HOW TO PRODUCE PODCASTS ABOUT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

GUIDE

ABOUT FRONTLINE AIDS

Frontline AIDS wants a future free from AIDS for everyone, everywhere.

Around the world, millions of people are denied HIV prevention, testing, treatment and care simply because of who they are and where they live.

As a result, 1.7 million people were infected with HIV in 2018 and 770,000 died of AIDS-related illness.

Together with partners on the frontline, we work to break down the social, political and legal barriers that marginalised people face, and innovate to create a future free from AIDS.

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ABOUT iREADY

i-READY supports and creates information and communication technology tools that can be used by adolescents and young people in Burundi and Mozambique to promote access to information on SRHR, peer support and adherence to HIV treatment. It is supported by the SPIDER centre (https://spidercenter.org/).

iREADY is part of the READY portfolio of programmes that aim to build resilient and empowered adolescents and young people. Young people helped create the READY movement and remain the core of it today. Read more, and find out how to join the READY movement: https://frontlineaids.org/our-work-includes/ready/

WHAT IS A PODCAST?

A podcast is a recorded audio content piece that focuses on a particular topic. People can listen to podcasts whenever they wish, as they are not tied to a time schedule like radio programmes are.

You can listen to podcasts on various devices, such as a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer. A podcast can be streamed, which requires you to be connected to the internet, or downloaded, which means you can listen to it at any time, even if you don't have internet access.

Today, podcasts are one of the easiest ways to consume audio content as you can plug in your headphones or listen to them in the background while you're relaxing, cooking or commuting to school or work.

Podcasts can be used to share information about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) with young people. In the iREADY project in Burundi, adolescent and young people produced and disseminated podcasts on topics such as discrimination faced by young people living with HIV, how to prevent getting sexually transmitted infections, and how to live positively with HIV as a young person.

THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU TO

- Plan the content for a podcast
- Know how to record a podcast
- Know how to edit a podcast
- Know how to publish a podcast
- Know how to promote a podcast

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR PRODUCING A PODCAST

Recorder

Depending on your budget there are many options for recording sound. You can use your smartphone, laptop or desktop computer (most have a built-in recorder) or a portable digital recorder such as a Zoom H4n.

Microphone

You can either use the built-in microphone on your smartphone or laptop, if that is what you are using as your recorder, or attach an external microphone. An external microphone greatly improves the quality of the sound for your listeners. There is a wide range of external microphones available in the market for various budgets.

Headphones

Good quality headphones are important for producing quality podcasts. When choosing headphones make sure they are comfortable, have a noise-cancelling feature and a good quality of frequency response (20-20,000 Hz is the standard for most headphones). Recommendations include SonyMDR7506, Shure SRH1540 Premium Closed-Back and Bose QuietComfort.

Software for editing and recording

Open source applications (also known as freeware) such as Audacity are frequently used by podcasters to record and edit podcasts. They are free and easy to use and are available for operating systems such as macOS, Windows and Linux. Alternatively, if you have the required skills you can use professional tools such as Adobe Audition.

Notebook

A notebook is useful when you are conducting an interview so you can take notes and remember specific moments.

MORE ABOUT PODCAST EQUIPMENT

These websites have up-to-date advice about good podcast equipment.

Best podcast equipment:
www.podcastinsights.com/podcast-equipment/

The top podcast equipment for any budget:
medium.com/@josephcurrency24/the-top-podcast-equipment-for-any-budget-b22036b73146

HOW TO PRODUCE A SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) PODCAST IN FOUR STEPS

1. PLAN THE PODCAST

It's important that each podcast focuses on a **specific topic**. You might want to consider the following topics:

- Issues relating to HIV prevention, treatment and care, such as community-based care, the social and economic cost of being a carer, access to services, financing.
- Human rights of vulnerable groups such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (LGBT), men who have sex with men, people who use drugs, sex workers, women and children and people living with HIV.

Before producing the podcast think about the topic and why it matters to your audience. Podcasts should be informative and engaging and hold your audience's attention. Your audience should listen to the end of the podcast, wanting to hear more.

Ask yourself: **who is my audience?** Who do I want to listen to this? The most effective podcasts will establish a connection with the audience and compel them to take some form of action. How will your podcast influence the listener? Think about who is involved or affected by the issue as well as who has the influence or power to make change happen. You should understand where the key stakeholders stand.

Make an **outline** of your podcast to give it structure and help it flow. The answers to these questions will help give you an outline for your podcasts:

- How long will the podcast be?
- Is it a solo podcast or will you interview anyone?
- Will your podcast include storytelling?
- Do you want to include any sound effects? If yes, you will need to have the sound files ready.

The art of the interview

Change the world: a toolkit for citizen journalists has a useful guide about interviewing people (see Module 3: The art of the interview).

https://frontlineaids.org/resources/change-the-world-a-toolkit-for-citizen-journalists/

2. RECORD AND EDIT THE PODCAST

Before you record your podcast you need to pick the right place, free from background noise and distractions. You can record it in a studio or, for example, in a closet or a car!

You also need to make sure it's a place where any people you interview for your podcast will feel comfortable and safe.

Do a few practice runs with a friend before recording the podcast. When you're making your real podcast, check that your recorder is actually recording!

When editing your podcast you can decide to present it as a solo recording or introduce other elements such as background music, special effects and the voices of various speakers.

