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ASSESSMENT OF MEDIA ACTIVITIES IN CHAD AND NIGER UNDER THE USAID PEACE THROUGH DEVELOPMENT (PDEV) PROGRAM

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Executive Summary

One month of field research, including interviews, observation and focus groups with radio program listeners, partner radio station staff and training program beneficiaries, indicates that the ongoing media and outreach activities of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) PDEV program continue to strengthen and expand the existing "civic culture" in Niger and Chad. Fostering civic culture related directly to the PDEV project aims of including and broadcasting a culturally and geographically diverse set of moderate voices via radio programming and local production capacity building and increasing awareness and discussion on among citizens on issues of peace, tolerance and good governance. The inclusive and multi-layered design of PDEV media programming has resulted in a range of activities that include and address ordinary citizens and influential decision makers alike.

This report documents the results of an end-line qualitative 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 nongovernmental organization (NGO) specializing in development communication and outreach, implements the media component of the PDEV project and works in collaboration with the Academy for Educational Development (AED)¹ 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.

This report is a follow on to the mid-line evaluation that focused primarily on listener accounts of the impact of four radio programs produced by the PDEV media team (two in Niger and two in Chad), which are broadcast by a network of PDEV radio partners in each country.² That report documented numerous examples of individuals and communities inspired by PDEV radio programs to engage in political and civic processes with local leaders and fellow community members.

This report focuses on seven interventions that I describe, for reasons which will become clear in sections that follow, as "sustained, multi-level activities." With the exception of listening clubs (which were extended in the 12 months since my first report), these activities are all second stage activities, building on successes and lessons learned from first stage activities that have been previously reported on. These activities include:

1. Communication training for religious leaders and association members (Niger)
2. Media guide for conflict situations (ONIMED) (Niger)
3. "Year-3" radio programs (Niger and Chad)³
4. Local production: Building the capacity of radio partners (Niger and Chad)
5. Radio station peer mentoring (Chad)
6. Listening clubs (Niger and Chad)
7. Listener engagement mechanisms: Frontline SMS/Text message software (Chad and Niger) and FreedomFone interactive voice response (IVR) (Niger).

¹ AED has been acquired by FHI 360 and now bears that name.

² Greiner, K. (2010). *Applying local solutions to local problems: Radio listeners as agents of change*. Washington, DC: USAID.

³ I use the term "Year 3" radio programs for the religious-themed programs Sada Zumuntchi (Niger) and Chabab Waddin (Chad). I emphasize the "Year 3" designation because I believe that these programs are able to include sensitive, conflict-related content precisely because they come after steadily building credibility (and familiarity) over two years of more general programming related to peace, tolerance and democratic expression.

This report presents qualitative data that shows the PDEV media activities outlined above continue to improve the quantity, quality and diversity of citizen participation and democratic expression. The current religious-themed radio programming builds on two years of more general “peace and tolerance” broadcasting that is widely listened to and discussed. Capacity building activities have increased and improved the production capacity of radio partners thereby extending the existing platform for a geographically and linguistically diverse set of moderate voices that are engaging with and discussing PDEV-related themes. Listener engagement mechanisms invite participation from citizens who contribute to PDEV programming through their input, feedback, questions and critiques.

Through these activities, the PDEV media component is actively countering the socio-economic and political drivers that could otherwise lead ordinary citizens to express themselves through violence.⁴ The inclusive and multi-layered design of PDEV programming is an “ecological approach” to behavior and social change, which is appropriate for the complex task of countering extremist ideologies and protecting against the spread of regional instability. Rather than focusing on individual behavior alone, the ecological approach adopted by the PDEV media team is attempting to influence individuals and the environments and structures they inhabit. The drivers of extremism are present across an entire “ecology” of mutually influencing levels, including individual, community, socio-economic, religious/cultural, media-system and political. To counter these drivers, PDEV media programming intervenes at each of these levels, with an important set of capacity building activities that have already borne fruit—in the form of locally produced radio content—signaling the potential for impact, via the continued promotion of peace and tolerance, beyond the life of the PDEV project.

Methodology

The findings and analysis in this report are the result of four weeks of independent field research (two weeks in Niger and two weeks in Chad), including interviews and focus groups with direct participants (listeners, radio station partners, training participants, etc.), interviews with PDEV media producers and technicians, and observation of staff meetings, recording sessions and one content advisory group meeting in each country. Interview and focus group data were supplemented with written material, including quarterly project reports, training reports, partner radio station reporting documents and radio program scripts.⁵

Background: Objectives of PDEV project and summary of mid-line evaluation results

The Peace through Development (PDEV) project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Partnerships (TSCTP), and implemented by FHI 360. The primary aim of the TSCTP strategy is to “constrict the tactical and strategic operating environment of terrorists in Northwestern Africa.”⁶ If one expands the definition of “operating environment” beyond geographical terms to include social and communication environments, the importance of strategic communication interventions to achieve this aim becomes

⁴ Termed “Countering Violent Extremism” in USAID’s terminology.

⁵ For more detailed information on the strengths of qualitative methods for evaluation research, see Greiner, K. (2010). *Applying local solutions to local problems: Radio listeners as agents of change*, pp. 11-12.

⁶ USAID Request for Task Order Proposal (RFTOP), p. 1.

evident. Of the three main desired results listed in the TSCTP strategy, two can be addressed via communication.⁷

- Result 1: Terrorists denied support and sanctuary by improving governance and reducing ungoverned and poorly governed spaces.
- Result 2: Terrorists denied support and sanctuary by reducing the pool of potential recruits (i.e., unemployed and/or uneducated youth).
- Result 3: Extremist ideologies supporting terrorist tactics are discredited.

Result 2 aims to reduce the pool of potential recruits. This can be achieved by fostering the engagement of community members, including “unemployed and/or uneducated youth,” in peaceful and democratic reflection, discussion and action. Result 3 aims to discredit extremist ideologies. This can be achieved by promoting peaceful and moderate perspectives. In other words, one counters extremism and the use of violence with a positive and *opposite* alternative.

The media and outreach support component of PDEV programming was designed to help achieve the two results included in the TSCTP strategy that can be addressed via communication.⁸ The stated objectives for the media and outreach component of the PDEV project are:

Result 3.1: Improved information flow among citizens on peace and tolerance

Result 3.2: Moderate voices strengthened⁹

These media programming results are directly related to the aims stated in Results 2 and 3 above. One can read the two sets of results as two sides of the same coin, with one side of the coin stated in what is to be prevented or discredited, and the flip side of the coin offering means toward those ends. In this sense, reducing the number of potential recruits can be achieved by promoting peace and tolerance as viable alternatives to violence. Strengthening and increasing the circulation of moderate voices is a means to supplant extremist ideologies or at least render them less mainstream and thus less popular. In a 2010 mid-line evaluation of PDEV media programming, I proposed the concept of “civic culture” as a potential defense against extremism. I defined civic culture as “peaceful self-expression and democratic participation in community life.”¹⁰

Fostering civic culture through media programming and related outreach activities involves increasing the diversity and the number of people expressing themselves peacefully and participating in their communities. In the mid-line evaluation of PDEV media programming I described how the *design* of the program interventions allowed a great number of community members to participate directly in the programs by 1) having their voices included in radio programs and 2) providing input and suggestions for change to the programs through the Content Advisory Group and Stakeholder Workshop mechanisms. I concluded that in addition, the radio programs and associated activities were designed to maximize audience interactivity through listening club discussions, call-in show participation and dedicated SMS/Text message phone lines.

⁷ While radio programming cannot directly improve governance (Result 1) it can reduce “support and sanctuary” for extremist groups. A combination of communication infrastructure and programming can bring peace and tolerance broadcasts into “poorly governed” regions where extremist ideologies could otherwise operate unchallenged. The new PDEV “micro-stations” in Northern Chad and the existing broadcasts in areas where Boko Haram is known to operate (Diffa, Niger, for example) offer the potential to prevent such support and sanctuary for extremist groups and ideologies.

⁸ USAID (2005). *Countering extremism and terrorism in the Sahel*. See PDEV/RFTOP p. 3.

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

¹⁰ “Applying local solutions to local problems: Radio listeners as agents of change,” p. 4.

The text box below summarizes the key findings from the 2010 mid-line evaluation report.

**Excerpt from PDEV media programming mid-line evaluation report
“Summary of findings” section (p. 27)**

I believe the PDEV program design facilitates levels and types of participation that address several of the projected results submitted to USAID by PDEV in the 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;
- 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.

The goals of increasing the number and diversity of moderate voices in circulation, increasing access to information on peace and tolerance and fostering related discussions among citizens are as relevant or even *more* relevant now, in 2011, as they were when the request for task order proposals was first issued for PDEV in 2007.

In addition to the security-related events described in the 2010 mid-line evaluation, which included several kidnappings and two coups d'états (attempted in Chad, successful in Niger),¹¹ the PDEV programming zone has since experienced additional violence and increased risk of violence due to regional events. In early 2011 two French citizens were kidnapped in Niamey, the capital of Niger, and

¹¹ Events include: The attempted coup in Chad (February 2008), the successful coup in Niger (February 2010), the kidnapping of Michel Germaneau in Niger (April 2010) and seven additional foreigners in Arlit, Niger (September 2010). See *Applying local solutions to local problems: Radio listeners as agents of change*, p. 14.

were subsequently killed in a failed rescue attempt.¹² The 2011 Niamey kidnapping signaled the first time in recent memory that Niger's capital was the site of extremist violence. Additional recent events in the region surrounding the PDEV program countries, Niger and Chad, have contributed to an increased *risk* of violence although violence itself has not erupted. To the east of PDEV countries, independence of South Sudan was successfully and peacefully declared despite reports of ongoing rebel activity that threatens to destabilize the region.¹³ To the north, violence in Libya has led to an influx of refugees and/or "returnees," estimated to number 75,000 across both PDEV countries.¹⁴

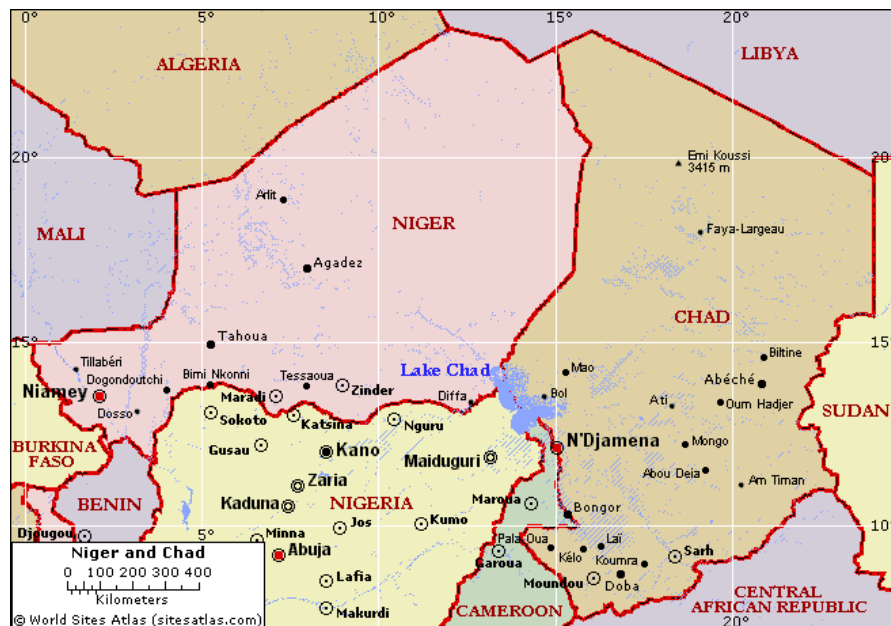


Figure 1: PDEV program operating zone and neighboring countries¹⁵

Just south of the Nigerien border and fewer than 300km from N'Djamena, the town of Maiduguri in Nigeria has witnessed violent attacks by the extremist group Boko Haram who have also attacked government installations in Abuja.¹⁶ As will be discussed in a later section of this report, the PDEV media team received reports that after its July 2011 attack on Maiduguri, elements of Boko Haram had fled across the border into Diffa, Niger, and began attempting to recruit there.

