

# Pop Culture

**with a purpose!**

Using edutainment media  
for social change



**Puntos de Encuentro,  
Soul City and Breakthrough  
share experiences from  
Nicaragua, South Africa,  
India and the U.S.**



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Videos and documents from  
Puntos de Encuentro,  
Soul City, Breakthrough  
and the authors

Oxfam Novib/KIC 2008

# Foreword

By Farah Karimi

Executive Director, Oxfam Novib

We are proud to present this publication and DVD on edutainment for social change.

“Edutainment” is an abbreviation for “Entertainment-Education” and is a communication strategy that is gaining popularity as its impact is proven over and over again.

What you have in your hands is the fruit of an inspiring collaboration between three outstanding organizations: Puntos de Encuentro (Nicaragua), Breakthrough (India and US) and the Soul City Institute of Health and Development Communication (South Africa) supported by Oxfam Novib KIC learning initiative<sup>1</sup>. We are happy and proud to work in partnership with these organizations and excited to be part of this adventure.

When I started working for Oxfam Novib in February 2008, these organizations and their representatives were among the first I had the honor to meet in person. I am impressed by the way they are able to get sensitive and often taboo issues on the political and public agenda. For example, Breakthrough reached more than 35 million people through *Is This Justice?* India’s first multi-media campaign to challenge the stigma and discrimination faced by women living with HIV/AIDS. With a campaign recall value as high as 73%, Breakthrough succeeded in transforming attitudes and building support for women who are unfairly expelled from their homes when their husbands die of HIV/AIDS.

The massively successful ‘social soap’ TV series *Sexto Sentido* (Sixth Sense) produced by Puntos de Encuentro in the Western Hemisphere’s second poorest country, Nicaragua, had the audacity to portray lesbian, gay and transgender characters and take on such polemic issues as sexual abuse, emergency contraception, rape and abortion in a country dominated by the traditional Catholic Church – all without getting censored or losing their sense of humor. Showing how domestic violence affects South African women in their primetime TV series of the same name, Soul City has had massive influence on the perception of people towards violence against women. The pot-banging by neighbors as a response to domestic violence in the series was thereafter often seen in the townships in South Africa. There are many more compelling examples of edutainment’s impact included in this publication.

When these organizations started out, they believed that to bring about not only individual change but also social change, they needed to be able to reach people on a massive scale and that the best way was to use the power of popular culture mass media in conjunction with other educational and community mobilization strategies. In the beginning they didn’t all know that what they were doing was labeled and theorized as Entertainment-Education or ‘edutainment’, but now they are leaders in the field.

Edutainment strategies have an impressive record in modeling new collective social norms, mobilizing communities, changing the mindsets of individuals, influencing public discourse and setting political agendas. It opens the minds and hearts of people and encourages them to make positive changes in their lives.

The organizations featured in this publication agree that it would be great to have had a resource like this one as guidance for developing innovative approaches for combining edutainment strategies with interpersonal communication methods to foster social change and strengthen social movements.

This publication focuses on unique communication-centered approaches to social change and introduces basic concepts, strategies and theories supporting edutainment strategies to foster social change and social movement building. It provides examples of how the organizations have used edutainment strategies, describing challenges, lessons learned and insights for the future, especially related to strategic planning and evaluation. It also provides references for where to find more information or who to seek for further advice on the design and implementation of these approaches.

Oxfam Novib believes edutainment is a promising approach that offers great potential for many social change organizations and movements. Therefore we hope this publication and DVD will not only inspire people about the potential of multi-media strategies for social change but will actually encourage people to apply them.

*Farah Karimi*

*The Hague, October 2008*

*The Netherlands*



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# Introduction

## Pop culture with a purpose: Dare to imagine!

There's a myth that educational TV and media for young people and adults have to be dull and serious, that it cannot be fun, engaging and entertaining. This publication questions this myth. We believe that one can address serious social issues through popular, entertainment media genres. Entertainment-Education (E-E or edutainment from now on) strategies for social change use traditional and non-traditional entertainment formats and the power of their narrative attributes, to engage mass audiences to question their existing realities and mobilize for social change. E-E strategies produce pop culture with a purpose.

Mass media circuits continuously funnel messages into neighborhoods and households and propel representations through borders and around the globe. Imagine the creative harnessing of these vast pathways to convey justice and equality. Think of television pictures broadcasting compelling dramatic storylines about *maquila* workers in Nicaragua. Imagine radio waves humming with stories from immigrants that have been detained and denied due process in the U.S. Envision a movement of children in South Africa, empowered by their interactive relationship with their favorite television show to lobby their local government.

E-E strategies contain not only the potential to engender mass mobilization, but also can demonstrate and stimulate public discourses about ways in which change can be accomplished. Audiences follow their favorite fictional characters over time, watching them suffer injustice and then finding ways to overcome it. The characters model possibilities for enacting change within families and neighborhoods, holding lessons for those who watch or listen.

Imagine the possibilities that are created by proliferating the representations of change in action! Imagine multiplying the reproduction of stories about ending family violence, challenging structural inequality and rebuilding relationships within popular media channels.

Edutainment strategies, as any communication strategy for social change, face diverse challenges. However, many edutainment experiences from around the world show the effectiveness of this approach. These are organizations that are part of local, national and/or international social movements that have stretched their resources, combined creativity, intuition, indigenous wisdom, theoretical and methodological rigor, built alliances with partner organizations and service providers, and leveraged their understanding of the

social issues that concern them to design and implement edutainment strategies to foster social change. This document will introduce you to three well-known organizations in the international field of edutainment, but there are many others.

### **Building the network: Cross learning and experience sharing**

This publication is intended to serve as a resource to support organizations thinking about engaging in the production and dissemination of effective edutainment for social change. But more importantly it is an invitation to join a network of organizations around the globe that believe E-E strategies have the power to affect the collective consciousness of societies and bring about long term social change.

The purpose of building a network of E-E strategists is to encourage cross learning and experience sharing among practitioners who use entertainment initiatives to foster social change and encourage more organizations to employ edutainment strategies for the common good. The purpose of such a network is to work together to develop edutainment media, discuss and find solutions to common challenges, further legitimize the funding of E-E strategies for social change within the industry of international development, and build a cross-border movement of practitioners working for social change within the realm of popular media.

Oxfam Novib is a member of Oxfam International and a Netherlands-based organization dedicated to ending poverty and injustice. As part of Oxfam-Novib's KIC

(Knowledge Infrastructure with and between Counterparts) initiative, organizations (such as Soul City, Breakthrough and Puntos) that are supported by and affiliated with Oxfam are given a platform and support to share their experiences and learn from each other. This cross-learning, experience-sharing collaboration began with three organizations:

1. Breakthrough, an international human rights organization with offices in India and the United States, that uses media and popular culture to promote equality and justice by addressing gender-based discrimination, HIV/AIDS, immigrant rights and racial justice.
2. Soul City Institute of Health and Development Communication, an innovative multi-media health promotion and social change initiative, reaching more than sixteen million South Africans through prime-time television, radio drama and printed materials.
3. Puntos de Encuentro ('Meeting Places' or 'Common Ground'), is a feminist Nicaraguan NGO that promotes youth and women's rights and challenging social norms by combining multimedia strategies, including television drama, a radio talk show and a feminist magazine, with leadership training and community education.

In March 2007, these organizations came together for a workshop on E-E strategies for social change in South Africa that was organized by Oxfam-Novib. During the experience-sharing and cross-learning meetings, these organizations discovered



they had many common concerns about strategic planning and evaluation, sustainability, private sector involvement and celebrity engagement. Through collaborative discourses, initiated in both real and virtual spaces, Breakthrough, Puntos de Encuentro and Soul City have tried to collectively enhance the knowledge base regarding the use of edutainment strategies for social change. Their collective experience is brought together in this publication with the hope that it will serve as an informational and inspirational resource for organizations that wish to learn about and apply, edutainment strategies for social change.

## What's in this document and how you can use it

.....

This document is divided into five sections. Each section can be read separately and in any order according to your needs and your level of familiarity with either the organizations or the theories.

### *Section 1: Edutainment: Basic concepts and strategies*

This section provides an up to date definition of edutainment. It classifies E-E initiatives into three different approaches based on how different organizations are using E-E to define the problem, identify their audiences, approach media and the expected outcomes and the timeline of their projects. It also explains the effectiveness of this strategy especially when combined with interpersonal and participatory approaches.

### *Section 2: Using E-E to build and strengthen social movements*

This section describes some of the strategies, successes and challenges experienced by Soul City, Breakthrough and Puntos de Encuentro. All three organizations are innovative in their efforts to build movements and strengthen civil society's capacity to promote change at the political and structural level. Both are essential elements to construct sustainable social change.

### *Section 3: Common challenges: Monitoring and evaluation*

This section addresses one of the most common concerns of organizations working on social change initiatives (using E-E or not). Nonprofit organizations and international funding agencies are under increasing pressure to demonstrate their effectiveness and document their program and outcomes, as the current political and funding environment continues to look for ways to measure performance and improve accountability.

We don't pretend to provide a magical solution to those challenges. This section provides a different perspective and some alternatives to assess social change initiatives. It will present some strategies that organizations implementing E-E strategies have used to facilitate the assessment of its effectiveness.

Most importantly, this section aims to introduce you to an increasingly popular perspective of evaluation based on the principles of complexity science; a science that approaches social change as a complex, unpredictable, uncontrollable and often contradictory long-term process, and how the principles of this perspective are being used by some innovative evaluators in different parts of the world.

*Section 4:*

*Main theories supporting edutainment practices and strategies*

This section provides an overview of communication and social change theories that have influenced the way that different E-E strategies have been structured. You are invited to further explore the theories and other information provided in this section, as it appeals to the local context of the social change endeavors that you are engaged with, by following the suggestions on the resource list in the last section.

You are also encouraged to experiment with a combination of communication for social change theories in practice to find the best structure for your needs. Remember theories are just that, theories. They aim to explain and account for media and social change related phenomena, but they keep being tested in

the field and evolving with the contributions of scholars and practitioners around the world. It can prove useful to be familiar with some of them when preparing proposals for funding and discussing alternatives approaches with other organizations in the field.

*Section 5:*

*Continuing the dialogue:*

*A resource list*

This last section provides you with a list of bibliographic references to explore and find out more about the topics discussed in this document. The objective of this document is not to be exhaustive but to spark ideas, promote dialogue and raise your interest about edutainment as an alternative and inspiring strategy for social change.

Inside the cover you will find a DVD accompanying this publication. The DVD and the document complement each other. The DVD contains audio-visual material and documents about and/or produced by the three organizations presented in this publication. The material help to illustrate what E-E “looks like” in different formats, context and with different purposes and messages and add more examples to the ones described here.

## Breakthrough

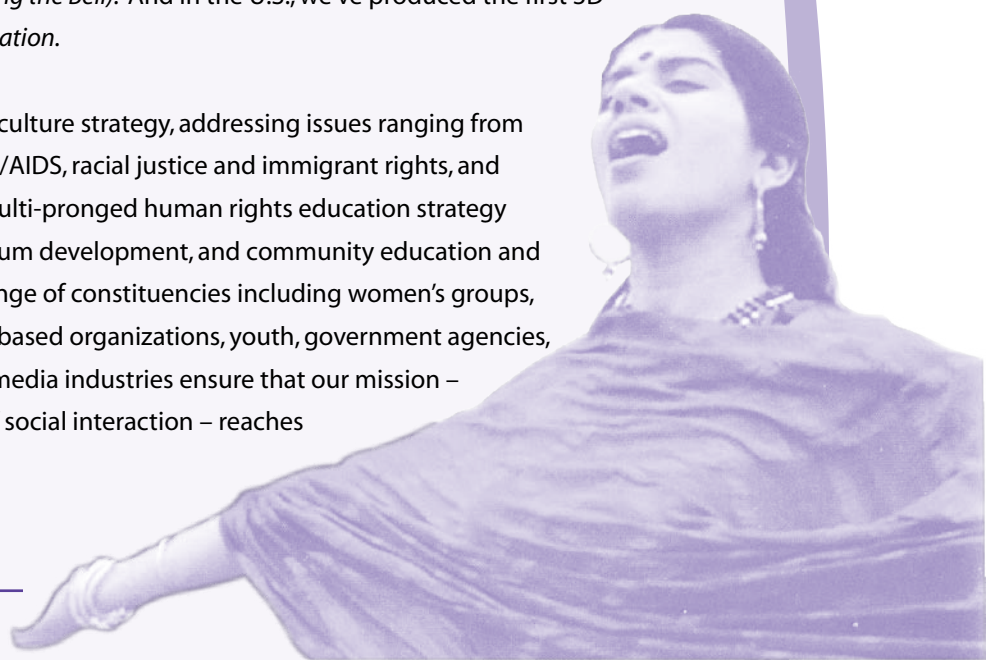
Eight years ago, an unusual sight on the TV screen riveted Indians – a music video featuring a woman driving a truck! As they watched in amazement, they saw a typical housewife, with her lively young daughter, walk out of an abusive marriage and abandon convention and norms in favor of an unusual female occupation. As the music video climbed the charts, media channels created a national buzz about this unique new entrant to the standard fare of Bollywood Masala. *Mann ke Manjeere (Rhythm of the Mind)*, an album of women’s dreams, went on to win the National Screen Award for Best Music Video and won nominations for Best Artist and Best Music Director.

