
dudeSearch for Common Ground/Talking Drum Studio
16th Street and Cheeseman Avenue, Sinkor
Monrovia, Liberia

**Report on the Outreach Activities of *The Team: Tabella FC*
April 2012**

Introduction:

This is the final report based on evaluation of The Team (Children and Youth) project implemented by Search for Common Ground/Talking Drum Studio-Liberia. This report covers outreach activities beginning March 2011 for the mobile screening of *The Team: Tabella FC*, a television project funded with grant from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), USAID, the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and the Norwegian government.

After a successful screening for 10 weeks on a number of TV stations in Monrovia, it became expedient to take the film outside to the greater society through mobile screening. This became possible with funding from the Children and Youth project of Search for Common Ground, Washington DC. The screening began in April of 2011 with a projection for completion at the end of June, 2011. But due to some unforeseen circumstances and the slow transfer of funds, the activities had to be extended to March, 2012. Unfortunately, funding for the completion of the project ended when the first set of outreach activities had only begun in 2011. As a result, some of the activities specified in the project could not be implemented.

This report covers outreach activities carried out under the C&Y Grant – the screening of these films in communities around Liberia – with the involvement of youth and children as part of the activities and part of discussions and feedback sessions.

Goal and Objectives of the Overall Initiative:

The goal of this project is to increase collaborative problem-solving and conflict resolution of key issues facing Liberia. It is also intended to influence mass attitudes and behaviors. Our premise is that “well-crafted, entertaining programming can have a profound impact on how people think about themselves, their neighbors and their society.” Specific objectives of the outreach activities are:

- To increase citizens' access to information on critical conflict issues through The Team;
- To facilitate dialogue forums among residents of targeted communities;
- To increase the skills of community members in addressing conflict issues; and
- To model behaviors away from violence to peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Target Groups and Location:

Screening of these series was intended to reach a large audience, including people of all ages. They included students, teachers, community members and leaders, people in government, parents, the police, bike riders, service providers, marketers, youth organizations etc. Specifically, the project was expected to have a direct impact on children and youth because of its themes and the manner in which the activities were implemented. Each episode of the film focused on a range of themes that affect children and youth in our country, some of which are: HIV/AIDS, sexual exploitation, drug abuse, violence, unemployment, education, ethnicity, littering, etc.

A total of 5 counties were selected for the mobile screening considering the issues portrayed in the series. Table 1 provides details of the counties and communities selected for the screening.

Table 1: Communities and Counties Selected for the Screening

| No. | County | Communities |
|-----|-------------|--|
| 1. | Montserrado | Barnersville, Old Road, Duport Road, New Kru Town, Paynesville, Brewerville, Bensonville, New Georgia, Caldwell, ELWA, Duala |
| 2. | Bong | Gbarnga, Suakoko, Salala, Totota, Palala, Zienzue, forequelle, Belefani |
| 3. | Lofa | Voinjama, Zorzor, Salayea, Gorlu, Kolahun, Foya |
| 4. | Nimba | Ganta, Saniquellie, Kpein, Tappita, Saclepea, Gbapa, Yekepa, Frompa, Bahn, Karnplay |
| 5. | Grand Gedeh | Zwedru, Toe Town, Zia Town, Zai Town, Pennokehn, Zleh Town |

Project Activities:

The outreach component of The Team-Liberia project commenced on April 15, 2011. With preparation made, a work plan of activities was drafted to achieve the following objectives:

- To increase the viewership/listenership of the series so that it saturates the society;
- To create an identity among the audience so that they feel they are part of the series in some way; and
- To take advantage in a shift in attitudes and reorientation among the audience to facilitate them to transform their behavior and take action



Viewers at one of the screening sessions in Duport Road, Montserrado county

The project began with consultation at the community level – the leadership, elders and youth groups. It was necessary to proceed through this means prior to the screening so that the people gained an understanding of the project and its objectives as 2011 was elections year and the people needed to know what they were about to see and hear through the films. The youth of the communities assisted with the mobilization of residents and the radio stations in the communities were used to create awareness about the screening. Announcements and pre-recorded advertisements were aired by the following radio stations:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. ELBC Radio | – Montserrado County |
| Sky FM | – Montserrado County |
| Truth FM | – Montserrado County |
| 2. Radio Gbarnga | – Bong County |
| 3. Radio Saclepea | – Nimba County |
| 4. Radio Kintoma | – Lofa County |
| 5. Radio Peace | – Grand Gedeh County |

Besides the mobilization which were carried out by the youth and other community members, 5 point persons – 1 from each county – were recruited to assist with the planning and mobilization for the activities in the counties. These point persons were:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Francis Mah | Montserrado County |
| 2. Johnson Sharty | Grand Gedeh County |
| 3. Robert Matadi | Nimba County |
| 4. William Quire | Bong County |
| 5. Quaqua Miller | Lofa County |

