 and then design a social marketing campaign for it?

**Question 3**—The common thread of all the campaigns produced by the AECC is the use of social networking sites for their distribution. Watch one of the videos (see instructions in Table 1) and identify the most relevant characteristic of these communication campaigns, and also the benefits for Non-profit Organisations (NPOs).

**Acknowledgements** The authors acknowledge the financial support provided by Junta de Extremadura and FEDER under the grant GR21078.

## Teaching Notes

### Synopsis

The Spanish Cancer Association (Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer—AECC, in Spanish) runs different campaigns aimed at sharing information and cancer prevention and encourages behaviour change among the general public that may result in cancer prevention. Through its campaigns, it also raises public awareness of economic, social, and gender-based inequalities that exist for cancer patients dealing with cancer. The main objective of this case study is to analyse the key social marketing campaigns launched in recent years, by the AECC, that contribute to the third and tenth Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 and 10.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case has been developed for use in the framework of social marketing courses. The potential audience for this chapter is twofold:

- Undergraduate students pursuing degrees in Business Administration or Marketing.
- Graduate students pursuing MBA and masters in Marketing or Executive Programs and Seminars (about social marketing).

### Learning

The overall objective of this section is to learn about and analyse some of the main social marketing campaigns developed in recent years by the Spanish Cancer Association (Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer—AECC) linked to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In particular, the following specific objectives were sought:

1. Analyse and reflect on a number of recent social marketing campaigns produced by the AECC aimed at improving health and reducing inequalities.
2. Reflect on the influence of the environment on health.
3. Study the messages conveyed in each campaign.
4. Establish which type of communication media was used to get the messages across.
5. Understand what the target audience was for each campaign.
6. Assess the impact of the campaigns and the results achieved.
7. Understand what the target audience was for each campaign.
8. Assess the impact of the campaigns and the results achieved.

## Time Frame for Class Discussion

This case can be taught in one session of 60–100 minutes, depending on the number of students participating in the discussion activities, as well as the previous work that students have done before class.

## Suggested Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Can you find a list of social marketing campaigns, released in your country, that contribute to the SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and the SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)? How did you react to the campaigns? Have they had an impact on your life, or not? Have they produced any change in your behaviour?

**Question 2**—Can you choose a specific theme from question 1 and then design a social marketing campaign for it?

**Question 3**—The common thread of all the campaigns produced by the AECC is the use of social networking sites for their distribution. Watch one of the videos (see instructions in Table 1) and identify the most relevant characteristic of these communication campaigns, and also the benefits for Non-profit Organisations (NPOs).

## Analysis

*Answer to Question 1—Can you find a list of social marketing campaigns, released in your country, that contribute to the SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and the SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)? How did you react to the campaigns? Have they had an impact on your life, or not? Have they produced any change in your behaviour?*

If this activity is carried out in the classroom, the number of students should be divided into groups of 4.

The questions are open responses, and each student will answer based on their experiences and perceptions.

Two types of reactions are envisaged. On the one hand, there may be a positive reaction to the campaign. If so, the student should be encouraged to indicate if the campaign generated a change in their thinking or beliefs, if it produced a change in attitude towards the product, if they have changed their behaviour, if it provided them with the information needed to make the change, if it inspired them to take action, etc.

On the other hand, if the student did not react at all or if the impact was negative, in this instance, they will be asked to explain the reasons or causes of this neutrality or negative effect of the campaign. You may try to find out if the motive is based on the lack of confidence or credibility of the organisation that launched the campaign, a fear of the topic being dealt with, a lack of information about the issue, which may generate mistrust, a lack of motivation or connection with the campaign theme, incorrect dissemination of the campaign, ingrained habits and resistance to change, peer pressure, not knowing how to get involved and take action, etc.

***Answer to Question 2—Can you choose a specific theme from question 1 and then design a social marketing campaign for it?***

This is a classroom-based activity. Each member of the group, established in Question 1, will be responsible for part of the social marketing strategy. When the individual task has been completed, the groups will share ideas and create a presentation. All the working groups will present the campaign to the rest of the students.

Tell the students that the campaign should contain at least the following elements:

- The social product chosen: good health and well-being/reduced inequalities. Indicate if the campaign will include a physical product.
- Campaign objective in relation to the social product: changing an idea, a belief, a habit, a myth, an attitude, an action, a behaviour, a conduct, values, a social practice, providing information on how to change, etc.
- The target audience the campaign is aimed at. Possible segmentation. Target community of the campaign. Motive for the choice of audience.
- Organisation responsible, campaign organiser.
- Message to be conveyed.
- Communication of the message: types of media to be used.
- Timings of the activities: time scheduling.
- Anticipated results.

***Answer to Question 3—The common thread of all the campaigns produced by the AECC is the use of social networking sites for their distribution. Watch one of the videos (see instructions in Table 1) and identify the most relevant characteristic of these communication campaigns, and also the benefits for Non-profit Organisations (NPOs).***

What the videos have in common is that they all champion a social cause; in other words, they all aim to bring about social transformation. On the one hand, they seek to improve the health of citizens, and on the other, they challenge the social inequalities of those who are facing cancer.

Most of the videos contain testimonies from real people. These include those who have cancer or have family members with cancer, those who are dependent on a harmful substance such as tobacco, opinions from experts, etc. Testimonies have a greater impact than using actors.

The themes are interesting to the target audience and depict real and current problems, such as those that the public face on a daily basis. Everyone has a family member or knows someone who has or has had cancer.

One of the common characteristics of all the videos is their short duration, the maximum length is around three minutes. The public demands short videos which deliver information quickly.

The language used is clear, direct and, on some occasions, causes surprise and impact (see “the last casting” video).

Each video is aimed at a specific and selective target audience: women over 50 (breast cancer), smokers (lung cancer), those over 50 (colon cancer), etc.

