can we play as a team?

Governance and Transparency Fund – 170
Football-Based Media to Strengthen Good Governance and Transparency

FINAL REPORT 2008- 2012

1. **Programme Identification Details.**

GTF Number	GTF 170
Short Title of Programme	Football-Based Media to Strengthen Good Governance and Transparency
Name of Lead Institution	Search for Common Ground
Start Date	1/8/2008
End Date	6/30/2012
Amount of DFID financing	4,067,220
Brief Summary of Programme	SFCG's mission is to transform how individuals, organizations and governments deal with conflict - away from adversarial approaches and toward cooperative solutions. SFCG's media arm, Common Ground Productions, works with CSOs in 11 countries to develop a TV/radio drama series called *The Team*. The show is a metaphor for co-existence. Identifiable and empathic characters – footballers, their friends and families – demonstrate how cooperation transcends ethnic, economic and religious differences. Accompanying outreach projects support positive engagement of citizens between one another, their families, their communities and their government.
Countries where activities have taken place in the past	Angola, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Morocco, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe
Implementing Partners	Listed in separate annex
Target groups and wider beneficiaries	Elected officials, civil society groups and leaders and people who are most often marginalized, including women's associations and youth group members. General viewing audiences in country and globally
Person who prepared this report	Deborah Jones, Executive Producer Common Ground Productions, Search for Common Ground

2. **List of Acronyms**

CFI = Canal France International

CGP = Common Ground Productions

CSO = Civil Society Organization

MFA = Media Focus on Africa

JNB = Jean Noel Bah Productions

RTI = Radiodiffusion Télévision Ivoirienne

OGP = Oscar Gil Productions

UPeace = University of Peace

3. Executive Summary

SFCG works to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial approaches toward cooperative solutions. Through themes that dramatize the root causes of conflict, the television and radio series, ***The Team,*** creates a vehicle for dialogue and reconciliation around these conflicts specific to each country in which we work. Among citizens at all levels of society, the issues in the series are discussed in a non-confrontational, safe environment.

With our mobile cinema and dialogue projects we have witnessed citizens and their local officials or peer groups solving problems in their respective the communities. As noted in the evaluations submitted with the year-end document for March 2012 as well as the final evaluation, it has been proven that in many instances, the change can be attributed to this project.

Additionally, participants in the discussions have taken separate positive actions in their communities as a direct result of exposure to and participation in The Team.

Therefore, we have seen that this project as made both an attribution and contribution toward positive change between citizens themselves and citizens and their governments.

The overall project was completed June 30, 2012 under the GTF grant. However, the project continues under grants from the EU, US State Department, others.

3.1 Period Since Last Annual Report: April 1-June 30, 2012

Angola: Series re-Broadcast twice on TV Jimbo; publicity/marketing campaign, television trailer made. Self-evaluation with partners conducted in order to launch mobile cinema project.   Outreach conducted in Cabinda, Luanda, Huilo and Huando. Arrangements to air again by other broadcasters are in the works. A full report on this project is attached in a separate Annex.

Indonesia: The series started broadcast in February 2012. Outreach commenced in this quarter. This series built on SFCG Indonesia's work in prisons and pesantrans (Islamic Boarding Schools) both of which concentrate on mitigating extremism and encouraging cooperative problem solving. One of the specific goals was that viewers of The Team recognise the value of pluralism and diversity and gain awareness of cooperative solutions and problem solving techniques**.** Some key takeaways are:

- …respondents reported an increased knowledge and understanding of Indonesia's ethnic, religious and socio-geographic diversity and the importance of pluralism;

- The amount of respondents in a viewing group who agreed that compromise was an effective way to solve conflict increased by 11%, from 68% to 79%.

- Significantly, an increase of 42% was recorded for the viewing group toward the notion that collaboration was an effective way to solve conflict.

- There was an increase of 21% amongst the viewing group to 53% who supporting the notion that women could be better leaders than men in the corrections system.

