

# UNTOLD

Stories in a time of HIV & AIDS



AUDIENCE RECEPTION AND CAPACITY BUILDING REPORT

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Each film has its own distinct voice, which tells a story previously untold: of love and hope, secrets and lies, courage and betrayal, in a time of HIV & AIDS.

Through partnerships with independent organisations in different southern African countries, a regional network of media and health communication specialists has been created.

## Introduction

*Untold: Stories in a time of HIV & AIDS*, is a series of nine films for television from nine countries across southern Africa. Each film has its own distinct voice, which tells a story previously untold: of love and hope, secrets and lies, courage and betrayal, in a time of HIV & AIDS. Through carefully crafted entertaining stories, drawn from indepth research, social issues are woven into popular dramas, which have the potential to reach audiences of millions.

The nine *Untold* films are from Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. *Untold* was broadcast on public television in all the countries. The *Untold* series is part of a large-scale, cross-border, health communication project, led by Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication. The South Africa-based Soul City Institute works with partners in eight other southern African countries to develop effective social change communication. A DVD set of the films with an accompanying discussion booklet has been distributed to more than 100 HIV-education and community organisations across the region.

The *Untold* films were also the culmination of an ambitious and multi-faceted capacity building programme, in which local writers, producers and directors were trained and mentored in the development and production of effective edutainment drama. Eleven writers and nine producers from across the region also completed an intensive, accredited 18-month training course in scriptwriting and film production, which was integrated into the process.

The *Untold* series has moved and entertained audiences, created dialogue and debate, and got people thinking about the choices they face in relation to HIV & AIDS.

This report presents a summary of an audience reception study conducted in all nine countries as well as an overview of the capacity building programme.





## Background

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In 2006 UNAIDS estimated that 39.5 million people globally are living with HIV & AIDS. Of these, two thirds, almost 25 million live in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>1</sup>

Effective communication is key to curbing HIV & AIDS and should be the cornerstone of health interventions in the region – whether it focuses on providing information, shifting norms and values, or affecting social and behaviour change. Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication (Soul City Institute) is a South Africa-based social change communication project. Soul City Institute uses the power of mass media, supported by advocacy and social mobilisation, to improve the lives and health of people and communities in South Africa.

Soul City Institute also works in partnership with Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in eight southern African countries to develop effective social change communication. The Soul City Regional Programme (Regional Programme) combines country-based communication programmes with a broader regional approach. It builds local capacity to strengthen the response to HIV & AIDS and other health challenges. Through partnerships with independent organisations in the various countries, a regional network of media and health communication specialists is being created. An extensive evaluation has shown that this cross border initiative has had measurable impact across the region.

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Edutainment is an internationally recognised tool for affecting change.

## Mass Media

Popular entertainment media are increasingly used as a vehicle for health promotion and social change. Edutainment – using stories and drama to entertain and at the same time to educate – is an internationally recognised tool for affecting change. It has been defined as

the art of integrating social messages into popular and high-quality entertainment media based on a thorough research process.<sup>2</sup>

For communication to contribute to social change and development in southern Africa; social change organisations, media specialists, health professionals, civil society and broadcasters must develop and grow local communication and media programmes that contribute to the development of the continent as a whole.

Mass media has the potential to reach large audiences with key messages. State-owned media, especially broadcasting services, have the widest reach, and potentially, the greatest influence. ...<sup>3</sup>

In comparison to radio, television audiences are still relatively small, but new technologies are escalating the reach of mass media broadcasting through mobile phones and the internet and this will continue. The internet, both mobile and fixed, is growing in the African region at an exponential rate.

The proliferation of new platforms will increase the demand for – and value of – local content. As new technologies gain momentum, convergence will escalate the process of broader access to television programming.

## The Soul City Institute Model

Soul City Institute is made up of different components that work together to maximise impact. The Institute's mass media offering consists of prime time edutainment dramas on television and radio as well as print materials. Social mobilisation and advocacy activities range from children's clubs to training with civil society organisations. Each component has been shown to shift behaviour, but in combination, the impact is even greater.

All Soul City Institute interventions are rigorously researched and evaluated through an extensive and inclusive formative and pre-testing research process with the target audience and key stakeholders. Through audience collaboration and participation the lived experiences and voices, and the social norms and behaviours of the target audience are captured – giving the media resonance, credibility and clarity of message.