Most of the videos ask the public to support and get behind a cause and take some immediate action: undergo a mammogram, have a colon cancer test, stop smoking, get help with stopping smoking using the Respirapp application, etc.

Furthermore, all the communication campaigns use hashtags to promote their message via social networking sites, enabling content categorisation, making finding information easier and providing information about the impact of the content available on the different platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.).

The benefits of using social networking sites are extensive, they include:

- Delivering fast access to a large slice of the population, through the use of a broad range of social networking sites (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc.) ensures that the different target audiences can be reached.
- The use of social networking sites allows the message to be transmitted quickly and facilitates the sharing and dissemination of information to target audiences.
- It is an economical and low-cost media. This is an important fact, bearing in mind that the organisation is non-profit.
- They constitute more participatory, direct, and transparent communication. It is possible to converse and garner opinions, generate debate, provide answers to questions and doubts the public may have, and it is also an easy way to contact people.

---

## References

- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2015). *Contigo en cada etapa de la vida*. Annual report 2015.
- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2018). *El impacto económico del cáncer en las familias en España*. AECC Cancer Observatory. Retrieved from <https://observatorio.contraelcancer.es/informes> (Accessed on March 15, 2022).
- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2020a). *El impacto económico y social del cáncer en España*. A study by Oliver Wyman for the AECC.
- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2020b). *La AECC anima a la sociedad a “sacar pecho” contra el cáncer de mama*. Press release 8 November 2020.
- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2020c). *Toxicidad financiera en el cáncer de mama, octubre 2020*. AECC cancer observatory. Retrieved from <https://observatorio.contraelcancer.es/informes> (Accessed on March 8, 2022).
- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2021). *Contra la vulnerabilidad que genera el cáncer de mama*. *Blog de la AECC*. Retrieved from <https://blog.contraelcancer.es/contra-la-vulnerabilidad-que-genera-el-cancer-de-mama> (Accessed on April 15, 2022).
- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2022a). *Quiénes somos*. Retrieved from <https://www.contraelcancer.es/es/sobre-nosotros> (Accessed on February 1, 2022).
- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2022b). *Impacto del cáncer en España. Una aproximación a la inequidad y los determinantes sociales*. Retrieved from <https://observatorio.contraelcancer.es/informes> (Accessed on February 7, 2022).
- AECC—Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer. (2022c). *Plan estratégico de la AECC 2021–2024*. Retrieved from <https://www.contraelcancer.es/es/sobre-nosotros/plan-estrategico-2021-2024>. (Accessed on May 19, 2022).
- AECC—Spanish Cancer Association. (2018). *Con motivo del Día Mundial Sin Tabaco*. Madrid. Press release.

- Atresmedia. (2021). 'Saca pecho', de la Asociación Española Contra el Cáncer, Premio Constantes y Vitales a la mejor campaña de divulgación en prevención médica. Retrieved from <https://www.lasexta.com/constantes-vitales/premios/2021/saca-pecho> (Accessed on April 6, 2022).
- Branded Content Marketing Association (BCMA). (2022). *What is Branded Content?* Retrieved from <https://bcma.es/que-es-branded-content/> (Accessed on May 18, 2022).
- Cancer Observatory. (2018). *El impacto económico del cáncer en las familias en España*. AECC. Retrieved from <https://observatorio.contraelcancer.es/informes> (Accessed on March 5, 2022).
- Domínguez Vega, Y. (2020a). Llámalo Cáncer. La realidad detrás de la palabra. *Ipmark: Información de publicidad y marketing*, No. 876, 51.
- Domínguez Vega, Y. (2020b). Más allá de la ola rosa. *Reasonwhy.es*, 1–3.
- INE—Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2021a). *Encuesta Europea de Salud en España (ESEE) 2020*. Press release. April 26, 2021.
- INE—Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2021b). *Defunciones según la Causa de Muerte Año 2020*. Press release. November 10, 2021.
- INE—Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2021c). *Encuesta de estructura salarial*.
- Janita-Muñoz, M. S., & Palacios-González, M. M. (2021). All united against breast cancer: The solidarity beauty of Estée Lauder. In Galan-Ladero et al. (Eds.), *Cause-related marketing*. Springer Nature Switzerland AG. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-65455-9\\_21](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-65455-9_21)
- Marketing Directo. (2020, 6 February). "Llámalo cáncer", la Guevara campaña de la AECC que Busch normalizer la enfeebled. Retrieved from <https://www.marketingdirecto.com/marketing-general/publicidad/llamalo-cancer-la-nueva-campana-de-la-aecc-que-busca-normalizar-la-enfermedad> (Accessed on April 18, 2022).
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2021). *Health at a Glance 2021: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/ae3016b9-en>. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/health/health-at-a-glance/> (Accessed on May 17, 2022).
- ReasonWhy. (2018). *El casting que nadie quiere ganar*. May, 31. Retrieved from <https://www.reasonwhy.es/actualidad/campanas/campana-antitabaco-last-casting-vccp-2018-05-31> (Accessed on March 10, 2022).
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2022). *Cancer, fact-sheet, detail, 2021*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/es/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cancer> (Accessed on February 15, 2022).



# The Central Lechera Asturiana Women's Race: A Case of Social Marketing Oriented to the Practice of a Healthy Lifestyle for Women and Girls

Nuria García-Rodríguez, Noelia Salido-Andrés,  
and Silvia Cachero-Martínez

## Learning Objectives

1. To understand the role of intra- and inter-sectoral partnerships and collaborations in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. To reflect the importance of social marketing as an instrument for generating value and contributing to the SDGs, specifically SDGs 3, 5, and 10.
3. To identify the different objectives or social causes of the social marketing campaign analyzed, as well as the different targets or beneficiary audiences to which they are oriented.
4. To examine the application of different communication mix tools to reach the different audiences of the campaign.
5. To analyze the impact and results of the campaign at different levels: micro, meso, and macro.

