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Sida Review

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PANOS SOUTHERN AFRICA'S COMMUNICATING HIV AND AIDS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA PROJECT, 2005–2008

Panos Southern Africa's Communicating HIV and AIDS in Southern Africa Project, 2005–2008

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The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

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Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
ART	Antiretroviral therapy
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
GT-ART	Global Trade and Access to Anti-retroviral Therapy
HIV	Human Immuno Deficiency
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies
JLWH	Journalists Living with HIV
MAP	Media Action Plan
MSM	Men Having Sex with Men
NGOs	Non governmental institutions
PLWHs	People Living with HIV
PSAf's	Panos Southern Africa
RLCs	Radio Listening Clubs
RCM	Radio Campaign Messages
SP	Strategic Plan
TVET	Technical Educational Vocational Training

Executive Summary

In a region badly hit by HIV/AIDS, Panos Institute Southern Africa works to empower southern African countries to shape effective responses to the pandemic. Working with the media and civil society, PSAf aims to stimulate debate on HIV and AIDS and amplify the voices of the marginalized, to ensure that the response to the pandemic is shared and driven by those most affected by it.

Support from Sida over the last three years, under the Communicating AIDS in southern Africa project, has helped PSAf make significant strides in these goals, expand its activities throughout the region and enhance its influence and reputation as a key partner in the fight against HIV and AIDS throughout southern Africa. Under the three-year contract agreed to by PSAf and Sida, PSAf had undertaken four main initiatives. The implementation, outcomes, impacts and challenges faced in those initiatives are discussed in this report.

PSAf conducted a baseline study of how HIV/AIDS is being handled in media institutions in southern Africa, and is currently finalizing a training manual aimed for use in media training institutions in the region. The goal is to improve the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues both quantitatively and qualitatively.

PSAf has made major progress expanding its trademark HIV and AIDS-focused radio listening clubs in Zambia, Malawi and Namibia. The programme, which seeks to enable communities to identify and shape their own responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, currently has a total of 32 RLCs, with 20 in Zambia (in Chipata and Mazabuka), six in Malawi (in Mangochi) and six in Namibia (in Carprivi). RLC success stories are numerous, such as the Malawian Ministry of Health's decision to offer HIV testing and counseling services in a clinic in the Mangochi region, in response to a radio discussion produced by a local men's radio listening club.

Through its Access to Treatment initiative, PSAf has empowered journalists in the SADC region with the skills and the financial capacity needed to report effectively on issues surrounding Access to HIV/AIDS Treatment. Under the project, PSAf-sponsored journalists across the region produced a total of 20 print and 20 audio features. The fellowships have highlighted challenges and sparked public debate on issues surrounding Access to Treatment, such as second-line treatment in Zambia. In a key success story, a PSAf fellow in Malawi spurred a rapid community response with a feature article on a pastor who told members of his church not to take ARVs. Moreover, the fellowships have also built the capacity of individual journalists in Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Lesotho to cover issues surrounding ART.

Finally, PSAf has produced vitally-needed research and sparked policy debate with its assessment of the impact and effectiveness of HIV/AIDS radio messages in southern Africa. PSAf has completed comprehensive monitoring and research on the impact of HIV/AIDS radio messages in Botswana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe and is in the final stages of producing detailed reports. Following initial discussions between stakeholders, the reports are already making an impact – in response to PSAf's findings, Zimbabwe's national broadcaster is pledging to re-establish radio listening clubs, establish an in-house HIV/AIDS policy and conduct new listenership research.

Along with the project's successes, PSAf has sought to learn from the challenges faced in implementing its plans. In its expansion of the radio listening club programme into Namibia, for instance, PSAf has seen the importance of effectively communicating the Panos RLC concept to all stakeholders, from the partners to the communities themselves.

With Sida's backing, PSAf has helped to shape effective responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and looking forward to even more significant work in the years to come.

Panos Institute Southern Africa

Panos Institute Southern Africa occupies a unique space in a region faced by myriad difficulties, including pervasive corruption, persistent poverty, natural disasters resulting from climate change and a still-raging HIV/AIDS pandemic. PSAf seeks to bridge the often gaping divide between the people of southern Africa and the institutions and leaders that are pledged to serve them, by focusing on a commodity that is often inaccessible to many – information. PSAf works with the media and other communication actors to cultivate an informed and inclusive environment for public policy debate in the region and enable marginalised populations to play an active role in the decision-making processes that drive development.

Our vision

A Southern Africa community that drives its own development.

Our mission

We work to ensure that information is effectively used to foster development by empowering communities to shape their own agenda. We particularly focus on amplifying the voices of the poor and marginalised. We do this through:

- innovative communication approaches
- working with mainstream and alternative media
- interfacing development actors and local communities
- providing platforms for informed debate

Our strategies focus heavily on public policy analysis and research, a rights-based approach to development, and gender mainstreaming.

PSAf recognises that for information to be effectively generated, the poor and the marginalised must be engaged in a two-way communication so that subsequent decisions, development plans and policies are not only meaningful but relevant to them. To this end, PSAf uses a variety of communication methodologies, including:

- Television and radio documentaries
- Oral testimonies
- Books, Brochures and Policy Briefs
- Radio Listening Clubs
- Vox populi, which are brief audio and visual recordings of what people say about any issue at hand.
- Workshops and Trainings
- Fellowships

PSAf is constantly evolving and growing. Founded in 1996 as a branch of Panos London, PSAf became an autonomous organization in May 2005. With a regional office in Lusaka, Zambia, PSAf works with other Panos Institutes based in London, Paris, Canada, South Asia, West and East Africa and the Caribbean. The Network is governed by the Panos Council, formed by the eight Institutes and located in New Delhi, India.

PSAf's mandate principally covers 12 countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC): Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

PSAf's HIV/AIDS Programme

More than 25 years after the discovery of AIDS, Southern Africa is still considered the epicenter of the pandemic, with some of the highest prevalence rates in the world.

Southern African countries have prioritised HIV and AIDS as a key development issue, and have put in place several measures to combat the pandemic. But even with the widespread availability of life-saving antiretroviral drugs, the questions surrounding the debate are not getting any easier to answer. Prevention remains a serious problem, driven in part by low condom use and low rates of circumcision in the region, as compared to other parts of Africa. Donor countries and policymakers continue to drive the policies and programmes designed to combat the pandemic and assist those living with HIV/AIDS – and their priorities often shift.

By empowering southern African countries to shape effective responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and providing information on critical and poorly understood aspects of the pandemic, Panos Institute Southern Africa seeks to change this paradigm. Working with the media and civil society, PSAf aims to stimulate debate on HIV and AIDS and amplify the voices of the marginalized, to ensure that the response to the pandemic is shared and driven by those most affected by it.

In particular, PSAf focuses on issues surrounding access to HIV and AIDS treatment, stigma, the role of men in HIV and AIDS, the relationship between HIV and AIDS and TB, the key drivers of the pandemic, orphaned and vulnerable children and reproductive health for youth.

The Sida-PSAf Partnership

Panos Institute Southern Africa and Sida have a longstanding and productive relationship in working to stimulate debate on HIV and AIDS and amplify the voices of the marginalized.

Sida, through its Regional HIV/AIDS Team for Africa, supported the research project that resulted in the PSAf publication entitled *Lessons for today and tomorrow: an analysis of HIV/AIDS reporting in Southern Africa*.

The research was aimed at measuring and providing an initial base-line analysis of how the media in eight southern African countries have been reporting HIV/AIDS. The study was conducted in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The book was launched in Zambia and Malawi, and has been disseminated widely.