Criteria were set for the recruitment of these point persons. They had to:

- Be a high school graduate
- Have knowledge of the area to be assigned or recruited from
- Have experience working with people

Their expectations included:

- Forming part of working group to plan the outreach activities/screening
- Performing fee-for-service activities (screening) in one of the selected counties
- Mobilizing residents in assigned county for the screening
- Distributing DVDs to video clubs and key public officials/stakeholders
- Assisting with town hall discussions
- Recording feedback from discussions and screening
- Reporting on activities at the end of the period
- Identifying and negotiating for screening space/video clubs
- Identifying and negotiating with radio stations for airing of promos
- Arranging for town hall discussions and focus group discussion

These point persons were involved in mobilizing the residents for the screening. By the use of megaphones, the point persons told the public about the screening hours before it began. As a result of this mobilization, more people than expected attended the screening, which took place before town halls, in market areas and on football fields. The launching of the film took place at the city hall in Saclepea, Nimba County. It was attended by the Acting City Mayor, a few elders, students and marketers. The screening began at 7:00 p.m. in the evening with a maximum of three films screened each night. A total of 10 episodes of the film were screened in each of the selected communities. Community elders and leaders, students, youth groups, marketers, police, school teachers, women, children, bike riders and health personnel watched the films at the various screening sites.

A few institutions working with youth and children were contacted to form part of this project. Three responded favorably up to the start of the screening process. The three institutions were CJPS (Center for Justice and Peace Studies), SEWODA (South-eastern Women Development Association) and EARS for the masses (a pro-democracy NGO). They also assisted with the focus group discussions.

Before the screening began there was an introduction, at which time TDS explained the purpose of the film and for screening of it in the communities. This was followed with the film's trailer and its theme music.



Audience at a screening in Nimba County

Viewership:

The communities showed great enthusiasm for the films after it was screened for the first time in New Kru Town. The news went about and on the following night the crowd tripled. By the time the screening was carried to the other communities, more people were turning up to see the film. The task of the point persons was also to do rough headcounts of viewers at each screening, asking for their occupation. This was intended to enable the team see whether the project was reaching its target beneficiaries. Table 2 provides details of the screening and the number of beneficiaries viewing the show:

Table 2: Number of Persons at each Screening

| No. | Community | Environment | County | Number of Beneficiaries |
|-----|----------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | New Kru Town | Before Town Hall | Montserrado County | 524 |
| 2. | Barnersville | Before Town Hall | Montserrado County | 671 |
| 3. | Old Road (Gaye Town) | Football Field | Montserrado County | 905 |
| 4. | Duport Road | Football Field | Montserrado County | 616 |
| 5. | Gbarnga | Open Space (Center of Town) | Bong County | 1,249 |
| 6. | Saclepea | In Town Hall | Nimba County | 894 |
| 7. | Zorzor | Center of Town (Before Old Gas Station) | Lofa County | 658 |
| 8. | Toe Town | In Market | Grand Gedeh County | 439 |
| | Total | | | 5,956 |

Feedback and Focus Group Discussions:

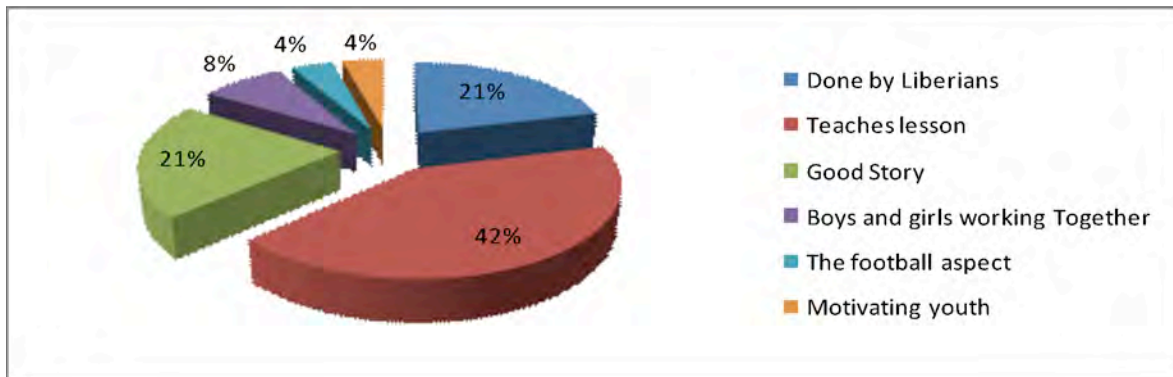
After each screening, about 12 – 15 persons were provided the opportunity to ask questions about the issues they had watched. This was necessary in that it helped the team gather immediate feedback from the audience. Altogether, the number of persons who asked questions during the entire screening was 286. Many persons in the audience were willing to answer questions from the TDS team also. At the end of the 10 episodes, TDS solicited names of people from the audience to form part of the focus group discussions. These were names of people who had watched the entire series. Their names were placed in categories for the focus group discussions. The groups included women, men, boys, and girls. Each group was placed in its respective category, 10 – 12 each for the focus group discussion and comprised of students, teachers, marketers, elders, community leaders, religious people, police, bike riders, and business people. The focus group discussions itself served as evaluation of the program.



