

Supporting parental behavioural change: Multichannel and cross-sector campaigns in Israel

Case study summary

Ben Baruch, Emma Leenders and Emma Disley



For more information on this publication, visit www.rand.org/t/RRA245-10

Cover image courtesy of Hop! Media Group

© 2021 Copyright Bernard van Leer Foundation.

Published by the RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif., and Cambridge, UK

RAND Europe is a not-for-profit research organisation that helps to improve policy and decision making through research and analysis. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the sponsor.

Support RAND

Make a tax-deductible charitable contribution at

www.rand.org/giving/contribute

www.rand.org

www.randeurope.org

Learning from two campaigns about encouraging parental behavioural change at scale

A far-reaching approach to engaging parents

Parents shopping in one of the largest supermarket chains in Israel may be surprised to be offered tips on bonding with their child. However, this community-level reach is exactly what those behind the ‘Magic Moments’ and ‘Beautiful Moments’ campaigns¹ hoped to achieve.

The essence of the campaigns is captured in a dedicated music video that shows the everyday challenges of parenting – a boy spills water on his mother’s laptop as she tries to work; siblings argue as a father rushes to prepare a meal. In both situations, the parents transform these challenges into ‘magic moments’ of positive interaction – the laptop is dried and the child makes a cardboard computer so he can work alongside his mother; in the kitchen, the children join in with the cooking and tidying up.²

The two campaigns were launched to support Israeli parents to use everyday moments with their children as a way of bonding and promoting child development

In 2016, two organisations with a focus on children and families approached each other – these organisations were Hop! Media Group,

an Israeli media company, and the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF), an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in the Netherlands. The two organisations were interested in developing an initiative that would support parents in Israel to use everyday moments with their children as bonding moments, thereby contributing to child development. In 2018 the two organisations formed a partnership and began working on two campaigns. The first was the **Magic Moments campaign, focusing on Israel’s Hebrew-speaking population**. The second, launched as the sister campaign, was the **Beautiful Moments campaign, focusing on Arabic-speaking families in Israel**. Magic Moments was launched in 2019 and Beautiful Moments in 2020.

Magic Moments made use of online media (e.g. promotion on social media), offline media (e.g. a television series for children on Hop! TV channels), and campaign activities implemented by partner organisations, including a supermarket chain, health organisations and museums (see overview in Box 1). By contrast, Beautiful Moments focused on online and offline media only, as other activities were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Box 1: Examples of activities of the Magic Moments campaign at partner organisations

Activity booklets and signs in the Rami Levy supermarket chain – The discount supermarket chain Rami Levy, one of the biggest in the country, has co-financed and created free activity booklets for children to use when they join their parents on grocery shopping trips (see example opposite).³ The booklets contain games for children, such as mazes or quests for finding items in the store. Three types of booklet were made, with a total of 230,000 hard copies circulated nationwide across Rami Levy stores.⁴ The chain also displayed in-store signs with questions to prompt parent–child dialogue and interactions. Rami Levy promoted Magic Moments on its Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as through text messages to members of its Loyalty Club and on a billboard in Jerusalem.⁵



Rami Levy booklet cover

An activity trail through WIZO day cares – At three day care centres run by WIZO, one of the country’s main childcare providers, a trail with stickers was made that parents can follow with their children at drop-off or pick-up time.⁶

QR codes in 36 playgrounds in Petah Tikvah and 41 playgrounds in Herzliya provide families with ideas for parent–child activities – In playgrounds across these two cities, parents have been able to scan a QR code on a sign with their phone, which has led them to a website with ideas for activities they can do together in the playground, for example counting games.



Example of a recipe from the Magic Moments campaign

Recipes that parents and children can make together – Recipes suitable for making with children, along with developmental tips, were made available on an online community of parents⁷ that has approximately 2,400 members.⁸ This initiative (see example opposite⁹) was jointly developed by Rami Levy and the Centre for Meaningful Parenting in Ashdod.