## Working in the Region

The history of the southern African region has been, and continues to be, shaped by intensive patterns of economic integration and regional migration. Millions of people are connected via migrant labour, transport routes and cultural exchanges, which play a critical role in spreading HIV. Numerous studies conducted in east and southern Africa document the association between migration and HIV & AIDS. Mobility contributes to the spread of HIV in a number of ways. People tend to engage in more high-risk sexual behaviour; people are more difficult to reach for prevention education, condom provision and care and support; and multi-local social networks create opportunities for sexual networking.

## Building Capacity in the Region

The Regional Programme was established in 2002 to develop communication programmes in eight southern African countries and build capacity to produce social change communication across the region. In each country a home-grown brand name has been developed. The eight country programmes are: Botswana – *Choose Life*; Lesotho – *Phela* (to live); Mozambique – *N'weti* (bringing light); Namibia – *Desert Soul*; Swaziland – *Lusweti* (strength); Zambia – *Kwatu* (our home); Zimbabwe – *Action* and Malawi – *Packachere* (under the fig tree/ a place to talk). Soul City Institute also has a partnership with *Femina Hip* in Tanzania.

To date, this project remains the largest locally-produced prevention communication programme in Africa.

A key purpose of the Regional Programme has been to build capacity to produce social change communication in each of these countries.

Over seven years, the Regional Programme has implemented a large-scale, regional, skills development programme, combining training with implementation. Capacity building programmes have covered all aspects of print, radio, advocacy, television and social mobilisation followed by hands on technical support in developing material and programmes.

Mobility contributes to the spread of HIV in a number of ways. People tend to engage in more high-risk sexual behaviour and are more difficult to reach for prevention education.

The Regional Programme capacity building process has had significant impact on skills in the region.

The *Untold* project focussed on training script writers, producers, directors, research fieldworkers and radio producers in edutainment drama. Even finance managers were given skills in budgeting and cost reporting for TV production. The capacity building combined theoretical input from experts in workshops and active technical support during practical application.

The stories engaged with the complexity of personal and social change, integrating social messages into entertaining stories.

The Programme's regional approach has consistently added value by facilitating a social network of support and experience-sharing. The regional nature of the project is a major innovation that provides economies of scale, while approaching the regional HIV & AIDS pandemic in a manner more likely to succeed than if each country operated in isolation. For example, nine individual country films were combined into an effective nine-part series for television and aired in nine countries across the region.

The Regional Programme capacity building process has had significant impact on skills in the region. According to an independent evaluation:

Through skills enhancement and roll out of media products, the Soul City Regional Programme has positively transformed behaviour change communications with a focus on health communications in the region.<sup>4</sup>



## The *Untold* Films

*Untold* was a collaboration between the nine partner organisations of the Regional Programme. *Untold* aimed to build and train a community of new voices to write, produce and make local content programmes. Although a regional series, it is made up of nine separate local films. Each partner organisation produced one film with its own distinct local voice. The films were produced in local languages, but the series as a whole was sub-titled into English (in Mozambique the whole series was sub-titled into Portuguese). Realising the regional resonance of many issues, *Untold* aimed to get people across the region talking about how HIV & AIDS affect their communities.

*Untold* was broadcast and screened across southern Africa. A DVD set of the films with an accompanying booklet to support discussion has been distributed to more than 100 HIV education and community organisations across the region. A further discussion tool was developed from the series in collaboration with UNAIDS, entitled *Girls at Risk*. The tool consists of a twelve minute DVD with extracts from five films in the *Untold* series, and a discussion booklet, which highlights the risks of ordinary young women and girls in a world of HIV & AIDS.

Each edutainment drama was drawn from country-specific, qualitative audience research. The stories engaged with the complexity of personal and social change, integrating social messages into entertaining stories of love and hope, secrets and lies, courage and betrayal in the lives of ordinary people and their communities to create a popular television series that both moved and entertained its audience.

The films aimed to:

- reach people with authentic local stories that moved and entertained
- create dialogue and debate
- get people thinking about their lives and the choices that they face in a context of HIV & AIDS
- challenge social norms and values and stimulate action
- build a community of new voices and grow local skills to develop edutainment drama.

Dramas for television were chosen because television is recognised as an important vehicle for reaching mass audiences with social change messages. While television's footprint is smaller than that of radio, it is a powerful tool for change, reaching key decision makers. Furthermore, with convergence and new technologies, the reach will expand exponentially in the coming years.

