Building Disaster Resilient Communities

Evaluating the Impact of the BBC WST's radio programme *New Home New Life* on Disaster Risk Reduction and Related Messages

Results from a Qualitative Research in Afghanistan

BBC World Service Trust
Research & Learning Group

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1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.1. BBC World Service Trust

The BBC World Service Trust (www.bbcworldservicetrust.org) uses the creative power of media to reduce poverty and promote human rights by inspiring people to build better lives. We partner with civil society, the media and governments to build long-term development solutions by:

- Producing creative programmes in multi-media formats that inform and engage audiences around key issues;
- Strengthening the media sector through building professional capacity and infrastructure; and
- Applying rigorous research so that we can measure impact and value for money and produce information that informs our partners and the work of the BBC World Service Trust.

Research underpins every aspect of the BBC WST’s work – from determining campaign strategy and messaging priorities to pre-testing output production and impact evaluation. The research is managed by the BBC WST Research and Learning Group staffed by research professionals based in London and ten project offices in different countries.

In Afghanistan the BBC WST’s pioneering programme Afghan Education Projects (AEP) has been operating for more than 14 years now.

1.2. Afghan Education Projects (AEP)

AEP was initially set up in 1994 to provide informative programming to refugees, IDPs and the rural population of Afghanistan that had little or no access to information on issues such as health, governance and rights. In 2002, the project moved back to Kabul from its previous home in Peshawar and has continued to produce a wide range of programming output for Afghan audiences.

AEP is now the largest single media-for-development project for Afghans run by Afghans, with over 300 producers, reporters, writers, actors and technical staff involved. It produces three episodes of the soap opera New Home New Life (NHNL) in Dari and Pashto every week, which is broadcast on the BBC World Service. Weekly radio educational feature programmes provide back-up information on the health (Health and Life), rural (Village Voice), urban (City Voice) and governance issues (People Talk) that arise from the drama.

AEP is funded by a number of donors, including British and other government departments, as well as international development institutions.
A 2007 survey\(^1\) indicates that 13 years since its start, *New Home New Life* was still the most popular cultural programme on radio in Afghanistan with 48% listening on a weekly basis. 66% of respondents in the 2007 BBC World Service MC&A national survey of Afghanistan were aware of *New Home, New Life*, and 60% had listened at least once. A further external survey in 2007 found that more than 14 million people listened to NHNL at least once a month\(^2\). It has proved to be an ideal medium for putting across educational messages on key developmental themes such as health, gender equity, good governance, and sustainable rural livelihoods. Major subjects covered in *New Home, New Life* have included mine awareness, repatriation, nutrition and malnutrition, drinking water, livestock management, issues related to poppy cultivation, and basic hygiene.

In July 2009, the BBC WST’s research and learning department as part of an ECHO funded project, conducted a qualitative study to assess the impact of NHNL on audience knowledge, attitudes and practices with specific reference to disaster preparedness and management. While on one hand the results are expected to provide feedback on the programme effectiveness in raising the awareness of disaster related issues among the general populations, on the other hand the findings will enable the NHNL programming team to develop messaging related to disaster preparedness and management for inclusion in future programmes.

This report outlines the key findings of the qualitative study.

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\(^1\) BBC MC&A Survey 2007

\(^2\) The BBC World Service Trust and Afghan Education Project – Results from a National Survey in Afghanistan, D3 Systems and ACSOR-Surveys, fieldwork conducted in October 2007
2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

A major objective of the research was to assess audience knowledge, attitudes and practices with regard to disaster preparedness/management among NHNL audiences.

Specifically, the research sought to understand various issues such as:

1. Awareness of different types of disasters occurring in Afghanistan, the factors that make some geographic areas prone to disaster and factors that increase vulnerability of certain populations to disasters – specifically women, children and older populations.
2. Awareness of methods/techniques that can be used for reducing risk and increasing preparedness to manage response to different types of disasters.
3. Attitudes towards sharing responsibility at individual and community level for disaster risk reduction and management.
4. Prevalent behaviours/practices towards disaster risk reduction and management at individual/community level.
5. Opinion about current levels of preparedness at the community level and key barriers/motivators towards preparedness.
6. Experiences related to past disasters, if any, and needs for improving preparedness to meet any disaster in future.
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Study design

The research team conducted qualitative research using Focus Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews among NHNL listeners. To get a comparative perspective of the impact on regular listeners, two focus groups were also conducted among non-listeners.

