

BRIDGING THEORY AND PRACTICE
RESEARCH DISSEMINATION SERIES: WORKING PAPER APPENDICES
ISSUE 07 | JULY 2014

APPENDICES

Reframing the evidence debates: a view from the media for development sector

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Appendix I: Methodology and contributors

This BBC Media Action Bridging Theory and Practice Working Paper, Reframing the Evidence (Debates): A view from the media for development sector, is based on 30 qualitative interviews conducted between March and June 2014.

Interviewees were purposively selected on the assumption that they would be “information-rich” (Patton 1990) and experts in the field of media and communication for development. Our primary focus was to interview practitioners working in media for development within research and evaluation or programme delivery, as well as academic experts, donors, and colleagues working in the field of media development. Some degree of “snowballing” took place with Steering Group members, and interviewees themselves, kindly providing additional advice on potential interviewees.

The interviewers were: Zoe Khor, Anna Godfrey and Kavita Abraham-Dowsing of BBC Media Action.

We recognise that the list of contributors has a Global North bias, this focus was driven by resource and time constraints. We plan to consult as widely as possible during the consultation phase on this working paper. A list of contributors is provided below.

Contributors

Susan Abbott (SG) ¹	Independent consultant, Cross-Pollinate Consulting Solutions
Anne Bennett	Fondation Hironnelle/Hironnelle USA
Vanessa Corlazzoli	Search for Common Ground
James Deane (SG)	BBC Media Action
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William Evans	DFID (Department for International Development) Research and Evidence Division
Dr Elizabeth Fox	USAID (United States Agency for International Development)
Dr Sue Goldstein	The Soul City Institute for Health & Development Communication (abbreviated to: Soul City)
Irene Guijt	Independent consultant Learning by Design
Theo Hannides	BBC Media Action
Nicola Harford	iMedia Associates – Independent Consultant
Professor Bob Hornik	Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
Caroline Howie	BBC Media Action
Dr Saul Johnson	Health and Development Africa (HDA)
Sarah Mistry	Bond
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Danielle Naugle	Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
Mark Nelson	Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA)
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¹ SG indicates that these people were members of the project steering group.

Lina Payne	DFID (Department for International Development) Research and Evidence Division
Tara Susman-Peña	Internews
Professor Monroe Price	Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
David Prosser	BBC Media Action
Lena Slachmuislder	Search for Common Ground
Professor J Douglas Storey	Center for Communication Programs, Johns Hopkins University, (JHU-CCP)
Dr S Tjip Walker	USAID (United States Agency for International Development)

In addition to the interviews, the paper draws on literature recommended by interviewees, as well as wider grey literature; please see References Section for full details. Literature was also used to inform the development of the interview guide.

A standardised semi-structured interview script was used – see below. In practice interviews were discursive and responsive to interviewees’ individual areas of expertise. All interviewees’ consent was secured and interviews were audio recorded. Where possible, interviews were conducted face-to-face; in most cases, however, they were conducted by telephone.

Synthesis of qualitative interview data was conducted at three three-hour analysis workshops.

The working paper has been drafted with input from the steering group members, and interviewees have fact-checked citations of their interviews. All errors and omissions remain the authors’ own.

BBC Media Action topic guide¹

Background

In the context of current evidence debates¹, wider practical considerations such as funding cycles and constrained budgets for monitoring, research and evaluation, as well as complex, difficult-to-evaluate interventions – BBC Media Action think there is a need to articulate what can practically constitute “evidence” for media development and media for development.

We think a practitioner-led articulation of what constitutes evidence has potential value, both for practitioners and evaluators working in the sector, and for others such as policy-makers and donors.

The paper will address:

- What evidence is useful,
- What evidence drives change, and;
- What research, evaluation and monitoring is feasible in terms of types of intervention, context and budgetary considerations?

Our hope is that the paper is developed collaboratively, with contributions from key media development and media/communication for development practitioners, evaluators, researchers and donors, including yourselves: Internews, Search for Common Ground, Fondation Horindelle, Soul City, Health Development Africa, Unicef, Bond, DFID, USAID, and academics at the Annenberg School for Communication.

We're being guided by a Steering Group which comprises Phil Davies of 3ie, Susan Abbott, a media for development practitioner, Sheila Murphy of Annenberg School for Communication at USC, and James Deane BBC Media Action's Director of Policy and Learning.

We are keen not to revisit RCT 'Gold standard' debates, but are instead interested in understanding and presenting a practical view of what can feasibly constitute evidence for our sector.

Are you happy to be cited in our paper?

Any questions before we start? Record permission

- Introduction, role, structure of research and M&E within organisation?
- What do you think evidence is?
 - Probe: formative, evaluative, outputs, 'change' - impact and outcomes, value for money, evidence for accountability, evidence for learning
- What are your expectations for legitimate evidence for our sector?
- What evidence counts (i.e. is influential) *within* [name of organisation]? Why? And in your view is this same, or different, to what evidence *should* count?
 - for programmes
 - for policy
 - for business development?

Probe as appropriate/necessary:

- What are your key sources of evidence relating to programme impact/change that inform strategy, policy positions, grant monitoring, reporting for donors, shared learning internally?
- In your view, what evidence counts (i.e. is influential) – for donors? Why? And in your view is this the same, or different, to what evidence *should* count?
- In your view, what evidence counts (i.e. is influential) – for policy makers? Why? And in your view is this the same, or different, to what evidence *should* count?
- In your view, what evidence counts (i.e. is influential) – for practitioners? Why? And in your view is this the same, or different, to what evidence *should* count?
- What are the practical challenges for evidence gathering in our sector?
- What are the dilemmas?
- What are the opportunities?
- What are your top five examples of evidence for the sector?

- What sector-leading examples would you give of:
 - Qualitative evidence
 - Quasi experimental methods
 - Mixed-methods evidence
 - Effective aggregation of evaluation evidence
 - Systematic reviews
 - Cost benefit, value for money analysis, SROI analysis
 - Outcome mapping
 - Experimental methods applied to evaluating complex development interventions, media for development (mass communication / public health campaigns / social marketing as appropriate for interviewee area of expertise)
 - Expert research
- Do you have any other reflections? Any suggestions of who it would be useful for us to speak with?

Next steps, thanks and close

Appendix 2: Examples of compelling evidence

This appendix provides details of the examples of evidence cited by our interviewees. Examples were given in response to the purposively open question: “What are your top five examples of evidence for the sector?”

As DFID’s guidance in the *How to Note: Assessing the Strength of Evidence* (2014) describes, different types of study, different designs and different methods are more or less appropriate for answering different types of research question. Categorising each reference according to the following descriptors aims to provide readers with an initial, general understanding of how each study’s findings were produced – and demonstrate the range of different designs and methods cited. As described in Section 2 of the working paper, examples cited by our interviewees included “formal” evidence, of the types detailed here, as well as examples at the level of more “anecdotal” individual stories of change.

Research type	Research design
Primary (P)	Experimental (EXP) + stated method
	Quasi-experimental (QEX) + stated method
	Observational (OBS) + stated method
Secondary (S)	Systematic review (SR)
	Other review (OR)
Theoretical or conceptual (TC)	N/A

It should be noted that we have not conducted any assessment or grading of the strength of the examples of evidence cited by our interviewees.

The following 16 annotated references are examples of best evidence cited during the interviews, which are detailed in Figure 2 in Section 2. The criteria for inclusion were that references were cited by more than one interviewee.