A short description of each *Untold* film highlights the story and intention of each film and how the interplay between drama and message worked.

The film was exactly in line with what we do in the communities. Especially in situations where parents have died: families always refuse to keep the infected young ones.

UNTOLD AUDIENCE RECEPTION,  
ZAMBIA, RURAL

Lusweti Institute produces local film

## The Films



**Batjele** *Tell them* (Swaziland) explores sexual abuse of school girls. In Swaziland, the first sexual experience of many girls is coerced, which contributes to high HIV infection rates among young girls. **Batjele** tells the story of a young Swazi girl who must stand up against a community that doesn't believe her when she exposes an abusive teacher. The film explores her personal journey and highlights the responsibility of the school community to act together.



**Between Friends** (Namibia) grapples with transactional sex and condom use, showing how poverty and financial dependence can push girls and women into taking risks that they don't want to take. It tells the story of two friends trying to start a small hair salon. They are manipulated by a smooth talking playboy who has money they need if their small business is to succeed.



**Chipo's Promise** (Zimbabwe) examines the plight of orphans and vulnerable children through the story of a young girl who is left to care for her siblings. It investigates how communities and schools can support child-headed households.



**Ulendo wa Rose** *Rose's journey* (Zambia) tells a touching story about a young HIV positive orphan in need of care and support. Research in Zambia showed that families and communities are rejecting many HIV positive children – often out of fear and ignorance.



**Secrets and Lies** (South Africa) takes on the issue of multiple concurrent partners. In a world where it is taboo for women to talk about sex and it's culturally acceptable for men to have more than one partner; a couple, unable to communicate, seek comfort and pleasure elsewhere. This silent sexual network has serious consequences for everyone involved. The couple must confront the consequences of their actions.

**A Tempestade** (Mozambique) set in a small fishing community in Mozambique, explores violence against women. The film is told through the eyes of a son, a silent witness who learns to confront his father who is abusing his mother. In a challenge to social norms that view domestic violence as a private affair, the story also depicts the community's journey from silent collusion to active opposition.



**Mapule's choice** (Lesotho) tells the story of an HIV positive garment-factory worker from Maseru. In Lesotho it is common for women to travel long distances to clinics far from their homes to get ARVs. Mapule learns to challenge both her abusive husband and social stigma in her community.



**The Test** (Malawi) uses comedy to explore a common practice in Malawi where men and women are either too scared to get tested for HIV or they go for a test and do not return to get the results. A successful ambitious young Malawian man is too scared to have an HIV test, but he risks losing the girl he loves if he doesn't.



**Rebel Rhymes** (Botswana) depicts a child-headed household through a fast-paced musical drama. Using local rap (*Motswako*) music, it grapples with a rebellious teenager who is forced to become the parent to his orphaned siblings after the unexpected death of his mother.





## **Untold Audience Reception Study**

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An audience reception research study was conducted across all nine countries.

### **Research Methodology**

Nine qualitative studies were conducted – one in each partner country.

#### ***Methods***

Data collection methods included focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews. In the case of focus groups participants were segmented by age. Countries chose the methods and languages that were most appropriate to their contexts. Trained researchers moderated interviews and discussions. All interviews and discussions were electronically recorded and later transcribed and translated verbatim. In each country, data were collected within a month after ***Untold*** aired.

#### ***Sampling***

Participants in the study were recruited through purposive sampling in rural, urban and semi-urban areas and mining towns in the various countries. In some countries recruitment happened in urban and rural environments only. The criterion for inclusion in the study was having watched at least one film in the ***Untold*** series. Overwhelmingly, most participants had watched more than one film. Participants ranged in age from 15 to 49 years and were both male and female. Numbers of respondents varied significantly across the different countries.

## Guiding Questions

Guiding research questions were concerned with getting an understanding of the audience's overall impression of the films and, to a lesser extent, their impact.

Interviewees were asked:

- if they liked the films
- whether the stories had regional resonance
- did they discuss some of the issues in the films with friends and family
- what made them decide to watch the films
- whether the films were emotionally appealing
- how they felt about the different languages in the films
- what overall messages they got from watching the films
- whether they could relate to the issues in the films.

## Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyse data from focus group discussions and interviews. This kind of analysis involves analysing content (for example, from interviews and focus group discussions) to identify overriding themes.