---

N. García-Rodríguez (✉) · S. Cachero-Martínez  
University of Oviedo, Oviedo, Spain  
e-mail: [nuriagr@uniovi.es](mailto:nuriagr@uniovi.es); [cacherosilvia@uniovi.es](mailto:cacherosilvia@uniovi.es)

N. Salido-Andrés  
University of A Coruña, A Coruña, Spain  
e-mail: [noelia.sandres@udc.es](mailto:noelia.sandres@udc.es)



## 1 Introduction

The wellbeing of the female population, understood in a broad sense, has been gaining prominence in the design of public policies and the initiatives of companies, civil society organizations, agencies, and institutions in the last decade.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the reduction of inequalities—starting with the multiple inequalities that underlie gender inequality—plays a leading role in many of the recommendations promulgated by the United Nations (UN) with the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter SDGs) (UN, 2022), with SDGs 3, 5, and 10 explicitly addressing this issue.

In response to these recommendations, different actors (e.g., companies, non-profit organizations, public agencies, and academic or cultural institutions, among others) use social marketing programs as part of their sustainability plans to promote desirable ideas and habits among women and girls that, by improving their wellbeing, will also benefit the rest of society (Kotler & Lee, 2008). When these actors join forces, partnerships emerge that channel the different actions and initiatives and generate value through the exchange of resources, knowledge, and capabilities, jointly contributing to sustainable development in the terms set out in SDG 17 (UN, 2019).<sup>2</sup>

In this context, the role of Corporación Alimentaria Peñasanta, S.A. (hereinafter CAPSA FOOD) stands out, particularly in relation to its commitment to social sustainability, where it develops actions aimed at increasing the welfare of women through its Central Lechera Asturiana brand.

Central Lechera Asturiana<sup>3</sup> (CLAS) is a [Spanish agricultural processing company \(SAT\)](#)<sup>4</sup> which owns a majority stake in CAPSA FOOD, a [dairy products](#) manufacturer. CAPSA FOOD is the leader in the domestic liquid milk, cream, and butter market, second only to the private label brands. The history of this entity dates back to 1967, with the creation of the trade union group Central Lechera Asturiana G.S.C., but it was not until 1997 that the current corporation was established with its headquarters in Granda (Siero, Asturias, Spain). CAPSA FOOD was born from the confluence of three companies that were leading in their respective markets and complementary to each other: Central Lechera Asturiana (national brand leader in

---

<sup>1</sup>The World Bank (2021), UNICEF (2021), European Commission (2020), Women's Forum (2020).

<sup>2</sup>These partnerships can take different forms and names (e.g., sector collaborations, *cross-sector* collaborations or *cross-sector partnerships*, multi-stakeholder initiatives, strategic alliances, or simply *partnerships*) depending on the degree of management and interaction that characterizes the partnership between the parties (Austin, 2000).

<sup>3</sup><https://www.centrallecheraasturiana.es/>

<sup>4</sup>The SATs are civil societies with a socioeconomic purpose related to the production, transformation, and commercialization of agricultural, livestock, or forestry products, improvements in the rural environment, and agricultural promotion and development, as well as the provision of common services related to these areas (MAPA, 2022).

the sector), ATO (sales leader in Catalonia), and LARSA (sales leader in Galicia). Since then, it has continued to grow with the entry in 1998 of new shareholders, among them the leading savings banks in Asturias, and the incorporation of new business units, such as [Food Service](#), focused on the hotel and catering sector.

CAPSA FOOD's cooperative business model is based on the Integral Sustainability Plan,<sup>5</sup> which covers the entire value chain, from the origin (livestock farms) to the final consumer (waste and packaging management), ensuring economic growth, environmental care, and the welfare of all communities on which its activity impacts. As a result of this commitment to sustainability, CAPSA FOOD has several certifications such as the SGS Leche Pastoreo, which endorses the sustainable processes of obtaining raw material, and the B Corp certification,<sup>6</sup> becoming in 2020 the first Spanish dairy company to obtain it.

Within its Integral Sustainability Plan, and in relation to the social commitment to health and nutrition (*commitment to health through nutrition and healthy lifestyles*), CAPSA supports the fight against breast cancer and the promotion of sports among women and girls, acting as the main sponsor of the female sports event that has the highest participation in Europe and is the subject of this case study: *the Central Lechera Asturiana Women's Race*.

---

## 2 Case Development<sup>7</sup>

### 2.1 Origin of the Women's Race

The Women's Race<sup>8</sup> had its first edition in Madrid in 2004, with the aim of promoting the participation—not competition—of women in sports. The origin of this event is the result of the confluence of several circumstances:

- (i) the publisher's need to increase the residual percentage of female readers who had been buying *SportLife* magazine up to that time (4%);
- (ii) the identification of a window of opportunity in the national market, since *amateur* sporting events specifically aimed at women in Spain were practically non-existent; and,

---

<sup>5</sup><https://capsafood.com/sostenibilidad-integral/>

<sup>6</sup>*B Corp companies are oriented* towards the creation of social, environmental, and economic value for all their stakeholders: <https://www.bcorpSpain.es/>

<sup>7</sup>For the preparation of this case, interviews were held with staff from the Sports department of Motorpress Ibérica (<https://www.motorpress-iberica.es/>), the publisher of *SportLife*, sports magazine organizing the race since its first edition. In addition to the review and analysis of available online resources related to the event, such as websites and press releases in digital media and social networks, we have also consulted corporate documentation such as dossiers, presentations, and publications that have been provided by the organization itself.