Each reference provides a short description of the study including its methods, findings and, where provided, implications. In some cases we also present information on the cost of the study – in terms of researcher time, travel in the case of field studies, etc. as well as the length of time it took to complete from inception to publication. This information aims to demonstrate the level of investment required to support evidence generation and shows a reliance on pro bono academic support for studies ranging from systematic reviews to intensive field studies. While every effort has been made to follow up with authors in order to provide this additional information, it remains either unavailable or partial in many cases.

In addition, examples of evidence which were cited by only one interviewee are included as a list of references at the end of this appendix. All are included in the References section at the end of this document.

1. Bertrand, J.T., et al. (2006) Systematic review of the effectiveness of mass communication programmes to change HIV/AIDS related behaviours in developing countries. *Health Education Research*, 21:4, 567–597. [SR]

Description:

This systematic review of 24 mass media interventions on changing human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-related knowledge, attitudes and behaviours was based on evaluations from developing countries published from 1990 through 2004. It found that the majority of HIV prevention campaigns had achieved positive effects across a variety of indicators, including condom use, knowledge of HIV transmission and reduction in high-risk sexual behaviour; the effect sizes, however, tended to be small to moderate (in some cases as low as a 1–2% increase, although arguably important if achieved at a population level). In at least half of the interventions studied, knowledge of HIV transmission and reduction in high-risk sexual behaviour did show a positive impact from the mass media.

On reflecting on this review in a chapter within the *Global Health Communication Handbook* (2013), Bertrand says:

“In keeping with Hornik’s findings in his edited volume of studies entitled *Public Health Communication: Evidence for Behavior Change*, this review underscores the need for alternate study designs to randomized trials as the optimal means for evaluating full coverage campaigns.”

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“I know that Jane Bertrand did a review on (mass communication) interventions and we were in there ...” Sue Goldstein – Soul City

Cited by: Sue Goldstein – Soul City, BBC Media Action colleagues, Philip Davies – 3ie

Available on: <http://her.oxfordjournals.org/content/21/4/567.full.pdf>

2. De Masi, S. (2011) *Light in the Darkness: Internews Radio in southern Sudan and the Three Areas – Findings of Community Impact Assessment. Report from Internews.* [P, OBS]

Description:

Internews launched a community radio project in southern Sudan (now the country of South Sudan) in 2006 with an estimated audience reach of 1.7 million listeners over five geographical areas. This community impact assessment and formative research involved 150 community leader interviews, 15 focus groups and an assessment of the technical and editorial skills of 25 broadcasters and community surveys in the five areas with 750 listeners. It aimed to “illustrate how listeners identify specific impacts of the radio stations’ broadcasts”, capture the development impact of the project, the value to the community of the radio station and its impact on changes in attitudes and behaviour.

Key findings included: across all five sites, 84% of people identifying their local Internews community radio station as their most popular and trusted source of information. Ninety-four per cent of people surveyed agreeing that radio had increased their understanding of the political process and 88% of those who use radio as an information source believing people in their community are more respectful to one another as a result of information they heard on the radio.

The research found that a network of FM radio stations in southern Sudan established and supported by Internews are the most important sources of information in their communities.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Four months from inception to reporting

Evidence interviewee quote:

“Internews has some good ones – South Sudan, not the most recent one – it was about the five Internews stations at the time, they mixed qual and quant, I know some people had problems with that study, but they do a good job of pulling together studies, packaging them – they are very readable, with a lot of good examples.” Anne Bennett – Fondation Hirondelle/Hirondelle USA

Cited by: Anne Bennett –Fondation Hirondelle/Hirondelle USA,
Tara Susman-Peña – Internews

Available from: <https://internews.org/research-publications/light-darkness>

3. Do, M., Kincaid, D.L., and Figueroa, M.E., (2014) Impacts of four communication programs on HIV testing behaviour in South Africa, *AIDS Care*, Sep 7;26(9):1109–17. [P, OBS]

Description:

This paper aims to evaluate the impact of four communication programmes on promoting HIV testing behaviour among sexually active individuals in South Africa. The four programmes, implemented by Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa, aimed to promote HIV prevention behaviours, as well as gender-based violence prevention, tuberculosis screening and treatment, and reduction of alcohol consumption. Launched between 2009 and 2010, they all promoted HIV testing. Data came from the population-based Third National AIDS Communication Survey 2012; 6,004 men and women who had sex within the last 12 months were included in the analysis. Multiple causal attribution analysis – using a research design that allowed respondents to make more than one attribution for a single outcome – was used to justify causal reference and estimate the impact of communication programmes. Findings indicated significant direct and indirect effects of the programmes on HIV testing behaviour. Indirect effects worked through increasing people’s likelihood of perceiving that their friends were tested and the probability of talking about HIV testing with sex partners and friends, which in turn increased the likelihood of HIV testing. Findings suggest multiple angles from which communication programmes can promote HIV testing. The study also demonstrated the use of multiple statistical techniques for causal attribution in a post-only design, where randomisation is not possible.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“The NCS (South African National HIV Communication Survey) stuff we've done has been, I think, has been very rigorous ... multilevel modelling, combined impact of communications programmes.” Saul Johnson – Health and Development Africa (HDA)

Cited by: Saul Johnson – HDA, Sue Goldstein – Soul City, Nicola Harford – iMedia

Available from: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24702270>

4. **Kincaid, D.L., et al. (2008) *AIDS Communication Programmes, HIV Prevention, and Living with HIV and AIDS in South Africa, 2006*. Pretoria: JHHESA (Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa). [P, OBS].**

Description:

A cross-sectional, nationally representative household survey of 7,006 adults 15–65 years of age was conducted in 2006 to measure exposure to AIDS communication programmes, HIV prevention behaviour, variables related to living with HIV and AIDS, and related socio-demographic variables. Multivariate, structural equation modelling (SEM) was conducted to estimate the impact of 19 AIDS communication programmes and to test three theoretical pathways by which communication has effect on condom use, getting tested for HIV, and helping someone sick with AIDS.

A widespread and substantial direct effect of exposure to 19 communication programmes was found on 13 distinct outcomes related to the AIDS epidemic, from condom use for HIV prevention to knowledge of AIDS telephone help lines, and helping someone sick with AIDS. The SEM analysis confirmed a substantial indirect effect on condom use, getting tested for HIV in the last 12 months, and helping someone sick with AIDS through its influence on three key ideational factors predicted by theory: self-efficacy of condom use, discussion of HIV testing with one's sexual partner, and knowledge of antiretroviral (ARV) treatment for AIDS. Social capital was found to have a positive interaction effect with AIDS communication exposure on helping someone sick with AIDS.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“He showed that 700,000 lives were saved through this, I don't really understand why it hasn't been taken more seriously.” Sue Goldstein – Soul City

Cited by: Sue Goldstein – Soul City, Saul Johnson – HDA, Sheila Murphy – Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California, Robert Hornik – Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, Rafael Obregon – Unicef, Nicola Harford – iMedia Associates

Available from: http://jhhesa.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/23_National_HIV_and_AIDS.pdf

5. **Mares, M.L., and Pan, Z. (2013) *The Effects of Sesame Street around the World: A meta-analysis of children's learning in 15 countries*. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 34:3, 140–151. [OR]**

Description:

The authors conducted a meta-analysis of 24 studies of the effects of *Sesame Street* from 15 countries. It is based on studies of the programme's effects, conducted with over 10,000 children as part of an effort to examine the extent to which children outside the United States (US) may learn from viewing *Sesame Street* on TV in diverse social, political, and economic circumstances – including in some of the world's economically poorest regions.