The existence of violence or *risk* of violence in the region bordering PDEV countries makes ongoing PDEV programming crucial to preventing future violence and contributing to regional stability. Beyond

¹² *The Telegraph*, "Two French hostages killed by al-Qaeda kidnappers during failed rescue attempt," January 9, 2011. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/niger/8248977/Two-French-hostages-killed-by-al-Qaeda-kidnappers-during-failed-rescue-attempt.html>

¹³ Copnal, J., South Sudan's enemy within, BBC, July 1, 2011. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13977178>

¹⁴ Niger, Chad receive 75,000 refugees from Libya. April 27, 2011. African online news with supporting statistics from International Organisation for Migration (IOM) offices in Niamey, Niger. Source <http://www.afrol.com/articles/37666>

¹⁵ Source: World Sites Atlas website: <http://www.sitesatlas.com/Maps/Maps/707.htm>

¹⁶ Sources: *Christian Science Monitor*: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/Africa-Monitor/2011/0621/Boko-Haram-attacks-show-new-range-sophistication> ; Al-Jazeera: <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2011/06/201162621858898349.html>

the regional context, the PDEV team faces the additional challenge of operating under conditions where many of the “drivers of extremism” exist, many of which are socio-economic in nature, including:

- **Perceptions of social exclusion** related to under-employment and existing social hierarchies where young people have little voice;
- **Frustrated expectations and relative deprivation**, again due to under-employment or lack of employment despite educational achievement;
- **Unmet social needs**, including an inability to marry due to a lack of financial resources.¹⁷

In addition to socio-economic drivers, the PDEV media teams in Chad and Niger are operating in the presence of a strong “political driver” that could encourage citizens to turn to violence because of the example set by the state itself: both countries have a history where violence is a valid and successful means for gaining leadership of the country. In Chad, for example, the current president, Idriss Deby, gained office through a 1990 coup d’état. Deby’s political party, the Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS), makes direct reference to force by featuring a rifle as one of the three symbols representing the values of the party.



Figure 2: Ruling political party symbol (MPS/Chad)¹⁸

With existing threats to regional stability in neighboring Libya, Nigeria and Sudan, and political environments in Niger and Chad that include a history of achieving power through violence, the PDEV media teams are engaged in important but challenging work. The aim of the PDEV project is to combat the influence of socio-economic and political drivers of violent extremism by helping to build a democratic and peaceful culture—a civic culture—that can withstand the pressures of the immediate environment. Strengthening the civic culture within a country requires intervention within the mutually influencing “layers” that exist in a society that includes individual citizens, families, communities, educational institutions, media environments and political systems. In addition to direct intervention at each of these levels, the PDEV media program has developed partnerships with local media outlets, which involved material and technical assistance that have enabled these partners to produce their own peace and tolerance-related content. The increased and improved production capacity of PDEV partners suggest that the important civic culture-building work the PDEV staff have been engaged in has a strong chance of continuing beyond the lifespan of the project.

The importance of building a peaceful and democratic culture that can withstand regional instability and counter-balance the existence of socio-economic and political drivers that could lead

¹⁷ **Bold text** from USAID (2009), *Development assistance and counter-extremism: A guide to programming*, p. iii. Additional text added by author.

¹⁸ Photos source: <http://grat.over-blog.com/article-le-pcc-chine-et-le-mps-tchad-se-rencontrent-mais-ne-parlent-pas-des-droits-de-l-homme-53195652.html>

citizens to engage in violence requires intervention on multiple fronts. The section that follows describes the ecological model, which is the theoretical framework that I feel best explains the current approach of the PDEV media team. In this section, I describe the model and situate it among other approaches to social and behavior change communication. The overview of the Ecological Model will allow me to apply relevant terminology in the description and discussion of PDEV media programming and its impact.

The Ecological Model: A multi-layered approach to behavior and social change

Efforts to affect human behavior through communication go back as far as Aristotle, who wrote extensively on the use of speech and other “available means of persuasion” to influence others. Beginning in the 1960s, academics and practitioners began making reference to “development” communication. In *Communication for Development in the Third World* Srinivas Melkote and H.L. Steeves trace the use of communication to improve the living conditions of society, beginning with post-World War II efforts based on theories of modernization, which privileged economic development fostered by persuasive, top-down models of communication promoted via mass media and information disseminating “extension agents.”¹⁹ This continued “pro-persuasion” model described by Melkote and Steeves was used extensively by government agencies intervening in the fields of rural agriculture and health and operating under the assumption that the innovation or technique being promoted was beneficial and useful.²⁰ Innovative and “modern” technologies were presumed to “develop” traditional societies.

In *Mass Media and National Development*, for example, Wilbur Schramm describes the role of mass media as “bringing what is distant near and making what is strange understandable [in order to] bridge the transition between traditional and modern society.” The mass media, he writes, “can contribute substantially to the amount and kinds of information available to the people of a developing country.” For Schramm, the assumption is that increased information can lead to national development.

A report prepared in 1980 for the United Nations by 1974 Nobel laureate Sean MacBride and a team of international colleagues challenged the development communication model. The MacBride Report, as the document came to be known, calls for a “New World Information Order” that would involve “more justice, more equity, more reciprocity in information exchange, less dependence in communication flows [and] less downwards diffusion of messages, more self reliance and cultural identity, more benefits for all mankind.”²¹ The report was highly critical of the one way flow of information between the “fully informed” who decide what information to make available and the “under-informed” who are powerless to address the imbalance.²² Academics and communication practitioners began discussing alternatives to the one-way flow of information focused on individual level “behavior change,” proposing new models that situate the individual within a broader ecology of influences and contexts, including families, neighborhoods, institutions, cultures’ historical legacies and political systems.

This shift to the ecological approach required the acknowledgement that individual-level change, although desirable, is often insufficient. Should we use persuasion to promote condom use if individuals have no access to them, cannot afford them or find them culturally unacceptable? Should we “target” individuals with messages of accountability and transparency while leaving corrupt systems and

¹⁹ Melkote, S. and Steeves, H. Leslie (2001). *Communication for Development in the Third World: Theory and Practice for Empowerment* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, p. 55.

²⁰ Melkote and Steeves, *Communication for Development*, p. 56.

²¹ The MacBride Commission (1980). *Many Voices One World: Towards a New More Just and More Efficient World information and Communication Order* Paris: Unesco, pp. xviii.

²² MacBride Commission, *Many Voices, One World*, pp. 36-37.

institutions unchallenged? The ecological approach to social change—rather than just individual behavior change—evolved from several models in the 1970s, primary among them the Ecological Model of Human Behavior of psychologist and child-development expert Urie Bronfenbrenner.

The Ecological Model of Human Behaviour Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979)

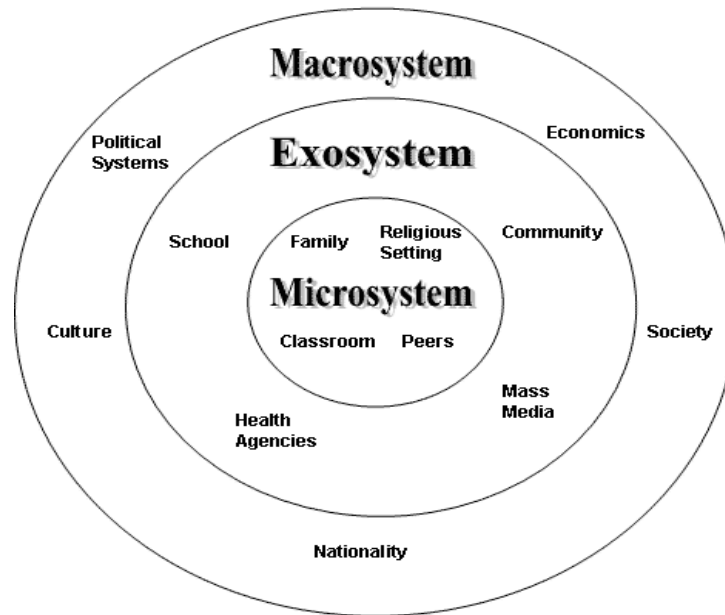


Figure 3: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model of Change²³

Bronfenbrenner argues that individual behavior should always be considered as part of an ecology that includes other individuals, institutions and social norms and social systems that influence, and are influenced by, individuals. Bronfenbrenner describes human behavior as occurring within “changing immediate environments.” These immediate environments, he writes, are “affected by relations within and between these immediate settings, as well as the larger social contexts, both formal and informal, in which the settings are embedded.”²⁴ In other words, behavior should be viewed as inseparable from context, relationships and environment.

The influence of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model is evident in more recent models that attempt to depict how social change happens, such as the socio-ecological model (SEM) developed for the USAID-funded C-Change project, a multi-level set of activities and communication interventions that promote behavior and social change in more than a dozen countries world-wide.²⁵

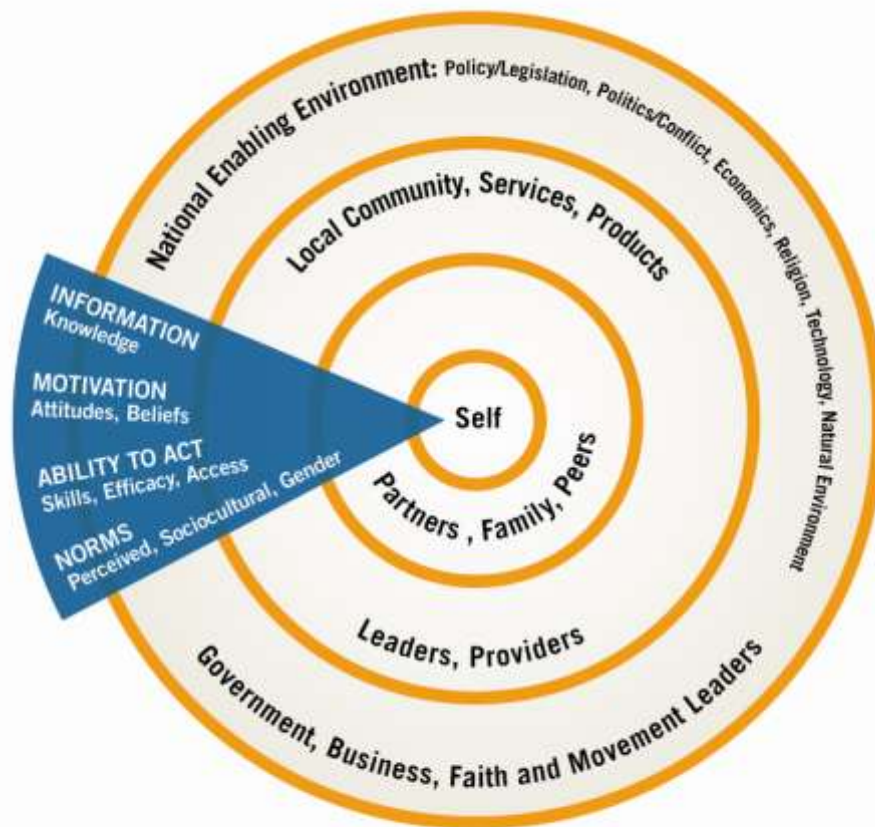
²³ Source of graphic: Anderson, Phil. *Growth and Development Theory: URIE BRONFENBRENNER (1917–2005)*.

<http://schoolworkhelper.net/>. St. Rosemary Educational Institution, November 25, 2010. Source: .