A full report is attached as a separate Annex.

<u>Kenya: Lessons Learned Follow Up</u>. On June 28, 2012, SFCG and Kenya partner, Media Focus on Africa held a meeting for youth leaders who have created the mobile cinema and dialogue project for The Team since 2009. These 16 leaders have created a vast network of youth who have been energized to continue the Team activities far beyond the scope of the original grant. We held the meeting to seek their knowledge and input so that SFCG and MFA can also continue the dialogues which we believe have been extremely effective in inspiring Kenyans to collaborate beyond tribal affiliation, a particularly important objective in the run up to the elections in 2013. A full report is attached as a separate Annex.

<u>Zimbabwe :</u> The series was successfully broadcast on ZBC, the national broadcaster. In this quarter, the outreach campaign began and is continuing. Search for Common Ground has planned a six-part outreach campaign for *The Team* over the course of the project.   This outreach, in the town of Mvurwi, proved to be highly successful, and SFCG will have campaigns in Rusape, Mutoko, Magunje, Gutu and Lupane.   Participants come from many diverse groups within the community, such as the church, youth, women, the council and the general population, encouraging people from different backgrounds to work together towards common goals. By the end of the outreach activities, participants had drafted a community action plan to avoid violent conflict, incorporating the needs of each group and a timeline to pursue certain desired goals. A clear pattern has emerged vis-à-vis the effectiveness of this methodology. See section 3.2 below for further comments.

<u>3.2 Changing People's Lives</u>

Agency: Progressive and participatory rather than prescriptive interventions are the most successful.   Our television and radio series *show* rather than tell the targeted audiences what to do or how to act. The dialogue projects that also encourage participation act as a springboard for participants to create their own projects using The Team as a vehicle to organize projects that will improve their lives, the lives of their families as well as and their relationship to government, particularly at the local level.

<u>Intended outputs in log frame</u>. We achieved the intended outputs listed in the log frame.   The most complex outputs of the program was writing and producing The Team television programs through our partner organizations. We had to engage in significant capacity building in all phases of this project.   This we achieved through using professional writer/producers from the international staff of SFCG or by the employment of outside experts in this area.   The second major output has been to change the relationship between citizens and their governments, particularly citizens and local governments. Through the creation of the mobile cinema plus the accompanying dialogue projects we were able to, over the course of several months, to shift attitudes of former enemies towards one another. The episodes of the TV or radio series were used as a tool to gather disparate groups and engage in dialogues that they otherwise would not have had.   See "Stories of Actions Triggered by The Team" on page 33 of the final evaluation that accompanies this document.

From the final external report conducted by Amr Abdalla of the University of Peace.

"The results of the evaluation demonstrate that, within conducive conditions, *The Team* indeed succeeded in achieving its objectives as stated in the Logframe. The main objective of *The Team* as a project was to help citizens, officials and communities to positively change attitudes and knowledge related to how they work together for the common good. The project was clear from the beginning that it was not only about changing attitudes and knowledge, but to see such changes translated to actions geared towards good governance and improved rule of law. The evidence especially in Kenya and Ivory Coast proved that *The Team* succeeded in motivating citizens, CSOs, and government officials towards such action. The final evaluation reports especially for those two countries include some solid examples of such action change.

Perhaps it was not possible to prove such transformation at the level of actions using quantitative measures. But this is not a problem with *The Team* as much

as it is a problem with the way donors and some evaluators believe to be the only way to prove success! The quantitative results in the reports have shown, when appropriate, the success of *The Team* in improving knowledge and attitudes of those who watched or listened to *The Team*. Such quantitative evidence was substantiated via comparative analyses with baseline data, and results for those who did not watch or listen to the drama. Yet, when assessing actions to improve good governance and rule of law, qualitative, in-depth, methods were more appropriate for assessing such transformations.

