APPLYING LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL PROBLEMS:
Radio Listeners as Agents of Change

APPLYING LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL PROBLEMS: RADIO LISTENERS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE[1]

An evaluation of the impact on listeners of radio programming in Chad and Niger under the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Peace through Development Project (PDEV).

Prepared by: Karen Greiner, Ph.D., University of South Florida, Department of Communication

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DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government

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[1] The first part of this title refers to the strategy recommended by counter-insurgency expert David Kilcullen in his book *The accidental guerilla: Fighting small wars in the midst of a big one* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. xvi, 15).

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Executive Summary

In depth research, including 46 field interviews and 16 focus groups, indicates that the media component activities of the United States Agency for Development's (USAID) PDEV program have achieved significant impact in strengthening moderate voices and improving information flow among citizens on peace and tolerance. These examples were observed in a wide range of settings and investigated in sufficient detail to indicate the positive impacts reported here are likely replicated widely in PDEV target areas.

This report documents the results of a two-month field research evaluation in Niger and Chad on the media component of the Peace Through Development (PDEV) program funded by USAID under the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Equal Access, a non-governmental organization (NGO) specializing in development communications, implements the media component of the PDEV project and works in collaboration with the Academy for Educational Development (AED) to 1) improve local governance in target communities; 2) empower at-risk youth to become active participants in their communities and the economy; and 3) render superfluous ideologies that promote violence.

The major activity of the PDEV media component is the production four radio programs (two in Niger and two in Chad), which are broadcast by a network of PDEV radio partners in each country. The radio programs are supplemented by community-level activities including the organization of listening clubs, the training of community reporters and ongoing training and material support offered to radio station partners in both Chad and Niger.

The evaluation was designed to determine the attitude towards and impact of EA's programs amongst those who are aware of and listening to the radio programs – i.e., amongst audiences where the program was successfully received. The evaluation was conducted using qualitative methods due to the emphasis of this approach on seeking an in-depth understanding of changes in individual knowledge, skills, behavior within a specific social context.

This report documents numerous examples of individuals and communities where PDEV has had a significant impact by galvanizing governmental action against corruption, amplifying moderate voices to advocate for inclusion and youth agency that leads to the youth engagement in political and civic processes with local leaders and community members. The listeners interviewed described a wide range of actions and initiatives undertaken as a result of listening to the PDEV radio programs. Their accounts suggest that although exact actions and initiatives vary by community, the radio shows do serve as an impetus for community level engagement in the many thousands of communities PDEV reaches in Chad and Niger.

This report presents qualitative data that shows the PDEV media component has had impact in two of the three result areas outlined in their performance monitoring plan (PMP). The radio programs 1) improve information flow among citizens on peace and tolerance (result 3.1) and 2) strengthen moderate voices (Result 3.2). The radio programs achieve these results by fostering and strengthening "civic culture." The "civic culture" building approach adopted in the production of the radio programs is gradual and informed by extensive community input and consultation. The radio programs rarely explicitly address issues such as terrorism or directly attempt to "render superfluous" "ideologies promoting violence" (Result 3). As a result, the content of individual radio program episodes could be criticized as too far removed from the more "hard edged" goals of the PDEV initiative. However, by strengthening "civic culture," the programs improve the quantity and quality of citizen participation and democratic expression and create a platform for moderate voices (from the capital city and from the regions), directly achieving PDEV project goals. Through these impacts, the PDEV media component is doing important work that serves to address drivers of negative behaviors and may prevent the emergence of more extreme and violent forms of expression from emerging. The gradual, "civic culture" building approach employed by the media teams in Chad and Niger has allowed the radio

programs to become established within the communities and the programs are now positioned to delve into new content areas (including more direct discussion of violent extremism) with the experience of ongoing, credible and culturally tailored programming to build on.

This report highlights the importance of 1) the impact on listeners of the radio programs which I illustrate by providing a selection of listener narratives and actions and 2) the design of the PDEV media component. The *design* of the PDEV media component is important because it facilitates extensive community participation ranging from the conception and creation of content to discussion of content in families and communities. The responsiveness of this approach has led to strong ownership of the programs by the audience resulting in observed impact in terms of dialogue and attitudinal and behavior changes resulting from the program. Finally, new actions and initiatives undertaken by listeners that are catalyzed by the program are illustrated in the "listener accounts" section of this report.

Methodology

      This two-month long qualitative evaluation was conducted as a precursor to a large respondent quantitative survey which is planned in Chad and Niger in early 2011. The evaluation was conducted using qualitative methods due to the emphasis of this approach on seeking an in-depth understanding of changes in individual knowledge, skills, behavior within a specific social and cultural context.[2] Unlike quantitative methods, like surveys or "questionnaires," which offer respondents fixed choices within pre-determined categories, qualitative methods are appropriate for exploring and documenting unique experiences and unanticipated outcomes. [3] The types of questions I asked respondents were sufficiently open-ended to enable me to discover and document several different *types* of outcomes, with each specific outcome as unique as the listener narrative I use to illustrate it. My line of questioning involved extensive probes. When listeners appeared to near the end of their account, I would use an open-ended probe to encourage them to keep talking. For example, in the case of my interview with a listening club president in which he described a clean-up activity led by his club, I asked several times: "And then what happened?" Each "and then what?" yielded a new layer to his story. On other occasions I began conversations with very broad questions, like: "Why do you listen to the radio?" and only asked specific questions about PDEV radio programs once an initial round of general questions had taken place. My aim was to ask broad questions and let respondents tell me what they found important. A narrow line of inquiry often limits the topics of discussion unhelpfully.

      Many of the in-depth, individual interviews were a follow on to larger, "focus group" interviews. Focus groups are useful for generating a lot of information and interaction on a specific topic in a short amount of time.[4] In this case, the specific topic was the PDEV radio shows, and the main goal, from my perspective, was to generate enough interaction to identify listeners and topics to pursue for more information. Since qualitative methods aim for depth of perspective with fewer individuals rather than less information in large quantities, the focus groups were crucial for identifying listeners to follow up with during one-on-one interviews. When focus groups were very small, 3-4 individuals, I call these interviews "small group" interviews. These interviews were more akin to individual interviews because I was able to spend more time asking questions to specific individuals. (See Annex 1 for detailed information on the number and location of respondents for the focus groups, and then the total number of individual interviews).

      Within the category of individual interviews I include radio station partners, radio station community advisory group members, and Equal Access staff members. These individuals were not the focus of the evaluation, but they provided very useful information in many cases and in other cases, the meetings were held for reasons of protocol (meaning it would have appeared disrespectful not to meet with them). Also included in the number of individual interviews are several people who attended focus groups.

      I present the results of the interviews following the conventions of ethnography; I offer fewer voices, but spend a great deal of time with each. Of the dozens of listeners I spoke with, either individually or in small groups, I have chosen a small number of narratives to share here.

I believe that the listener accounts I have selected demonstrate, in great detail, what listeners *do* with what they learn from the PDEV radio programs produced by Equal Access and the variety of ways what they learned has affected them. My research was specifically directed by Equal Access to focus on

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[2] Baker, Quinton, Davis, Denise, Gallerani, Ron, Sanchez, Victoria, and Viadro, Claire. *An evaluation framework for community health programs.* (Durham, NC: The Center for the Advancement of Community Based Public Health: 2000), p. 41.

[3] Patton, Michael Quinn. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications, 2002), p. 14.

[4] David Morgan, Focus groups as qualitative research (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1997), p. 8.

whether the programming had impact against the PDEV goals *where it was fully received by the audience* so it is important to note that this assessment is not an evaluation of how broadly the PDEV programs are reaching Chadians and Nigeriens. That question will be assessed through the large respondent survey early next year, although my research suggests the program is reaching a large audience.

The data presented in this report was collected through direct observation, a review of project materials including scripts and reports, and interviews with individuals and groups as outlined in table 2.1 above. Since the primary focus of the evaluation was to gauge the impact of PDEV radio programming on listeners, I give priority in this report to what I learned from conversations with listeners and listening clubs/groups. The interviews conducted in Chad and Niger with in-country Equal Access staff, radio station personnel, members of the Content Advisory Groups (CAG) and community reporters are the basis for my analysis regarding the Equal Access program design, which has impact in the form of much greater levels of participation than one would expect in the production, circulation and subsequent discussion of radio show content. The PDEV media program design is extremely "porous," by which I mean that it has "multiple and continuous entry points and opportunities for involvement."[5] I will return to the importance of this design element of the program throughout the report and I provide more details of the program design in the second half of the report.

Background

This report documents the results of a two-month field evaluation on the impact of PDEV radio programs on listeners in Chad and Niger (June-July, 2010). Equal Access has partnered with the Academy for Educational Development (AED) to implement the communication component of the Peace through Development Project (PDEV) funded by USAID West Africa through the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), an interagency (DOD, State, USAID) initiative established "to assist potentially vulnerable regional partners to constrict the tactical and strategic operating environment of terrorists in Northwestern Africa."[6]

Based on research conducted in the Sahel region, USAID designed PDEV to have activities and programming focused on three areas: 1) good governance; 2) social and economic empowerment of youth and 3) media and outreach support.[7] This report focuses on the impact of one component of the PDEV project, which is the media and outreach component implemented by Equal Access in Chad and Niger. The stated objectives for the media and outreach component of the PDEV project include:

Result 3:   Ideologies promoting violence are rendered superfluous
Result 3.1: Improved information flow among citizens on peace and tolerance
Result 3.2: Moderate voices strengthened.[8]

The focus on increasing access to information and "moderate voices" as a means to counter extremist ideologies signals a shift from theories suggesting that violent extremism should be addressed by focusing on macro-level "root causes" such as poverty and unemployment. "Root cause" approaches are difficult to implement because of the immense resources they require, and have received criticism as failing to adequately account for the motivations for violent extremism.

A USAID-commissioned report on counter-extremism notes that populations experiencing poverty and unemployment are very large and yet only a small number from these populations react

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[5] Karen Greiner, "Participatory communication processes as 'infusions of innovation': The Case of Scenarios from Africa," In T. Tufte & F. Enghel (Eds). *Teens engaging with the world: Media, communication and social change.* (Gothenburg, Sweden: NORDICOM, 2009), p. 276.

[6] USAID request for task order proposals for PDEV project, p. 1.

[7] USAID, "Countering extremism and terrorism in the Sahel," 2005. See PDEV/RFTOP p. 3.

[8] PDEV Performance monitoring plan (PMP) approved by USAID June 2010, pp. 9-10.

with violence.[9] As an alternative to explanations based in "root causes" and "underlying conditions," USAID has commissioned exhaustive research that identifies four set of inter-related "drivers" which can lead to violent extremism, summarized as follows:

1. Personal relationships, social bonds and group dynamics;
2. The quest for dignity, recognition and respect (not only for oneself, but also for one's community and one's culture) and the perception that one is being denied all of that at both a collective and personal levels;
3. Historical legacies of foreign domination and oppression; and
4. Perceptions of an unjust international system through which Muslims and Muslim culture are de-valued and subordinated.[10]

A report prepared by the RAND Corporation, a non-profit institution specializing in research and analysis, suggests that strategic communication can address some of these "drivers." Rand analyst Michael Egner argues that strategic communication can:

1. Ease short-term frustrations among vulnerable populations before they harden into long-term grievances,
2. Foster resistance to extremist messages; and
3. Reduce the perceived legitimacy and social acceptance of violence.[11]

Strategic communication cannot undo a "legacy of foreign occupation" but it can help foster positive social networks, provide opportunities for individuals to gain respect and recognition, increase the circulation of moderate voices and perspectives, and offer positive representations of Muslims and local culture.

Although Chad and Niger have been assessed as being on the very lowest end of a violent extremism threat continuum,[12] both countries have experienced internal violence in the recent past. The Chadian President Idriss Déby Itno withstood an attempted coup in February 2008 while the Nigerien government of President Mamadou Tandja was overthrown in a military coup in February 2010.[13] Incidents of kidnapping were also reported in both Chad[14] and Niger, with the latter country gaining unfortunate notoriety when French humanitarian aid worker Michel Germaneau, kidnapped in Niger in April 2010, was killed three months later in Mali by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).[15] The September 2010 kidnapping in Arlit, northern Niger, of seven individuals including citizens from France, Togo and Madagascar has added to the climate of insecurity which led French President Nicolas Sarkozy to label the entire Sahel region "extremely dangerous." [16] The situation in Niger has been further heightened by the apparent statements of Osama Bin Laden on October 27, 2010, linking the

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[9] USAID, "Guide to the drivers of violent extremism" (Washington DC: USAID/MSI, 2009), p. iv.

[10] USAID, "Guide to the drivers of violent extremism," pp. v-vi.

[11] Here I have abridged Egner's original five-point list. See Egner, Michael. "Social-science foundations for strategic communications in the global war on terrorism" in Paul Davis and Kim Cragin (eds.) Social science for counterterrorism: Putting the pieces together (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2009), p. 324.

[12] Both are listed as "negligible." USAID. *Development assistance and counter-extremism: A guide to programming* (Washington DC: USAID/MSI, 2009), p. 73 (Annex A).

[13] Yonah Alexander *Maghreb and Sahel terrorism: Addressing the rising threat from Al-Qaeda and other terrorists in North and West/Central Africa* (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2010), pp. 21-22; pp. 55-57 (Chad); pp. 62-63 (Niger). http://www.potomacinstitute.org/attachments/524_Maghreb%20Terrorism%20report.pdf

[14] Ibid., p. 55.

[15] "Al-Qaeda kills French hostage," Al Jazeera (English edition) July 26, 2010. http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2010/07/201072519292114510.html

[16] Maïa de la Baume, "French Citizens Among 7 Seized in Niger," *The New York Times*, September 17, 2010: A7. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/17/world/africa/17niger.html

kidnappings in Arlit to Muslim grievances in France and to France's involvement in the war in Afghanistan.[17]

Research documenting that violent extremists often come from countries without a legitimate and democratic political process which suffer from "endemic" corruption[18] and a lack of "civil and political liberties" (such as freedom of expression; democratic elections, citizen participation in political processes)[19] is the basis for USAID's search for programmatic approaches that seek to prevent or mitigate extremism before it takes hold in counties like Chad and Niger. Social change interventions where success is measured by a negative or "non-event," such as the non-transmission of HIV or the absence of extremism and violence represent a measurement challenge. Proving what *does* exist and what has occurred is often an easier task. A marketing campaign to sell a new device, for example, can use sales figures to measure the campaigns effectiveness. A girls' education project can count increases in the number of school-age girls enrolled in classes. But how does one prove that something might have happened and now, post-intervention, will not?

In the case of measuring the effectiveness of efforts aimed at preventing or mitigating violent extremism – that is, the act of self-expression through violence - one solution is to turn to the "proxy" indicator of the presence of "civic culture," which I define as peaceful self-expression and democratic participation in community life.

In a 2005 Foreign Policy article, political scientist Gregory Gause notes that while there may be no evidence that democracy itself uniformly curtails extremist violence there *is* evidence that acts of extremist violence "are less frequent when democratic political *participation* is high." (emphasis added).[20] This distinction is important. It is also fortunate for individuals and institutions interested in promoting peace and positive social change for the simple reason that it is much easier to promote democratic participation, (or "civic culture,"), at the individuals and community level than it is to effect structural, macro-political change.

Communication is a critical tool in fostering individual and community level change. Communication is credited with positive outcomes in social change projects ranging from water conservation in Jordan[21] to civic participation for women in Bangladesh.[22] Radio, the communication medium under discussion in this report (together with related activities), has been cited by listeners themselves as the direct inspiration for decisions to abandon the practice of female genital cutting in Sudan[23] and to create literacy classes for lower-caste citizens in the Bihar region of India.[24] This latter example, from the "Taru" radio drama broadcast in India from 2002-2003, is of particular interest due to the similarity of that program to PDEV media programming in Niger and Chad; a mixture of "Air cover and ground mobilization,"[25] or mass media in the form of radio broadcasts and inter-personal and

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[17] New York Times, October 27, 2010.

[18] USAID, "Guide to the drivers of violent extremism," p. 27.

[19] USAID. *Development assistance and counter-extremism*, p. 17,

[20] Gregory F. Gause . "Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?" *Foreign Affairs*, (September/October, 2005), p. 65.

[21] Gregory R. Niblett, "Research as promotion: Jordan water efficiency program, 2000-2005," in Philip Kotler and Nancy R. Lee (Eds.), Social marketing: Influencing behaviors for good, 3rd edition (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE publications, 2008), p. 71.

[22] Sara Stuart and Renuka Bery, Powerful grass-roots women communicators: Participatory video in Banladesh in Jan Servaes, Thomas Tufte and Shirley A. White (Eds.), *Participatory communication for social change* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE publications, 1996). pp. 197-212.

[23] Karen Greiner, Arvind Singhal, and Sarah Hurlburt, "With an antenna we can stop the practice of female genital cutting": A participatory assessment of *Ashreat Al Amal,* an entertainment-education radio soap opera in Sudan. *Investgacion y Desarrollo, 15*(2), 226-259.