<sup>8</sup><https://www.carreradelamujer.com/>

- (iii) the initiative and individual determination of one of its main promoters (Yolanda Vázquez Mazariegos)<sup>9</sup> who, aware of the existence of popular races for women in the USA, decided to adopt the concept of these events and adapt it, giving it a charitable (support in the fight against breast cancer) and recreational purpose. The race would therefore have not a competitive purpose but rather a participatory one and would be family-oriented and open to women of all ages, including older women who were used to walking a little every day. At the same time, this increase in women's sports practice would increase the percentage of women readers of sports magazines and, consequently, their sales.

Thus, the first edition of the race is promoted with a clear objective: to *promote healthy lifestyle habits through the inclusion of women in the regular practice of sport*, a goal in line with the recommendations that eleven years later would be gathered in the aforementioned Agenda 2030 and the 17 SDGs, more specifically, SDG 3.

In order to encourage the participation of women and girls in this first edition, numerous prizes were established and an official distance (5 km) and a maximum time to complete it (2 hours) were chosen, so that it would be feasible regardless of the age or physical condition of each participant. The event was a success, far surpassing the initial objective (1000 registrations), with 5000 participants finally taking part in this first edition.

---

### 3 From Race to Circuit, Thanks to Central Lechera Asturiana

The success of the first edition motivated the organizers to continue with a second edition (2005), which, on this occasion, was held in five Spanish cities: Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Zaragoza, and Seville, creating the first Women's Race Circuit. This expansion of the race was possible, thanks to partnerships with companies such as Central Lechera Asturiana.<sup>10</sup> The then Marketing Director of the company, José Armando Tellado (current CEO of CAPSA), who was passionate about sport, supported the initiative from the beginning, so the former CLAS was already incorporated as the "main sponsor" in this second edition. As a result of this collaborative relationship, the Women's Race is now called the *Central Lechera*

---

<sup>9</sup>With a PhD in Cancer Biological Sciences, Yolanda Vázquez Mazariegos began her professional career as a researcher of this disease until, attracted by the sports field in which she participated as a popular athlete, she changed direction and joined different sports magazines such as *SportLife*—the best-selling sports magazine in Spain and the national franchise of the American *Runner's World*—as an editor.

<sup>10</sup>Within sports *sponsorship*, Central Lechera Asturiana has also collaborated as a sponsor of the Women's Soccer League and the Spanish Basketball Federation in recent years.

*Asturiana Women's Race*, thus adding a nominative sponsorship to the economic sponsorship.<sup>11</sup>

In 2006 and 2007, the circuit was extended to eight cities with the incorporation of Gijón, Vitoria, and Málaga and became the largest women's sporting event in Europe, with all the benefits of sponsorship that this entails for the brand. Central Lechera Asturiana saw in the event a very effective formula to reach women of all ages (as current and future buyers and consumers of its product range) and to reinforce its brand image through attributes linked to health, healthy living, teamwork, sportsmanship, and commitment to the welfare of society as a whole, extending to its own brand the values of the race itself, which according to the corporate documentation consulted are:

- the encouragement of physical activity and healthy habits among women of all ages, from 12 year olds to senior citizens participating in the races;
- the promotion of a healthy lifestyle through content, workshops, fairs, festivals and talks, in addition to the races;
- the fostering of a community of women united by breast cancer research, patient support, and the fight against gender violence and against any other form of violence against women (namely, the *marea rosa*<sup>12</sup>); and,
- the driving of real equality through projects supporting women with disabilities and women at risk of exclusion, both in Spain and abroad.

As the event evolves and its scope and impact increase, other collaborators are incorporated into the initiative in a hierarchical manner. At the second level (after the Main Sponsor), there is the “Gold Sponsor,” with up to three sponsors (currently Oysho and Santander); at the third level, the “Official Sponsor,” with up to ten sponsors (Marlene, Solán de Cabras, TotalEnergies, Michelin, Zurich, and Seat M6); and finally, a fourth level, “Official Collaborator,” where there is no limit on the number of collaborations (Cosmo, Nestle Fitness, Ballet Fit, ESP, Oxígeno Sport, Zumba, Daiichi Sankyo, AstraZeneca, and Renfe). At all levels, exclusivity in the collaborator's sector is guaranteed, thus avoiding the incorporation of companies with which it could compete directly.

### **3.1 The Women's Race Circuit and Its Solidarity Dimension (SDGs 3, 5, and 10)**

The entry of sponsors and collaborators supposed also the starting shot of the solidarity dimension, since the event did not initially pursue this purpose. Below (Table 1) is the list of partnerships with third-sector entities through which a

---

<sup>11</sup>*Nominative* sponsorship exists when the name of a sponsoring brand becomes part of the sponsored brand of the event or infrastructure (e.g., a soccer stadium).

<sup>12</sup>“The Pink Tide,” in English.

**Table 1** Constellation of inter-sectoral collaborations with third-sector entities

Entities/Projects	Target	Beneficiaries	Modality	SDG
National				
Spanish Association Against Cancer—AECC	Research and support for the fight against cancer	Patients and families/Women and girls/Society	Monetary donation	3
Wanawake Women's Association	Fight against female genital mutilation	Women and girls in developing countries	Monetary donation	3, 5, 10
Clara Campoamor Association	Fight against gender violence	Women/Society	Monetary donation	3, 5, 10
Spanish Breast Cancer Research Group Foundation—GEICAM	Breast cancer research	Patients and families/Women and girls/Society	Monetary donation	3
Puïseras Rosas Association	Provision of wigs to oncology patients without resources	Patients and families/Women and girls/Society	Donation in kind (hair) Monetary donation	3, 10
Wanawake Women's Association + other NPOs <i>#MasQueUnaMuñeca</i>	Promoting social and labor inclusion of trafficking for exploitation and gender violence survivors	Women and girls/Society	Dolls sale made by beneficiaries in sewing workshops	3, 5, 10
Local				
Association of Women with Disabilities—Xarxa (Valencia)	Full normalization of lives of women with disabilities and real gender equality	Women/Society	Monetary donation	3, 5, 10
Association of Women with Disabilities of Galicia—ACADAR (Santiago de Compostela)	Empowerment and personal autonomy of women with disabilities	Women/Society	Monetary donation	3, 10
Ca l'Aurèlia Women's Association (Barcelona)	Fight against gender-based violence and inequalities	Women/Society	Monetary donation	3, 5, 10
Association of Women with Breast and/or Gynecological Cancer of Alava—ASAMMA (Vitoria)	Support and accompaniment for breast and gynecological cancer patients	Patients and families/Women and girls/Society	Monetary donation	3