And thus was born Breakthrough – with a bold new vision for advancing human rights through the power of popular culture and mass media. Despite obstacles and opposition on many fronts, *Mann ke Manjeere* was an unqualified success. The album and music video were created by some of the best minds of the music and advertising industry; it featured top artists and actors; it was released by a commercial music label; it won awards; and it was in the top ten for six months. More importantly, it placed the issue of domestic violence squarely in the public discourse and perhaps, marked the first time that men spoke out against this human rights violation in the national media.

*Mann ke Manjeere*, subtitled in English, Spanish, and French, reached an audience of approximately 100 million around the world, and continues to be used as an inspirational education tool to challenge gender-based violence. Its accompanying curriculum, *Strength in Action: An Educator’s Guide for Preventing Domestic Violence* has been used to train more than 75,000 individuals to become catalysts for change.

Building on the success of this first “edutainment” product, *Mann ke Manjeere*, Breakthrough has emerged as an innovative and effective transnational human rights organization, using the power of media and popular culture to encourage social change. Working through offices in India and the United States, Breakthrough’s cutting-edge multi-media campaigns confront challenging issues in India, like HIV infections in marriage (*What Kind of Man Are You?*), discrimination against women living with HIV/AIDS by their families (*Is This Justice?*), and the need for men and boys to take a stand against domestic violence – *Bell Bajao (Ring the Bell)*. And in the U.S., we’ve produced the first 3D game for change, *ICED – I Can End Deportation*.

Breakthrough’s mass media and popular culture strategy, addressing issues ranging from gender-based violence, sexuality and HIV/AIDS, racial justice and immigrant rights, and religion and peace, is part of a broader multi-pronged human rights education strategy that includes leadership training, curriculum development, and community education and mobilization. Partnerships with a wide range of constituencies including women’s groups, networks of positive people, community based organizations, youth, government agencies, and the entertainment, advertising, and media industries ensure that our mission – respect for human rights at every level of social interaction – reaches the broadest audience possible.



## Soul City

With its multimedia communication strategy that uses television and radio drama to influence peoples' social norms, attitudes and behaviors, the Johannesburg-based Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication is regarded as an international leader in public health promotion. Its two flagship series (also referred to as "brands") are *Soul City* and *Soul Buddyz*, targeted to adults and 8 to 12 year olds, respectively, each containing a television series, a corresponding radio drama --broadcast in nine of South Africa's 11 official languages-- as well as glossy print material, including comic books, life skills materials and workbooks.

Soul City's origins go back to 1992, when Dr. Garth Japhet was working as a medical doctor at a clinic in Alexandra, a township just north of Johannesburg. The number one cause of child death in Japhet's clinic was diarrhea, which was easily preventable death if mothers knew about how to rehydrate their child. Teaming up with another medical doctor, Dr. Shereen Usdin, Japhet launched Soul City, a health education initiative that was to reach the people through multimedia edutainment programming. Its television series, *Soul City*, became an instant hit, and the organization since then continues to march forward. In 1999, it launched *Soul Buddyz*, its series targeted to 8 to 12 year olds, addressing their problems and concerns in school, at home, and their communities.

Soul City uses an exhaustive research process to create highly compelling storylines. For each of its series, Soul City chooses prioritizes three or four health and development issues to address, and holds consultations with experts, civil society groups, medical doctors, and scholars. Its in-house researchers engage in a long consultative process with audiences, trying to understand what they know about the issue, how they feel, and what barriers prevent them from practicing desired behaviors. Accordingly, scripts are developed and pre-tested for their entertainment and educational value, clearing the way for production, broadcast, and distribution of multi-media materials.

Soul City is currently collaborating with partner organizations in eight other countries in the Southern African region -- Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe - to build capacity among the region's health communications programs. The local partner chooses which Soul City materials (television, radio and/or print) to adopt (and adapt) to their local contexts. Namibia's flagship drama program, for instance, is called *Desert Soul*, in Malawi it's *Pakachere*, and in Zimbabwe it's *Action Pals*.



# Puntos de Encuentro & Sexto Sentido

The main characters of *Sexto Sentido*, Nicaragua's only homegrown "social soap" telenovela TV series aren't rich kids, jocks or beauty queens; they're working class teenagers living in Nicaragua who helped each other deal with homophobia, sexual abuse, HIV, racism, rape and abortion.

This award-winning weekly TV social soap captured 70% of the TV watching audience during its timeslot. The 80-episode series has crossed borders for broadcast in other countries as well. *Sexto Sentido* has managed to bring a feminist perspective on taboo issues into the commercial mainstream in a country that is dominated by deeply entrenched machismo and the Catholic Church hierarchy – all without getting censored or losing their sense of humor.

In the context of growing religious fundamentalism and social and political conservatism, *Sexto Sentido* is the centerpiece of a broader effort to reframe public and private discourse around often polarizing issues. The edutainment framework utilizes emotionally engaging drama to humanize stories on taboo subjects. *Sexto Sentido* doesn't "preach to the converted," but rather looks to open up dialogue with the great majority of people who don't necessarily consider themselves progressive or feminist, but who may be open to question conventional wisdom.

But *Sexto Sentido* isn't just a TV series. It's part of broader strategy to open up dialogue that combines radio and print materials, as well as youth leadership training, coalition building and community mobilization. The cast visits high schools to open up dialogue about subjects not usually discussed in school. Billboards in major towns use *Sexto Sentido* characters to publicize local health and social service centers to connect audience members to youth-friendly centers, and local organizations use special DVD packs with thematic editions of *Sexto Sentido* and discussion guides to go deeper into the issues.

Puntos is currently developing a new TV series that will begin production in 2009. *Aquí está Eva* (Here's Eve) will explore women's economic empowerment, household power dynamics and reframe "family values" from a feminist perspective.



# Section 1

## Edutainment: Basic concepts and strategies

### Communication and social change

Communication processes are not just an accompaniment or embellishment to accomplish social change, but an integral and fundamental part of the social change enterprise. Communication processes nurture critical thinking capabilities such as identifying and analyzing the causes and manifestations of discrimination, social exclusion and violence and the ability to develop and implement personal and collective alternatives to solve those problems. Communication processes can be utilized to catalyze changes in social norms and collective attitudes by provoking interpersonal and public dialogue.

E-E strategies are not magic solutions for development issues and there are many scholars that critique their use and/or the way their impact and effectiveness has been measured. However, edutainment, especially combined with other methodologies and approaches such as movement-building strategies and interpersonal communication, has shown to be highly effective in several contexts.

### Edutainment: An age-old tradition

Entertainment has been used for educational purposes for centuries. There is a well-documented history of storytelling

traditions that transfer cultural values from one generation to the next. But over the past decade the theoretical development and the strategic dimensions of edutainment as a communication strategy in development work have grown significantly<sup>1</sup>.

Entertainment-Education (E-E), or edutainment strategies have been used for decades to address health-related issues including blood pressure, smoking, vaccine promotion and family planning. It has also been used for the past 15 years in HIV/ AIDS prevention. E-E has been increasingly applied as a communications strategy in the environment, peace building and conflict resolution and rural development sectors. E-E is increasingly being used as a strategic tool with a varying diversity of agendas.

Influenced by diffusion of innovation theory, social marketing principles and social learning theory (see theory section for explanations of these theories), the use of entertainment formats to promote change in attitudes and behaviors has spread quickly in the last few decades. Between 1975 and 1985, Mexican television producer, Miguel Sabido, created a total of seven soap operas with built-in social messages. E-E communication strategies were taken up in India, Kenya, Tanzania and Brazil. These early E-E innovations became the building blocks

for the use of fictional genres in television and radio for social change today<sup>2</sup>.

## What is edutainment?

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Edutainment is not a theory of communication, but rather a strategy used to disseminate ideas to bring about behavioral and social change. While one can find several definitions of edutainment in literature<sup>3</sup>, Thomas Tufte, professor of Communication at Roskilde University in Denmark provides the latest and most comprehensive definition:

Edutainment is the use of entertainment as a communicative practice crafted to strategically communicate about development issues in a manner and with a purpose that can range from the more narrowly defined social marketing of individual behavior to the liberating and citizen-driven articulation of social change<sup>4</sup>.

Tufte made another contribution to the field by revealing where and how E-E has managed to transcend traditional dichotomies found within both development theory and communication theory about top-down vs. bottom-up approaches. Arvind Singhal<sup>5</sup> argued: "For social change to occur, both dissemination and dialogue must dynamically co-exist, each shaping the other."

## What makes edutainment so effective as a communication strategy for social change?

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First, the public is consuming more and more entertainment. Entertainment is becoming a more integral part of people's

life: during shopping, traveling, eating, driving, exercising and working experiences. While many still perceive entertainment as frivolous in content and unimportant in its effects (i.e., something that takes up large amounts of the daily time of individuals, but does not represent an important force for human behavior change) studies around the world suggest that edutainment has generally been found to be an important agent of social change<sup>6</sup>.

Second, the powerful and engaging effect of drama and storytelling is especially relevant to convey complex messages and engage people in complex, long-term processes.

Television and radio soap operas (two of the most widespread formats of E-E) have at least four advantages:

- Audience popularity (if they're good!)
- They provide effective emotional identification and role modeling.
- They allow complex and layered treatment of multiple themes (like sexual abuse and machismo, or abortion and the emergency contraception pill) through intertwined and on-going storylines.
- Long-term, repeated exposure to different aspects of the same theme<sup>7</sup>.

Third, this long-term engagement produces the effect of a cumulative message dose: the more messages people are exposed to and the longer the period of exposure, the more likely they are to have a 'positive' attitude toward an issue and be motivated to change. As Amy Bank of Puntos de Encuentro notes, "Short-term, single-issue campaigns although very useful and often

the best way to raise initial awareness and break the silence on difficult topics – such as violence and reproductive health-- were not necessarily the surest way to achieve deep and sustainable individual and social change.” Not only was this a matter of cost-effectiveness, but also, she continued, “we know that people don’t live their lives by ‘theme’ or process issues in isolation and mono-thematic campaigns are often too oversimplified in their treatment of the issue at hand. We felt the need to address issues that are interrelated with each other in order to promote dialogue and debate around the complexity of each one<sup>8</sup>.”

### The magic is in the mix

Complex systems and processes, such as social change, evolve by trying out different methodological combinations. Experimentation with combining communication techniques and methods of social change will reveal functional portions. Next, the pieces must be linked together with awareness of the unpredicted emerging behaviors that those new interconnections bring about. The organizations described in this document have developed the communication strategies for social change in this fashion.

Complex problems require complex approaches. Change is not immediate or even particularly rational. There is no linear or cause-and-effect relationship between knowledge and attitudes and practice. There are many factors and many catalysts of different kinds, at different moments and on different levels that are necessary to bring about change, and there is lot of internal and external conflict along the way. Strategies implemented by organizations to bring

about social change include: combining popular mass media appeal with on-going coverage and environment-enabling benefits of television and radios shows; support of the local media; community mobilization and coordination alliances with local organizations; training activities, interpersonal reinforcement mechanisms as well as advocacy activities to change laws and policies; links with service delivery; ongoing monitoring and evaluation; and dissemination of the results.

Amy Bank of Puntos de Encuentro explains the effectiveness of Puntos’ multi-media, multi-method approach:

We believe the magic is in the mix, because then you have both individual AND social change catalysts operating simultaneously and over time. You get the benefits of both big scale and more concentrated face-to-face reinforcement at the local level. And, you can still do specific thematic campaigns for awareness raising. The results is that the synergy of the integrated whole is definitely more than the sum of the parts.<sup>9</sup>

### Deconstructing and reconstructing

All three organizations highlighted in this publication know that for social change to occur, oppressive relationships need to be identified, then deconstructed, and then reconstructed. Soul City and Puntos de Encuentro use their locally produced edutainment soap operas as launching pads for their multimedia, multilevel communication strategies and couple them with on-the-ground advocacy initiatives and partnerships with local organizations to synergize social outcomes.



## Empathy and 'intersectionality'

Puntos de Encuentro based their Sexto Sentido storylines on their years of work with and on-going interaction with women's and youth groups. Their strategy "We're Different We're Equal" puts into practice the notion that social change begins with personal change and that each person embodies a number of different social conditions that puts him or her in different situations of power or privilege on the one hand, or as targets of oppression and discrimination on the other. The point is to show the intersectionality of power relations and the commonality among different issues, identities, and oppressions, and to build alliances and work for change.



Their annual youth leadership camps are safe spaces where 150 grassroots leaders come together to break down prejudices and stereotypes about people who are different from themselves, and to build new alliances. The camp brings together adolescent and young men and women; urban and rural, poor and not-so-poor; mestizos, indigenous and afro-caribbeans; people with different kinds of physical abilities and disabilities; HIV-positive people who are willing to be out, people with different levels of education; gay, straight, bi, trans and questioning folks. They live in close quarters for 13 days with people who they might be afraid of or even have disdain for.

