RS10 China: Social Marketing and Road Safety

Dr HE Jinglin¹, Dr WANG Linhong³, Dr Brent Powis², Dr DUAN Leilei³, Mrs Amy Zima²

Abstract

Context
In China, the rapid rate of motorization coupled with the high levels of road traffic fatalities and injuries is quickly moving road safety up the public health agenda. The Road Safety in 10 Countries - Brazil, Cambodia, China, Egypt, India, Kenya, Mexico, Russian Federation, Turkey and Viet Nam or the RS10 Project is one of the ways road traffic injury prevention is being tackled in China. The RS10 China Project supports the Chinese Government in the implementation of proven countermeasures and strategies to enhance road safety in the cities of Suzhou and Dalian for eventual scaling up and in-line with China’s national plan. Exposure to marketing and behavioural science methodology has been limited among the on-the-ground teams and local technical staff. This paper presents work that introduces RS10 China, Social Marketing models for speeding and drink driving interventions within the Chinese cultural context in 2012.

Objectives
As the RS10 China team assessed and evaluated the initial efforts of the program in 2010 - 2011, an increased demand for capacity building and Social Marketing tools for local implementation was apparent. The objective of the project in 2012 was to bring a social marketing approach and build capacity to enable the design and delivery of enforcement and communications related to road safety interventions within the RS10 China program.

Key Outcomes
Focused capacity building resulted in establishing Social Marketing planning and design models, and resources and for use in China. The key stages of development included focused planning and targeting, assessing stakeholder commitments and resources, evidence based methods/data collection/evaluation, and an integrated approach to enforcement/legislation/SM. Review of the available data resulted in the campaigns targeting male drivers aged 30-45 years. Outputs included: materials production and distribution - TV/radio ads/posters/fact sheets, city level and specific grassroots activities, media advocacy and reports, celebrity and community/business leader involvement, and tactical campaign launches. Results of the evaluation of the RS10 China campaigns indicated a high level of reach to target groups.

Discussion and conclusions
Significant progress has been made and demonstration models on Social Marketing were established in 2012. Future challenges include; scaling up of successful models; national legislative changes; stronger NGO involvement; and integrating road safety into Healthy City models.

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² World Health Organization

³ Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Introduction

The Road Safety Project dubbed ‘RS10’ aims to support the governments in 10 project countries to implement good practices in road safety in line with their national road safety strategies. In China this is being achieved primarily by focusing on behavioural risk factors of drink driving and speeding in the pilot cities of Suzhou and Dalian.

Social marketing is the application of commercial marketing techniques to public health and social issues (Andreasen, A.R., 1994). The use of social marketing in road safety efforts internationally has shown the need to combine legislation, enforcement and communication efforts to influence behaviours (DELHOMME, 1999). Because road safety campaigns are often seeking to change complex behaviours, rather than encourage consumption of a new product or a change of brand it is important to carefully identify a specific target audience with whom the campaign can offer a benefit or increased barrier to the risky behaviour. In the case of RS10 China, the effort must persuade people to give up a behaviour that they enjoy, such as drinking (when they will be driving afterwards), and do something that is seen as inconvenient, such as driving more slowly. Combining legislation/enforcement with a communication strategy supporting its efforts is a key goal of RS10 China.

As a key component in all RS10 interventions social marketing, is a new concept in China as it relates to road safety. It is not surprising that following the initial stages of the project in China in 2010-11 partners responsible for implementing the project identified a need to significantly increase capacity in social marketing including building new tools, human resources and an evidence based culture.

This paper outlines; the design and implementation of the social marketing programs undertaken during 2012 in pilot cities, the capacity built, lessons learnt and how these will shape the future.