[24] Arvind Singhal, "Riding high on *Taru* fever: Entertainment-education broadcasts, ground mobilization, and service delivery in rural India" (The Hague: OXFAM/NOVIB, 2010), p. 8.

[25] Arvind Singhal, Devendra Sharma, Michael Papa and Kim Witte "Air cover and ground mobilization: Integrating entertainment-education broadcasts with community listening and service delivery in India," in Arvind Singhal, Michael J. Cody, Everett Rogers and Miguel Sabido

small group communication in the form of community listening groups. Using the detailed qualitative examples in this report, I will demonstrate that the PDEV media activities have been successful in increasing democratic participation ("civic culture") and as a result address drivers of violent extremism.

Equal Access's role in the PDEV project is to develop and deliver community radio programs that support USAID's goals of improved access to objective information, promote civic education, provide opportunities for "broad Muslim engagement"[26] and avenues for the expression of moderate voices.[27] The media programming directly supports extensive PDEV community development initiatives in each country. To provide an illustration of how the different components of the PDEV program work in tandem I give the example of the "Peace Festival" (Festival pour la Paix) held in Faya, Chad at the end of my one-month stay in the country. The three-day festival involved a variety of activities meant to valorize local culture and traditions and promote peace and tolerance in the city of Faya, located in the extreme-north of Chad, approaching the Libyan border. One activity included a showcase of traditional dancing; an important component of the festival given that according to local authorities, there has been no public dancing in Faya for several years.[28] PDEV radio producers accompanied the PDEV program team and broadcast large portions of the event live in Faya on Radio Palmeraie, a radio station partner, and via telephone link with community and other radio stations in the capital city of N'Djamena. Other forms of collaboration involve the inclusion and discussion of PDEV activities into the story lines of the two weekly radio programs which are the central media activity. For example, the radio show producers have incorporated recordings of inter-religious dialogue round tables organized by the PDEV programs and a discussion of these dialogues in their broadcasts.

In Chad and Niger, Equal Access has in-country media teams whose core activity is the production and distribution of two half-hour weekly radio shows which focus on youth and good governance. Additional activities related to the radio shows in both Chad and Niger include the formation of listening groups, the creation of mechanisms to capture audience feedback and thematic proposals via "Frontline" software that captures and aggregates text messages. In addition, the PDEV media teams have delivered training to radio station partners on how to implement listener call-in shows after PDEV radio programs and how to produce their own radio shows, on PDEV themes, in one of three formats: "Micro" Program (3 minutes each), "Debate & Discussion" and "Public Broadcast," which are recorded in the setting of public community gatherings and then edited for subsequent broadcast. Below I provide a short outline of the PDEV produced radio programs currently being broadcast in Chad and Niger.

	Chad		Niger	
Language(s)	Arabic (Goran in progress)		Haoussa, Zarma, Tamashek, French	
Radio program name & focus	Chabab al Haye Youth	Dabalaye Good Governance	Gwadaben Matassa Youth	Hantsi Good Governance
Format	Magazine + Situational drama	Magazine + Serial drama	Magazine + Situational drama	Serial Drama*
Notes	Situational drama refers to storylines	Serial drama refers to		*In late July 2010 the producers of

(Eds.), Entertainment-education and social change: History, research, and practice (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003), pp. 351-374.

[26] USAID. *Development assistance and counter-extremism*, p. 74 (Annex A).

[27] USAID PDEV RFTOP, p. 4.

[28] This was reported by the Prefet of Faya to PDEV Chad Country Representative, Jill Morris, and shared with me during my debriefing in the country. The Prefet linked the absence of public dancing to the rising influence of more conservative religious leaders.

	that are unique to each episode	storylines that evolve over several episodes, "soap opera" style.		Hantsi began including recorded comments from listeners and segments from partner call-in shows at the end of each episode.

Figure 1: Names, foci and formats of radio programs in Chad and Niger

The media teams are now in their second year of production for the two core programs. Each team is in the process of developing one additional radio show, which in Chad is called "Chabab Wal Din,"("Youth and Faith,") a 26-episode series focused on religious issues for a youth audience and in Niger, a 26-episode series called "Sada Zumuntchi" ("Promoting solidarity" in Haoussa) which will address intra and inter religious dialogue.[29]

As would be expected in two countries with different languages, cultures, political contexts and histories, the media teams in Chad and Niger put their distinctive stamp on the youth and good governance content while still operating within similar formats. Indeed, I believe that one of the strengths of the PDEV media program design is the country-specific, local-culture-infused nature of each radio program. Below I provide a graphic of components of the 100% in-country process, in descending sequential order, followed by a description of contributors to the process. A brief review of the components and contributors involved in the creation of the radio shows allows me to set the stage and cast of characters which I believe will facilitate understanding of material presented in later sections.

The basic sequence of the creation of PDEV radio programs is comprised of three phases: 1) community input, a process of seeking local perspectives and suggestions on content; 2) production, which includes collaborative script writing, community reporting and the recording of local theater troupes for the radio dramas; and 3) review, which involves a vetting process whereby local professionals, community leaders and citizens provide feedback on existing scripts and recorded episodes and make suggestions, when necessary, for changes or refinement. Figure 2 below summarizes the phases and participants.

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[29] Revised and approved Media Component SOW submitted to USAID December 2009.

Formative research
- PDEV media teams conduct research in PDEV target regions to assess cultural/regional differences that will inform the scriptwriting process.

Community input
- Stakeholder meeting: Community members give input and suggest themes.
- Content advisory group (CAG) formed with volunteers from stakeholder meeting.

Production
- Producers write scripts, conduct interviews, invite guests and coordinate with community reporters.
- Community reporters conduct interviews in their communities and submit audio files to producers.
- Actors record scripted sections of the program with the input and supervision of directors.
- Directors suggest changes to wording according to their in-depth knowledge of local languages and culture.

Review
- Sound engineers compile, review and revise content.
- Content advisory group (CAG) members periodically review near-final programs for content and sound quality.

Figure 2: How the radio shows are created (four basic phases)

In Chad and Niger the radio shows are created with the participation of dozens of individuals of varied backgrounds and ages from both the capital city and the regions. I provide a brief description of my understanding of the roles and contributions of several groups:

Stakeholders

Before the radio shows are scripted and recorded the PDEV media teams in Chad and Niger meet with a group of 30-50 men and women who attend a one-two day-long working session to suggest specific content and themes to be addressed, working from the PDEV themes related to good governance, tolerance, citizenship and peace. The presence of important community and religious leaders at the initial stakeholders meeting ensures that the members of civil society are apprised of the content of the radio programs and have the opportunity to make suggestions. The stakeholders are the first set of voices to begin shaping the content for the radio program and the act of seeking input at the earliest possible stage establishes the element of the programs I identify as contributing most to their success – their porous and inclusive design.

Content Advisory Group (CAG)

From the larger group of stakeholders, a group of the more enthusiastic and helpful members are invited to join a Content Advisory Group (CAG). In Chad, both the youth and good governance shows are served by the same group of advisors whereas in Niger, each show has its own CAG. I noted that while an additional CAG requires more logistical and scheduling effort, it also doubles the amount of resource people available to the producers. I say "resource people" due to an observation I made in each of the CAG monthly meetings I attended (one in Chad and one in Niger), which was that beyond suggestions about script content, CAG members also recommend specific individuals to be interviewed, such as medical specialists, government officials or representatives from community associations. I provide below a brief look (or "listen") to some of the comments made during the CAG meeting I attended in N'Djamena Chad on June 3, 2010. (See text box on next page).

What happens during a CAG meeting?

The meeting I attended had representatives from the National Youth Congress, UNICEF, the Ministry of Communication, and Association of Chadian NGO's. One CAG member, not in attendance, sent his written comments on the suggested script themes to the Producers prior to the meeting. Here is a selection of comments which were made in relation to various proposed topics including female circumcision, youth employment, tolerance, the AED/PDEV "Peace Festival," and the internet:

- "You should drop the internet theme. Youth simply do not have access – especially in the regions."
- "Who are you inviting? [For the tolerance program] We have to be sure that we invite someone who really knows Islam."
- "You need to be sure to get the women involved [in the Peace Festival] Isn't this years' "Miss Chad" is from Faya? She should be invited.
- Is Arabic the appropriate language for discussing the Peace Festival in Faya? Should we not be doing it in Goran? [Language spoken in Faya and the Kanem region]
- "You should be careful with this topic [female circumcision]. If you come to the region where I am from you will note that all the girls are circumcised."
- "You should invite a female medical doctor [for female circumcision topic]. I can recommend a good person if you need it.

As I listened to the CAG members' comments it occurred to me that the CAG was a sort of "cultural safety net." The cautionary comments signaled to the Producers (who are largely from N'Djamena or the southern region of Chad) what topics might be delicate (female circumcision), inappropriate (internet) and what guests should be chosen with great care (religious leaders for program on tolerance). The fact that several CAG members, during the meeting, pulled out their phone and provided names and numbers for potential guests shows how having a Content Advisory Group greatly increases the number of contacts at the producers disposal. "Tell them *I* gave you their number," one CAG member told a Producer. As in many countries, relationships matter in Chad, and CAG members contribute not only their relationships but also their professional, cultural, linguistic and regional expertise.

Producers

The Producers are the backbone of the PDEV radio shows: They develop the themes to be treated, conduct formative subject-matter research, write the scripts, and conduct the bulk of the guest interviews.[30] Documenting the extent and importance of the contribution of the Producers would require a separate evaluation. I should include, however, that a commonality shared by each Producer I met was a desire to contribute to their community. Prior to coming to PDEV most of the Producers were already working as professional journalists and radio presenters. Many said that they applied to work with the PDEV project out because they wanted to "do more" for the community. Several commented that their work with PDEV, including the training they would receive, would allow them contribute to their communities immediately and to continue contributing, as a result of new skills they were learning, once the project concluded.

Young producers

In Niger four young people had been promoted from "Community Reporter" (see below) and were working closely with producers in the creation of content for the radio shows. The young producers had responsibilities ranging from proposing and interviewing guests for the show to presenting content, including the performance of short "skits" to illustrate the themes presented in the radio show. One young woman from N'Djamena, Zenab Hassan, took me to meet Mariam, a social worker who she had interviewed for a show on unplanned pregnancy. I asked Zenab how she thought of the social worker as an interviewee. She said: "Mariam is part of my extended family. She works at a social services center run by the Ministry of Social Action. I thought to myself that a social worker would be well placed to speak about the topic of unplanned pregnancy. And many people do not know about the centers and the social services they offer." When we arrived at the center I asked Mariam how she felt about having been a guest on the radio show. "People came up to me afterward and congratulated me for being on the show. They said: 'We heard your voice on the radio, you explained things very well.'" Mariam's colleague, Amina Mahamat, added that she felt that Mariam having been invited on the radio helped raise awareness about the existence of centers like theirs and the services they offer. "We help many young women. We go to their houses and talk to their families so that they will not put them out on the streets [in cases of pregnancy]. It is helpful to us if more people can become aware of what we do here."

Community reporters

One of the most interesting and unique features of the PDEV media program design is the training of community members, including many young people, as "community reporters." Community reporters[31] (CRs) are citizens who have been trained in the basics of community journalism, including how to approach people for interviews, how to present oneself professionally, how to pose different types of questions, and how to use the "Zoom H2" digital recorders that each CR is equipped with during training. Each Zoom recorder comes with a thin memory card that CRs remove once they have finished conducting citizen interviews and then send in an envelope to the PDEV office, usually by one of the buses or "bush taxis" that make frequent trips between the regions and the capital. Most radio projects I have evaluated or studied involve the broadcasting of content that is recorded exclusively in the capital city. The inclusion of community reporters in the project design means that voices from the regions, and from *average citizens* in the regions, are sent to the capital to be included in the recorded broadcasts that reach a national audience. As an illustration of just how far voices can travel because of Community Reporters I share the example of Abdraman Moussa, a teacher and community reporter in

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[30] When I was in Chad, I noted that the Producers there were also doing a great deal of the sound editing for their shows. I suspect that this gives them useful professional experience but may take a toll in terms of workload.
[31] There are approximately 45 Community Reporters working in each country, 10-12 in the capital cities and the remaining CRs are spread out in various PDEV regions throughout each country.

Delemanga, a village about 55 kilometers from Moussouro, in Northern Chad, which is itself about 300 kilometers from the N'Djamena, Chad's capital.

Abdraman explained that he is alerted by text message that there are new questions to pose to citizens for the "Vox Pop" segment of the radio show, he generally travels the 55 kilometers to Moussouro by bus to pick up a fresh memory card at Radio Moussouro, the PDEV radio partner that serves as a hub for Community Reporters. He then makes the return trip and spends some time converting the questions from French to local languages so they will make sense to people in the surrounding villages. On occasion, Abraman rents a horse for the day so that he can travel to remote villages to ask the "Vox Pop" questions. He records short interviews in whichever language villagers prefer to speak in, Arabic, Goran or Kanembou, and then returns by bus to Moussouro to drop of the memory card containing the interviews back at the radio station. After speaking with Abdraman I estimated that he spends nearly half of what he receives from PDEV to cover costs related to his work on transport, whether for horse rental or bus fare to and from Moussouro. He said he does it because "the work is important" and because "people want to express themselves." He is satisfied with the work, he says, because he is "contributing to his community," and I believe that it his desire to help his community rather than economic interest that is driving his Community Reporter work.

Figure 3: Mariam and Falmata, two community reporters in Moussouro Chad

Radio partners and Local producers

In Chad and Niger the PDEV media teams work with a network of local and national radio stations who broadcast each of the PDEV radio programs once a week (for a total of two PDEV radio programs broadcast by each station per week). Beyond their role as broadcasters of PDEV radio programs, radio station partners have also been trained to conduct call-in programs following the broadcast of PDEV radio programs. The call-in programs serve to build "civic culture" in that they increase the circulation of voices that are flowing at the community level. The call-in shows allow individuals and groups in remote regions and villages to comment on and discuss PDEV programming via their telephone calls, which are broadcast to the entire community. This additional programmatic feature enables community members to become *active* listeners, listeners who have the opportunity to weigh in on the issues discussed on the radio and to relate them to their local context. This additional programming element also typifies the PDEV media component approach of ensuring the radio programs are strong vehicles for the voices of the communities they serve – directly addressing PDEV goals such as increasing political participation and dialogue as a way of ameliorating grievances.

Radio partners have received equipment and training that allow them to digitally record, edit and finalize their own content. Radio partners have the opportunity to put their skills to work by becoming "local producers" which involves proposing their own PDEV-related content. During my field research, PDEV media teams in Chad and Niger were in the process of selecting "local production" partners based on a competitive application process. The "local production" programs have great potential to tailor PDEV-related themes to local contexts and to further increase the circulation of local voices, which I argue is akin to building "civic culture." Below I present a brief introduction to a local producer and his approach to developing PDEV-related content.

A visit to a radio partner trained in "local production"

Akouete Kodjo Amadou, the Director of programming at Anfani radio in Niamey Niger, is an Equal Access trained local producer. In discussion with him, I learned that Akouete is a seasoned journalist with more than a dozen years of experience.

"So did you learn anything new at the training," I asked, suspecting that the answer might be no.

"Yes, I did. I learned something very useful. I learned how to incorporate recorded segments into a session with invited guests." I asked him to give me a concrete example to illustrate what he meant.

He explained that the first show he was creating as an Equal Access "local producer" was in format of "discussion and debate." He continued:

"It's going to be about human rights and equality under the law. I've already recorded "person on the street" interviews with citizens and I will play these interviews for my guests, some of whom will be government officials, when they come to the studio to record their contribution to the show. So the segment with the invited guests will include their reaction to the pre-recorded citizens' comments. These reactions and ensuing discussion will be recorded and that is how the show will be produced."

"So you are bringing citizens' voices to the ears of the State," I observed.

"Yes. And also to civil society. There will be jurists and human rights association representatives as invited guests as well."

After my conversation with Akouete I made this observation in my written field notes: "Local producers also designing for community inclusion in their radio programs." Akouete was actively fostering "civic culture" at the local level.