Emerging data on the campaigns are promising: an independent evaluation of Magic Moments found that its reach has been larger than originally planned, that parental awareness of the campaign had increased during the campaign, that it had provided parents with practical ideas to enjoy everyday moments with their children, and that parents had started to implement the suggested activities.¹⁰

Much can be learnt from the two campaigns about how to encourage behavioural change at scale

BvLF commissioned RAND Europe to develop a case study of the campaigns to capture lessons relevant to others designing similar

behaviour change campaigns. The case study was based on interviews with key stakeholders and a review of relevant documentation. In particular, the case study analysed the events, actions, stakeholders and wider elements of the two campaigns. It focused on identifying how the campaigns reached their target group, how a partnership between a philanthropic organisation and the private sector can support behavioural change, how multichannel activities can be used in a complementary way, and the challenges associated with the campaigns.

Key factors that contributed to the success of the campaigns



1. The multichannel approach increased reach and reinforced Magic Moments' messages

Magic Moments made use of a multichannel approach to reach the target audience. This approach has taken the campaign beyond a traditional media campaign, expanding its reach to an ever-growing number of places that parents frequently visit. Parents have therefore been reminded of the messages, tips and activities that could be used in their daily routine – whether through signs in supermarkets or floor markings at their day care drop-off. The combination of the different channels in one campaign meant that parents were more likely to be exposed to its messages, and this has been perceived to have reinforced its messages and supported behavioural change.¹¹



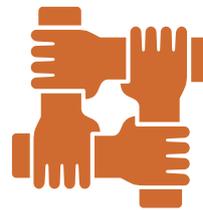
2. Experts and evidence from behavioural science have supported the campaigns

Experts on child

development, parenting, media and marketing played an important role in the campaigns.¹² First, they provided **strategic input** that helped with direction setting. For instance, they ensured that the selection of issues to address was based on a context-relevant approach through the involvement of a steering committee. BvLF's behavioural change consultant was also engaged to ensure that a **behavioural science approach informed the campaigns**.¹³

Second, the experts **served as messengers** (e.g. in videos providing tips to parents¹⁴), complementing the use of 'real parents' in the campaign.¹⁵ The campaigns selected

experts with context-specific knowledge who were skilled in communicating messages in a relatable way.¹⁶ In videos, these experts were presented as **professional role models** who could advise on real world events using real world examples in households in an engaging and creative style.¹⁷ In this way, the intention was that role models could become trusted messengers, with whom the target audience would connect.¹⁸



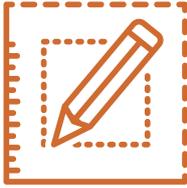
3. The partners, including those from the private sector, played a key role in campaign implementation

The **involvement and commitment of the Hop!**

team was instrumental in contributing to the success of the campaigns.¹⁹ Hop! also provided the added value of its established television channels, which were used to show the campaign's television series, as well as their marketing experience and reputation.²⁰

The diversity of the partners involved allowed Magic Moments to **reach parents and children in many aspects of their daily lives**, regardless of their background and media **consumption habits**.²¹ **The range of private sector perspectives and management styles complemented the other organisations** involved in implementing the campaigns.²²

Finally, partners from the private sector had the added value of being able to **contribute financially** to the campaign, and there was a perception from those involved that they may also have been more **flexible** than partners from other sectors, perhaps because they have fewer bureaucratic procedures to deal with or because they may be keener to look for new opportunities than, for example, government agencies.²³



4. The campaigns were tailored to the diversity of the target societies in Israel

BvLF and Hop! recognised that a dedicated campaign

was needed if they were to effectively reach Arab society in Israel.²⁴ Importantly, although Beautiful Moments benefited from lessons learned during the implementation of the Magic Moments campaign, it was not a replication of Magic Moments. Hop! and BvLF **developed tailored campaign content and distribution channels for Beautiful Moments to reach the target audience.**²⁵ This included content for different societal groups, with videos showing families from different communities in Arab society in Israel.²⁶ The recognition of these social, cultural and behavioural differences between groups is seen by campaign leaders as essential to an effective behavioural change campaign.²⁷

In addition, Beautiful Moments paid considerable attention to selecting the most appropriate channels – i.e. the ones used by its targeted audience – and focused on the distribution platforms frequently visited by Arabic-speaking parents.²⁸



5. The campaigns' messages engaged and empowered parents in a positive manner

BvLF and Hop! wanted to **show parenting in a positive**

light,²⁹ and their use of an encouraging style and clear messages appealed to parents.³⁰ For instance, instead of telling parents what to do, the campaigns focused on suggesting how each parental challenge can be turned into an opportunity to bond with children, and on encouraging behavioural change in a positive and constructive way.³¹

