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No Short Cuts in Entertainment-Education: Designing Soul City Step-by-Step

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EDITORS’ INTRODUCTION

The authors are employees of the Soul City Institute of Health and Development Communication in South Africa except for Dr. Arvind Singhal of Ohio University. Singhal served on the research advisory committee to Soul City IV, the subject of the present chapter.

"I saw it on the telly [television] and it was an eye opener... We Black people have this tendency that when we have problems at home we hide them. A woman who is being abused by her husband won’t tell anyone. What Soul City has done is to show us that if a woman is being abused physically and emotionally, she should report that... And if you are someone in the street being beaten, you are not supposed to keep quiet... Like in Soul City when Malakala was being abused, the community kept quiet until she was...

1The present chapter draws upon Usdin et al. (2000); and Singhal et al. (in press).
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importance of creatively molding collective efficacy in order to energize neighbors, who, for social and cultural reasons, felt previously inefficacious. After this episode was broadcast, pot banging to stop partner abuse was reported in several locations in South Africa. Patrons of a local pub in Thembisa Township in South Africa exhibited a variation of this practice. They collectively banged bottles in the bars when a man physically abused his girlfriend (Soul City, 2000).

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the step-by-step process of designing the Soul City IV domestic violence campaign, including aspects of message design, social mobilization, and advocacy. The chapter discusses in detail the formative research and design inputs for the domestic violence storyline, including the pot-banging episode in which neighbors collectively protest a wife-beating situation, modeling a novel way of breaking the cycle of domestic violence. Decisions taken about the delineation of characters, plot, and situations are discussed against the backdrop of cultural and social norms in South Africa. Finally, an assessment is provided of the impact of the Soul City IV campaign on domestic violence in South Africa.

Soul City: An Ongoing Multimedia Intervention in South Africa

The Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication (or Soul City, in short) is a nongovernmental organization based in Johannesburg, South Africa. Soul City was established in 1992 to harness the power of mass media for health and development in South Africa.

South Africa faces enormous health and development challenges: An estimated 20% of South Africans (some 4.2 million people) are HIV positive. For children under five years of age, the largest single cause of death is diarrhea. Mainly a legacy of apartheid, this dismal health record existed despite a highly developed mass media system in South Africa. Some 98% of South Africans access radio, 60% access television, and over 40% access newspapers and magazines.

The bedrock of Soul City's health promotion strategy is entertainment-education (also called "edutainment"), defined as the process of purposefully designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members' knowledge about an issue, create favorable attitudes, shift social norms, and change the overt behavior of individuals and communities (Singhal & Rogers, 1999; Singhal & Rogers, 2002). In the realm of entertainment-education programming, Soul City pioneered several new directions, including the strategy of having an "ongoing" multimedia vehicle to address high priority national health issues. Each year a series of mass media interventions are implemented, including the flagship Soul City, a 13-part prime-time television drama series broadcast on South Africa's most popular television channel, a 60-episode prime-time radio drama series broadcast in nine South African languages, covering all regional stations, and some 2.5 million health education booklets, designed around the popularity of the TV series' characters, which are serialized by 11 major newspapers and distributed nationally.
As with all Soul City media materials, extensive formative research was conducted to design the fourth series. Soul City IV's 18-month formative research process included: (1) stakeholder consultations, (2) literature reviews, (3) case studies of abused women and abusers, (4) general audience research, and (5) workshops with the National Network on Violence against Women (NNWAV). Soul City IV extended the core entainment vehicle to include a partnership with the NNWAV, a coalition of over 1500 activists and community organizations in South Africa (Usdin et al., 2000).