Listening clubs

In both Chad and Niger, "listening clubs" have begun meeting regularly to listen to PDEV radio programs in a group setting. While I was in Niger, the number of listening clubs had reached 137. The Niger PDEV media team explained to me that most of the listening clubs had formed organically by emerging from pre-existing social groups called "Fadas," which are small community groups that have traditionally existed but that did not have specific activities to provide cohesion. Many of the listening club members I spoke with in Niger explained how the PDEV radio programs served as a catalyst and a reason to meet more regularly which gave the "Fadas" new momentum and purpose. During my time in Chad I noted that the Community Reporters were taking the lead in organizing listening clubs in their communities. A follow-on evaluation would be useful to assess how many listening clubs are operating, how many members are in each and what impact membership in these clubs may have on listeners. The PDEV media team in Niger includes a "listening club" coordinator which has enabled the Niger media team to keep track of how many clubs exist, who leads them and what activities they engage in. The Chad team would benefit from creating a similar position.
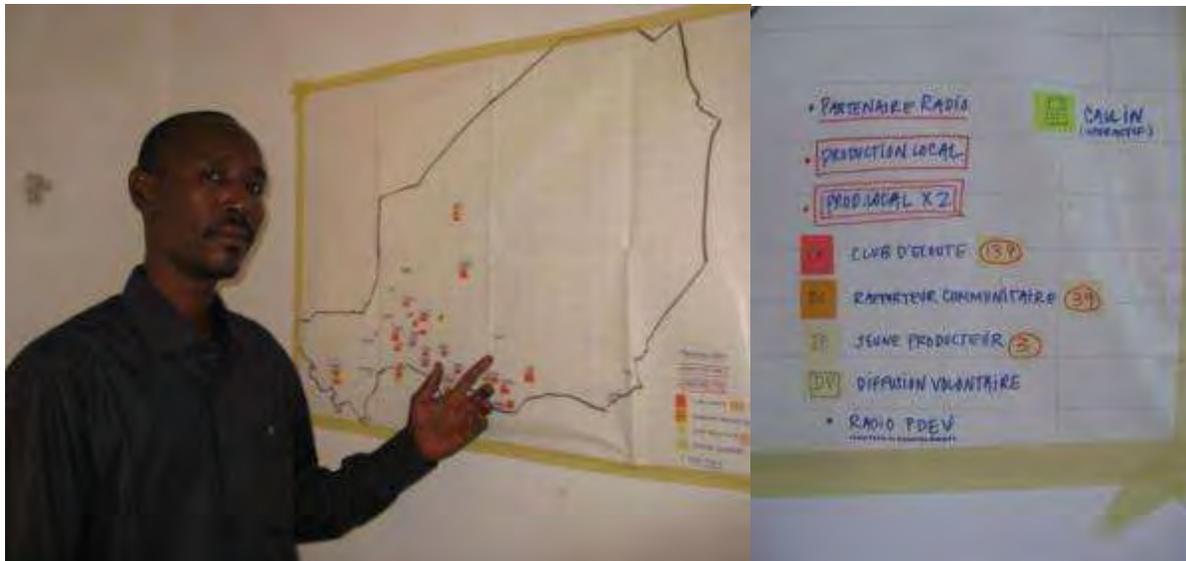
Figure 4: Listening club coordinator Lawan Boukar with a map representing the location of 137 listening clubs radio and other program-related activities. On the right, a key outlining the types and numbers of activities.

In this next section I introduce several listeners and discuss their accounts which illustrate the range of actions and initiatives inspired by PDEV radio programs. The listening clubs themselves are an example of the kinds of community actions that have been galvanized by the PDEV media component. I describe my interaction with Elsa Kotto, a listener and listening club president in Niger to introduce the listener accounts section.

Author Michael Cunningham suggests that "no two readers ever read the same book."[32] Books, like any form of communication, may be created with one intention and then interpreted in another or multiple ways. The accounts of two residents of the Pays Bas neighborhood in Niamey, Niger illustrate this phenomenon. Both listened to a PDEV radio drama on the topic of forced marriage on their local radio station. For one resident it was a compelling and important tale, nothing further. But for Elsa Kotto, an avid listener in her late twenties,[33] the story about forced marriage was *her* story. Elsa explained how the father in the show, Habibou, forced his daughter Zelika into a marriage she didn't want. Elsa then gave a much longer version of the story, which was her own personal account. She described how she had been forced to marry a much older man who then decided to relocate to Nigeria. One day Elsa fled her marriage and made her way back to Niger, depending on the kindness of strangers for food and transportation along the way. Elsa is the President of a listening club that meets weekly to listen to PDEV radio programs. On the day I met her I was accompanied by Lawan Boukar, coordinator of the 137 (and counting) PDEV listening clubs, groups of community members that meet regularly to listen together to one or both of the PDEV radio shows.

On a second visit to the Pays Bas neighborhood with Lawan, Elsa again met us in her home. This time she had gathered all of the members of her listening club, and several members of two neighboring clubs, Club Kamamini and Club Natachi.

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[32] Michael Cunningham, "Found in translation," *The New York Times*, October 3, 2010, p. WK10.

[33] Unlike survey research instruments that include detailed demographic information, qualitative interviews with strangers are often designed to first build trust and then proceed as informal conversation. The topic of Elsa's exact age did not come up in conversation and I generally do not ask unless exact age is relevant to the study.

Figure 5: Listening club members at the house of Elsa Kotto

During this second visit to Elsa's house I learned many interesting things about women's preferences related to the PDEV radio show. I learned, for instance, that several of the listening club members present at Elsa's listened to the show in two languages, Zarma and Haoussa, even when that meant listening to the same episode twice. I also learned that the women thought that Zeinab, a character in the serial radio drama "Hantsi," was, as they put it: "krikridi krikridi," *very nice*, explained Lawan, translating from Haoussa. Zeinab, one of the protagonists in the "transparency" storyline of the Hantsi serial drama was also described as "a good model" "a hard worker" and "a good person." Understanding which characters listeners like and identify with can have important implications for future scripts.[34] But the most interesting thing I learned that day in the Pays Bas neighborhood was the fact that Elsa used her radio and the content it delivers as a peace-making tool. As is often the case in qualitative research, this piece of interesting information came up in casual conversation rather than in direct response to an interview question.

"It's because of this one here," Elsa began, laughing and pointing a woman seated on a mat a few feet from her.

"She was always fighting with her neighbors."

Elsa said that she brought her radio to her fight-prone neighbor and asked the other surrounding neighbors to join.

"I said to them: 'You should listen to this show.'"

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[34] I shared with the Producers of Hantsi in Niger that many of the women I spoke to in the Pays Bas neighborhood appreciated and identified with Zeinab. I shared this with them because I knew from previous conversations with the producers that Zeinab was designed to model positive behaviors such as honesty and integrity.

And this is how a group of neighbors, convoked by Elsa, began listening to Hantsi, the PDEV serial drama featuring Habibou, Zelika and Zeinab.

The "fighting neighbors" no longer fight Elsa explained as the neighbors-in-question nodded nearby in agreement. The *content* of the radio program could very well be a deciding factor given that the main story lines in Hansti are peace and tolerance, transparency and citizenship. And yet I cannot say for sure whether it was the content of the show or the *act of listening together* that led them to make peace. Perhaps it was a combination of these two factors? Or was it Elsa's urging alone? It was difficult to know but Elsa's "radio intervention" intrigued me nonetheless. As did the range of her actions related to listening to show. So far the show had 1) sparked a lengthy personal narrative about her experience with forced marriage; 2) led to discussions with other Club members about various characters and their behaviors; and 3) provided an occasion to intervene in a dispute between two neighbors. Later I would learn that Elsa had been invited to the next Content Advisory Group meeting at the suggestion of Hadi, a PDEV "Community Reporter" who is very active in the Pays Bas neighborhood. The Content Advisory Group is made up of community members from various professions and walks for life who meet once monthly to give feedback and suggestions to the Producers of the PDEV radio programs. When I saw Elsa at the CAG meeting a week later I greeted her and asked how the meeting was going.

"It's good. I am sharing my experiences and giving suggestions" she said. In other words, Elsa had evolved from a "mere" listener to host of new, more active roles: She had become a facilitator of dialogue (as listening club President), a peace-maker (as concerned neighbor), and a contributor to the development of community radio programs (as a CAG participant). One strength of the design of the PDEV media component is that it allows for a continuum of participation from motivated community members like Elsa, facilitating community action towards peaceful resolution of programs and greater participation.

"But is Elsa a *typical* listener?" one might ask. The answer is that no listener is "typical." Like Elsa, all listeners are living and listening in a unique context under a particular set of historical and cultural circumstances. This has implications for attempts to influence and measure human behavior.

RAND corporation analysts suggest that in the social sciences, "reliable prediction is usually inappropriate."[35] There are too many variables driving human behavior to ensure prediction: humans don't always behave as we expect them to or as we might want them to. Science that measures things rather than people can be more precise. The rate of automobile production, for example, is predictable because the assembly line can be standardized and mechanized and thus easily controlled and measured. This is what makes efforts to foster *social* change different, and often more difficult, than types of change that involve static, material objects. This difference can be likened to the difference between building a bridge and building democracy.

This means that making predictions or generalizations based on the behavior of Elsa Kotto (or any other listener for that matter) is not advisable. However, there are certain *types* of human behavior, in this case behavior of radio listeners, that resemble behavior described in literature on radio listeners in different contexts. These "types of behavior" are what I describe in this report. This report represents my effort to put the voices of the people I spoke with in Niger and Chad into conversation with literature related specifically to communication for social change and also more general theoretical and empirical social science literature on human behavior. The aim is to provide a detailed account of what listeners *do* with PDEV radio programming: How it affects them and, in some cases, how it inspires them to change and/or become agents of change. Detailed information about how the PDEV radio shows are produced and broadcast will follow to help contextualize the radio program content and to also illustrate how the PDEV media program design generates interesting outcomes in itself, in particular

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[35] Paul Davis and Kim Cragin (eds.) Social science for counterterrorism: Putting the pieces together (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2009), p. xl.

by fostering "civic culture" by increasing access to information and opportunities for citizens to voice their viewpoints and questions in public, mediated form.

Writing in the field of Public Health, McLeroy and colleagues have created a typology of health promotion interventions that are "community based." They note that behind the term community based" there is a wide variation in what, exactly, is the role of the community. They observe that "the term *community based* often refers to community as the *setting* for interventions."[1] The community-as-setting is a largely geographical definition. This type of intervention occurs *in* the community, but may not be *of* the community, meaning that the community may have no role in implementing the intervention. The next type of intervention described by McLeroy et al. is community-as-target: "In this model, health status characteristics of the community are the targets of interventions."[1] In this instance, community level health indicators, such as the amount of park space per capita or the community air quality levels, are targeted for improvement. Here, community is a unit of analysis and a target for change. McLeroy and colleagues then describe the final two types of intervention, which are community-as-resource, and community-as-agents.

The two types of intervention are both rooted in the understanding that "community ownership and participation is essential for sustained success" in population-level outcomes.[36] McLeroy et al. note that interventions that approach the community as *agents* for change are the least common of the four types:

> "Although closely linked to the model just described [community as resource], the emphasis in this model is on respecting and reinforcing the natural adaptive, supportive and developmental capacities of communities...These naturally occurring *units of solution* meet the needs of many, if not most, community members without the benefit of direct professional intervention" (emphasis in the original).[37]

McLeroy et al. conclude their article by advocating for inclusion of these "naturally occurring units of solution" into social change interventions. Taking this approach requires faith in the community. One has to believe that the community has the capacity to act on its own behalf and interventions should be designed to make the most of the strengths of the community. By investing in "local production" I conclude that PDEV media teams are confident in the ability of radio partners to act as agents of change in their communities. I believe that this expanded role for radio partners, to include *producer* in addition to broadcaster, is quite significant.

Summary of Findings – impact of methodology used

This concept of community members as "agents" is relevant to the discussion of the design of the PDEV Programs as a way of examining the levels and *types* of participation and democratic expression the programs make possible. I believe the PDEV program design facilitates levels and types of participation that address several of the projected results submitted to USAID by AED/EA in their 2010 performance monitoring plan. Rather than a largely passive one-way communications tool, the radio programs and associated activities are designed to maximize audience input and interactivity, directly resulting in impact that addresses PDEV goals. Specifically,

- Result 2.2: "**Expansion of informal and formal social groups for youth**" through the sustained promotion of organized listening clubs;

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[36] McLeroy, K., Norton, B., Kegler, M., Burdine, J. & Sumaya, C. (2003) 'Community Based Interventions', *American Journal of Public Health* 93(4): 529-533.

[37] McLeroy et. al., 'Community based interventions," p. 530.

- Result 2.3: "**Increased youth civic participation**," through the participation of dozens of community reporters and the actions of listeners as will be detailed in the next section of this report;
- Result 3.1: "**Improved information flow among citizens on peace and tolerance**," through the targeted participation of moderate religious authorities and representatives from civil society and the government sector on radio programs dedicated to issues of peace and tolerance;
- Performance indicator 23: "**Number of radio stations producing and broadcasting their own programs incorporating PDEV messaging**," through training and support offered to "local production" radio partners; and finally
- 3.2 "**Moderate voices strengthened**," through strategic invitations to participate in the new religion-themed radio program and ongoing invitations to moderate religious leaders, civil society representatives and civil servants to participate as guests on the youth and good governance radio programs.

Clearly, increasing the number of voices in circulation in a democracy is an important objective and the PDEV media component is designed to maximize impact in this area. Now I highlight some of those voices, the voices of listeners, to share what they are saying and whether this illustrates that PDEV is achieving its goals of countering violent extremism.

Listener accounts

I now shift to the results of my conversations with listeners in Chad and Niger. I have "curated" these stories, meaning that I have selected them from among dozens of interesting accounts. I share the narratives that, in my opinion, best illustrate what listeners *do* with what they learn from PDEV radio programs. Another way to state "what they do" with the information is to say "how they have been impacted" by PDEV programs. I grouped listener behaviors into five categories, five "types" of action, each of which is illustrated with one or more listener accounts:

1. Listeners engage in group discussion;
2. Listeners share what they learn from the radio;
3. Listeners make changes in their lives;
4. Listeners initiate community action; and, finally (and exceptionally)
5. Listeners make or influence policy decisions.

It is important to point out that even the first two stages of the five stages above directly achieves a number of PDEV project goals which focus on increased dialogue, beyond that impact is very significant as I observed numerous examples of stages three and four and even examples of stage five, changes in policy, which is remarkable given the setting and the relatively short time the programs have been broadcast.

I present the accounts of listeners from Chad and Niger together. I could see no benefit to future programming to disaggregate what I learned because I see the two programs as having equally competent media teams and performing roughly on par with one another. I believe that if the Niger model is more "robust" it is because the team in Niger started slightly earlier, has had fewer logistical barriers[38] and benefits from cultural advantages such as the existence of "Fadas," informal social groups

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[38] I experienced a "logistical" barrier first hand when the Chadian President ordered the construction of a new road in the capital that "necessitated" the bulldozing of the AED/Equal Access office, including the recording studio that had been built by the PDEV project due to avoid the ongoing cost of renting an external studio. The entire office was razed within one week of the plans for the road being announced. I was told that this type of decision

for young people that have been easily converted into PDEV listening clubs. The programs may have similar designs and different types of outcomes because each program is operating within a different cultural, political and economic system. The accounts from both countries are presented together and there is a logical progression to the order of presentation.

I see these accounts as progressing along a continuum, beginning with the discussion of radio content with fellow listeners and then discussion with non-listeners (thus widening the circle). Next we have listeners acting, creating and organizing themselves. Action is then broadened to include other community members. And finally, in the case of one listener who is also a government official, action is taken at the policy level. By presenting these listener accounts on a continuum I aim to suggest a progression in levels of engagement, from discussion to action, and in scope, from individual to collective. I do believe that dialogue has a value unto itself. However, I cannot suggest that generation of dialogue is the same type of impact as the impetus to enforce policy. Each type of impact is of value, but some types of impact have wider repercussions, and I place these farther along the continuum, toward the end of this report. I also discuss one case where the impact of the radio show on the listener was limited to provoking reflection, without discussion or action.

Figure 6: A continuum of engagement

By helping listeners to move through a positive path to social change, a clear alternative to the drivers to violent extremism (such as feelings of powerlessness, exclusion or humiliation) is created.

Listeners engage in group discussion

While in Mossouro Chad, I listened to PDEV radio programs in group settings on two occasions: the first time with community members and a colleague-interpreter, with the express intention of following the call-in show, and the second time at the house of a female Community Reporter, so that I could observe and experience how women listened to the show as a group.[39] Achta Abakar is a Moussoro community reporter in her early twenties. She lives with her husband in a house that is grouped with six other houses in a compound that shares an interior courtyard. Achta had mentioned to me that she listens to the PDEV programs faithfully. She added: "You should come have tea and listen with us – we all listen together, outside in the courtyard."

When I arrived I found a courtyard full of women and children. I was invited to sit on a mat was served tea as Achta set up the radio in the courtyard. We were joined by several other women and as the the first part of the Chabab al Haye broadcast began. The show began with a "magazine,"; two presenters speaking with one another, presenting information in the form of a dialogue. Achta translated the main points of the program for me as another 4-5 adult women of different ages listened nearby on another courtyard mat while tending to their small children. At one point Achta stopped translating and made a sign telling me to stop talking. We had entered the drama portion of the program. About 8 minutes went by in total silence and then suddenly everyone but me and the children burst out laughing and then began conversing rapidly all at once. Later Achta explained that the theater part had been particularly well done that evening. "And what was the topic?" I asked. "It was about undesired pregnancy" she explained. "And it was *funny*?" I asked in surprise. She replied: "The *topic* wasn't funny

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was "typical." When I commented on the surprising equanimity of Equal Access/Chad Director Zara Yacoub, she responded: "Growing up in Chad you are raised to be ready for anything" (and she was).

