

Amanda Barnes

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Profile

A strategic communications specialist with extensive experience of stakeholder engagement, media relations and digital media, as well as a proven track-record of delivering innovation and successful outcomes. An experienced leader with a background in senior management and consultancy for high-profile organisations.

Highlights of strategic skills and achievements

Leadership and management

Led a dynamic headquarters-based communications team, as well as communications managers in 60 countries, to transform Plan International's advocacy, branding, media profile, publishing and internal communications. Presided over the introduction of a new content management and editorial planning system for Plan's family of websites and oversaw a programme of communications training and capacity-building for regional and country office staff. Managed an annual budget of £1 million and supervised a major re-structuring of the communications department.

Built an outstanding media team at Amnesty International UK and led the development and implementation of a new media strategy, using pro-active media relations and deployment of information technology. Motivated the team to take Amnesty's media communication to a higher level and presided over a six-fold increase in UK media coverage in six months. Acted as organisational media spokesperson – making numerous broadcast appearances including Newsnight, Channel 4 News and the BBC Radio 4 Today Programme.

Digital and social media

Created and steered implementation of a stakeholder engagement strategy, centered on digital and social media, for the *Young Lives* study at the Oxford University Department of International Development. Succeeded in re-orientating the *Young Lives* organisational culture towards making full use of the opportunities offered by Facebook, Twitter, the Blogosphere and other online tools – with outcomes including the doubling of their social media following and the publication of accessible and multi-media content on their own digital platforms and specialist blog sites.

Wrote stakeholder engagement strategy for the OECD-led International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and steered its implementation. Launched IATI's first HTML e-newsletter; re-launched their website with new content and architecture that met the needs of different stakeholders (from grass-roots transparency activists and journalists to data-base technicians and senior government figures) and edited a new marketing brochure for potential funders.

Media relations

Produced media strategy and directed the launch of a major new report on Malaria for the World Health Organisation. The report was covered extensively in the national and international media, achieving a global print and broadcast audience reach of more than 310 million, for a budget of US\$20,000. Subsequently directed UK media relations for a further WHO report about anti-microbial resistance and achieved an overall international audience reach of more than 317 million.

Developed and implemented Save the Children's first broadcast strategy – introducing multi-purpose media packages

containing video, audio, digital and print content as well as media training for field spokespeople – which succeeded in significantly raising the organisation’s television profile. Led a successful media campaign for the organisation’s 75th anniversary, developing the organisation’s celebrity strategy and strengthening its relationships with high-profile individuals.

Career history

2007 to present – Oxford Global Media, Strategic Communications Consultant

Provide strategic communications consultancy to large and small not-for-profit organisations. Clients include: UNICEF Geneva; DFID; Oxford University Department of International Development; Joseph Rowntree Foundation; One World Media; Practical Action; IBT; Marie Stopes International.

2004-2007 – Plan International, Head of Global Media

Responsible for strategic management of international communications across 60 countries world-wide. Headed a team of six communications professionals, with responsibility for media relations, publishing, web communications, advocacy and internal communications. Controlled a budget in excess of £1 million. Acted as media spokesperson.

1996-2003 - Amnesty International UK, Head of Media Relations (included 6 years part-time)

Responsible for leading an extremely busy and pressurised press office: promoting human rights to the UK media, building strong relationships with journalists and securing widespread media coverage. Acted as media spokesperson.

1997-2003 - Self-employed, Freelance Media Consultant (part time)

Clients included: Age Concern England; Diabetes UK; Department of Health; Greenpeace; NCH Action for Children; Plan International; The National Trust; Save the Children; The World Health Organisation; Roll Back Malaria.

1995-1996 – Help the Aged, Head of Media Relations

Responsible for directing Help the Aged’s relations with the national and local print and broadcast media. Line managed ten press and PR personnel, promoting fundraising, commercial ventures and corporate partnerships as well as the organisation’s UK and international programmes. (Left in order to pursue a more flexible career for family reasons.)

1991-1994 – Save the Children, Senior Press Officer

Responsible for managing Save the Children’s relations with the press and broadcast media. Supervised a staff of five, directed the media strategy and was a member of the Public Affairs Department’s senior management team, which undertook strategic planning for all aspects of the charity’s external communications.

1980-1991 – Previous career in local government communications.

Voluntary

Current International Board member of Relief International – pioneered new corporate and employee fundraising initiative. Former Trustee of International Broadcast Trust. Amnesty Country Coordinator for South Africa and Swaziland and Chair of Beckenham & West Wickham Amnesty group.

Education and qualifications

MA in International Communications and Development, Merit Award, City University 2013. Diploma in Production Journalism, London College of Communication, 1990. Diploma in Radio Journalism, City University 1989. BSc (Hons) in Geography 2:2, Coventry University 1980.

References available on request