

Dear everyone,

I wish to thank Bill and his colleagues at the Population Media Center (PMC) for another week rich with academic and experiential content, this time concentrating on radio as a tool of entertainment education.

* We started the discussion what entertainment-education is and have agreed that its definition is a combined educational and leisure effort in order to transfer information. As a strong benefit, entertainment-education carries information alongside emotional engagement through dramatic plots.

* We learned about the “Whole Society Strategy” utilized by the PMC, which follows ICPD Programme of Action’s recommendation that the best way of impacting behaviour change is through employing all possible methods and services, including electronic and traditional media.

* In terms of radio programming, we agreed that:

- Radio has many advantages for rural, illiterate, mobile and other populations
- The listener creates the images that match the information they are receiving
- The listener may continue their daily routine while listening to the radio
- Radio is a better medium at certain times of day
- Radio programs cost less to produce than television
- Radios can be mobile
- There is widespread evidence that radio programs (particularly drama programs) have triggered inter-personal communication by audience members with friends and family members

* Bill summarized some of the points covered excellently:

- To be most effective at bringing about change, radio interventions should be based on extensive formative research.
- They should be written and produced by those who understand the culture and language.
- They should be filled with emotional conflict, and every episode should end with suspense, in order to bring the audience back for the next episode.
- They should use the three types of characters (positive, negative and transitional).
- They should have multiple inter-weaving sub-plots.
- The settings should reflect the audience and their lifestyles.
- The programs should contain music and sound effects to set the mood and add audience interest.
- They should be carefully monitored and scientifically evaluated.
- Radio interventions should utilize multiple channels of communication at different times of day.

* We have discussed that it may be more efficient to work with producers of existing programs in order to help them incorporate social and health issues while still retaining the entertainment value of the program.

* We discussed works of Miguel Sabido on other producers internationally. We discussed an ethical question posed by Mr. Sabido exploring who has the right to determine what is positive or negative and how has the authority (producers, policy makers, the community) to make decisions what messages would be promoted through entertainment-education.

* Finally, we reviewed the process utilized by PMC in producing value statements that will be embedded into entertainment-education programs.

Once more, I wish to thank our colleagues at the Population Media Center and all of you who have participated actively or have followed our discussions.

In the next week, we will be covering topics related to theatre and dance and sexual and reproductive health promotion and HIV prevention. The discussion will be facilitated by Cydelle, Ken and Colin. For their biographies, please click <http://tinyurl.com/37c7h6>.