The studies examined both cognitive and socio-emotional outcomes. There were significant effects, overall, and for each of the outcome categories. Effects were significant in low- and middle-income countries, and in low-SES (socio-economic status) samples. Key findings included:

- Watching Sesame Street was associated with learning about letters, numbers, shapes, and sizes. It was also associated with learning about science, the environment, one's culture, and health- and safety-related practices such as washing one's hands or wearing a bike helmet. Finally, it was associated with more prosocial reasoning about social interactions and more positive attitudes toward various out-groups, including those that were associated with long-standing hostilities or stereotyping. "The fact that over 90% of estimates contained some control for the child's initial performance on that outcome considerably enhances the plausibility that these were causal effects on those children who were selected to participate or who chose to watch."
- Researchers found an overall effect size of 0.29. This translates into an 11.6 percentile gain (in terms of education). That is, an average child who does not watch Sesame Street is at the 50th percentile, whereas a child who watches is at the 62nd percentile.
- Moderation by methodological features:
 - Effects by outcome category: There were significant positive effects for each of the three outcome categories: d [unbiased estimate of the average effect size] = .189 for social attitudes, d = .284 for cognitive outcomes, and d = .339 for learning about the world.
 - Effects by country income: 82% of whole-sample effect size estimates came from studies conducted in low- and middle-income countries. The average effect size from these countries was significant and positive (d = .293). Most effect size estimates from low- and middle-income countries came from experimental or quasi-experimental studies (74%).
 - Effects by sample SES: There were nine studies in which researchers explicitly reported sampling children exclusively from low-SES populations. Overall, the effect of exposure to Sesame Street in low-SES samples was positive and significant (d = .413).

Cost: \$24,000

Timeline: two and a half years – from inception to journal publication

Evidence interviewee quote:

“The research that was done recently on Sesame Street looks thorough and therefore persuasive to me.” Mary Meyers – iMedia Associates

Cited by: Mary Myers – iMedia Associates, Saul Johnson – HDA, Sue Goldstein – Soul City, BBC Media Action colleagues

Available from: <http://www.cominit.com/early-child/content/effect-sesame-street-around-world-meta-analysis-15-countries>

6. Naugle, D.A., and Hornik, R.C., (2014) Systematic Review of the Effectiveness of Mass Media Interventions for Child Survival in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. *Journal of Health Communication* [SR]

Description:

Review provides “evidence that mass media campaigns can positively impact a wide range of child survival health behaviours in low and middle income countries” such as antenatal care, vaccination coverage, and early initiation of breastfeeding. These include one-off behaviours like tuberculosis testing or a vasectomy, episodic behaviours like vaccinations, oral rehydration therapy, and early initiation of breastfeeding, and habitual behaviours like nightly bed net use, hand-washing, and consumption of iron and vitamin A-rich foods. In addition, evaluations show effects across theoretical frameworks, channels, target audiences, message types and styles, and evaluation designs.

In order to draw these conclusions about the effectiveness of mass media interventions for child survival, the evaluations were sorted into stronger, moderate, and weak categories based on how thoroughly they addressed threats to inference of mass media effects. Of 111 evaluations assessed, 78 were classified as moderate and stronger evaluations. While these evaluations make it clear that many programmes have had some success in changing behaviour, campaigns with accessible evaluations reflect a publication bias. The review notes that weaker campaigns are less likely to be evaluated at all and evaluations of campaigns which show poor results are less likely to be written-up and less likely to find publication. The review states it can draw conclusions about campaigns that are accessible, but the high proportion of successful campaigns included possibly overestimates the proportion of all campaigns that are successful.

The review found that evaluations tended to rely on face-to-face interviews and self-report data. The use of more objective behavioural outcomes (such as observed hand washing after cleaning a baby's bottom) were less common. Dose-response effects on behaviour were explored in some evaluations and a small number traced a mediation pathway from exposure to outcomes, such as knowledge to vaccination coverage. In addition to behavioural effects, a number also explored effects on determinants of behaviour such as awareness/knowledge, beliefs/attitudes, self-efficacy, social norms, intentions and ideation. Some evaluations gathered data at three or more time points; others were single before-/after- measurement designs combined with statistical controls, propensity score matching, a quasi-experimental design, a panel sample, or additional analyses across levels of exposure.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“It was aiming to show what kind of evidence exists and applying fairly rigorous standards on the evidence, because the field is so diverse – there’s a mixture of everything, of formative research, descriptive studies, kind of sloppy designs, more rigorous designs – what we tried to do was to say what do we know that’s published in the peer review literature and also in grey literature and then what’s the strength of the evidence, then we asked what’s missing – and that’s trickier, what’s missing for what? To convince donors to hand over the money? To make a programme run better? Or what’s just nice to know...” Elizabeth Fox – USAID

Cited by: Elizabeth Fox – USAID, Robert Hornik/Danielle Naugle – Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, James Deane – BBC Media Action

7. Noar, S.M., et al. (2009) A 10-year Systematic Review of HIV/AIDS Mass Communication Campaigns: Have We Made Progress? *Journal of Health Communication*, (14) 15–42. [SR]

Description:

This 10-year systematic review of HIV/AIDS mass media communication focused on sexual behaviour, HIV testing, or both (1998–2007) and compared the results with the last comprehensive review of such campaigns, conducted by Myhre and Flora (2000). The authors conducted a comprehensive search strategy that yielded 38 HIV and AIDS campaign evaluation articles published in peer-reviewed journals, representing 34 distinct campaign efforts conducted in 23 countries. The articles were coded on a variety of campaign design and evaluation dimensions by two independent coders.

Results indicated that compared with the previous systematic review (over a period from 1986–1998), campaigns increasingly have employed the following strategies: (1) targeted defined audiences developed through audience segmentation procedures; (2) designed campaign themes around behaviour change (rather than knowledge change); (3) used behavioural theories; (4) achieved high message exposure; (5) used stronger (quasi-experimental) research designs for outcome evaluation; and (6) included measures of behaviour (or behavioural intentions) in outcome assessments. An examination of 10 campaign efforts that used more rigorous quasi-experimental designs revealed that the majority (eight out of 10) demonstrated effects on behaviour change or behavioural intentions. Despite these positive developments, the review concluded most HIV/AIDS campaigns continue to use weak (for instance, non-experimental) outcome evaluation designs.

In discussing the implications of the review, the authors ask the question: why, then, have so many reviewers of HIV/AIDS campaigns called for more rigorous evaluation and have so few heeded the call? They say this lack of progress is not entirely surprising, since there are a number of barriers to rigorous evaluation of campaigns. These include the high cost of rigorous evaluation, the need to roll out campaigns quickly in countries with fast-growing epidemics, and the fact that many campaigns are executed in entire regions or countries and as such do not lend themselves to randomised controlled designs. Given these reasons, they propose that at a minimum, researchers and practitioners in this area should begin a dialogue about more sophisticated approaches to evaluation of HIV/AIDS campaigns, and evaluations of national campaigns in other behavioural areas should be consulted. In addition, when weaker designs must be employed, newer sophisticated methodological innovations to control for confounding factors might be considered.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Cited by: Danielle Naugle/Robert Hornik – Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, Phil Davies – 3ie, Sheila Murphy – Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California

8. Levy Paluck, E. (2009) Reducing Intergroup Prejudice and Conflict Using the Media: A Field Experiment in Rwanda. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96 (3) 574–587. [P, EXP]

Description:

Can the media reduce intergroup prejudice and conflict? Despite the high stakes of this question, understanding of the mass media's role in shaping prejudiced beliefs, norms and behaviour is limited. A yearlong field experiment in Rwanda using listening groups tested the impact of a radio soap opera featuring messages about reducing intergroup prejudice, violence, and trauma in two fictional Rwandan communities.