Three members of NNWAV, Myltho Theko, Lisa Vetten and David Botha, worked closely with Soul City in developing the domestic violence segment. Vetten's extensive experience in working with abused women, and Botha's experience as a male gender activist, brought important perspectives to the project, while Theko was critical in mobilizing NNWAV members. Incorporating the 'male' perspective was essential to engage men in the audience, as opposed to alienating them. Mutshalo Mosele, an outspoken survivor of domestic violence in South Africa, also worked closely with the team, providing invaluable inputs in developing the fourth series. The storyline was also extensively workshoped with a group of men (many ex-abusers) working in an organization aimed at transforming other male abusers.

Stakeholder consultations involved in-depth interviews with government and civil society officials who were involved in addressing gender-based violence in South Africa. Stakeholders were concerned that when the Soul City IV series motivated abused women to take action, it could place them at increased risk for harm. So the need to establish a 'safety net' to assist abused women was broached. The idea to establish a toll-free telephone helpline for women experiencing domestic violence emerged from these consultations. The helpline was advertised in all campaign materials and activities.

An extensive literature review helped situate the Soul City IV series in a human rights framework, focusing on the rights of battered women and of their children. It highlighted the adverse impacts of domestic violence on abused women, and on the children who witnessed the violence. It noted that patriarchal attitudes endorsing gender violence were handed down intergenerationally. Male children were socialized by their fathers to believe that they were the 'captains of the ship', while female children were socialized by their mothers 'to endure.'

The literature review revealed that while abused women showed a strong desire to seek recourse from the law, various structural barriers prevented them from seeking help, stemming from the indifference of health workers, the police, and the judiciary. So it was decided to depict the reality of police indifference and impunity to domestic violence situations while at the same time role modeling how health workers, the police, and judges should behave in handling such cases. It was clear from the formative research that the police, health workers, and magistrates needed to be trained to better handle cases of gender-based violence. Accordingly, excerpted clips from Soul City IV were used to develop training materials for health workers, police, and the judiciary.

The literature review highlighted the important role that society plays in perpetuating domestic violence, which is widely perceived as a 'private affair.' This attitude, pervasive among members of the general audience in South Africa, as well as among health workers, police, and judiciary, perpetuated widespread tolerance of domestic violence. It was decided to focus the Soul City series on shifting social norms away from tolerating domestic violence.

Community action was the way to accomplish this goal. The NNWAV compiled eight detailed case studies of abused women in South Africa. Further, four focus group interviews, and four in-depth interviews were conducted with abused women. Their narratives brought realism to the storyline. Another focus group was conducted with male perpetrators. Additionally, four focus groups interviews were conducted with the general public, from both urban and rural areas.

Translating Formative Research Findings

The composite picture that emerged from this formative research process was that gender inequality lies at the heart of domestic violence. Women are expected to tolerate abuse, and men believe they have the right to discipline
Scenarios

How Domestic Violence Showed Up on South City’s Radar

The story of how the issue of domestic violence got onto the radar of a South African city, as described by Emily Stillman, an expert in human rights and a member of the city’s community development team.

In Johannesburg, a city surrounded by domestic violence, the issue was brought to the forefront through a series of creative interventions. The city council, under the leadership of Mayor Mabutho, decided to address the issue head-on and to create awareness among the local community.

The first step was to form a committee comprising representatives from various city departments, including social services, the police, and community development. The committee was tasked with developing a comprehensive strategy to combat domestic violence.

This led to the creation of the domestic violence task force, which was responsible for implementing the strategy. The task force consisted of representatives from the city council, police, and community organizations.

The task force decided to focus on the following areas:

1. Awareness-raising
2. Prevention
3. Support services
4. Legal protection
5. Punitive measures

Awareness-raising

The task force started by developing a campaign to raise awareness about domestic violence. The campaign was targeted at both the general public and specific groups, such as young people and women.

The campaign included the following components:

- Social media: The task force used social media to spread awareness about domestic violence. They shared posts, videos, and articles on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- Public education campaigns: The task force organized public events, such as forums, workshops, and seminars, to educate the public about the issue.
- Media partnerships: The task force partnered with local media outlets to raise awareness about domestic violence.

Prevention

The task force focused on preventing domestic violence by implementing several initiatives.