The First Stage: Developing Model and Target Identification

Agreement was reached early in 2012 that in terms of Enforcement and Social Marketing, the planned interventions would focus on single specific risk factors in each city as well as restrict the areas of the city to be the subject of major campaign interventions. In Dalian, Speeding and in Suzhou, Drink Driving was the focus of dedicated campaigns with continued activities continuing on both risk factors in both cities at a reduced level. A model – City Wide – District Deep was developed to encapsulate the proposed strategy wherein mass media would potentially expose the entire target group and more specific enhanced enforcement and community engagement would be trailed in districts with a high incidence of road crashes.

Within this new framework, 2012 began with a Literature Review and Communications Audit to better understand what the environment and audiences RS10 must work with for each city. Through this review the target audience was more carefully defined: The Suzhou Drink Driving Campaign would focus on male, experienced drivers, age 35 to 45. In Dalian, the anti-speeding campaign would focus on a similar audience; male drivers, 35 to 45 years old. This more specific target audience (vs. “all drivers” as used in the previous year) lead to a targeted KAP study done in a sample district in each city to identify how the campaign would address this audience and what benefits and barriers exist for the audience to achieve our desired behaviours. The development of the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) and focus group tools themselves brought light to the need for technical assistance as resources were limited. As social marketing is an evidence-based approach, it was
important that the local city based teams gained the capacity to develop and implement research tools for independent future efforts.

Data gained regarding benefits and barriers that matter to our audience from the KAP and focus groups allowed the team to translate that into communication tactics.

The Second Stage: Capacity Building and Plan development

Social marketing planning meetings and workshop were held in Dalian and Suzhou which placed emphases on the key steps of Social Marketing and timelines of the RS10 China project. Lessons learnt from other RS10 countries, such as Russia, Viet Nam and Turkey were integrated into the programs as was the key message that working closely with the enforcement effort and publicizing the risks of being caught drink driving (based on new legislation) and speeding were key elements of the city plan.

Media advocacy and the use of earned media are an essential part of increasing awareness and educating the public about new legislation (e.g. legal limits of alcohol) as it relates to their driving behaviours. Media workshops were conducted in Dalian and Suzhou on as part of the preparation for mounting campaigns in both cities. Over 50 journalists and editors from major television, radio and newspapers were provided with information and group exercises addressing issues such as; road safety as a public health issue, the role of the media, the proposed new enforcement measures during the campaigns and new ways of reporting road crashes.

Planning and the development of Plans at the city level was both and an emergent and iterative process. With many key stakeholders to coordinate the process took time to develop as both the technical and more conceptual elements of the Plan needed to be explored with many. Timing of social marketing activities with the enhanced enforcement provided by the local city traffic police was key to the finally agreed Plan.

The Third Stage: Material and Tools development

It is at this stage that the international expertise of the World Lung Foundation (WLF) was applied. Using international experts and looking to resources within the broader RS10 countries proved to be an important part of making resources stretch further for the project and bringing capacity building into the local context.

The WLF process was undertaken during the first half of 2012 and utilized combined qualitative and quantitative methodology was implemented in accordance with a precise research protocol.

Based on assessments by a task force of road safety and social marketing experts, five core speeding advertisements were selected for testing and an additional four advertisements were chosen from a pool of ads that also rated as suitable for the study, as well as one locally chosen by WHO China road safety staff and partners, based on specific relevance to the RS10 objectives in China. In order to be able to assess driver responses to different types of messages, selection of ads for the study was undertaken within three main message categories to ensure representation of:

- Ads that focus on **consequences** of speeding on the driver or others;
- Ads that focus on **instruction** of some form about what happens when someone speeds; and
- Ads that focus on **enforcement** and the risk of being detected if speeding.
Using the final reports on field testing of TV ads, material production of - 4 TV ads, 4 radio ads and 2 posters, key messages and fact sheets on Drink Driving and Speeding were developed to serve as the foundation of a local and national Road Safety Social Marketing Resource Kit for China.

