Radio Soap Operas Prompt Social and Behavior Change for Improved Nutrition in Pastoralist Communities of Ethiopia

Pastoral Areas Resilience Improvement through Market Expansion (PRIME) Project

Integrated Nutrition Conference

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PRIME Project Operational Areas
OUTLOOK OF NUTRITIONAL OUTCOMES FOR ETHIOPIA
PASTORAL COMMUNITIES AT A GLANCE....!!!!

• Acute malnutrition high
• Stunting levels high
• Dietary Diversity Maternal low
• Dietary Diversity Children low
• Micronutrient deficiencies –low
• Minimum Acceptable diet- low
PRIME WORKS AT THE “UNDERLYING CAUSES OF MALNUTRITION LEVEL”

PRIME’s Nutrition programming is targeted at addressing mainly the underlying causes of malnutrition which are:

- Inadequate Access to food (production or procurement)
- Inadequate Care for Women and Children
- Insufficient health services and unhealthy environment
SBCC APPROACH

- Circus/Drama Performance
- Community Conversations
- Radio Soap Opera
- Interpersonal Communication

Behaviour Change
## FORMATIVE RESEARCH IDENTIFIED ISSUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Average for all regions</th>
<th>Underlying reasons from formative research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| % of men and women reporting meaningful participation of women in decision-making | 53%                     | • Cultural barriers for women questioning household decisions  
• Religious boundaries that expect women to submit always and hence not question decisions  
• Women only expected to make decisions on shoats and the rest for men |
| Percentage of children 6-23 months of age who receive a Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) | 2.6                     | • CF around 9 months …."when children have teeth “  
• Feeding frequency based on signs of child showing hunger  
• Lack of knowledge on Complementary Feeding (CF)  
• Lack of preparation/cooking skills for CF |
| Percentage of farmers who practice supplementary feeding for animals (8.6) |                         | • Supplementary feeding carried out as a necessity due to insufficient pasture, rather than a purposeful decision  
• Knowledge of other supplementary feedstuffs for livestock lacking |
| Animal health seeking behavior (Low)                          |                         | • People preferring traditional methods passed on from ancestors |
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP: BRINGING THE DRAMA TO LIFE

- Four Warner Bros. executives volunteered their creative expertise at ($0), working closely with Mercy Corps’ staff to develop interesting characters, compelling storylines and an impactful promotional strategy.
- They shared best practices for writing and marketing with the team to ensure sustainability, and spent time in Ethiopia to help shape stories that would be captivating and authentic.
- The team stayed engaged rendering remote support even post-broadcasting period for Season 1.
- With a decade of experience working in Ethiopia, Mercy Corps contributed local insight and a deep knowledge of the nutritional barriers that plague different regions of the country.
Mercy Corps and Warner Bros. are working together to ensure that the program has tangible impact for all of the stakeholders involved in Soap Operas for Social Change (SOCS), including:

- Strengthening Mercy Corps’ behavior change nutrition program in Ethiopia
- Positively impacting the program beneficiaries’ lives by instilling nutrition-related behavior changes
- Improving Mercy Corps’ staff behavior change communications capacity
- Providing an integrated employee volunteer program, yielding increased employee engagement, from which volunteers can take learnings and apply them to their roles at Warner Bros.
- Harnessing Warner Bros.’ commitment to “entertain the world” and positively impact employees and communities
A radio drama that is airing in three regions (Afar; Oromia and Somali)

Dialect and characters tailored to each region

Incorporating the details that make each of these areas unique, like names and common greetings, establishes familiarity allowing audiences to connect with the characters and messages

Forty three Radio Listenership Groups (RLG) in the 3 regions
### Meaning Behind the Tag Lines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ENGLISH EQUIVALENT</th>
<th>Tagline</th>
<th>ENGLISH EQUIVALENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afar/Story 1</td>
<td>TEKKEM</td>
<td>“An Animal that is Productive” (related to prosperity)</td>
<td>Buxa Marih Exxiga Kee Gadaliinoh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borena/Story 2</td>
<td>MIRGITUU</td>
<td>“Full Milk” (related to prosperity, abundance, sharing, bountiful)</td>
<td>Hormaataa fi Bultuma Dansaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali/Story 3</td>
<td>ADOOLE GEEL</td>
<td>“Milky She-Camel” (related to prosperity/nutritious, rich milk)</td>
<td>Aqoonta iyo Rayn Raynta qoyska</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RADIO LISTENERSHIP GROUPS

• Listener groups are an essential part of monitoring.
• PRIME provided training to listener group leaders in the broadcasting areas, with a focus on rural areas.
• Leaders are assigned an Encore Radio Player – a solar dynamo-powered multi-band radio, MP3 player and recorder designed for use in off-grid communities. So, no matter where they are or whether the communities are off-the grid for radio frequencies, listener groups can come together to start their dialogues on the content of the soap opera and its characters.
RADIO LISTENERSHIP GROUPS
SOCIAL MARKETING ITEMS

• Warner Brother’s Creative designer helped the Mercy Corps SBCC team to design Social marketing products about the Soap Opera. Materials contained titles, taglines, tune in info

1. SOSC Promotional posters
2. Door stickers
3. Syringe Pen
4. Baby Wrap
5. Seed packets
6. Market bag
SOCIAL MARKETING ITEMS
ROAD SHOWS FOR THE SOAP
• SenseMaker captures quantitative and qualitative data through micro-narratives (people experiences) and self-signification (people interpreting their own experience).

• People’s attitudes, preferences and how they link to behaviors are very difficult to capture

• learn if messages and characters were being well-taken by listeners and learn what in the messages was important to listeners
The overwhelming majority (90%) of people felt positive/strongly positive about their stories. There were no strongly negative feelings from storytellers. Stories referred to the 5 key messages the soap opera is trying to get across.
Men and women remembered stories about livestock vaccination. Pregnant women nutrition stories were remembered more by women than men.

Both men and women had the least interest in economic-decision-making.
The story you just told us is about…

- Most people felt positive about the stories they recalled from.
- Both men and women’s stories were about responsibility, though negative/neutral stories and stories that referred to women economic decision-making leaned towards love.
An old man, named Ganaya Wario has cattle. During dry season he buys supplementary feed and pasture for his animals and also he buys drugs and treats his animal when they get sick.

A woman, whose name is Kibele Galgalo has a child, at 6 months; she cooks and feed him eggs and boiled milk. During wet season she collects and stores pasture to feed her animals in dry season.
LESSONS LEANT

• Garner high level CEO level support from the start
• NGO’s interaction with private sector can raise the quality of service delivery e.g. brand maintenance by WB
• Understanding each other’s paradigms and goals before embarking on the cross-sector collaboration.
• Flexibility and ensure ongoing transparent communications
• Factor sustainability goals into the whole partnership processes
• Nature a learning enabling environment-two way
• Partnership to revolve around innovation
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