Juan's story illustrates one of the dynamics. After a series of sessions to get people to feel comfortable and safe, the facilitators lined everyone at one end of the room and asked the men to cross to the other side of the room. Juan happily crossed over. He looked proudly at the other men with him, and at the women who were on the other side of the room. They crossed back and were all together again. Then the facilitators asked that those who had ever gone hungry because their family didn't have enough money to buy food to cross over. Juan hesitated, but he crossed over, but he wasn't quite as happy about it. In turn, the facilitators asked people to cross over if they had a disability that had limited them in any way, if they considered themselves LGBT or questioning, and so on. And so on. Juan crossed over for some and stayed put for others. There was some nervous laughter and some emotional moments. At the end, everyone had experienced being on different sides of the room at different moments. While Juan is young, dark skinned, and poor, and had suffered discrimination and violence because of these conditions, he is also male, heterosexual, and doesn't have a disability and he recognized that he had more power and privilege than women, LGBT people and those with disabilities.

Twelve days of living together, learning about each other and listening to each other forges friendships and new ways of relating and participants take their new knowledge and changed attitudes with them back to their communities.

Since not everyone can go to camp, Sexto Sentido seeks to bring something of that same experience to hundreds of thousands, if not millions of young people. Granted, it's not the same as living together for 12 days, but week in and week out viewers do get to "live with" a cast of characters who represent the same kind of diversity as at youth camp. In a sense, TV offers a safe environment for viewers to re-think their own attitudes and actions... and evaluations show that indeed they do.

## Social issues as human stories

Whether through fictional characters in a television series or real people, caught in the daily grind of their lives, E-E strategies open up airtime for the human side of social issues. People connect with real life stories more than to abstract ideas and concepts. Through storytelling an audience sees characters' problems and possible solutions, a less didactic and non-threatening approach than telling people what to do.

Stories allow for emotional engagement: an opportunity to experience emotions and value the murmurs of the heart alongside the mind. Stories transform news perceived as unfortunate circumstances experienced

by other people in distant places into accounts of human struggle that audiences can empathize and identify with.

Take the polemic topic of immigrant rights. Legislators sitting in the capital pass laws framing immigration as a socio-economic or political issue. Breakthrough believes that the right of immigrants is foremost a human right issue and a citizenry should understand how "public policies" influence the daily life of millions of people, many of whom are our neighbors, co-workers, or relatives. Through videos, brochures and web-based technologies, Breakthrough puts a human face on this issue, enabling real people to tell their stories.

### Agatha's story

Agatha Joseph is a native of St. Lucia, immigrated to the United States in 1986. In 1997, her 16 year-old daughter, a legal resident of the United States, was found with a marijuana joint for which she was booked and fined by the local police. Several years went by without an incident. One morning, as Agatha's daughter returned to the U.S. after a vacation in the Caribbean, she was arrested and sent to a detention center. The charge: The same old marijuana violation for which she was fined at age 16. Why so? Because as a result of the revised immigration laws of 1996, the minor crime committed years ago was now categorized as an "aggravated felony" and subject to double punishment.



Breakthrough humanizes a mother's trauma through Agatha and her daughter's story. In a highly emotional video, Agatha describes the horrific conditions and harsh treatment that her daughter faced during three years of detention. She was transferred seven times without prior notice and barely survived a gymnasium fire on account of a chained exit.

## Getting to places other media doesn't get to

Here's a story of the impact of a special edition of *Sexto Sentido* dealing with sexual abuse on a remote community in Nicaragua, as told by Arlene, an actress and director of *Sexto Sentido*:

We were in Bilwi, a remote community in the indigenous Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua and the woman directing the *comisaria de la mujer*<sup>10</sup> told us that she used the special edition of *Sexto Sentido* – “We need to be able to talk” – to train police officers in the remotest of communities. The special edition told the story of Laura, a 14-year-old character in the series that is sexually abused at home. During one of the trainings, when the tape was playing, people from the neighboring community gathered around to watch the show. The show elicited varied reactions from the people who had gathered and the tape must have sparked reflection on this topic as the number of reported cases of sexual abuse increased significantly in that community. Women who had suffered sexual abuse when they were young and didn't have the chance to tell someone about it, or find any kind of social support filed most of cases. These older women made the decision to break the cycle of silence not just for themselves, but also for their daughters. Many of them – especially those who lived in the most remote communities – traveled for days in harsh road conditions to take their daughters to the police station to press charges against their abusers. Sometimes it meant that they had to sleep in the doorways of shops, if they did not enough have resources to pay for a room.



What was amazing was that while there is no electricity in those communities and people have no access to any media and most of them are illiterate, the especial edition hit home for many women helping them to take action. Even though few perpetrators spent time in jail, the cases of sexual abuse declined. Most importantly, women in the community felt empowered by the process of breaking the silence and helping their daughters to get out of the abusive situation, given no body had done that for them when they were abused.

So, the learning process from the special edition of *Sexto Sentido* went beyond the mere denunciation of sexual abuse, an important act in itself, but also helped develop emotional networks and social support so essential for such changes to occur.



## People and communities change themselves

Sustainable change from a communications strategy only happens if it is able to promote self-

organizing processes within the communities. It is not about telling people what to do, but to propel them to take initiatives and coordinate efforts with other members of the community to bring about the kind of change they want.

### Banging pots and rattling the status quo

In 1999, *Soul City*, rattled its prime-time viewers when a well respected character, a schoolteacher, Thabang slapped his wife, Matlakala. As the cycle of violence increased and began to take a heavy physical and emotional toll of Matlakala, she shared her plight with her mother. She was advised to *bekezela*, that is, endure the abuse given it was primarily a woman's duty to make a marriage work. Thabang's father agreed, emphasizing that as per tradition a husband must discipline their wife.

When Matlakala's beatings got worse, including a hospitalization, she learned about South Africa's new Domestic Violence Act and served Thabang a protection order. Matlakala's father explicitly urges the neighbors to not be "silent colluders," but rather to intervene. As the television series rolled and when in an episode Thabang begins to beat Matlakala, her neighbors, collectively, stood outside Thabang's house beating their pots and pans. The loud noise of dozens of pots and pans sent a clear message to Thabang that the community disapproved of his actions and an assurance to Matlakala that her neighbors cared about her.

This pot-banging episode, which earned one of the highest audience ratings in South Africa in 1999, demonstrated the importance of creatively modeling collective efficacy in order to energize neighbors, who, for social and cultural reasons, felt previously inefficacious. By watching the neighbors collectively act against an abuser on screen, viewers learned new ways to break the cycle of spousal abuse. Within weeks, pot banging to stop partner abuse was reported in several communities in South Africa (including in Khayelitsha Township, Cape Town, as the photo below illustrates). Clearly, members of these communities self-organized themselves to discuss, decide and act to curb this insidious social practice. Interestingly, patrons of a local pub in Thembisa Township in South Africa self-organized themselves to reinvent the new collective behavior they learned. They collectively banged bottles in the bar when a man physically abused his girlfriend.



## Section 2

# Building alliances and strengthening social movements

Social organizing capacity, strengthening civil society, individual and collective self-efficacy and others factors represents a complex web of variables influencing the process of social change.

Puntos de Encuentro, Soul City and Breakthrough each deal with different contexts, different histories, different cultures and different ways of organizing. But all three share the idea that social change happens as the result of the interaction of multiple elements in the system. Individual behavioral change is important but not

enough. Changes in the policies, discourses, social structures and cultures that create and reinforce different forms of discrimination and oppression are also necessary.

To achieve this Breakthrough, Puntos de Encuentro and Soul City work with civil society organizations and seek to build and/or strengthen of social movements. The following narratives, written by each organization, describe some of their efforts, successes and challenges in their work with social movements.

## Soul City: The Soul Buddyz Club Story

### *Background*

The Soul Buddyz Club program is a project of Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication in partnership with SABC<sup>11</sup> Education. It promotes children as active agents for change in society. The project was conceptualized in early 2002 and officially launched in January 2003. Soul Buddyz Club emerged as a direct result of the popularity and success of the Soul Buddyz multimedia vehicle, which comprises a prime time television drama;



a radio drama and interactive educational materials for grade seven learners.

The Soul Buddyz Club can be described as a social movement for children in which learners between the ages of 8-12 years old are supported to establish clubs within their schools. Children, together with educators in their school, are expected to complete formal registration processes in order to gain official membership. The clubs are located within primary schools in South Africa and have received valuable input and support from National and Provincial education departments. There are over 5,000 clubs across the country with a membership of 100,000 children.

Through structured processes, all Soul Buddyz clubs receive a variety of materials that provide content and information about specific social and health issues, as well as skills based activities that provide opportunities to understand and internalize the issues as well as practice skills learned through the process. Soul Buddyz Clubs embrace the motto of 'children in action' so children not only have access to information about certain issues but are also encouraged and supported to undertake activities or actions that can lead to changes in either attitudes, behavior or situations in the schools, homes and communities. Many of the issues covered in the Soul Buddyz Club materials are directly linked to issues addressed in the Soul Buddyz multimedia intervention.

Soul Buddyz Clubs subscribe to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and simultaneously promote responsibilities that go along with each of these Rights. Soul Buddyz Club further promotes non-discrimination, respect for self and others and gender equality.



### ***Soul Buddyz Club and Edutainment***

The Soul Buddyz Club is an apt example of the power and influence of mass media and edutainment. The Soul Buddyz Club was initiated in direct response to many children's request to belong to Soul Buddyz. The Soul Buddyz drama (characters, content, genre, etc.) resonated strongly with ordinary children in Soul Africa who were the loyal audience of the drama. The combination of education and entertainment, in the form of Soul Buddyz, gave birth to an unexpected phenomenon. Ordinary children in Soul Africa identified with the characters and most importantly the issues being raised through this edutainment vehicle. Children had a strong association with the principle of children as activist, as demonstrated in the drama.

While the Soul Buddyz Club was a direct spin off of the Soul Buddyz edutainment vehicle, today both projects reinforce each other. Through the use of mass media, Soul Buddyz continues to highlight issues affecting children and their positive responses to these issues. Simultaneously the characters

in the TV and radio series are role models and catalysts for action among Soul Buddyz Club members engaged in activities at grassroots level.

The edutainment vehicle Soul Buddyz as well as the Soul Buddyz Clubs gave rise to another edutainment vehicle called Buddyz on the Move (BOM). Members of the Soul Buddyz Club have embraced the concept of children in action. On a monthly basis the Soul City Institute receives evidence of school and community projects initiated by the Soul Buddyz Club. Efforts to showcase these projects and the children involved have resulted in the production of a new reality television show called BOM. It shows real children engaging with adults from their communities and how this helps to make changes in their lives. BOM shows how ordinary children are doing extraordinary things to learn more, help others and make a difference in their direct environment. Evaluation studies show that both members and non-members of these Clubs have more information from BOM and are inspired to take on similar projects.

### ***Challenges in linking edutainment and social movements***

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One of the most significant challenges we face is finding the right balance between using strong modeling in the drama to educate and inspire children in Clubs, but at the same time ensuring that the children do not directly copy what they have seen in the drama.

With the continuously changing media environment, every new series of Buddyz needs to be fresh, innovative and inspirational while still appealing to children

as being real and authentic. We've had situations where children have been so motivated or inspired by the drama that they end up not being able to think outside the box to deal with the specifics of their own problems in real life.

Another challenge arises in terms of developing a system to concretize the relationship between the drama and the children's movement. Although we do attempt to promote a stronger synergy between the drama series and the clubs, in most instances research and testing of the edutainment is undertaken with children who do not belong to clubs. We need to find a system that enables us to engage the captive audience of Club members more vigorously so that interaction with them can influence not only future series of Buddyz, but also the overall strategy for Clubs. We need to be able to engage a variety of children who do not belong to Clubs as well as club members in order to get the most extensive input from children at large. At present, a lot of research happens with non-members and some work happens with Club members but this can indeed be strengthened.

### ***Impact and lessons learned***

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There have been many noteworthy changes through the establishment of Clubs. Soul Buddyz Club evaluation reports also confirms this.

Despite earlier ideologies which position children as helpless and passive participants in society, Soul Buddyz Clubs have demonstrated the opposite. Through participation in Clubs many children have shown that they are concerned about

themselves and others. They have been excited and energized to take action to bring about change and have gained additional life skills through the process.

Children have embraced Soul Buddyz club as a children's movement and they have demonstrated that they can work towards common goals. Through their small and sometimes large-scale projects the Clubs have impact not only on other students at their school but on the community as a whole. Many Clubs have been innovative and courageous and have ventured to explore other issues affecting children beyond those presented in the Soul Buddyz Club materials.

Through the establishment of the Soul Buddyz Clubs we have been able to extend the

positive impact of the Soul Buddyz multimedia edutainment intervention to reach and change the lives of thousands of children.