The three-year Communicating AIDS in Southern Africa project was developed as a follow-up to the *Lessons for Today and Tomorrow* project. It was agreed to in 2005 and focused on four main initiatives:

- A baseline study of how HIV/AIDS is being handled in media institutions in southern Africa, and the publication of a training manual aimed for use in media training institutions in Southern Africa, with a view of improving the training of media practitioners in the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues both quantitatively and qualitatively;
- The expansion of PSAf's trademark HIV and AIDS-focused radio listening clubs throughout southern Africa;
- The empowerment of journalists in the SADC region with the skills and the financial capacity needed to report effectively on issues surrounding Access to HIV/AIDS Treatment, through a fellowship program; and
- An assessment of the impact and effectiveness of HIV/AIDS radio messages in southern Africa.

The following sections discuss PSAf's progress in implementing these activities, the impact they have had, and the challenges faced.

HIV/AIDS Training Manual

With Sida support, PSAf has made significant progress towards the publication of a HIV/AIDS training manual for journalists. Following the completion of a baseline study of how HIV/AIDS is being handled in media institutions in southern Africa, PSAf is now finalizing a training manual aimed for use in media training institutions in the region with a view to improving the coverage of HIV/AIDS issues both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Objectives

PSAf believes that while targeted HIV/AIDS workshops for the media are important and have gone a long way in improving HIV/AIDS reporting, the best long-term solution is to introduce HIV/AIDS as a legitimate area of academic study in media training institutions in the region. A quick survey revealed that in most training institutions HIV/AIDS is not part of the curriculum. In a few training institutions HIV/AIDS is taught as part of health reporting and even then, it is not given prominence.

The nature and impact of HIV/AIDS makes it necessary for the pandemic to be given prominence in media studies. Introducing an HIV/AIDS curriculum at the very core of media studies will go a long way towards improving coverage and quality of HIV/AIDS stories while demystifying the pandemic in media circles and hence reducing HIV/AIDS related stigma within newsrooms – spilling over to the general populace. In PSAf's *Lessons for today and tomorrow: An analysis of HIV/AIDS reporting in Southern Africa*, formal training of media personnel in HIV/AIDS issues came out as one of the key recommendations.

The development of an HIV/AIDS manual will go a long way towards assisting media training institutions, universities, colleges and governments introduce formally HIV/AIDS reporting in the various institutions.

The study's specific objectives were:

- To assess the current training on HIV/AIDS reporting in various media training institutions in the sub-region.
- To identify the content of HIV/AIDS in the curricula of media training institutions.

- To assess the availability and suitability of training materials currently being used for training of journalists.
- To identify various constraints against improved training of journalists on HIV/AIDS reporting in the sub-region.
- To compile a report on the findings of the baseline studies conducted in six countries in Southern Africa, with recommendations, aimed at improving the training and reporting on HIV/AIDS in the sub-region.

This study was expected to yield the following products:

- A baseline study report on HIV/AIDS reporting and the content in the curricula of Media Training Institutions in the sub-region.
- Recommendations for the inclusion of HIV/AIDS issues in the curricula of media training institutions, the development of an HIV/AIDS Training Manual for journalists, and improving HIV/AIDS reporting in the sub-region.

Implementation/Outputs

Baseline Study

As the first part of the process, PSAf conducted a baseline study on the status of current training on HIV and AIDS reporting by different media training institutes. The main objective of this study was to assess current reporting on HIV/AIDS issues in southern Africa, to identify impediments to improved reporting and, based on the study findings, make recommendations to PSAf on the way forward.

As planned, PSAf identified one consultant per country to carry out research on selected leading HIV/AIDS media training institutions in the country and assess, analyze and document how HIV/AIDS is being handled in these media training institutions. Each consultant liaised with the various ministries of education and practicing journalists who had been trained in the same institutions – as well as the institutes themselves – to conduct the study. The country reports were all submitted to PSAf. The Zambia consultant compiled a regional report and submitted it to PSAf.

Some of the study's key findings were as follows:

- Training on HIV and AIDS reporting is not conducted in an in-depth way, and in some institutions it is not done at all.
- There is a lack of training material specifically tailored to training the media on reporting HIV and AIDS and this affects the quality of training received.
- While there have been improvements in some areas, the coverage of HIV and AIDS issues in the sub-region was found to be generally unsatisfactory. What the media brings out is often what the target audience already knows. Coverage is very superficial and does not go beyond the obvious.
- Most journalists learn about HIV and AIDS while on the job. As such, a number of misconceptions and mistakes are made in the course of learning.
- Journalists report on HIV and AIDS from a distance; they don't identify with it.
- However, the HIV and AIDS pandemic have had a major impact on the operations of media institutions in southern Africa, including absenteeism and deaths of members of staff or students.
- There is a need for buy-in from editors when it comes to designing the curriculum for HIV and AIDS reporting.

- A dearth of information on HIV/AIDS means that HIV and AIDS stories often carry the same recycled and sensational messages.
- There is ongoing stigma and discrimination, to the extent that journalists reporting on HIV/AIDS issues are sometimes labeled “AIDS journalists/reporters.”
- The current trend in the sub-region encourages the sourcing of HIV/AIDS information from secondary and sometimes unreliable sources.
- There is a need for capacity building and study tours as a mechanism to remove the relevant constraints.
- General factors that need to be considered in the development of an effective training manual for journalists include:
 - the cultural environment in which the manual will be used
 - the level and academic qualifications of journalists who will use the manual
 - sources of information on HIV/AIDS including website links
 - availability of teaching aids
 - an emphasis on the responsibility of journalists when reporting on HIV/AIDS
 - inclusion of best practices of HIV/AIDS coverage
 - an emphasis on the need to teach journalists about respect for people, their privacy, issues of confidentiality, informed consent and ethical issues

Conclusions and recommendations were as follows:

- Media institutions should set the agenda to propel political and civic leaders to develop and institute policies and interventions that can help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and mitigate its impact in the sub-region, through: raising awareness; ensuring transparency and accountability in the response and use of resources; advocating for behavioral change; and giving feedback to policy makers.
- In order to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS on media institutions, they should internalize the fight against the epidemic, by developing and implementing HIV/AIDS policies and programmes and also mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in their operations.
- In order to improve coverage of HIV/AIDS, especially in rural areas, it is proposed that more effective approaches should be introduced, such as FGDs, theatre, and drama, which could target and attract wider audiences. In addition, it is recommended that journalists be specifically trained on reporting on HIV/AIDS, oriented in in-depth research and taught how to deepen their analysis of HIV/AIDS issues.
- In order to provide journalists with more profound knowledge on this important subject, HIV/AIDS issues should be incorporated in the curricula of media training institutions in the sub-region.
- An HIV/AIDS Training Manual should be developed with a view to imparting HIV/AIDS knowledge to journalists and improving quality reporting on HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa.
- PSAf and/or other relevant organisations should support media training institutions in the sub-region to develop or acquire training materials and teaching aids, taking into account the relevant cultural and political contexts of the countries and the sub-region as a whole, the population, and the level of instruction to journalists.

- In view of the fact that it is important for journalists and editors to have a good knowledge of the basic facts on HIV/AIDS, a consistent approach incorporating the basic information and facts on HIV/AIDS should be adopted for journalism training.
- In order to minimize the impact of identified problems, a number of possible solutions were proposed. These include the involvement of PLWHA in the dissemination of HIV/AIDS information, development of a mechanism for increased community involvement in information gathering and production, engagement of specialist HIV/AIDS reporters, reduction of stigma and discrimination through sensitization, in-depth research, the introduction of drama and theatre in HIV/AIDS Advocacy, capacity building and tours to best practice institutions.

Training Manual

On the basis of the baseline study, PSAf identified five expert educationalists with vast experience in media and HIV/AIDS from around southern Africa to develop a HIV/AIDS training manual for journalists. A four-day workshop for the experts was held in April 2007, at which a common methodology was decided upon to allocate tasks and iron out any other issues to ensure success.

In compiling the manual the experts were asked to draw inputs from key stakeholders in the areas of HIV/AIDS activism, media, training (including leading universities and colleges in the region), financing, etc.

