



Population Media Center has more than a decade of experience working to improve the health and well-being of people and our planet by modeling prosocial behavior in entertainment education programming.

Population Media Center (PMC) creates long-running serialized dramas on radio and television, in which characters evolve into role models for the audience, resulting in positive behavior change. The emphasis of the organization’s work is to educate people about the benefits of small families, encourage the use of effective family planning methods, elevate women’s status, prevent exploitation of children, and promote avoidance of HIV infection. The programs also address other high-priority issues of specific relevance to each country.

WHERE WE WORK .....

Since its inception, PMC has initiated projects in Brazil, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, nine island nations of the Eastern Caribbean, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Mexico, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, the United States, and Vietnam. PMC has new projects in development in Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Haiti, all countries in Latin America, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

WHO WE WORK WITH .....

To produce our programs, PMC partners worldwide with:

- bi- and multi-lateral agencies
- philanthropic foundations
- national governments
- socially responsible corporations
- committed individuals

Our most significant and enduring relationships are with **UNFPA**, the **Packard Foundation**, **UNICEF**, **Save the Children**, and the **Oak Foundation**. More than half of our programs have received support from UN agencies, as our missions are strongly aligned. Corporate partners recognize the marketing potential of supporting popular, positive programs, and include **Bayer Corporation** and **Colgate-Palmolive**.

*To learn more about our partners on individual programs, visit:*  
[www.populationmedia.org/where](http://www.populationmedia.org/where).

THE USE OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS .....

The term “unmet need” has come to be confused with that of “unmet demand,” misleading many people into assuming that the issue could be overcome solely by improving family planning service delivery and contraceptive distribution. However, the discrepancy between attitudes and behavior has had less and less to do with availability in recent decades. Lack of access is cited infrequently by those who are categorized as having an unmet need for family planning. Concerns about the side effects on their health, partner opposition, religious opposition, and a pervasive fatalistic mindset are the most prevalent reasons cited by non-users who do not want to be pregnant.

Changing this situation takes more than provision of family planning services. It requires helping people understand the personal benefits in health and welfare for them and their children of fewer, spaced births. It requires a major shift in societal attitudes and knowledge. It involves role modeling small family norms and making them popular, as well as overcoming the fear that contraceptives are dangerous or that planning one’s family is unacceptable. One thing that could change the population dynamics in developing countries is role modeling through popular media.

# METHODOLOGY

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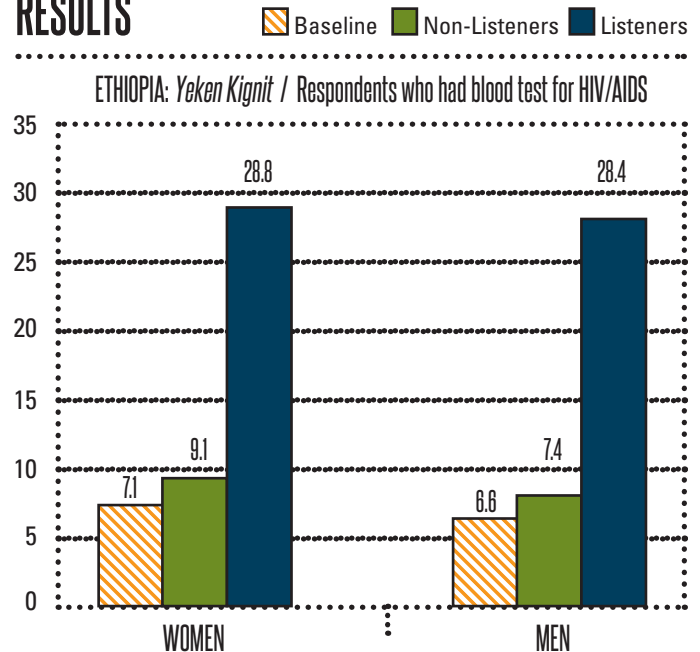
PMC uses a theory-based approach to behavior-change communication called the Sabido methodology, developed by Miguel Sabido, a producer of Mexican television. Using this methodology, PMC develops long-running drama series with characters that evolve into role models for the audience, encouraging the adoption of healthier behaviors to benefit individuals and their societies. Evaluation research has shown that the Sabido methodology leads to population-wide behavior change.

One of the keys to our success is that all of our programs are managed, produced, written, and acted by local people. PMC aligns its programs with the policy framework of each host country, including UN agreements to which the country is a signatory. The highly dramatic series that PMC helps to develop are, therefore, reflective of the target audience's lives and sensitive to cultural constructs built around the community's system of values. As a result, our programs are ultimately able to connect with audiences at a deeper level while also providing highly relevant social and health information. By engaging audiences in riveting, dramatic stories, PMC is able not only to deliver important information and messages to huge audiences, but we are also able to motivate audiences to change their behavior. This leads to a low cost per behavior change: \$0.08 per person who changed behavior to avoid HIV infection, in one study.

“More and more people are engaged in discussions on these crucial issues. . . . As a result, we have no worry in sending our girls to school.”

– Woman listener in Ethiopia

## RESULTS



- **63%** of new health clinic clients seeking reproductive health services in Ethiopia said they were listening to one of PMC's dramas.
- Among married women who listened to *Yeken Kignit* and knew of a method of family planning, spousal communication about family planning issues climbed from **33%** to **66%**.
- Contraceptive use among listeners to *Yeken Kignit* increased from **14%** to **40%**, and listeners were **5.4** times more likely than non-listeners to know of three or more family planning methods.
- In Mali, listeners to *Jigi ma Tignè* were **3.4** times more likely than non-listeners to say they "approve of using contraceptive methods."
- **72%** of respondents in the four northwest states of Nigeria listened to the broadcast, *Ruwan Dare*, one or more times per week, and **67%** of reproductive health clients cited the program as the motivation to visit the clinic.
- In Nigeria, **54%** of fistula clients cited *Gugar Goge* as the main motivation for seeking services.
- Listeners in Rwanda were **twice** as likely as non-listeners to know about medication mothers can take to prevent transmission of HIV/AIDS to a baby, and **24%** of clients seeking this medication cited the program as the main motivation to do so.

For more information on our work and approach, visit [www.populationmedia.org/what](http://www.populationmedia.org/what).