Today, the Buddyz still carry the torch for this project, following up to ensure that work on the udhonga continues. This project demonstrates the ability of young children to engage in voluntary activities in partnership with adults, to mobilise people and resources and traditional and government leadership for the greater good of the community. On an individual and collective level the children also learnt leadership skills, communication skills, team work, organising skills, problem-solving skills, conflict management skills. In this way the power of volunteerism and collective action was reinforced, which is critical to developing responsible and active citizenship.

### The Mkhazane Primary School Soul Buddyz Club

For many months, the community of Mkhazana in Ulundi (Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa) contended with a huge udhonga (gaping ditch) which affected their daily lives. Travelling for both commuters and pedestrians was a strain. Negotiating their way around this udhonga was often fraught with fear and great danger. School going children in particular were affected as the udhonga was on the route to schools. During rainy spells the udhonga filled up and caused spillage onto the roads, resulting in many children missing school.

As part of their Road Safety project the Soul Buddyz Club from Mkhazane primary school prioritized the udhonga as the number one issue affecting them as children and the community at large. The Club members decided to have a meeting to discuss this hazard and brainstormed ideas on how to deal with it. They agreed on a plan of action which involved lobbying support from the school principal and governing body, the Department of Agriculture and the local Headman and Chief. They shared tasks like writing letters, holding meetings with stakeholders and inspecting the site to identify what kind of work needed to be done. They mobilised key players and together started fixing the udhonga.

The Buddyz, other students and even parents collected the stones needed to fill the ditch. The Department of Agriculture sent trucks and machines to move the collected stones into the udhonga. The Department of Public Works proposed to install water pipes to assist with drainage during rainy spells. The most exciting and unexpected outcome was the commitment by the Department of Public Works to build a bridge which would be a permanent solution.





# Breakthrough: Building human rights culture in India and the United States

Working in India and the United States, Breakthrough seeks to build a global human rights culture by empowering individuals to become agents of change and by creating learning tools that innovatively utilize new media and popular culture. Breakthrough creates awareness and promotes dialogue about human rights issues, particularly related to immigrant rights in the U.S. and

women's rights in India, through leadership trainings, youth and community outreach, and multimedia products that pair education with entertainment. Through invaluable partnerships with like-minded local, national and international organizations, government agencies and the entertainment industry, Breakthrough effectively amplifies and multiplies its outreach and impact.

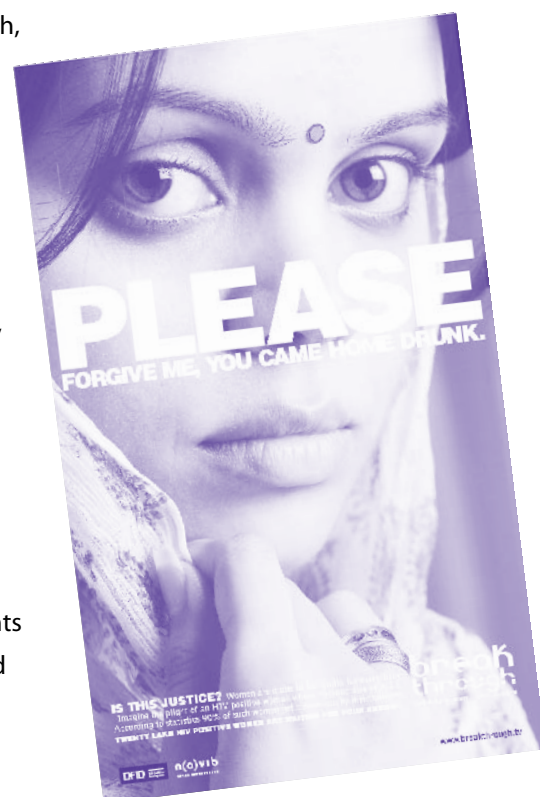
## Breakthrough and edutainment in India

In February 2007, Breakthrough reached 35 million people with *Is This Justice?* – India's first multimedia campaign to bring attention to gender-based violence, discrimination, and the stigma faced by women living with HIV/AIDS. A hard-hitting yet sensitive campaign created pro bono by advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather in four languages – Hindi, English, Kannada and Marathi – *Is This Justice?* asks for greater responsibility from the immediate family. The campaign challenges the treatment of women, particularly women living with HIV/AIDS who are rendered homeless after their husbands die of AIDS.

*Is This Justice?* builds on earlier mass media interventions including popular and award-winning music videos featuring Indian celebrities and actors that have been widely disseminated through music channels like MTV. *Mann ke Manjeere (Rhythm of the Mind)*, Breakthrough's first music video on violence against women has one of the highest recall values of Indipop videos in the country. Breakthrough's ability to reach mass audiences with limited resources is possible

because of the ongoing partnerships it has developed with mainstream media channels and platforms that distribute our media on a pro bono or highly subsidized basis.

Breakthrough's mass media reach is reinforced through partnerships with more than 100 NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) across three Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. We build the capacity of youth, senior field workers and trainers to address gender-based discrimination, sexuality and HIV/AIDS through our Rights Advocates Program, which has trained more than 100,000 men and women thus far. Rights Advocates are trained with comprehensive materials that draw



on Breakthrough produced media. They then become catalysts for change in their communities by promoting human rights values and challenging violence and discrimination against women. Our intersectional approach to human rights ensures that Rights Advocates incorporate the impact of caste, religion, economic status and related issues into their understanding of gender and sexuality.

### **Challenges in linking edutainment and social movements**

An overarching challenge for Breakthrough in India is penetrating the highly sophisticated and complex mass media space with limited resources. Unlike many other emerging economies, India has long had a cinema tradition that outpaces Hollywood. There are hundreds of TV channels in multiple languages and the Bollywood ethos underlies a significant part of mass media consumption in large metros,

small towns and rural areas.

In order to engage the Indian public and capture viewers, Breakthrough's mass media campaigns have to be very slick and meet high production values. Therefore, an important strategy from our inception has been to rely on some of the best creative minds in the advertising and music industry to partner with us in media

development. To sustain these partnerships on a pro-bono basis presents an ongoing challenge because Breakthrough's productions compete with highly paid clients for their time and attention.

Limited resources also place constraints on the number of mass media interventions that Breakthrough is able to make in the public space. Gender-based discrimination is the product of hundreds of years of bias against women and continues to be reinforced by mass media through movies, soap operas, music videos, advertising and the like. While the impact of Breakthrough's campaigns on challenging and reshaping these norms have been demonstrated by rigorous evaluation, the pace of change is slow because of the intense competition we face from corporations and other better-resourced entities who do not share similar human rights values.

### **Impact and lessons learned**

Working with Breakthrough, independent research and evaluation agencies evaluate the success of each campaign, and assess the reach and impact of our message. *Is This Justice?* reached an estimated 35 million people through television, print, and radio campaign ads. The campaign was released on 27 national and regional television channels, 13 regional radio stations and presented on 42 outdoor billboards in six cities. As a result of this widespread effort to disseminate the campaign material, the recall value of the campaign was as high as 73%. More importantly, the evaluation showed a significant positive change in knowledge and attitudes towards women living with HIV/AIDS.



Responses to the campaign through focus group discussions showed a decrease by 22% in the number of individuals who feel it is necessary for a woman to stay with her HIV-positive husband; this is particularly significant in the Indian context as it is usually considered the wives' duty to stand by their husbands under all circumstances. Additionally, responses showed a decrease in blaming a woman for not satisfying her husband, who then went to sex workers and became infected; an increase in those who acknowledged that women can not negotiate safe sex; and an increase in those who acknowledged that women are further subjected to domestic violence and treated unjustly after their husbands' deaths.

The campaign sensitized the community about the unequal status of women and how it is linked to the violence they experience. It also sensitized the community about the presence of HIV-positive women among the general

population, and their vulnerability due to domestic violence and inability to negotiate safer sex. In response to the campaign, the community suggested family support and the right to shelter in order to reduce the stigma and discrimination faced by women living with HIV/AIDS.

The impact of mass media coupled with the catalytic work of the Rights Advocates at the community level has led to the emergence of new methodologies to advance women's rights in India. We have been able to capture the power of popular culture to engage and inform at the mass level while harnessing its potential for social change at the community level. And by insisting that men and women alike take responsibility for the protection and promotion of women's human rights, we believe that the Breakthrough approach will lead to real positive change in the lives of women and their communities.

## Breaking through in India

After attending a workshop on domestic violence, a woman from rural Karnataka, decided to act against her son who was inflicting physical and emotional violence on his wife. She sent her daughter-in-law to her parents' home and encouraged her to take a stand against her own son. Through the workshop, she realized the importance of morally, emotionally and financially assisting her daughter in law. When her son realized that his wife would stand up to him and his own mother would support her actions, he had no choice but to turn for the better. Now there is no violence or abuse in that family.

This story from rural Karnataka is especially salient for various reasons. First, recognizing and taking action against domestic violence is a huge step in a male-dominated society where men are in positions of authority. Second, it is unusual for supportive alliances to develop among women suffering from domestic violence, given their low self-esteem and a lack of self-efficacy. Further, such alliances are particularly unusual between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law who usually compete for their son or husband's favor.



In February 2008, Breakthrough launched ICED (“I Can End Deportation”), a free, 3D downloadable video game that educates wide audiences about unfair U.S. immigration policies that deny due process and human rights to all immigrants, regardless of immigration status. Since ICED launched, it has been downloaded online and played offline well over 115,000 times. Because of the contentious nature of the debate over immigration policy in the U.S., ICED received overwhelming mainstream media attention. The game was covered by TV, radio and print channels and spread through the blogosphere like wildfire. An estimated 25 million Americans learned about the lack of due process and human rights in immigration policy through media coverage of the game.

ICED players step inside the shoes of five immigrant youth and are taken through a virtual experience that mirrors the injustices of American immigration policies. The ultimate challenge is to obtain citizenship, though, as in real life, this proves most difficult. As players traverse

the city, they are confronted with a series of dilemmas and answer myth/fact questions that problematize immigrants’ status in society and reflect the tenuous position of immigrants in the U.S. If answered incorrectly, players face immigration officers

and increase their chance of being placed in detention. If placed in detention, players are exposed to the difficult conditions confronted by immigrants: unfair policies, isolation, random outcomes and possible deportation.

In the U.S., Breakthrough partners with two major immigration rights coalitions: the Detention Watch Network (DWN), a national coalition of more than 70 groups advocating for humane reform in immigration policy, and the Rights Working Group (RWG). Together they form a national coalition of more than 250 community-based groups and policy organizations dedicated to protecting civil liberties and human rights as part of America’s core values of liberty and justice for all. Producing our own media in-house places us in the unique position of functioning as a progressive nonprofit that understands the issue while creating innovative cutting-edge multimedia products that educate the general public.

### *Challenges in linking edutainment and social movements*

Gaming, social networking and Web 2.0 platforms have transformed the media landscape in the United States. When Breakthrough first began its work in the U.S. it attempted to form partnerships with the advertising and entertainment industry in a similar fashion to its strategy in India. This approach was singularly unsuccessful. The emergence of new media tools enabled Breakthrough to develop a different set of communication and popular culture strategies.



Breakthrough began its immigrant rights programming with short video stories of affected individuals, animations and music videos were produced in-house. However, it was ICED, our first video game, that penetrated the national consciousness and generated public debate and dialogue in an entirely new way. There is limited research and information available in the field of 'games for change' and we faced several challenges in the design, dissemination and evaluation of ICED.

Breakthrough's multi-media campaigns are developed in close collaboration with others in the immigrant rights movement. We work with them to identify programming priorities and to develop shared messaging around policy advocacy. Many groups participate in the conceptualization, execution and dissemination of our media; and, thousands utilize them in their own community education efforts.

As is the case with India, limited resources challenge our ability to penetrate the popular culture landscape at the same level as best-selling (and incredibly violent) games like Grand Theft Auto. However, the overwhelming response to ICED indicates the scope and reach that games for change can have in transforming hearts and minds.

### ***Impact and lessons learned***

As mentioned earlier, the nascent nature of the field of games for change presented Breakthrough with some challenges in developing an effective evaluation mechanism for measuring the impact of ICED. We worked closely with an external evaluation agency to develop an effective

process. Several other groups are now using our study to develop benchmarks and indicators for the field.

Since ICED launched in February 2008, it has been downloaded

and played more than 115,000 times with 75% of the players being based in the U.S. and the remainder representing more than 100 other countries. In response to comprehensive qualitative and quantitative evaluation, players have indicated an increase in knowledge about U.S. immigration and deportation policies. Additionally, more than half (56.5%) of the player responses indicated that playing ICED changed their attitude about the ways in which immigrants are treated in the U.S. Perspective taking and role-playing enabled some players to consider the facts presented in the game from immigrants' points of view, enhancing understanding and awareness.

With the spread of gaming, social networking and Web 2.0 to other parts of the world, including the global south, we are confident that the lessons learned in the U.S. will provide important insights for others to build upon in their own media production and dissemination. As an organization, we have benefited enormously from the differences in approach and strategies that our two-country transnational identity has generated.



