The success of Amah

Communicating AIDS prevention through entertainment-education
A case study based on the film Amah Djah-foule
produced by Project Retro-CI and PSI/ECODEV in Côte d'Ivoire

By Annica Widmark, Malmö University/Communication for development, 2002
Supervisors: Phil. Dr. Thomas Tufte, Malmö University/University of Copenhagen and Dr. Bea Louise Vuylsteke, Projet RETRO-CI
Content

Foreword .......................................................................................................................... 5

Introduction .................................................................................................................... 7
A background to entertainment-education .................................................................... 7
Historical entertainment-education initiatives ............................................................. 8
Soul City .......................................................................................................................... 9
Entertainment-education in Côte d'Ivoire ................................................................. 10
Miguel Sabido’s entertainment-education theory ...................................................... 10
Towards a participatory approach ............................................................................. 12

Method ......................................................................................................................... 16
Material .......................................................................................................................... 16
Method ......................................................................................................................... 16
My person ..................................................................................................................... 17

The organizations behind the production of Amah Djah-foule ......................... 19
Projet RETRO-CI ...................................................................................................... 19
Clinique de confiance ................................................................................................. 19
Observation going with the team to Youpogon ...................................................... 21
PSI - Population Services International ................................................................. 22
Distribution and use of Amah Djah-foule ............................................................... 22

The creation process of Amah Djah-foule .............................................................. 24
Prerequisites ............................................................................................................... 25
Formative research ..................................................................................................... 25
Realism and identification ......................................................................................... 27
The image of sex workers ....................................................................................... 29
Advocacy for social change ..................................................................................... 30
Format ......................................................................................................................... 30
A multi media approach ............................................................................................. 32

Analysis 1: The characters in Amah Djah-foule ..................................................... 33
Amah ............................................................................................................................ 33
Fortuna ......................................................................................................................... 33
Boni .............................................................................................................................. 33
Prince ........................................................................................................................... 34
Mr. Kokou ................................................................................................................... 34
Mme. Kokou ............................................................................................................. 35
The student .................................................................................................................. 35
Role modeling in Amah Djah-foule ........................................................................ 35
Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 37

Analysis 2: The educational messages of Amah Djah-foule ................................. 39
The risks incurred by sex workers ........................................................................... 39
Condom negotiation .................................................................................................. 40
Correct condom use .................................................................................................. 41
The role of lubricating gels ...................................................................................... 41
The importance of voluntary counseling and testing ............................................. 41
The importance of regular medical check-ups and follow-ups for sex workers ................................................................. 42
The role of peer educators in raising awareness among sex workers ........ 42
Conclusion ..................................................................................................................................................... 42

Analysis 3: The audience's reception of Amah Djah-foule ................. 44
Messages about condom use ......................................................................................................................... 44
Other messages in the film .............................................................................................................................. 45
Lacking subjects ............................................................................................................................................ 47
Social change .................................................................................................................................................. 47
Conclusion ..................................................................................................................................................... 48

Concluding discussion ........................................................................................................................................ 49
Message design ............................................................................................................................................... 49
Role modeling in Amah Djah-foule ................................................................................................................ 50
Recommendations .......................................................................................................................................... 50
References ..................................................................................................................................................... 52
The recent ten years I have spent working within the field of culture and theatre, trying to administrate and distribute art to the people. In my studies in Communication for Development, I immediately took an interest in entertainment-education. It is a field where I can combine my previous experiences within both communication and arts. I believe that in modern western culture there is a dichotomy between artistic and educational purposes, which I find unnatural and not very productive. In the field of entertainment-education I see the possibility of producing art that is actually speaking of important issues.

The AIDS pandemic is maybe the largest catastrophe in our time. AIDS communication has an important role to play in controlling it and I have especially taken interest in the communication strategy of entertainment-education. I was very happy to learn about the entertainment-education film Amah Djah-foule that has been produced in Côte d’Ivoire. In this film the producers have managed to balance artistic qualities and educational purposes.

What took me to Côte d’Ivoire? I have a personal relation to Côte d’Ivoire through my partner Francois who is Ivorian. In my daily life I have given a lot of thought to the matter of communication within and across cultural contexts. This study was at the same time my third journey to Côte d’Ivoire.