[39] I listened to the radio shows on many other occasions, either live while being recorded or in the studio with PDEV media team staff members. I could follow programs in French but required interpretation when the radio programs were in other languages, which was not always available and thus limited my listening ability somewhat.

but the characters were very skillful – and the words they used made us laugh." I never learned the exact content of the drama part of the program but I had seen what it instigated: the program led to three generations of women openly discussing a taboo topic – together, and in front of their children. Communication for social change scholar Arvind Singhal suggests that dialogue in a group setting can increase group members' sense of "collective efficacy." Writing in the context of his own evaluation of the impact of radio programs on listeners in India, he writes that "discussions, dialogue, and conversations among audience members regarding the content of a media program can clarify doubts, overcome inhibitions, and provide a sense of collective efficacy to act.[40]

Borrowing from the work of theorist Albert Bandura, he defines collective efficacy as:

"the degree to which individuals in a system believe that they can organize and   execute courses of action required to achieve collective goals. Collective efficacy helps to   promote meaningful social change because such change is embedded within a network of social   influences…For this process to begin people need to believe that they can solve their   mutually-experienced   problems through unified effort."[41]

This perspective suggests that group dialogue is a precursor to group action. It is through dialogue with others that individuals begin to see that they have the potential to act as a group to effect change in their communities.

Dialogue on topics relevant to the community, including taboo topics like unplanned pregnancy, begin subtly shifting social norms about what can and cannot be discussed in public. Media programs help "break taboos" because they can introduce, from afar and over the airwaves, topics that individuals normally shy away from. Media programs can also depict types of behavior that can serve as a model to listeners. Albert Bandura observes that media programs can help foster the belief in audiences that their fate is not pre-determined, that they can affect change in their own lives. He writes: "People must be prepared for the obstacles they will encounter by modeling protypic problem situations and effective ways of overcoming them.[42] Peaceful and tolerant modes of dialogue can also be "modeled" in media programs. Of course listeners, as unpredictable human beings, are ultimately in charge of what they do with information they hear on the radio. I met one listener, a young man attending high school in N'Djamena, who served as a reminder that all listeners will not react in the "desired" way to media content that aims to have persuasive, pro-social effects. This young man spoke up in a large focus group meeting with more than twenty individuals to give his opinion on a story line that another listener had just mentioned as being particularly relevant to them.

"I do not agree with that storyline." He said. "I do not think it is a good idea to send girls to school and I told my father this – I told him that I was against him sending my sisters   to school."

This comment elicited several groans and dismissive hand gestures from other members of the group (the inevitable downside of focus group discussions, group dynamics). Out of respect for this young man's right to his own opinion, and mindful of the group dynamic, I continued the discussion without probing further for the time-being. When the focus group was over I approached the young man and asked him why he believed that girls should not go to school.

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[40] Singhal, "Riding high on *Taru* fever," p. 9.
[41] Singhal, "Riding high on *Taru* fever," p. 9.
[42] Albert Bandura, "Social cognitive theory," in Arvind Singhal, Michael J. Cody, Everett Rogers and Miguel Sabido (Eds.), Entertainment-education and social change: History, research, and practice (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003), p. 81.

"Because when girls go to school they get harassed by boys. I do not want my sisters to get harassed."

This young man's comments reflect two things: 1) That communication often fails to overcome deeply held beliefs or beliefs instilled through experience or during years of socialization; and 2) communication cannot easily address social norms at the structural level, such as the phenomenon of girls being disrespected in public, institutional settings. The young man did not explain whether his belief resulted from personal experience, from observation or from socialization. He did say that he was a faithful listener of the Chabab al Haye youth program. Regarding the Chabab al Haye storyline on the value of girls' education the listener had clearly reflected on the topic, but expressed that preventing the harassment of his sisters was of more importance to him than their attending school The fact that this young man liked the show and yet had not changed his opinion is a helpful reminder that communication projects can promote thought and discussion and can even changes in attitude and behavior, but cannot directly address structural-societal issues such as the public harassment of women and girls.

Theorizing communication effects

Most researchers who study the agenda-setting effects of mass media agree that while the media may not always influence *what* we think, it can certainly influence what we think *about.** As communication researchers have moved away from more "direct effect" theories that are associated with research on propaganda and referred to as the "hypo-dermic" model or "magic bullet" model of directly influencing audiences via mass media,[1] the claims about what, exactly, media can achieve have become more modest.[1] Scholars no longer accept that information can be "injected" wholesale into the minds of a passive audience. As early as 1980 a foundational United Nations document commonly referred to as "The MacBride Report" criticized "social engineering" attempts "by those who feel responsible for shaping societies and human minds."**

Communication scholar Silvio Waisbord suggests that mass media is now viewed for its ability to raise awareness, and ideally, also promote potentially generative discussion. He writes:

> The media are extremely important in raising awareness and knowledge about a given problem. They are able to expose large numbers of people to messages and generate conversation among audiences and others who were not exposed.***

In his article summarizing decades of scholarship on the use of communication for development, Waisbord states that the idea of promoting both mass media and interpersonal channels is a widely-accepted and recommended practice. A study on radio listeners in the under-resourced Bihar region of India similarly concluded that while the state-sponsored radio program disseminated important educational messages, the program's impact was increased considerably by virtue of the creation of multiple "spaces for discussion and dialogue" among listeners.**** The drama segments of each of Equal Access's radio programs are useful for introducing new ideas and educational content, and when done skillfully and in culturally respectful ways, can foster dialogue and group discussions – on even controversial topics. There is a vast literature on the use of mass-mediated drama to promote the kinds of interpersonal discussion that can eventually lead to sustainable behavior and social change.[1] Listening to Chabab al Haye at Achta's house together with the women in her extended family allowed me witness it in action. What the lively discussion in the courtyard may lead to is unknown. But I am certain that had they not listened to the radio program, a tri-generational discussion on undesired pregnancy would have most likely not taken place.

* McCombs, Maxwell and Shaw, Donald. "The agenda-setting function of mass media." In David Protess and Maxwell McCombs (eds.) *Agenda setting: Readings on media, public opinion and policymaking*. (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1991), p. 18.
** For a helpful summary of the evolution of this thinking see Bineham, Jeffrey L. "A historical account of the hypodermic model in mass communication." *Communication Monographs* 55 (1988): pp. 230-246.
***Joseph Klapper makes an early argument along these lines. See Klapper, Joseph. *The effects of mass communication*. (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1960).
***The MacBride report takes its name from Sean MacBride, president of the 15-member "International commission for the study of communication problems." The official citation is: *Many voices, one world: Towards a new, more just and more efficient world information and communication order* (New York, UNESCO: 1980), p. 86.
****Waisbord, Silvio. "Five key ideas: coincidences and challenges in development communication." In Oscar Hemer and Thomas Tufte (eds.) *Media and glocal change: Rethinking communication for development*. (Buenos Aires: CLASCO, 2005), p. 81.

In Birni N'Konni Niger I learned about another type of group discussion related to PDEV radio programs. Amadou Moukaila, President of the "Friends of the Library" listening club, explained that the library is the site of regular gatherings for a group of young people that listen to both of the PDEV radio

programs, Hantsi and Gwadaben Matassa. "Some of us listen here in the library, but most listen at home and then we meet here and hold discussions about various themes." "And are the discussions always about the show?" I asked Amadou.

"Yes, for the most part. But sometimes we invite guest speakers to provide additional information about the topic from the show. Recently we had a meeting about youth participation in the political process. The main topic of discussion was about how many politicians call on young people to help them during the election period but then they   forget about us after the election is over."

"And were any politicians invited to the discussion?" I asked.

"No. It's hard for us young people to speak to them [politicians] directly. For now we are discussing amongst ourselves, talking about how get more involved."

Amadou described to me the Gwadaben Matassa episode about youth and political participation that he had listened to and discussed with his club. According to Amadou, the listening club members are still in the discussion stage, but there is consensus that they want to become more active.

The "stages of change" theory, sometimes referred to as the "transtheoretical model" developed by Proschaska and DiClemente posits that behavior change is a *process* rather than an event.[43] Proschaska and DiClemente's model suggests that communicators should endeavor to move individuals along a "continuum of change" which begins with *pre-contemplation,* when the individual is not even considering change, then *contemplation*, *preparation* and finally *action* (the desired behavior change).[44] The stages of change theory offers an alternative to out-of-favor media effects theories that posited a "magic bullet" immediate and direct effect on individual behavior. We can plot Amadou and the other listening club members along the continuum by stating that they are somewhere between the contemplation and preparation stages. Because of existing hierarchies in the structure of political parties in Niger (and in many countries in the world) it is not evident that Amadou and his peers will be able to participate in the political process as they hope. Attempting participation is still a form of action. If they move to that stage, the radio program on youth participation will be partially responsible. As things stand now, the radio program has served as a catalyst for discussion and preparation, which are pre-cursors to action.

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[43] Prochaska James, and DiClemente Carlo. *The transtheoretical approach: crossing traditional boundaries of therapy.*(Homewood, IL: Dow Jones-Irwin; 1984).

[44] Some versions of the stages of change model include a fifth stage, *maintenance*, which occurs when there is no relapse and the desired behavior change is maintained. For an easily accessible summary of this theory see the National Cancer Institute's online publication: "Theory at a glance: A guide for health promotion practice, p. 15. http://www.cancer.gov/PDF/481f5d53-63df-41bc-bfaf-5aa48ee1da4d/TAAG3.pdf

Figure 7: The library in Birni N'Konni Niger: A listening club gathering place

Listeners share what they learn from the radio

As previously noted by Waisbord, mass media have the ability to "generate conversation among audiences and *others who were not exposed*" (emphasis added).[45] I learned from three listeners in N'Djamena Chad that listening to PDEV radio shows led to important conversations with non-listeners – conversations they hoped would change lives. High school student Oumar Sanda is confident that he changed the life of his female cousin when he used information gained from an PDEV radio show to convince her father that she was too young to be married.

> "My uncle wanted to give my cousin in marriage to his friend – and she is 14 and he is 42. He began preparing the marriage. He talked to us, me and my brother, about his plans.   And   I told him: 'No, my uncle…that's not normal. Your daughter is going to have to stop studying…and the man already has one wife. Your daughter is not mature yet – she is only 14.' I told my uncle that his daughter was also risking her health – because   she is too young, and her body may not support having a child. She may get the…how do   you   say   in French…Vestive…Vestule?"

> "Fistule?" I asked (fistula).

> "Right. La fistule. And my family listened to me. I told them about how I had heard on the radio, the PDEV program, they talked about early marriage, and they talked   about letting the child mature before getting married so that she doesn't have problems…and about how girls should finish school.

> "Which program was it?" I asked.

"It was Dabalaye, tribune positif" (tribune positif – positive foundation in English – is a   tag   line of the radio program).[46] When I shared what I learned with the program they   understood the physical difficulties the girl can have [in childbirth]…and that is where I   learned about fistula.   And   I told   my Uncle what I heard. My mother supported me.   And the marriage was cancelled. Everyone supported

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[45] Waisbord,"Five key ideas," p. 81.
[46] I confirmed that this was the Dabalye tag line by consulting a script. I reviewed the script for Dabalaye show number 39 titled: "Le PDEV: Halte a la violence et a l'intolérance, oui pour le développement."

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me [in my discussion with my   uncle]. My big brother also supported me. And he listens to the program too."

Oumar explained that his female cousin, Mariam, was still living at home, continuing her studies. His successful intervention against the marriage of his young cousin echoes findings reported in an evaluation of Taru, the Entertainment Education radio drama that was referenced earlier in this report (p. 10). The evaluation cites the case of Shailendra Singh, a rural medical practitioner who intervened to stop a child marriage in his village after hearing a storyline on that topic in the radio drama. The exact details of the fictional stories broadcast in Chad and India undoubtedly differed, but raising the issue on the airwaves led to similar and important outcomes in both countries. The challenge is having the time and human resources to "track down" these impact stories. For every Oumar or Shailendra Singh evaluators are able to interview how many listeners with impact narratives are not accessed?

Sitting next to Oumar was Abakar Adoum, another Dabalaye listener. I had met Oumar and Abakar the previous day at a large meeting with 24 listeners when I held a large focus group discussion about the radio programs. Each listener had been called to attend using the phone number they provided when they sent a text message to the PDEV phone lines dedicated to gathering listener feedback on Dabalaye and Chabab al Haye. I had asked Abakar to the follow up meeting because of something he had said at the larger meeting about listening to the program with his father. I asked Abakar to give me more detail on why and how he listened to the program.

> "The drama parts – I really like them. They help raise awareness. And the program gives a lot of good arguments. I wanted my dad to listen to the program with me so I bought him batteries [for his radio] so we could listen together. One day I said 'Listen Dad [to the program]. People are evolving. My dad said they should play the program more often   – like 4-5 times a day."

I asked Abakar why he wanted his father to listen to the program. He said his father refuses to let him marry outside of his ethnicity. He wanted his father to hear more tolerant, more "evolved" ideas. He thought that listening to Dabalaye would expose him to these ideas.

Abakar's account interested me because of his deliberate use of the radio program to try to persuade his father to be more tolerant. To ensure that his father would listen he bought batteries for the radio and asked his father to listen along with him. Luckily for Abakar his father liked the program. Will his father continue listening? Will he eventually allow Abakar to marry outside of his ethnicity? These questions were not answered during my stay in Chad. However, there is evidence in literature on youth and community development to suggest that once young people have a positive experience communicating and being heard by adults, they are more likely to continue that practice. Shelden Zeldin, a professor of human development, writes:

When youth have the opportunity to engage with peers and friends in a structured and safe environment, receive safe emotional support from adults and experience a sense of   community, they are more likely to remain engaged and report positive outcomes.[47]

Abakar did not express that he received "emotional support" from his father after listening to the radio program with him but the fact that his father liked the program and was willing to listen with his son is encouraging. A listener I had spoken with before meeting Abakar shared with me that in Chad, "most people feel that if something is on the radio, it must be true." Abakar seems to be hoping that his father will share this sentiment. Regardless of the subsequent actions or attitude of Abakar's father, his account helps us understand how and why he made use of and shared the information he learned about in the program. The unpredictable nature of human behavior and motivation means that other listeners might

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[47] Sheperd Zeldin, "Youth as agents of adult and community development: Mapping the processes and outcomes of youth engaged in organizational governance," *Applied Developmental Science* 8:2 (2004); 76.

make different (or no) use of the same information. Abakar's account cannot demonstrate what is probable but it can show what the radio show makes *possible*.

Another listener from the large focus group that I sought out for a follow up meeting was Ahmat Adoum Mahamat, a young man in his early twenties. Ahmat caught my attention in the focus group when he shared that he had written and memorized a poem about AIDS based on information he learned from an episode of Chabab al Haye. I had asked the group: "Do you think that radio programs can affect the way people think and behave?" Many people responded yes but were not able to provide personal examples. "What about first person examples?" I asked the group. Ahmat raised his hand and mentioned his poem. He then recited the poem in Arabic for the other focus group members.

At the follow up meeting I asked him why he had written the poem. He responded as follows:

> "My parents live in Bangui [Central Africa]. When I lived there with them I was a peer educator with Unicef. I tried to do something like that here [in N'Djamena Chad] but I had no success. I heard the information about Aids on the radio, on Chabab al Haye. I wanted to share the information with my friends – because they don't listen to the radio and they don't understand anything about Aids. So I wrote the poem and then I recited it to many of them. I have it memorized."

Ahmat's poem is mostly a cautionary tale about the dangers of Aids. It does not relate specific information about modes of transmission, but it stresses that Aids can affect anyone and was designed to raise awareness among his friends.

> Where do you come from Aids?
> You make the world suffer
> You evolve without obstacle
> You are without nationality, without pity.
> You kill rich and you kill poor
> You aren't black or white or yellow
> You hit men, women and children.
> Aids, the entire world is fighting against you, your end is near.

At the end of my interview with Ahmat I asked him what plans he had for his life. "I want to be a doctor," he replied. He is already a health educator, I thought to myself, despite the fact that no one has hired or trained him to be. He used what was available, which is information from the radio, and he converted it to poetry and started spreading the message, one friend at a time. In this sense, Ahmat is not a passive consumer of mass media, nor did the radio inspire him to do something totally new. Listening to the Chabab al Haye episode on Aids gave him the information, and perhaps motivation, needed to return to his peer educator role.

Ousman, Abakar and Ahmat all shared information they got from PDEV programs with family and friends. Ousman strategically shared his new knowledge of fistula to persuade his uncle not to marry his 14 year-old daughter. Ahmat esteemed that his friends who didn't listen to the radio needed to learn about the dangers of Aids and so he re-packaged the information and shared it with any friend that would listen. Abakar's case is a bit different. He thought the information he heard on Dabalaye about peace and tolerance between different ethnicities was important and rather than trying to convince his father he had his father listen to the radio with him, in hopes that the tolerance messages would continue and that his father would change his views.