3.2. Research Instrument

The research team developed discussion guides (for listeners and non-listeners) in consultation with the creative and drama production team in Kabul. The discussion guides were translated in Dari and Pashto, and fine-tuned after pre-testing for audience comprehension and discussion flow, before conducting the focus groups across various provinces in Afghanistan.

3.3. Research Process

The audience research team in Kabul identified and trained male and female investigators to moderate focus group discussions and to conduct individual in-depth interviews in the districts where they live. In total, 10 investigators were trained and conducted Focus Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews in 8 villages across 4 provinces: Kandahar, Khost, Nangarhar and Laghman. These provinces were chosen because of their proneness to natural disasters like floods, droughts and earthquakes. Male investigators conducted focus groups with males while female investigators conducted focus groups and in-depth interviews with female respondents. Discussions and interviews were conducted with both listeners and non-listeners of AEP’s radio programme New Home New Life. Interviewers first went around identifying listeners and non-listeners of the programme in each of the chosen villages. Focus groups were then conducted separately with listeners and non-listeners in a central place in the village, or the home of one of the participants in the case of women respondents.

Our research team faced many challenges in conducting this research. The researchers in Afghanistan face grave danger and threat to life when traveling to rural areas. They cannot stay late in the villages to conduct the focus groups or interviews at times when the rural populations are free from their work. Women researchers in particular face great danger to their lives from insurgents and criminal elements. Rural communities are often not willing to speak freely on issues pertaining to their lives from fear of the Taliban. They may view the researchers with suspicion and give “politically correct” answers to the questions instead of revealing their true feelings and opinions. Women, in particular, do not allow the group discussions or interviews to be recorded.
fearing that their interviews will be broadcast on radio, which would make them and their families a target for the Taliban. Also, older women often do not allow younger women - their daughters and daughters-in-law - to attend focus groups or interviews fearing that the researchers will “corrupt” them with their ideas. Finally, researchers from a particular tribe or ethnic background do not gain easy acceptance among villagers of a different tribe. Although Dari and Pashto are widely spoken in most parts of Afghanistan, many areas such as the Tajik, Uzbek and Turkmen regions have different dialects and languages. Hence the delay in the two-tier research planned for January and June and the need to request a contract amendment.

We therefore chose and trained men and women from different provinces to overcome the barriers of language and ethnicity. Also, it was relatively safe for researchers to travel within the regions to which they belong. Our researchers had to travel many times to each village to gain the trust of the villagers and seek their agreement to participate in the group discussions and individual interviews. Our researchers traveled in groups of two or more so that they could divide the tasks of conducting interviews and recording the responses by taking notes between them. They also felt safer traveling to far-flung rural areas to conduct the research. Only in some cases were our researchers allowed to record the group discussions with men.

Once the group discussions and interviews were completed, the research team transcribed the interviews into English to conduct content analysis. This report is based on the key findings emanating out of the content analysis. Efforts have been made to capture the views and opinions of the audiences by quoting their responses verbatim where relevant.
4. ANALYSIS OF KEY FINDINGS

4.1. Radio Listening

When asked about the time of listening to radio the participants mentioned different times of the day – morning, afternoon, evening and night time indicating that there is no fixed time when they listen to radio. People seem to be listening to radio at different times as per their convenience. Men mentioned listening to radio at work— in their fields, in shops, with friends and at home, while women mentioned listening at home when doing household chores, tailoring and other work. People mentioned listening to different stations – BBC Radio, Radio Azaadi, Wolus Ghag, Salaam Watander, Deh Soli Paigham and local stations like Radio Khost, Laghmaan etc.


Those listening to different radio stations mentioned listening to news, music and songs, programmes on health matters (like Rogh Zhuwand), religious matters, and Islamic education programmes. Religious programmes and programmes on Islamic education were mentioned by a significantly higher number of respondents from Kandahar province.

4.2. Listeners of New Home New Life

Those listening to BBC Radio mentioned listening to the drama *New Home New Life* and various features namely *Your World*, *Castle of A Thousand Windows*, *Village Voice*, *Health and Life* and news on BBC Radio. A majority of the listeners of drama *New Home New Life* were regular listeners and had listened to many episodes of the drama. Participants recalled different characters from the drama and the messages they got from the characters in different episodes.

