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Using Communication for Development to promote the right to a safe and healthy working environment in the coffee supply chain: The case of the #CoffeePeople campaign

Background

In 2023, the International Labour Organization (ILO) [Vision Zero Fund](#), in collaboration with the International Training Centre (ITC-ILCO), launched a campaign to promote the right to a safe and healthy working environment in the coffee supply chain (#CoffeePeople campaign). Co-funded by the European Union, the global, social media campaign aimed to raise greater awareness of occupational safety and health in the coffee supply, disseminate knowledge and practical tools, and mobilize collective action among coffee stakeholders.¹

This case study explores how the campaign was developed, implemented, and received.

What was done

Since 2018, the Fund had been working to promote the right to a safe and healthy working environment in the coffee supply chain through country projects in Colombia, Honduras, Lao PDR, Mexico and Vietnam. In 2022, more than 20 research findings and methodologies were consolidated into a “coffee toolkit” for dissemination them among coffee stakeholders.

Later that year, donors encouraged a more global approach to scaling up this work. The campaign emerged as the ideal vehicle.

The campaign was co-designed at a workshop attended by representatives from coffee-producing countries (Brazil, Uganda, and Vietnam), and employers’ and workers’ organizations, as well as of organizations that had been working with the Fund at both global and country level, namely, the International Coffee Organisation (ICO) the International Women in Coffee Association (IWCA), and the Global Coffee Platform (GCP). ILO representatives from the target countries, involved in coffee projects promoting fundamental principles and rights at work, also attended the workshop.

Among others, the campaign included the development of:

- a [campaign brief](#), that served to capture the key messages to be disseminated;
- a [collective action kit](#), that further systematized the methodologies and tools that the Fund had produced through its country level work, presented by stakeholder group;
- [social media actions and materials](#) (in the form of a challenge, and of cards and infostories), for constituents and stakeholders to disseminate the message; and
- a [photo exhibition and a documentary](#), which showcased producers and workers in Brazil, Uganda, and Viet Nam and delivered the message that behind every cup of coffee were the people who made it possible.

¹ The campaign was part of the EC funded “Improving Safety and Health in the coffee global supply chain - A Vision Zero Fund” project (GLO/22/12/EUR).

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The ICO decided to adopt the theme 'Joining forces for a safer coffee supply chain' as the official theme of the World Coffee Day for 2023.

Before the launch of the campaign, the Fund held workshops in the target countries to localize the campaign messages. Workshops serve to further social dialogue at the sectoral level, fostering collective action by helping constituents and key sectoral stakeholders agree on concrete activities that they would implement to promote OSH in the supply chain. Workshops were conducted jointly with other ILO projects working on the fundamental principles and rights at work in the coffee sector.

A "soft launch" of the campaign took place on September 27th at the World of Coffee Conference (Bangalore, India). The formal campaign launch was timed to coordinate with International Coffee Day on October 1st.

Following the launch of the campaign, the Fund held [learning webinars](#), that serve to further the discussion and share ILO tested tools to advance OSH at workplace level.

Key Achievements

- 25 million from 50 countries were reached in the campaign
- 135,000 engagements on social media were identified
- Messages from the ILO Director General, the President of the IOE, and Ministers from Germany and Brazil provided support for the campaign
- 10 organisations made pledges related to OSH
- 56% of stakeholders reported integrated at least one aspect they learned from the campaign into their work
- Adoption of OSH theme for the 2023 International Coffee Day
- Inclusion of OSH in side events and panel discussions at industry global and regional events

Good Practices

► Collaborative design

The initial workshop to design the campaign held at ITCILO's Turin campus was crucial for strengthening ownership of the campaign. This helped to shape the messaging of the campaign and ensured that the

tripartite constituents from the target countries agreed with the approach. During the roll out of the campaign at the country level, this proved fruitful as the constituents and VZF were able to agree on country specific messaging and ensure the campaign was supported by all parties.

► Connecting the campaign to country level activities and making contextual changes

The campaign was most effective when combined with country level activities. The project has supported activities in Brazil, Colombia, Uganda, and Viet Nam. These have often been held in collaboration with other ILO projects on FPRW. Holding these events helped ensure the messages from the campaign reached different elements of the supply chain in these countries. The activities appear to have contributed to improvements in awareness of OSH among workers and producers and strengthen social dialogue in the sector. The trust built during the initial design workshop and through other engagement supported the refining of the campaign to meet different needs in the target countries. For example, in Uganda, a well-known comedian provided visibility to the campaign, and a similar approach with a famous chef was taken in Brazil. In Colombia, the wording of the campaign was changed slightly to reflect the unique characteristics of the coffee sector in the country.

► Partnership with sectoral bodies

The ILO partnered with ICO, GCP and the IWCA to support the campaign. This helped give the campaign credibility and presence among key global players in the coffee sector. The launch of the campaign on International Coffee Day and the naming of OSH as being the theme of the year, helped raise the profile of the campaign. The partnership with IWCA and other key sectoral stakeholders (including the European Coffee Federation) also allowed VZF greater access to key groups in the supply chains in the individual target countries, while at the same time helping to raise the profile of IWCA at the global level.

► Developing a performance logical framework

A specific logical framework that included key performance indicators (KPIs) for the campaign was developed. This included KPIs for inputs, outputs, outtakes, outcomes, and impact. This logframe was developed in addition to the project's logframe that had been agreed with the donor. The logframe provides a basis for which the changes of the campaign contribute to can be measured. There have though been challenges in implementing the measurement, thus reducing the utility of the logframe.

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Evaluation results

The #Coffee People campaign appears to have been most relevant when combined with in-country activities in Brazil, Colombia, and Uganda. Challenges in measuring its impact make it harder to assess the relevance beyond these countries, although the inclusion of OSH into sectoral meetings and conferences is an example of relevance for sectoral actors. Opinions among global stakeholders about the utility and effectiveness of the campaign varied widely.

Opinions about the campaign within the ILO and among the tripartite constituents were divided, ranging from

concerns about its design to views that it was innovative and a model for future ILO initiatives. Country level stakeholders in general believed the campaign to have been useful for further the conversation on OSH and supporting workplace activities.

More information

[Impact and outreach report](#)

[#CoffeePeople webpage](#)

[VZF project webpage](#)



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Vision Zero Fund is part of **Safety & Health for All**, an ILO flagship programme building a culture of safe, healthy work.

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