<http://schoolworkhelper.net/2010/11/growth-and-development-theory-urie-bronfenbrenner-1917-2005/>

²⁴ Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an Experimental Ecology of Human Development, *American Psychologist* (July), p. 514.

²⁵ For additional information and a full set of social and behavior change communication (SBCC) training materials, see <http://c-changeprogram.org/focus-areas/capacity-strengthening/sbcc-modules>



SOURCE: Adapted from McKee, Manoncourt, Chin and Carnegie (2000)

Figure 4: The C-Change Socio-Ecological Model (SEM)²⁶

Ecological models such as those featured above, and many additional communication and sociological theories,²⁷ suggest that interventions aimed solely at individual “common citizens” are insufficient for fostering behavior and social change. One must include in the design of social change interventions mechanisms for reaching influential individuals at the community level and at the national level and one should also aim to shape public opinion more broadly through interpersonal and mass media channels.

PDEV media programming in Niger and Chad can be explained using ecological models as a conceptual guide. Sustained social change is increasingly conceived of as achievable only by simultaneous interventions at multiple levels of society—individual, community and national/political. PDEV media programming is a robust, ecological approach to social change. As such, it is designed to have impact at multiple levels. In the 2010 mid-line evaluation and the recently conducted large-scale quantitative end-line surveys (early 2011), impact has been decisively demonstrated at two levels—individual and community. This impact has been achieved through three years of mutually reinforcing activities that

²⁶ The source of this graphic is *C-Change Learning Package for Social and Behavioral Change Communication (V.2)*, Module 0, p. 10. The C-Change socio-ecological model is adapted from McKee, Manoncourt, Chin and Carnegie (2000), *Involving People, Evolving Behaviour*, Southbound/UNICEF.

²⁷ Including Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers 2003), Social Learning Theory (Bandura 1997), Agenda Setting (McCombs and Shaw 1991) and Social Convention Theory (Schelling 1981).

attempt change at several levels. The strength of PDEV media programming thus far has been the complementary use of interpersonal and mass media channels to increase the number of people hearing, discussing and even *producing* PDEV-related content. In short, an ecology has been created that receives, produces and distributes messages of moderation within a society and contains assets that can highlight and diffuse contra movements such as impending violence or intervention from outside. This ecology is not designed as responsive to a specific threat; rather it is designed to diffuse core values of moderation and nonviolence and respond to contra values however they arise. Communication theorist Silvio Waisbord describes the combination of mass media with interpersonal contact as one of five “key ideas” in communication for social change. 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. Because social learning and decision-making are not limited to the consideration of media messages but also involve listening and exchanging opinions with a number of different sources, interventions cannot solely resort to the mass media. Although television, radio and other media are important in disseminating messages, social networks are responsible for the diffusion of new idea.²⁸ (Waisbord, p. 81)

The combination of interpersonal with mass media communication channels has proven particularly effective for the PDEV media team. A set of surveys on PDEV radio program listenership conducted in Chad and Niger in early 2011 by InterMedia,²⁹ a global media research firm, document the ability of the PDEV radio programs to spark dialogue on PDEV related themes. For instance, of the 130,000 monthly listeners of the Good Governance program “*Dabalaye Tal Afe*” in Chad:

- 90 percent said that listening to the program had increased their understanding of Peace and Tolerance; and
- 82 percent said it had increased their understanding of good governance.³⁰

In Niger, PDEV radio programs are reaching more than 2 million people weekly (of a population 8.97 million adults). Of the monthly listeners of the youth-oriented show, *Gwadaben Matassa*, the survey reports that:

- 94 percent agree the program (*Gwadeben Matassa*) improved their understanding of peace and tolerance
- 86 percent said the program had shown them “how to improve their lives”; and
- 80 percent state the program demonstrates “how to live peacefully with people from other ethnic groups.”³¹

Large-scale surveys, such as those conducted by InterMedia in Niger and Chad, are able to document the geographic and demographic reach of radio programs. Further, the surveys can measure the self-reported impact on listeners of the content of radio programs. In Niger and Chad, the InterMedia surveys have demonstrated that PDEV radio programs are reaching a broad range of citizens who report that the programs have increased their awareness and discussion of PDEV-related themes such as

²⁸ Waisbord, S. (2005). Five key ideas: coincidences and challenges in development communication. In O. Hemer and T. Tufte (Eds). *Media & Global Change Rethinking Communication for Development*, pp. 77–90. Buenos Aires, CLACSO, p. 81.

²⁹ For more information on InterMedia see <http://www.intermedia.org/>

³⁰ InterMedia (2011). PDEV Chad 2011 Endline Survey: Overall findings report, p. 25–27.

³¹ InterMedia (2011), PDEV Niger 2011 Endline Survey: Overall Findings Report, pp. 25–29.

peace, tolerance and good governance. This qualitative, analytical evaluation seeks to complement the InterMedia survey data by reporting in greater depth on the design of PDEV media programs, including, notably, a variety of capacity building efforts with collaborating local partners and a several activities/mechanisms that foster and document listener engagement with PDEV radio programs. This evaluation also discusses the impact or potential for impact of PDEV media activities. I conclude with suggestions for post-PDEV media programming.

In total, I discuss seven interventions, which I describe as “sustained, multi-level activities.” With the exception of listening clubs (which were extended in the 12 months since my first report), these activities are all “second stage” activities, building on successes and lessons learned from first stage activities—the core youth and good governance radio programs. These activities include:

1. Communication training for religious leaders and association members (Niger)
2. Media guide for conflict situations (ONIMED) (Niger)
3. “Year-3” radio programs (Niger and Chad)
4. Local production: Building the capacity of radio partners (Niger and Chad)
5. Radio station peer mentoring (Chad)
6. Listening clubs (Niger and Chad)
7. Listener engagement mechanisms: Frontline SMS/Text message software (Chad and Niger) and Freedom Fone interactive voice response (IVR) (Niger).

The contribution of each activity toward the achievement of PDEV aims, and how the activities fit within the ecological approach to social change will be described in the next seven sections.

1. Communication training for religious leaders and association members (Niger)

In January 2010, the PDEV media team organized a three-day training for 15 Muslim and Christian leaders, and members of religion-affiliated associations and educational institutions (9 men and 6 women). Oustaz Mouha Halil Dan Yaro, secretary general of the largest Islamic association in Niger, the “Association Islamique du Niger” (AIN), was one of the participants. “Oustaz” is an honorific title, it means “respected leader” in Hausa.



Figure 5: Communication training participant Oustaz Mouha Halil Dan Yaro

I asked Oustaz Mouha for a concrete example of something he learned in the training. He said:

I brought tapes of me preaching at the grand mosque and the training facilitator and other participants reviewed these and offered feedback. I have since changed a lot of things —how I dress, my eye contact and my posture. The last day of the training was a Friday and I immediately used what I had learned in the prayer at the Grand Mosque that day. I talked about encouraging religious tolerance. There were many important figures in the audience, as is typical on a Friday at the Grand Mosque. The prime minister was there and afterward he approached me and congratulated me on my prayers and I told him I had just received communication training and he said “keep up this work” and gave me more words of encouragement.

The presence of important figures at the Grand Mosque during Oustaz Mouha’s Friday prayers makes it possible for his words to reach ordinary citizens, those populating the “micro-system” to use Bronfenbrenner’s terms, and also civil servants and politicians who are individual citizens but who also have influence in the “exo” and “macro” systems that contain the political sphere and key institutions, including the media.

In relation to the media, Oustaz Mouha explained that Friday prayers at the Grand Mosque are broadcast nationally in the evening by the Bonferey television station. “Your words travel very far,” I commented. He responded by saying that he, and other religious leaders of his stature, are indeed “very well listened to”—“on est très bien écouté”—were his exact words in French. As someone who is well regarded and well listened to, he added that he would like to be more active in PDEV activities. “Il faut nous impliquer—You should involve us,” he stressed.

He said that people of his background and profile could be a powerful ally and he repeated that he wanted to “do even more,” which he said could be accomplished by travelling to meet personally with communities and religious leaders in other regions. Finally, Oustaz Mouha suggested that if PDEV activities continue they should be expanded to incorporate the regions of Tillabéri, Dosso and Diffa. “It’s important to speak widely on these issues and to pass along the message of peace,” he concluded. Oustaz Mouha’s suggestion of activity expansion is supported by the results of the survey in Niger conducted by InterMedia that reflect high numbers of “high-risk” youth living in both Dosso and Diffa,³² with high risk being defined as males between the ages of 15 and 30 who 1) accept of one or more of four statements condoning violence and 2) do not listen to PDEV radio programs. Increased programming in Dosso and Diffa can serve to counter the influence of high-risk youth by increasing listenership of the programs, which in turn increases the amount of peace-related content in circulation and fosters discussion on tolerance and other PDEV-related themes.³³

Not all of the association members and religious leaders trained in communication by PDEV are heard at well-attended Friday prayers at the Grand Mosque or have their words mass-mediated on television as is the case with Oustaz Mouha. But each participant was invited because they are a leader on some scale. Social scientists call those who are widely listened to opinion leaders, which can be defined as those who are “able to influence other individuals’ attitudes or overt behavior informally in a desired way.”³⁴ He is a particularly prominent opinion leader because of the reach of his words and his credibility represented by his honorific title and as an official the largest Islamic association of Niamey. On Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model, Oustaz Mouha is bridging the micro, exo, and macro-systems—

³² The survey results show that 23 percent of high-risk youths reside in Dosso (compared to 12 percent of non-targets/non-high risk), and 8 percent of high-risk youth are in Diffa (compared to 3 percent of non-targets/non-high risk). Inter-media, *PDEV Niger 2011 Endline Survey: Overall Findings Report*, p. 42.

³³ The activity of the extremist group Boko Haram, as referred to earlier in this report, is an additional element supporting the addition of Diffa to PDEV-program coverage zone.

³⁴ Rogers, E. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th edition). New York: Free Press, p. 475

he is a religious leader (one individual) whose ideas and words are carried interpersonally to the immediate community level and then to the national level via mass media. As a well-respected and “mediated” leader, Oustaz Mouha has the opportunity to reach and potentially influence a greatly increased number of people. Regional tours with activities (perhaps “tolerance caravans”³⁵) to be implemented by leaders like Oustaz Mouha—who is in fact *asking* to be more deeply involved—would further increase the circulation of peace and tolerance messages coming from culturally credible and influential sources.

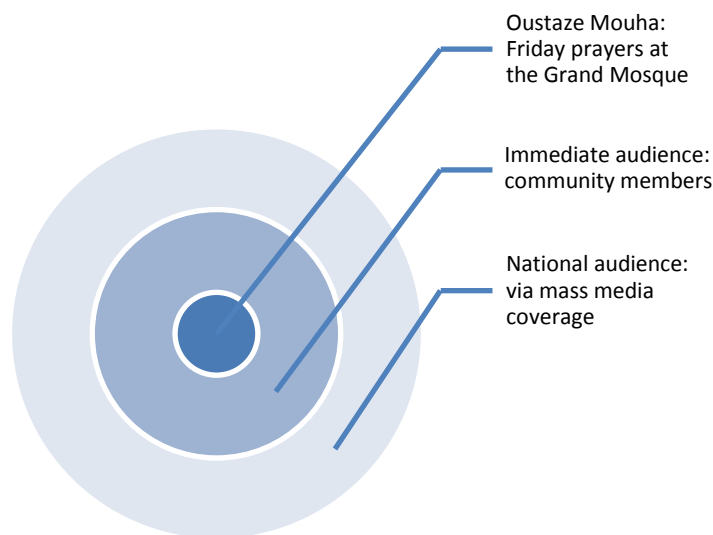


Figure 6: One intervention, multiple audiences

An additional PDEV media team activity that aimed to “get more people involved” in the support of PDEV project goals is worth mention here. Despite the potential “system-wide” impact of this activity, this section will be brief since the activity was just unfolding during my visit and the length of field research did not allow for in-depth investigation.