The campaigns sought to **show real-life parents as peer role models.** For instance, Magic Moments tried to appeal to the common challenges that parents face, such as balancing home and a busy work life, or dealing with sibling arguments. Crucially, it was conscious of messaging to parents that they should not feel guilty about these struggles.³² The campaign was informed by a deep understanding of parents' behavioural barriers and motivators, and was able to incorporate this into its content.³³

The campaigns faced several challenges



There were obstacles in the planning and development of the campaigns

Hop!'s flexibility in adapting to opportunities had a number of benefits, but also meant that at some points **planning and content development needed to catch up with the evolving aims of the campaign**. For instance, some of the partnerships could have benefitted from additional advance planning to ensure the right partners were involved early on.³⁴ The team and partners added the fieldwork activities during the campaign, and partner organisations needed time to develop the content that Hop! provided.³⁵ The Beautiful Moments steering committee also needed time to discuss the campaign's aims, the partners and stakeholders that should be involved, the style of the videos, and the kind of language to use.³⁶

Additionally, there were some **operational and practical challenges for partners**, such as finding resources and time within their organisation, and a lack of knowledge among campaign partners about maintaining social media networks.³⁷

Finally, there were instances where partners' initiatives did not materialise due to a variety of **context-specific obstacles**. For instance, one organisation ran into copyright issues when trying to make children's books available in an app.³⁸



Establishing and maintaining partnerships could be challenging

It was not always easy to establish relationships with partners. Magic Moments at times had to work hard

to convince potential partners to join the campaign. Organisations were busy, hesitant to spend money on the campaign, or had concerns about the use of online media or screens.³⁹ The campaign leaders spent time listening to and addressing concerns to secure partners' involvement.

Even where partnerships were struck, maintaining these could be challenging, for similar reasons. One approach to addressing this has been to **formalise partnerships**. This has allowed for continuity, for instance when there were personnel changes. However, this was not always possible, and in the absence of formal cooperation, some aspects of the campaigns' success depended on the goodwill of the individuals involved.⁴⁰ As such, where key people did not have the time to work on the campaign, or the campaign was not prioritised at senior levels, opportunities for partnership could be limited.



Maintaining parental engagement required persistence

Because Hop! had not planned for Magic Moments to be as long a campaign as it has turned out to be, and due to the limited time and resources, all campaign material (including the television series, theme song, music video and online activity library) had to be used more than once. This contributed to a **decline in the audience's engagement with video content** (e.g. the documentary series).⁴¹ Anticipating this in Beautiful Moments, Hop! did not publish all the content at once, instead releasing items on a weekly basis.⁴²



Although the COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge, it also provided opportunities

The COVID-19 pandemic meant that some campaign activities had to be cancelled. For instance, in Magic Moments some plans for activities in day care centres and a library had to be suspended.⁴³ Beautiful Moments had to make significant changes to its original plans, cancelling activities and conferences due to the pandemic.

On the other hand, **COVID-19 increased the relevance of the campaigns.**⁴⁴ During this time,

parents had a greater need for ideas about activities to do with their children, as well as for professional advice on parenting.⁴⁵ The campaigns adapted to this by developing a number of context-specific responses:⁴⁶ they found new ways of disseminating information, such as through newsletters and WhatsApp groups;⁴⁷ the start date of Beautiful Moments was brought forward;⁴⁸ and new partnerships were established.⁴⁹ This shows the importance of being flexible and adapting to a significantly changing environment.⁵⁰

Work on the campaigns continues

At the time of writing, the campaigns were ongoing and due to conclude at the end of 2021. **With the end-date approaching, the campaign leaders have key decisions to make.** They naturally wish to see campaign achievements maintained going forward, and are looking into different options to ensure sustainability into the future. Options range from a limited level of ongoing funding (for regular content updates) to the creation of an income-generating model or a greater level of funding to continue expanding campaign reach and partnerships across sectors and channels. One of the options explored in summer 2021 is the involvement of private sector organisations' human resource departments in

providing Magic Moments as a service to their employees.

This raises the question of where funding and direction-setting should most appropriately come from – a question relevant to many other fields in which funders operate. In the case of Magic Moments and Beautiful Moments, much will be determined by whether the government takes the lead, BVLf continues its funding in some form, the campaign adapts a business model with self-generated income, or another actor steps in. Regardless of what the future holds, those playing a role in it will have been heartened by the demonstrable possibilities for changing parental behaviour and its impact on children's development.