Compared with a control group who listened to a health radio soap opera, listeners' perceptions of social norms and their behaviours changed with respect to intermarriage, open dissent, trust, empathy, co-operation, and trauma healing. However, the radio programme did little to change listeners' personal beliefs. Group discussion and emotion were implicated in the process of media influence. Taken together, the results point to an integrated model of behavioural prejudice and conflict reduction that prioritises the communication of social norms over changes in personal beliefs.

The evaluation relied on the research design creating the conditions required for randomisation of the sample, in this case through the use of listening groups. In practice this evaluated these groups listening to radio programmes, rather than the radio programme per se.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“One study is the Betsy Paluck study from Rwanda, it is like the Ghana study (in terms of its experimental approach) ...” Nicola Harford – iMedia Associates

Cited by: Nicola Harford – iMedia Associates, Anne Bennett – Fondation Hirondelle/Hirondelle USA

9. Snyder, L.B., and LaCroix, J.M. (2013) How Effective Are Mediated Health Campaigns? A Synthesis of Meta-Analyses. In Rice, R.E., and Atkin, C.K. (eds.) *Public Communication Campaigns*. Thousand Oaks, California, US: Sage Publications Inc. [OR]

Description:

The chapter reviews what is known about the effectiveness of health communication interventions that use media and the conditions under which they have a greater likelihood of changing health behaviours. Most of the studies included are from developed countries. The review notes that media campaign effects have improved over time in the area of HIV prevention, where there have been concentrated efforts in the past 20 years. The study notes that an important strategic issue for the field is predicting when it is effective to use media strategies, and when not. It found that media campaigns or other mediated interventions were better than interpersonal interventions without media for HIV/STD prevention, mammography and, perhaps, smoking. Combined media and interpersonal strategies worked better than media alone for youth substance prevention (Derzon and Lipsey 2002), HIV campaigns in developing countries (Snyder, Johnson, et al. 2009), and organ donor campaigns (Feeley and Moon 2009). In many domains – including smoking, alcohol, nutrition, and weight loss – media enhances the effectiveness of interpersonal interventions (Mullen, Simmons-Morton, Ramirez, Frankowski, Green, and Mains 1997).

The study is a meta-analysis of meta-analyses, looking at public health campaigns for a range of health outcomes including: HIV prevention, reduction of fat consumption, seat belt use, condom use, fruit and vegetable consumption, oral health and smoking cessation. The analysis found heterogeneity in average campaign effect sizes by health behaviour and age for adults and youth. Moderators of effect sizes included:

- Whether or not campaigns were accompanied by enforcement of laws or regulations
- Whether or not campaigns presented new information or repackaged repackaging old information
- Tightly defined target groups
- Environmental factors such as enforcement and product distribution

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“One of the great recent trends is toward this interest in systematic reviews and I concur with that; over the past five to seven years there have been a number of meta-analyses of health communication on various topics I think are useful – Lesley Snyder’s on nutrition, on family planning and a new special issue on AIDS in July that has one of her newest meta-analyses of 70 some intervention programmes. I think meta-analyses (like these) are a very compelling source for the impact of health communication.” J Douglas Storey – JHU-CCP

Cited by: J Douglas Storey – JHU-CCP, Nicola Harford – iMedia Associates

10. Vaughan, P.W., et al. (2000) Entertainment-education and HIV/AIDS prevention: a field experiment in Tanzania. *Journal of Health Communication*. 5, 81–100. [P, EXP]

Description: Entertainment-education is the process of designing and implementing an entertainment programme to increase audience members' knowledge about a social issue, create more favourable attitudes, and change their overt behaviours regarding the social issue. The study presents results of this field experiment in Tanzania to measure the effects of a long-running entertainment-education radio soap opera, *Twende na Wakati* (Let's Go with the Times), on knowledge, attitudes, and adoption of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) prevention behaviours. Multiple independent measures of effects and the experimental design of this study conferred strong internal and external validity regarding the results of the investigation. The effects of the radio programme in Tanzania included (1) a reduction in the number of sexual partners by both men and women, and (2) increased condom adoption. The radio soap opera influenced these behavioural variables through certain intervening variables, including (1) self-perception of risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, (2) self-efficacy with respect to preventing HIV/AIDS, (3) interpersonal communication about HIV/AIDS, and (4) identification with, and role modelling of, the primary characters in the radio soap opera.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“This (study) is persuasive (to me).” Mary Meyers – iMedia Associates

Cited by: Mary Myers – iMedia Associates, Sheila Murphy – Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California, Danielle Naugle – Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, Nicola Harford – iMedia Associates

11. Wakefield, M., Loken, B., and Hornik, R.C. (2010) Use of mass media campaigns to change health behaviour. *The Lancet*, 1261–71, [SR]

Description:

A review of mass media campaign outcomes – primarily of interventions in developed countries including the USA and Australia - in the context of various health-risk behaviours. These include: use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, heart disease risk factors, sex-related behaviours, road safety, cancer screening and prevention, child survival (Bangladesh and the Philippines), and organ or blood

donation). It concludes that mass media campaigns can produce positive changes or prevent negative changes in health-related behaviours across large populations. It also assesses what contributes to these outcomes, such as concurrent availability of required services and products, availability of community-based programmes, and policies that support behaviour change. They also propose areas for improvement, such as investment in longer, better-funded campaigns to achieve adequate population exposure to media messages.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“...the Wakefield, Loken and Hornik paper in the Lancet - although it includes evidence for projects worldwide, since it is probably the most cited (or will become the most cited) paper summarizing such effects.” Robert Hornik – Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania (author).

Cited by: Sheila Murphy – Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California, J Douglas Storey – JHU-CCP, Robert Hornik – Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania.

12. Yanagizawa-Drott, D. (2012) *Propaganda and Conflict: Evidence from the Rwandan Genocide*. Research paper from Harvard University. [P, QEX]

Description:

This paper investigated the role of mass media in times of conflict and state-sponsored violence. A model of collective violence was presented where mass media has the potential to increase participation in conflict by facilitating coordination, in addition to any direct effect on behaviour due to content. The study estimates the impact of Radio Mille Collines radio broadcasts on fuelling violence showed that the broadcasts increased participation in the killing. Approximately 10%, or an estimated 51,000 perpetrators, of the participation in the violence during the Rwandan Genocide can be attributed to the effects of the radio.