The initial draft was submitted to PSAf in October of 2007. PSAf, however, decided that the quality of the draft manual was of inadequate quality for publication. As a result, PSAf brought in an independent team to critique the draft manual and make recommendations for improvement to the team of experts that compiled it. PSAf then organized another workshop to critique the manual.

The second workshop brought together a number of academic, media and HIV and AIDS experts from different countries. The workshop was also an opportunity to get buy-in from different stakeholders who would eventually be using the manual; this was important as people eager to own and use the manual felt they were part of the process.

After the review, the draft manual was sent back to the team of experts that developed it to make corrections and amendments based on the outcomes of the workshop.

Editing and lay out

Having compiled and reviewed the manual in 2008, PSAf went ahead in 2008 to get the manual edited and laid out. A final editor and proof-reader was identified from the Wits University, Dr Dumisani Moyo. He edited the document, and had it laid out for publication. The document has since been published. The project evaluation process informed that the manual is a need and it will go a long way to improving media training on HIV and AID Reporting in Southern Africa.

Manual Adoption

Apart from integrating the manual in the curriculum for training institutions, the project evaluation suggests that PSAf should consider getting other NGOs that work with the media involved so that they can also use it in conducting media workshops. It was also found that although the Training Manual was successfully prepared, it is yet to be rolled out. The ultimate intention is that the manual could be made an examinable subject, so that it is institutionalized in the training of Journalists. Information obtained from the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) in Zambia showed that the Manual was not yet ready for use in training institutions. In its current form, the manual was a reference material, and needed to be repackaged before it could be used by lecturers.

HIV/AIDS Radio Listening Clubs

With support from Sida, Panos Institute Southern Africa has made major progress expanding its trademark HIV and AIDS-focused radio listening clubs (RLCs) throughout southern Africa. The programme, which seeks to enable communities to identify and shape their own responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, currently has a total of 32 RLCs, with 20 in Zambia (in Chipata and Mazabuka), six in Malawi (in Mangochi) and six in Namibia (in Caprivi).

Objectives

The HIV and AIDS programme has been running radio listening clubs on HIV and AIDS issues in eastern Zambia since 2003. RLCs focused on HIV and AIDS use an existing methodology, rural women's listening clubs, to capture and communicate how rural people, are perceiving and reacting to the HIV and AIDS pandemic – how they are discussing it in their own language and how they are responding to it in Zambia, Malawi and Namibia.

Since public debate over HIV and AIDS has largely been driven by outside groups, rural communities have been prevented from generating from within a process of constructive enquiry and engagement with the pandemic. The RLC programme seeks to enable communities to identify and shape their own responses to the pandemic.

Under the Communicating AIDS in Southern Africa project, PSAf's goal was to expand on existing RLC activities and cultivate an informed rural community (women, men, young men and young women) that has the capacity to turn around the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and eradicate HIV/AIDS related stigma, by replicating its RLC work in Zambia's Eastern Province to the southern and northern provinces of Zambia, as well as selected regions of Namibia and Malawi.

Given the shortcomings of existing behaviour change initiatives, as outlined above, this project proposes to explore the potential of the listening club methodology to:

- identify HIV/AIDS as an issue needing sustained, focused attention in rural communities;
- debate and address socio-economic issues surrounding transmission of the virus (e.g. poverty, ignorance and gender inequities);
- initiate debate around such sub-issues as the complementary roles of women and men in prevention and the stigmatization of people living with HIV;
- bring together discussions of reproductive health issues, HIV/AIDS prevention and other aspects of sexual behaviour; and
- influence the development of intervention methods as driven by government, NGOs and other related bodies.

This approach was designed to raise levels of knowledge about HIV/AIDS in rural communities and to raise levels of knowledge among national experts who design prevention programmes about the perceptions, beliefs, myths and traditions of rural communities.

The added value of this pilot project comes from the fact that it examines the implications of introducing specific themes to RLCs (in this case HIV/AIDS) in parallel to the existing practice of having a more free-ranging agenda. It will also serve as an opportunity to broaden the base of radio listening clubs to include young people and man and afford them an opportunity to engage themselves and policy-makers on issues surrounding the epidemic.

Implementation/Outputs

PSAf implemented its Sida-funded RLC project in three phases.

In Phase 1, PSAf, in partnership with local organizations, set up radio listening clubs (RLC) in each region. In Phase 2, PSAf held special club “leaders” or “grassroots” coordinators training workshops to bring together leaders of the clubs and develop a link between HIV/AIDS and communication for social change, analyze attitudes toward and beliefs about the pandemic and how these may be handled within the context of the clubs, and propose ways the radio listening clubs can be more effectively used to address issues relating to HIV/AIDS prevention and control. Technical sessions were held on basic radio programme production, the use of the radio-cassette receiver and methods of recording and monitoring discussions. Phase 3 focused on the full-scale implementation of the project, with programmes aired in the local language commonly used in the selected province using the national broadcasters of Namibia, Malawi and Zambia.

Zambia

- PSAf expanded the number of radio listening clubs in the Eastern Province of Zambia in 2006 by establishing another RLC in Chadiza district.
- PSAf established three new RLCs – for women, youth and men – in the Mwanachingwala and Hanjalika Chieftdom of Mazabuka, in Zambia’s Southern Province, in February of 2006, resulting in a total of six new HIV and AIDS RLCs in the Southern Province.
 - Training for community groups was conducted, three clubs were set up, and local coordinators and producers for regional and national broadcasting stations were identified.
 - Weekly programmes are being aired on Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), as well as local community radio stations Radio Breeze in Eastern Province and Maz Fm in Southern Province.
 - Monitoring reports are being sent in on a monthly basis and PSAf conducted an on-site monitoring visit to the Southern Province in November of 2006.
 - Observers say the clubs have had an impact in terms of reducing the stigma of being HIV-positive, encouraging people to get tested and helping people living with the disease and their families through practical advice and shared experiences. The clubs have also prompted members to undertake work looking after orphans and disseminating information about protection and other HIV and AIDS related themes.

Malawi

- In Malawi, PSAf in 2006 signed a MoU with the Malawi Media Women Association, to be the local coordinator of the project, and the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) and Dzimwe (a local community radio station) as national and local broadcasters.
- PSAf conducted an RLC training workshop in Mangochi, Malawi, in April of 2006. This resulted in the formation of three clubs – for women, youth and men. Weekly programmes were aired on MBC and Dzimwe, with quarterly reports submitted to PSAf.

Namibia

- In Namibia, PSAf signed a one-year MoU with Catholic AIDS Action (CAA) as the local coordinator, to support community mobilization and day to day running and supervision of the programme. CAA had structures on the ground which Panos would use to drive the RLC programme.

- Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) as broadcaster. A training workshop was conducted by PSAf staff in Caprivi, Namibia, in October of 2006, and resulted in the formation of three clubs – for women, youth and men. Weekly programmes were aired by NBC.
- The programme ran from September 2006 to November 2007. The radio programme stopped running in November because people were not sure what became of the programme since the MOUs had expired and there was no word from Panos on continuity or next steps. The communities, however, were still meeting and hoping that the programmes would continue running.

Throughout 2007, PSAf built on and solidified its expansion of the RLCs, and conducted on-site monitoring visits.

In sum, PSAf's HIV/AIDS radio listening club programme currently has a total of 32 RLCs, with 20 in Zambia (in Chipata and Mazabuka), six in Malawi (in Mangochi) and six in Namibia (in Carprivi).



A Radio Listening Club meeting in Mazabuka, Zambia.

Impact

The project has seen significant success. The project has proven very popular among the rural population in Zambia and is one of the most successful projects implemented by PSAf. It has also attracted support from local authorities – chiefs – who have offered their support, demonstrating the value and importance rural communities have come to attach to the project.