2. Media guide for conflict situations (ONIMED)³⁶ (Niger)

The field of communication research known as “agenda dynamics” studies the relationship among the media agenda (what is covered), the public agenda (what people think about) and the policy agenda (regulatory or legislative actions on issues).³⁷ Theorists suggest that an intervention aimed at shaping the media agenda can in turn influence public and policy agendas by increasing the number of people thinking about and discussing a given topic. To use Bronfenbrenner’s terms, an intervention with members of the media, who operate at the community (exo-system) level, can radiate in a targeted fashion, towards families and individuals (micro-system) as well as *upward* toward the national decision-making arena (macro-system). Because of this potential for “bi-directional” influence, members of the media can be a powerful ally for any behavior or social change intervention. In October 2010, the PDEV-Niger media team implemented an activity that went one step beyond the training of media journalists, which is a common community-level intervention aimed at shaping the media and public agendas. The activity was the organization of a conference of journalists, in collaboration with the

³⁵ This term is borrowed from Equal Access Afghanistan’s Tolerance Caravan program that involved mobile theater and training related to human rights within the context of Islam.

³⁶ Observatoire Nigérien Indépendant des Médias pour l’Ethique et la Déontologie

³⁷ Rogers, E. and Dearing, J. (1996) *Agenda setting*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Independent Media Ethics Association of Niger (ONIMED), who were invited to use the conference time to create a draft *Media Guide for Conflict Situations*.

After a period of review, the draft Media Guide was subsequently revised and published³⁸ and is soon to be distributed to journalists and media outlets across the country.

The finalized media guide includes definitions of various types of conflict (political, social, ethnic, etc.), a list of “principles for conflict-sensitive reporting” and a presentation of side-by-side case study examples of “traditional” versus “conflict-sensitive” reporting. The impact of the media guide will be determined by the extent of its adoption, adherence and use.³⁹ One could argue, however, that the very elaboration of the guide is an intervention of great potential impact in its own right and as such it is worthy of follow-on study. The issue of impact aside, one undeniable outcome of the process of creating the 34-page guide is that for an extended period of time (October 2010–March 2012) a number of leading journalists and PDEV counterparts were focused on discussing and debating the finer points of how to responsibly report on conflict, both domestic and international, within the current political and cultural context of Niger.

An additional community-level media intervention currently underway in both Niger and Chad is the production and broadcast of radio programs designed to promote peace and tolerance from the standpoint of religion and local culture.

3. Year-3 radio programs

In this section I describe two religious-themed radio programs that were still in the design stages during the June 2010 mid-line evaluation. The shows are now being produced and broadcast on a regular basis. In Chad the show is called *Chabab Wal Din*, (Youth and Faith) a 26-episode series that focuses on religious issues for a youth audience. In Niger, the series is called *Sada Zumuntchi* (Promoting Solidarity in Haoussa), which is designed and written to address intra- and inter-religious dialogue.⁴⁰ Each program description is followed by a short section that reports on discussions held with listeners of the religious-themed radio programs in Niger and Chad.

I have labeled the religious-themed radio shows “Year-3 radio programs” to highlight the fact that these shows have come into existence only after two years of programming and thus two years of audience- and trust-building. By deliberate design, these shows follow the more general youth and good governance shows that have set the stage and built up the credibility and familiarity, which has allowed the religious-themed shows to address more sensitive topics, like violence, extremism and conflict in a more direct way.

According to the 2011 InterMedia survey on PDEV radio listenership conducted in Niger and Chad, the good governance and youth-oriented radio programs enjoy high ratings in terms of listener-reported satisfaction with the content and their perception of the content as being “trustworthy.” In Niger, 89 percent of listeners were satisfied with program content and the same percentage found the program worthy of their trust. The figures for the youth program, *Gwadaben Matassa*, are 86 percent for satisfaction and 92 percent for trustworthiness. The InterMedia survey reports this last figure as

³⁸ Review and revision period, October 2010–February 2011, publication date March 2011.

³⁹ One could attempt to measure impact through a pre- and post-content analysis of conflict coverage, although this would not prove direct causality. Alternatively, a survey of self-reported use could be conducted with individual journalists who have a copy of the guide and a canvas of all practicing journalists could be conducted to measure awareness, possession and/or use of the guide.

⁴⁰ Revised and approved Media Component SOW submitted to USAID December 2009.

being on par with levels of trust that listeners report having for family members.⁴¹ In Chad, 88 percent of the listeners of the good governance show *Dabalaye* report being satisfied with the program and 90 percent say they find the information on the program trustworthy. *Chabab al Haye* listeners respond in like fashion at similar levels, with 85 percent reporting satisfaction with program content and 70 percent finding the content trustworthy.⁴² The PDEV radio programs have established listenership and credibility through time and effort spent covering non-controversial topics in the youth and good governance shows, which range from youth underemployment and “the spirit of initiative” to the importance of transparency and participation in elections. This gradual approach to programming has enabled the producers of the religious-themed shows to begin tackling sensitive topics head on.



Figure 7: *Sada Zumuntchi* producers Ramatou Guero and Moutari Attaou reviewing a script

An example of the direct treatment of a sensitive topic is episode number 2 of *Sada Zumuntchi* (Niger), which was about The Role of Religious Leaders in Building a Culture of Peace. In this script, writer/producer Ramatou Guero made direct reference to the extremist group Boko Haram, which operates in neighboring Nigeria and which has engaged in acts of violent terrorism during the past several years (see text box below). Ms. Guero included the reference to Boko Haram after a phone conversation she had with Ibrahim Inazoum, a journalist—colleague of hers in Diffa near the border with Nigeria. Ramatou said she had heard that there was unrest in Diffa and that police had instituted a curfew and so she called her colleague in Diffa to see what was going on. Her colleague explained that the unrest was caused by members of Boko Haram who had fled the Nigerian police by entering the Diffa area in eastern Niger. Further, he reported, the group had also begun attempting to recruit young Nigeriens to join their cause and return with them to Nigeria to fight the government. Ramatou explained that the idea of including reference to Boko Haram was a direct result of her conversation with her Diffa-based colleague. “He told me ‘You must address this topic in the show.’ He said it was important to discuss the danger this group represents.”

The reference to Boko Haram in episode number 2 is brief but I expect it would not be lost on an audience receiving frequent headlines of violence from Maiduguri. The bulk of script is dedicated to the role of religion in building peace and tolerance—the opposite of what Boko Haram represents. This

⁴¹ Intermedia (2011). *PDEV Niger Endline Survey Overall Findings Report*, pp. 29 & 34.

⁴² Intermedia (2011). *PDEV Chad Endline Survey Overall Findings Report*, pp. 29 & 35.

is appropriate since the communication strategy is not to emphasize direct criticism of groups such as AQIM and Boko Haram, rather the programming focuses on a deeper, more resonant drum beat of moderate values, fostering sustained resilience by allowing audiences to develop their opposition to such groups from an empirical base.⁴³ In the episode, a discussion between the presenters about the importance of non-violence in general is followed interviews with prominent religious leaders, Muslim and Christian, who express in their own words the important role that religion can play to promote peace and counter violence.

The often direct, anti-violence content of the religious-themed shows would not have been advisable in the first year of programming. The participatory nature of program production includes mechanisms for pre-production input from a Content Advisory Group for each of the shows and an extensive review and revision process that includes the power to “veto” content that is judged to be inappropriate for the local cultural context. The “porous” design of the production process, which allows for “multiple and continuous entry points and opportunities for involvement”⁴⁴ means that *Sada Zumuntchi*, like the other PDEV radio programs, can effectively incorporate current events like the Boko Haram incidents into program content. In this sense, the program is designed to be “responsive infrastructure” that despite not being an *immediate* response, as with standard, nightly-news-style journalism, it can

Boko Haram (which roughly means “Secular schools are prohibited” in Haoussa) claimed responsibility for two deadly bombings in 2011 in Nigeria. On June 10th a bomb blast killed five policemen in Abuja, and a series of bombs set off in the northern city of Maiduguri on June 26th left 25 people reported dead.* Boko Haram prohibits members from participating in secular political or social activities, including elections and non-Islamic educational institutions.**

Kashim Shettima, governor of Nigeria’s Borno State, which includes the targeted city of Maiduguri, has condemned Boko Haram’s violence by stressing the incompatibility of violence with Islam. He said:

The targeting of innocent and unarmed civilians regardless of their ethnicity, race and/or religious beliefs is alien not only to our norms and culture, but alien to the fundamental doctrines of Islam.***

With these words, Governor Shettima evoked Islamic doctrine to reject violence. His comments mirror the approach adopted by the PDEV media team, which is to position Islam as the solution to extremist violence rather than its cause.

*Sources: Christian Science Monitor: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/Africa-Monitor/2011/0621/Boko-Haram-attacks-show-new-range-sophistication> ; Al-Jazeera: <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2011/06/201162621858898349.html>

*** Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13809501>

***Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/Africa-Monitor/2011/0720/Why-Nigeria-s-tactics-with-the-militant-Boko-Haram-may-not-work>

nonetheless provide a thoughtfully crafted values-based counter-weight (and counter arguments) to on-the-ground violence or vulnerability to self-expression through violence.

⁴³ In the field of health communication, for example, an equivalent approach would be to promote exercise and healthy living rather than belaboring the evils of smoking or processed foods.

⁴⁴ I used this word to describe the design of the production process in the 2010 mid-line evaluation. The definition is from 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.

In Niger, the *Sada Zumuntchi* production team is composed of two experienced journalists, PDEV staff members Ramatou Guero and Attaou Mouttari. Each of the producers came to PDEV after a formative period at the National Radio and Television service of Niger (ORNTV) and several years working as both radio and television producers and presenters. After writing a *Sada Zumuntchi* script, the producers send the draft to a two-person review team for feedback and follow up this revision process by sending the updated draft to local religious leaders for their input. The producers work closely with staff at Radio Bonferey, an established and respected religious-oriented radio station that provides the studio space and technical support for the production of the show. When I visited the Bonferey radio station to observe a recording session of the show, producer Attaou Moutari explained that *Sada Zumuntchi* is a show that has achieved many “firsts.” He explained:

It is the first show on the radio to be co-presented by a Christian woman and a Muslim man and it is the first show to include topics and issues related to both religions in the same program.

Sada Zumuntchi presenter Mairo Addo is the first Christian, non-veiled woman to enter the Radio Bonferey building. A second year law student, she is the daughter of a radio journalist mother and a father who is a professor at a local university, author of a book on the history of the Haoussa world, and a member of the Elders Council of their church. A newcomer to radio, she is partnered with seasoned journalist Abdou Mamane Amadou who studied the Haoussa language at university and is the host of a weekly 2-hour politically-themed television show called *Mahawara* (debate, in Haoussa). Despite his ten years of combined radio and television experience, Abdou said that *Sada Zumuntchi* is the first time he has presented with a Christian: “The program gives voice to Christians and gives voice to Muslims. Mairo and I get along well—there is no conflict. We are building a culture of peace.” Given his schedule as both a television host and a radio presenter, I asked Abdou if he gets much rest. “I don’t really go on vacation,” he said. “I’m afraid I’ll lose audience members.”



Figure 8: Mairo and Abdou in the studio at Bonferey Radio

An afternoon with Sada Zumuntchi radio listeners in Dollé

Sada Zumuntchi presenter Abdou Mamane Amadou would be less concerned about “losing his audience” had he travelled with us to the village of Dollé, a muddy one-hour drive on unpaved road just north of Birni N’Konni, about 200km south of Tahoua, near the Nigerian border. In Dollé, *Sada Zumuntchi* has a very strong following. This became evident through discussions with Radio Dollé staff and during an impromptu focus group that resulted when listeners from the village, hearing of our arrival in Dollé, began arriving at the station, individually and in pairs, until the room was full and overflowing with opinions. In the three-room building housing Radio Dollé, *Sada Zumuntchi* producer Attaou Mouttari took notes and listened attentively as listeners shared their thoughts on the program. Afterward, he said to me: “This is the first time I have really seen the impact of what we do.” Attaou explained that his earlier field visits were during the formative research stage of program production process. This visit to Dollé was his first encounter with avid listeners outside of the capital.