It is my hope that this study will serve as a good example of what is going on in AIDS communication in Côte d’Ivoire, a corner of the world that is not so often referred to in the Anglophone countries of Europe. It is also my hope that this study will make Amah Djah-foule and its contribution to the genre wider known.

There are many people that I am grateful to for being able to do this study: Thanks to Projet RETRO-CI and Clinique de confiance and all your staff for your help and collaboration. Thanks to my local supervisor Dr. Bea Vuylsteke for letting me in on the project, sharing your knowledge and introducing me to the activities at Projet RETRO-CI, to Dr. Ettiegne-Traoré and Dr. Anoma for guidance and good advice. Thanks to the clients at Clinique de confiance for sharing your thoughts with me. Also I want to thank Jeff Barnes, Alexis Don Zigré and Silvére Antony Zokou for sharing your thoughts on the creative process. Thanks to all the representatives of the different NGO’s that have taken their time to give interviews. Thanks to Francois Nanou Anougba for assisting me with language and guidance. Thanks to my university supervisor, Phil. Dr. Thomas Tufte, for helping me to clear out my thoughts. Thanks to Skånes Dansteater for giving me leave of absence to do the study.

Lund in January 2002

Annica Widmark
Introduction

Every evening, Amah, a young Ivorian woman, goes to work along "Rue des gos", a busy street in Abidjan. Her job: to seduce customers, to debate the going rate, to negotiate condom use, to sell love. When she returns home in the morning, she climbs tenderly into bed with her boyfriend. Unfortunately, he is not very fond of condoms, and Amah must re-negotiate with him each time they make love. But when she proposes, one day, that both of them should be tested for HIV, that’s when things start to fall apart. (Press release on Amah Djah-foule)

Amah is the main character of the film Amah Djah-foule, a film designed as an IEC (information, education and communication) material, primarily targeting female sex workers about STI’s and HIV/AIDS. The film wishes to raise risk awareness and influence attitudes and practices for safer sex and was produced by Project RETRO-CI and PSI/ECODEV in Côte d’Ivoire in 2001 and released on the 12th of April.

Amah Djah-foule was produced in the entertainment-education tradition. Studies of entertainment-education productions are often concentrated on measuring the effects of an intervention, for instance measuring individual change in KAP (knowledge, attitudes and practice) before and after the intervention. In this study I have chosen to focus upon what I find to be the most central part of entertainment-education production - the messages. The purpose of this study was to:
- understand the message design process
- analyze the messages of the film
- analyze the audience’s reception of the film

I wanted to find out how Amah Djah-foule has contributed to the genre of entertainment-education and what could be learned from it. What is effective and what is not? This has been done through two different pairs of glasses: the entertainment-education theory of Miguel Sabido and the theories of participatory communication. I have tried to understand the participatory essence of the work with Amah Djah-foule, during message design, during the creation process, and during the showing of the film and the educational work connected to it. I have also tried to understand how the socio-cultural context has been regarded in the message design of Amah Djah-foule.

A background to entertainment-education

The following pages (7-11) builds on Singhal/Rogers (1999) if nothing else is indicated.

In all cultures throughout history people have been using storytelling, music, dance and theatre to tell stories – to amuse themselves and each other, and to teach moral and skills for survival. Entertainment-education is a communication strategy where entertainment and education are purposively joined to communicate messages for social and behavioral change.

In 1999, Arvind Singhal and Everett Rogers, leading researchers in the area, defined entertainment-education as follows:

Entertainment-education strategy is the process of purposively designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate in order to increase
audience members’ knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, and change overt behavior. (Singhal/Rogers, 1999, p. 9)

Dutch researcher Martine Bouman has given a slightly different definition:

"Entertainment-education strategy is the process of purposively designing and implementing a mediating communication form with the potential of entertaining and educating people, in order to enhance and facilitate different stages of prosocial (behavior) change." (Martine Bouman 1998, p. 25)

During the last decades entertainment-education has developed into an academic field of research and is also known under names like "Enter-educate", "E&E", "Edutainment", "Infotainment" etc. A difference from "ordinary" entertainment productions is that producers of entertainment-education productions place more importance on formative research, on defining the social issues that are to be addressed and on designing the messages for desired social change. Messages and scripts are usually pre-tested to focus groups to make sure of the effectiveness. The producers also place a lot of importance on measuring the effects after the intervention.