## Puntos de Encuentro: *La Boletina*, *Sexto Sentido* and the Nicaraguan women's movement

Today, Puntos de Encuentro is internationally recognized for its TV series *Sexto Sentido* (Sixth Sense) and the accompanying social change communication strategy, *Somos Diferentes Somos Iguales* (SDSI), translated as We're Different We're Equal. However, the roots of the TV series and its communication strategy go back to their first and longest-lasting effort, *La Boletina*.

*La Boletina*\* began as a four-page, mimeographed newsletter to create a forum for interchange among the dozens of independent women's groups that were popping up in Nicaragua after the defeat of the Sandinista government in 1990. The new movement that emerged in 1991 sought to assert its independence from party politics and to embrace a wider range of different interests and ideologies. The notion of 'Unity in Diversity' became the slogan of the movement and this diversity is something that has characterized the movement ever since, although unity has been more elusive. *La Boletina* sought to strengthen the movement by creating among these disparate groups a "sense of belonging" to a larger movement. The lack of internet and even phones, the non-existence of a national mail system or indeed postal addresses, combined with bad roads made communication and interchange among groups in different parts of the country very difficult. *La Boletina* sought to fill that gap. Short reports on activities being carried out by the spectrum of women's organizations in rural and urban Nicaragua made visible a wide variety of groups and actions and inspired groups that previously hadn't



known about each other to get in touch and coordinate. These kinds of reports are still being published today, as more and more initiatives emerge. *La Boletina* also runs testimonies and analytical essays written in simple language to provoke wider feminist debate on topical issues. Many of these pieces appear without an author's name to highlight the fact they are collectively produced and aim to promote collective reflection and ownership.

Unlike many publications produced by a specific organization, *La Boletina* is not a newsletter that highlights Puntos' activities, and while many women and women's organizations identify with the magazine they do not necessarily know who exactly publishes it. This has allowed the whole spectrum of organizations to see *La Bole* (as it's affectionately called) as a magazine that speaks to them, not with 'the' voice of Puntos or of a specific organization, but as a source of information and analysis for women and women's groups to share knowledge and promote informed debate.

\* A play on words in Spanish, using the feminine form of the noun 'boletín', or newsletter in English

This sense of collective ownership of *La Boletina* was what made *La Bole* grow quickly into the largest circulation magazine in the country. Women's groups themselves distributed the magazine. And as more and more groups popped up and wanted to be part of a larger movement, demand for the magazine increased exponentially. The volunteer distribution network called *las emboletinadas* is now made up of a diverse range of groups and organizations that share a common identity via *La Boletina*. They go to Managua, the capital of Nicaragua, bring back packages of *Boletinas* to their towns and then re-distribute them to local groups who physically carry the magazines to isolated communities where even the national newspapers don't get to, getting the magazine to over 1,100 groups all over the country.

At the same time *La Boletina* was establishing itself as an important tool for women's groups and movements, *Puntos de Encuentro* was also directly involved in various movement coalitions, most notably the Women's Network against Violence. In addition to the political principles and strategic perspective that we brought to the Network, we also brought our communications experience. *Puntos* was instrumental in designing the Network's national campaigns for many years, including the one that led to the passage of Nicaragua's first family violence law in 1996.

### ***The evolution to TV edutainment and linking with the women's movement***

It was also 1996 when *Puntos* decided to develop a way to have a 'permanent campaign' on the TV airwaves that would allow for multi-thematic and more complex treatment of myriad social issues. The idea

slowly but surely evolved into *Sexto Sentido* and the SDSI strategy. Five years later in 2001, when *Sexto Sentido* finally got on the air, awareness of the domestic violence law was still quite low: most women and young people still didn't know about the law, much less how to use it. So we put in a storyline that showed a main character, Elena and her family living through a common situation of family violence. Elena finds out about the law and convinces her mother that the best way to deal with their violent father/husband is to get a restraining order using the law. *Puntos de Encuentro* was one of the founders of the Network. Two of the scriptwriters and the executive producer of *Sexto Sentido* were active members and therefore knew very intimately the dynamics of family violence and the details of the benefits of the law.

In addition to the storyline broadcast on national TV, *Puntos* coordinated with the Network to re-publish an informational pamphlet about the law, using the image of "Elena" on the cover to create audience identification and to target young women. We also put a PSA at the end of the show with the actress who plays Elena talking about the law, showing the pamphlet and letting people know how to be in touch with the Network.



## Challenges in trying to link edutainment with other movement strategies

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There are many challenges, but here we will highlight two main ones:

- The challenge of developing strategies that combine complementary actions by different social actors when high visibility actions are involved;
- The challenge of bridging the gap between the “traditional” women’s movement and doing feminist work with young women in the context of their mixed spaces

Coordination with the Network for the campaign regarding the domestic violence law was not without its pitfalls and we’d like to offer a view into an important challenge we’ve faced trying to use a high visibility vehicle like a TV series to strengthen a social movement. We are applying the lessons learned as we move forward.

## Visibility and credit

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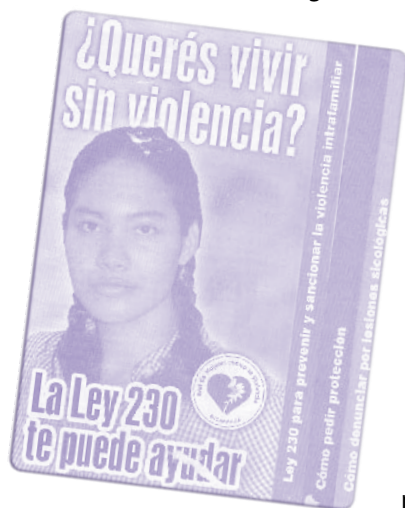
Essentially the stumbling block has to do with competition among organizations for credit and visibility and often funding as well. In general, Puntos de Encuentro is widely

recognized and appreciated by smaller and local organizations in Nicaragua and Central America for the educational materials we produce. For budget and expertise limitations, many of these organizations aren’t able to produce their own materials for workshops and so very much appreciate having access to our materials, which they recognize

for their high quality, accessible language and attractive presentation. They see this as an important role for Puntos to play and demand for our materials is high.

Puntos’ aim was that the organizations would take on *Sexto Sentido* and the accompanying materials as their own –as they’d done with La Boletina-- using them as the basis for their own local level group work and reflection. While this has happened to a large extent, the dynamic has been quite different than with La Boletina. Upon reflection and analysis, the direct links and distribution with local organizations has ended up being more of an ‘alliance-building’ strategy than a movement building strategy. Despite our efforts and actions to build and develop links among organizations to stimulate collective action, many organizations characterize their relationship with Puntos as a bilateral one. Some have sometimes even expressed that they felt the relationship was not so much a mutually collaborative alliance but more a means for Puntos to distribute materials.

A bit of this dynamic was present in the coordination with the Women’s Network against Violence as well. While the Network in general was enthusiastic about the ‘mini-campaign’ of using *Sexto Sentido* to promote awareness of the law and there was a formal agreement with the Coordinating Committee of the Network to re-issue the pamphlet and launch a new distribution initiative, a few members of the Network weren’t happy when they saw the image of Elena on the cover of the pamphlet. More than seeing the social benefit of associating the law with a popular TV character, these few were concerned that the association was publicizing Puntos de Encuentro as





an individual organization member which might adversely affect the visibility and recognition of the Network as a whole.

### **The generation gap**

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A separate but related challenge is the apparent difficulty that many long-time activists and leaders in the women's movement have in identifying work being done with young people (and specifically younger women) as being 'women's movement work'. For Puntos, *Sexto Sentido* was a powerful way to promote feminism among young women and to challenge sexism in young men. However, many leaders in the women's movement didn't see it as a bona fide women's movement strategy, but as a 'youth' strategy, which was somehow separate from what the women's movement was doing. The young women involved in making *Sexto Sentido* however, and many of the hundreds of thousands of viewers, do identify themselves as feminists and would like to be considered part of the movement. The women's movement has an ongoing challenge to be more inclusive.

### **Impact and lessons learned**

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Despite the challenges, dozens of Network member groups distributed 50,000 pamphlets around the country. For many young women it was the first time they had even heard of the law, which had been passed 5 years before when they were still children. The external impact study showed that frequent viewers of *Sexto Sentido* were 43% more likely to know of the law and be able to correctly identify an organization or centre where they could go for help than those who didn't watch the series.

Also, despite the perceptions of some organizations, qualitative impact studies have revealed that in general local organizations report that *Sexto Sentido* created new opportunities for dialogue and debate about taboo topics in families, schools, with friends and in organizations and the media; strengthened their own work and enabled the development of new initiatives; and increased youth leadership, collective efficacy and links and alliances between individuals, groups and social movements.

Attending to some of the perceptions and concerns raised about *Sexto Sentido*, Puntos' new TV series, *Aquí está Eva* (Here's Eve), is being conceived from the outset as a women's movement-strengthening strategy, involving a diversity of organizations from the inception so that there is a sense of collective ownership not only of the contents but also active participation in the implementation.

We hope that the fact that *Aquí está Eva* is conceived as a broader Latin American series for a multi-generational audience and with a focus on reframing family values from a feminist perspective will help bridge the gap between 'women's movement' and 'youth-oriented' strategies.



## Section 3

# Common challenges: Planning and evaluating social change

*“Not all things that count are countable.  
And not all things that are countable, count.”*  
- Albert Einstein

### Not everything that counts is countable

Monitoring and evaluating interventions has always been and still remains a main concern for every nonprofit organization. Mallika Dutt, Executive Director of Breakthrough, explains:

Breakthrough works in a complicated social context and a cluttered media environment where it is difficult to gain audience attention. As a result, accurately understanding the reach and impact of one’s work requires strong monitoring and evaluation practices, something that Breakthrough has struggled with to date. As Breakthrough scales up its programs for increased visibility, a firm understanding of how and why our programs are effective is necessary. Further, as the organization matures and accumulates learning and experiences, it needs to reflectively analyze and document its programs so that they feed into the formulation of a Breakthrough approach.

But designing and implementing effective monitoring and evaluation processes is easier said than done. The lack of resources

and internal capacities, the pressure from donors to speak to specific evaluation criteria and the lack of agreement about the impact indicators to be used are only few of the many concerns that organizations have when it comes to monitoring and evaluation.

Furthermore, there is no universal agreement on what we want to measure and how to measure it. Many social change organizations believe that defining indicators of change in individual attitudes and behavior is important but is not enough. We need new methodologies and indicators that could capture the complexity of social change processes: How does one ‘measure’ social movement building? Or how can you count ‘an enabling environment’? How do we measure ‘empowerment’? Or furthermore, *when* it is appropriate to measure empowerment? When, for instance, is the process of ‘youth empowerment’ ready to be measured? We need evaluation methods that explore the processes that lead to outcomes rather than only focus on demonstrating and counting those outcomes.

The way in which the development field works, and all the requirements imposed on social change organizations, together with

a lack of resources and capacities to create and try new methodologies and indicators, impose a lot of restrictions that hinder the possibility of innovations in the field. Irela Solórzano from Puntos de Encuentro explains this dilemma:

We needed to gain external legitimization of our work, but we also wanted to have an opinion and to participate in the design [of the evaluation] to guarantee that it would be coherent with our vision and mission. The problem is we still haven't developed enough theoretical and methodological frameworks that allow us to offer effective alternatives. We need new indicators, but they can only be validated during implementation and that affects the evaluation because it cannot be planned in detail at the beginning of the project.<sup>10</sup>

### Evaluation models: Cadillac vs. bicycle

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Finally, there is the issue of costs. When resources are limited and one cannot afford a pre-post, treatment-control field experiment research design, what options might one have?

A useful metaphor in such a case is the *Cadillac vs. Bicycles* metaphor. A Cadillac is the ultimate in road transportation. If there is a paved road, it can get from point A to point B and provide a comfortable and secure ride. However, what if you needed to go to points

A,B,C,D,E and F and all at the same time? And, what if the roads to these destinations are not paved?

It is relatively easier for social change organizations that work under tight resource constraints to invest in many bicycles that can ply many different routes, at different times and capture diverse topographies through different sets of eyes. There are many methodologies, methods and tools that could help in gathering data about the impact of work and the changes in the environment that are more cost-efficient than a big, formal, one-shot, all-inclusive "Cadillac" evaluation.

This doesn't mean that one is better than the other or that they are mutually exclusive. Advocating for more resources that allow organizations to improve their monitoring and evaluation capacities and the resources to implement a longitudinal evaluation with mixed methods approaches, is essential for the kind of feedback that organizations fostering social change need.

Low scale, continuous and diverse data gathering about the changes in the environment would inform organizations about their performance and their need to adapt their strategies to those changes thus, improving their chance at success. Large-scale exhaustive assessment of an organization's contribution to the changes observed, especially when this evaluation involves multiple approaches and perspectives, would not only reveal *what* changed and *how much*, but also contribute to our understanding of *why* and *how* that change happened.

## Challenges in evaluating complex processes

Social change involves people and people are unpredictable. Consequently, attempts to assess program effects miss their mark when social change is approached as a predictable linear process. The development and social change field embodies this contradictory dynamic. Though most development professionals and organizations agree that social change is a non-linear, long term and often-unpredictable process requiring efforts at multiple levels; most organizations continue to frame their strategies in measurable, cause-effect terms as if their programs can be evaluated in isolation from other efforts and can demonstrate effectiveness in the short-term.