Cost: \$7,000 in direct costs for one postgraduate student

Timeline: 800–1,000 hours of one postgraduate student

Evidence interviewee quote:

“This paper on Rwanda by David, where they use the geographic mapping – that’s very interesting. The most interesting thing about the paper is that Radio Mille Collines only had a 10 per cent impact on people’s genocidal behaviour and I think that most people would say that the radio was fundamentally important in that genocide [so this is not so much an example of negative evidence].” Anne Bennett – Fondation Hironnelle/Hironnelle USA

Cited by: Anne Bennett – Fondation Hironnelle/Hironnelle USA, James Deane – BBC Media Action

Available from: <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/dyanagi/Research/RwandaDYD.pdf>

13. Multiple authors and sources* (2001) *Soul City Series 4 Evaluation outputs. Summary reports from The Soul City Institute for Health & Development* . [P; QEX, OBS]

Description:

The Soul City 4 Evaluation comprised six separate evaluation outputs in the form of summary reports which represent “a purely descriptive account of research findings, demonstrating impact where it has been observed”. The evaluation showed that Soul City succeeded in creating a popular and effective vehicle that fosters audience identification with characters and scenarios, and facilitates self-reflection. It competes favourably in the South African media environment and is highly valued by its target audience as a credible and entertaining educational vehicle.

The evaluation found a consistent quantitative association between exposure to Soul City 4 and the following behavioural processes:

- Television, radio and print intervention, with complementary outreach and community work, focused on HIV and AIDs and reached 79% of its target population.
- In HIV/AIDS increases in awareness and knowledge were achieved for under \$0.90 cost per person reached and with improvement in attitudes towards violence against women at a cost per person reached of under \$3. The likelihood of positive intention around domestic violence was 6.4 times higher among respondents with high levels of exposure to Soul City and around HIV/AIDS behaviour, 6.8 times higher than among those with no exposure.

***Sources:**

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- c) Hall, K. et al. (2001) *Soul City Series 4 – Sentinel Site Study*. Johannesburg: CASE.
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- e) Christofides, N. (2001) *Impact Evaluation of Soul City in Partnership with the National Network on Violence Against Women (NNVAW)*. Cape Town: Women’s Health Project.
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Associated journal articles:

Goldstein, S., Usdin, S., and Scheepers, E., Japhet, G. (2007) Communicating HIV and AIDS, What Works? A Report on the Impact Evaluation of Soul City’s Fourth Series. *Journal of Health Communication*, 10:5, 465.

Scheepers, E., Christofides, N.J., Goldstein, S., Goldstein S, Usdin S., Pate D.S. (2004) Evaluating health communication – A holistic overview of the impact of Soul City IV. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia* 15(2) 121-33.

Usdin, S., Scheppers, E., Goldstein, S., and Japhet, G. (2005) Achieving social change on gender-based violence: A report on the impact evaluation of South City's fourth series. *Social Science & Medicine* 61L 243402445.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

"I have the highest regard for what Soul City have done over a period of time, many of their initiatives could be cited as models" J Douglas Storey – JHU-CCP.

"The idea was to get together and all contribute some funding –that way [we had a] much bigger sample than [if it had been] done independently, more accurate measure of other interventions, which allows us to control for them when measuring our own intervention. We were able to measure outcome variables in relation to communications access –we were able to show that with increased access to communications interventions, people's behaviour was more positive – controlling for range of demographic variables. We're usually rivals with other organisations in fighting for funding. In this case, we're showing that the different interventions support each other and improve together". Sue Goldstein –Soul City (author)

Cited by: Tara Susman-Peña – Internews, BBC Media Action colleagues, Sue Goldstein – Soul City. Saul Johnson – HDA, Lena Slachmujilder and Vanessa Corlazzoli – SFCG, Nicola Harford – iMedia Associates, Sheila Murphy, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California

Available from: <http://www.soulcity.org.za/research/evaluations/series/soul-city/soul-city-series-4/theory-and-impact/view>

14. Schierhout G, Johnson S, Morley P. (2005) *Impact Assessment of "Takalani Sesame" Season II Programme, Report prepared for the Takalani Sesame Project at SABC Education Television. Health and Development Africa: Johannesburg, South Africa*

Description:

The *Takalani Sesame* (Be Happy Sesame) Project, an initiative of the Sesame Workshop, with funding from USAID and Sanlam, is a multimedia and multi-lingual educational programme that includes a television series, a series of radio programmes, and an outreach programme that features a print component. In February 2004, the South African Broadcast Corporation (SABC) contracted with external agencies to evaluate the impact of *Takalani Sesame* Season II programme material on three- to six-year-old children who were not in structured preschool programmes.

- Participants consisted of 175 children, 89 parents, and 20 caregivers, such as a Department of Education's early childhood development (ECD) practitioner/teacher. The children lived in a rural setting in South Africa and had no prior exposure to *Takalani Sesame*. Children in the experimental group received one of four interventions: (a) viewed 16 TV episodes without caregiver mediation; (b) viewed 16 TV episodes with caregiver mediation; (c) listened to 16

radio episodes without caregiver mediation; or (d) listened to 16 radio episodes with caregiver mediation. Mediation by caregivers involved supplementing the learning outcomes targeted during an episode with prescribed activities. Each caregiver was trained and provided with mediation materials. Children in a “control” group were not exposed to *Takalani Sesame*. The effectiveness of mediation varied depending on the medium and learning area: with television, mediation was most effective for numeracy; with radio, mediation helped in the areas of literacy and life skills.

- Researchers found that the experimental group's knowledge scores increased significantly between the pre- and post-test, compared to the control group (whose scores were lower on the post-test). Significant learning gains were made in literacy, numeracy, and life skills, regardless of age.
- At pre-test, the experimental group scored considerably lower than the control group on the areas of HIV and AIDS knowledge tested: basic knowledge, blood safety, discrimination, and coping with illness. However, by the post-test, the experimental group showed greater gains on all outcomes: a gain of 28% in the overall score, compared with an increase of 4% for the control group.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“(The study) ... showed an intervention effect ...” Saul Johnson – HDA (author)

Cited by: Saul Johnson – HDA, Sue Goldstein – Soul City, BBC Media Action colleagues

Available from: <http://www.comminit.com/early-child/content/impact-data-takalani-sesame-season-ii-programme>

15. Internews and the World Bank Institute* (2012) *The Media Map Project* [online] Available from: <https://internews.org/research-publications/media-map-project>. [S, OR]

Description:

The Media Map Project was a two-year pilot research collaboration between Internews and the World Bank Institute funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The aim of the project was to build a better understanding of the relationships between the media sector and economic development and governance, and provide an evidence base for future decision-making about media support.

The findings of this project point to the vast amount of work that remains to be done, the gaps in knowledge and the paucity of global data. It identifies the dearth of systematic tracking of spending or of evaluations of media development work, which means that few meaningful impact studies can be done. However, at the same time, the evidence identified by the study is a rich source of information about the nature and scope of outside interventions in the media sector.

Nelson and Susman-Peña conclude that: “An abundance of evidence suggests that creating stable and effective media enterprises is a core challenge of development, one that cuts across sectors, reaching up and down through societies and helping development reach deep into communities.”

***Sources**

- a) Nelson, M. and Susman-Peña, T. (2012) *A Report on the Media Map Project*. A working draft report from Internews and the World Bank Institute.
- b) Roy, S. (2011) *Overview Report: Measuring Media Development*. A report by Internews and the World Bank Institute.
- c) Aresnault, A. and Powers, S. (2010) *Review of Literature*. A report by Internews and the World Bank Institute.