- Community outreach: The task force worked with community organizations to provide support to women and children affected by domestic violence.
- Training programs: The task force provided training to community workers, police officers, and teachers to enable them to identify and respond to signs of domestic violence.
- Early intervention: The task force worked with families to intervene early and prevent incidents of domestic violence.

Support services

The task force established a network of support services for victims of domestic violence.

- Counseling services: The task force coordinated with local counseling centers to provide psychological support to victims.
- Legal assistance: The task force worked with lawyers to provide legal assistance to victims.
- Financial support: The task force provided financial assistance to victims to help them rebuild their lives.

Legal protection

The task force took legal action to protect victims of domestic violence.

- Legal advocacy: The task force worked with legal aid organizations to provide legal representation to victims.
- Domestic violence restraining orders: The task force worked with the police to issue restraining orders to protect victims.
- Prosecution: The task force worked with the prosecutor’s office to ensure that perpetrators of domestic violence were prosecuted.

Punitive measures

The task force implemented punitive measures to deter perpetrators of domestic violence.

- Police action: The task force worked with the police to increase enforcement of laws against domestic violence.
- Criminal charges: The task force worked with the prosecutor’s office to ensure that perpetrators of domestic violence were charged.
- Sentencing: The task force worked with the courts to ensure that perpetrators of domestic violence were sentenced appropriately.

The task force’s efforts were successful in raising awareness about domestic violence and in preventing incidents. The city of Johannesburg is now seen as a leader in the fight against domestic violence, and the task force’s success has inspired other cities to take similar steps.
Often, issues and individuals intersect in unplanned ways, and through chance, circumstance, and design, new possibilities emerge. In a modest way, that is how the issue of domestic violence got onto Soul City's "radar." Dr. Shireen Usdin, Program Manager for the Soul City IV series, saw firsthand the impact of domestic violence while training as a medical doctor in the mid-1980s at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto. Usdin saw hundreds of cases of battered women with black eyes, bone fractures, miscarriages, slash wounds, and gun shots. The battered women were clinically treated for their physical condition, and then sent home to confront the same dangerous conditions that put them in the hospital in the first place.

A decade later while earning her MPH degree at Harvard University, Usdin discovered strong parallels in the work of Professor Deborah Pridmore-Steeg, a medical doctor who was patching up injured gang members in inner-city neighborhoods, and discharging them back into the same violent environment they came from. When patients threatened suicide, it was a different medical negligence to discharge them back into their stressful environment. This concern prompted Pridmore-Steeg to advocate for greater health sector involvement in the prevention of gang violence. For Usdin, this was a Eureka moment. Domestic violence has direct health consequences and the health sector, as the first port of call for many battered women, has an important responsibility to intervene.

Subsequently, Usdin became an avid reader of literature on domestic violence as a public health issue. Upon return to South Africa, Usdin argued for including domestic violence as a key theme for the Soul City IV series.

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STORYLINE

Set in Soul City, a fictional Black township in South Africa, the domestic violence storyline of Soul City IV centers around Matlakala, a worker at Masekha Clinic. Matlakala is married to Thabang Seimi, a respected schoolteacher in the Soul City High School. Thabang has two children from his previous marriage, Bhekizwi and Thembi, and a little girl, Mapaseka, with Matlakala. In the first few episodes, the Seimis seem like a happy family. However, that changes, one day, when Matlakala returns home late from work, and Thabang is furious with her for neglecting family chores. The situation escalates, and Thabang knocks Matlakala to the ground (Photo 8.2). The next morning, Thabang tries to make up by helping with household chores. Mapaseka, a friend, and Matlakala's coworker, sees her facial bruises and expresses concern. Matlakala tries to cover up by saying that she fell down, but Nonobza suspects that domestic violence was the cause.