RLC success stories are numerous. In Mazabuka, Zambia the women's and men's groups discussed the poor roads in the area and the scarcity of water; the government responded by improving roads and sinking boreholes. In the Mangochi region of Malawi, the men's group talked about the problem of HIV testing and counseling facilities being too far away; the Ministry of Health responded by offering such facilities in a local clinic. The youth group from the same area talked about the soaring rate of HIV infection, and the fact that the only recreation young people had was to hang around a lakeside patch where interaction with tourists gave rise to casual sex and prostitution. The Ministry of Youth responded by engaging with UNICEF to build a youth centre with a sports complex and counseling on offer.

The enthusiasm of the rural communities remains undimmed. People listen excitedly every week to “their” programme as it comes over the airwaves, hearing their own voices and studying the responses. Sometimes the programme becomes the basis of the next discussion.

PSAf keeps its involvement in the clubs to a minimum. But the HIV and AIDS RLC methodology has legs – other radio listening clubs are springing up, some in other parts of the world, run by different organizations tackling different concerns.

In Namibia, a recent monitoring visit found that the programme has been welcomed by the communities both targeted and peripheral. It is a welcome methodology and it stimulated interesting debate such that even communities that were not targeted are requesting for feedback mechanisms so that they can contribute to the discussions.

Challenges

The challenges are numerous. For rural communities, the excitement of being able to air their views can lead to unreasonably high expectations of what will come out of it. The wish list from the villagers is sometimes impossible. Funding is also a challenge. Rural communities are very, very poor. They cannot afford to buy batteries, tapes. We work hand in hand with national broadcasters, but national broadcasters are poorly funded and need to fundraise as well.

In Namibia, PSAf encountered several challenges that affected the quality of the discussions at community level, and the quality of programmes being produced, with implications for the long-term impact of the programme. For instance:

- PSAf’s partners in Namibia – CAA, NBC and the community – did not fully understand the PSAf RLC concept. Although the people were trained, it was noted that the training was rushed and left a number of issues unresolved. CAA did not understand the intended outcome of the programme – as a result; it was difficult for CAA to provide quality control checks. NBC did not fully understand the concept with regards to developing programmes after discussions and following up on previous discussions. As a result, it was not possible to follow up on important discussions and topics and take them up to the end.
- Discussion was often considered an end in itself – not a process leading to more learning, more discussion and the possibly of influencing policy and development decisions.
- From the onset, CAA was not included in organizing and running the training. As a result, it did not feel part of the programme, and communities did not view CAA to be part of the programme – they expected to see PSAf people in the community supervising the programme. Since the communities could not see any Panos people in the community, they felt abandoned and de-motivated.
- Although CAA had existing structures, PSAf set up parallel structures (the RLCs) which were in way competing with the CAA structures, to the disadvantage of PSAf. CAA is on the ground and their groups were doing much better.
- CAA and NBC at the ground level were working against each other since PSAf seemed to have independent agreements with each of them. CAA could neither supervise the producer nor conduct quality checks as it was unclear whether CAA could do this or not. In the end, quality was compromised but CAA could not do anything about it as it was not in their power to supervise the producer.

PSAf learned several lessons from the Namibia experience.

- The PSAf RLC concept needs to be effectively communicated to all the participating parties in order to prepare them effectively. PSAf will not achieve the maximum outcomes if this is not

seriously taken into consideration. The community will also not benefit to the maximum if they are not aware of the reasons why the methodology is successful in other parts of the region.

- Appreciation of the partners is reduced when they do not fully understand what they are doing and why. This might cost PSAf some important and effective partnerships if not checked.
- Local coordinating partners work better if they are entrusted with the supervisory power, even over the producer, to ensure that s/he is doing the right thing and programmes are being produced and aired.

Access to Treatment

Through its Access to Treatment initiative, PSAf has empowered journalists in the SADC region with the skills and the financial capacity needed to report effectively on issues surrounding Access to HIV/AIDS Treatment. Under the project, PSAf-sponsored journalists across the region produced a total of 20 print and 20 audio features. The fellowships have highlighted challenges and sparked public debate on issues surrounding Access to Treatment, such as second-line treatment in Zambia. In a key success story, a PSAf fellow in Malawi spurred a rapid community response with a feature article on a pastor who told members of his church not to take ARVs. Moreover, the fellowships have also built the capacity of individual journalists in Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Lesotho to cover issues surrounding ART.

Objectives

Over the last five years, anti-retroviral therapy (ARV) has become increasingly available throughout the SADC region, with foreign donors ramping up their emphasis on treatment and regional governments committing themselves to making anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) available to those who need them. However, a host of questions continue to surround the provision of ART, with new ones arising frequently – whether drugs are getting to the people who need them, who are responsible for their availability, their cost, and distribution and monitoring. There are many players, including government departments, NGOs, private companies, pharmacies and individuals. There is often little or no cooperation or knowledge of who is doing what regarding ARVs, resulting in confusion, mistrust, duplication of effort and wasting of scarce resources.

PSAf's Access to Treatment activities focus on:

- Raising awareness among civil society groups, policymakers and the media about the different factors affecting access to treatment for HIV and AIDS-related opportunistic infections in the developing world.
- Informing the media and those working in the response to HIV/AIDS of recent policy, commercial and medical developments relating to Access to Treatment.
- Helping those most affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic to input into the policy and media agendas relating to HIV/AIDS treatment.

To make this happen, PSAf has used a fellowship programme to empower journalists in the SADC region with the skills and the financial capacity needed to report effectively on issues surrounding Access to HIV/AIDS Treatment.

The primary output was designed to be the publication and/or broadcast (radio) of investigative reports on treatment in the southern Africa region. These publications and broadcasts would be researched and authored in conjunction with the media and local partners, will be publicly launched as a way of rekindling public debate and policy debate on access to treatment.

The added benefit of this activity was expected to be the enhancement of investigative skill as well as improve the journalist skills on reporting HIV/AIDS.

Publications would be widely distributed in-country to media institutions, media training institutions, HIV/AIDS organisations, policy makers, parliaments, Networks of People Living with HIV/AIDS and National AIDS Councils. In addition these will also be posted on Panos website and our partners.

This focused attention on treatment was aimed at bringing to the fore issues entangled in access to treatment regarding the world trade in drugs, while at the same time updating and bringing to the attention of those in authority, NGOS, donors, paramedical companies and the general public the complexities, socio-economic, cultural and gender issues that are at play in accessing treatment in southern Africa.

Implementation/Outputs

PSAf decided not to advertise the fellowships in local media due to high costs, and instead advertised through several D-groups and list-serves – both of which received a good response. Interested journalists applied and submitted abstracts of the issues around Access to Treatment they proposed investigating and writing/broadcasting on.

During Phase 1, PSAf identified eight fellows – one print journalist and one radio journalist per country in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Malawi – and awarded those fellowships to research and produce two features each focused on Access to Treatment in their respective countries. The journalists were funded and, through PSAf, attached to a seasoned and respected editor who worked with them and provided editorial guidance throughout the process. All the editors that PSAf worked with to assist the journalists were sourced from the SADC Editors Forum.

Each journalist conducted research and reporting and produced two features – for a total of four per country – and submitted them to PSAf for publishing. Journalists ended up take three months to complete their reporting, instead of the planned two months.

PSAf subsequently edited and printed the 16 features, branding them the Panos Talking Treatment Series. PSAf conducted successful public launches of the features in Malawi, Zambia and Namibia. In Zimbabwe, PSAf conducted a workshop on Access to Treatment. In total, 16 features were produced – 8 print and 8 audio.

The print reports were published in the form of a series of glossy four page briefings titled the “Panos Talking Treatment” series. Broadcasts were produced as a series of radio features titled “Talking Treatment.” They were produced on appropriate broadcast tapes as well as on ordinary audio tapes. The ordinary tapes were produced in indigenous languages and distributed in rural areas, using the radio listening clubs.