## Limitations

One of the major limitations of this study has to do with recruitment of participants. In some contexts it was difficult to find participants who had watched all films or a reasonable number of films in order to give detailed feedback on the films. It was also sometimes difficult to find respondents who had watched the same films in a country. Given different research methods used to collect data in different countries, comparable analysis of data was challenging.

I think these series of films are very exciting; they portray some things that happen in real life.

MALE, PERI-URBAN, ZIMBABWE

I really enjoyed the films. They taught a lot which I did not know so I enjoyed them a lot.

MALE, MALAWI



It's like they passed through Mumbwa [one of the rural districts where the data collection was taking place] to see what happens here so that they can portray this in the drama [film]. Everything that was in the story happens here in Mumbwa.

RURAL, ZAMBIA

## Overall Impressions

Overall, the *Untold* series made a positive impression on viewers.

### *True to Life*

The films were generally viewed as realistic.

*I liked the concept behind the drama because it's something that is common. You might find that it is happening as we speak that a student is being abused by her teacher. This can serve as a warning to female students since they would be able to notice anything that might lead to such abuse.*

MALE, 15-19 YEARS, URBAN, SWAZILAND

### *Regional Identification*

In the main, viewers seemed to prefer the film from their own country; however, viewer comments do show cross-country identification. That is, they identified with the other stories and related them back to their own lives.

*Yaa, the other countries' films were also interesting. Like the part of the guy who was beating his wife [A Tempestade].... You just feel pity for the woman who was being beaten. The other thing is that these types of beatings are not only in that country [Mozambique] but also in Namibia. There are more men that are beating their wives. Sometimes they are not married.*

FEMALE, URBAN, NAMIBIA

I think the stories were made for the whole world. What happens in South Africa, Malawi or Namibia happens in Botswana too, so I cannot say the stories were made for Botswana. I can say they were made for all countries.

FEMALE, URBAN, BOTSWANA



In addition to identifying with the issues in the films, some participants had first-hand experience of regional connectedness. The comment below highlights the links people have across the southern African region.

*I have a child and her father is in Mozambique.... I'm not a Swazi, but I was born in Zambia and we were still young when we came to Swaziland.*

FEMALE, URBAN, SWAZILAND

## Emotional Appeal

Research has shown that when mass media messages evoke emotions, they are more effective.<sup>5</sup> Because they capture viewers' attention and involve viewers, they tend to be better remembered.<sup>6</sup>

*I don't know ... but maybe I have a lot of tears, because I cried when I was watching these films. That story of a child who was rejected by her relatives, I cried when I watched it. You begin to wonder what you could do if you see a child being treated like that. It is very painful indeed.*

RURAL, LESOTHO, COMMENTING ON ZAMBIA FILM

*I felt sad about that woman who was afraid to reveal her [HIV] status. It was a challenge to stay with someone who beats you up when you want to come out in the open.*

PERI-URBAN, ZAMBIA, COMMENTING ON LESOTHO FILM

Emotions aroused in the viewers ranged from anger, sadness and pity to joy depending on the story and its outcome. This shows cross-country identification with the issues. The empathy the films created crossed national boundaries.

## The Co-Viewing Experience

People often watch television with family and friends. This is known as co-viewing. Co-viewing influences media experiences and responses. In fact, co-viewing has been identified as an important variable in determining the impact that a program will have on viewers. Researchers have found that co-viewing can change people's attitudes to and evaluation of media content.<sup>7</sup> Co-viewing may also influence emotional responses. Lin and McDonald<sup>8</sup> found that media enjoyment comes from two variables – an individual's response to a media message and the level of enjoyment of other audience members around them.

When concerned with behaviour and social change, co-viewing becomes important because it presents opportunities for viewers to engage with other audience members about the messages in the media. The *Untold* audience reception study asked interviewees if they watched the films in company and whether or not they discussed some of the issues in the films with others. Theories such as the Theory of Reasoned Action<sup>9</sup> support the notion that people plan to change their behaviour based on what they think others around them think. This becomes particularly important in mediated behaviour-change messaging.



Co-viewing has been identified as an important variable in determining the impact that a program will have on viewers. Researchers have found that co-viewing can change people's attitudes to and evaluation of media content.



### ***Discussion of Films***

The *Untold* series stimulated discussion. Participants reported that they discussed the various issues raised in the films with friends, siblings, their children, neighbours and colleagues.