Communication theorists have studied what audiences *do* with information from mass media, what "uses and gratifications" their experience with mass media provides. In an article titled "Uses of mass communication by the individual," Katz et al. writes:

Compared with classical effects studies, the uses-and-gratifications approach takes the media consumer rather than the media message as its starting point, and explores his communication behavior in terms of his direct experience with the media. It views the members of the audience as actively utilizing media contents, rather than being passively acted upon by the media.[48]

This view of an active audience making use of mass mediated information is aligned with the accounts of Ousman, Abakar and Ahmat. Each young man made use information he heard on a PDEV radio program. The information found most "useful" in the cases they described was different for each of them. The implication of this is that there is no "one size fits all" approach to using mass media for social change. A program focusing solely on health may have taught Ousman about fistula and helped Ahmat fine tune his poem on AIDS but it would not have helped Abakar in his efforts to persuade his father to be tolerant of other ethnicities. Presuming a diverse audience with diverse needs and potential uses for mass mediated information allows producers of media to inspire a wide range of behaviors. Communication theory can help explain these behaviors but not predict them. To predict one would have to be familiar with the needs and aims of all audience members, an impossible task.
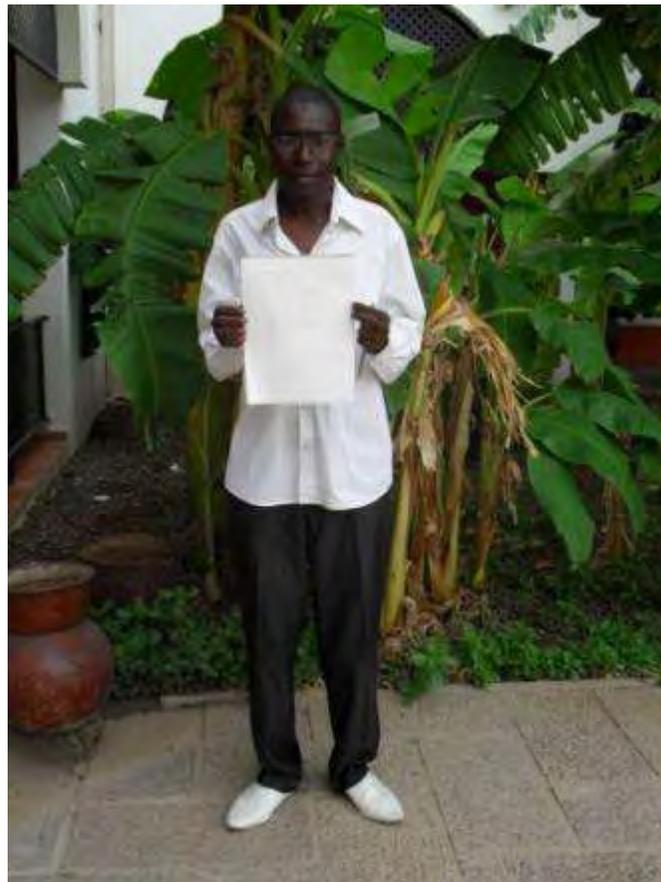
Figure 8: Ahmat Adoum Mahamat with his poem about AIDS

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[48] Katz, Elihu, Blumler, Jay and Gurevitch, Michael. "Uses of mass communication by the individual," in Walter P. Davison and Frederick Yu (eds) *Mass communication research: Major issues and future directions* New York Praeger, 1974), p. 12.

Listeners make changes in their lives

Communication theories claiming that direct and immediate behavior change effects can result from mass media interventions have mostly fallen from favor. Yet, there are nonetheless cases when mass media have indeed had instant and profound effects on individuals. Returning to the "stages of change" continuum, there are cases of individuals moving from pre-contemplation (not considering a change) directly to action when they hear a message they find exceptionally persuasive. For instance, I spoke with three individuals in two different cities in Niger who said they stopped using drugs after listening to an episode of the PDEV program Gwadaben Matassa. That particular radio program featured an interview by a community reporter of a registered nurse who outlined the harmful effects drugs can have on the human body. A young man named Ali in Magaria, a small town bordering Nigeria in south-east Niger said all his friends called him "the Jamaican,"[49] because he was known for using drugs. He said he once regularly took "Tramol" a term that likely refers to "Tramadol," a pain-killer in pill form that is inexpensive and readily available according to several young people I spoke with in Niger.[50] My conversation with Ali went as follows:

> "So you were taking Tramol?"
> "Yes."
> "But you knew it was bad for you?"
> "Yes."
> "And your parents and your friends had urged you to stop?"
> "Yes."
> "So what is it about the radio episode that made you stop?" I asked.

He responded at length:

> "My parents and my friends had already asked me to stop and I had refused. One day I   had taken the drug and I was lying down, listening to Gwadaben Matassa about the   consequences of taking drugs. On the show they talked about consequences like liver   disease and that people can become crazy from taking drugs, and it made me really   think…I thought a lot about it, and about what my parents and friends had already told   me, and I thought maybe they are right and I should stop. So I stopped. And you know   that people here call me "Ali the Jamaican" because everyone here knows that Jamaica is   a country with drugs. Now that I have abandoned drugs and alcohol I feel good and in   shape – like I've re-entered the world…and I now run a business and I'm back in my   community and I'm proud of having stopped. There are a lot of friends who stopped   taking drugs after listening to that show – I can't even count how many because they are   very numerous."

Aristotle has written extensively on the art of crafting persuasive arguments. In his classic work *On Rhetoric* he identifies three "modes of persuasion" that can be applied to any subject. Artistotle's persuasion triad is comprised of *Ethos*, the character and expertise of the speaker, *Logos*, the logical argument being made, and *Pathos*, the appeal to the public's emotions.[51] Ali's family and friends had made emotional appeals, imploring him to stop taking drugs, which had no effect. When a medical professional discussed the biological, physical and mental consequences of drug abuse on the radio Ali decided

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[49] Ali's story, in short form, is recounted in the Equal Access document "Synthèse des Focus Group Discussion (FGD) à Maradi, Zinder, Agadez et Tahoua du 12 au 28 Octobre 2009, p. 13. I followed up with Ali in order to learn why, exactly, the radio emission caused him to stop taking drugs.

[50] I am not 100% certain that "tramol" is the same as Tramidol, but I am certain that it is readily available as I was told this repeatedly and heard a road-side coffee seller offering to put it in the coffee of one of his clients for a minimal extra charge.

[51] Aristotle, *On rhetoric: A theory of civic discourse* (New York: Oxford Univesity Press, 1991), pp. 37-38.

immediately to stop. The combination of a credible medical source (ethos) and an evidence-based argument (logos) led to Ali's behavior change. Two additional young men from Aguie, a nearby town with several listening clubs told similar stories; each cited the intervention of the medical professional and the detailed description of the drug's harmful effects on the body as the main motivation for quitting. Yahaya Dan Bawa, from Aguie, stated:

"Others tell you and you don't listen. But when you hear the information on the radio, and you hear about the medical problems you can have, you start worrying and thinking 'what if that happens to me?'"

Nodding in agreement next to Yahaya stood Maman Moutari, a member of Yahaya's listening club. He explained that his case was the same. He heard the program and decided to stop taking drugs. In my experience, such cases of immediate behavior change are quite rare. I felt compelled to ask Maman a follow up question: "And you weren't already considering stopping?" He replied: "Everyone had told me to stop and I refused. It was hearing the medical consequences that convinced me."

Theories such as the "hypodermic needle" model or "magic bullet" arguing that mass media can cause direct causal effects on audience members may have fallen out of favor and yet may still have their tenets supported by direct empirical evidence. Ali, Yahaya and Maman are three examples of such evidence. Each abandoned Tramol after hearing an episode of Gwadaben Matassa on the medical consequences of the drug. The similarity in their stories about the impact of learning about medical consequences from a medical professional suggest that while some radio listeners may be moved by emotion-inducing drama, other listeners are more effectively persuaded with the expertise of "real life" professionals. Dozens of conversations with young people in Niger and Chad convinced me that listeners are eager for "conseilles" (advice) and information. With more than a year of broadcasts "in the can," Equal Access has established the credibility required to provide advice and information on a wide range of educational topics.

The narratives of Ali, Maman and Yahaya demonstrate that radio show content can lead to direct, individual-level change. This next illustration demonstrates the radio show's capacity to inspire collective action. This next narrative also shows that it is very difficult to predict what parts of a storyline will inspire a listener.

Listeners initiate community action

Abdoulahi Aboubacar is the President of the listening club "Fada Lumière Couture" in Illela, Niger. Inspired by an episode of Gwadaben Matassa, his listening club took the initiative to organize a clean up on the streets of the town. Abdoulahi explained how the idea came about:

"In the drama part of one of the episodes of Gwadaben Matassa there was a character who was a donut seller. One of the donut seller's clients told her that he didn't want to buy her donuts because her stand was just in front of a ditch filled with trash. The donut seller told the client 'The ditch is not my responsibility – it is the Mayor's responsibility.'
When we heard that episode we began talking about how in our city the Mayor has been doing a lot to clean up the city, including the ditches (les canevaux). We said amongst ourselves: 'Why not help out the Mayor in the cleaning effort?'

Abdoulahi explained how he and his fellow listening club members paid to have an announcement read on the radio inviting other citizens to help with the planned clean up. Neighborhood leaders and residents participated, each contributing what they could, whether labor, materials or cold water. The Mayor gave a wheelbarrow to Abdoulahi's listening club and another local political leader (Chef de Canton) joined the club on the clean-up day and helped out by sweeping. Aboudalahi explained that not everyone understood their actions. "One person said to me 'You are a tailor, why are you cleaning the streets?' But I think that it is important to lead by example. Others may

join in, or be inspired do something else." This case demonstrates that even "negative modeling" (or the absence of action) in a storyline can lead to action. The story of the donut seller was not a direct message to go out and organize a clean-up, but it did get Abdoulahi thinking about the importance of sanitation.

The clean-up initiative of the club continues to have impact. The listening club has included a clean-up day for their immediate neighborhood in their weekly activities. Their example also had policy implications. The Mayor of Illela told Abdoulahi that he was inspired by their clean up day and thus had instituted a 4000 cfa fine (about 8 USD) for littering or throwing trash in the ditches. According to Abdoulahi, the Mayor now regularly invites listening club members to participate in community actions that are sponsored by the city or by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The collaboration between Abdoulahi's listening club and the Mayor, and their collaboration with the local Marabout (which I will describe shortly) are exemplify on a small scale a PDEV program result which is "increased collaboration of public, private, and civil society sectors" (result 1.2), and increased youth civic participation (result 2.3).[52]

Writing on the role of youth as agents in community development, Zeldin has noted that participation is a means for youth to "gain respect, a sense of belonging and importance."[53] In addition, youth engagement in the community can lead to "positive changes in personal identity and efficacy," and increases in community connections.[54] The perception of self-as-change-agent is amplified, Zeldin noes, when youth completed tasks in collaboration with powerful adults."[55] By initiating the local clean up, the Illela listening club set an example. By inviting others to join them, including "powerful" adults like the mayor, their prestige grows by association.

The sequence of events in Illela also demonstrates how acts of social change are unpredictable. In this instance, the PDEV radio show, together with the Mayor's ongoing initiatives in Illela, jointly inspired the listening club to initiate the clean-up effort. Several community members, including high profile local leaders, joined the club-led action which, in turn, led to the Mayor instituting a new fine for littering and resulted in him seeking the contribution of listening club members in additional community actions. This chain of events is not only unpredictable but also non-replicable. The chances of the exact confluence of circumstances repeating in another time or place are minimal. What is exciting, however, is the idea that *new* versions of social change may be set off in similar circumstances. Westley, Zimmerman and Patton, professionals working in program design and evaluation, recommend openness to unplanned-for, emergent outcomes when assessing an intervention. "The narrow goal orientation of much traditional evaluation," they write, "can result in missing important unanticipated outcomes."[56]

They argue that innovative program designs require:

Evaluating short-term desired outcomes (how and where are we making progress?) while also rigorously watching out for unanticipated consequences, unpredicted (and unpredictable) side effects, spinoffs and ripples emanating from interventions (what is happening around and beyond our hoped-for results?).[57]

Tracking down the "ripples" of an intervention is a task well-suited to in-depth, ethnographic methods involving open-ended questions rather than fixed-choice scales, as would be found on a survey. In the

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[52] PDEV Performance monitoring plan (PMP) approved by USAID June 2010.

[53] Sheperd Zeldin, "Youth as agents of adult and community development: Mapping the processes and outcomes of youth engaged in organizational governance," *Applied Developmental Science* 8:2 (2004); pp. 80-81.

[54] Zeldin, "Youth as agents," pp. 81-82.

[55] Zeldin, "Youth as agents," p. 82.

[56] Francis Westley, Brenda Zimmerman, and Michael Quinn Patton, *Getting to maybe: How the world is changed.* (Toronto, Canada: Vintage, 2006), p. 238.

[57] Westley, Zimmerman and Patton. *Getting to maybe*, p. 238.

case of Abdoulahi, I used open-ended questions to query him at length about his club's clean-up initiative. He had already sent photos of the event to PDEV media team in Niamey and thus they were aware that it had happened. I wanted to know more about how it came about and what "ripples" it may have caused.

Figure 9: A photo sent to PDEV by Abdoulahi's listening club in Illela Niger

I learned from Abdoulahi that an additional unpredictable outcome of the listening club's clean-up action in Illela was the formation of new relationships. Abdoulahi mentioned this when I asked him if anything new had come about *after* the clean-up event.

> "Because of it [the clean-up efforts], the club was very visible in the community. One day a Marabout's (religious leader) came to see us. He said he had seen us listening to the radio as a group and asked us about the radio programs."

Aboulahi went on to explain how the listening club solidified their new relationships with the Marabout when a club member financed materials and other members donated their labor to make needed repairs at the Marabout's mosque. I was intrigued by Abdoulahi's account of this new relationship and collaboration. With one community action, the listening group had succeeded in forming relationships with two prestigious sectors in Illela; local government and a local religious authority. Interested in learning more about the club's ability to build new relationships, I asked Abdoulahi to put me in touch with Malam Saadou Assoumane, the Marabout he had spoken about. It was understandable that the young men and women of the listening club were proud to have been approached by a respected religious leader.[58] To complete the picture, I wanted to learn how the Marabout saw this new relationship.

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[58] In a Community Youth Mapping (CYM) exercise led by Nigerien youth, more than 80% (average) of the young people surveyed said they felt their opinions were not taken into account. Relationships with respected elders can represent, for young people, a step toward gaining community respect. See «Restitution de la cartographie

Malam Saadou Assoumane is a religious leader (or "Marabout," the term Abdoulahi used, which is commonly used in Niger) who presides over daily prayers in a local mosque in Illela. Malam explained that every Saturday he gathers with other local religious leaders to discuss the Koran and, in particular, issues of peace and tolerance as taught in the Koran. When I asked Malam what he thought about his relationship with Abdoulahi and the other members of the listening club, he responded at length:

"In the Arab countries where people are killing themselves, with the "kamakazis" that is not true Islam. Islam never said to do any of that. Islam promotes peace through the words of the Prophet. And when Abdoulahi puts on his radio, there are often people near the mosque waiting for the call to prayer and we can all hear the radio. I realized that the shows he listens to on the radio are preaching the same thing I am."

"How So?" I asked

"Religion recommends peace and tolerance and the radio show does too. It is like the radio is doing our job. I told Abdoulahi, 'I am also interested in what the radio is saying. We can listen and evolve together.' Nowhere in the Koran does it say that we should promote violence. Religious leaders should promote peace –that is our duty. But we do not have the capacity to diffuse the message as far – but the radio lightens our load because it can speak in a loud voice and the radio has a long reach."

Malam went on to explain that with the help of Abdoulahi and his listening club, they had renovated the neighborhood mosque. Malam also mentioned that he had begun meeting regularly with six other religious leaders to listen to the show with them.

He said:

"The shows Hantsi and Gwadaben, they are very pertinent during the vacation periods because young people listen and they can do activities. For young people who are not employed, it gives them something to do."

"Do you have any suggestions for the producers of the show?" I asked, as our conversation was wrapping up.

"Keep stressing peace in the shows. Even peace within the family, with the wife and children, the need to treat one another always with respect. And I think the shows should be re-diffused again and again. People are listening here in Illela."

Malam was not the first person to have suggested re-diffusing the radio programs. Whether due to the quality of the programs or a dearth of mass media options (or both), many listeners expressed a strong desire to hear the shows more often. Given the nature of Malam's comments about the complementary nature of PDEV radio programs and his work as a religious leader I am confident that the addition of a new radio show featuring religion-related topics will be a welcome addition.

I learned of a second example of listeners initiating community action in Tessaoua, a city about 500km from Niamey, Niger's capital. I found this example particularly encouraging because it involves young people creating a government-recognized organization dedicated to development in the

communautaire par les jeunes dans la communauté de Niamey, » PDEV-Niger, AED/USAID : (2009), p. 19, Tableau 3.

community. This example also highlights the importance of the listening clubs as a springboard to community involvement.

The President of "Listening Club Zamani Z Gwadaben" in Tessaoua is a young man named Oumarou Ibrahim, who goes by the nickname "Coach." The Zamani Z club has 15 members, 11 men and 4 women, ranging in age from 18 to 30 years old. I met Oumarou along with the Presidents of two other listening clubs at the studio/offices of Radio Tarmamua, PDEV's community radio partner in Tessaoua. I asked each of the Presidents if they recalled specific episodes of Hantsi or Gwadaben that they had found particularly relevant and/or interesting. Oumarou said that he had been greatly influenced by a Gwadaben Matassa episode on young people and participation in the democratic process. He then opened a folder that he had brought with him and handed me a set of documents. He explained:

> "These are the official by-laws of our organization. We had our listening club formally registered with the city. We have teachers in our club, and so we have begun giving literacy classes to primary school students in their homes."