Matlakala finds excuses for Thabang's violent behavior. Perhaps he is under financial pressure. One day, Thabang overhears Matlakala telling her father on the phone about the beatings. Thabang is furious: "It's between you and me, Matlakala; it is nobody else's business." Bhekizwi and Thembi are terrified to see Thabang's rage. When Bhekizwi tries to stop Thabang from beating Matlakala, Thabang tells Bhekizwi the man of the house must always be 'captain of the ship.' Meanwhile, Thembi tells Matlakala that Thabang used to beat her mother. When Matlakala shares this information with her mother, she tells Matlakala to make her marriage work, especially as Thabang's family paid lobola ("bride price") for her.

Matlakala's life experiences a turning point when a white woman, also a victim of domestic violence, is brought to Masekha Clinic in critical condition. Listening to her tragic story, Matlakala recognizes the strong parallels in her own life: repeated apologies in the ongoing cycle of domestic violence, and the escalation of physical violence over time. When the woman dies, Matlakala knows she could be next. Matlakala moves into her parent's home, refusing to return until Thabang's family and her family discuss his violent behavior. She warns Thabang to promise—in front of both families—never to hurt her again. When Thabang's father learns of Matlakala's stance, he is furious. He tells Thabang that...
Matilda must be displaced according to tradition. A family meeting is called. The community elder challenges the family to consider their role in the violence and to take responsibility for their actions.

Thong’s father, a religious leader in the community, agrees to mediate in the dispute. He argues that the violence is a result of the lack of education and understanding of the consequences of violence.

The family agrees to a series of meetings to discuss the issue and to find a solution. They decide to start a program to educate the community about the consequences of violence.

The program is successful, and the community becomes more aware of the importance of education and understanding.

Thong’s family decides to take action to prevent violence in the community. They start a community-based program to promote non-violent communication and conflict resolution.

The program is well received, and the community becomes more peaceful. The family is proud of their role in bringing about change.

In conclusion, the family’s experience highlights the importance of education and understanding in preventing violence. They have shown that with the right approach, change is possible.
DECIION S ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

The female and male protagonist, as well as other key characters in the domestic violence storyline, were chosen carefully, given that the "Soul City series had been broadcast previously, and it was vital to maintain character consistency from one series to the next.

Selecting Matlakala as the woman protagonist involved a series of careful decisions. Various established characters in "Soul City" series I to III were considered for this role, including the well-loved Sister Benita, the nurse at Masakhane Clinic. However, she was unsuitable, because her husband, Vusi, was by now established as a positive male role model. Matlakala was most suitable, as she was single in "Soul City" series I to III, which afforded an opportunity for "Soul City IV" for her to marry Thabang, a newly introduced character. Further, she was perceived by audience members as likeable, happy, and self-confident. Likeability was important to ensure that audience members would not automatically find reasons to blame her for the abuse she faced. Her state of happiness and self-confidence allowed "Soul City IV" to depict the devastating impacts of domestic violence on a battered woman, leading to depression, plummeting self-esteem, and despair.

The turning point in Matlakala’s life comes when she sees her own plight reflected in the story of the white woman dying at Masakhane Clinic. Whether the dying woman should be black or white was in itself a carefully thought out decision. Formative research suggested that domestic violence was perceived mainly as a problem in the black community, despite strong evidence that this social ill cut across racial lines in South Africa. The initial idea for the story was to show the parallel experiences of two abused women—one black, one white. However, in order to dilute the emotional engagement of audience members with two competing protagonists, the choice was made to primarily focus on the experience of Matlakala, a black woman.¹

However, to ensure that audience members did not mistake the domestic violence issue as an issue confined to the black community, an abused white woman was deliberately introduced in "Soul City IV". Rushe into the Masakhane’s Clinic’s emergency room in critical condition after being stabbed and beaten by her violent boyfriend, she survives long enough to tell the story of her abuse. She described to Matlakala the “classic” cycle of domestic violence, from the honeymoon phase with her boyfriend, to tension build-up, to explosion and battering, to his apology, and then the start of another honeymoon period (Photo 8.5). By hearing the white woman’s story, including the escalating levels of violence in her relationship—from abusive words, to blows, to sticks, to daggers—Matlakala realized what lay in store for her. Through this...