I shared the story with my brother and sister about this film and that if they happen to be in any relationship; they need to go for VCT [Voluntary Counselling and Testing] first.

PERI-URBAN, ZAMBIA, IN REFERENCE TO FILM FROM MALAWI

*I talked to my sister about Rosa because we have a neighbour that discriminates [against] a nephew that lives with her. The boy's mother passed away – I just don't know with what. So we were talking about how good it would be for the neighbour to see that movie of Rosa's journey – maybe her heart would be purified.*

MALE, URBAN, MOZAMBIQUE, IN REFERENCE TO FILM FROM ZAMBIA

*We discussed and we still discuss.*

FEMALE, MALAWI

*I watched it with [M] then we discussed it a bit about the issue of orphans, say like in this era of HIV we have a lot of orphans who need help not only from the government. Even us people we need to volunteer as a community.*

FEMALE, URBAN, BOTSWANA

## Behaviour Change

Every communication intervention is faced with the challenge of moving the audience from getting a message to acting to change their behaviour. Respondents reported that the *Untold* films had encouraged them to shift their attitudes, social norms, and behaviours.

*The story Mapule's [Choice] made me feel challenged to go for VCT. For years we've been hearing and talking about HIV, AIDS and VCT and it ends there. But this time after watching this story, I went for VCT.*

RURAL, ZAMBIA

The films therefore played a role in breaking down barriers and stigma among viewers. Among the social norms that were challenged in *Untold* are norms that view violence and abuse as private affairs. *Batjele* and *Mapule's Choice* depict characters moving from being silent victims of 'private' abuse to active and public opposition. Audience members found this role-modelling empowering.



I liked the fact that the student finally disclosed the abuse by her teacher in the presence of the whole school. I liked it because it shows the importance of disclosing your troubles to someone.

FEMALE, PERI-URBAN, SWAZILAND





### Concerns

Participants interviewed raised some concerns about the films that do not fit into these categories – such as the fact that some people felt awkward about watching sex scenes and suggested that future productions should not have these.

*As you know in our culture you cannot watch such sex films with children or any other people besides your wife so I strongly feel that something could have been done so as to make sure that such things are not repeated.*

MALE, PERI URBAN, ZIMBABWE, REFERRING TO SECRETS AND LIES



Older participants who were not familiar with the music and style of **Rebel Rhymes** commented that the film was ‘un-African’, but many of the youth interviewed related well to these features.

*After watching the story [Rebel Rhymes], I was so touched such that I started advising my friends about their lifestyle and not to misuse the money on drinking and smoking.*

RURAL, ZAMBIA

One of the most common suggestions for improving **Untold** was to increase the length of the films or to serialise the individual stories. This suggestion really speaks to the success of the series.

## Assessing Reach

Assessing the overall reach of **Untold** is difficult as, except in South Africa, ‘no significant, regular audience research or audience monitoring, either qualitative or quantitative, exists in the regional partner countries’<sup>10</sup>. The Regional Programme’s own cost limitations did not allow for a quantitative study.

To reach maximum audiences you have to compete in prime time and to do that you have to be as good if not better than the best local entertainment programmes being broadcast at the time. In South Africa, where audience ratings are available, the **Untold** series performed extremely well. Initially, it was shown late – at 10.00pm – but it was brought back as a re-run in prime time. Despite being a repeat and having sub-titles, the re-run received a 40% audience share. **‘Untold** out performed *Smack Down* a wrestling programme which traditionally draws large audiences in South Africa!’<sup>11</sup> The findings confirm other research that there is a demand for quality local dramas. ‘Audiences have an appetite for locally-made content in preference to international content.’<sup>12</sup>

Part of the solution to meeting this demonstrated appetite for local content is capacity building, ‘to foster and encourage the development of a local production skills base for radio and television programming to tap and harness creativity.’<sup>13</sup>

Part of the solution to meeting this demonstrated appetite for local content is capacity building.

# Capacity Building

The multi-layered training programme consisted of regional workshops, follow-up assignments, mentorship and technical support. The film-making process offered participatory hands on experience; with industry experts on set to observe, guide and troubleshoot if necessary. Mentorship allowed for deeper hands-on training.

Combining the making of *Untold* with training was complex and challenging. The project provided support in finance and budgeting, continuity, camera, lighting, sound and art direction, with over 130 technical people benefiting from the skills building programme (camera, lighting, sound, art direction, etc.). Script writers and producers were trained in edutainment drama theory, story development, story treatment and script writing.