It is also evident that while the drama itself has succeeded in changing attitudes and knowledge positively, the action-related changes were possible usually via more intensive outreach activities. Mobile cinema screenings have proven to be effective tools for communicating with specific audiences, and to become the catalyst for effecting change in communities. " [1]

Zimbabwe

The mobile cinema and dialogue project uses the same method that has been proven to be effective. Participants view episodes of *The Team*, which jumpstart discussions linking the challenges faced by characters in the series and by the community itself. They are able to apply the solutions demonstrated in the series to the problems faced by their own community, or to use the series as inspiration to find unique solutions to their unique challenges.

By the end of the screenings, discussions and conflict management and teambuilding exercises, participants admitted to have learned that a community which comes together allows individuals to complement each other's efforts to the benefit of all. They also learned the importance of a team having unity of purpose and confidence and of listening to the voices of others in community development projects. Finally, participants came to realize that it was their role, as much as the government's, to contribute to their own service provision, and that managing conflict non-violently involves understanding the needs of other stakeholders deeply and sincerely and dealing with root causes to create permanent solutions.

Participants in the Mvurwi outreach activities independently realized the need to form a Community Action Plan Committee after an activity in which groups depicted their ideal community on large flipcharts. Each group then developed a six-month action plan for non-violence, which the Action Plan Committee harmonized in order to direct the implementation process. In the end, the Action Plan involved activities such as establishing a sports and youth centre,

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[1] The Team: Four Country Final Evaluation Report. Amr Abdalla, ph.d University of Peace August 2012.

establishing schools in farming areas, creating an information centre, planting an herbal garden and lighting the streets, along with specific methods to accomplish these goals, the resources they would require, the bodies responsible for implementing each objective and a specific deadline for each project to be completed.

Significant setbacks: The war in Côte d'Ivoire that start post election 2010 and continued through the spring of 2011 was the most significant setback we encountered. Although the series itself continued to broadcast and in fact was re-broadcast by both the old and new regimes, we were unable to complete the mobile cinema and dialogue projects on time, nor were we able to complete the final evaluation as we expected. This resulted in our asking for and receiving from DFID an extension of the overall grant.   However, because it is also true that both regimes saw the series to be a positive influence on the population, we feel that the idea of using a television series as a tool to unite citizens and their governments has been validated consistently.

The second significant setback occurred immediately following the award of the grant in 2008. The global economic downturn resulted in the drop of the pound against the dollar thus the *value* of the award was reduced by about 30%. SFCG managed to produce material in the ten countries in spite of this significant challenge.

3.7 VALUE FOR MONEY.   (Annex 3). The TV/radio series were broadcast by many more broadcasters than originally anticipated thus we reached tens of millions of more viewers. Three of the series are being broadcast across sub-Saharan Africa. Two are being broadcast in the UK and the US. All of the series have been re-run and will continue to run. And all of the series can be used for years to come by SFCG country programs and our hundreds of beneficiaries via mobile screenings. SFCG has raised an additional 12 million USD for The Team projects around the world thus building on the original 4 million pound GTF grant.

4. Key Findings:

4.1 Management Response to Final Evaluation: Overall recommendations. Country by country recommendations are found within the final evaluation.

Final Recommendations	Management Response
Explore means to continue production of the Team in same countries and others	Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo continue now; Kenya continues outreach, other countries are actively looking to continue; The program is also in Yemen, Pakistan,

	Tanzania with different donors.
Conduct country/context analysis before introducing *The Team* with the purpose of assessing the suitability of the political and cultural context for *The Team*. As has been seen, in some parts of the world, such as North Africa, such conditions may hinder the implementation of *The Team* using the current design. A careful assessment and adjustments to the design must be used.	Agreed. The series in Morocco is the most obvious example because it is a constitutional monarchy.
The Team outreach facilitators have become a cadre of motivated and committed group. Their potential to contribute continues beyond the production of *The Team*. Explore ways to keep them engaged.	Agreed. One of the ways is to continue to train them in conflict resolution theory and practice through workshops. It's also important that we encourage the facilitators to continue on their own: **ownership** is key to sustainability.
Cases of positive transformation are abundant, but there does not seem to be a systemic process for capturing them.