Figure 9: An unplanned gathering of radio listeners at Radio Dollé

During the gathering with station staff and listeners from the village, the first to speak after introductions was Radio Dollé presenter Dayabou Dan Sakou. “We know from the call-in program after the show [*Sada Zumuntchi*] that we have listeners in villages up to 50 kilometers away.” I asked him to draw me a small map depicting villages that call frequently and he quickly produced a circle filled with 16 villages, including Araba, a village across the border in Nigeria. Dayabou also shows me photos he took with his cell phone of a local Marabout and his Koranic school students seated outside around a radio. He said: “I took this picture because someone had told me that the Marabout listens to our broadcast of *Sada Zumuntchi* every week with his students.” As any good journalist would do, Dayabou had gone to the field to see the phenomenon first-hand.

I, too, was able to confirm the account of group listening among teacher and students at the Koranic school when minutes later, the Marabout in question, Mallam Magawata Moussa, arrived at the

station with three other men. Dayabou presented Mallam Magawata's companions in succession: Mallam Ibro Toure, Elhadj Oumarou and Arzika Anda.

The Marabout Mallam Magawata said that he takes inspiration from the radio show to discuss various religious themes with his students at the Koranic school. "There was one program about being a good neighbor," Magawata explained, "I discussed this with the children and I told them 'What you have heard [on the radio] is truth'." His confidence in the content, he explained, comes from the quality of the invited speakers and the adept use of specific verses from the Koran. Attaou then explained at length how the scripts once written are reviewed and often revised by local religious leaders so that the content will be accurate and sensitive to cultural and religious tradition.

Elhadj Oumarou, a school teacher, spoke next. He said that he liked the content of the *Sada Zumuntchi* because it is respectful of local values:

It doesn't go against what we believe – unlike some of the other radio programs, like the one about AIDS that was broadcast before that discussed sex and used words like "capotes" [condoms]...we didn't like at all.

After translating Elhadj Oumarou's words from Haoussa to French for my benefit, Dayabou explained further that the health-ministry-funded HIV/AIDS prevention radio program mentioned by Elhadj Oumaour had to be taken off the air due to listener complaints. Dayabou added that in contrast, calls and "walk in" feedback on *Sada Zumuntchi* have been overwhelmingly positive. "We have even been asked to give out copies of the CD so that people can listen to the programs again at home."

The distribution of the program to listeners in CD format increases the reach of *Sada Zumuntchi* in time and also "by device." With the program on CD, listeners can enjoy the program outside of and beyond broadcast hours and the program can "travel" outside broadcast range through the use of the CD-player device. To borrow a term from the world of business, the "return on investment" of the radio program increases every time the program is heard beyond the initial paid radio broadcasts.

Continuing on the theme of appreciated *Sada Zumuntchi* program content, Marabout Mallam Magawata added that one of the episodes he particularly appreciated was on the topic of women's inheritance rights within Islam. "I had no idea they could inherit," he explained. Given that Mallam Magawata is the teacher at the local Koranic school, this realization is important because it can now be passed on to the younger generation. When PDEV radio programs have influential listeners such as Mallam Magawata, listeners who in turn have listeners of their own, program content has the potential for increased impact. The ethos, the *credibility*, of the influential listener/teacher is in this sense added to the credibility of the program. The local influential listener can thus vouch for and pass on key issues that are presented in the program.⁴⁵

The lone woman in the room (whose name I unfortunately failed to capture) said that she liked the episode about peaceful co-existence within Islam. She said:

We are always many women that listen to the show in the house. When we listen together I know I don't need to try to correct the other women's behavior because they can hear about it [how to behave] from the show.

⁴⁵ This phenomenon of "influential-listener-as-bridge" should be considered when designing future programming. The key question producers should seek to address is: How can we attract an increased number of *influential* listeners? A follow on question is: How can we measure/document the *type* of listeners we are reaching?

This comment demonstrates how the listener relies on the radio show as a form of indirect communication with her neighbors. She is spared from “correcting others’ behavior” because the radio show is offering advice in her place.

Dayabou said that many women in the village had purchased radios so that they could listen to the program and call in after the show. “How did you come to know this?” I asked him. He responded by pointing to the woman who had just spoken: “She works here at the station,” he said, “and I regularly ask her to go around while the show is on to confirm how many people in the immediate area are listening. She is the one who told me what women were saying about buying a radio to be able to listen and participate.” Unfortunately, our need to get back to the paved road before nightfall prevented us from attempting to speak directly to more women. We did hear one final comment of great interest from Arzika Anda, who had remained silent up to that point. He said:

You must continue to produce these radio programs. In neighboring countries there are a lot of problems. You must do more to prevent those problems from coming here to Niger. The programs motivate us. And for us who are religious, we feel encouraged.



Figure 10: SZ listeners Elhadj Oumarou Allou (left) and Arzika Anda (right) at Radio Dollé

Arzika, a man of few words, provided comments that seemed tailor made—nearly *too* perfect—for an impact evaluation. The nods of agreement that rippled through the room when Arzika spoke, however, suggest that he is not alone in having these, or similar, thoughts. Project reports from the *Sada Zumuntchi* team provide various indicators that suggest a strong acceptance of the radio program, even if not expressed in the “perfect” words of Arzika Anda. Voluntary (unpaid) broadcasting and voluntary re-broadcasting of *Sada Zumuntchi* are two indicators pointing to a wide embrace of the program. Since January 2011, 13 community radio stations (informal partners) have begun unpaid broadcasts of *Sada Zumuntchi*.⁴⁶ A review of the “diffusion reports” submitted by partner stations that are paid to broadcast the program gave insight into the high number of episodes being re-broadcast voluntarily (without payment). A section provided for comments on the diffusion reports allows radio station partners to state the number of re-broadcasts and in some cases to explain the reasons why some episodes were chosen for broadcast. For example:

- From Radio Moumio Goure: “Episode #1, on neighbors and Islam, re-broadcast five times, on Wednesdays during the month of December.”
- From Radio Mangari Maïné Soroa: “Episode # 11, on intra-religious dialogue, re-broadcast two times at the request of listeners.”

⁴⁶ This was confirmed by PDEV-Niger Media Director Kadir Idi.

- From Radio Communautaire de Dollé: “Episodes # 21, 22, 23, 24: re-broadcast two times each because of listener phone calls. Next to Episode # 24, on charity and religion, this comment appears: ‘Our Marabouts have greatly appreciated this topic’.”

Radio Mangari in Mainé Soroa, like Radio Dollé listed above, also re-broadcast episodes 21–24 two extra times each. After the notation of “2 re-broadcasts,” Radio Mangari staff added this comment: “Listeners would like the program to also be produced in Kanuri and Peul” (two additional languages spoken in the east (Kanuri) and throughout Niger (Peul)). This final comment builds on an earlier remark made by the religious leader Oustaze Mouha, about his belief that PDEV programs should be expanded to cover a wider geographic area. In this case, the suggested expansion involves language rather than territory. In either case, the request for broader and more linguistically diverse PDEV programming can be interpreted as a vote of confidence by the listeners and stations expressing these views.

Beyond a reflection of the programs popularity, asking for *Sada Zumuntchi* to be broadcast in new areas and in additional languages is a request to make the program even more democratic, more accessible. To meet this demand in follow-on programming, one might consider a targeted and well-supervised expansion of the local production component of the PDEV media project (see p. 29 for more on this activity). Collaborating with local production partners to increase the linguistic and geographic reach of the programs serves a two-fold purpose: it increases the capacity of partner radio stations while increasing the number of people who can access—and ideally discuss—program content. An additional benefit of working with local partners is that they create content that is appropriate and relevant for the local context. Supervision and quality control by PDEV staff (or PDEV follow-on project staff) ensures that peace and tolerance-related content is accurately and systematically included. Supervision of partner collaborations also allows project staff to identify areas where partners might benefit from further training and then plan/implement accordingly.

My discussions with partner radio stations suggest that current structure of having a PDEV staff member serving as point person for the partnerships seems to be working. The ongoing need that partner radio stations identified was additional training, both in new areas and to reinforce what they have already learned. The implication for PDEV project staff (or PDEV follow-on project staff) is that their numbers may need to be reinforced to meet the needs of partner stations, especially if they are producing their own programs. A dedicated training specialist who could work exclusively on professional development for partner stations would be particularly useful in my view.

The production and reception of *Chabab Wal Din*

In Chad, the youth-oriented radio show *Chabab Wal Din* is written and presented by Abbas and Abdelaziz, two young producers from Al-Quoran and Al Bayan, long-established radio stations with a strong Islamic orientation. The producers collaborate with a PDEV senior producer and are overseen and advised by the Content Advisory Group (CAG) that includes PDEV/Chad Media Director Zara Yacoub—the only female CAG member. The initial partnership between the PDEV media team and the two partner stations was shaky at first. When the role of Al Quoran and Al Bayan was limited to that of broadcast partners, they had each expressed doubts, and in the case of Al Bayan *rejection*, of PDEV program content. Youfedi Abdulaziz Hassan, program director of Radio Al Bayan, explained their position in this way:

There were some elements in the youth program [*Chabab al Haye*] that were not in line with our culture. A person should not refer to a woman who is not his wife as “my

darling,” for example. And some of the overt sexuality presented in the drama sections of the program invited moral corruption.

These critiques related to the perceived cultural and moral impropriety could have irrevocably damaged the working relationship between PDEV and Al Bayan. Instead, the short-term compromise reached with Al Bayan was that they would not broadcast the drama portions of the programs they deemed inappropriate. The creative longer term strategy was to invite Al Bayan to become a producing partner on the new religious-themed show for youth. Al Bayan was thus asked to address their own critiques by helping to produce a radio show they could embrace and freely broadcast. The resulting program, *Chabab Waddin*, has led to an interesting role reversal in terms of content critique. PDEV Media Director Zara Yacoub explained that she has “more than once” had to refuse pre-broadcast elements of *Chabab Waddin* because they were irrelevant or “irresponsible.” Zara explained:

Recently, there was a verse from the Koran included in the show that had nothing to do with the episode’s content and so I suggested another verse that fit better. On another occasion I found a representation of violence in a short drama portion of the show to be too ambiguous—a fight was depicted that I felt could be misinterpreted as justifying or even glorifying the use of violence. I told them [the producers] to revise that section and they did so.

The inclusion of the CAG in the PDEV media program design yields a regular stream of input that often results in revisions of content at both the script and production stages of the radio programs. The CAG also serves as a mechanism for controlling the quality and content of the programs. This review mechanism allows PDEV staff to confidently hand the reins of production over to their young partners at two local radio stations.

This collaboration is one of the major strengths of the *Chabab Waddin* program. The producers, in effect, come from the same social and cultural background as the listeners the program aims to reach. It is a program made by youth for youth. The producers and their audience are also youth with a strong sense of religious conviction. In addition, *Chabab Waddin* builds on the established credibility and listenership of its partner radio stations, Al Quoran and Al Bayan. In addition, by partnering with these two radio stations, the PDEV media team was able to address critiques of cultural and moral insensitivity through inclusion: those who criticized were invited to be *part of the solution* by becoming production partners.