“I like Nek Muhammad’s family – it is a literate family and this family saved their son Karim from vagrancy. And it is a good lesson for other families to be careful about their youngsters.” Male listener, Bahramkhil (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai)

“I like Jandad and Zalmai’s role. There was no one to support them but they improved their lives on their own and supported their family. My brother is also disabled and after hearing that Jandad learnt tailoring, I encouraged him to learn this skill and now he is a good tailor.” Male listener, Bahramkhil (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai)
“I like Rahimdad’s role, especially when he struggled with Nazer. And Rahimdad complained to Jabar Khan about Nazer. We learnt from the drama that we should solve the problems with the help of elders and Jirga (local council) and with a lot of tolerance e.g. when the elders solved Adam Khan and Majeed’s conflict.” Male listener, Bahramkhil (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai)

People mentioned learning various things from the drama New Home New Life such as sending their daughters to school, saving young people from drug addiction, learning to be self-sufficient and taking care of their environment. But the most common message echoed in almost all the focus groups was the message of solving day-to-day problems amicably with the help of elders and the Jirga (local council) and not with guns, as a woman put it:

“I have learnt many things about solving quarrels in the drama when Adam Khan and Majeed quarreled. People quarrel very often in our village. Quarreling pointlessly about lands is not good. People shouldn’t use guns for solving quarrels. Quarrels should be solved by elders in the village. It is a good message for the rural folk.”

“Young people to listen to radio programmes encouraging the Government and insurgents to talk to each other about peace.”

“Although BBC’s educational programmes have tackled many issues, it will be good if you could make a programme to stop the use of illegal force, because we have many such cases in Afghanistan and it can help audiences greatly.” Male listener, Bahramkhil (Esmailkhil & Mandozai District), Khost Province.

Years of civil war has made people realize that guns and bloodshed cannot resolve conflict. People want peace and love for each other to return to their lives. This came out clearly when we asked the participants to name the important issues they would like to hear on radio.

“We would like to listen to radio programmes encouraging the Government and insurgents to talk to each other about peace.”

“We would like to hear more programmes against cutting trees. Trees shouldn’t be cut for timber and wood”. Male Listener, Ghondi, Khost Province.

People have also become aware of environmental problems and expressed the need for more programmes on conserving the fragile ecosystem.
“We have seen many droughts – our water is depleting and there is not enough for us now. Make a programme which can teach us how to irrigate big farms with little water. Is it better to conserve water by making reservoirs or is there another method”. Male Listener, Haji Nazar Jan garden, Kandahar Province.

“It will be good if you make a programme about ill effects of smoke due to burning feather and plastic.” Male listeners, Ghondi, Khost Province.

Male respondents wanted to hear more programmes on agriculture related issues – which crops to sow and how to get good harvests, tackling problems related to irrigation, pests, weeds and information related to livestock keeping.

“See this is farmland and most of the people are farmers so you should give them information regarding land. I am a shepherd so I need information on how to keep my cattle or sheep healthy or how can I prevent them from getting sick.” Male listener, Nawiday (Daman District), Kandahar Province.

“Yes, we have a lot of problems. One big problem is that when we cultivate kitchen garden and the plants grow a little bigger some knots are found in their roots which get bigger with time then getting out of the soil and make a stem on this stem which has no leaves. Some flowers with indigo colors grow on it which make the tomato, watermelon, melon, cucumber and pumpkin plants weak with withered leaves and finally the whole plant dies. We call this (Souz gul) and when we talked with Directorate of Agriculture, they were unable to find a solution for this. If you give us information about this it will be so good.” Male listener, Haji Nazar Jan Garden (Dand District), Kandahar Province.

Women on the other hand indicated a need for more programmes on women’s rights and issues related to family matters.

“In this drama, nothing has remained that we don’t face in our daily life. All problem solving issues are broadcasted in this drama. You have also mentioned about women’s right according to Islam and people. We are Pashtuns and this will affect our lives.” Female Listeners Bahramkhil (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai), Khost Province.

“If radios broadcast programmes which help the males to understand that women are not only to stay at homes, they can also work out of the homes. Most of the males believe that women must not get out of home.” Female listeners, Sakhra Village (Aleengaar District), Laghman Province.
Listeners also recalled children’s programmes on carpentry, the visit to Estalif to see earthenware and the visit to the shrines in Kandahar to learn about the culture of Afghanistan, as well as messaging on child rights and child development:

“\textit{There was a programme which had good advice for children. We learnt that parents should avoid fighting in front of their children and behave properly – that is how we can encourage them to follow the right way.}” Male listeners, Bahramkhil Village (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai), Khost Province.