Develop the local capacity to systematically conduct case studies of such examples of transformation, and to document them in a way that would allow for wide distribution among the peace building community worldwide. | Agreed.   One new tool we're using is to capture some of the mobile cinema campaigns and dialogue on camera and to post these short films on line.

In Tanzania, where we have started the project under a different grant, we are replicating as closely as possible the program in Kenya to ascertain viability. |

4.2. Programme Management. No change during life of grant. As of June 30, 2012, Ratiba Cherif, DME coordinator for GTF grant no longer works with SFCG.

4.3 Impact on Governance and Transparency : CAR

a) What has changed?   The most significant changes have occurred between:
- Improved communication between citizens (civil society) and local governments. As an example, see Annex 9A, year 3 report. (Kenya, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Zimbabwe, Indonesia)

- Attitudes toward gender based violence e.g. rape. Women and men are more likely to understand the dynamics of rape and the importance of supporting women in their efforts to get justice. (DR Congo, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire

- Attitudes shift towards non-violent approaches to conflict, or compromise as a tool to resolve differences (Nepal, Kenya, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, Angola, Zimbabwe)

- Attitudes towards tolerance and mutual respect among different ethnic, tribe religious or political groups shifted positively. (Nepal, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Burundi, DR Congo, Morocco, Zimbabwe)

  A youth from Morocco stated, "*Through this show I was able to see the daily struggles of certain individuals in my community especially the marginalized groups which changed the way I interact with them.*"

  Another stated, -"*This show helped me to believe that people from different backgrounds can come together to accomplish one common goal*

b) Who has changed?   The following groups who are SFCG target audiences have seen the most change:

- Tens of thousands of marginalized youth (men and women)
- Local government officials and local police
- Partners of SFCG engaged in the writing and production of the series.

An example from the final evaluation for Côte d'Ivoire: A Local Government official who watched a few programs admitted that it has contributed on many levels to the re-welding of the social fabric and that it had an impact both on a personal and a professional level.

"The idea of promoting the peaceful resolution of conflicts can only be beneficial. I was particularly attracted by the approach used in the series to resolve conflicts".

One impact he acknowledged is that several actions were taken by his department more or less connected with the themes of *L'Equipe* such as the introduction of free medical care in public hospitals; the fight against extortion, the removal of lawless forces, the fight against racketeering and corruption.[2]

c) How the change occurred: The TV and radio dramas ***show*** through positive role models that individuals can make a difference.   This empowerment of marginalized groups particularly youth so that they believe they are capable of being agents of positive change is the single most important part of our program.

Example: In Burundi, one youth said, "….*there was an awakening of my conscience, I discovered my responsibilities, namely that I am capable of something when it comes to the return of peace.*" [3]

d) Why the change has occurred: The major change has occurred because our project acts as a catalyst for change but we work without being prescriptive.

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[2] Final Evaluation: L'Equipe, Côte d'Ivoire. Amr Adalla, Ph.d University of Peace March 2012   P.15
[3] Final SFCG internal evaluation Burundi.   http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/cgp/the-team-funding-report.html

Individuals and groups are given every opportunity to own the projects and develop projects along the same lines.

Sequencing: We broadcast the series (the tool) nationally and then commence the mobile cinema/dialogue projects.   This is a practical consideration since broadcasters require that the major audiences see the series via the broadcaster's feed.

Obstacles: Working in fragile states/conflict zones.   SFCG works almost exclusively in fragile states and conflict zones.