(continued)

**Table 1** (continued)

Entities/Projects	Target	Beneficiaries	Modality	SDG
Aragonese Women's Association of Genital and Breast Cancer—AMAC-GEMA (Zaragoza)	Attention, support, and guidance for women affected by genital and breast cancer and their families	Patients and families/Women and girls/Society	Monetary donation	3
Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid—CEAR (Valencia) " <i>Dance as a refuse</i> "	Promotion of dance as an experiential approach with playful and artistic proposals	Migrant, refugee, and displaced vulnerable women	Monetary donation	3, 5, 10
Bey ProAction Association (Madrid) <i>#retogema</i>	Development of R&D and inclusive activities for vulnerable groups	People with reduced mobility	Monetary donation	3, 10
El Pájaro Azul Foundation (Gijón)	Fighting social inequality in sub-Saharan African countries	Children/People with mental illness/Women	Monetary donation	10
International				
Z Zurich Foundation	Funding for solidarity projects led by local entities	Women and girls/Vulnerable groups	Monetary donation	3, 5, 10

Source: Own elaboration

multitude of causes have been supported with women and girls as their main beneficiaries since 2004 and until 2022.

The annual donation to the Spanish Association against Cancer (AECC) together with the pink color of the T-shirts motivates the linking of the Women's Race with breast cancer, with the event being nicknamed "*la Marea Rosa*" (i.e., "*the Pink Tide*" in English) by the press. However, this has not always been the case. When Central Lechera Asturiana became the main sponsor, its corporate color, blue, was used. Shortly afterwards, it launched the "*Naturlínea*" range, changing the color of the T-shirts to orange for a few years and then returning to the initial color. In one of the races held in Barcelona, participants who reached the finish line wore a pink scarf and an aerial photo was taken of them forming a big pink ribbon. As time went by, the participants began to demand that the color of the official T-shirt be changed to pink, initially meeting with resistance from Central Lechera Asturiana. However, when the pink color was tried in one edition, it was such a success that the company has maintained this decision until today. Similarly, other sponsors assume and accept an occasional change in their corporate color during the event as part of their participation. The *pink T-shirt* has become an emblem, achieving what no other popular race in the world has achieved: that all participants wear it on the day of the race (Fig. 1) and even collect them edition after edition (Fig. 2).



**Fig. 1** Start of the race (Madrid, 2022) Source: Women's Race (2022)

### 3.2 Women's Race Circuit and Its Multi-Activity Dimension

Over the course of the various editions, the Central Lechera Asturiana Women's Race has become a highly complex sporting event due to the plethora of activities, initiatives, and resources that take place pre-, during, and post-event.

Pre-race initiatives and resources:

- Runners' Fair: Forty-eight hours before the start of the race in each city, the Runners' Fair takes place, where registered participants can meet, visit the stands of sponsors<sup>13</sup> and collaborators, and actively participate in group training sessions, sports activities such as yoga, fitness, or self-defense, and even attend concerts by bands (e.g., Duncan Dhu, La Union, etc.) or soloists (e.g., Pablo Alborán, Rozalén, etc.).
- Runner's Bag: Participants receive their Runner's Bag at home, which includes the 016 bib number, the pink T-shirt, and gifts from the sponsors and collaborators of the circuit (mostly product samples, discount vouchers, and corporate *merchandising* items).
- Women's Race App: All participants can download the event's app for free where, in addition to information on trainings for the race, they can view videos

<sup>13</sup>For example, in 2022 CAPSA is participating with a bowling game that includes as a prize the delivery of products or discounts for the purchase of items of its brands at the fair itself.



**Fig. 2** Pink T-shirt 2022 edition. Source: Sportlife (2022)

on physical activity, running, and nutrition, as well as a tab where sponsors can launch their promotions and contests proposals.

Race initiatives and resources:

- Physical races: for a limited number of participants.
- Virtual races through the app.
- Sponsor and partner activities (contests, sweepstakes, videos, promotions, etc.).
- Aerobics and fitness festivals at the end of the races in each city.

Post-race initiatives and resources:

- Informing participants of their race classifications and downloading of diplomas.
- Video of the physical event.
- Presentation of the Women's Race Medals.

The organizers of the Women's Race aim to listen and respond to the opinions and suggestions provided by the participants. After each race, a survey is distributed to the runners asking them to rate (from 0 to 10) different aspects such as the delivery of bibs, the closet service, and the organization at the starting point, among others. In response to their requests, in the 2022 edition, more animation and entertainment



zones have been added along the route and there is a new prize category that includes great-grandmothers. Participants are also polled about solidarity causes in the surveys, so that participants indicate which causes they would like to see incorporated or modified, for example, and as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the figure of the refugee is more present in 2022 than in previous editions. These are anonymous surveys and, although they are not incentivized, they achieve an average of around 2000 responses, which provides sufficient sample size to detect possible errors or areas for improvement. For example, photos of the participants were traditionally taken upon arrival at the finish line, but this was not done in the first race of 2022 in Valencia. Through these surveys, complaints were collected in this regard, so in the next race of the circuit held in Madrid, the publication of galleries with images of the runners has been resumed.