Two *Chabab Waddin* listeners, Mahamat Moussa and Ouyss Abakashi, said that future episodes should include fewer “big subjects” like corruption and politics and instead address issues related to the “ordinary life of young Chadians.” “What topics did you find particularly important?” I asked. To respond, Mahamat took from his pocket a half sheet of paper with several lines written in Arabic script. “These are the themes I really liked,” he said, referring to his prepared list: “Respect within religion, tolerance, violence in the schools, and the problem of tobacco use.” At the mention of this last theme Ouyss added that as a result of listening to *Chabab Waddin*, he and Mahamat decided to start a small association, which currently has eight members. “It’s called the ‘Young Thinkers’⁴⁷ association,” he explained. “To be a member you cannot use tobacco products. We gather two times a month and discuss the topics from the radio show.” Mahamat suggested that young people from the capital be sent to other regions to “sensitize” the population about the issues discussed in the show.” Any issues in particular? I asked. “Topics that can improve the life of young people...and the use of tobacco and

⁴⁷ A Chadian colleague transcribed the name of the Association from Arabic to Latin script as “Chabab al yi fakir lel Moustakhal,” which he said meant “Young thinkers about the future,” in French.

drugs,” he stressed. A final suggestion provided by Mahamat was that the *Chabab Waddin* be also broadcast outside the capital. “Why not the south?” he asked.

Mahamat’s question reflects one of the limitations of *Chabab Waddin*, which is its limited geographic reach. Unlike the other PDEV radio programs in Chad, *Chabab Waddin* is broadcast exclusively by the N’Djamena stations Al Quoran and Al Bayan, which effectively limits its listenership to residents of the capital. This limitation is reflected in the results of the 2011 InterMedia survey in Chad that estimates the number of weekly listeners of *Chabab Waddin* at 7,009 as compared with 95,125 for *Dabalaye* (good governance) and 41,054 for *Chabab Al Haya* (youth-oriented).⁴⁸ The lower listenership figure for *Chabab Waddin* can be partially explained by the fact that the program had begun just two months before the survey was conducted, but undoubtedly also results from its limited broadcast range. *Chabab Waddin* should be viewed, in essence, as a local production rather than a core PDEV program. Like other “ocal production partners, the broadcast is limited to the producing station. If PDEV media programming were to continue, *Chabab Waddin* could be broadcast more broadly, or additional local production collaborations could be pursued, to increase the potential impact of religious-themed content.

An additional limitation I noted after discussions with *Chabab Waddin* producers, a review of program documents⁴⁹ and observation of a July 2011 CAG meeting is producers’ exclusive focus on Islam. This restrictive interpretation of religion-as-Islam may have been a strategic decision designed to address the needs and interests of Muslim youth. Nonetheless, the PDEV project should attempt to include all members of the larger Chadian community, including Chad’s sizeable Christian population (15% in the target areas for PDEV, and higher in the South of Chad), and the even the minority of “animists and other” (2%)⁵⁰ in project activities. The promotion of peaceful civic engagement is a worthy goal that all Chadian citizens can aim for and contribute to.

4. Local production: Building the capacity of radio partners

The local production activity involves increasing the capacity of local radio partners so that they can expand the scope of their involvement in the PDEV project by producing and broadcasting their own PDEV-related radio programs in addition to broadcasting the programs that are made by the PDEV media team. This added role demonstrates that the radio production activity is not only sustainable but it has been sustained; the evidence of this is the programs that have been made and broadcast. The Niger PDEV media team held two intensive local production trainings, with 12 radio stations⁵¹ trained in 2010 and an additional 5 stations in 2011. In Chad nine radio stations have been trained in local production and are currently producing programs discussing PDEV-related themes in a range of languages, including: Literary Arabic, Chadian Arabic, French, Goran and Kanembou.⁵²

Radio Sarounia, Madaoua, Niger

One of the local production training participants I spoke with is Hamza Nomao, a producer and presenter at Radio Sarounia in the Madaoua region. Hamza said that the most useful thing he learned at the training was how to create and use a “conducteur,” a step-by-step production guide that he had never used before despite being an experienced journalist. He said that training on the Zoom digital

⁴⁸ Intermedia (2011). *PDEV Chad Endline Survey Overall Findings Report*, p. 24

⁴⁹ Production planning grids for *Chabab Waddin* episodes #17–26.

⁵⁰ 15% of the Chadians surveyed self-identified as Christians or Catholics, Intermedia (2011), *PDEV Chad Endline Survey Overall Findings Report*, p. 9

⁵¹ Of the 12 stations trained in 2010, 10 were selected as local production partners.

⁵² See *PDEV/Equal Access Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report*, April 1–June 30, 2011, pages 17 (Niger) and 36 (Chad) for a list of Local Production stations and the languages the stations have chosen for their programs.

recorder was also helpful and has improved the sound quality of his reporting. Hamza Nomao said that Radio Sarounia chose the magazine format for their local production effort. His latest show brought water and health experts into the studio to discuss the dangers of drinking ground water during the rainy season. “I presented the theme, and the invited experts gave their views, and then people could call in to ask questions. The program was recorded and then edited and we broadcast it only after cleaning up the quality and getting approval from the PDEV media team.”

“Was there any other impact of the local production training you received?” I asked Hamza, expecting him to continue discussing gains in production skill or knowledge. “Yes,” he replied, without hesitation, “I’m training the others at my station. One young man named Kimba has already used what he learned with me to create his own weekly radio show, *A Daidaita Sahu* (The reorientation of society, in Hausa). Hamza said he felt fortunate to have received the training. “What we learn is not just for us, we need to share.” In this example of local production at Radio Sarounia we can see how PDEV training has allowed staff to not only produce their own programs but to also *train others* to produce their own programs, thus extending the impact of the training by creating a new generation of trained radio producers. The commonly used adage about “teaching to fish” rather than simply giving out fish comes to mind with this example of unprompted peer training. Another applicable term for Hamza Nomao is that he is a “force multiplier”—he has taken what he has learned through PDEV’s capacity building activities and invested it in several of his colleagues, one of whom has already produced a tangible (or *audible*) return on that investment.

I believe that the Radio Sarounia case provides another example of a sustainable program activity that has, in fact, been sustained. Building local production capacity is designed as a sustainable activity; the finished radio program of two “generations” of staff at Radio Sarounia is a demonstration that what was learned by Hamza Nomao has been applied and sustained by his colleagues.

Radio N’Djimi, Mao, Chad

In July 2011, producers at Radio N’Djimi sent to the PDEV N’djamena office 10 programs they had produced about child and maternal health.⁵³ The chosen content, child and maternal health, reflects the on-the-ground reality in Kanem, a region in western Chad where an estimated one in three children is malnourished,⁵⁴ and women, like in the rest of Chad, are confronted with a maternal mortality rate that is among the 10 highest in the world.⁵⁵ The programs, each in a local language of the Kanem region (five in Goran, five in Kanembou), were produced after taking part in four-day training in “high-quality local production” in Niamey. During interviews conducted with dozens of radio listeners in Mao in 2010, the most frequently cited request was local-language versions of the PDEV radio programs. One year after these visits, the PDEV team has produced and broadcast Goran-language versions of the youth show *Chabab al Haye* and Radio N’Djimi is also able to help meet the request of listeners by producing shows in not just one but two local languages.

5. Operation mentoring

⁵³ The content of Radio N’Djimi’s programs, child and maternal health, is not directly related to the PDEV goals, which are to 1) improve local governance in target communities; 2) empower high-risk youth to become active participants in their communities and the economy; and 3) render superfluous ideologies that promote violence. The content does reflect how local participation in the production process serves to shape and adapt program content to serve the needs of the local community.

⁵⁴ UNICEF estimate, http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/2009_5991.html

⁵⁵ BBC News, Maternal Health Facts and Figures, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/panorama/4119510.stm>

In addition to the local production activity, Radio N'Djimi has been an active participant in Operation Mentoring, which is the name the PDEV media team in Chad has given to the activity they have designed to help radio station staff in Chad learn from one another in structured but informal way. The first wave of mentoring activities occurred in late March through early April 2011 as radio staff members from stations in the north went to the capital city to work with mentor-partners in larger, and in most cases better equipped, stations. Staff members from radio N'Djimi went to the national radio station (ONRTV) and Dja FM (a commercial station). After working with their mentors for four weeks, they returned to their home station.

Now, like Hamza Nomao, the producers at Radio N'Djimi are sharing what they've learned with others. In July 2011, the station received three young people from a new, PDEV-established Micro FM station in Mondo, Radio Bissam. The three youth, two producers and a technician-in-training, were invited to spend four weeks at Radio N'Djimi to learn from their mentors a combination of the knowledge, skills and past experience of Radio N'Djimi staff plus new skills that Radio N'Djimi staff have just acquired in N'Djamena. In this sense, the visit of the young staff members of Radio Bissam represents the second wave of Operation Mentoring. It provided Radio N'Djimi staff with the opportunity to apply what they learned in N'Djamena by directly passing it on teaching others. During a July 2011 visit to Mao, I heard the fruit of that teaching on the airwaves. During a live Thursday evening broadcast on Radio Djimi, I heard the voice of Youssouf Ali, one of the young producers from Mondo, as he put into practice what he had learned about techniques of presentation. Youssouf's participation in the broadcast was followed by a field report recorded earlier that week by Abakar Mahat, his Radio Bissam colleague. Both performances were energetic but suggested the need for still more practice, which they will undoubtedly get during the remaining weeks of their mentorship program at Radio Djimi. When they return to Mondo, Youssouf and Abakar will be the most experienced (and the only) journalists in the village.

When I asked Ahmat Ali Dallidou, the director of Radio N'Djimi, how the station had planned for the mentoring visit he showed me a program he had prepared based on the one he himself had received while in N'Djamena at Radio Dja FM. "Do you receive any money for training the others?" I asked. The response was negative. He then made reference to the equipment in the studio and a variety of training opportunities that he and other staff members had benefitted from. "We have received a lot from PDEV," he said. I interpreted his comment to mean that they accepted to train the young men from Radio Bissam without payment because they were "paying forward" what they had received. I shared my interpretation of Ahmat's comments with PDEV-Chad Media Director Zara Yacoub whom I had heard on several occasions say that "nothing gets done in Chad without payment." Zara shared that she had been doubtful about whether Operation Mentoring would succeed when it first began. "And what do you think now?" I asked. "Ask me when it's completed" was the cautious response.

Completion of Operation Mentoring will occur at the conclusion of the third wave of the activity, which began in early August 2011. The final activity involves the travel of N'Djamena radio station staff to cities and villages in the north to continue working with their mentees at their home radio stations. This third wave activity will help staff from the N'Djamena radio partners get a better idea of the challenging working conditions of their northern colleagues (lack of electricity, extreme heat, etc.) while continuing to share their skills and expertise as they had done during the first wave activity in the capital. During the Operation Mentoring activities we have seen Radio N'Djimi staff go from being mentees in the capital, to mentors of Radio Bissam youth, and then back to mentees at their home station. The mentorship activity functions as a mechanism for sharing ideas, experience and knowledge in an ongoing and horizontal way. Thus far, it has enabled participants to be both student and teacher and has allowed the knowledge-sharing process to be sustained.

Radio N'Djimi station Director Ahmat Ali Dallidou explained that when the Radio Bissam youth returned to Mondo, producers and technicians from the newly established “micro-station” in Bol would be arriving to receive training and guidance as part of the mentoring activity.⁵⁶ Operation Mentoring seemed to be “knitting together” a network of journalists in the Kanem region with Radio N'Djimi serving as a connecting hub. Scholars of violent extremism have observed that personal relationships and social networks can lead to individuals becoming affiliated with extremist groups.⁵⁷ I would like to suggest here that personal relationships and professional networks, as currently being fostered through the mentoring activity, can also serve to combat extremism. By identifying and building the capacity of moderate and committed community media partners, the PDEV project is developing pro peace and tolerance networks. The network members themselves will be responsible for remaining active and connected beyond the lifespan of the PDEV project.