Indicators: These are for Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya and DR Congo only

OC.I2. Number of communities, CSOs and CS coalitions with significant and sustainable improvements in their capacity to demand improved governance and transparency	23 communities, 50 CSOs, (composed of at least 146 students/pupils, 19 illiterate persons, 39 NGO workers, 94 housewives, 72 unemployed persons, 45 farmers, 40 police officers and 36 military personnel) These numbers are a direct result of the GTF grant; but as an indirect result, many times more CSOs were impacted.
OP1.I1. Budget allocated to public services and goods for vulnerable and excluded groups	n/a
OP1.I2. Number of officials trained for better management and provision of services	70
OP2.I1. Number of key information documents available to the media and public in a timely manner throughout the budget/policy cycle	2,000 copies of a viewers guide that included values captured in the series, 2000 DVD sets of "The Team," 200 CDs of the series' soundtrack distributed to youth CSOs
OP2.I2. Number of women empowered through collective action in associations, self-help groups and increased access to knowledge, services, assets and choice	837 took part in the survey which showed overall increased access to knowledge, 979 women took part in mobile cinema screenings as *organizers* – thousands took part as participants
OP3.I1. Number of disadvantaged and vulnerable people with understanding of human rights and ability to claim rights	1452 survey participants showed significant improvement in their understanding of human rights and their ability to claim those rights
OP3.I2. Number of media articles, radio and television programmes covering various governance issues	24+39+31+26=117 52 radio episodes 200 mobile cinema screenings
OP3.I3. Number of strengthened media organisations and trained journalists	12 media organisations strengthened –

4.4   Sustainability: Because of the approach mentioned in 4.3 d., we have seen the television and radio series (the tools) used consistently either through re-runs

of the broadcast or by the beneficiaries, like youth, who use the series via DVD to organize other projects that have a 'common ground' point of view.

It has been well reported that youth in Kenya built their own youth network starting from a group of 700 and building to over 60,000. However, other countries have also seen youth take actions as a result of participating in a 'team' event. There are many examples that are documented in the evaluations. Below are a few examples from Morocco:

"Abdel Moneim, one of the workshop's participants, attended literacy classes after watching episodes of the team through our association. He took with him many of his friends as well."

"We organize sport matches twice a week to encourage the spirit of team work which was highlighted in the episodes of the Team."

"Our association formed a group called "Initiative Work Team" which encourages social participation among the youth, and they already made many environmental and awareness initiatives." [4]

Partners capacity: We worked with different types of partners: production companies, CSOs, broadcasters, youth leaders, local leaders, church groups

A) Production partners. Writing/producing The Team TV series.   The writers in all countries were exposed to a writing process they had not yet experienced due to the lack of an established industry in most developing countries. Even in countries with writers who have experience, we worked on creating stories that are dramatically viable but that have resolutions that promote social cohesion and problem solving rather than gun play. An unexpected positive consequence: Actors, and in some cases technicians, became interested in conflict resolution in general and asked to be trained in the methodology. We offered 1-2 day training for these groups and as a result, many of the actors volunteered to take part in the facilitated dialogues as 'ambassadors' for the Team series.   In addition, we built the capacity of local directors/producers increasing their technical abilities to make TV series. This is significant because artists are the voice of a generation. We often have had comments that The Team series speaks on behalf of the people because it presents issues from a realistic point of view.

B) Youth leaders/facilitators/CSOs.   Depending upon the country, we either created a youth network specifically to facilitate the mobile screenings/dialogues or we worked with CSOs and other groups with whom SFCG has had long-term relationships. The challenge with a TV and radio

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[4] Baseline and Final Evaluation of Morocco: *L'Equipe* Amr Abdalla, ph.d University of Peace, January 2011

series is that viewing or listening to the series can be a passive experience. The whole purpose of the dialogues was to encourage viewers/listeners to change attitudes and behaviors in order that they might take positive actions. As reported in many evaluations, this objective has been achieved and the actions are on-going.