Notes

- 1 The word 'campaign' is used in this case study to refer to Magic Moments and Beautiful Moments as long-term initiatives with a campaign style.
- 2 Hop! Media Group (2019) *Magic Moments – Musical Clip*. As of 22 November 2021: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vglzYOxEdro>
- 3 Rami Levy (n.d.) *Children's activity booklet*. As of 22 November 2021: https://www.hop.co.il/uploads/coloring_pages/fcb4d5e185844b2281755eccc3d1b2e6.pdf
- 4 Hop! Media Group (2021) *Magic Moments – Phase 1&2: Plans for 2021* (internal document).
- 5 Hop! Media Group (2020) *Progress Report of 24th of June 2020* (internal document).
- 6 Interview with Campaign Partner 1.
- 7 The 'Mitbashlim (translation: 'getting cooked') Parents and children cook, learn and enjoy' community on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/children.cooking/>
- 8 Hop! Media Group (2021) *Magic Moments – Phase 1&2: Plans for 2021* (internal document).
- 9 Hop! Media Group (personal correspondence, 21 February 2021)
- 10 For Magic Moments: Tsurulnikov, A., Diamant, R., Daskal, E., Chetrit, D.B., Kadosh, N., Mishaan-Spiegel, T., & Newman, H. (2020) *The Magic Moments Initiative: Summative Evaluation Research Report*. Tel Aviv: The Center for Educational Technology. For Beautiful Moments, the evaluation is ongoing.
- 11 Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 3 May 2021); interviews with Hop! CEO, Hop! Partner Outreach Manager and Campaign Partner 1.
- 12 Interviews with Steering Committee Member 1 (Magic Moments campaign), Hop! Consultant and Evaluator.
- 13 Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 3 May 2021).
- 14 Interviews with Steering Committee Member 1 (Magic Moments campaign), Hop! Consultant and Evaluator.
- 15 Interview with Campaign Partner 3.
- 16 Interviews with Hop! Consultant and Evaluator.
- 17 Interviews with Hop! CEO, Evaluator and Campaign Partner 5/Steering Committee Member 5 (Magic Moments campaign); Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 3 May 2021).
- 18 Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 3 May 2021).
- 19 Interviews with Hop! Partner Outreach Manager, Campaign Partner 5/Steering Committee Member 5 (Magic Moments campaign), Campaign Partner 6, Steering Committee Member 4 (Magic Moments campaign) and Steering Committee Member 3 (Beautiful Moments campaign).
- 20 Hop! Media Group (personal correspondence, 2 May 2021); Interview with Hop! CEO.
- 21 Israel country representative and Israel programme coordinator, validation workshop, 20 April 2021.
- 22 Interview with Campaign Partner 6.
- 23 Interviews with Hop! Partner Outreach Manager, Steering Committee Member 4 (Magic Moments campaign), Campaign Partner 5/Steering Committee Member 5 (Magic Moments campaign) and Hop! CEO.
- 24 Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 3 May 2021).
- 25 Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 3 May 2021).
- 26 The Arab community in Israel comprises a number of religious groups, living in varied locations across the country and with a range of lifestyles. There are Bedouin Arabs in the North and South of Israel, Muslim Arabs throughout the country, Christian Arabs in urban areas in Israel, and Druze in northern Israel. Some groups are more religious or conservative than others. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013) *People: Minority Communities*. As of 22 November 2021: <https://mfa.gov.il/mfa/aboutisrael/people/pages/society-%20minority%20communities.aspx>; interview with Hop! Consultant