Cost: Information unavailable

Timeline: Information unavailable

Evidence interviewee quote:

“[The project showed] there is actually a ton of evidence that media matters for development, it just hasn't been put into practice. There hasn't been a bridge between the evidence and the policy.” Tara Susman-Peña – Internews

Cited by: James Deane – BBC Media Action, Tara Susman-Peña – Internews and Mark Nelson – CIMA (both authors)

16. Larkin, C. and Were, R. (2014) *How do political debate programmes influence political participation?* Research report from BBC Media Action. [OBS]

Description:

This study found exposure to *Sajha Sawal* (Common Questions) to be significantly associated with an increase in political participation and discussion. How much a person was exposed to *Sajha Sawal* was also a factor; the more exposure, the greater the level of political participation and discussion. It used multiple regression at post broadcast only controlling for confounders.

Cost: £3,150 fieldwork, analysis and production

Timeline: three months approximately

Evidence interviewee quote:

“(I) thought the Nepal paper was evidence, (and) the best thing we've got in terms of (governance and political participation)...” James Deane, BBC Media Action

Cited by: James Deane – BBC Media Action, David Prosser – BBC Media Action

Available from: http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/pdf/research/nepal_research_report.pdf

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https://internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews_Indonesia_DigitalNation_2012-07.pdf
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 Available from:
http://www.internews.eu/docs/Publications/InternewsEurope_Report_Japan_Connecting_the_last_mile_Japan_2013.pdf
3. Chazaly, C. (2011) *Beneficiary Communications Evaluation: Haiti Earthquake Operation 2011.* Report by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. - Miranda Eeles, CDAC
 Available from: <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/reports/IFRC-Haiti-Beneficiary-Communications-Evaluation-EN.pdf>
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 Available from: <http://ijoc.org/ojs/index.php/ijoc/article/view/444>
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6. Deane, J. (2013) *Fragile States: the role of media and communication.* Policy Briefing 10 by BBC Media Action. – Anne Bennett, Hironnelle USA
 Available from:
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/policybriefing/fragile_states_policy_briefing.pdf
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8. Hutchinson, P. et al. (2006) Measuring the Cost-Effectiveness of a National Health Communication Program in Rural Bangladesh. *Journal of Health Communication*, (11) 91–121. – Danielle Naugle, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
9. Jaramillo, E (2001) The impact of media-based health education on tuberculosis diagnosis in Cali, Columbia. *Health Policy and Planning* 16(1) 68–73. – Danielle Naugle, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
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11. Kincaid, D.L., and Do, M.P., (2006) Multivariate Causal Attribution and Cost-Effectiveness of a National Mass Media Campaign in the Philippines. *Journal of Health Communication* (11) 69–90. – Danielle Naugle, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
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Available from: <http://www.developmentmedia.net/burkina-faso-rct-preliminary-midline-results>
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16. Pawa, D. (2013) Reducing HIV Risk among Transgender Women in Thailand: A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation of the Sisters Program. *PLOS ONE* (8) 10. – Gary Mundy, PSI
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In addition, interviewees cited 3ie's Impact Evaluations [EXP/QEX] in general, Farm Radio research, and BBC Media Action's work, among other examples of organisational level evidence bases. They also cited individual stories of change, documented outside the formal or grey literature.

Appendix 3: Priority research questions for the evidence agenda

The following are examples of research questions emerging from the interviews themselves, interview analysis and the literature. Where individual interviewees cited a research question this is referenced in brackets, all other questions are based on the authors' analysis of interviews and literature:

Health Communications

- What are the social and behavioural changes, at individual, community and health system level that will prove interventions have "worked"? (Elizabeth Fox)
- What study designs are best at measuring dose effect (to speak scientists' and clinicians' language)? (Elizabeth Fox and Saul Johnson)
- How can we better evidence behaviour maintenance and support evaluations beyond programme timelines? (Elizabeth Fox and Rafael Obregon)
- What are the most appropriate cost effectiveness measures for health communications? (Handbook of Global Health Communication²)
- Which health communication formats are most effective in reaching which audiences and why? (Handbook of Global Health Communication)
- How does the editorial and production quality of health campaigns have an impact on outcomes?
- Theory-specific questions may include:
 - What works in persuasion?
 - Do communication interventions prompt social networks to talk about health?
 - What leads people to participate to redress health conditions? (Handbook of Global Health Communication)
- What is the collective evidence that media (such as soap operas or edutainment) can have an impact on service uptake among audiences? (Mary Myers)³
- How can we develop standard items for health outcomes and drivers of health outcomes with in-country ownership? (Elizabeth Fox)

Governance

- Will information sent out in a five-year period between elections change people's actions, such as voting behaviour, participation? (Anne Bennett)
- What are considered to be important components of accountability and what are compelling indicators of media and governance interventions? (James Deane)
- What evidence is there that media either contributes to or minimises conflict in fragile states? (Schoemaker et al. 2013)⁴
- Does media and governance programming influence power relationships?
- Does media help people be active citizens in their communities?
- What leads people to participate to redress local governance issues?
- Can content analysis of election coverage over time be used to show evidence of change in practices across a range of interventions on electoral support? (David Prosser)

² Obregon, R. and Waisbord, S. (2012) *The Handbook of Global Health Communication*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

³ Question paraphrased from interviewee's comments around compelling evidence.

⁴ Question paraphrased from LSE Media and Conflict Evidence Assessment.

- What are the implications or costs of not having free and independent media in a developing country? (For instance, the absence of Radio Okapi in DRC?) (James Deane)
- What learning or evidence is there around combining mass media interventions with other accountability interventions (such as open data, community level accountability mechanisms?)

Evidence for Learning

- Can we further research partnerships by identifying common questions that are both relevant to academics (theory) and practitioners (practically relevant)?
- How can experiential learning be systematically gathered and reported?
- If monitoring data is often more time sensitive than other data, how can it be leveraged for learning? (Rick Davies)
- [As] longer term change tends to get lost – are there ways to burden share on evaluations? (Sarah Mistry)
- Does our sector need a portal – an “easy-to-use online library of research, evidence, and analysis easy-to-use online library of research, evidence, and analysis”⁵ – like those in other sectors (such as the UK’s Third Sector Knowledge Portal)?
- What are the best mechanisms to bring practice learning back into academic thinking, literature and wider public policy?
- Can we create a common understanding of literature to create comprehensive toolkits to support a shared understanding of how we bring evidence into our interventions (Rafael Obregon)

⁵ <https://cssfs10.bham.ac.uk/HeritageScripts/Hapi.dll/search1?SearchPage=srchgen.htm>

Appendix 4: A note on M&E, R&L and DME

Different organisations talk about and organise their research, evaluation and learning functions in different ways, depending on their size and structure. Examples from different practitioner organisations include:

- Research & Learning (R&L) – covering formative research and ongoing research, evaluation and organisational learning
- Innovation and Learning – focused on research for innovation in programme design and sharing learning
- Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) – focused on M&E for accountability
- MEL – monitoring, evaluation and learning
- DME – design, monitoring and evaluation
- Effectiveness and Learning – covering the 3 E's (economy, efficiency and effectiveness) and shared learning

In this paper we talk about:

- **Monitoring** in relation to grant, programme or operational management processes designed to capture performance, process outputs and results, with mechanisms to feed back information to enhance programme delivery
- **Evaluation** as often conducted separately to monitoring, and a process designed to capture outcomes and impacts, and an understanding of what has worked in a project or intervention which may be formative (or ex ante designed to inform programme design on an iterative basis) or summative (ex post conducted to understand the impact, outcomes and efficiency rather than process management of an intervention).
- **Learning** is understood as something that may be part of monitoring and/or evaluation, or which may be separate, and which is focused on the creation of real-time or retrospective feedback on how a project or intervention is delivered, what works well and less well in relation to both process and outcomes, and at a strategic level comprising insight that may inform organisational and/or sectorial learning

Size and capacity of research and evaluation

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capacity and functions vary by practitioner organisation.