Positive or Negative External Effects On Sustainability.   We were extremely concerned that the war in Côte d'Ivoire would leave the people without hope. While it's true that we had to wait for some time before continuing the project, and that full reconciliation will take years, we also found that our local partners were ready to get back to work. Under a new grant, we have started season 3 of the TV series and we will continue to expand the dialogue project. In addition, and to our surprise, we found that the new administration readily embraced this project and has helped us continue. In the past, because the state broadcaster, RTI, is highly politicized, that programming from an outgoing regime was systematically cancelled with the incoming administration. However, Outtara himself met with SFCG and heartily embraced the series as a good example of how to bring the country together via the media.

Network with public opinion; how activities relate to sustainability: The popularity of the series has led to increased interest from broadcasters in country and across the globe. Three series (Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe) are seen now in the West and/or all over sub-Saharan Africa. Most of the series are in re-runs via the original broadcaster or additional broadcasters have picked them up. This has been as a result of popular opinions via audience response as recorded with ratings. (Nielsen, Synovate etc)

Sequence of reforms: This project does not depend upon a sequence of governmental reforms.

4.5   Innovation: Social media has exploded since we started this project. We've quickly embraced the technology and thus use social media in each country to promote the series. Facebook, Twitter, blogs, streaming video and audio are all tools that engage youth so that they can interact with one another and with the series. Because we stream audio and video, this makes it possible for audience members to see or hear the series again without having to go through a broadcaster.

The last series to broadcast was the series in Indonesia. Called Tim Bui, the series takes place in a prison. A woman warden has taken over the prison and has decided to put an end to the vicious battle between two gangs that is fueled

by ethnic rivalry. Instead of punitive measures, she decides the two groups will learn to cooperate and to respect one another. The project succeeds when an enterprising guard starts a football team across ethnic lines. The series called on the Indonesian prison authorities to embrace the idea of the series. Search for Common Ground Indonesia had been working in the prisons for some time, particularly with hardened inmates who had perpetrated violence, including the person convicted for the nightclub bombing in Bali.

The series was unlike anything seen before in Indonesia. To increase the likelihood of success, SFCG elicited the support of a hugely popular Indonesian rock band called SLANK. The band wrote the theme music and made a popular music video. To engage youth, SFCG launched a huge social media campaign. Within a few days, the 'view's on the YouTube channel had more than 35,000 hits.   AC Nielsen, found that over the course of the 13 episodes, positive sentiments was as high as 98% towards the show.

In addition, because of the heavy on-line presence of this series, we tried an on-line survey. Here are the results:

- More than 90% said they were now more concerned about: using soft-power approaches to resolving conflict (95.7%); tolerance toward others (91.3%); strengthening diversity (91.3%).

- Out of seven key messages from the show, the following were ranked the highest for importance: If we work together as a team and respect our differences, we can achieve our common goals (34.8%);

- Corruption within public institutions undermine their effectiveness (21.7%);

- Difference and diversity are positive, not negative, things (21.7%).

- 54% said their perceptions of prisoners had changed "a lot" more positive, while 45.5% said "a little".

- 33.3% said their perceptions of women as having the potential to be strong and effective leaders had changed to become of "a lot" more positive, while 61.9% said "a little". (Note the survey was completed by a total of 30 people).

What makes this show innovative?

It's been said that creativity is the ability to come up with ideas, but innovation is the process of bringing ideas to life. The core idea of The Team TV/radio series is relatively simple, but the innovation has been to build the capacity of a wide

variety of local partners who are empowered enough to take action once the original project has ended.

Each country has had its own set of challenges. In complex countries with millions of people, the challenge is to pinpoint a way into the country so that change is possible. For example Indonesia has a population of 240 million. How do we make in-roads enough so that viewers and beneficiaries begin to think that cooperative behaviour is beneficial? We chose to target prisoners and peasantrans (Islamic schools)   because each is a vulnerable population at risk for radical extremism. In addition, the Indonesian government was looking for help in how to diffuse extremism in the prisons in the hope that it would impact the rest of the population.   The result worked in three ways: 1) the general audience saw an entirely different and innovative episodic drama which sparked enormous positive feedback. (A full report on the Indonesia program is attached in an annex to this document). 2) Students in pesantrans, inmates in the prison system and the guards/officials in the system started thinking about changing their behaviour.   3) Audiences engaged over social media on topics not normally discussed on Facebook, Twitter, etc in Indonesia. e.g. issues around prisons.