After you have edited your podcast save it in the format that best suits your needs, such as MP3 or AAC.

3. PUBLISH YOUR PODCAST

When the podcasts are ready you can upload them to your website or one of the many free podcast hosting sites, such as SoundCloud.

4. PROMOTE YOUR PODCAST

One of the easiest and quickest ways to drive listeners to your podcast is by posting it on social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

In your promotional social media posts, give your established and potential new listeners some clues about what to expect from your podcast. You can also use two or three 'heartbeat quotes' from your podcast for promotion. Remember to choose commonly-used and event- or topic-specific hashtags as they provide a quick way to be discovered online. Lastly, use analytics to establish what is working, how many listeners you have and where your audiences are based.

A GOOD PODCAST IS
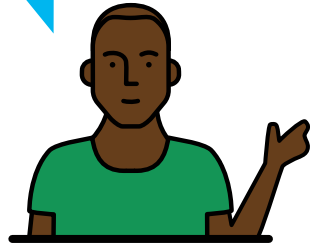**ENGAGING**
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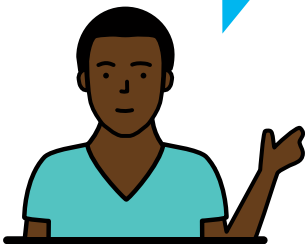**AUTHENTIC**
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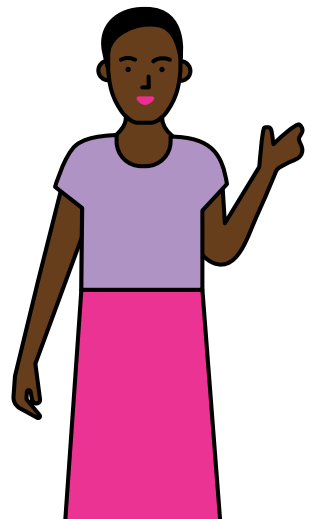
TIPS

1 If you want to get people to engage and connect with your podcasts you need to make it about them, not you.
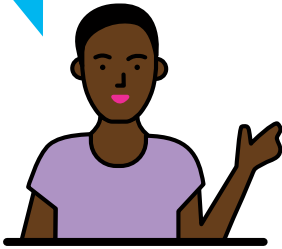
2 Always remember to test your equipment before you start recording.

3 Fact checking is important for all your podcasts, as is using credible sources (interviewees) for all your stories.
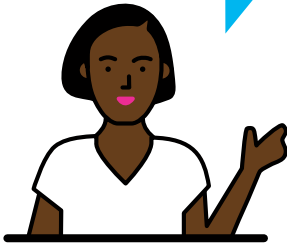
4 When editing, cut out the bits that don't add much value to the listener or have rambling segments.

5 When conducting an interview, it helps to be prepared. The better you know your questions and the better you know your equipment, the better you'll perform and feel.

6 When mixing, cut your sound down to the clips you need, arrange them in order and adjust their volume levels so they're not too loud or too soft in a listener's ears.

7 Always use non-copyrighted sound effects or music. These can be found on websites such as Freesound and Bensound or sites offering music under Creative Commons License, which means the copyright owners have given permission for their sound effects to be used for free.
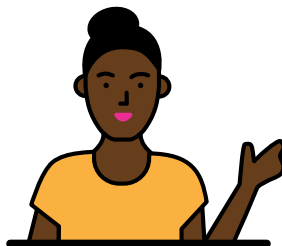
PODCAST TERMINOLOGY

BUTT CUT

Means to place one voice in a story immediately after another without dividing them.

FADE AWAY

Is to decrease the sound volume until it is out of earshot.

HOST

Is a person who talks to guests on a podcast, radio or television programme.

MASKING

Is using existing ambient sound to cover over bad edits or to create smooth transitions.

MIXING

Is the process of editing and arranging audio clips in a way that sounds seamless and natural to a listener.

NARRATOR

Is a person who voices a story. To be an effective narrator requires insights about the character(s) and knowledge of emotional nuances, which can be used to paint the scene for listeners.

PLOSIVES

Are sounds made by letters such as P, T and K, which are created using a sudden release of air from the mouth. They can produce a popping noise for the listener if your mouth is too close to the microphone.

PRE-RECORDING

Is mixing or recording a piece or interview in advance.

SCRIPT

Is the written text of your podcast.

SOUND BITES

Are short sections of voices from other people, not the narrator or the (main) interviewee, talking about the topic.

SPECIAL EFFECTS (OR SFX)

Are sounds that help to locate the story in a particular context or add drama or 'flavour' (e.g. the sound of hospital machines beeping, cars hooting, activists chanting songs at a rally).

TRACKS

Are layers of sound.

EXERCISES

1. RECORDING YOUR OWN VOICE

Requirements:

A smartphone (with a recorder) or a voice recorder, headphones and a notebook.

What to record:

Introduce yourself and explain your motivation for working on SRHR issues into the microphone, then listen back to the recording on the phone or recording device.

2. RECORD A TWO-WAY INTERVIEW

Requirements:

A smartphone (with a recorder) or a voice recorder, headphones, an interviewee and a notebook.

What to record:

At the beginning of the recording, the host introduces himself/herself, the SRHR topic to be discussed by the interviewer and the main points the podcast will address. The host will then pose questions to the interviewee and give him/her a chance to respond. How does it sound? What would you change?

JOIN US. END IT.

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