“I learnt through the children’s programme not to engage them in labour in order to earn money. Labour will stop them from getting educated and it is harmful for their health as well.” Female listeners, Bahramkhil Village (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai), Khost Province.

However, most listeners from Kandahar province were not regular listeners of the BBC drama. They did recall some episodes but were not able to recall the names of characters or the stories very clearly.

“That old woman who cultivated vegetables with the watermelon kitchen garden.”

“That son of the barber named Allahdad or something like that, who is lost now and went abroad with the smugglers”.

“That heroin addict, who stole the rug which led to many issues, close to many people getting killed in it. We admire that mediator who mediated between them and made them settle their differences peacefully”. Male listeners, Haji Nazar Jan (Dist. Dand) Kandahar province

\textbf{4.3. Knowledge & Attitudes Towards Preparedness for Earthquake}

When asked if they recalled any earthquake in their area in the recent past most respondents mentioned that they have not seen or heard about any major earthquake in recent years. The respondents from Khost province in particular mentioned that they have not heard about earthquakes in their region for a long time because it is not prone to earthquakes. Some respondents mentioned hearing about earthquakes in China, Indonesia, Jalalabad, Kashmir etc. However, most respondents who had listened to \textit{New Home New Life} were aware of the important messages related to earthquakes such as:
1. The houses should be built with the help of an engineer to have resistance against earthquakes. The foundation, walls and roofs should be strong to withstand the tremors of an earthquake.

2. Things should not be hung in the room otherwise during the earthquake they may fall and cause injuries. Shelves should not be placed loose on the walls, and things which are hanging should be tied to the walls so that they don’t fall easily.

3. Nothing should be placed near to the exit doors so that people can run out easily during the earthquake.

4. Important documents, first aid and other important things should be kept safely in a place from where they can be retrieved easily when disaster strikes.

Recalling the drama episodes on the earthquake, the audiences mentioned that Lalbaz’s son Shams was injured by the wall-clock that fell on his head and Shams could not escape from the room because the cupboard which was placed near the door fell during the earthquake and blocked the exit. They also recalled Teacher Rahim telling his students to run out in the open immediately when an earthquake strikes and to tie down things hanging on the walls and not to have any loose shelves in the room. Most audiences also recalled that Aqila gathered chinaware and glass utensils from the shelf to prevent injuries and damage during the earthquake. When asked which things should be taken when running outdoors during an earthquake, the respondents mentioned that first aid, food-stuffs, and important documents should be taken. They mentioned that such things should be kept safely in a place from where they can be retrieved easily during an emergency.

\[\text{“Gul Khan of Di Payan village put some food stuffs and first aids and some other necessary items in a box so that he could use them in emergency time. And it was a good message for the audience.” Male listener, Village Ghondi, Khost Province}\]

Audiences also recalled Engineer Shir Mohammed’s advice to uncle Gul Mohammed’s son for building earthquake resistant houses. According to the audiences, the engineer advised him to build the house on a strong foundation, place appropriate beams inside the walls and build the roof with strong construction material so that the house could withstand tremors of an earthquake.

\[\text{“When Gul Muhammad’s son wanted to rebuild his house he asked Engineer Shir Muhammad for some advice so that his house becomes resistant against earthquake to some extent. Engineer Shir Muhammad told him that his house foundation and walls should be firm and strong. He should use strong iron and wooden beams for his roof.” Woman listener, village Behramkhil, (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai)\]
By contrast, those who had not listened to *New Home New Life* did not have knowledge about specific issues related to earthquakes. While some respondents gave general answers in response to specific questions on disaster preparedness and management, most did not exhibit correct knowledge on disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

- “How can we know when an earthquake takes place and what to take out at that time so we can not take anything out at the time of earthquake? We must try to take children and elders out of home.” Woman non-listener, village Behramkhil, (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai)

- “Our elders have told us that when an earthquake takes place, we have to move at least seven steps otherwise we ourselves would be responsible of our death.” Woman non-listener, village Behramkhil, (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai)

- “Even in some developed countries earthquakes have destroyed very firm buildings and buildings which are resistant against earthquake so we don’t know further about it. We can only say it is Allah’s will.” Woman non-listener, village Behramkhil, (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai)