4.6 Learning from GTF

The lessons learned are stated throughout this document. The audience most likely to be interested in this lesson: donors, NGOs.

Sustainability

In Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire the program led to poverty reduction in an unexpected way. Please refer to the articles that accompany this document written about two of our partners. Because our youth or our partners felt empowered, they were moved to start other programs which are inspired by the TV series. Because of the success of these ancillary programs, the youth decided to start job creation programs. One thing led to another; once we discovered once people are empowered, the desire to achieve and prosper continues regardless of donor support. Our beneficiaries have started businesses as varied as car washing businesses, activities for tourists, a dry cleaning business and a restaurant.

Thematic Issues:

Agency:

Progressive and participatory rather than prescriptive interventions empower our beneficiaries to take action. As described above, this is key to sustainability. Our television and radio series *show* rather than tell the targeted audiences what to do or how to act. The dialogue projects that also encourage participation act as a springboard for participants to create their own projects using The Team as a vehicle to organize projects that will improve their lives, the lives of their families as well as and their relationship to government, particularly at the local level. Each of the themes listed from governance in fragile states to addressing corruption are influenced by how much the beneficiaries believe that they can change their own lives for the better.

5. Recommendations

Recommendations for Western donors: People from developing countries, particularly those that have been under tyranny or protracted conflict, do not have the faith in institutions like we do in the West. They lack the experience and confidence to engage across boundaries (tribe, class, etc) and though most want to live peacefully, few have the tools to engage productively if social unrest ensues. SFCG has learned that facilitating processes is extremely fruitful. If Western donors would also consider themselves *facilitators* of change it would be perhaps a more useful way of framing long-term objectives like poverty reduction because donors would be partners. Too often, aid is very much 'top-down'. It's tied to conditions that are easily perceived in the West but not easily perceived by beneficiaries. Of course it's crucial that aid money be spent wisely. However, the perception from the beneficiaries' point of view is that they are considered 'backward' or that the expectation is that they are supposed to change who they are as people. e.g. 'to be westernized.'

Here's an example: Our television producer/director for Zimbabwe was very appreciative of the confidence we placed in her. She said that most donors or international NGOs micro-manage the projects because they don't actually trust the local partners and they want to make sure that the donor's 'message' is properly delivered. Our philosophy is completely different: we find talented people and support them when they need it but give them the creative space to blossom. She also said, "You have no idea how sick Africans are of being 'taught'."

With The Team project, though alleviating poverty through better governance was in our minds, we created a project that was question-driven and non-prescriptive. Why? If the message is posited as a directive, it's a one way conversation. "We are telling you." Thus, reactions like "Africans are so sick of being 'taught."

In visual media, directives make bad television. Instead, we pose the messages dramatically by via questions. The metaphor, "Can we play as a team?" is the underlying question in all of the series. The audience views characters they can relate to struggle to overcome their differences and as they do so, they seek to answer this question. Thus our audiences respond with reactions like, "I walked with that character." This shows that we respect the audience to engage in a type of conversation. Because the series remains available in many forums we've created a project, that is on-going and one that sends a message to the beneficiaries that 'we're all in this together." It becomes a powerful way of working together.

The following links are for two videos produced for the GTF grant. In addition to the two articles required, we made 2 short videos that show the link between the Team series and the reaction of the audience as well as the cast and crew.

One is from Cote d'Ivoire

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pr18QQOXzNc&feature=youtu.be

The second is from Nepal.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBAFikox6Sc&feature=plcp