Based on the WLF research, KAPs, Focus group and relevant literature the following slogans, key messages and posters were developed for use in the then forthcoming campaigns:

**Slogan: Drink Driving, Extreme – Danger**

**Key Messages:**
- Drink Driving significantly increases the likelihood of a crash
- You don’t know where the police will be waiting – expect to be tested
- Get caught drunk driving and you'll be processed like any other criminal
- Drunk Driving can result in loosing your life and your family loosing you.
- Driving even with low levels of alcohol is unsafe

**Slogan: Save a Life – Slow Down**

**Key Messages:**
- Speeding is not only exceeding the speed limit but driving too fast for the conditions
- Reduced speed leads to reduced death and injury
- Small increases in speed leads to high risk of crashing
- Vulnerable road users are at the greatest risk
- Fixed and Mobile speed cameras will catch speeding drivers
- There is no such thing as 'Safe Speeding'

**The Fourth Stage: Campaign Implementation and Evaluation**

Following the completion of the above activities and submission of social marketing, media and enforcement plans from both pilot cities the first of China's RS10 'evidenced based' Road Safety campaigns were conducted in Suzhou and Dalian. These utilized the now produced TV/Radio and print materials and focused certain enhanced enforcement activities in the selected district levels of each city while maintaining city wide interventions for both risk factors. Given the need for time to develop resources and strengthen human and media resources the first campaigns were not launched until late September in each city.

Campaigns Elements in a Nutshell:

- Enforcement –100 days of enhanced enforcement activity by city traffic police;
- Engagement: activities included use of volunteers and restaurant owners, replacement drivers, six demonstration drink safety environment restaurants established;
- Education: TV and radio ads broadcasted, road safety website established, use of social media to send messages and establishment of an information network; and
Emotion: Goodwill Ambassador – Movie Star Jiang Wenli and victims of road traffic crashes participating the advocacy media events.

SM campaign process evaluation

The process evaluation was undertaken by an independent third party agency who undertook a range of quantitative and qualitative methods including; face to face random survey of approx. 600 target group drivers in each city, focus groups of target group drivers and key stakeholders and in-depth interviews of key local partners responsible for implementation activities.

The overall reach of the campaign in Dalian was 40% with TV/radio and Outdoor Public Display highest in reach. This compared with 37% overall reach in Suzhou with outdoor messages rating highest in reach followed closely by all other media including TV, radio, newspapers and web sites. This reinforced the now generally held understanding of the importance of mass media in social marketing however the high reach of both outdoor advertising in both cities and the use of the purpose built web site in Suzhou are important to note for future campaigns.

However while the social marketing activities can be said to effective in terms of making drivers aware of the campaigns and resulted in a desire to change behaviour, this cannot be said of their apparent knowledge of the more detailed information related to the each risk factor. For example 53% drivers did not know the penalties for over speeding 20%~50% of the speed limit, while there were 51% respondents did not know the penalties for over speeding 10%~20% of the speed limit. While over 90% of drivers in Suzhou new drinking a small quantity of wine was dangerous, only 25% knew the alcohol test standards for drink-driving, and 30% knew the alcohol test standards of drunk-driving. This led the evaluation team to recommend that future campaigns should focus more on details of each key message and less on transmission on general slogans.

Other major recommendations for the future included; making greater use of key media including TV and radio, strengthening media tracking and impact evaluation and increasing the roles of civil society.

Conclusion

The progress made during 2012 within the RS10 China project has succeeded in bringing a social marketing approach to the road safety programs in Suzhou and Dalian. This more integrated approach brings the three pillars of the effort – legislation, enforcement, and social marketing together to provide a more cohesive, balanced and methodological/evidence based approach. This social marketing approach will provide a greater ability to influence behaviours and reduce the selected risk factors in such a rapidly motorizing country rather than focus on education and attitudes alone.

The lessons learnt from this first series of campaigns still bring many challenges including the need to; develop more effective engagement of civil society in delivery of key messages, continue to strengthen the human and technical resources for the design and delivery of social marketing programs and to reinforce the need for evidence based decision making in design and delivery.
References