Figure 11: Radio N'Djimi staff (first and third from left) with young "mentees" from Radio Bissam

6. Listening clubs: A one year update

Since the completion of the mid-line evaluation report on PDEV media activities (October 2010) the number of listening clubs in Niger has grown from 137 to 158, with the total number of individual listening club members reaching 2,225. In Chad, where the listening club activity was just beginning in mid-2010, the current number of listening clubs is 29.⁵⁸ (See activity map in figure 12 below). It is worth noting that the listening club activity has been implemented differently in Chad than in Niger. In Niger, listening clubs are largely “self-organized” and have often emerged from existing “Fadas,” which is a form

⁵⁶ In fact, it was subsequently decided that the Radio N'Djimi trainer would travel to Bol to conduct the training on site rather than have a few Bol radio staff travel to Mao. This allows a broader range of participants and also training on-site with the newly installed equipment in Bol. A similar process is planned for the new station at Noukou.

⁵⁷ USAID (February 2009). *Guide to the drivers of violent extremism*, p. ix.

⁵⁸ Since the listening clubs are more of an event than an entity with fixed membership, the number fluctuates according to the number of Community Reporters (CR) who are facilitating the gatherings and the number each CR facilitates per week.

of youth social group that is commonly found throughout Niger. In Niger, the same listening club members meet weekly (or more often) to discuss PDEV radio programs and often listen to the program as a group. In Chad, the membership of listening clubs rotates weekly, and the clubs are more akin to weekly events, which are organized by PDEV community reporters, who are paid a small amount to facilitate and record the sessions.⁵⁹

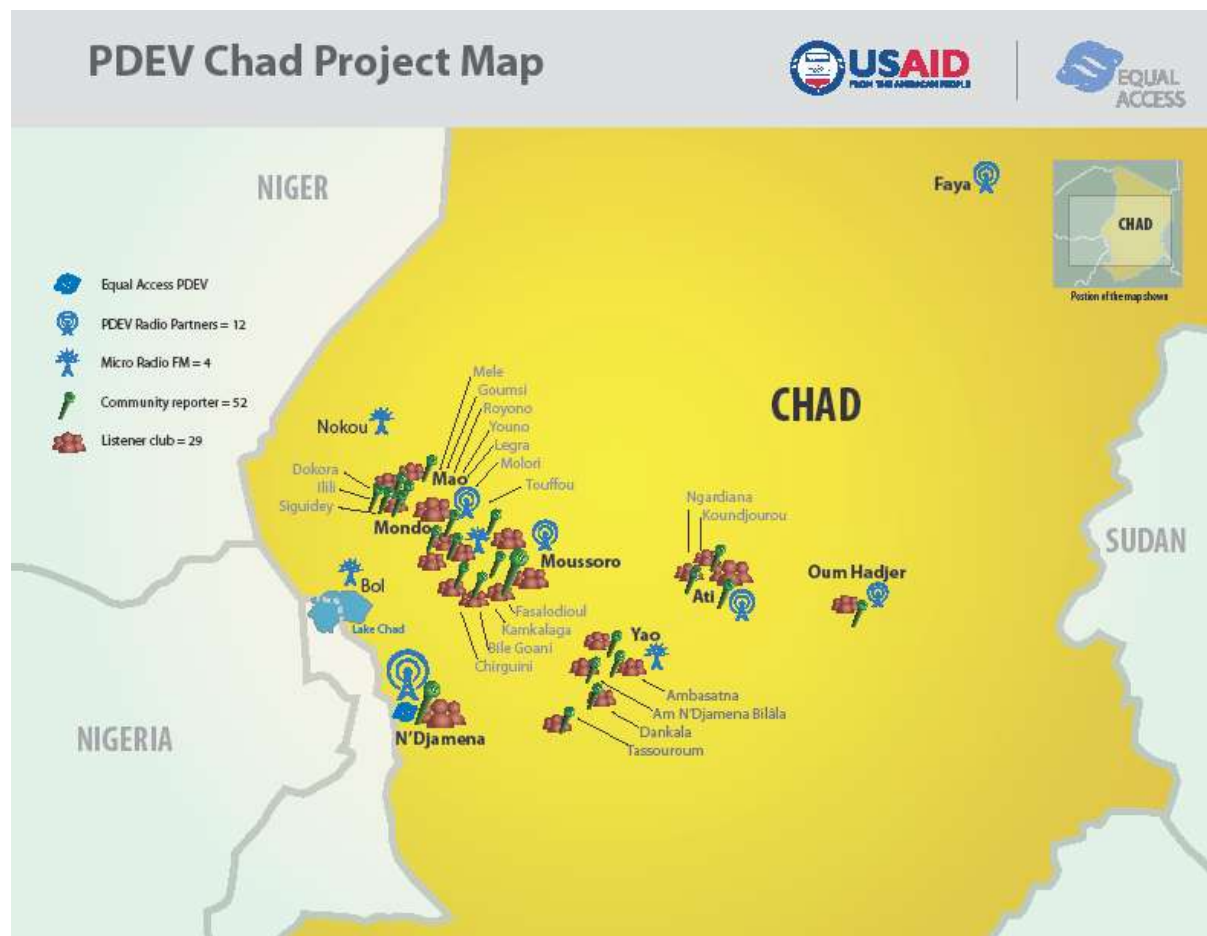


Figure 12: Map of PDEV-Chad media activities

The listening clubs in Chad (also called listening tea gatherings) are designed to attract different listeners each time and many of the community reporters serving as facilitators use MP3 players to reach communities that are outside the range of PDEV radio station partners. Because of this difference in design and implementation, the Chadian PDEV listening clubs, while fewer in number than can be found in Niger, have the potential to reach a diverse (because rotating) group of listeners, which includes those who would be otherwise underserved because they live beyond the reach of radio broadcasts.

Although the number of listening club members is growing in both Niger and Chad, a return visit to Birni N'Konni (Konni) Niger in 2011 revealed that the *nature* of listening club activities has also

⁵⁹ For more in-depth information on community reporters and listening groups see pages 16–21 of the 2010 mid-line report.

grown.⁶⁰ In the 2010 mid-line evaluation report I included the case of the Friends of the Library listening club, which had organized a listening club theme-discussion on the topic of youth and democracy after listening to a *Gwadaben Matassa* (youth) radio episode on that topic. Listening Club president Mounkaila Amadou reported that the discussion focused on politicians who call on young people to help them only during the election period but then “forget about them” after the election is over.⁶¹ In my July 2011 discussion with him, Mounkaila proudly reported that his listening club had since organized a public conference on the topic of youth and democracy, which was partially funded by Nigerian writer Youssouf Konaté, who they had invited to be the conference keynote speaker. Mounkaila described the event, which took place on February 16, 2011.

The conference was held on the second floor of the Konni Library. It lasted three hours and had more than 100 participants. We had announced the event on the radio and we deliberately did not invite any politicians. We wanted to see which, if any, politicians would come to the conference on their own.

“And did any come?” I asked.

“Yes! The Minister of Urban Affairs came. And also the Mayor of Konni. City Council member Mamane Harouna also came. He is an inspiration to many of us—he is only 29 years old.”

On the topic of youth political participation during our discussion in 2010, Mounkaila had said that speaking to politicians was difficult:

“It’s hard for us young people to speak to them [politicians] directly. For now we are discussing amongst ourselves, talking about how to get more involved.”

Mounkaila and his fellow Friends of the Library listening club members have thus progressed from “discussing amongst themselves” in 2010 to organizing a well-attended, externally funded public conference in 2011. Equally importantly, Mounkaila and his listening club have progressed from talking *about* political participation to engaging *directly* in it. The listening club members did more than “show up” at someone else’s meeting or rally, they took the initiative to create their own forum for civic engagement, invited citizens, civic leaders and elected officials to join them. Building on their success of their first conference Mounkaila reported the club had organized an additional round table, for the young women of Birni N’Konni, on the topic of menstruation and pregnancy. “One of our members teaches life sciences at the high school,” Mounkaila explained. “We noticed that many young women get pregnant very early and we thought that some providing some basic information might help the situation.”

“And did many women attend?” I asked, somewhat skeptically, since the conference was organized and led by men.

“Yes,” responded Mounkaila, “There were more than 50 young women there. We were hoping to raise consciousness on the topic [of youth pregnancy] but not directly, so we focused on menstruation.”

Interviews with three other listening club presidents in Konni revealed that they were not engaged in community service and organized public discourse to the extent of Mounkaila’s club. These clubs

⁶⁰ Given that listening club activities were not underway in Chad during my 2010 visit, the example I use to illustrate this point will be from Niger.

⁶¹ Greiner, K. (2010). *Applying local solutions to local problems: Radio listeners as agents of change*, p. 29

listened to PDEV programs individually and then gathered a few evenings per week to discuss the content and drink tea together. In light of this, one cannot say for certain whether the progression in the type and complexity of listening club activity has been repeated elsewhere or if it is unique to the Friends of the Library listening club in Konni. The PDEV-Niger media team would be wise to conduct additional field-research to check in with listening clubs included in previous evaluation and project reports to document the frequency and nature of ongoing listening club community engagement. Given the varied and rich types of agency encountered among listeners in 2010, I would not be surprised to learn if different, but *equally interesting* progressions, are taking place in other Nigerien villages.



Figure 13: Presidents of four listening clubs in Birni N'Konni Niger

Despite the interesting progression of the Friends of the Library listening club, who went from talking *about* participation to *organizing* and *initiating* participation in their community, the activity of their other listening club peers are still to be valued. A young listening club president, Abdoulaye Ibrahim, said he club was called Tururuwa—The Termites—because he and the other members were always “packed in close together, like termites.” The time they spend listening to PDEV programs and discussing them as a group is time spent building civic culture. For these youth in Konni to be engaging, as a group, on themes of peace, tolerance and democracy means they are become gradually protected against appeals that are neither democratic nor peaceful. Even if these youth are never approached to join an extremist cause, they have great potential to contribute to their communities, and thus I believe that PDEV efforts will be continue to have positive impact.

7. Listener engagement mechanisms: Call-in shows, SMS/Text message software and interactive voice response (IVR).

Three additional PDEV media activities are worth mentioning for the role they play in fostering listener engagement with the PDEV radio programs. I call these “listener engagement mechanisms”: they are channels that invite listeners to respond after radio broadcasts, thereby reversing the traditional flow of information. The first mechanism, the call-in show, should be familiar to most radio listeners worldwide. After a radio program, listeners are invited to call the broadcasting station to provide comments or ask questions about the program content. The novelty of the PDEV media team’s design of call-in shows is

that they are recorded by partner radio stations and sent to the PDEV media team for review and analysis. Recording the call-in shows also allows the PDEV media team to assess the quality of radio partner shows. The PDEV media team can provide feedback to partner radio facilitators on their technical capacity—how to address poor sound issues, for example—and their handling of listeners’ comments. In addition, these recorded call-in shows give producers a “window on the world” of listeners in distant regions and village, which may be very different from their own lives and views as capital city dwellers.

In the 2010 mid-line evaluation I conducted of PDEV media programming, I gave the name “generative loop” to describe this circular flow of information, which in this case begins with program broadcast, followed by listeners calling in, and then radio station partners recording and forwarding call-in show content, which results in producers “closing the circle” by responding to the content of recorded call in shows. (See excerpt from 2010 mid-line report below).



Figure 14: Recorded call-in show from Radio Dollé in Niger

Listener engagement (From 2010 mid-line evaluation of PDEV media programming, p. 51)

Listeners can give comments and ask questions by a) calling their local stations, 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-capture software. The two arrows (on graph) 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.** I prefer the term “generative loop” to 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.

** Morin, E. (1977) *Method: Towards a study of humankind*. Vol. 1: The nature of nature, New York: Peter Lang, pp. 190, 224.