Some have internal research and evaluation functions; others combine monitoring and evaluation functions in the role of country directors or programme staff, and commission others to conduct research and M&E. In this context, research is contracted out to agencies or academics.

“All of our ToRs (Terms of Reference) – from project managers in Switzerland, to country representatives, have a very strong monitoring and evaluation component ... our approach is that it can't be external to the management of the project – the key people for monitoring and evaluation are the editor-in-chief, the country representative and the project manager. Those three people are responsible for making sure that the project achieves its desired objectives, the activities are all carried out and you reach your desired outcomes.”

Anne Bennett – Hirondele USA

For those with dedicated research and evaluation staff, team size varies significantly from one or two dedicated researchers (e.g. Internews) to larger global teams (e.g. BBC Media Action, PSI, JHU CCP). Many organisations were developing their monitoring and evaluation capacity. For example, the Annenberg School of Communication aim to look at how far you can go in making statements that will be helpful and that have methodological security, integrity and a sound evidence base.

Following precedent from the health communication field, many organisations working in media development or within newer areas of development communication, such as governance, are forming collaborations with academics. In particular, collaboration with economists or development economists was common⁶.

“We are also in the process of developing two projects with Harvard, very scientific studies of impact, research teams (economists who have worked in the field of media) – using one of our media as a lab for that.”

Anne Bennett – Hirondele USA

“We are trying to be a lot more targeted around our evaluations, and where there is funding to work with people who understand peacebuilding and whatever other sectors we work on. We’re trying to be more selective and looking at opportunities for different types of studies – I think there are other organisations going down the route of partnering with MIT and doing 5–6 year studies we haven’t ruled that out, we are thinking about the right opportunities... for example we are doing ethnographic work in Indonesia at the moment.”

Lena Slachmuislder – SFCG

These difference in research and learning functions and approaches may offer some insight into why there are disconnects in terms of creating “learning organisations” and, in turn, a learning-focused sector.

It is also important to note that many NGOs do not have the size, capacity or funding to conduct evaluations at all.

⁶ Examples include Internews’ work with economists as part of Media Map and Fondation Hirondele partnering with researchers from Harvard and considering implementing a randomised control trial over three years in Mali on governance and civic engagement. The latter partnership is subject to funding and the research questions are still to be developed. However, Hirondele already works in partnership with Urtel, which has 250 community radios. They have rolled out their media development work to 20 community radio stations and plan to roll it out to another 40 stations. They aim to randomise the second roll out to enable an impact evaluation. This was seen as large step change in their approach to evaluation.

Appendix 5: Mixed methods evaluation evidence – farmer field schools

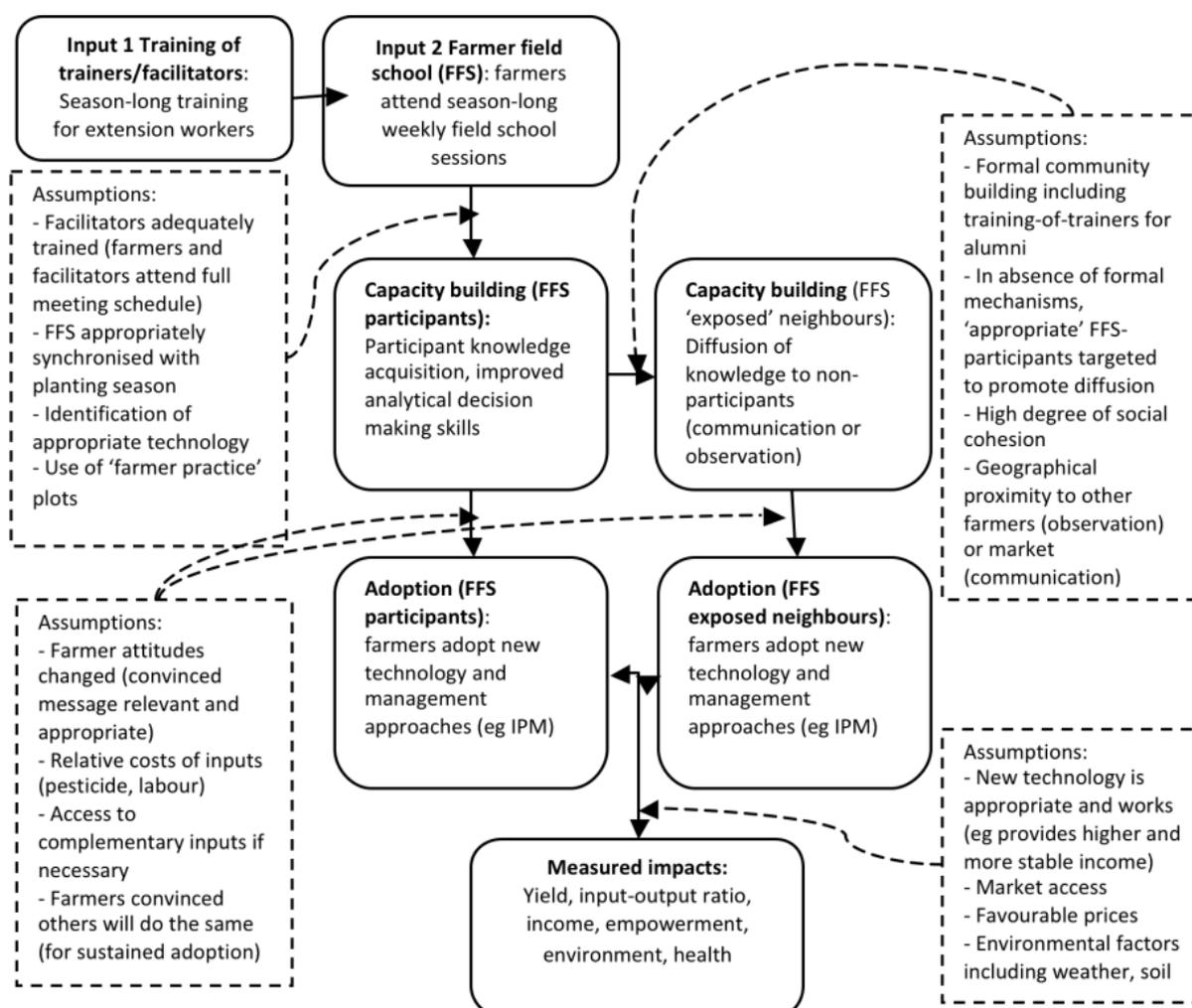
An example of how a mixed methods approach to policy evaluation can be undertaken is the systematic review of farmer field schools (FFS) carried out by Waddington et al. (2012). The central questions that the FFS review addressed were:⁷

- 1) What are the experiences of farmer field school implementation in low- and middle-income countries since the inception of the approach?
- 2) What are the effects of farmer field schools on final outcomes such as yields, net revenues and farmer empowerment, and intermediate outcomes such as knowledge and adoption of improved practices (for example, reduced use of pesticides)?
- 3) What are the effects on outcomes for non-participating neighbouring farmers living in the same communities as FFS farmers?
- 4) What are the facilitators of and barriers to FFS effectiveness and sustainability?