During Phase 2, PSAf expanded the programme to Botswana and Lesotho, in addition to the four original countries. In 2007, PSAf awarded 12 fellowships in total - one print journalist and one radio journalist per country. *Each fellow produced two features, for a total of 24 features – 12 print and 12 audio.*

Impact

The fellowships have highlighted different obstacles to treatment in countries throughout the region, sparking debate, and also empowered journalists with skills and financial capacity to report on issues surrounding Access to Treatment and Universal Access.

In Zambia, for instance, Panos worked with two journalists – Pamela Mnyantha, a radio journalist with Radio Phoenix, and Zarina Geloo, a print journalist from the Weekly Guardian newspaper. Mnyantha produced two audio features, one looking at problems and complexities associated with providing antiretroviral treatment to children in Zambia, and the other looking at the problems and complexities of ensuring access to ART for people with disabilities. Geloo wrote one feature looking at the challenges associated with Access to ART service in Zambia and another looking at challenges in access to second line treatment.

Zambia's then-Minister of Health, Hon. Angela Cifire MP, presided over the Oct. 19, 2006 launch of the series in Zambia, and commended PSAf and the Swedish government for the support given to the journalists to introduce them to investigative reporting on treatment. She acknowledged that journalists in Zambia need a lot of capacity building to move away from event-based reporting to investigative reporting that will prompt community action.



Participants at a PSAf Access to Treatment workshop in Harare-Zimbabwe.

The launch was widely covered by print and electronic media. The national Television and Radio station, ZNBC, was among the media houses that covered the function. Other media institutions which covered the function included Radio Phoenix, The Post, Times of Zambia, Guardian Weekly, daily Mail, Q fm among others.

The fellowship programme has made significant impact in Malawi. In 2006, Panos worked with Frank Kapesa, a radio journalist, and Ambrose Namoyo, a print journalist. Kapesa produced a feature exploring challenges and complexities associated with accessing treatment in rural Malawi, and another looking at food shortages and nutrition as a challenge to ART management in Malawi. Namoyo wrote two features looking at the challenges associated with ART service provision in Malawi.

Dr Mary Shawa, the Principal Secretary for Nutrition, HIV and AIDS in the Office of the president and Cabinet, presided over the launch, congratulated Kapesa for his work producing the features and encouraged other journalists to emulate him by identifying and researching developmental issues that

will inform policy decisions and enlighten the masses on available resources, facilities and services. She pledged to have her office disseminate the feature to all government departments with a signed memo emphasizing the importance of the publications.

A 2007 PSAf fellow, Malawian print journalist Arkangel Tembo, made a huge impact with a feature in The Daily Times newspaper titled “ARVs or Prayers?” Tembo’s feature, which he reported and wrote with financial and editorial assistance from PSAf, told the story of how a pastor from Dedza District, along with others, was stopping the HIV-positive members of his church from taking ARVs.

The feature, published on Jan. 18, 2008, prompted the National Association of People Living with HIV and AIDS in Malawi (Napham) to organise a panel discussion with assistance from Medicins Sans Frontiers in Thyolo District. The panel discussion, which included pastors, journalists, health experts and Napham members, was a direct reaction to Tembo’s article, according to the organizers – the article was distributed in the hall as the session began. During the discussion, Tembo tells PSAf, it was reported that five people who were on ARVs in the district had died soon after they were advised to stop taking the life-prolonging drugs on religious grounds. At the end of the panel discussion pastors who like Pastor Lexa Chitekwe of Evangelical Church, Sheikh Abdulkhim Ganda agreed that it was wrong for pastors to force people to stop taking ARVs based on the argument that prayers would cure them.

In 2008, PSAf was mainly following up on the impact of such feature stories and if at all there has been increased debates and discussions around such issues.

In Zambia for example, the Ministry of Health has made reference to features published by Panos under the Talking Treatment Series in their plans to address some of the challenges with treatment access. (Canisius Banda, MOH Spokesperson 2008). In Malawi, Dr Mary Shawa, the PS in the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS has in a number of her speeches quoted the Talking Treatment series either in agreement or in dispute, which shows that the government is responding to the issues raised. Dr Marowa, National Representative UNAIDS in Botswana also quotes the Talking Treatment Series. The same response has been experienced in Zimbabwe, where Dr Mugurungi, HIV and AIDS Specialist in the Ministry of Health has also quoted the features in addressing stakeholders and responding to what the government is planning to do to address the challenges raised. Interesting media debate arose out of the features as they were also published in the main stream media. Journalists also confessed increased skills in communicating HIV and AIDS.

The impact did not stop there. In Malawi, Dedza District, the site of the original story, a pastors organisation known as MANELERA + organised a workshop in the district in response to the feature, according to a member of the group. All local pastors were invited. The group explained to the pastors that it was wrong to advise their followers to stop taking ARVs. At the end of the workshop all the pastors present agreed that it was wrong to preach to their congregation to stop taking ARVs. In addition, the Malawi Council of Churches issued a statement signed by its chairperson, Bishop Joseph Bvumbwe, and General Secretary Cannan Phiri, condemning pastors who advise their congregation to stop taking ARVs.

Tembo’s fellowship not only made a real public impact – it also gave him invaluable skills for the future. “I have established a lot of sources of news who help me with issues happening in their various villages on HIV and AIDS,” Tembo tells PSAf. “To be honest I am proud that this feature had an impact after it appeared in the newspaper.”

Other testimonies by PSAf Access to Treatment fellows are chronicled below.

Access to Treatment Fellowship Outcomes: Finding the Story Behind the Story

LUSAKA, Zambia - When Zarina Geloo, a journalist in Lusaka, Zambia, discovered that local HIV and AIDS patients were developing resistance to antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) - forcing them to start "second-line treatment" - she knew she was on to an important story.

Panos Institute Southern Africa knew it was important as well, and helped Geloo publish a series of articles investigating the little-discussed complication to the Zambian government's fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The articles appeared in PSAf's "Talking Treatment" print series.

Indeed, advances in the fight against HIV and AIDS in southern Africa, the region of the world hit hardest by the pandemic, have opened up entirely new, and sometimes unexpected, challenges. Nowhere is this more apparent than the subject of access to treatment. While international donors and African nations have made progress in securing affordable antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) in recent years, getting these drugs to the rural Africans most vulnerable to the pandemic - and making sure they are used effectively - has proven a huge hurdle.

Making sure these issues get the media attention they warrant is also a hurdle. "What I like about the stuff Panos puts out is that ... they tackle various issues not in the mainstream media," Geloo said.

PSAf has placed a particular emphasis on access to treatment, given its impact on the poor and marginalised communities of southern Africa. All too often, Geloo says, newspapers in the region don't give the issue the prominence it deserves. "They don't see it as news. They don't understand it," she said.

For her series of articles, Geloo interviewed people living with HIV and AIDS in rural Zambian villages, professors, medical officials, members of civil society, nutritionists and a former Zambian minister of health to produce an in-depth and comprehensive look at the Zambian government's ART rollout, its successes and failures. She explored the problem of drug resistance, as well as the role government and businesses have played in creating and addressing the resulting complications.

Geloo, an award-winning journalist who focuses on HIV and AIDS issues, also partnered with PSAf staff to produce "Lessons for Today and Tomorrow: An Analysis of HIV/AIDS Reporting in Southern Africa." The study found that reporting on the pandemic has improved, but recommended that the media make a series of improvements, including: more formal training of journalists on HIV and AIDS issues; increased sensitization of editors; and the establishment of formal policies on HIV and AIDS in newsrooms across the region.

To Geloo, who also works with the Guardian, a weekly newspaper in Lusaka, PSAf's role in the world of HIV and AIDS reporting is indispensable. "They fill a critical gap missing in disseminating information," she says.