If complex systems are often unpredictable and hard to control, demands for strict planning and promises of specific outcomes straps organizations in pursuit of social change into a straightjacket situation. A complexity-based approach is, therefore, not only useful when designing interventions, but should also be applied when evaluating the efforts.

### The machine paradigm

Many social science theories and scientific methods are still rooted in the idea that the world is like a giant clock. Regarding the world as a machine lends easy explanations to complex phenomena. Machines are simple and predictable: it seems that if we understand the basic universal laws that keep the machine functioning we will be able to predict and control the future.

Based on this paradigm, development and social change organizations are often required to use traditional methods (such as log frames)

to plan social change strategies that have a short-term, cause-effect based schemata and frame results as quantifiable and measurable. These planning tools are based on the following beliefs:

- The future is knowable given enough data points;
- Phenomena can be reduced to simple cause and effect relationships, and usually the size of the input will determine the size of the output;
- Examining isolated parts will reveal how the whole system works;
- Results are improved by increasing detailed planning and control;

But social realities do not usually match these assumptions. People and communities are not machines. So when grappling with the inconsistencies between the beliefs that inform the design of social change programs and the complexities of social realities, it is helpful to keep some important factors in mind. First, not all social processes are linear, meaning that not every action has a direct and single effect. Second, there are many unpredictable events that can influence one's strategy and so it should be flexible enough to adapt. Third, accounts detailing how expected outcomes will be measured gives almost exclusive importance to measuring predetermined outcomes, while many other important results are overlooked and un- or undervalued if they hadn't been identified beforehand as project goals.

This doesn't mean that social change organizations can't plan the results they're looking for, but it does mean they need to reconsider their approach to planning. Problems must be fully understood before possible solutions are determined. The first step is to assess problems and issues by

distinguishing the difference between simple, complicated and complex problems.

## Complexity as a 'science' to understand social change

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Complexity science is a field that studies the characteristics and patterns of complex adaptive systems, such as human organizations, stock markets or schools of fish, and it offers a planning method for tackling complex systems and phenomena that usefully acknowledges uncertainty.

As the authors Glouberman and Zimmerman<sup>11</sup> note, for addressing simple problems –take cooking for instance-- a recipe of various ingredients is essential. 'It is often tested to assure easy replication without the need for any particular expertise. Recipes produce standardized products and the best recipes give good results every time.'

To address complicated problems, like sending a rocket to the moon, formulae or recipes are critical and necessary, but are often not sufficient. 'High levels of expertise in a variety of fields are necessary for success. Sending one rocket increases assurance that the next mission will be a success. In some critical ways, rockets are similar to each other and because of this there can be a relatively high degree of certainty of outcome.'

Raising a child, on the other hand, is a complex problem. Here, formulae have a much more limited application. 'Raising one child provides experience, but no assurance of success with the next. Although expertise can contribute to the process in valuable ways, it provides neither necessary nor sufficient conditions to assure success. To some extent this is because every child is unique and must be understood as an individual. As a result there

is always some uncertainty of the outcome. The complexity of the process and the lack of certainty do not lead us to the conclusion that it is impossible to raise a child.'

## Tips for applying complexity-based planning and evaluation

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Complexity-based evaluations methods and approaches are gaining popularity among evaluators (the American Evaluation Association and other related associations in Europe and Australia have their own specialized division on this area), but it is still a new concept for the majority of organizations and donors. However, you don't need to be an expert on complexity science or to change all your organizational structure and functions to incorporate some complexity-based principles in your work. There are some small changes that can be fit into evaluation designs that would allow for a broader understanding of the varieties of social changes and how they occur.

The first step is to keep evaluation design, methods and analyses open and flexible so that they can be adapted to the changes in the environment and in the project as they happen. Social change is an ongoing evolving process and we need to create the conditions that will allow us to evolve with it.

Secondly, understanding the whole picture requires seeing it from many different perspectives. This means not only involving stakeholders in all the phases of the evaluation, but also including as many perspectives, methods, sources, informants (with different, even opposite, interests and worldviews) as possible and triangulate the findings often so you can identify relevant patterns in the system.

## Section 4

# Theories and practices of edutainment

What is a theory? A theory is a hunch.

What are theories of social change? Hunches about how social change occurs.

What are theories of communication and social change? Hunches about the role that communication plays (or doesn't) in explaining how individuals, groups, communities and societies change.

One thing the three organizations have in common is that they are all 'learning' organizations: that is, not afraid to tread on uncharted territory, not afraid to follow their intuitions, open to collaboration and partnerships with others who 'know' and obsessively reflexive about their programs and outcomes, including the connections between the two, to do it even better in the future.

Another thing they have in common as they mature and expand their scope, they are often required to more systematically and scientifically evaluate their work and frame their interventions and findings in theoretical terms.

This section is designed to help organizations familiarize themselves with some of the commonly used communication, social change, health education theories and research methodologies.

### The role of theory in our work

Since the end of World War II, public health, development and social change practitioners and policy makers have consulted media theories and individual and social behavioral change theories to inform program planning, implementation and evaluation.

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Interestingly, none of the three organizations highlighted here were established by individuals with academic training in communication theory and research. Far from it: Soul City was started by two medical doctors, Breakthrough by a

lawyer, Puntos by people with humanities backgrounds.

Everyone 'learned by doing' and got the theory along the way as they critically reflected on their experiences. As their experience accumulated, they adapted those theories to their specific goals and realities. Today, they represent leading organizations in the realm of communication for social change.

A theory is supposed to present a systematic way of understanding events or situations. It is a set of concepts, definitions and propositions that explain or predict these events or situations by illustrating the relationships between variables.

At its best, theory can give organizations and policymakers tools for moving beyond intuition to design and evaluate social change strategies based on previous studies about human behavior and how it changes. It helps them to step back and consider the larger picture. Like artists, program planners who ground their programs in theory can create innovative ways to address specific circumstances. Rather than depending on a 'paint-by numbers' approach of re-hashing stale ideas, it's much more effective to use a palette of theories, skillfully applying them to develop unique, tailored solutions to problems.

However, it is important to remember that theories are, by nature, abstract and don't have a specified content or topic area. Like empty coffee cups, theories have shapes and boundaries, but they become useful only when filled with practical topics, goals and problems. As all worldviews, all frameworks, models and theories are partial representations and partial explanations of the reality observed. And, because they are partial and partisan points-of-view, all theories are *problematic* in nature. Even though theories are based on scientific research and have been validated and legitimized in many different ways by the academy, the donor community, the evaluation specialists and the social change enterprise, they still present contradictions and inaccuracies in the practice of social change initiatives.

## Challenges to apply theories

As mentioned in the evaluation section, most theories of communication and social change are premised on bringing about linear, incremental individual level-changes in peoples' knowledge-attitude-practice (KAP), implicitly subscribing to the misguided --but still mostly unquestioned-- notion that social change can be predicted, controlled, planned and measured with a high degree of certainty.

As Dr. Arvind Singhal said during the workshop on Edutainment held in South Africa:

There is no formula for social change, there are no foolproof recipes that lead to knowable, agreeable and predictable outcomes, we do have hunches about how social change might occur. Many hunches, actually. We have hunches about the influence of historical, political, cultural and contextual factors in social change processes. We have hunches about the process through which individuals; groups, communities and societies are influenced from the outside and/or inside. We have hunches about what role communication plays (or does not play) in these social change processes. We have hunches about how mass media strategies might interface with group and interpersonal communication processes to foster social change processes.<sup>12</sup>

## Some relevant theories and approaches in the edutainment field

The following is an outline of some of the relevant theories and approaches that have guided the thinking processes for

creating mass communication programs to foster social change and development. These theories are not exclusive but rather complementary and help 'decode' different processes and parts of reality. All these theories have been refined, questioned, validated, critiqued and written about extensively in textbooks, journal articles and research reports. There are references to these theories as well as to complexity science theory in the last section of this document.

### ● Stages of Change Theory

This theory or model describes the path that people follow in order to change their behavior. Edutainment practitioners can use it to identify in which stage of change their audience is, and design the intervention to lead their audience through the next stages.

The Stages of Change Model<sup>13</sup> (SCM) is rooted in the idea that behavior change does not happen in one step or overnight. Rather, people tend to progress through different stages on their way to successful change. Also, each of us progresses through the stages at our own pace.

The stages of change described by this theory are:

1. **Pre-contemplation:** Not yet acknowledging that there is a problem behavior that needs to be changed.
2. **Contemplation:** Acknowledging that there is a problem but not yet ready or sure of wanting to make a change.
3. **Preparation/Determination:** Getting ready to change.
4. **Action/Willpower:** Changing behavior.
5. **Maintenance:** Maintaining the behavior change.

What it is useful about this theory for E-E and other social change interventions is that it suggests the importance of understanding the stage of change in which the audience is at certain point of the process and design next messages and interventions according to that information. If the population you are working with knows nothing about the issue or the issue is taboo, starting by familiarizing the community with the topic is a better way to start than promoting specific changes from the beginning.

One of the difficulties of this approach is that populations aren't homogenous; different parts of the population are likely to be at different stages at any one time, so it's important to recognize that you can't simply design interventions that will cover each stage in order and assume you will effect the change you want.

### ● Social Learning Theory<sup>14</sup>

Social Learning Theory is one of the most used theories in the edutainment field. It supports the idea that characters (in soap operas, theatre and other forms of E-E) can play a role model for the audience.

Social Learning Theory<sup>15</sup>, also known as *Social Cognitive* or *Modeling Theory*, is based on the assumption that people learn how to behave by observing others, including those portrayed in the mass media. Social modeling is considered an important part of the process of *socialization*, in which a child learns the expectations, norms and values of society by observing his/her parents, siblings and others around to whom he/she can relate how they behave in different situations and in relation to different issues.



A central concept in Social Learning Theory is the role of media role models in disseminating new behaviors (or innovations) and how a person's sense of self and collective efficacy will determine whether or not the learned behavior will be practiced and/or copied.

Miguel Sabido, a creative writer-director-producer at Televisa, the Mexican national television network, creatively employed the principles of role modeling in the mid-1970s to produce a series of edutainment *telenovelas* (television novels or soap operas). Sabido understood the central concept in mass-mediated observational learning is modeling, defined as psychological processes in which one individual matches the actions of another, not necessarily closely in time.

So, Sabido designed his edutainment *telenovelas* in ways that viewers could become affectively involved with the role models and learn socially desirable behaviors from them. For example, when a likable character modeled a behavior that was socially desirable, the character was rewarded. If an unlikable character emulated a socially undesirable behavior, he/she was punished. So, when Martha, the central character in Sabido's family planning *telenovela*, *Acompáñame* (Accompany Me), visited a family planning clinic, she was visibly rewarded. When a role model in *Ven Conmigo* (Come with Me) refused to enroll in an adult literacy class, he was observably punished. Sabido's programs also profiled "transitional" models, individuals who are in doubt about the value of performing the new behavior, the hesitators. As the storyline moves, some transitional models learn to initiate, refine and practice the new behaviors and are rewarded for it; and some do not and they are punished for it.

## ● Elaboration Likelihood Model

This theory talks about persuasion and how to get your message across different audience. As such, E-E practitioners in the design of their messages have used it.

In the 1980s, Richard E. Petty and John T. Cacioppo created the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion to explain in detail how a persuasive message worked to change the attitude of the receiver. They proposed that a message was transmitted and received through one of two routes of persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route.

The central route holds that a person is more likely to be persuaded if he is able to elaborate on a message extensively. That is, if he is motivated to think about the message, is able to think about it and if the message is a strong one, he will be persuaded in accordance with the message.

The peripheral route states that if a person is unable to elaborate on a message extensively, then she may still be persuaded by factors that have nothing do with the actual content of the message itself. That is that she would be drawn to the message by factors that she is already familiar with and has positive attitudes about and would associate those attitudes with the message. She would then be persuaded toward the message, albeit weakly and temporarily.

## ● Health Belief Model

Similar to Stages of Change Theory, this model is used in E-E strategies that aim to address health issues, and it helps practitioners to design the storylines that will guide the audience through each one of the phases of change.

The original Health Belief Model (HBM), constructed by Rosenstock (1966), is based on the understanding that a person will take a health-related action (i.e., use condoms) if that person:

- Feels that a negative health condition (i.e., HIV) can be avoided;
- Has a positive expectation that by taking a recommended action, he/she will avoid a negative health condition (i.e., using condoms will be effective at preventing HIV); and
- Believes that he/she can successfully take a recommended health action (i.e., he/she can use condoms comfortably and with confidence).

The Health Belief Model is a framework for motivating people to take positive health actions to avoid a negative health consequence as the prime motivation. For example, HIV is a negative health consequence and the desire to avoid HIV can be used to motivate sexually active people into practicing safe sex. Similarly, the perceived threat of a heart attack can be used to motivate a person with high blood pressure into exercising more often.