Entertainment-education is based on popular culture, telling about people and relations, which encourages audience to speak about the story with family and friends. Important ingredients are that the audience finds it easy to identify with and recognize environments, characters and situations. Entertainment-education stresses emotional values before intellectual ones. The genre allows the audience to experience the inner life of another person. It makes possible for the audience to seek information and advice from the story and the characters. Entertainment-education works both on the individual level and the collective level of society. It can create individual awareness and behavioral change, but also work as an agenda setter, influencing discourses in society.

Entertainment-education has a large potential to reach a broad spectrum of a population, and is often designed to reach less educated and socially exposed groups of people, that in general have less possibilities to take advantage of social information. Mainly using electronic media, the information is accessible to everyone, even if you don’t know how to read and write. Through mass media poor and rural populations can be reached at a relatively low cost. In some media environments it could even be possible for an entertainment-education intervention to pay for itself, attracting commercial advertisers.

**Historical entertainment-education initiatives**

Entertainment-education is originating from different sciences such as psychology, sociology, pedagogy, health communication and social marketing. The theories of entertainment-education are based on several from each other independent experiences of communicating social issues through an entertaining media format. Experiences have been made above all from the mass media: radio, television, popular music etc, but also in smaller scale through theatre, dance, art and crafts.

One of the great pioneers was Mexican television producer Miguel Sabido. He produced seven television soap operas in the entertainment-education genre during the 1970ies and 80ies and he also developed his own theoretic framework to the genre. Other early productions have been created in different parts of the world: The Archers in the UK (still running), Elaine Perkins’s radio dramas in Jamaica, Sesame Street in USA. Researchers and practitioners at John Hopkins
University (JHU) in Baltimore have further developed the theoretic base of entertainment-education. In collaboration with PCI, Population Communication International, they have implemented and measured the results of radio and TV soaps in India (Tinka Tinka Sukh) and Tanzania (Twende Na Wakati) and other countries. (Singhal/Rogers, 1999). Arvind Singhal, Ohio University, and Everett Rogers, University of New Mexico, have richly contributed to the theoretical development.

In Netherlands Martine Bouman has taken part in and conducted research on an entertainment-education intervention in a regular television soap opera in hospital environment – Medisch Centrum West, where three episodes were designed to contain cardiovascular health messages. Bouman has measured the audiences’ awareness of the educational messages that were in the episodes and also measured the level of knowledge about the different health messages. It turns out that the audience did not reject the existence of educational messages in the series and that people that had viewed the actual episodes had more knowledge about cardiovascular health behavior than audience that had not watched those episodes did. Martine Bouman has also studied the collaboration between health communication professionals and television professionals to reveal the power relationship during the production process. She finds out that health communication professional are in a power position during the implementing phase while television professionals take over the initiative during production and editing. (Martine Bouman, 1998)

**Soul City**

One recent and still running very successful entertainment-education initiative is the one of Soul City in South Africa. Started in 1992 by medical doctor Garth Japhet, the NGO Soul City has developed independently of the Miguel Sabido and JHU tradition of entertainment-education. It started with a television drama series and has during the years developed into a multimedia vehicle, also including a radio drama series, a children's television drama series, education booklets, newspaper cartoon strips, merchandise materials etc. Soul City has during the years concentrated on health and social issues such as HIV, maternal and child health, tuberculosis prevention, alcohol abuse and domestic violence. (Singhal/Rogers, 1999)

Soul City promotes a multi media strategy, believing that they will reach more people using different and complementary media:

1. The same audience can be reached in different ways with the same messages
2. Some audiences can be better reached with certain kinds of media. For example, in South Africa most rural audiences are best reached by radio, while urban audiences are best reached by television.
3. Different mediums have different strengths. The electronic media can communicate messages that give broad information – but only for a moment in time. Print media can carry more detailed information that can be read at the reader's own pace and then kept for reference.” (www.soulcity.org.za/methodology.htm, 2001-11-05)