In addition to highlighting, through the media, different obstacles to treatment in countries throughout the region, the fellowship programme also has built the capacity of individual journalists to report on Access to Treatment issues, and also to foster interest in these stories among their editors, the "gate-keepers" at most news organizations. This was clearly shown in the experience of Golie Nyirenda of Malawi, a PSAf Access to Treatment fellow in 2007.

PSAf Fellowships: Getting Reporters to Explore New Angles on HIV/AIDS and TB

LILONGWE, Malawi - Like many journalists covering HIV/AIDS issues throughout southern Africa, Golie Nyirenda, a reporter for the Daily Times in Malawi, used to rely on statements from government officials, staged events surrounding World AIDS Day, and information from NGOs unfamiliar with the actual facts on the ground.

But after participating in Panos Institute Southern Africa's Access to Treatment fellowship programme, Nyirenda's reporting methods have changed – she now goes and speaks to people living with HIV and AIDS to give her stories real meaning.

"Working with Panos has helped me to develop story ideas that impact on the lives of the people living with HIV/AIDS and people that are affected by the pandemic," she says.

To help shape a response to the HIV and AIDS pandemic that is driven by those most affected, PSAf engages mainstream and alternative media with the aim of improving the quality of HIV/AIDS reporting throughout southern Africa. Fellowships for journalists are an integral part of this effort.

In conjunction with training workshops, these fellowships go beyond platitudes and give journalists practical advice for covering HIV/AIDS-related issues, which often require an understanding of complex health and social topic. They also require dedication, commitment and real interest on the part of the journalist.

For instance, many journalists say that the biggest hurdle to quality HIV/AIDS coverage in the region is editors who feel the pandemic is not a story. PSAf fellowships stress the art of presenting HIV/AIDS story proposals in a manner that is persuasive to editors.

Perhaps even more importantly, PSAf gives journalists feedback on their writing. Many news editors in the region lack the time, resources or training to work with their reporters on reporting and writing. Not Panos.

"Times when [the] Panos editor made comments on my stories and sent back my stories for clarifications and more details were my learning moments," says Malawi's Nyirenda said. "The Panos editor never passed my stories with inadequate information and she never allowed stories without the voice of the people at the grassroots levels and people living with AIDS."

Looking to the future, Nyirenda says PSAf has widened her network of sources her contacts and opened her new eyes to new and interesting story ideas that will inform the public and keep her busy.

"The fellowship has also increased my contacts for HIV and AIDS stories," she said. "I can now take HIV/AIDS as my area of specialty ... I can sustain pages with HIV/AIDS stories."

Challenges

The Access to Treatment project was very successful. Looking forward, it is important to note that in the course of implementing the Access to Treatment fellowships, there was a paradigm shift in the HIV and AIDS debate. The international focus is no longer only on Access to Treatment – it has broadened, to encompass Universal Access for Prevention, Care and Treatment of HIV and AIDS.

HIV/AIDS Radio Campaign Messages

Panos Institute Southern Africa has produced vitally-needed research in assessing the impact and effectiveness of HIV/AIDS radio messages in southern Africa. With support from Sida, PSAf has completed comprehensive monitoring and research on the impact of HIV/AIDS radio messages in Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe and is in the final stages of producing detailed reports. Following initial discussions between stakeholders, the reports are already making an impact – in response to PSAf's findings, Zimbabwe's national broadcaster is pledging to re-establish radio listening clubs, establish an in-house HIV/AIDS policy and conduct new listenership research.

Objectives

In southern Africa, radio is the most efficient and cheapest mode of communication. It knows no literacy barriers and is a powerful tool for outreach, extending to many of the most remote areas. As a result, governments, NGOs and other civic organisations have employed radio to carry out HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, running a variety of programmes and advertisements to reach populations with messages about prevention, treatment, stigma and other issues.

The “Reporting HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa: HIV/AIDS radio campaign messages” project aimed to assess the effectiveness of these campaigns by:

- Studying the impact, if any, that HIV/AIDS messages transmitted via radio have had on their targeted audiences;
- Determining how appealing these messages are to various target groups and whether they influence the audience’s understanding of the pandemic, contribute to behaviour change or promote and stimulate debate on poorly understood aspect of the pandemic;
- Determine whether target groups find these messages socially and culturally appropriate;
- Determine whether these messages are employed as part of systematic, structured and planned campaigns – or in other ways; and
- Advise media organisations and HIV/AIDS organisations on how best to carry out HIV/AIDS campaigns to ensure maximum impact, stressing the need for a full partnership that is based not on financial benefits but on a genuine need contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Implementation/Outputs

PSAf originally planned to monitor HIV/AIDS radio messages on state-owned, commercial and community radio stations in 8 different countries – Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana and South Africa. Under the original proposal, one radio station in each country would be selected and sponsored to produce regular weekly HIV/AIDS messages (acting as a control) while the others would just be monitored.

In consultation with Sida, the plan was revised during the second year of implementation. The number of countries was reduced to five – Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana and Malawi – due to budget constraints. Also, a decision was made not to actually sponsor any HIV/AIDS messages, since this might have skewed the findings of the study.

In 2006, PSAf identified consultants in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana and Malawi to monitor the radio-transmitted media campaigns on a daily basis. The consultants agreed to:

- Identify the source of the HIV/AIDS media adverts and programmes;
- Determine the reasons behind and idea for the campaign, and establish the relationship of the originators of the campaign and the radio station;
- Use questionnaires to conduct focus group discussions on the campaigns and conduct personal interviews of the targeted populations; and
- Produce a detailed report at the end of three months.

Consultants completed and submitted detailed reports from Botswana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe to PSAf in 2007 for review. PSAf contracted an outside editorial consultant, who did final edits on the reports and identified outstanding questions. The outstanding questions were answered, and the four

reports are currently being finalized for publication in early 2008. The Namibia report has been delayed due to a change in personnel.

Each report produced important conclusions and recommendations, including the following.

Botswana

- Radio is ranked poorly as a reliable source of information on HIV and AIDS due to a lack of feedback options and often faulty information.
- Consistent, regular and strategic research on communication in general and radio in particular is grossly lacking. Rating and listenership information is limited to the public broadcaster's efforts.
- Public radio in Botswana, for all intents and purposes, holds a monopoly over radio broadcasting.
- More information on treatment, care and support is needed.
- A concerted effort must be made to more actively and meaningfully include Persons Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) in the development, production and disseminating of programmes and messages on HIV and AIDS.
- Simple radio programme awareness campaigns must be initiated to let people know when health programmes will be on air.
- Investment in radio-specific research is a must.
- Training is required in the broadcasting sector as well as with civil society groups. In particular, stakeholders need to invest in and capitalise on PLWHA to increase the effectiveness and reach of HIV/AIDS messages. Radio personnel, on the other hand, must be trained on both the social issues and sensitivities surrounding HIV as well as selected medical and health aspects of the virus.

Malawi

- The cost of batteries in the rural areas of Malawi is one of the most important bottlenecks hindering people's ability to listen to radios. There is no electricity in many areas. Stakeholders should therefore explore the distribution of solar or hand powered radios to radio listening clubs.
- A continued fight against stigma and discrimination, which are still rampant in communities, is necessary through the media and other channels.
- Even though most people have heard about HIV/AIDS in Malawi, as has been demonstrated by many nationwide studies, comprehensive knowledge about the epidemic is low and misperceptions about AIDS still prevail.
- It seems that more men than women have access to radios. It may be important to try and promote access to the media by women. The formation of radio listeners' clubs where membership of females is encouraged can be one way of promoting access by women to radio.
- Radio stations and NGOs appear to consult communities in the development of HIV/AIDS adverts and programs. Research should be used to inform the development of programs. In some cases, while journalists may want to visit communities and get information that they can use to develop programs, transport may not be available due to a lack of funding. It is therefore important that donors and government fund the media adequately so they can do their jobs professionally. Also, once journalists have collected stories from the communities, it is important that members of the community be told when the programs will be aired and they should be involved in these programmes; their voices need to be heard.