The scope of the project across nine countries raised management and supervision issues – particularly managing the 18-month accredited training course in scriptwriting and film production that was integrated into the process.

At the outset the desired objectives of the project were to provide training to mostly inexperienced filmmakers and also to ensure that the final product delivered was broadcast quality. Whilst the key training objective was to create opportunity that increased skills on production, the project had to simultaneously ensure that both completion and financial risks were minimized.<sup>14</sup>





The TV production course was an eye-opening experience that offered diverse new skills, the opportunity to investigate new technology and a chance at achieving goals that seemed impossible before. This course also benefits my country as a whole since professional drama/film production is new in Swaziland.

THEMBUMENZI MABUZA,  
PRODUCER, SWAZILAND

For most trainees, the training and mentorship programme was invaluable:

*The TV Production was very empowering. What I liked about the course was its practical aspect. We got to practise what we learned and practise instils knowledge and discipline ...The mentoring programme was very useful... having an industry professional guiding every step of the way was very helpful and empowering. The mentoring and transfer of knowledge by the professionals was, for me, the highlight of the course. They guided us all the way and were always available for advice and direction.*

KAISER MATSUMUNYANE, DIRECTOR/ WRITER, LESOTHO

A further challenge was the range of skills across the teams. An initial audit was done to assess needs. For example, in Swaziland and Malawi, both the director and producer were doing drama for the first time, while the Mozambique team was very experienced. In Lesotho, the producer was inexperienced and there was little available in-country infrastructure or support.

To ensure effective training and also minimise risk, a shadow producer worked alongside the local producer throughout the film-production process. In many countries equipment was lacking but regional collaboration meant that equipment could be sourced on loan from South Africa where necessary.

A review of the training programme<sup>15</sup> has enabled the Regional Programme to assess levels and abilities for future work. While the training had benefits and was successful in many respects, it would be unrealistic to assume that the training has left people completely equipped. It takes years, experience, and opportunities to practise and learn to genuinely build and grow local capacity. Training needs to be sustained. Further training is needed to consolidate the skills that each country will need to produce effective, local edutainment material.

*Filmmakers across the region need to be nurtured so as to guarantee a reliable pool of professionals who can embark on telling stories in a professional manner that is technically competent in all facets of filmmaking. ...This is a great start in becoming a true filmmaker and story teller.*

TUMELO MATOBAKO, PRODUCER, LESOTHO

Brent Quinn, story editor and head of the *Untold* writing training programme notes:

Each writing team, especially the less experienced, seemed to thrive under the guidance they were given. Their ability with screenplay writing improved remarkably, ensuring each film had its own voice ... They have grown from beginner level and are now at intermediate level. To get to master level they need more training. Equally important is ongoing training for the country partners ... to commission their own edutainment drama, oversee quality control and develop talent in the region is a key goal to strive for.<sup>16</sup>



## Conclusion

The *Untold* films bear testimony to the success of the skills development element of this Regional Programme initiative. The fact that these television dramas were developed, written, directed and produced in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe by local people; constitutes the achievement of one of the central goals of the *Untold* project – to build a community of new voices and grow local skills to develop edutainment drama.

The audience reception study conducted across the region has shown that the films were successful in highlighting a range of issues relating to HIV & AIDS. These issues include orphanhood, HIV testing, stigma, and gender-based violence. The dramas reinforce the complexity of the HIV & AIDS epidemic and the need for individuals and communities to develop new ways of thinking and acting to curb its spread.

The *Untold* series has moved and entertained audiences, created dialogue and debate, and got people thinking about their lives and the choices they face in relation to HIV & AIDS. The project has thus, through successful regional collaboration, achieved its stated goals.

Another major success of *Untold* is that the films have generated an appetite for home-grown television drama:

*They were interesting and they showed true African living. They were not dealing with things from America. They expressed the issues of African stuff, the things we experience as youths of Africa.... It showed that it was made at home, in Africa.*

MALE, URBAN, BOTSWANA

The project has highlighted the need to continue and expand capacity development efforts in the region both to produce integrated regional behaviour and social change communication messages and to develop regional capacity to deliver these messages through local and regional television drama.

The story makes me to be proud of my country ... . We managed to show our capabilities, that we as a country – we can produce educative stories that inform people about what is happening in life.

MALE, URBAN, BOTSWANA



## Endnotes

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