Article 5 of the club's by-laws listed their objectives. I copied down several of them and list them here:

1. Engage in activities that support socio-economic and cultural development with the aim of fighting against poverty.
2. Develop a training program on literacy for community members.
3. Put in place a clean-up program.
4. Implement awareness campaigns.

I asked Oumarou why the listening club decided to offer classes and plan other activities. He responded: "The radio program is a contribution. We also wanted to contribute. We organized [formally] because we thought that if we believe in change we should start with ourselves." I asked Oumarou and the other club Presidents what suggestions they had for PDEV headquarters in Niamey. Oumarou said that financial support for the listening clubs would be welcome. "We have a lot of activities we want to implement – like a clean-up." I shared with the Presidents how Abdoulahi and his club received a wheel-barrow from the Mayor and volunteers from within the community. I did not say it directly to Oumarou but I was hoping to plant the seed that Club Zamini Z had everything they needed, in their own community, to continue their activities. Judging from the literacy classes they are currently offering, I am believe that they already know this.

Yet Oumarou's suggestion resonates with comments I heard repeatedly while speaking with listeners in Niger, most of whom were members of Hantsi or Gwadaben listening clubs. One listening club Presidents in Aguie, for example, said that his club wanted financial support to travel to neighboring villages to conduct "awareness caravans," sharing the content of the Equal Access radio programs with those outside the broadcast zone of the local community radio station. This comment illustrates the desire of the listening club members to become more involved in their community. It also demonstrates their awareness that the radio broadcast, which they clearly view as an asset, does not reach some of the surrounding communities and they want to help bring the content to them.

A listening club president in Zinder also expressed a desire for additional activities. He said he would like to get together with other listening club Presidents and members in the region, and he expressed that PDEV support would help facilitate that. The members of listening club "Katanga Hantsi" in Agadez reported that they hold regular discussions with other community members about topics like

forced marriage and also go door to door to try to raise awareness about keeping the neighborhood clean and the importance of education for children.[59]
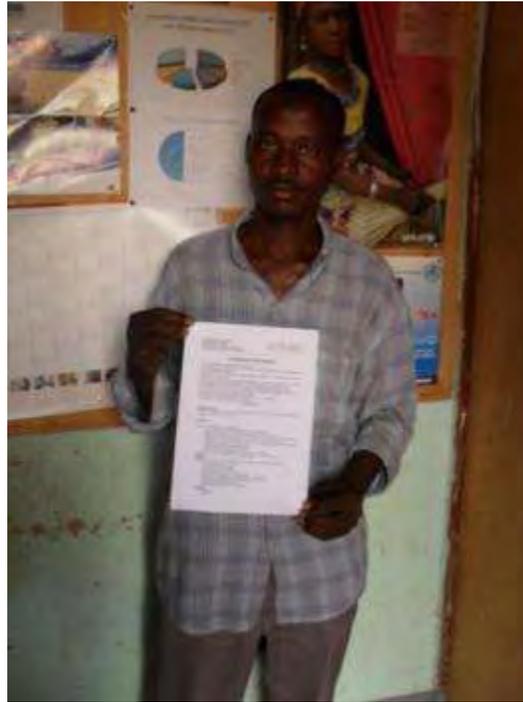
Figure 10: Listening Club President with the official club by-laws

On my trip to the regions outside of the capital, I was accompanied by Lawan Boukar, a newly hired "Listening Club Coordinator" who had been a community reporter in Zinder.[60] Each time we met with listening club Presidents and members Lawan explained that PDEV was planning to provide small portable radios and a supply of batteries to each club. I suspect that the clubs that have already begun organizing activities know they can be self sufficient but I believe that formal recognition, validation and support would encourage them greatly. For those young people who are unemployed and yet eager to contribute to their communities, financial support would allow them to participate without having to use their own meager funds to pay for bus fare or materials.

The involvement of young people in their communities represents a shift in their role from passive listeners to active promoter of change. In *Change: Principles of problem formation and problem resolution*, Watzlawick et al. distinguish between "first-order change" which they state 'occurs within the given system which itself remains unchanged' and "second-order change" which occurs when the system itself changes.[61] Both Abdoulahi in Illela and Oumarou in Tessaoua changed the systems in their communities when, as young people, they were recognized as agents of change, a role normally reserved for authority figures. By challenging the established norms about who can initiate (not just implement) civic action, the listening clubs of Abdoulahi and Oumarou modeled a new level of engagement, and

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[59] This interview was conducted by phone (in Haoussa) by Lawan Boukar. I was unable to travel to Agadez due to logistical problems (heavy rains on the road and also security issues).

[60] Lawan was the community reporter who interviewed the nurse about the harmful effects of drug use. He provided information that was very helpful when speaking with the former "Tramol" users who had been affected by that Gwadaben Matassa episode.

[61] Paul Watzlawick, John Weakland and Robert Fisch, Richard. *Change: Principles of problem formation and problem resolution* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974), p. 11

offered what Singhal et al. describe as "a new story" about how change happens, a story that may inspire others, leading to amplification through adaptation and emulation.[62]

The initiative taken by the young listening club members in Illela and Tessaoua signals their ability to shift from being targets for social change to agents and initiators of social change.[63] That the community members involved are unpaid youths who hold no position of authority makes their actions even more extraordinary. Also noteworthy is that the phenomenon of youth becoming agents of change, acting collectively to contribute to the well-being of their community helps to counter several potential drivers of violent extremism such as "boredom and idleness,"[64] "social exclusion"[65] and a lack of positive social networks.[66] Noted communication theorist Manuel Castells describes social exclusion as a process rather than a condition.[67] As such, social exclusion is reversible, and it can be addressed by the strategic use of communication. Social exclusion, Castells suggests, is a phenomenon in which individuals

> "…are bypassed by flows of wealth and information and ultimately deprived of the basic technological infrastructure that allows [them] to communicate, innovate, produce, consume and even live in today's world."[68]

While inequalities in "flows of wealth" are very difficult to address, flows in communication are less so. Given the description of social exclusion provided by Castells, augmenting opportunities for individuals and groups to communicate, innovate and produce are particularly worthy. As Nobel Prize-winning author Amartya Sen has suggested, there are many identities that are "relevant for a person's self understanding," and to the extent that a person's identity as a citizen engaged in "responsible political action" can be fostered, the chances of these active citizens being recruited for violent or illicit activities is decreased.[69]

Put in PDEV project terms the initiative of the like the Illella listening club represents an increase in the number of young people participating in civic activities (result 2.3, # 16). Further, the visible nature of their civic activities, cleaning the city in plain view of all citizens, is likely to increased the number of citizens stating youth groups make positive contributions to society (Result 2.2, #15).[70]

Listeners make policy decisions

An individual I interviewed who had been a guest on "Dabalaye," the radio show about good governance produced by PDEV Chad, turned out to be a listener – a listener powerful enough to affect government policy. Hamai Makore heads what used to be known as the "Moralization" office, an office within a branch of government now called the "Ministry of public hygiene and the promotion of good governance." He described his role as that of an "ethics overseer," someone charged with monitoring government transparency and the utilization of public funds and equipment. Makore said that an important part of his job was communicating with the public, for which he relied upon mass media

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[62] Singhal, Arvind, Rao, Nagesh, and Pant, Saumya *Entertainment-Education and Possibilities for Second-Order Social Change Journal of Creative Communications* 1; (2006): 272-274.

[63] Here I am adapting terminology used by McLeroy et al. in their article "Community-based interventions," American Journal of Public Health 93.4 (2003), p. 530.

[64] USAID, "Guide to the drivers of violent extremism," pp. v, 23, 38.

[65] USAID, "Guide to the drivers of violent extremism," p. 22

[66] RAND, Social science for counterterrorism," p. 312

[67] Manuel Castells "The rise of the fourth world," in David Held and Anthony McGrew (eds.), *The global transformations readers: An introduction to the globalization debate*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), p. 350

[68] Manuel Castells "The rise of the fourth world," p. 350

[69] Amartya Sen, Identity and violence: The illusion of destiny (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006), pp. 168, 83

[70] AED PDEV Performance monitoring plan (PMP) submitted to USAID April 26, 2010.

outlets – radio and television primarily (internet penetration in Chad is less than 2%).[71] He confirmed what I had been told in the Equal Access office by a producer, which was that he had been invited to appear on Dabalaye to discuss proper and improper use of state vehicles.[72] "And what was the result of your appearance on the show?" I asked.

> "Speaking on the PDEV show was a big help. It had a big impact on our mission because of the quantity and diversity of listeners we were able to reach. We have a big problem here in Chad with people mis-using state vehicles. You can see cars parked in front of bars or state-owned trucks filled with wood that people have purchased for their own use. Some state workers use the vehicles in ways they shouldn't during work hours. And as civil servants it's not dignified from a moral standpoint. Three years ago our office instituted a policy prohibiting the use of state vehicles for transporting wood or coal and also from parking in front of bars during office hours. When the [PDEV] show on the use of public goods aired with my interview on the use of state vehicles we started enforcing the policy that had been dormant. The Minister sent out a memo and held a big press conference announcing that people needed to be aware that the policy was now going to be applied in earnest."

> "And what happened when the policy began being enforced?" I asked

> "The police started towing cars that weren't being used properly – it didn't matter if it was a Minister's car. If the car was misused they took it away from that person and gave it to another service. We had a big awareness campaign and involved opinion leaders from different sectors – neighborhood chiefs, Sultans, Imams, and so on. And many of my acquaintances called me to tell me that they heard me on the radio and that they were in agreement with what we were doing."

> "So, overall, how do you feel about your participation on the radio show?"

> "You have to communicate with the media that people use most. Our mission can only have long-term impact by using mass media and PDEV supports our work in that sense. The show is useful for the authorities because [it allows us to] hear the reaction of listeners to our policies when people record their opinions with the Vox Pops ["on the street" interviews with average citizens]. It helps us know how our decisions are received. The Minister has listened to Dabalaye. He told me so when I told him I had been asked to be interviewed for the show."

I was greatly interested to learn that the Minister knew and had listened to the Dabalaye radio show. Of particular interest was Hamai Makore's comment that civil servant-colleagues listened to the show to hear the reactions of citizens to their policy decisions. It was evident from Makore's earlier comments that the state used mass media to communicate its policies and values to the general public and his final comments demonstrate that the public can use the same medium to respond. For this two-way communication to take place, media producers should invite the general public to express themselves and communicate with the state through segments like the Vox Pops and citizen interviews.

In a Rand Foundation publication on social science and counterterrorism, a chapter on the use of strategic communication recommends involving community members to help "fine tune" strategic messages and the stresses the importance of soliciting, collecting and incorporating audience feedback.[73] Equal Access takes follows this recommendation and takes it one step further by giving citizens access

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[71] The CIA Factbook reference page for Chad states that out of a population of 10,300,000 only 130,000 have access to the internet (1.26%). https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cd.html
[72] Dabalaye Episode 20: Usage of public goods: State vehicles.
[73] Egner, Michael. "Social-science foundations," p. 336.

(albeit edited access) to the airwaves. When citizens communicate directly with other citizens and with the state through their participation in PDEV radio programs they add authenticity and credibility to the program, which is what the recommended community involvement described above is designed for.

Design as impact

This report focuses mainly on radio listeners, not radio partners. Yet after spending two months learning about Equal Access programs in Chad and Niger I came to believe that the *design* of the media program allows levels of participation and democratic expression that are important outcomes in their own right. To explain what I mean, I present a simplified and then more complete graphic outlining the PDEV radio program.
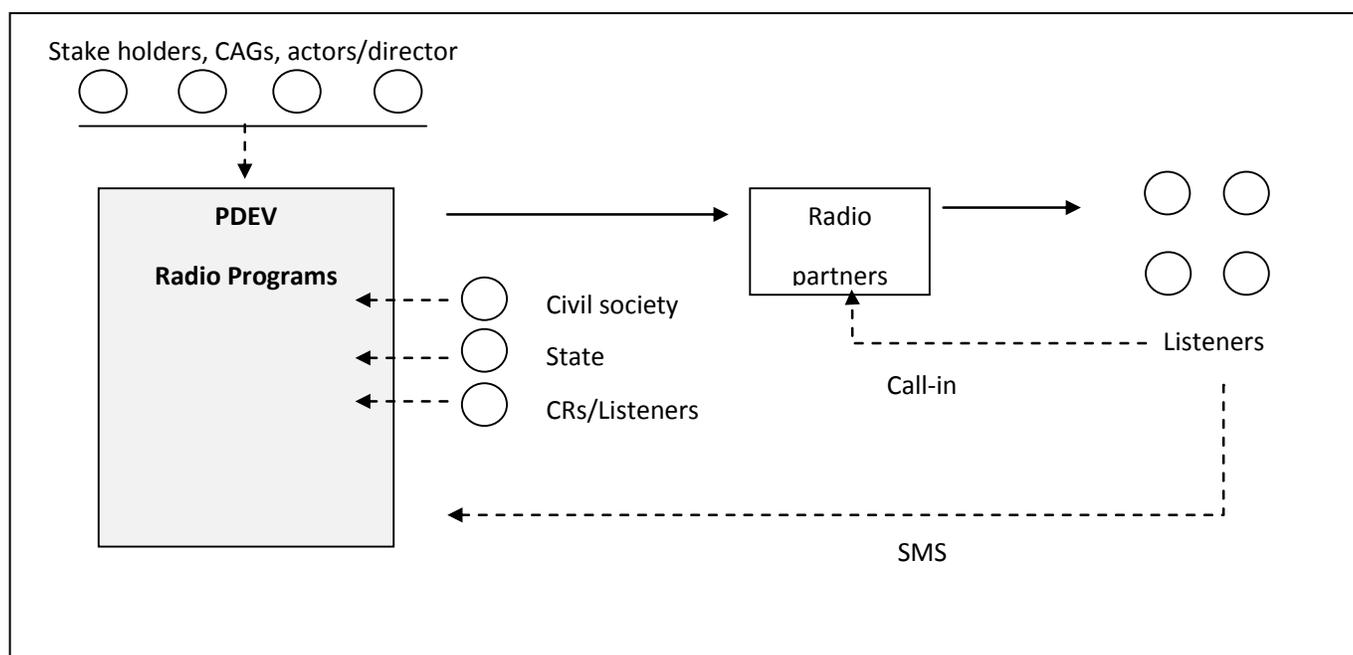
Figure 11: Simplified conceptual graphic of the PDEV program design.

This simplified graphic is not tailored to a specific radio program in Chad or Niger. It illustrates the components that nearly all the radio programs have in common, which are:

Top left corner:

1. They begin with a stakeholder workshop where topics are identified and discussed;
2. They benefit from regular Content Advisory Group (CAG) where specific topics are discussed in detail, scripts are shared and sample broadcasts are reviewed;
3. They are shaped by the actors and director during recording sessions;

Grey box, with circles representing those who in addition to Equal Access producers provide content for the show:

4. The scripts are written by producers and then recorded with input and sound from civil society and the state (monologues, recorded or in-studio interviews), and the voices of community reporters and citizens, via Vox Pop interviews;

White box:
5. The programs are sent in CD or digital format to dozens of radio partners

6. The radio partners diffuse each program once a week to their local listeners (or national listeners in the case of National radio stations or short wave broadcasters)

Set of four circles:
7. Listeners can give feedback, comments and ask questions by a) calling their local station, some of which host on-air call-in programs and/or b) expressing themselves via SMS (text) message to the dedicated phone numbers Equal Access mentions in the recorded programs and documents using the Frontline SMS-receipt software. The two arrows demonstrate how there are two different "generative loops" circulating listeners voices and perspectives, one directed at local radio stations and one directed at Equal Access Producers in the capital city.

I borrow the term "generative loop" from French Sociologist Edgar Morin who used the term to describe the genesis of newness among interacting agents.[74] I use the term "generative loop" rather than feedback because my discussions with listeners and radio station partners, and my analysis of written comments submitted by listeners via text message, taught me that listeners do more than provide "feedback," which is an exclusively reactive term. They also "feed-forward," they offer new ideas and new perspectives. Often listener input takes the form of a notification of action: "Look what we are doing in our town," as was the case with Abdoulahi, the listening club President in Illela, Niger.

The graphic below represents PDEV radio programs in Niger, which is Equal Access at its most "robust." Robust because it involves several elements that are still developing or have not been developed in Chad, such as the listening clubs, the use of pre-recorded listener feedback in programs (as in Hantsi 2.0) and the "local production" programs, which are a collaboration between PDEV Niamey and ten partner radio stations who are in the process of producing their own shows after receiving production training at PDEV headquarters. I provide the content breakdown of the two programs, Gwadaben Mattassa (the youth-oriented program) and Hantsi (the Good Governance-related program) in order to show how many different elements one program can contain. Gwadaben Matassa is particularly "porous" in the sense that it allows for a maximum of voices to be heard and to circulate. Listeners can "hear themselves" via Vox Pops and through content and salutations from SMS messages embedded into scripts And, importantly, the Vox Pops and listener-provided content bring regional voices to the capital, which are included in the recorded programs and then circulated nation-wide, thus reversing the typical "capital to region" flow of information.