This model has been useful for many health related initiatives and, since most E-E programs deal with health issues (HIV, Diabetes, Polio, Malaria, mal nutrition, etc.), we found useful to mention it here. The use of the “politics of fear” to promote desired social change is still a controversial topic among certain scholars and practitioners.

## ● Individual Differences Theory and Reception Theory

This theory is also important, not only for planning E-E strategies but also in the design of their evaluation. It suggests that different people will perceive messages in different ways, therefore the importance of doing formative research and testing the message of the program before launching it.

Individual Differences Theory, as its name suggests, states that mass media will affect different media users in different ways. In other words, this theory looks at how media users with different characteristics are affected in different ways by the mass media. Some types of users are more susceptible to some types of media messages. For example, an individual with high level of education tends to be more susceptible to a message that includes logical appeals (such as economic and political analysis) that would a viewer with a low level of education. Other individual differences include age, gender, geographic region, socio-economic background, level of violence in the home, profession, intellectual and cultural level, etc.

Reception Theory also argues that different people are affected by mass media messages in different ways. The color red for instance evokes different feelings and interpretations and means different things in different cultures. This becomes more complex when the message we try to convey is more complex.

The usefulness of these theories for E-E interventions are of two fold: first, they remind us about the importance of deeply

understanding our audiences and the culture in which the program is being implemented. Second, the importance of doing formative research and of pre-testing our messages with our potential audiences to be aware of the different possible readings that our audiences can make of our messages and act accordingly.

### ● **Agenda Setting**

In some cases, the main goal of an E-E organization is not to change individual behaviors but to put in the public agenda certain topics that are not being addressed by mainstream media. This allows the audience to have a context in which these topics can be discussed, and it also supports the work of grassroots organizations at the local level or in advocating for policy changes.

Agenda Setting theorists state that while media cannot (and in our view, should not) tell people *what* to think, it can tell people what to think *about* and it can also influence people's perception of what is important, i.e. *how* to think about those issues).

Why did the tragedy involving cyanide-laced Tylenol pain-reliever in the United States, which claimed seven lives in 1982, get front-page, top-of-the-news coverage, while the issue of AIDS languished in the U.S. media? *The New York Times* ran four front-page articles on the Tylenol tragedy and printed over 50 articles in a three-month period<sup>16</sup>. It took four years and 20,000 AIDS deaths before the media, including *The New York Times*, began to give news coverage to the issue of AIDS. How does a at the time new issue like the AIDS epidemic come to public attention, gain followers who believe that it is an important social problem and climb to prominence on the national agenda?<sup>17</sup>

Usually an issue first gets on the *media agenda*, which consists of the hierarchy of news issues ranked as to their degree of news coverage. What puts an issue on the media agenda? Often this process begins with the coverage of an event with tremendous social interest (perhaps involving a celebrity). Seldom does an issue climb the media agenda due to indicators of the severity of a social problem. The mass media prefer to describe an abstract issue like the epidemic in terms of one or a few individuals who are suffering from HIV/AIDS, rather than in aggregate numbers or trends. So the abstract numbers of people living with HIV/AIDS, or dying from AIDS, provided regularly by the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention), did not attract much media attention. However, when Rock Hudson, the famed Hollywood celebrity announced that he was HIV-positive, the media went into a frenzy, and the issue made it into the public agenda.

How is this relevant for our work? Framing social issues in dramatic human stories is the best way to engage media into telling your story and, in the case of E-E, the characters of the program are perceived as 'real people' by the audience and therefore it is easy for the audience to relate to their stories.

### ● **Cultivation Theory**

This theory supports E-E practitioners in their argument that long-term projects, that allow for repetition of the messages and deeper discussion, are more effective than one shot, single topic campaigns.

This theory can be used by communication strategists and especially by E-E strategists, to counteract some of those ideas and stereotypes that sustain inequalities and

discrimination. This theory suggests that if people are exposed over and over to pro-social messages over a long period of time, the theory suggests that media can change people's perception of those issues.

According to Cultivation Theory advanced by George Gerbner, from University of Pennsylvania (U.S.) the media shapes how people view the world. This theory helps explain how a person's perceptions of the world are shaped and sometimes distorted by media. Cultivation Theory predicts that, over time, media will "cultivate" within users a particular view of the world. Supporters of this theory suggest that in the long term, mass media can shape the way people perceive issues, events and cultures, to which they are not directly exposed, by a cumulative effect of message redundancy around those issues, people and events. That is how many stereotypes are formed and reinforced in our collective minds to the point that we stop noticing the difference between what is presented to us by the media and what is real. How Westerners perceive the Middle East, the fear of communism during the Cold War, and gender inequalities have been produced and reinforced by mass media –as well as by social institutions, schools, laws, and churches, of course-- for so long that many people ended up believing these ideas.

### ● **Spiral of Silence Theory**

Similar to Agenda Setting, this theory support the effort of E-E organizations that want to reinforce the position of marginalized people and groups who are invisible or have been silenced in the mainstream media and in the public sphere. The idea is to present their opinions and

legitimate their voices in the public debate about important issues.

According to Spiral of Silence Theory, most people will be unwilling to publicly express their opinion if they believe they are in a small minority. Conversely they will be more vocal if they believe they are a part of the majority. Desire for acceptance and fear of social rejection fuel this phenomenon.

Noelle-Neumann (1974) introduced the "Spiral of Silence" theory as an attempt to explain how public opinion is formed. She described it as a dynamic process, in which predictions about public opinion become fact according to mass media's coverage of a position thought of as the majority opinion, thereby becoming the conventional wisdom and the status quo.

This theory points not only to how public opinion about an issue is constructed and measured, it also raises suspicion about the real level of public support on a topic based as claimed by the media. The Spiral of Silence has served as a theoretical basis to encourage minority or marginalized groups to 'break the silence' around certain issues in order to create a safer space for others to voice similar opinions or positions, and eventually to create greater legitimacy for the minority position. This is important for changing social norms that underpin many forms of discrimination. LGBT rights groups have used this strategy, as has the movement against violence against women.

### ● **Diffusion of Innovation<sup>18</sup>**

Together with Social Learning Theory, this theory is one of the original supporters of E-E strategies. It describes the way in which

development organizations can convince some people (usually opinion leaders) to adopt new behaviors, and how they will eventually persuade others to do the same. This theory poses an explanation of how innovations (new ideas, new practices, new behaviors) are communicated over time among the members of a social system. The members of a social system are connected to each other through social and communication networks, but some members are more influential and more connected than the others. These members become opinion leaders. If the opinion leaders adopt an innovation it tends to diffuse rapidly. Social norms play an important role in influencing the rate at which an innovation is spread. The more compatible, relatively advantageous and non-complex the innovation is perceived to be, the more likely it is to be adopted. So, the way that an innovation is 'framed' critically affects its longevity.

Most innovation diffusion happens from the outside in. That is, experts or change agencies try to convince folks (through mass and interpersonal communication channels) to adopt a certain product, service, idea, or practice. The dissimilarity between the change agents and the client audience is a barrier to effective communication. So, an understanding of the social norms, the social patterns of influence and the prevailing perceptions is critical in the diffusion of an innovation.

## ● Social Marketing

Similar to diffusion of innovations, social marketing aims to 'sell' an idea or behavior to an audience. This theory has fed the design of E-E strategies in many ways. Perhaps the most important one is the implementations

of formative research and message design. Social marketing is a combination of theoretical perspectives and a set of marketing techniques. Social marketing has been defined as: 'the design, implementation and control of programs seeking to increase the acceptability of a social idea or practice in a target group'. It utilizes concepts of market segmentation, consumer research, idea configuration or message design, communication, facilitation, incentives and exchange theory to maximize target group response. In social marketing the intervention is developed from a solid base of communication and social-psychological theories.

Social Marketing Theory is based on the marketing philosophy that people will adopt new behaviors, or ideas if they feel that something of value is exchanged between them and the 'social marketer'. Thus, one of the goals of a social marketer should be to meet 'consumer' needs and wants. The 'something' can be a tangible product (for example, a condom) or an idea (for example, HIV prevention) or both. Another assumption is that well-honed and demonstrably effective techniques from the commercial business sector can successfully and efficiently be applied to advance social causes.

These techniques include the five "P's"- *product, price, place, promotion and positioning*.

The product refers to the behavior (eating low fat foods) or idea (eat five fruits and vegetables a day for better health) that the audience needs to accept. A product line refers to the variety in which the product can be promoted (drink fruit juice instead

of eating a banana) to attain the goal of adoption of the product.

The price of the product refers not only to the monetary but also to the non-monetary cost of a product. These non-monetary costs include psychological, social, or convenience costs. For instance, promotion of a low fat diet may not only require buying higher priced low fat products but also increase difficulty in obtaining such products, preparing them and making them part of a new lifestyle. Reducing these costs greatly increase the chances that a new idea/product will be adopted.

The place refers to the distribution sites of the product. The greater the number of distribution sites and the more convenient and appropriate the places where the product can be found the better chance that awareness and use of the product is facilitated (for instance in the level of availability of condoms in pharmacies, health care centers, schools, grocery stores, public bathrooms).

Promotion of a product refers to the ways in which the audience is made aware of the product, such as use of advertisements, direct marketing and other avenues. In the promotion of a product social marketing campaigns rely on the interaction between mass media and interpersonal channels for increasing awareness and facilitating change.

Positioning refers to the psychological 'image' of the product. For instance, the promotion of a low fat diet can be positioned as a healthy way to a slimmer body, or as way to reduce the chances of getting health disease or certain types of cancer.

Social marketing strategies have been used extensively in family-planning campaigns, HIV prevention campaigns and other health related issues.

### Practice: How the thinking behind edutainment for social change

The communications strategies organizations use to achieve their goals have evolved over many years. Specifically referring to edutainment practices, Thomas Tufte has classified E-E strategies into three different generations:

The first generation E-E interventions are used to disseminate information as well as to raise awareness and change behavior. This approach is based largely on the social learning theory, which posits that an individual learns by observing and imitating the behavior of others who serve as role models for the new behavior, thereby gaining a sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Tufte cites criticism of first generation E-E interventions as disseminating external messages and ignoring the knowledge and needs of the target community, an approach that the Brazilian educator Freire<sup>19</sup> refers to as 'banking education'.

Second generation approaches emerged in the mid to late 1990s. As in first generation interventions, they continue to use social marketing as a strategy to create behavioral change. However, these interventions acknowledge the structural barriers to behavior change and in addition to individual behavior, address society as a unit of change. Second generation interventions also introduce participatory approaches, forming a hybrid of the diffusion and participatory paradigms of development.

Tufte argues that a third generation of E-E initiatives has recently emerged. These interventions locate the root of development problems not as a lack of information, but as structural inequalities, power imbalances and deep societal problems. This third generation of E-E thus aims to empower individuals and communities to seek and create social change. These interventions recognize that change cannot be catalyzed from an external agent, but must come from within the community. In accordance with the principles of Freire's liberating pedagogy, third generation initiatives "seek to articulate

and to promote the dialectic process of debate and collective action centered on social issues, conflicts, inequalities and power imbalances in society" (Tufte, 2005). Therefore, the recognition of voice, human rights and cultural citizenship are at the core of third generation E-E.

The following table summarizes the characteristics of the three generations of E-E (yet, it is important to clarify that some E-E interventions include elements of each generation):

### Tufte's three generations of edutainment

Edutainment	First Generation	Second Generation	Third Generation
Definition of Problem	Lack of information	Lack of information and skills. Inappropriate contexts. Structural inequalities.	Structural Inequalities. Power Relations. Social Conflict
Notion of Entertainment	Instrument: Tool for message conveying	Dynamic genre: Tool for change	Process: Popular culture genre as form of expression
Notion of Culture	Culture as barrier	Culture as ally	Culture as 'way of life'
Notion of Catalyst	External change agent targeting X	External catalyst in partnership with community	Internal community member
Notion of Education	Banking pedagogy. Persuasion.	Life skills. Didactics.	Liberating pedagogy
Notion of Audience	Segments. Target groups passive.	Participants. Target groups active.	Citizens. Active.
What is Communicated?	Messages	Messages and situations	Social issues and problems
Notion of Change	Individual behavior. Social norms.	Individual behavior. Social norms. Structural conditions.	Individual behavior. Social norms. Power relations. Structural conditions.
Expected Outcome	Change in norms and individual behavior. Numerical result.	Change in norms and individual behavior. Public and private debate.	Articulation of social and political process. Structural change. Collective action.
Duration of Intervention	Short term	Short and long term	Short and long term

Tufte, 2005, p.173. See endnote 4

## Some homegrown principles

Breakthrough, Soul City and Puntos de Encuentro each have their own set of principles that guide their communications work. This is an example of some of the principles Puntos de Encuentro has developed over the years.

### ● *Critique the status quo and present alternatives*

We seek to put forth coherent critiques of traditional and official discourses, revealing how they reinforce the subordination of women and young people and their implications for people's daily lives and we suggest alternative ways of thinking about these same issues.

### ● *Use language that is understandable to everyone*

Complex ideas and analysis are 'translated' into simple and straightforward language so that people with little academic training and who are not in the NGO world can understand them and thus participate in the debates that affect their own lives. La Boletina, for example, is written to be understood by women with 3rd grade education.

