

Running a campaign action

Campaign actions put pressure on decision-makers to make positive changes. Whether you're planning to get involved in a Christian Aid campaign action or creating your own to help tackle poverty and injustice, this resource can help you make it as impactful as possible.

About campaign actions

Campaign actions are the things we do to put public pressure on the person, company or governing body that can change a policy, law or practice for a more just world.

Christian Aid campaigns might have a range of campaign actions within them such as petitions, protests, prayers, meeting decision makers, generating media coverage and much more. We use various actions, building upon each one, to achieve justice for the world's poorest people.

This guide will help you think through how to run your campaign actions well, inspire others, and be part of bringing about the world we want to see.

There are four main steps to running a great campaign action:

1. Connecting with others.
2. Planning your action.
3. Running your action.
4. Impact and next steps.

Types of campaign actions:

- Meeting your local politician for a lobby.
- Panel event or Q&A session with decision makers.
- Local media stunt.
- Petitions (giant cards, petition sheets, online petitions).
- Local demonstration or march.
- Letter writing and hand-ins.
- Craftivism action.



Action for change?

Over the years, Christian Aid campaigners like you have taken many campaign actions to help the world's poorest people. Back in the 1990s, campaigners marched with receipts in hand to their local supermarkets to demand Fairtrade items be stocked on the shelves. From teabags to flowers, Fairtrade items are now commonplace and make a real difference to the world's farmers and their families. When we take action together, like these campaigners did as part of the Fairtrade movement, we can help create long-lasting change.

1

Connecting with others

Who do you know that wants to change the world? Asking your friends, church and community to join in with your campaign action will increase the impact you have and help bring about the change you want to see. Take a look at our **Inviting others to campaign** resource for tips.

When you're inviting others to be involved, think about:

- What will inspire them to make a difference?

- What shared experiences and values do we have?
- What talents and skills do I need in our team to run the action?
- What am I asking them to do?
- What opportunity am I giving them?

When you have a team together, you can tailor your campaign action to suit your group and have the biggest impact possible.

2

Planning your campaign action

When planning your campaign action, there are two things you need to think about. Firstly, some of the 'big' contextual questions such as why your action matters and what you want to achieve. Although these questions can sometimes be tricky to think through, they are vital if you are going to make sure that your campaign action has the impact you want.

Secondly, you need to think about the practical and logistical elements of your action. This will make sure your action runs smoothly when it takes place.

'Actions need to be well pitched and have clear aims.'

Lizzie, campaigner in Norwich

Can you answer these questions about your campaign action?

Contextual questions

- What is the action?
- Why are we doing this?
- How does it meet the aims of our overall campaign?
- How will we make this action have a local feel?
- How will we ensure our group feels a sense of ownership over the action?

Practical questions

- What is the action?
- When and where is the action?
- What resources do we need?
- How will we engage the media (or social media) and what is our key message for them?
- Are there any safety issues to be aware of?
- What could go wrong? What is our contingency plan?

An easy way to think about these is to imagine you are explaining your campaign action to a stranger in a few short sentences. How will you help them understand what is going on and why?

Pre-action meeting

As part of your planning, consider running a short pre-action meeting with those involved – this doesn't need to be lengthy. This will help those involved understand the action more deeply, renew their commitment for the action, and ensure everything runs smoothly during the action.

What to include in a pre-action meeting:

- **Inspirational stories.** Remind everyone of their part in creating a better world, what the main aim of the action is, and how it links to the wider campaign. Explore Christian Aid's website for a host of stories and inspiration.
- **Share the full plan for the campaign action.** When and where is it taking place? Who are the targets? What do you define as success?
- **Plan roles.** When people have a specific role to play, they feel part of what's happening and more committed to turning up. Find out who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. This might include tasks in the run-up, such as gathering resources and contacting the local media, and tasks on the day like taking pictures or asking specific questions. Confirm these with each team member so that they are clear on what they need to do.
- **Invite others.** This is a great chance to encourage the people that have turned up to bring more people with them – who do they know that they can bring along too?
- **Prayer and reflection.** Take time to pray about the issue you are campaigning on, and ask God to help your action build the kingdom.

3

Running your campaign action

Depending on whether you are running a petition stall or meeting your local politician, how you run your campaign action will look very different! But there are some things you should think about, no matter what your action is:

- Do you have a meeting point before you head to where the action takes place? (If your action is taking place at church this might just be a side room, or a specific spot.)
- Do you have some space for prayer and reflection before you begin?
- How will you brief people at the beginning to remind them of what you are doing and why? How will you get a sense of how everyone is feeling?
- Is everyone here?
- Does everyone have a specific job?
- How can people contact you?

Part of your job during the action will also be to make sure the people in your team are

comfortable and engaged, particularly if your campaign action has any tricky elements:

- How are you going to inspire people at the start of the action?
- How are you going to keep energy up throughout?
- How are you going to celebrate people coming together?
- How will you show and share the impact of their involvement?



4

Impact and next steps

How did your action go? Your campaign action is one tactic within the overall campaign. You'll want to build on your achievements in your next steps. Knowing how your action went and the impact it had will help you plan these.

Immediately after the action

You can get a real sense of how an action has gone from the initial responses and feelings you and others in your team have. What was the energy like after your action? Have a talk to others afterwards and find out their reactions. Ask them:

- How do you feel?
- What do you think has gone well? What could have gone better?
- Who have you noticed who has done well today?
- What have you achieved and how does this contribute to the wider campaign you are part of?

Evaluation

To build on your action and take the next steps in your campaign, think about these questions:

- What are the results of your action? If they aren't what you wanted, why not?
- If you don't know the result yet, how was the action received?
- How do others involved feel now they have had time to think it over?
- Was there anything practical that could have worked better?
- How did your action fit into the wider story of the campaign?

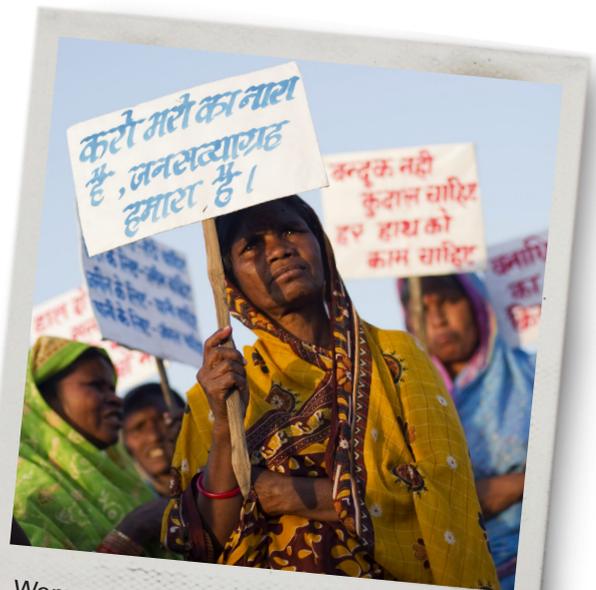
Remember to share your successes with your church and the Christian Aid Campaigns team by emailing campaigns@christian-aid.org

Next steps

Your next steps will depend on the response and impact of your campaign action.

In general, your next steps will be a consolidation of your successes, and escalation of your campaign. This may involve making your campaign audience larger, choosing a new campaign target, or changing your campaign action.

Find out more about taking the next steps in our [Next steps for your campaign](#) resource.



Women march for their land rights in Delhi, India.