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[74] Edgar Morin, Method: Towards a study of humankind. Vol. 1: The nature of nature (New York: Peter Lang, 1977), pp. 190, 224.
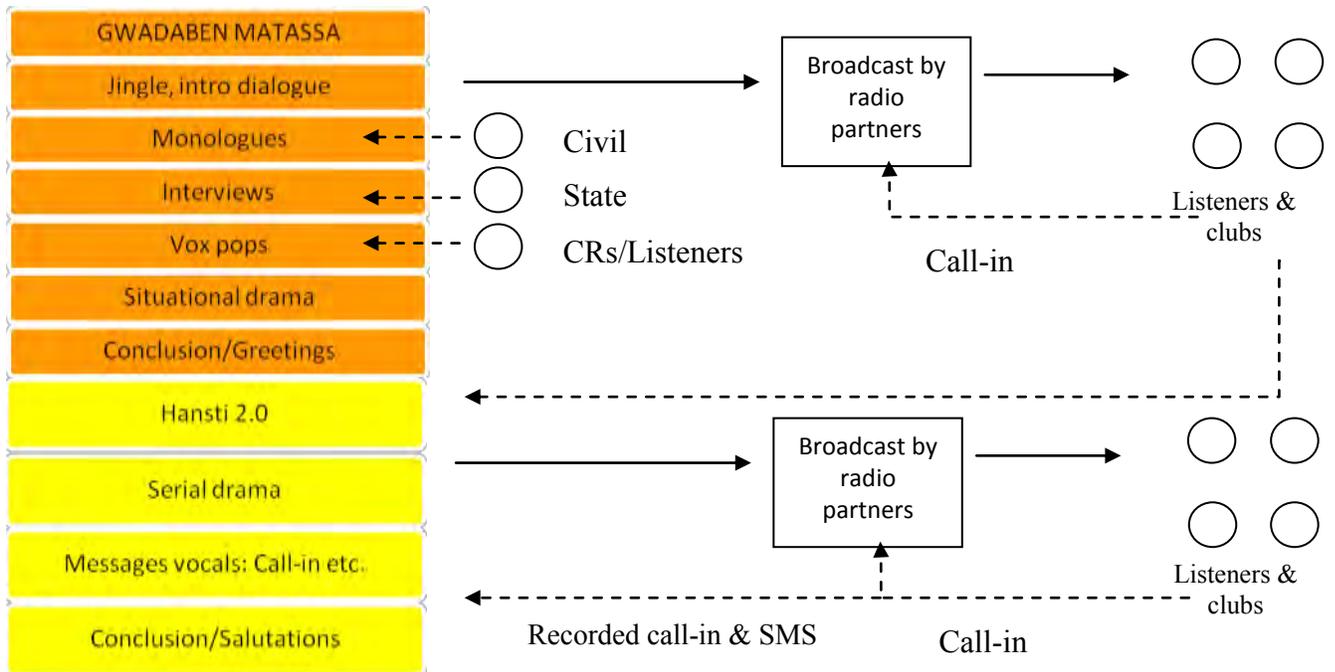
Figure 12: Breakdown of radio show content and how it is generated and circulated.

Of particular interest are the sections of the graph that illustrate the input into the content of the shows that is provided by civil society and the state (via interviews and round table participation) and by Community Reporters through their "Vox Pop" interviews with listeners and by listeners themselves via Vox Pop segments but also by the suggestions and feedback they provide through their text messages to the PDEV media team which are captured by a specialized software called "Frontline." [75]

I highlight the *design* of Equal Access programs because I believe that the highly participatory process allows for unprecedented levels of input from a wide range of individuals including Stakeholder workshop participants, Content Advisory Group members, actors, producers, directors, members of civil society, representatives of the State, community reporters, citizens, listeners and members of listening clubs. It is precisely this input that gives Equal Access radio programs their culturally appropriate "national" flavor, which can be contrasted with a type of internationally-funded communication that one Rand Analyst describes disparagingly as "careless or heavy-handed propaganda."[76] The Equal Access programs have an extremely "porous" design, which can be defined as a design that allows "multiple and continuous entry points and opportunities for involvement."[77]

Consider, for instance, the number of opportunities that citizen and listeners have for expressing themselves:

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[75] I believe that the use of Frontline by the PDEV media teams in Chad and Niger is quite novel and thus worthy of more in-depth study and analysis. Future evaluations may want to consider looking at the Frontline system to better understand its use and potential.

[76] Egner, "Social-science foundations for strategic communications," p. 325.

[77] Greiner, Karen. Participatory communication processes as infusions of innovation: The case of *'Scenarios from Africa'* in Thomas Tufte and Florencia Enghel (ed.) *Youth engaging with the world: Media, communication and social change* (Gothenburg, Sweden: Nordicom, 2009), p. 276.

1) Citizens express themselves on the air when they are interviewed by a community reporter for a "vox pop."
2) Citizens may be asked to record longer-form "monologues" with a community reporter.
3) Citizens who are members of civil society (representatives of NGOs, professional associations, bi-lateral organizations, etc.) or representatives of the State may be invited to the studio for an on-air roundtable, or an interview, or may be interviewed at their place of business by a producer or community reporter.
4) Citizens who are also listeners can respond to radio programs by calling their local station, which may be broadcast live, or recorded for later use when local partner stations submit their recordings to program producers in the capital
5) Citizens who are also listeners can write or a text message to the PDEV Frontline system, which is regularly reviewed by EA staff members who either a) respond to questions or comments and/or b) incorporate for use in a future script, either in the acknowledgement section or in a drama dialogue.[78]

Additional voices and viewpoints will be put into circulation with the advent of two new religion radio programs in production in each country as well as a series of "local production" shows, for which radio partners will shift from exclusively broadcasting PDEV radio shows to creating their own, PDEV-themed shows for broadcast. I believe that the new programming, including "local production" programs, will increase and extend, both geographically and thematically, the reach of the PDEV-related messages and discussions.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings:

- The non-linear (or porous) approach to facilitating behavior change in the PDEV media component design is effective in achieving impact against PDEV goals such as increased dialogue and participation as it embodies the social change the programs seek to encourage.
- Although PDEV programs often only tangentially address "hard edged" topics such as terrorism, they are effective at addressing the drivers of violent extremism in their audience and do achieve clear outcomes in line with PDEV program goals.

The content of the radio shows is responsible for the actions and initiatives of listeners that I describe in this report. This range of "actions and initiatives" caused by the programs is evidence of the impact the shows have had on listeners. *How* the content is produced and circulated is, I contend, of equal importance.   The PDEV radio shows are the product of a "porous" design, a design that invites multiple stakeholders to contribute their ideas, cultural knowledge and personal relationships to help create content that is culturally relevant because it is 100% "home grown." One of the most interesting "findings" during my two-month visit to the field was how the design of the PDEV media program multiple "generative loops," or circulation of voices that not only brought information and opinion from the capital city to the regions, but that brought rural and small village voices *into* the capital where it could be broadcast to the entire nation. This is reflective of the design of the PDEV project itself and embodies the theory underlying PDEV – that increased dialogue and participation attenuate drivers to

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[78] EA producers in both Chad and Niger described a number of ways they use listener feedback sent by SMS. For example, Dabalaye (good governance/Chad) producer Nemerci Denemadji told me that she often calls listeners and asks them questions about comments they made via text message to explore new story ideas or details for scripts in-progress.

violent extremism. The PDEV media component is reflecting the changes it is working to facilitate in Chad and Niger.

The "porous" – or inviting – design results in a highly de-centralized and democratic media product. The project and the products they produce are inclusive to a degree that I have not seen previously or elsewhere. I believe that an important impact of the radio shows on listeners is evidenced by the multiple examples of listeners organizing and making changes in their lives and in their communities. The project could have a potential "macro-level" impact on other organizations seeking to foster social change by documenting and disseminating its design for creating democratic, 100% local media content that increases the amount and variety of community voices in circulation.

The report provides a detailed account of what listeners *do* with PDEV radio programming: How it affects them and, in some cases, how it inspires them to change and/or become agents of change. The PDEV media program design generates interesting outcomes in itself, in particular as related to fostering "civic culture" by increasing access to information and opportunities for citizens to voice their viewpoints and questions in public, mediated form. Importantly this links directly to both the PDEV project design, which focuses heavily on improving participation, amplifying moderate voices and engaging audiences to take positive actions and to current best practices in improving community engagement.

Literature on youth and democracy suggests that the more young people are engaged in their communities, the greater their sense of worth and "well-being." Community psychology scholars Evans and Prilleltensky further explain the effect of engagement on "well-being":

> To experience well-being, youth and adults alike first have to experience affirmation. Affirmation comes from, among other things, an acknowledgment of young person's strengths, voice, and choice… we have feelings and actual experiences of empowerment whereby citizens feel and are in control of helping, healing, and community building processes.[79]

They continue:

> Youth gain skills, a sense of belonging, and a deeper understanding of themselves and their world through social action. Youth are more inclined to act as they develop skills, interpersonal competencies, and sociopolitical awareness. Furthermore, as agents of change, youth bring their skills, energy, and creativity to the joint endeavor of creating just communities.[80]

This description of the relationship between agency and well-being suggests the existence of a "virtuous circle," the more young people act the more they gain confidence and skills. With greater confidence and skills, young people are increasingly inclined to act. The challenge for the designers of social change interventions is to create multiple and varied opportunities for young people, and community members in general, to contribute to their communities. Social change literature has established a link between group dialogue and the development of "collective efficacy," which can be defined as group members' belief in their own ability to effect change in their communities.[81] Interventions that increase opportunities for people to gather, express their viewpoints and discuss ideas with others can be seen as a potential step in the direction of action. In my observations I document numerous examples of PDEV programming leading directly to increased interaction and often

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[79] Scot D. Evans and Isaac Prilleltensky, "Youth and democracy: Participation for personal, relational and collective well-being*," Journal of Community Psychology 35*.6 (2007), p. 688.
[80] Evans and Prilleltensky, "Youth and democracy," p. 690.
[81] See Albert Bandura, *Social learning theory* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Inc.), p. 79. See also: Arvind Singhal, "Riding high on *Taru* fever: Entertainment-education broadcasts, ground mobilization, and service delivery in rural India" (The Hague: OXFAM/NOVIB, 2010), p. 8

community action.   All community members should be encouraged to be agents of change in their communities, there is a particular value in designing interventions to include and inspire young people. Scholars have noted that throughout the world – not just in the Sahel - young people face considerable obstacles when trying to participate, whether socially, economically or politically.[82] Frustrated by the lack of legitimate democratic participation, young people can turn to violence, as was the case in Senegal in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as explained here by Mamadou Diouf:

> This new generation felt excluded from the postcolonial munificence and its sites of sociability, e.g., recognition, the rights to free speech, work, and education, and although a numerical majority, as youth, they were reduced to political silence. This youth is actually behind political violence, which ranges from urban riots to Islamic fundamentalist armies, and is spearheading armed conflicts and criminal actions of random violence, looting, student strikes; it uses violence to express its disillusionment with the outcome of the restoration of democratic rule.[83]

Beyond frustration at the lack of avenues for genuine political participation, young people are also vulnerable to being recruited for violent and/or illicit for simple reasons of boredom and "idleness." In his book *The Accidental Guerilla*, Counter-insurgency expert David Kilcullen shares the comments of a young farmer who had spontaneously joined in a battle on the side of the Taliban against a patrol of American troops:

> "But, they said, when a battle was right there in front of them how could they not join in? Did we understand just how boring it was to be a teenager in a valley in central Afganistan?"[84]

Any parent understands that keeping young people busy keeps them out of trouble. But beyond "keeping teens out of trouble" we can also envision social change interventions as opportunities to benefit from their knowledge, energy and their creativity. All community members, in fact, have the potential to contribute. This is evidenced in the multiple levels of participation and action made possible by the design of the PDEV programs. The Content Advisory Groups include members of the highest professional classes, medical doctors, ministry officials and representatives from the United Nations. Community Reporters conduct interviews in their community, they serve as mediators in community disputes,[85] they are sought out to give advice, they help organize listening clubs,[86] and they identify members of civil society for extended interviews in the radio programs.[87] Many PDEV radio partners are now engaged in additional program-related activities ranging from hosting call-in shows to give listeners the chance to publicly voice their perspectives to the production of their own PDEV-themed shows. There is evidence that radio show listeners, the focus of this report, are also an active and dynamic group. They discuss taboo topics, they write didactic poetry, they advocate for family members, they enforce government policies and they clean up their lives and their neighborhoods. Even the young man who could not be swayed from his view that girls should not attend school took the time to voluntarily

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[82] Judith Bessant, "Mixed messages: Youth participation and democratic practice," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 39.2 (2004): 387. See also: *Shawn Ginwright, and James "*From assets to agents of change: Social justice, organizing, and youth development ," New directions for youth development 96 (2002), pp. 27-46.

[83] Mamadou Diouf "Urban youth and Senegalese politics: Dakar 1988- 1994," *Public Culture* 8: (1996): 229.

[84] David Kilcullen, *The accidental guerilla* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 40.

[85] I want to acknowledge Hadi, the community reporter from the Pays Bas neighborhood in Niamey, for sharing his experiences and for spending the day as our guide and companion in the neighborhood.

[86] Here I am again thinking of Hadi and also of the incredibly dynamic community reporter from Zinder, Nassirou Boukari.

[87] The very enterprising Zenaba Hassan took the initiative to interview a local social worker who intervened in the storyline about unplanned pregnancy. Zenaba has been promoted from community reporter to "junior producer" in recognition of motivation and abilities.

participate in a focus group discussion to share his views on the radio shows. All of these observed impacts, move communities away from the drivers of violent extremism and towards peaceful processes to address challenges through advocacy and cooperation.

Borrowing a concept from popular culture, I conclude this report by suggesting that the design of the Equal Access media programs are in many ways akin to the "Field of Dreams" built by Kevin Costner's character in the 1989 Hollywood movie of the same name. "If you build it, they will come," the character is told by a mysterious voice throughout the movie. Costner razes his corn crops to build a baseball field and then waits, to see who comes. Eventually, as prophesied, legendary players come to the field to play. The premise of the film is that in order for these talented players to play, someone had to *believe* they would come. This belief fueled the effort to build the field. A "porous" social change intervention is like a Field of Dreams: it is a creation fueled by faith in others and designed to invite action. Building a "Field of Dreams" does not *guarantee* that others will act; but it does make it possible. Community members, unpredictable humans that they are, decide the rest. They *decide* to get involved and to become agents of change. A well designed social change intervention makes participation more than possible, it makes it *easy*. A text message, a phone call, a short interview, a discussion with family members under the stars: listeners have a myriad of opportunities to express themselves; they must simply decide to do so. My two months of interactions with the PDEV audience indicates to me that many thousands of Chadians and Nigeriens are making the choice to participate, starting with the act of listening to the program and moving on to dialogue, advocacy and community led-change. The "field of dreams" has been created and many are now contributing their own voices to help their communities find peaceful and positive solutions to their challenges and turn away from the path of violence and extremism.

Annex 1: List and Number of Focus Groups and Individual Interviews

Type/location	#/type of respondents	Notes
CHAD		
Focus group, N'Djamena	24 listeners	9 female, 15 male
Focus group, N'Djamena	11 community reporters	6 female, 5 male
Focus group, Mao	7 community reporters	2 female, 5 male
Focus group, Mousouro	9 community reporters	5 female, 4 male
Individual interviews	22	8 female, 14 male
Chad subtotal	73	30 female, 43 male
NIGER		
Focus group, Niamey	10 Listening club presidents	2 female, 8 male
Focus group, Niamey	7 Community reporters	2 female, 5 male
Focus group, Niamey (Pays Bas)	20 Listening club Presidents and members	20 female
Focus group, Niamey (Pays Bas)	6 Listening club Presidents and members	6 male
Small group, Konni	3 Listening club presidents	3 male
Small group, Tessaoua	3 Listening club presidents	3 male
Small group, Maradi	4 Listening club members	4 male
Focus group, Aguie	15 Listening club Presidents & members	3 female, 12 male
Focus group, Zinder	5 Community reporters	3 female, 2 male
Small group, Zinder	3 Listening club presidents	3 male
Focus group, Mirriah	5 Listening club Presidents & members	5 male
Small group, Magaria	4 Listening club Presidents & members	2 female, 2 male
Individual interviews*	24	7 female, 17 male
Niger subtotal	109	39 female, 70 male
Total	182	69 female, 113 male
Note: * This includes phone interviews with Listening 2 club presidents (1 Agadez, 1 Arlit) and one community reporter in Agadez who could not be interviewed in person due to logistical and safety issues. The total number represents individuals I met with. In larger focus groups, each individual had the opportunity to speak but in some cases individuals spoke very little or not at all.		