These questions were framed in light of the increasing use of farmer field schools – an adult education intervention that uses intensive “discovery-based” learning methods with the objective of providing skills in such areas as integrated pest management (IPM) and empowering farmers and communities – as a policy initiative across ninety low- and middle-income countries worldwide. These questions illustrate the broad range of issues that need to be addressed for policy purposes in agricultural and international development. They incorporate effectiveness, implementation and experiential issues. In order to provide answers to these questions, the review team identified evidence from experimental and quasi-experimental studies, qualitative studies, and a portfolio of evidence from documents on FFS implementation and delivery.

The review team constructed a theory of change of how farmer field schools are supposed to work in order to achieve the desired agricultural outcomes. Intermediate outcomes include increasing farmer knowledge, knowledge diffusion, and adoption of good farming practices; end-point outcomes include yields, income, environmental outcomes, health status and empowerment. This theory of change is presented in Figure 1 below.

⁷ These types of evidence questions synthesising impact (questions 2 and 3), implementation experiences, and barriers and facilitators to intervention effectiveness are relevant to and needed in the media development sector. To date, systematic reviews have largely focused on impact by specific development outcomes, such as HIV and AIDS interventions in health communications.

Figure 1 – Farmer Field Schools – Theory of Change

Source: Waddington et al. (2012)

Following systematic searching of academic databases, journals, and the grey literature, 28,000 papers on FFSs were screened by the review group, of which 460 papers met the review's scope and were assessed for inclusion at full text. After the final screen by two authors, 93 impact evaluations of varying quality that provided quantitative estimates of effects on intermediate and/or final outcomes for 71 separate FFS projects were included in the review, together with 29 qualitative evaluations discussing barriers and facilitators of change of 20 FFS projects. A review of 337 project documents was also conducted (Waddington et al. 2012).

There were no randomised controlled trials of FFS that met the review's quality standards, and only 15 quasi-experimental studies were judged to be of sufficient causal validity to make predictions for policy. The results from these 15 studies indicated that "farmer field schools do impact positively on process outcomes (knowledge, pesticide use and other adoption measures), and on outcomes relevant for farmers' standards of living (yields, revenues, environmental outcomes and empowerment), at least in the short to medium term." Further, "the impacts on agricultural outcomes were in the region of a 10 per cent increase in yields and 20 per cent increase in profits (net revenues), at least in the short term," and the size of impacts varied across projects. The authors noted that "the effects on profits are particularly large when FFS are implemented alongside

complementary upstream or downstream interventions (access to seeds and other inputs, assistance in marketing produce) for cash crops.” (All quotes are from Waddington et al., 2012.)

There was no sustainable evidence, however, of diffusion of integrated pest management practices from FFS participants to neighbouring farmers. The qualitative evidence from the FFS review, and the analysis of project implementation documents, found that the barriers to successful diffusion of knowledge and changes to farming practices included: the complexity of the curriculum, the nature of the training offered, the observability of FFS practices and their relative advantage compared to other farming practices, existing levels of social capital, access to seeds and social networks, assistance in marketing produce, and the ways in which FFS programmes are targeted. The top-down transfer of technology for an intervention that is intended to be a “bottom-up” participatory-transformative approach to empowerment may also hinder successful implementation and effectiveness.

Taken together, this combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence, using controlled and uncontrolled evaluation designs, provides decision-makers with a sound and broad evidence base upon which to make future decisions about FFSs and agricultural development in low- and middle-income countries. This demonstrates the value of a mixed method approach for making sound decisions, without privileging any particular evaluation method, design or paradigm.

Appendix 6: Methodological challenges

Examples of methodological challenges not particularly specific to media for development, but cited by interviewees, are provided below:

Self-report data – much of the data used by the sector is in the form of responses to self-report questions. There are a number of criticisms of this type of question, concerning bias and quality. While the general approach to addressing such criticisms has been triangulation with service-level data – to unpick any differences between what people say they do, and what they actually do – this also presents a number of challenges, with service-level data being patchy/poor quality/unavailable, see data inadequacies below. This challenge is acknowledged in DFID’s recent response to an external evaluation of HIV and AIDS behaviour change programmes in South Africa:

“Any evaluation of behaviour change must ultimately rely on self-reported behaviour as direct observation is impossible and change in resulting HIV incidence is only measurable with a considerable time lag and would be subject to various biases and confounding factors that would limit the conclusions of such a massive and costly exercise. We therefore have to accept that an evaluation such as this one, relying on self-reported behaviour is the most rigorous methodology possible in this context. The evaluation team enhanced the robustness of results by an extensive multivariate regression analysis to take various (known or estimated) biases and confounding factors into account.”

External Evaluation of the Southern African Regional Social and Behaviour Change Communication Programme, DFID Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

Capturing long-term change – Interviewees agreed that data capture currently tends to happen quite soon after broadcast, which often misses questions about if, and how, any behaviour change is maintained over time. Short-term data capture also tends to miss the opportunity to capture data to say anything about “dose response”, or the level of media effects, or to consider other concurrent or subsequent changes that may affect long-term outcomes. There is also a tendency to miss unanticipated outcomes.

“Longer term change tends to get lost – are there ways to burden share on evaluations?”

Sarah Mistry – Bond

Data inadequacies – For example, in many developing and conflict-affected countries data gathering is expensive and there is a dearth of existing data, such as a lack of national data sets or data from market research companies, that can inform programming, sampling frames or evaluations.

“I’ve never been keen on the ‘if a tree falls in a forest’ view of evaluation (if there’s no one there to hear the sound, we don’t have evidence that it made one). Some of the most needed and most important development work, including media development support, takes place in countries where data is extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to collect. We need to work in these contexts and do what we can to generate the best data we can. If we can’t generate data we need to be creative in working out what we can do. The evidence base can’t rest only on where the best data exists. We need to be bolder in acknowledging that and more creative in adapting so we can generate credible evidence despite it.”

James Deane, BBC Media Action

Replicability – Interviewees talked about the challenge of if and how evidence and learning from media for development evaluation can have immediate practical application to more than one context. The highly localised specificities of particular media landscapes and particular interventions, means replicating studies and generalising learnings can be limited.

Bias – Although not specific to media communication, interviewees acknowledged that even particularly compelling evidence is rarely bias free, in relation both to sampling and response bias, and questions of independence (see above).

“No study is problem free. It is important to recognise that there isn’t that one perfect evaluation.”

Danielle Naugle – Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania

“Is there any way you can get a sufficiently big randomised sample to have all those other factors, those multi-level factors, evenly represented and experimentally controlled for? The answer is probably no.”

Philip Davies – 3ie

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Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge Philip Davies who wrote a section of this paper and Elizabeth Fox who contributed the evidence summit case study. They would also like to thank all those who gave generously of their time to be interviewed. Special thanks to the steering group: Susan Abbott, James Deane, Philip Davies and Sheila Murphy, who kindly advised on and reviewed draft versions of this working paper. In addition, the authors would like to thank Delia Lloyd, Sonia Whitehead, Caroline Sugg and Sarah Lister for their feedback.

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The content of this working paper is the responsibility of BBC Media Action. Any views expressed in this paper should not be taken to represent those of the BBC itself, or of any donors supporting the work of the charity. This paper was prepared with funding from the UK Department for International Development, which supports the policy and research work of BBC Media Action.

Series commissioning editors: Kavita Abraham-Dowsing and Anna Godfrey

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