- The production of messages and programs demands a significant amount of money. In addition to gathering information, adverts and programs have to be paid for, hence the need for funding. Another issue related to this is the critical shortage of staff in the broadcasting houses, hence the need for more funding.
- Messages on sex and condoms make listeners, especially adults, very uncomfortable, particularly in the presence of children. While it is important that these messages be aired, it may be important to time the airing properly.
- It seems that in many cases, there are no support structures at the community level to promote the activities discussed in the adverts or programmes aired on the radio.
- While different radio stations are airing programs on AIDS, it seems that there is no forum in Malawi where electronic media practitioners can meet, discuss and share their experiences regarding HIV/AIDS programming. It is therefore suggested that media practitioners should come together and create a forum where they can discuss these issues.
- Community radios are severely constrained in the delivery of programs and adverts not only for HIV and AIDS but for other programs as well. These radio stations need to be strengthened through provision of training to their staff and funding of their programs.

Zambia

- Radio is the best medium of communication in that it covers the majority of people, it is cheap and it is widely accessible. Various target groups indicated having been affected positively by radio messages. Radio will be the main medium of communication for a long time to come.
- However, there currently are insufficient HIV and AIDS radio programmes/advertisements. The existing programmes do not communicate the information that Zambians are currently looking for. They find it to be shallow, fragmented and sometimes incorrect. This is mainly due to the fact that most of the presenters lack in-depth knowledge, do not research HIV and AIDS-related issues, and receive little or no support from their superiors.
- It also came to light that most women do not have as much access to radio as men do.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of programmes or messages is almost non-existent, especially on ZNBC's Radio 2.

- Community stations can be used to reach out to more people; they tend to be more intimate than the larger stations and more people are able to participate. More resources need to be allocated for the training of presenters in the area of HIV and AIDS programme development and presentation, for the provision of technical and up to-date information on HIV and AIDS, and for M&E.
- It is also important to ensure that HIV prevention messages are resuscitated since the emphasis now seems to have shifted to treatment, care and support. If this is not given the importance it deserves, Zambia will end up with a much higher prevalence as new infections will continue to occur.

Zimbabwe

- It is imperative that programmes be initiated to reach out to communities where there is no radio frequency. Radio stations can record on tape, distribute programmes and conduct outreach initiatives where programmes are recorded in particular communities to diversify the views expressed in programmes.

- In-house capacity-building for presenters is also essential for effective presentation of such programmes. Establishing sustainable partnerships with the civil society can complement this.
- It is necessary to get the relevant ministry to expand radio coverage nationally.
- The Broadcasting Services (Licensing and Content) Regulation should be reviewed to ease application procedures and requirements for the establishment of community radio stations, so that such stations can be located nearer to their communities and can reflect the local way of life.
- Civil society should involve marginalised sections of the society in message development. Organisations should also fully exploit the existing free slots on radio stations to air HIV and AIDS messages as part of their communication strategies.
- The private sector's involvement in disseminating HIV and AIDS messages leaves a lot to be desired. None of the programmes reviewed under this study were funded by the private sector. The private sector's minimal participation can be attributed to a lack of adequate HIV and AIDS workplace policies and the profit motive behind their operations.
- Meaningful involvement by the public in the formulation of HIV and AIDS messages is still in its infancy. There is a tendency for programmers and media people to focus on urban settings at the expense of remote ones. The public should be included in baseline surveys to facilitate the development of programmes that are reflective of the collective needs of the audiences.
- The lack of clear monitoring and evaluation of HIV and AIDS campaign messages implies that the informational needs of the public are not adequately met.
- Only a handful of donors are directly funding HIV and AIDS radio programmes. There is need for this stakeholder category to expand areas of funding to include capacity building for media houses in HIV and AIDS message development. They could also provide technical and financial resources towards the development of a national HIV and AIDS media strategy, something which the nation does not have. They should give leverage to the audience to develop their own messages and desist from taking a top-down approach.

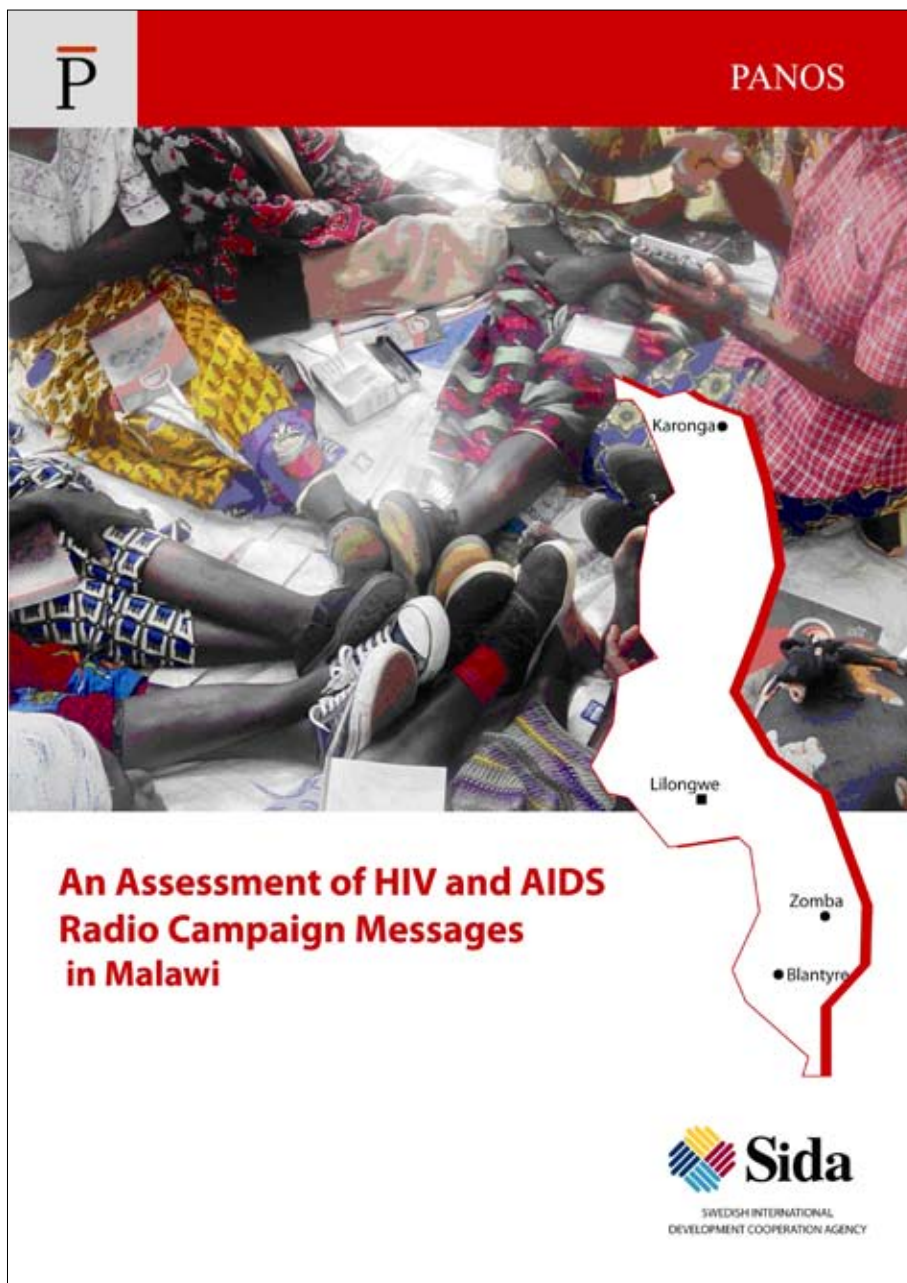
After the consultants had completed their monitoring, they attended a meeting with PSAf staff, held in Pretoria, South Africa, to present their initial findings and brief PSAf on their progress. They then held focus group meetings to obtain additional perspectives for the reports.