Annex 2: Recommendations

I include here two types of recommendations: 1) specific suggestions to be considered for immediate implementation and 2) conceptual recommendations that are applicable beyond one concrete situation and are meant to guide long-term practice.

Here is a preview of the recommendations offered:
<u>Specific:</u>
Work to increase the listenership of State actors and to document existing examples of "State-as-listener."
Create visual geographic representations of PDEV media programs activity
<u>Conceptual:</u>
Use "pull" rather than "push," when possible.
Expand on what is already working
Consider the "return on investment" of each planned activity
Experiment with new evaluation methods

Specific
1. Work to increase the listenership of State actors and to document existing examples and of "State-as-listener."

The PDEV media programs, as they are currently designed, allow many sectors in Chadian and Nigerien society to communicate with one another via the radio programs and the responses and follow on discussions invited by the programs. The PDEV media teams have worked diligently and creatively to ensure that the State, civil society and the general public are included in PDEV media programs via recorded interviews, round table discussions and vox pop segments recorded by Community Reporters. This table illustrates the variety of sectors communicating with one another via PDEV media programs and associated activities:

Communication patterns: Who is communicating with whom and how?		
Output	**Reception**	**Mode of transmission**
1. PDEV media	General public	Hantsi/Godaben/Sada Zumuntchi
2. PDEV media	State, Civil society	Hantsi/Godaben/Sada Zumuntchi
3. PDEV media	Radio Partners	Trainings, material and technical support
4. State, Civil society	General public	Recorded interviews, round table participation (diffused via the radio programs)
5. General public	General public	Call-in programs (diffused via local radio stations), discussion in listening clubs or in homes (interpersonal communication)
6. General public	PDEV media	Vox pops, SMS, lettres, appels
7. General public	Radio Partners	Call-in, visits to stations, letters, text messages
8. General public	State, civil society	Vox Pop segments, recorded call-in segments that are embedded into programs (Hantsi 2.0)

After reviewing several scripts and listening to radio programs I noted that the majority of communication is designed to foster individual-level behavior change. The general public is encouraged

to be more tolerant, to register their daughters in school, to seek entrepreneurial activities, to register to vote, be aware of the dangers of drugs and alcohol, etc. Increasing the amount of listeners who State actors and have decision making power is a step toward fostering systemic level change. The State can create incentives or remove barriers for parents wishing to enroll their daughters in school, for example. Imagine a listener who complains during a call-in show that the voter registration table in their village was staffed by illiterate workers. If State employees are active listener of the radio program the voices of the general public may motivate them to make changes in practice. The radio programs can serve to bring the voices of the general public to the ears of the State in a safe and anonymous way. PDEV media producers have done an excellent job of "democratizing" the airwaves by greatly increasing the number and types of voices that access the airwaves. A parallel effort should be made to increase the number of "State ears" listening to the voices of the general public.

2. **Create visual geographic representations of PDEV media program activity**

The hand-drawn map of Niger depicting the location and number of various PDEV media activities that is featured in figure 5 of this report (p. 16) is a very compelling demonstration of the far reach and decentralized nature of PDEV media activities.
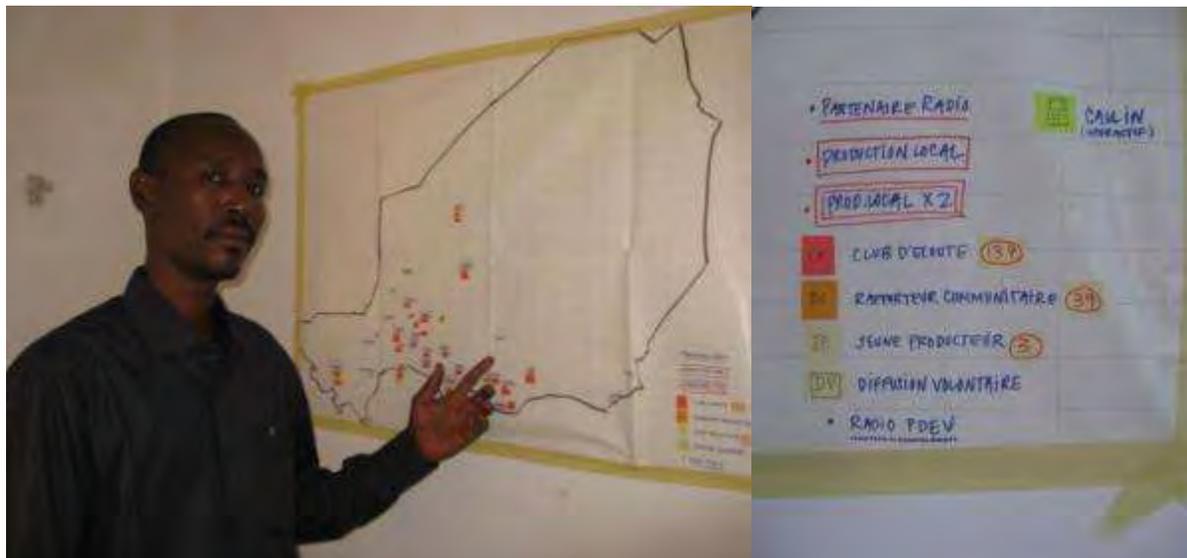
Figure 13: Listening club coordinator Lawan Boukar with a map representing the location of 137 listening clubs radio and other program-related activities in Niger. On the right, a key outlining the types and numbers of activities.

The key next to the map outlines the activities and actors that are present in various cities and villages including: 1) radio partners, 2) local production activities, 3) listening clubs, 4) Community Reporters, 5) Young Producers, 6) Voluntary diffusion (which are radio stations that requested to broadcast PDEV media programs but who are not formal PDEV partners), and 7) call-in shows.

If the PDEV media teams are able to more formally map their activities I believe it will lead to an impressive depiction of the various "circulations of voices" and levels of engagement that are occurring throughout (and beyond) the PDEV area of operation. The locations and number of Listening Clubs alone would be worthy of mapping for they show the great number of cities and villages, far from the capital city, that have groups of listeners who are regularly listening to and discussing PDEV content. These group discussions of PDEV content are a form of peaceful, democratic expression that foster and strengthen local civic culture.

2

Conceptual

3. Use "pull" rather than "push," when possible.

I borrow the conceptualization of "pull" and "push" from technology theorist Peter Morville[88] who likens "push" to advertising messages that come toward us, whether we want them or not. Billboards, television and radio ads and spam in our email inbox are forms of push: they are difficult to avoid and they often invade our space. Pull, on their other hand, functions when we willingly seek out information. When we Google a word to find a definition or go to You Tube to watch a video we are being drawn in by the quality of the information we are seeking, we are pulled *toward* the information and we go seek it by choice. I liken "push" to *invasion* or going out to the objective, and "pull" to *invitation*, finding ways to have the objective come to you.

For PDEV media programs embracing a philosophy of "pull" over "push" could be useful in the following three situations, which I offer here as illustrative examples:

1) Imagine that you need to get listener input on a particular topic, perhaps you want to know what listeners in a particular region think about early marriage, for example. You can "push" by having a staff member go to the region or call listeners to ask them questions, or you can design a question for broadcast and ask listeners to send their responses via SMS message, which will then be captured and aggregated by Frontline. The "push" method may be more certain (because you can keep pushing until you get what you need), but the "pull" method requires fewer human resources and can yield data in excess of your expectation or need.

2) Imagine that you need to increase the number of stations broadcasting your radio program. Perhaps you seek to expand into a new geographic region. You can go toward the radio stations with mention of a contract ("push") or you can invite all non-partner radio stations to solicit the radio programs if they wish to broadcast them voluntarily (with no remuneration). The results of both the "push" and the "pull" method can be reported upon as achievements, yet the results of "push" only allow you to document increases in partners whereas the "pull" method would allow you to document increases in partners who came to you and who are broadcasting the programs at no extra cost (beyond production and duplication costs) to the program.

3) Imagine that you want to increase the number of listening clubs in a given region. You can ask Community Reporters to organize listening clubs (push) or you can invite listeners, on the air, to contact their local Community Reporter (pull, and be sure to give the CR phone number on the air) if they are interested in forming a listening club. The end result can be the same but the pull method requires less work from the CR and may lead to more sustainable listening clubs because they formed organically and voluntarily, by invitation.

In truth, "push" and "pull" can work in together: push gives you a greater amount of certainty and pull can help conserve human resources. I recommend using "push" when certainty is required or when time constraints are pressing and "pull" whenever you can afford to take more time and are interested in a larger response than would be possible via "push" methods. (If you ask a question on the air you can get more responses than if you had to call each listener individually to ask the question).

4. Expand and strengthen what is already working

One of the strengths of the PDEV media programs is the number of different individuals involved in the creation, broadcast and organized reception of the programs: PDEV media program staff, Radio station partners, Content Advisory Group members, Community Reporters, Young Producers and Listening Club presidents are all involved in some capacity in the PDEV media component. The

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[88] Morville, P. *Ambient findability.* Cambridge: O'Reilly, 2005, pp. 98-107.

PDEV media teams are already "expanding on what is working" by training Radio partners in "Local Production," in the use of Adobe Audition software and in the technical and content aspects of hosting local "call in" shows. This model of finding ways to reinforce and strengthen capacity with existing partners is recommended for other collaborators as well (and I believe this is already happening). For example, I learned that training sessions for Community Reporters are frequent and ongoing and training and information sessions for Listening Club Presidents (in Niamey) had already begun.[89] When I was conducting interviews with different stakeholders in Niger and Chad I heard many comments about the desire to connect with counterparts in other parts of the country, both near and far. I believe that the organization of various "counterpart exchange" events at the regional level would be gratifying to collaborators and they would also be a potential source of evaluation data. For example, if Community Reporters from several cities met at the regional capital (and I believe this has already been done with Crs in Agadez, Arlit and Tahoua in Niger) they can exchange experiences and also share their concerns and success stories with PDEV staff.

Several Listening Club Presidents I spoke with in Niger also expressed a desire to "do more" in their communities. Each President had a different idea of what form "doing more" would take and I recommend finding a mechanism, perhaps a small grant competition, for funding small Listening Club projects. Listening Club Presidents or Community Reporters could be charged with documenting each funded project and the resulting data could be incorporated into evaluation reports or even shared with local and national media via press releases. Documenting and disseminating news of civic engagement on the part of community members may also motivate and inspire others to additional acts of civic engagement.

5. Consider the "return on investment" of each planned activity

The PDEV media teams have finite resources to work with. Each planned activity should be considered in terms of the amount of resources required to implement it (the investment) in relation to the yield, or "return" on that investment. Questions to consider:

1) What are the financial and human resources required for this activity?
2) What are the potential gains?

All activities should be planned with a return in mind whether the return take the form of increased press coverage (an event), benefit to PDEV partners (a training), benefit to PDEV staff (a professional development activity), benefit to listeners and documentation opportunity (a small-grant competition for listeners and Listening Clubs). Ideally, each activity can be planned and maximized to have several returns. For example, a small-grant competition could be beneficial to listeners and communities, it could yield good press coverage and it could yield data and images for evaluation purposes and it could have inspirational effects (that would be hard to measure but could increase the number of applicants if a second grant competition was organized). An example of an activity with only a small return is an event that yields only press coverage but that does not work toward achieving project goals or directly benefit listeners or PDEV partners.

Large Investment, large return	Large investment, small return
Small investment, large return	Small investment, small return

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[89] I believe that the existence, in Niger, of a specific "Listening Club Coordinator" position is a great asset that counterparts in Chad may want to consider, budget permitting.

When planning activities it can be helpful to keep the "return on investment" ratio in mind. A large return on a small investment is ideal. Sometimes a large return requires a large investment. To be avoided are large investments with small returns (grey box). It is up to PDEV management and staff to discuss and determine whether an investment is too large or a return too small to make an activity worthy of implementation. The concept of "return on investment" (ROI) is also useful when designing instruments for collecting data from partners and collaborators. When designing data collection instruments, such as feedback forms, the following questions should be considered:

1) How much "investment" am I asking of the respondent to fill out this form? (Is it too long? Will its depth discourage the respondent?)
2) How will I use the information I am asking for? (In other words, what "return" is expected from the form?)
3) How much investment is required in terms of human resources to process the data on the form? In other words, if you design a form or a process that requires someone in the office to manage that data it is important that the data be put to use. If the data is not useful one needs to consider whether it is worth the time to collect and process it.

2d: Experiment with new evaluation methods

I share the following story about the use of "markers" for evaluation purposes as an example of one type of "experiment" with evaluation methods for the PDEV media team to consider:

Keeping the challenges of evaluation in mind, the producers of Soul City, a pro-social television drama implemented in South Africa, left nothing to chance when they embedded "markers" into the story line. Markers are "distinctive elements of a message that are identifiable," such as a new name for an existing product an entirely new behavior.[90] Producers of Soul City introduced and modeled the behavior of "pot banging" (not a current practice in South Africa), whereupon neighbors would gather at the site of domestic abuse to "bang pots" to bring shame and attention upon the abuser. The modeled behavior broke with the social norm of silence and non-intervention in cases of domestic violence, a purportedly "private affair." After the episode with this "marker" aired, several cases of pot-banging were reported as was one variation, which involved "bottle banging" by patrons in a bar. [l] In similar fashion, producers of a pro-social radio drama in St. Lucia were able to measure that the name of the brand of condoms they introduced in their story line ("Catapult") could be identified by 28% of listeners and even 13% of non-listeners, demonstrating that even beyond direct exposure to the program the new brand name for condoms was also travelling inter-personally. The idea of introducing unique and recognizable markers may be of interest to PDEV media producers in Chad and Niger as an additional means of measuring impact.

I also believe that the Frontline SMS-capture software has great potential for evaluation purposes. PDEV media team members are best placed to determine which questions can be posed in order to get which types of information. (Different "seeds" will yield different "crops.") I recommend some experimentation with Frontline for evaluation purposes. I believe that PDEV media staff can create questions that will be useful to them in their work while also being of use as evaluation data. Short questions embedded in recorded programs are a small investment that can potentially yield a large return.

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[90] Singhal, A. and Rogers, E. (2002). "A theoretical agenda for entertainment education," *Communication Theory* 12(2): p. 131

Below is a reflection on 1) the purpose of questions in general and 2) different types of questions, potential responses, and how various responses can be utilized.[91]

On pose des questions aux auditeurs pour…
1. Savoir que les gens écoutent et d'ou ils écoutent (ainsi on peut éventuellement les féliciter/remercier).
2. Savoir ce qu'ils pensent les auditeurs sur des sujets spécifiques.
3. Savoir quelles sont les sujets que les auditeurs trouvent très pertinent.
4. Donner l'opportunité aux auditeurs de proposer des thèmes (qui peuvent nous donner des idées pour les scripts).
5. Donner l'opportunité aux auditeurs de poser des questions

Question	Réponse	Utilisation
1. Qui est le personnage de Hantsi qui peut être un modèle pour les Nigériens ? Envoyer un SMS avec le mot « Modèle » suivi par le nom de personnage.	Zeinab: 247 (95%) Zelika: 7 (3%) Habibou: 5 (2%)	Confirmer les perceptions des auditeurs envers les personnages.
2. Vous nous écoutent de quelle ville/village?	Niamey: 120 Maradi: 45 Konni: 35 Magaria: 12	Savoir la ou on nous écoute bien et savoir quelle régions il faut encourager d'écouter davantage
3. Parmi les suivant, quel thème de Gwadaben avez-vous le plus apprécié? (Réponde avec la lettre seulement)	A. Assainissement (40%) B. Violence faite aux femmes (30%) C. Drogue (8%) D. Autre (2%)	Savoir quelles sont les émissions qui sont apprécié pour savoir lesquelles traduire en Français ou rediffuser ou traite encore.
4. Votre ville/village a-t-il une très bonne gouvernance ? Si ou, envoyer le nom du votre ville/village pour le nominer aux prix bonne gouvernance. A mettre dans le SMS, les lettres BG et puis le nom de votre ville/village	Aguie (20 nominations) Kantche (5 nominations)	Avoir des informations qui aide à reconnaitre la bonne gouvernance – pour féliciter et encourager.
5. Avez-vous été personnellement impacté par une émission d'Equal Access ? Avez-vous change d'idée, de comportement ou été inspire à l'action dans votre communauté? Si oui, envoyez un SMS avec IMPACT et puis votre nom et nom de ville/village	IMPACT, Mariama, Maradi	Avoir des pistes à suivre pour la prochaine évaluation d'impacte. On peut appeler et prendre leur témoignage ou envoyer un RC pour enregistrer…
6. Etes-vous dans la fonction publique ? On veut vous	Fonctionnaires	Savoir combien des auditeurs nous avons a la fonction

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[91] This is a slightly abridged version of information presented to the PDEV media team in Niger in late July 2010.

saluer ! Envoyez-nous votre nom et ville par SMS. SVP, mettez les lettres FP au début de votre message pour que nous sachions de quoi s'agit. Pour chaque 10 réponses reçus nous allons donner un T-shirt et casquette Equal Access pour encourager nos auditeurs a la fonction publique.		publique