### 4.4. Knowledge & Attitudes Towards Preparedness for Floods

When asked about the incidence of floods in their area, respondents in almost all provinces mentioned recent flooding (April/May 2009). The respondents from Khost province in particular mentioned the devastation caused by floods, with many deaths and much damage to property and agriculture. Most
respondents who had listened to *New Home New Life* were aware of the important messages related to floods such as:

a. Houses should be built with an engineer’s advice to have strong foundation and structure in areas away from the path of the floods.

b. Villagers should build embankments and protective walls to prevent water bodies and canals from flooding.

c. Important documents, first aid kits and other important things should be kept safely in a place from where they can be retrieved easily when disaster strikes.

d. People should not venture into flooded areas to prevent getting swept away by water currents.

e. People should use boiled water to prevent water borne infections like cholera, diarrhea etc. after the floods. Also people should use preventive measures like mosquito nets to prevent incidences of malaria caused by mosquitoes breeding in stagnant water.

Recalling the drama episodes on floods, the audiences mentioned that Engineer Shir Mohammed had advised Janbaaz to construct a strong foundation and structure for his house and to build the house away from the floodways. However, stubborn Janbaaz did not listen to Shir Mohammed's advice and his house was washed away when the floods came. They also mentioned that Janbaaz was careless in putting his house deed near the wall instead of putting it in a box. As a result he lost the deed when the wall collapsed during the floods. The respondents also recalled the story of Majeed Khan getting swept away with the currents when trying to collect logs of wood from the water. Gul Khan saved him from drowning and gave him first aid to get water out from his stomach.
When asked about the precautions taken by inhabitants of the Di-Payan village, the respondents mentioned that the people from the lower village decided to build a stone wall to prevent damage from floods to their agricultural land. NHNL listeners also recalled correctly that Akbar filled the empty bags with stones and sand to prevent damage due to floods. They recalled the doctor telling Karim that his diarrhea was caused by unclean water during the floods which contaminated the regular water sources. Audiences also mentioned that floods are caused by indiscriminate felling of trees, and that they should plant trees and bushes on the mountains to prevent flooding in future.

🔹️ "Also the trees in the forest have been cut in our country that is why the flood is coming so intensely and powerfully in the villages and it damages a lot. We should not cut trees from the forest- instead we should extend the forest and so we can prevent floods. The villagers do not have money to build the wall but we should decide that every villager can work and take part.” Male listener, Village Bahramkhil, Khost Province

🔹️ “The forest has an important role to prevent the flood because most the water is absorbed by forest and bushes. It also prevents the water pressure”. Male listener, village Behramkhil, (Dist. Esmailkhan & Mandozai)

By contrast, those who had not listened to New Home New Life blamed the Government and the municipal authorities for not taking adequate measures to prevent floods.
Female non listener, Khost province

“The municipality hasn’t made gutters to take the water out of the residential areas.”

Female non listener, Khost province

“The government hasn’t taken any measures for such disasters and would never take. It builds bridges with low quality so they get destroyed even by small floods and less water.”

Female non listener, Khost province

“I don’t know how to make water clean and drinkable. It would better to clean canals, bring water from other areas or use tap water. If we don’t have access to tap water or clean water, we can boil the water we have and then use it.”

Female non listener, Khost province

“We don’t know the role of forests and bushes. We just know that trees separate water and don’t let water to flow together. On the other hand bushes absorb water and make it less and prevent it from destroying houses.”

Female non listener, Khost province

4.5. Knowledge & Attitudes Towards Preparedness for Droughts

When asked about incidences of droughts in their area, respondents in most areas mentioned the damage caused by drought. They recalled how people lost their livestock, their farmlands became barren, they faced food and water scarcity, prices of essential items rose in markets and the water tables went down. People had to sell their livestock cheap to save them from dying, and also to generate resources for their own survival.

When asked how they managed to get water during the times of drought, the respondents mentioned numerous problems faced by them in getting drinking water and water for use in their households, farms and for their livestock. They mentioned that those with resources and money could dig tube wells deeper to get water for irrigating their farmlands while others bought water from private water tankers. But the poor people and majority used animals, carts and vehicles (tractors) to ferry water from far away sources.

“We brought water from faraway place. There was a well and we used livestock and wheelbarrow. Some people bought water sold by tankers. We used still water for our livestock and decreased their number by selling them and didn’t have lots of cattle in drought years.”