### ● *Take on controversial issues and build bridges*

We have an "affirmative action" policy to focus on taboo and politically polarized subjects in a way that reinforces the position of the minority of people who already agree with us and reach out to the majority of people who don't. We aim to take such topics out of 'the closet' and put them square into the public agenda. By "humanizing" sensitive subjects, we are able to get them into mainstream consciousness and de-stigmatize them, highlighting their relevance to social development processes based on equality and rights.

### ● *Change is messy and people don't live their lives by themes*

The conventional advertising and social marketing wisdom is "KISS: Keep It Short and Simple". While this is useful for thematic agenda-setting campaigns, it's not particularly useful for broader social change. Much of Puntos' work is therefore purposely multi-thematic, highlighting both the complexity and intersectionality of the psycho-social and political dynamics behind many of the issues that people deal with in their daily lives, acknowledging that change is not easy or linear, but rather a very bumpy road.

### ● *Create and sustain our own mass media outlets*

Puntos has created "alternative" media outlets that are as "mass" as mass media, maintaining editorial control while achieving broad reach. In addition to the impact of each individual media outlet project, this strategy positively influences the broader media environment, making it more democratic and favorable for such alternatives.



● **Use engaging and attractive materials and formats**

We pay close attention to the way we present ideas, not only in terms of content, style and tone, but also in format, design and production values. We also pre-test our materials to ensure that we are achieving our intentions with the people who will be using them.

● **Involve organizations and audiences in content creation and use**

Mass media as part of a communication for social change strategy is powerful successful only to the extent that it is not seen as a transmitter-receiver relationship, but as a dynamic and collective process in which the on-the-ground organizations doing the work are active participants in both creating and using the media product to enhance their own work.

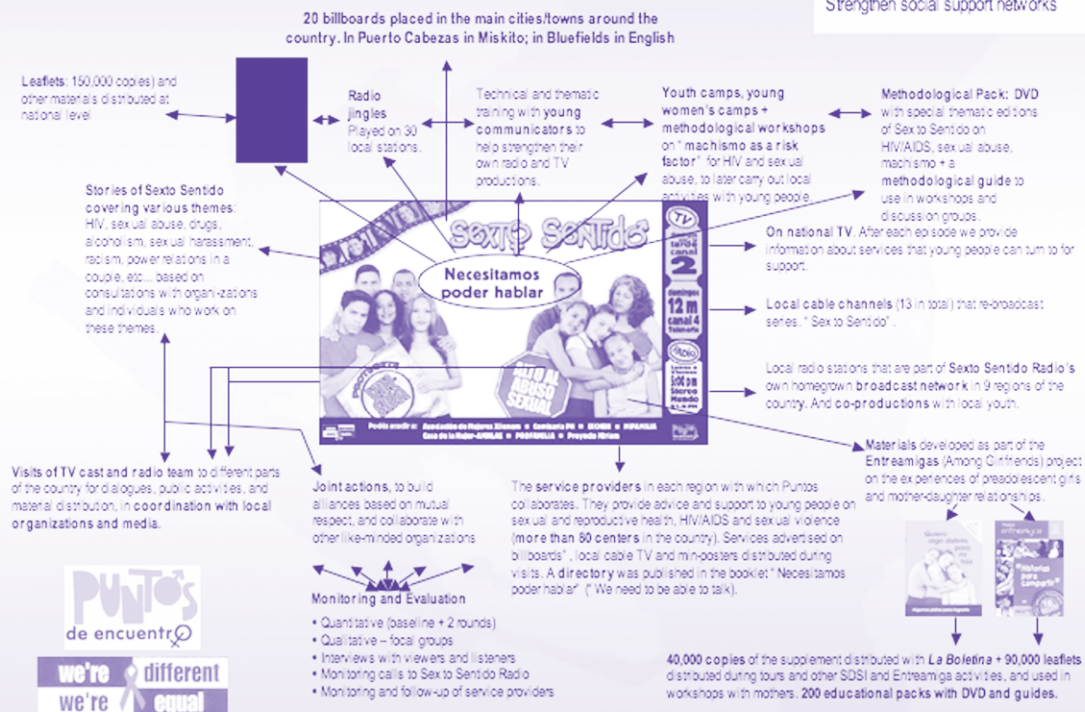
● **The magic is in the mix**

People respond to different things in different moments and change occurs as a result of multiple catalysts working simultaneously, on different levels and over time. Puntos' strategies combine mass media with interpersonal interchange, networking and community mobilization to effect both individual and social change.

**The magic is in the mix**

A graphic summary of how the "We're Different We're Equal" strategy works

**Goals:**  
 Challenge sexist gender norms  
 Raise risk awareness, reduce stigma  
 Promote self-efficacy/ collective efficacy  
 Strengthen social support networks



This complicated diagram shows how *Sexto Sentido* is only a starting point for a multi-level strategy that includes radio, print materials, billboards, cast tours, coordination with local organizations and service providers, a feedback loop and evaluation.

## Section 5

# An invitation to keep the dialogue going

There is only so much a publication like this can share about the experiences and approaches presented here. Some of the issues and ideas might not be new to you. Some might be and you would probably want to know more about them. Below you will find a non-exhaustive list of resources you can consult about some of the main topics, as well as the contact information of the authors and of each of organization described here. Feel free to contact us if you are interested in knowing more about the design and implementations of these strategies.

Attached to this publication you will also find a DVD with videos and documents produced by the organizations and the authors to

better illustrate the strategies described in this document.

Our intention was to introduce you to edutainment and the multimedia, multi-method approaches implemented by Breakthrough, Soul City and Puntos de Encuentro as a way to open a dialogue about the edutainment approach. We hope it's gotten you to ask new and different questions and get new and different answers; to think about new and different strategies for your own organization; and to better understand the excitement and challenges. If we have sparked even one new question that seems like a good place to start.

## What you'll find on the DVD

### Videos

#### Breakthrough India

##### Mann ke Manjeere

Mann ke Manjeeré, winner of the Screen Awards 2001 in India and nominated for MTV's 'Best Indipop Music Video', reached 26 million households via six satellite music television channels, effectively mainstreaming

discussions about domestic violence issues throughout South Asia and reaching as far as Tajikistan, Indonesia and the United States. Music Video, August 2006

##### Is This Justice?

This PSA asks: "He can't drive, but I'm the one who is being punished. Is this justice?" Breakthrough's hard-hitting yet sensitive campaign Is This Justice? asks this very

question and aims to bring attention to the growing incidence of stigma and discrimination faced by women living with HIV/AIDS in India- after they are infected by their husbands. *Is This Justice?*, through its multi-media approach, challenges the way women are treated, especially women living with HIV/AIDS, and asks for greater responsibility from the immediate family. PSA, March 2007

### What Kind of Man Are You?

Sometimes a woman wants something so trivial that she thinks it best to leave it alone rather than raise it with her partner. Like, I wish you'd wear a condom. Breakthrough's ground-breaking campaign *What Kind of Man Are You?* directly asks men to wear condoms to protect their wives from HIV/AIDS infection. A multi-media campaign translated in several languages, *What Kind of Man Are You?* has reached millions across India, promoting gender equality and calling for male accountability and responsibility for checking the spread of the disease. PSA, December 2006

### Breakthrough U.S.

*Agatha Joseph: A Mother's Battle*

Agatha Joseph, a US citizen, came to the United States in 1986 and eventually brought her daughters here. In 1997, her 16-year-old daughter, a green card holder, was found with a marijuana joint. A New York State judge found her guilty of a marijuana violation, and she paid the \$50 fine. However, three years later, she was detained when re-entering the United States from the Caribbean and placed into detention for the same crime. In this video, Agatha describes the conditions her daughter faced

while in detention for three years including harsh treatment, dirty facilities, and being transferred seven times. Video Story, March 2007

### Don't Deport Me, Scotty

Even intergalactic people have to worry about their human rights! See what happens when a permanent member of a popular space crew finds his status is in question. In any galaxy, when we deny due process and human rights to some, we put all of our freedoms at risk. Animation, July 2008

### ICED

The object of *ICED: I Can End Deportation* is to become a citizen of the United States. As an immigrant teen you are avoiding ICE officers, choosing right from wrong and answering questions on immigration. But if you answer questions incorrectly, or make poor decisions, you will be detained with no respect for your human rights. *ICED*, as a learning tool, uniquely illustrates how unfair immigration laws deny due process and violate human rights and affect all immigrants: legal residents, those fleeing persecution, students and undocumented people. Trailer, March 2008

### Soul City

#### Buddyz on the move: Zinhle's story

The story on Zinhle, a middle school student born with HIV who got very sick with AIDS, and how, with the support of the Ntuthuko Buddyz Club and others, she was able to get a lot better and become active again.

## Puntos de Encuentro

### Novela Novela

A documentary about the making of “Sexto Sentido” that looks at how such a groundbreaking series made it to the air in Nicaragua, how stories like Elena’s, Eddy’s and Angel’s were developed to fight issues like domestic violence and homophobia, and how the creators, writers, actors and viewers have grappled with controversial themes in an impoverished country so heavily influenced by the Catholic Church. Produced and directed by Liz Miller. Red Lizard Productions.

## It’s a Man’s Game

In this episode: Eddy feels betrayed when he discovers his close friend, Angel, is gay; Gabriel gets censored by his school paper; Sofía recently broke off her engagement and must tell her mom about her pregnancy; Alejandra finds the man of her dreams; Elena tires to please her father to avoid his violence, but fails.

### Real Life Stories

A sampling of a few “Sexto Sentido” storylines including sexuality, immigration, sexual diversity, rape, HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse in the family and abortion.

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## Articles & documents on the DVD

### Breakthrough

*Strength in Action. An Educators’ Guide to Preventing Domestic Violence.*

Vidya Shah with Devika Sahdev. Breakthrough.

*Rights and Desire. A Facilitator’s Manual to Healthy Sexuality.*

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### Soul City

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*Catalyzing Personal and Social Change Around Gender, Sexuality, and HIV: Impact Evaluation of Puntos de Encuentro's Communication Strategy in Nicaragua.*  
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## Virginia Lacayo

*¿What complexity science teaches us about social change?*  
Virginia Lacayo. MAZI 10, February 2007.

*When it comes to social change, the machine metaphor has limits.*  
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## Arvind Singhal

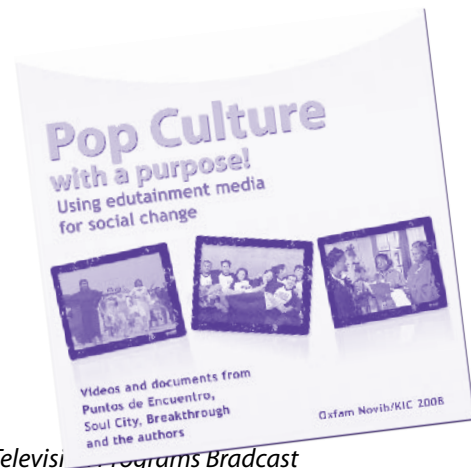
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# Section 6

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### Communication for Social Change

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Communication for Social Change Consortium: [www.communicationforsocialchange.org](http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org)

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Virginia played an important role in the design and implementation of Puntos de Encuentro's communication strategy for social change in the first twelve years of the project. She co-created and hosted Puntos's radio show for 4 years and was co-creator, Executive Producer and Director of the edutainment television series *Sexto Sentido*. She has several publications and presentations on gender issues and edutainment, including a keynote presentation (together with Amy Bank) at the First Latin American Conference on Entertainment-Education held in Morelia, Mexico, in November 2005. She left Puntos to pursue her Master's Degree on Communication and Development at Ohio University (U.S) and she is currently pursuing a Ph.D on Mass Communication and Gender Studies at the same University. She is very interesting in complexity science and alternatives approaches to planning and evaluation for social change. Her dissertation focuses on impact evaluation of communication for social change initiatives from the perspective of complexity science and feminist standpoint epistemologies.

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Arvind Singhal is the Samuel Shirley and Edna Holt Marston Endowed Professor of Communication, and Associate Director, Sam Donaldson Center for Communication Studies, University of Texas, El Paso. He teaches and conducts research in the areas of diffusion of innovations, organizing and communicating for social change, and the entertainment-education communication strategy. Singhal is author or editor of eight books, including *Communication of Innovations: A Journey with Everett M. Rogers* (2006); *Organizing for Social Change* (2006); *Entertainment-Education Worldwide: History, Research, and Practice* (2004); *Combating AIDS: Communication Strategies in Action* (2003); and *Entertainment-Education: A Communication Strategy for Social Change* (1999). Singhal has won Top Paper Awards from the International Communication Association, National Communication Association, and Eastern Communication Association a dozen times, and Ohio University's Baker Award for Research twice. In 2008, the International Communication Association recognized Singhal as the winner of the Communication Researcher as an Agent of Change Award, and in 2005, USC's Annenberg School and Norman Lear Center honored him with the first Everett M. Rogers Award for Outstanding Contributions to Entertainment-Education.

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