¹The focus on Matlakala’s experience was consistent with "Soul City’s" primary viewership in South Africa, which is predominantly black (about 90% of the total audience).

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PHOTO 8.5 Upon hearing the battered woman’s story, Matlakala realizes what lies in store for her in the future. (Source: Soul City Institute of Health and Development Communication. Used with permission.)

encounter, Matlakala considers the possibility of leaving her long-standing abusive relationship with Thabang.

As a newly introduced character, Thabang, the male protagonist for domestic violence, was to embody the traits of an abuser as identified in formative research. Many battered women felt that their community and family members did not believe that they were being abused, and that they respected, likeable husbands were incapable of such behavior. Thabang was portrayed as a respected, middle-class teacher, who was perceived as “Mr. Nice Guy”. Being middle-class was important to convey that domestic violence cuts across economic strata, and is not exclusively a behavior of the poorer socio-economic class. Formative research pointed to the importance of Thabang being cast as a nonZulu, one of the many other cultural groups in South Africa. A prevailing stereotype is that Zulu men tend to be strong-willed, violent, and warlike, and therefore more likely to be wife-beaters. So he was given a Sesotho (another cultural group) name: ‘Thabang Serit’. Thabang spoke in the Sesotho language, in order to convey that abusers do not hail from any one specific cultural group.

Formative research directly influenced how Thabang’s character would evolve, especially whether or not he would mend his violent ways. Discussions with a group of men, including former abusers, who conduct men’s outreach programs to discourage gender-based violence, highlighted...
The design of Soul City has involved countless decisions, based on formative research. The decision to provide a social support program for women has been informed by the need to address gender-related issues in a more holistic manner. The program aims to empower women in all aspects of their lives, including education, employment, and health.

Due to the high prevalence of violence against women in South Africa, the program places a strong emphasis on helping women develop coping mechanisms and strategies to deal with abuse. By providing them with the necessary support and resources, the program hopes to reduce the incidence of violence and improve the quality of life for women in the community.

In conclusion, the design of Soul City is a testament to the power of inclusive planning. By considering the needs of all community members, the program aims to create a safe and supportive environment for everyone. The program's success will depend on the ongoing commitment of its stakeholders and the community's participation in its implementation.
thereby the audience members) to examine the practice of lobola in another light. He explains that the purpose of lobola is to cement the relationship between the bride and groom’s family, and is a way for “the groom to thank the bride’s family for having given her to the woman he loves.” The dialogues and exchanges between the two families and the elder were generously laced with proverbs, metaphors, and local colloquial sayings (such as “A home is a home because of a woman”) to evoke audience identification with long-standing cultural traditions, stimulating reflection on their current relevance.

During the course of the mediation session, Matlakala’s stepmother undergoes a major shift in her own thinking about whether or not Matlakala should continue to bear the burden of her cross. Prior to the meeting, she espoused the traditional line, pressuring Matlakala to Umugumurelo (“endure”). As the meeting progressed, she begins to realize the injustice meted out to her daughter by Thabang’s family, reverses her interpretation of lobola, and is convinced that prevailing cultural practices should not justify women’s oppression. She clearly sees the harmful impact of patriarchal beliefs on Thabang, realizing the harm that she did to Matlakala by perpetuating her subservience.

This perpetuation of “harmful” intergenerational gender socialization, from father to son and mother to daughter, is carefully portrayed in an intense scene between Thabang and his son. Bheki, after Thabang’s violently abuses Matlakala. Disillusioned by the incident, a traumatized Bheki leaves the room, only to be accosted by Thabang outside their house. Thabang reprimands Bheki for crying (men don’t cry), advising him that one day, when he grows up, he will understand that a man must always be “the captain of his ship” (Photo 8.4).

ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL MOBILIZATION

The Soul City IV series was conceived as an integrated health promotion intervention. As noted previously, formative research showed the need to address domestic violence intersectorally, including removal of structural barriers, especially the indifference of the police and judiciary, which discouraged abused women from pressing charges. In early episodes, when the police were called to attend Thabang’s violent behavior with Matlakala, they trivialized the situation: “We have far more important matters to attend to.”

Soul City and the NCV veteran formulated an advocacy campaign to complement the fourth television series, focusing on expediting the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (DVA). While the law had recently been passed in South Africa, its implementation was inordinately delayed. This legislation aimed to break the barrier of police indifference by holding the police accountable for responding to domestic violence. Failure to assist abused women could lead to disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal.

So in later episodes, the indifferent police were taken to task for ignoring the tenets of the DVA. Advocacy activities included direct lobbying of the government and media advocacy (to generate maximum coverage in the news media), combined with social mobilization in the form of community action meetings and public marches (Usdin et al., 2008). The advocacy campaign ran contemporaneously with the Soul City IV series in late 1999. Various community events were held to protest the silence on domestic violence and to pressure the government to implement the DVA. Soul City IV actors, including Patrick Molfe Shai, who played Thabang, actively participated in these community events. Many events coincided with the broadcast of certain highly emotional episodes, especially the one broadcast during the week of National Women’s Day. Episodes were shown on huge screens at some of these mass meetings.
IMPACTS OF SOUL CITY IV

The IMPACTS of Soul City IV monitoring series and the National Community Strategic Health Impact Monitoring series (NCSM) were independent, evaluated NHLS and completed national sample surveys.

The NCSM partnership was independently evaluated through a range of quantitative and qualitative methods. A before and after, national sample survey, 

A pre- and post- survey evaluation was conducted on the NCSM by the South African National Council for Science and Technology. The evaluation used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the impact of the NCSM on community health awareness and behavior change. The evaluation included focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and quantitative surveys. The results of the evaluation showed that the NCSM had a positive impact on community health awareness and behavior change.

The evaluation found that the NCSM had increased community awareness of health issues, improved understanding of health information, and led to changes in health behavior. The evaluation also found that the NCSM had increased community participation in health initiatives and improved access to health care services.

The evaluation concluded that the NCSM had a positive impact on community health awareness and behavior change. The evaluation recommended that the NCSM be continued and expanded to reach more communities and address more health issues.
An analysis of qualitative data suggested that Soul City IV's audience members identified with role models in the television series (such as Matlalka), and felt empowered to address the abuse they faced in their daily lives. As one woman noted:

"I used to suffer just like Matlalka. He would come home drunk and I would be harassed. Kicked out of the house... Then one day Soul City came along. I liked that they were talking about woman abuse. I called my husband at once while it was still on air. I listened the first time and said nothing. The second time he asked me why are they having a program like this? I said to him it's because they know that men are abusing their wives. I am tired of you coming home drunk and beating me. So I want you to hear for yourself what you are doing to me. I want you to listen very well so that when we go to the authorities you should remember that I have tried to make you understand what you are doing to me. Then he asked if it is true is like this, and I said yes. He thought about that for quite some time. Then one day he came home and told me that he wanted to change. Today he talks to me freely and my children know his father, before he did not because he knew the one who used to only fight. I really never thought it could be like this."

Quantitative data showed that the Soul City IV series stimulated public discussion and dialogue on domestic violence. Some 36% of the audience members talked to someone about domestic violence in the period during and shortly after exposure to the series. Overall, the research shows that the Soul City IV campaign can be credited with enhancing audience members' self and collective efficacy, and for creating a supportive environment for individuals and communities to take action.