“We had owed all our money to drill deep wells. It made us too tired, and its result was not good, also. As we got tired on it but still our production were less and expenses much. Previously, our
country was like forest but, now it is like desert, the drought made us suffer big losses.” Male listeners, Haji Nazar Garden (Dand Garden district), Kandahar province

Most respondents were able to recall how Piru Nomad, who had lost his herd during the drought, raised a new herd with a few animals and was able to restore his herd once again in due course. They also recalled that in Di-bala it was Abida, Ghaffar’s sister, who prepared a nursery of the saplings which she later sold in the village and district bazaar at a suitable price. They also recalled that when her plants suffered a disease she took them to the district agricultural clinic. She sprayed her plants with the pesticide she got from the clinic, and the plants became healthy again.

“yes, I remember that when his (Piru Nomad’s) herd was destroyed, he did not lose his determination and resolve. He started raising his herd with one or two ewes, and finally he was able to restore his herd.” Male listener, Haji Nazar Garden (Dand Garden district), Kandahar province
“Abida prepared the nursery of seedlings in all villages in the area. Preparing nursery has lots of benefits like people can rehabilitate gardens and parks; and Abida could solve her economical problems to some extent. It was a good lesson for us how to prepare a nursery and how to take care of them from diseases.” Female listener, Bahram Khel (Ismale Khel & Mandozai Districts), Khost province

The audiences in most villages recalled that the public garden trees dried in the district bazaar because of drought and fighting. When asked about the benefits of tree saplings they mentioned that planting saplings can help protect the environment as well as give economic benefits.

“IT has lot of advantages, you can either sell it in the market and get a good price or you can plant it to make a garden which helps the environment.” Female listener, Haji Nazar Garden (Dand Garden district), Kandahar province
5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

There is clear evidence from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews that the audiences of *New Home New Life* not only recalled the characters and the storyline of the episodes related to disaster preparedness and management, they also played back the messages related to disaster risk reduction very clearly, narrating specific instances from the programme episodes. Both male and female listeners across provinces could recall the messages very clearly. Also encouraging is the fact that some of them even reported taking actions inspired by the drama to prepare for disasters in their respective villages and families. It is clear that people want peace and harmony to return in their lives and this reflected in their request to the BBC for programmes to be broadcast that will promote peace among the militants and the Government. In the context of this background, their engagement with NHNL characters and story lines was quite good.

By contrast, the non-listeners of *New Home New Life* gave very general and vague responses to specific issues related to preparedness for and management of disasters. The responses ranged from lack of awareness to myths and misconceptions about the causes of disasters and mitigation of the impact of disasters. While the listeners sounded motivated and prepared to deal with natural disasters, the non-listeners sounded despondent blaming the Government for not taking adequate steps for disaster prevention and mitigation.

5.2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the programme *New Home New Life* should continue the broadcast of messages related to disaster risk reduction. It may be useful to include more messages related to governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the area of disaster risk reduction – so that people can approach these organizations and work with them to reduce disaster risk. The audiences appear keen to follow the advice given to them though the drama, but may benefit further if advice is given on specific issues such as:

1. Engineering advice from government departments for those wanting to build disaster resistant houses.
2. Startup advice for those wanting to develop plant nurseries for business as well as for afforestation within their villages.
3. Low cost and effective solutions for building embankments in flood prone areas.
4. Low cost and effective solutions for water harvesting at individual and community levels. This has the double benefit of preventing flood and droughts, at the same time.
5. Consultation on dealing with post disaster trauma.
6. Assistance for preventing the spread of infectious diseases during and after disasters.

It is further recommended that messages related to disaster risk reduction be woven within the regular drama story lines – such as those dealing with issues related to agriculture, women, health, education etc. These issues are of immediate relevance to the audiences attracting them to listen to the programmes regularly. This way even those who could not listen to the disaster related episodes for some reason will continue to get the messages with regular episodes. And for those who did, it will continue to serve as a reminder so that communities don’t become complacent about disaster preparedness in normal times.

Although audience engagement with the episodes on floods appeared to be higher than the other two storylines – earthquake and droughts - it is important to continue the messaging on all three. The creative and production team could also think of including messages/ storylines on other natural disasters like avalanches, landslides, mudflows, blizzards, and cyclonic storms depending on the occurrence or proneness to such disasters in Afghanistan.