Finally, the restrictions derived from the COVID-19 pandemic substantially affected the celebration of these events, starting with the Women's Race itself, which, due to the ban on mass events, had to be held virtually. Participants were able to register through the website or the specific application created for the event and to run the race on their own wearing the usual pink Oysho T-shirt with the number 016 for the fight against gender violence, which was sent to their homes. With a strong social and inclusive character, and maintaining the spirit of solidarity of the previous editions in person, the race continued with its goal of raising awareness among women about the importance of their incorporation in the practice of sports for their health and wellbeing, as well as about fighting against gender violence and other inequalities they face. In the 2022 edition, and despite the fact that the population is no longer affected by COVID-19 restrictions on movement, the virtual race is maintained to give women and girls who cannot participate in person the opportunity to join in through two modalities: one free, for which it is only necessary to download the application and then obtain the corresponding diploma, and a second that includes the option of buying the pink T-shirt.

### **3.3 Women's Race Circuit and Its Communication Strategy**

As part of raising awareness of health, sports, and female empowerment among women and girls, communication actions are carried out throughout the year through own and external channels in traditional and digital media (Fig. 3).

Most of these actions stem from the promotion of the race event itself, both beforehand (preparation exercises, useful information on the race operation, dates and places for registration) and afterward (e.g., with the publication of photographs and videos of the participants' arrival at the finish line), but also aimed at providing information on health and wellness (e.g., tips and recipes for healthy nutrition or information on free sports activities available to potential race participants). Table 2 shows a breakdown of the media and communication tools that are planned each year with a view to influencing changes in habits among the female population.



**Fig. 3** Front and back cover of the race’s magazine (Valencia, 2022). Source: Women’s Race (2022)

### 3.4 The Women’s Race Circuit: Impact and Results

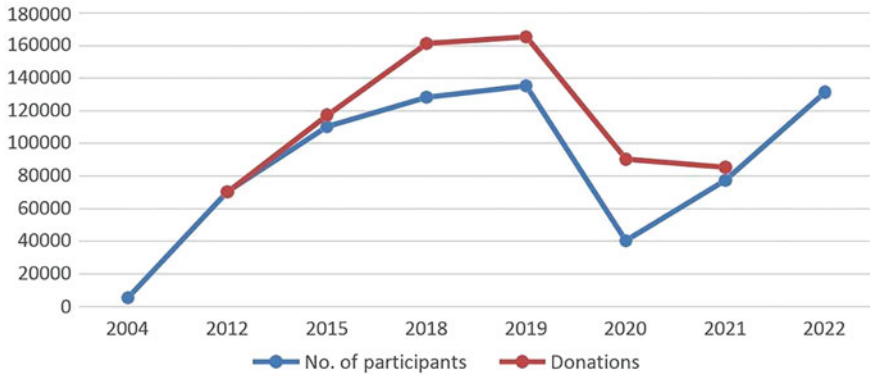
The main objective of the race at its inception—the promotion of sports habits in women—has been more than fulfilled over the 18 years that this sporting event has been held. In Spain, the percentage of women participating in popular races in general has risen from 7 to 30%, with many girls taking up running to participate in one of the well-known Central Lechera Asturiana Women’s Races. Since 2004, when the first edition started, more than 1,200,000 women have taken part in *la Marea Rosa* in a total of 129 races held up to May 2022.

The number of registrations (and, therefore, donations) has been increasing year on year. As can be seen in Fig. 4, the pandemic drastically reduced the number of registrations in 2020, the year in which the race was held only in the virtual modality, although it is true that it was also a great success in terms of participation and donations under the circumstances. In 2021, the figures began to pick up again, albeit diminished by the reduced participation quotas in the eight cities that hosted the circuit, which did not prevent some of the races from exhausting the maximum number of bibs available in just 48 hours. However, the 2021 edition was

**Table 2** Media and tools of the communication strategy (2022)

Media/Tools	Description
Television/spots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 85 spots (20") on Telecinco, Cuatro, Divinity, Energy, BeMad, FDF TV channels (Mediaset)</li> <li>• 60 spots prior to each race, 720 spots between the eight cities (Cosmo TV)</li> <li>• AVE trains closed-circuit television</li> </ul>
Television/audiovisual reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report after each race (10') in each of the eight cities (Teledeporte)</li> <li>• National, regional, and local television channels</li> </ul>
Radio/advertising spots	Cadena Dial; Cadena SER
Print and digital media (newspapers)/advertorials and press releases	Official newspaper of the race in each host city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ara</i> (Barcelona)</li> <li>• <i>Diario AS</i> (Madrid)</li> <li>• <i>El Comercio</i> (Gijón)</li> <li>• <i>El Cotreo Vasco</i> (Vitoria)</li> <li>• <i>La Voz de Galicia</i> (A Coruna)</li> </ul>
Digital press (in-house magazine)/reports, advertisements, and digital guide	Each runner registered for one of the races receives a digital magazine with content common to all races and specific local content (information on local councils, local sponsors, etc.)
National print and digital specialized press/reports and advertisements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>SportLife</i></li> <li>• <i>Corrector</i></li> </ul>
Print advertising/posters and leaflets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Placement of posters</i></li> <li>• <i>Distribution of leaflets and brochures</i></li> <li>• <i>Presentations</i></li> </ul>
In-house press office/press releases and communication	Press releases, advertising, and communication at national, regional, and local level
Mailing to database/newsletters	Sending of newsletters with health, nutrition, and sports content to more than 154,000 authorized contacts
Own website/posts, banners, and other graphic and audiovisual resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Hosting and publication of articles, reports, images, and videos</i></li> <li>• <i>Free download of the races video</i></li> </ul>
Own app/graphic and audiovisual resources and online registration platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Free of charge enrolment in all virtual races</i></li> <li>• <i>Hosting of related content (e.g., healthy recipes for quick cooking, gift of one month of free online fitness classes, etc.)</i></li> </ul>
Social networks/posts and other graphic resources	<p>Viralization of content generated (e.g., the day after the Madrid 2022 Women's Race, more than 700,000 videos and photos of the race were viewed on the web)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Facebook (97,983 followers)</i></li> <li>• <i>Twitter (11,424 followers)</i></li> <li>• <i>Instagram (24,177 followers)</i></li> <li>• <i>Strava (more than 2,000 members)</i></li> <li>• <i>YouTube (4,800 subscribers)</i></li> </ul>

Source: own elaboration based on the dossier of the organization and profiles of the race on social networks and social media as of September 19, 2022



**Fig. 4** Number of registrations and donations by year. Source: own elaboration based on press releases (2022)

complemented by the celebration of its corresponding virtual race with a total of 17,000 participants who opted for this modality.