Following the finalization of the reports, PSAf staff and consultants held stakeholder meetings in each country, where they presented the findings of the study and made recommendations. In Zimbabwe, the report was presented twice, to the Management of ZBCA and the Ministry of Information.

After the consultants had completed their monitoring, they attended a meeting with PSAf staff, held in Pretoria, South Africa, to present their initial findings and brief PSAf on their progress. They then held focus group meetings to obtain additional perspectives for the reports.

Following the finalization of the reports, PSAf staff and consultants held stakeholder meetings in each country, where they presented the findings of the study and made recommendations. In Zimbabwe, the report was presented twice, first to the Management of ZBCA and then to the Ministry of Information.

The findings from all the five countries were then compiled into a regional report titled *Who is talking? Who is Listening?: Radio HIV/AIDS campaigns in southern Africa*.



A copy of the radio campaign messages report for Malawi, one of the five country reports that were produced.

All the reports are being widely distributed to relevant stakeholders to ensure that they take action.

The regional publication also includes tips on how to carry out an effective HIV/AIDS radio campaign based on the practical realities unearthed by the research. The idea is to foster a relationship which is not only based on financial benefits that accrue to the radio stations but also on the establishment of effective HIV/AIDS radio message campaigns.

Impact

Although it will take time to see some of the expected policy impacts, PSaf's radio campaign message project has already made some concrete impacts in some countries:

In Malawi, the Media Council of Malawi and the National AIDS Council development a project that is aimed at working with radio stations to address a number of the challenges highlighted in the report.

The project stated rolling out in 2008.

In January of 2008, Zimbabwe's main government broadcaster, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings (ZBH) wrote to PSAf and committed to several initiatives aimed at improved the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS radio messages in Zimbabwe. (See below.)

Impacts: Assessment of HIV/AIDS Radio Messages

While Zimbabwe is a signatory to international conventions and treaties aimed at ensuring secure and enabling media environments, the country's media environment is marred by several repressive laws that stifle the existence of a free and secure media environment in Zimbabwe. The government controls many major media outlets, and has a large influence in media content.

As a result, when it comes to making HIV/AIDS radio messages more effective, government buy-in is essential.

With support from Sida, Panos Institute Southern Africa has begun securing that buy-in.

In a January 10, 2008 letter to PSAf, ZBH public relations manager Sivukile Simango explained the broadcaster's position and laid out several commitments – a huge step forward in the effort to improve HIV/AIDS radio messages in Zimbabwe.

ZBH said that it is not prepared to offer reduced advertising and transmission rates as long as donors continue to fund radio messages through third parties, such as independent producers – mainly because producers charge the donors commercial rates and then still demand reduced rates from ZBH. ZBH said that donors should, when possible, deal directly with ZBH. When donors prefer to deal with independent producers, those producers must be willing to pay for broadcasting time at commercial standing rates.

ZBH made three key commitments:

- In the "near future," ZBH said it will plan the re-establishment of Radio Listeners' Clubs in partnership with other interested parties like Panos – on the condition that all the information is controlled by ZBH.
- ZBH said it plans to formulate a clear internal (in-house) policy on HIV/AIDS issues, and pledged to be a strategic partner with genuine players in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

ZBH said it will engage consultants to carry out audience and viewer ship research.

Challenges

The main challenge for this project component was that there was not enough funding to allow consultants to monitor more than three radio stations per country. As a result, it was felt that in most countries, there was not a representative sample from which to draw conclusions.

Another challenge was that country consultants did not deliver on time. As a result, the process took longer than planned.

Thirdly, this project component did not have a provision for stakeholder meetings for presentation and review of the findings before publishing. PSAf however felt that these meetings were important to the process, and hence carried out the meetings with funds from other sources.

Conclusions

Successes

Through the Sida-funded Communicating AIDS in southern Africa project, Panos Institute Southern Africa has achieved significant successes in its mission to amplify the voices of the marginalized and ensure that the response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic is shared and driven by those most affected by it.

PSAf conducted a baseline study of how HIV/AIDS is being handled in media institutions in southern

Africa, and is currently finalizing a training manual aimed for use in media training institutions in Southern Africa.

PSAf's successful expansion of its trademark HIV and AIDS-focused radio listening club programme has helped communities in Zambia, Malawi and Namibia identify and shape their own responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. With a current total of 32 RLCs, with 20 in Zambia, six in Malawi and six in Namibia, success stories are numerous, such as the Malawian Ministry of Health's decision to offer HIV testing and counseling services in a clinic in the Mangochi region, in response to a radio discussion produced by a local men's radio listening club.

Through its Access to Treatment initiative, PSAf has successfully empowered journalists in the SADC region with the skills and the financial capacity needed to report effectively on issues surrounding Access to HIV/AIDS Treatment. PSAf-sponsored journalists across the region have produced a total of 20 print and 20 audio features. The fellowships have built the capacity of individual journalists in Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Lesotho to cover issues surrounding ART and sparked public debate and community action in significant ways – highlighted by Malawian journalist Arkangel Tembo's recent feature on a pastor who told members of his church not to take ARVs.

Finally, PSAf's comprehensive assessment of the impact and effectiveness of HIV/AIDS radio messages in southern Africa is already making an impact – in response to PSAf's findings, Zimbabwe's national broadcaster is pledging to re-establish radio listening clubs, establish an in-house HIV/AIDS policy and conduct new listenership research. PSAf is in the final stages of producing detailed reports for Botswana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe – reports that will provide vitally-needed research data and add to policymaking debate.

With Sida's backing, PSAf is helping to shape effective responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and looking forward to even more significant work in the years to come.

Challenges

Along with the project's successes, PSAf has sought to learn from the challenges faced in implementing its plans.

In some cases, as with the completion of the HIV/AIDS reporting manual, the biggest challenge has been the fact that PSAf is coordinating work that is being done by independent consultants. PSAf has not, however, let this affect the quality of the final product.

In its expansion of the radio listening club programme into Namibia, PSAf has seen the vital importance of improving its methods of effectively communicating the Panos RLC concept to all stakeholders, from the partners to the communities themselves.

Looking forward, it is important to note that in the course of implementing the Access to Treatment fellowships, there was a paradigm shift in the HIV and AIDS debate. The international focus is no longer only on Access to Treatment – it has broadened, to encompass Universal Access for Prevention, Care and Treatment of HIV and AIDS.

In assessing the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS radio messages, the main challenge was a lack of funding to allow consultants to monitor more than three radio stations per country. And again, getting consultants to deliver products on time proved a challenge. Also, while, this component did not have a provision for stakeholder meetings for presentation and review of the findings before publishing, PSAf carried out the meetings with funds from other sources.

As it looks forward, PSAf is studying all these challenges, making adjustments and noting important lessons learned.

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PANOS SOUTHERN AFRICA'S COMMUNICATING HIV AND AIDS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA PROJECT, 2005–2008

The PANOS radio listening clubs have proved to be an effective means of communicating not only HIV and AIDS issues but other development issues within communities. The female radio clubs proved more effective than the male radio clubs. Interviews revealed that communities with the radio listening clubs were more likely to have tested for HIV than those without. Despite the quality of HIV and AIDS reporting in the media deemed as low, community radios were more effective in relaying HIV messages than national or private radios. Journalists sponsored under the PANOS fellowship programme dubbed Global trend and access to treatment for all helped increase interest amongst journalist and media houses on HIV and AIDS reporting. Another key success under the PANOS programme was the development of a HIV and AIDS training manual for journalists. However, the expectations raised by PANOS were high and communities requested for transport to attend the Radio listening clubs. The media gaps in HIV reporting though improving still need more funding to build the capacity of media houses and journalists.

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