TEN STEPS TO ORGANISING A BRILLIANT EVENT

1. Planning
   Set a budget and plan your year
   How much are you going to raise and how much are you going to spend?
   Aim to make a 3:1 return on every pound you invest. Try to keep costs as low as possible, but be realistic in your planning – you don’t want to go over budget. Delegate tasks between group members For example: marketing, venue hire, entertainment, refreshments etc.

2. Find the venue. Set the date
   Your venue has the potential to be your biggest cost or your biggest saving, so take time to do some research.
   Think about:
   • The space – maximum capacity, floor space, whether there’s a stage etc.
   • Technical equipment – speakers, microphones, lighting.
   • Kitchen or bar facilities – is there an alcohol licence?
   • Tables and chairs.
   • Cost – can you get it for free or a reduced price?
   • Who do you know that could get you a great venue?

3. Fundraising
   How are you going to make money from the event?
   Perhaps your main income is from ticket sales but it doesn’t have to end there. Think about:
   • Additional fundraising on the night, for example a raffle or auction.
   • Getting matched funding from a local business.
   • Introducing a minimum sponsorship target for participants.

4. Promoting the event
   Who will want to attend? Are you aiming your event at friends, colleagues or families? Make sure you advertise the event in the right places for your target audience. There’s no use advertising a family picnic on a university notice board. Once you’ve produced your posters, flyers, emails and letters, some typical promotion channels include:
   Local Oxfam shops. They might be able to put your poster up and help sell tickets.
   • Local radio stations. Most have a section on their website where you can upload events details to be read out on air.
   • Local newspapers can promote the event in their ‘What’s on’ section.
   • Social media. Create an event on Facebook and invite all your friends.
   • A local celebrity spokesperson, to help get local press coverage.

5. Selling tickets
   Firstly, make sure that each member of the group helps to recruit participants. You could set yourselves targets for ticket sales. Secondly, think about how people will buy tickets? Where possible, sell tickets in advance to be sure of a good turnout. Make sure you include information on how to buy tickets in all your promotion materials. There are several ways to sell tickets in advance:
   • Online, eg. www.wegottickets.com
   • Local box offices.
   • Virgin Money Giving (people can pay the price of the ticket and are then added to your guest list).
   • In person. To increase ticket sales, get your friends and family to help.
6. **Approaching local businesses**  
The more you can reduce costs, the more money you will raise. The best way to do this is by approaching local businesses. They may be able to help you reduce costs by supplying goods or services for free or at a reduced cost. Alternatively they may be keen to sponsor the event, for example by paying for the start-up costs of the event in exchange for advertising.

7. **Entertainment**  
Think about whether you need to hire a performer or equipment. This can be expensive, so shop around.

8. **Refreshments**  
Selling food: selling snacks such as cakes is a simple way to raise more money. Freebies: providing a meal is a great way to increase ticket prices without having to increase costs. People will often pay considerably more for a ticket if there is food provided. It doesn’t have to be anything complicated or expensive. A free drink on entry is also a nice touch. The bar: drink sales are a great way to increase fundraising. Additionally, people will often stay at an event longer if there is a bar – giving them more time to buy raffle tickets. Just remember to get an alcohol licence. If you are providing food you will also need a Food safety certificate.

9. **Keep it legal and safe**  
Making sure your event is safe and legal doesn’t need to be complicated. All you need to do is contact your local council for particular licences or permissions (see page 38). Make sure the event is safe by completing a health and safety risk assessment (see page 51). And you may be able to use Oxfam’s Public Liability insurance, so discuss this with your Regional Fundraising Manager.

10. **Evaluate**  
Once your event is over, spend some time reflecting on what went well and what you want to improve next time. Don’t leave it too long – you’ll forget the details quickly.  
Consider:  
• What was the feedback from attendees?  
• How could you improve the experience?  
• What drove up your costs?  
• Did you hit your fundraising target? Why?  
• Which activities raised the most money?  
• Can you expand the event?  
• Were there any complications?  
• Were group members and volunteers happy?  
• Did attendees engage with Oxfam’s issues?