In 2022, the edition of the circuit in which this case of social marketing has been developed, the virtual race is again maintained and is expected to achieve a total of 20,000 registrations. In addition, Gran Canaria has been added as the ninth city in which the race will be held in person, attracting more than 2000 participants in its first race.

Looking ahead to the 2023 edition, the organization is confident that the level of participation will return to normal and even exceed the 2019 figures.

## 4 Conclusions

This chapter deals with the usefulness of social marketing in achieving the SDGs through a case of intra- and inter-sectoral collaboration. The Central Lechera Asturiana Women’s Race is a pioneering sporting event in Spain because of its essential purpose—to increase the levels of wellbeing of the female population—and its intergenerational scope and *multi-stakeholder* implications. Its direct beneficiaries (*women and girls*) participate dynamically in the materialization of its objectives, namely: (1) improving the healthy lifestyle habits of the female population through regular sports practice (SDG 3), and (2) combatting gender-based violence through the active empowerment of women and girls in all spheres (SDG 5, SDG 10).

The Central Lechera Asturiana Women’s Race is a case of social marketing that reveals the important potential of collaboration in the creation of value and the achievement of established objectives:

- between the *different actors involved* (companies, public administrations, non-profit entities and other civil society organizations, participating brokers in particular, and citizens in general);
- at different *levels of intervention* (mainly regional and local);
- through different *contribution modalities*: sponsorship and official collaboration (B2B); corporate donation (B2NPO); individual donation (C2NPO/C2B);
- through different *registration modalities*: individual, groups, family (intergenerational), and corporate;
- through the *resources* made available (tangible and intangible, monetary and in-kind);
- with respect to multiple *social causes* which, even though women and girls are the direct beneficiaries, contribute to the improvement of welfare and equality levels for society as a whole, through (a) promoting healthy and self-care habits; female empowerment mechanisms; intergenerational relationships and community strengthening; supportive, generous, and altruistic behaviors; gender equality; medical research; and so on; and (b) combatting breast cancer incidence and mortality rates; social inequality due to economic, gender, disability, or ideological reasons; violence against women in its multiple forms; and so on.

In short, the Central Lechera Asturiana Women's Race—throughout these 17 years of collaboration between CAPSA FOOD and Motorpress Ibérica—exemplifies the strategic role of partnerships (SDG 17) and their great potential in promoting changes in habits, values, and points of reference among the population, creating value in the medium to long term, at micro (individual), meso (organizational), and macro (social) levels, for an effective sustainable development.

---

## 5 Discussion Questions

**Question 1**—Why do you think a woman might be interested in participating in this event? Reflect on the different profiles/motivations that may exist and to what extent the event is contributing to the achievement of the SDGs mentioned in the text.

**Question 2**—Based on the information presented in the case, indicate to what extent you consider that CAPSA's sustainability strategy is aligned with the objectives of the social marketing campaign developed. Describe the benefits for CAPSA in terms of corporate and social objectives.

**Question 3**—Identify the different instruments of the communication mix, traditional and digital, used to publicize and disseminate the social marketing campaign promoted through the Central Lechera Asturiana Women's Race.

## Teaching/Classroom Notes

### Synopsis

This case study is framed within the activities that the company Corporación Alimentaria Peñasanta, S.A. (CAPSA) has been implementing in terms of social sustainability and focuses on the Central Lechera Asturiana Women's Race as a successful case of social marketing and intra- and inter-sectoral collaboration (SDG 17) aimed at strengthening the welfare of the female population to the extent that: (1) it aims to promote healthy lifestyle habits through the inclusion of women in the regular practice of sports (SDG 3), and (2) it combats gender-based violence, empowers women, and makes women's potential visible in all areas (SDG 5, 10).

Since its inception, the objective of this race has been to encourage the participation of women of different ages, being, to date, the women's sporting event with the highest participation in Europe. In addition to its dynamizing and transforming character, it has a solidarity dimension through monetary and in-kind donations and the sale of products in support of different social causes for the common good. In addition, communication campaigns are carried out throughout the year, through both traditional and digital media, to promote awareness of society in terms of welfare, preventative health, and equality.

### Potential Audience and Instructor's Material

This case has been developed for use in the framework of Marketing Management courses in general and Social Marketing seminars particularly. The potential audience for this case study is twofold:

- Undergraduate students pursuing degrees in Business Administration or Marketing.
- Graduate students pursuing MBA and Masters in Marketing, Corporate Social Responsibility, or Social Marketing; or Executive Programs and Seminars (about Marketing in general and Social Marketing particularly).

### Learning

1. To understand the role of intra- and inter-sectoral partnerships and collaborations in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. To reflect the importance of social marketing as an instrument for generating value and contributing to the SDGs, specifically SDGs 3, 5, and 10.
3. To identify the different objectives or social causes of the social marketing campaign analyzed, as well as the different targets or beneficiary audiences to which they are oriented.

4. To examine the application of different communication mix tools to reach the different audiences of the campaign.
5. To analyze the impact and results of the campaign at different levels: micro, meso, and macro.

### **Time Frame for Class Discussion**

This case can be taught in one session of 70–100 min, depending on the number of students participating in the discussion activities, as well as the previous work that students have done before class.