In addition to the call-in shows, the PDEV media team can get access to listeners’ ideas and questions through Frontline, the SMS-Text message capture software. Frontline records text messages sent by listeners to one of several dedicated phone lines, the numbers for which are included in each radio

broadcast. (Each radio program has its own line). The phones are plugged into a laptop computer and incoming messages are recorded via the software and are then aggregated and exported into Excel format for easy viewing.



Figure 15: The Frontline SMS-Text message capture system

Date	Contenu Message	Numéro
PM-07-03	L enfant qui fumé c'est bichara.c'est hassana brahim du qtier ambassatna	23566236016
PM-07-03	Le nom du garçon qui fumait la cigarette e qui par la suite etait tomber malade s'appel bichara.Abigaël.	23562384050
PM-07-03	Le cas de siphilis le plus grave c est la 3eme phase. Je m appel Saleh Mahamat Abba à la rue 40m	23566268119
PM-07-03	La cyphilis a trois phases dans son evolution.ABIGAEL kartier chagoua	23562384050
PM-07-03	Bonjour,c'est Fina Sozo de moursal pour repondre à la rubrique Quiz: Le mot le plus important que nous devons dire en cas d'une préssion est que de dire NON. Parlant des chefs des groupes qui pratiquent ce système, qu'ils sachent que chacun est libre de son choix et de ses gouts à condition qu'ils respectent la loi. Pour ceux qui subissent ces peines qu'ils sachent qu'ils sont libres de dire oui si cela va dans son intérêt ou non d'ou celles-ci nuisent à sa personne.	23563148721

Figure 16: Listener messages from Frontline, exported to Excel format

Listeners send text messages to the PDEV media team⁶² in response to quiz questions included in the radio shows or general questions about the themes discussed on the radio programs. The messages sent by listeners are then read by PDEV radio program producers (and other staff, if interested) and depending on the nature of listener input, comments sometimes make their way into *new* radio programs. In my discussion with PDEV producers I learned that producers read and use listener input for a variety of purposes: they announce quiz winners, they thank listeners from a particular region or

⁶² In Chad listeners must pay to send text messages to the Frontline system. In Niger, the PDEV media team has successfully negotiated with a local carrier to establish a “green line” (numero vert) that is free to users.

village for listening and occasionally producers use listener input, questions or ideas in new scripts they are working on.⁶³

In realization that not all PDEV radio program listeners are able to read and write, the PDEV media team in Niger has begun piloting an interactive voice response (IVR) system called Freedom Fone⁶⁴ that allows listeners to call a dedicated PDEV number to 1) hear PDEV program content, 2) leave a voice message for the PDEV media team or 3) do both things in one call. In Niger the IVR system was launched on July 22nd for a test phase that lasted just under two weeks. During that period, the dedicated phone line (which was set up as a toll-free number), received 149 calls and 67 voice messages from listeners. The IVR calls have not yet been analyzed to assess what regions listeners are calling from or the gender breakdown of the callers, but with time the IVR system should yield data that will be extremely useful to the PDEV media team. Of course, the content of the messages themselves will also be very enlightening, in particular if the message prompts are designed to ask questions of listeners that will yield rich data. For example, an IVR message prompt could ask listeners to suggest future program content that would be particularly relevant to the region or village they are living in. In this way, the Freedom Fone system can act as ongoing formative research that requires little effort from PDEV program staff beyond the initial set up of the system (See figure 17 below for an example of the IVR message process).

⁶³ On the whole, I would say the Frontline system could be used more “robustly” by replacing quiz-type questions with questions that aim to learn more about listeners’ lives, priorities and preferences. By asking different questions, producers could have a very rich set of data that they could use more fully in new scripts.

⁶⁴ Freedom Fone is open source software and thus free to the user. As free software, PDEV staff report that it has proven somewhat “clunky” and with many “glitches” that make it more difficult to use than commercial software. For more information, see: <http://www.freedomfone.org/>. Source: PDEV-associated staff member and Freedom Fone lead implementer Graham Gardner (Equal access/Cambodia).

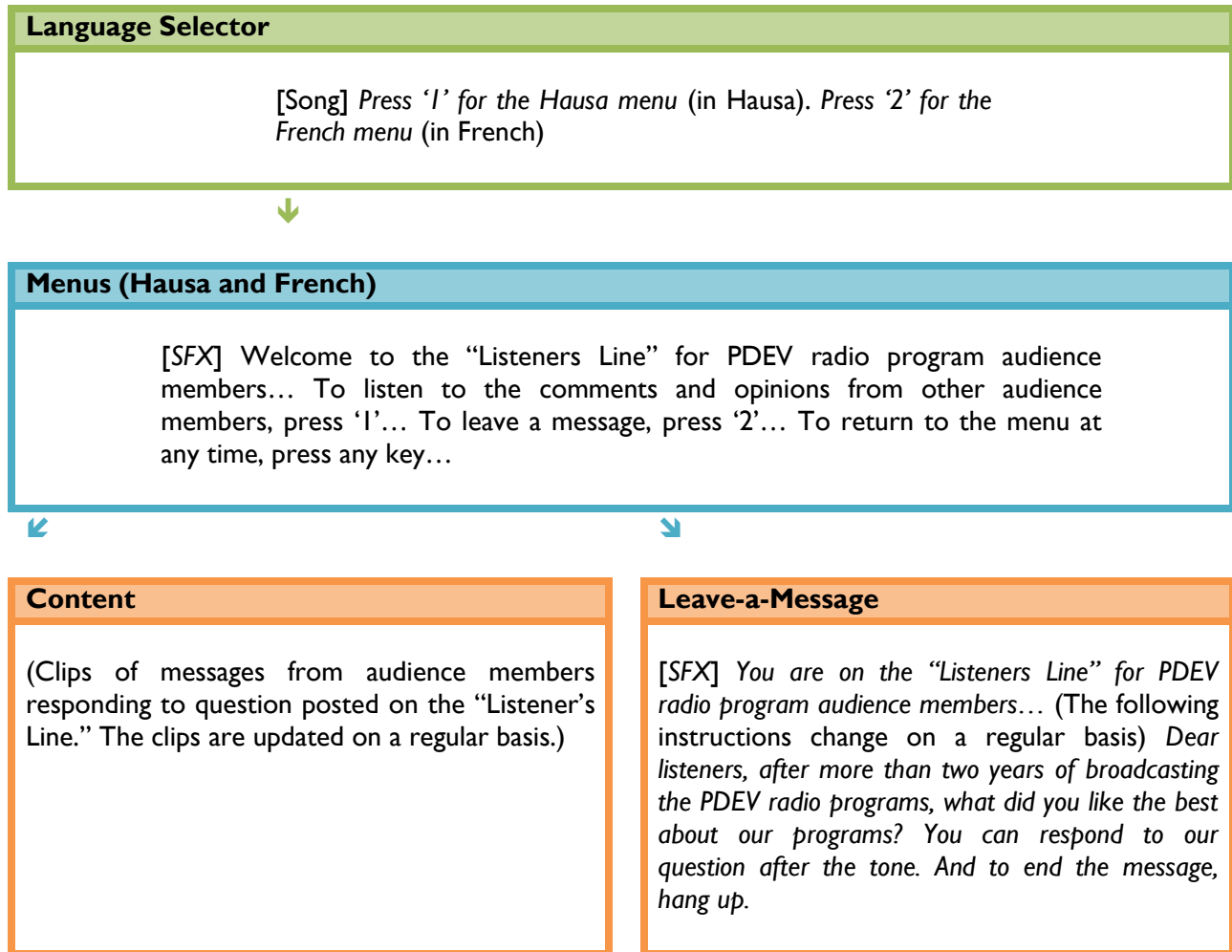


Figure 17: IVR system menu

The three “listener engagement mechanisms,” taken together, demonstrate great effort and ingenuity on the part of the PDEV media team to find ways to be as democratic as possible in including listeners. The call-in shows are geographically and linguistically democratic in their broad appeal to listeners far from the capital cities. Listeners can call their local radio station and express themselves in their language of choice. For listeners who prefer to communicate directly with PDEV radio producers, *technological* democracy has been established via the SMS-Text message capture and interactive voice response systems. These systems allow low cost (or no cost) text messaging for those who can read and write, and voice messaging for those who cannot. Once PDEV media teams manage to make the Frontline and Freedom Fone systems entirely toll-free for the listeners, the “final democratic frontier”—the cost barrier—can be addressed.

Conclusion

The “ecological” nature of the PDEV media program design has resulted in a number of interventions and activities that far exceed a traditional radio broadcast approach. Broadcasting radio programs is pure diffusion—the one-way flow of information from capital to region, from “experts” to citizens. Traditional radio programs have certainly proven effective in increasing the amount and reach of information on a given topic. In fact, mass media are unparalleled in their ability to reach remote regions using a technology that is widely accessible and low-cost. *Supplementing* radio programs with

additional engagement activities increases and enriches the reach of radio even further. Activities such as listening clubs, call-in shows, local production shows, communication training for influential figures, peer-mentoring and media guides for journalists, and listener engagement mechanisms such as IVR and Frontline SMS allow the PDEV media teams to intervene at several “ecological levels” that increases their potential to have system-wide impact. The local production shows in particular, as part of an intensive material and human investment through the provision of equipment and training, have already demonstrated that the PDEV team’s work will be sustained. Partner radio programs are no longer merely broadcasting PDEV programs; they are creating their own programs, in their own local languages, suited to their local and regional needs and realities, amplifying and localizing core PDEV messages. They are still being “given” radio programs but they have also been taught to produce their own. The programs themselves, the 10 programs in two regional languages produced by Radio N'Djimi in Chad, for example, are the evidence of success.

Thus far, two evaluations (mid-line, 2010 and end-line, 2011) have documented that citizen radio-listeners are engaging with PDEV content; they listen in groups, they discuss, they call their local stations, they send messages to PDEV producers, and, on occasion, they act and take initiative in their communities. Radio station partners and civic-minded community leaders have also demonstrated their capacity to contribute to the goals of the PDEV project. They address their communities in Friday prayers, they produce radio programs, they host lively call-in shows and, importantly, they dream of being even more involved and request support to do so.

The stage is set for post-PDEV follow-on programming; networks are in place and are currently active, local partners have begun proving the technical and human capacity to produce content on their own. New programming, in my view, should focus on two key areas: 1) continuing to shift the responsibility for creating peace and tolerance-related content to local partners while providing the material resources, technical support, guidance and training to support partners in this effort, and 2) increasing efforts to address influential leaders and state-level actors and involve them whenever possible in PDEV-related work. Ordinary citizens have been receptive to PDEV programming, yet they have limited power and visibility. Involving and *addressing* decision makers, policymakers, legislators, civic and religious leaders and international partners provides a much greater chance to effect system-level change than addressing average citizens in remote villages. The solution is not to focus on the average public or influential publics, but rather to address and include *both*.

Discussions about violence as a means to an end can find its way into homes, neighborhoods, communities, media-scapes and political arenas across Chad and Niger. Regional instability and current events in neighboring Sudan, Libya and Nigeria *bring* these discussions into Chad and Niger. How will the population respond? The response—a civic and peaceful response—must be cultivated and strengthened. Individuals and community leaders across Niger and Chad have communicated to me in interviews and focus groups that they are either *already* doing their part or are willing. Anthropologist Gregory Bateson would call this a state of “readiness,” which he defines as “the uncommitted potential for change.”⁶⁵ Community members are *ready* to contribute. The task is to systematically invite and facilitate community contributions to maximize and acknowledge their momentum. Post-PDEV programming should design innovative activities and mechanisms that allow people to connect with their neighbors and fellow citizens—to support the local production of peace and tolerance messages—to help communities help themselves.

⁶⁵ Bateson, G. (2000). *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, p. 401