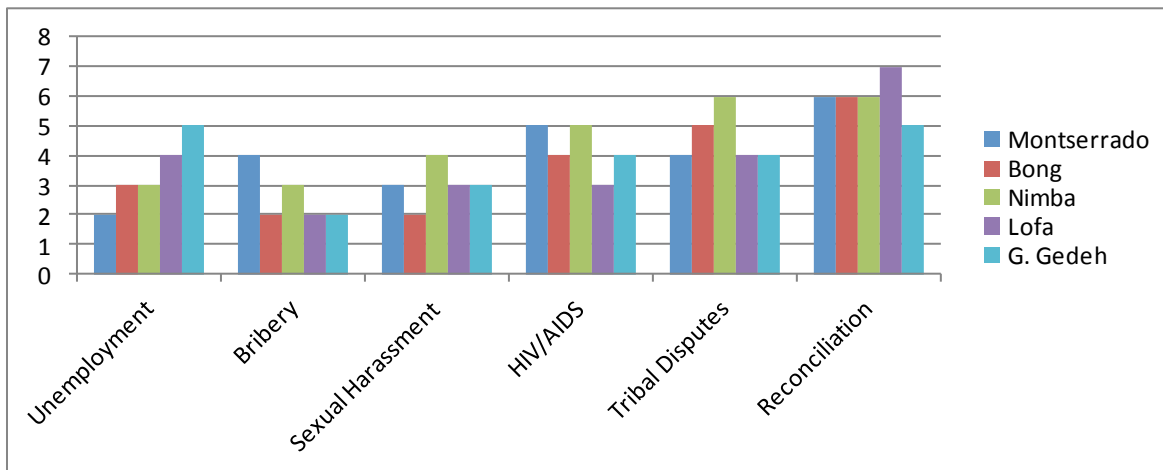
Some participants of the FGD, the Acting City Mayor of Saclepea fourth from left

The questionnaire for the focus group discussion was similar to the one used for the midterm evaluation. Responses from the beneficiaries indicate that they appreciate the series and want to see more of it shown in their communities. The chart below provides responses for why beneficiaries like the series and the preferred issues:

Most common responses for why people love the show



Preferred issues/topics of the show



Video Clubs:

In order to ensure that more people were provided the opportunity to watch the series, copies of the films were given to video clubs in the target counties. More than thirty video clubs received copies of *The Team*. The managers were very happy to receive these series free of charge; and because most of these managers had seen the series, they were glad to show them to other people who did not see them in the community.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Monitory and evaluation activities were not conducted due to the inadequacy of funds. Results gained, however, have been through feedback sessions and discussions. Focus group discussions were also conducted in some of the target communities.

Some success stories:

A girl in Nimba tells of a situation between her and her older brothers and sisters. She says, “Before our parents died they left all the property with me – farm land and houses. This is making my older brothers and sisters jealous and angry and it is causing a conflict between us. But this film has taught me how to stop that conflict. From here I will go and tell my sisters and brothers that we can now share the property between us. I believe this will stop the conflict between us.”

In Gbarnga, a former fighter (who owns a video club) tells us that he used to be on drugs and involved in other criminal acts. When he left drugs, he began telling on people who were involved in the act. He has been inspired by the film to go out and talk to his friends about the danger of drug abuse instead of telling on them. He asked the team to provide him the full series of *The Team* to show free in his video club for the children of Gbarnga to see.

A crippled, who formed part of the focus group discussion, asked that physically challenged persons – especially children – cast in subsequent series.

Someone watching the film remarked in the crowd saying in Liberian English, “Ehn your say Liberian films not fine?” What he really meant is, “You people say Liberian films are not beautiful, but here is one beautiful Liberian film.”

Emery Savage from the TDS-Sierra Leone project, who worked with the pre-production stage of *The Team-Liberia* project, was returning to Liberia when he was stopped at an immigration checkpoint for questioning. But the moment he told the officers that he was working with *The Team* project, he was immediately accorded the appropriate courtesy and congratulated for being part of the ‘beautiful film project.’”

Constraints:

Pre-election activities (including the referendum and campaigning) interfered with the project's activities. Also, the rains and the slow transfer of funds from Washington contributed largely to

slow pace of this project. As a result, the mobile screening did not reach all of the target communities.