### **Suggested Discussion Questions**

**Question 1**—Why do you think a woman might be interested in participating in this event? Reflect on the different profiles/motivations that may exist and to what extent the event is contributing to the achievement of the SDGs mentioned in the text.

**Question 2**—Based on the information presented in the case, indicate to what extent you consider that CAPSA’s sustainability strategy is aligned with the objectives of the social marketing campaign developed. Describe the benefits for CAPSA in terms of corporate and social objectives.

**Question 3**—Identify the different instruments of the communication mix, traditional and digital, used to publicize and disseminate the social marketing campaign promoted through the Central Lechera Asturiana Women’s Race.

### **Analysis**

*Answer to Question 1—Why do you think a woman might be interested in participating in this event? Reflect on the different profiles/motivations that may exist and to what extent the event is contributing to the achievement of the SDGs mentioned in the text.*

Women can participate in this sporting event for various reasons: they may be professional runners who take part in a more competitive way (personal challenge); amateur runners who see in the event an additional incentive for their usual training; women or families who do not usually practice sports, but participate in the event due to its recreational and solidarity aims; or women affected by any of the social causes with which the event is linked and who feel supported and comforted by the massive participation in it. In this sense, the event contributes to the achievement of the SDGs by trying to promote healthy lifestyle habits (SDG 3) and favoring the reduction of inequalities through the fight against gender violence and the empowerment of women (SDGs 5 and 10).

***Answer to Question 2—Based on the information presented in the case, indicate to what extent you consider that CAPSA's sustainability strategy is aligned with the objectives of the social marketing campaign developed. Describe the benefits for CAPSA in terms of corporate and social objectives.***

Within its Integral Sustainability Plan, CAPSA shows special concern for health through nutrition and healthy lifestyle habits. This commitment is perfectly materialized in the social marketing campaign developed, since the event comes with a very clear objective: to promote the practice of sports and healthy lifestyle habits among women and girls. As a result, the company manages to associate its brand with this objective (the number of women participating in races has increased to 35% in the period studied). In addition to the link with the values of sport, other values are added, such as solidarity (when the fight against breast cancer was incorporated and the participants started to be known as *la marea rosa*) and the fight against gender violence (when the number 016 was incorporated in all the bibs in 2016). In short, the value captured by the company is its association with social and solidarity causes. There are also benefits in terms of the high impact and visualization of the brand through the logos displayed during the race, the communication actions, and the merchandising included in the Runner's Bag.

***Answer to Question 3—Identify the different instruments of the communication mix, traditional and digital, used to publicize and disseminate the social marketing campaign promoted through the Central Lechera Asturiana Women's Race.***

To achieve its main objective—the promotion of sports practice and healthy lifestyle habits among women and girls—the Women's Race is disseminated to its target audience through different communication tools. First of all, the organization uses *advertising actions*, for instance through an annual spot transmitting an emotional message and appealing to women's feelings. This spot is also published on its own social networks and website. Secondly, it uses *promotions*. When registering for the on-site race, each runner receives a gift bag donated by the sponsors of the event. Thirdly, it uses *public relations* to a great extent, since the event has a great impact in the media. It also uses *corporate publications*; in fact, there is a specific magazine for each race. There is also a fair prior to each event, with stands of sponsors and companies that wish to participate and other types of activities that seek to encourage the engagement among runners: pre-race training, sports activities, and concerts by classic bands or emerging singers. However, if there is a highlight in the public relations approach employed, is related to the existence of sponsorship and fundraising modalities. As mentioned in the case study, there is a hierarchy of sponsors: Gold, Official, and Official Collaborators. In addition, the race is always linked to a monetary contribution (registrations, in some cases 100% of a charitable nature) or a donation in kind (for example, donation of hair for the making of wigs). Lastly, it also uses *direct marketing* as a communication technique, in the form for instance of mailing campaigns (sending important pre-race information to all registered participants, sending out a magazine, etc.). The relation of all the communication tools employed shows that the organizers carry out an integrated marketing communication strategy through the coordination of actions, aiming to transmit a consistent, clear, and impacting message to change social habits and beliefs for the common good.



## References

- Austin, J. E. (2000). Strategic collaboration between nonprofits and businesses. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 29(1), 69–97.
- CAPSA FOOD. (2022). Website: <http://www.capsafood.com>
- European Commission. (2020). *A union of equality: Gender equality strategy 2020–2025*. Accessed May 28, 2022, from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152&from=ES>
- Kotler, P., & Lee, N. (2008). *Social marketing: Influencing behaviors for good*. Sage, ISBN10: 1412956471.
- Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Government of Spain (2022). *Agricultural transformation companies*. Accessed September 19, 2022 from <https://www.mapa.gob.es/en/alimentacion/temas/integracion-asociativa/sociedades-agrarias/>
- SportLife. (2022). Website: <https://www.sportlife.es/>
- The World Bank. (2021). *Partnering for gender equality: Umbrella facility for gender equality—Annual Report 2021*. Accessed May 28, 2022 from <https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/reports>
- UNICEF. (2021). *Gender action plan, 2022–2025*. Accessed May 28, 2022 from <https://www.unicef.org/gender-equality/gender-action-plan-2022-2025>
- United Nations. (2019). *Maximizing the impact of partnerships for the SDGs. A practical guide to partnership value creation*. Accessed May 28, 2022 from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships/guidebook>
- United Nations. (2022). *Sustainable development goals*. Accessed May 29, 2022 from <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>
- Women’s Forum for the Economy and Society. (2020). *Seven key issues for an inclusive recovery*. Accessed May 28, 2022 from <https://www.womens-forum.com/2020/10/22/proposals-to-the-g7-leaders-7-key-issues-for-an-inclusive-recovery/>
- Women’s Race. (2022). Website: <https://www.carreradelamujer.com/>