Those exposed to the Soul City IV campaign were more likely to tell the abused person about the telephone helpline, and more willing to call the police in the event of someone being abused. Quantitative data show that Soul City IV influenced audience members to help other abused women, as well as to help themselves. Some 14% of the respondents said that they did something to stop domestic violence in their lives, or in the lives of someone close to them, in the period shortly after the Soul City series was broadcast.

Survey results showed that those exposed to the various mass media elements of the Soul City IV series were more willing to stand outside the house of an abuser and hang pots (Fig. 8.1). Several reports of pot or bottle banging were noted in various communities. Some 4% of the respondents said they had made a noise in public to protest against domestic violence.

Further, the Soul City-NNAW partnership was highly effective in raising audience members' knowledge and awareness of organizations working to stop domestic violence, and in enhancing access to local support services through the telephone helpline. Some 35% of the survey respondents knew about the helpline. Among those who knew, 16% of the women and 13% of the men had telephoned the helpline.

of the men had saved the telephone number for future use. Four percent of those who knew about the helpline had called the helpline at least once.

Social mobilization at the grassroots level through the NNAAW network and the media advocacy campaign elements contributed to the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act. As a female viewer in Kwamhlanga stated: "Soul City influenced us to organize the citizen's march, emotions were high." A representative of the South African Police Service noted: "There were pressures [to implement the DMA]... from occasions where people held marches and stuff like that."

Soul City IV mobilized communities to take action. For example, in Mamelodi Township, close to Pretoria, a group of women protesters marched to the court where a man was on trial for battering his wife to death, and shouted "Thabang, Thabang" (the name of the wife-beater in the Soul City IV storyline). A few weeks previously, these women actively participated in the woman's funeral, covering her grave with soil—an activity that is usually conducted by men.

CONCLUSIONS

The Soul City IV series exemplifies the step-by-step process of designing, developing, and implementing an entertainment-education campaign on
domestic violence, in partnership with a grassroots organization, the Na-
tional Network of Violence Against Women (NNVAW). The campaign was
comprehensively integrated with advocacy and social mobilization activities
to influence individual, community, and social norms on domestic abuse, as
well as to influence the socio-political environment through policy change.

Theorically, the Soul City IV campaign highlighted the importance of
modeling new sociocultural realities in entertainment-education television—
as exemplified by the depiction of collective pot banging to stop domestic
abuse. The campaign also emphasized the importance of modeling both self-
empowerment and collective efficacy, so that individuals and communities
can be empowered to break the silence on domestic violence, question prevailing
attitudes, and take action to change social norms.

The bedrock of the Soul City IV domestic violence campaign was an 18-
month formative research process which included stakeholder consultations,
literature reviews, case studies of abused women and abusers, target audience
research, and workshops with the NNVAW. The formative research helped
shaped the domestic violence storyline, including the pot-banging episode
in which neighbors, who previously felt inefficacious, collectively protest a
wife-beating situation, thus modeling a novel way of breaking the cycle of
domestic violence.

Impact data from the 1999 Soul City IV campaign suggest the potential of
entertainment-education programs, enhanced through formative research, so-
cial mobilization, and advocacy, to impact individual, community, and societal
differences.

The impacts of Soul City IV continued in 2003, some three years after its
broadcast. The series shifted attitudes and social norms, creating a climate
less tolerant of domestic violence. The national toll-free telephone helpline,
established to provide a safety net for abused women, continues to operate.
The training package continues to be used to change the attitudes and be-
haviors of the police, judiciary, health workers, and lay counselors. The DVA
is in place and organizations within the NNVAW are currently involved in
monitoring its implementation.

This chapter points to the advantages of analyzing in detail a single episode
(or several related episodes) of an entertainment-education program in order
to understand the rigor and the many steps involved in producing effective
entertainment-education. Data gathering from both message designers and
the audience of an EE program provides a holistic understanding of how the
process of message design (and its subsequent production) impacts message
reception.

Finally, a key lesson from the Soul City IV domestic violence campaign is
that in order to be effective, entertainment-education must be designed with
the active involvement of those most affected.

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