- 27 Interview with Steering Committee Member 2 (Beautiful Moments campaign); Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 10 June 2021); interviews with Hop! CEO and Steering Committee Member 1 (Magic Moments campaign).
- 28 Israel country representative, validation workshop, 20 April 2021.
- 29 Israel country representative, validation workshop, 20 April 2021.
- 30 4 out of 7 Campaign Partners. Interview with Campaign Partner 1, Campaign Partner 3, Campaign Partner 4 and Campaign Partner 5/ Steering Committee Member 5 (Magic Moments campaign).
- 31 Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 3 May 2021).
- 32 4 out of 15 interviewees: Interview with Hop! Consultant, Steering Committee Member 4 (Magic Moments campaign), Evaluator, Campaign Partner 3.
- 33 Bernard van Leer Foundation behavioural change consultant (personal communication, 10th of June 2021).
- 34 Interview with Evaluator.
- 35 Interview with Evaluator.
- 36 Interviews with Hop! Consultant and Steering Committee Member 3 (Beautiful Moments campaign).
- 37 Interviews with Campaign Partner 4, Campaign Partner 1 and Campaign Partner 6.
- 38 Interview with Campaign Partner 6.
- 39 Interviews with Hop! Partner Outreach Manager, Campaign Partner 4 and Campaign Partner 5/ Steering Committee Member 5 (Magic Moments campaign); Bernard van Leer Foundation (2020) *Cluster report* (internal document).
- 40 Bernard van Leer Foundation (2020) *Cluster report* (internal document).
- 41 Interviews with Steering Committee Member 1 (Magic Moments campaign), Steering Committee Member 4 (Magic Moments campaign) and Evaluator; Tsurulnikov, A., Diamant, R., Daskal, E., Chetrit, D.B., Kadosh, N., Mishaan-Spiegel, T., & Newman, H. (2020) *The Magic Moments Initiative: Summative Evaluation Research Report*. Tel Aviv: The Center for Educational Technology.
- 42 Interview with Evaluator.
- 43 Hop! Media Group (2020) *Progress Report 24th of June 2020* (internal document).
- 44 11 out of 15 interviewees. Interviews with Campaign Partner 1, Campaign Partner 3, Steering Committee Member 3 (Beautiful Moments campaign), Steering Committee Member 2 (Beautiful Moments campaign), Steering Committee Member 1 (Magic Moments campaign), Campaign Partner 5/Steering Committee Member 5 (Magic Moments campaign), Hop! Partner Outreach Manager, Campaign Partner 4, Evaluator, Campaign Partner 6 and Campaign Partner 7.
- 45 Tsurulnikov, A., Diamant, R., Daskal, E., Chetrit, D.B., Kadosh, N., Mishaan-Spiegel, T., & Newman, H. (2020) *The Magic Moments Initiative: Summative Evaluation Research Report*. Tel Aviv: The Center for Educational Technology.
- 46 Interview with Evaluator; Hop! Consultant.
- 47 Hop! Media Group (2020) *Progress Report 24th of June 2020* (internal document).
- 48 Interview with Hop! Consultant.
- 49 Israel country representative, validation workshop, 20 April 2021.
- 50 Interview with Steering Committee Member 2 (Beautiful Moments campaign).

The 2019–2020 case studies and the Bernard van Leer Foundation's focus on early childhood education

The Bernard van Leer Foundation has long focused on enhancing opportunities for children growing up in socially and economically disadvantaged circumstances, with a view to developing their innate potential (Bernard van Leer Foundation, 1999). The Foundation has contributed to a substantial body of work that emphasises the importance of early childhood (Van Gendt, 1998). More recently, it has turned its attention to how best to deliver early childhood services and the best policies in this field. Current knowledge on this topic is explored in its regular journals (e.g. Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2018a). As part of its approach to enhance opportunities for children, the Foundation seeks to intervene at a greater scale, for example through funding projects with national reach instead of smaller-scale interventions. In 2018 it published its 2016–2020 Transition to Scale strategy (Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2018b), and in 2019 it commissioned Harvard University, Princeton University and RAND Europe to deliver a set of case studies to document learning about implementing early childhood development (ECD) programmes at scale.

The objective of these case studies is to ensure that lessons on 'what works' in operating at scale were systematically captured, assessed and made available for other governments, practitioners and foundations to use. The Foundation was particularly interested in learning about the critical conditions for achieving sustainable impact at scale in ECD.

Sources:

Bernard van Leer Foundation. (1999) *A Legacy for Humankind. The Bernard van Leer Foundation: from profits to philanthropy*. The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation. As of 22 November 2021: https://issuu.com/bernardvanleerfoundation/docs/a_legacy_for_humankind

Bernard van Leer Foundation. (2018a) 'Advances in early childhood development.' *Early Childhood Matters* 127.

Bernard van Leer Foundation. (2018b) *Annual Report 2017*. Page 18. As of 22 November 2021: <https://issuu.com/bernardvanleerfoundation/docs/bvlf-annualreport17-digital-pages>

Van Gendt, R. (1998) 'Introducing Early Childhood Matters.' *Early Childhood Matters* 88.