Soul City explains their success partly to their successful partnerships with the South African government, national radio and television, different daily newspapers, commercial corporations and donor agencies. Soul City is most of all a research and management organization coordinating all the activities. The drama series and print materials are commissioned from creative professionals. Soul City
owns the media products that are produced and therefore has the power to control the quality of each product. Soul City is very aware of their brand, using the name in all communication products, lending credibility to whatever is associated with it. (Singhal/Rogers, 1999)

Entertainment-education in Côte d’Ivoire

In Côte d’Ivoire, the social marketing organization PSI is producing in the entertainment-education genre. PSI has an audiovisual production unit producing different materials: music, film, radio drama, television drama, documentaries etc. Many of these productions are actual entertainment-education products, while others could be characterized as just educational products.

Most attention has PSI had for the television drama series SIDA dans la cité (AIDS in the city), addressing the social issues related to HIV/AIDS. It was broadcast in two periods, the first one in 1995 and the second in 1997. A third series will be produced within near future. Another PSI production was ”A ka na Deme”, a multi media campaign including a television series, a commercially sold music cassette and a music video. The campaigned discussed for instance family planning and AIDS prevention. (Jeff Barnes, 2001-08-09)

PSI has made a television series called ”Refugee”, a story about refugees of the war in Liberia. It was broadcast also in Liberia. They have also produced a one-hour television documentary following a popular Ivorian music artist, Meiway, on tour. The film also includes personal interviews with the artist about his personal engagement in the fight against AIDS and a scene where he pays visit to a hospital for people with the disease. Another recent product is ”Rouler protégé”, a radio drama cassette targeting truck drivers on the issue of HIV prevention. (Alexis Don Zigré, 2001-07-25)

Besides PSI I have not found any other actors producing entertainment-education materials in Côte d’Ivoire, at least not using audiovisual media.

Miguel Sabido’s entertainment-education theory

I want to give a more elaborate presentation to Miguel Sabido, as I will base part of my analysis on his entertainment-education theory. Miguel Sabido’s interest in soap operas with social messages started with watching the Peruvian soap opera "Simplemente Maria" in 1971. This production was very successful all over Latin America and promoted for instance adult literacy classes and sewing classes. By analyzing this series Sabido started formulating his own theory. Between 1975 and 1982 this Mexican TV producer produced not less than seven entertainment-education soap operas.

His concept is based on different scientific theories. One was Rovigatti’s circular model of communication where Sabido chose to see the communicator as the manufacturer of a product, the medium as the soap opera, the receiver as the consumer and the response as the purchase of the advertised product. Sabido also took an interest in Eric Bentley’s dramatic theory, especially in his analysis of the structure of the melodrama. Sabido recognized the power of emotional affect on the audience. In the melodrama good and bad are contrasted towards each other and situations are exaggerated to convince the audience to support the ”good”.

Sabido also studied Dr. Paul D. MacLean’s Triune Brain Theory. MacLean’s theory proposes that human beings process messages in three brain centers: the neo-cortex (intelligence), visceral (emotions) and reptilian (physical urges). Sabido
concluded that most educational programs fail because they only trigger intellectual responses. He believed that a successful soap opera should evoke the audience response in all three areas.

Sabido was also inspired by Jung and his theory about the folk myths and their role in the collective unconscious. In his work Sabido uses bi-polar archetypes that can be either good or bad role models. He tries to present several male and female archetypes representing the different stages of human life, and so making it possible for the audience to identify with the characters.

Maybe the most influential on Sabido’s work was the Bandura Social Learning Theory about how people learn new behaviors by modeling. In his soap operas Sabido designed characters to be physically and psychologically attractive and of a slightly higher status than the target audience, making the characters more attractive to the audience. Bandura thought that the model behavior is better remembered if it is repeated and if the actions are coded into verbal signals. Sabido used this knowledge in a concrete way by adding an epilogue to each episode in his soap operas, where a well-known authority person would conclude the message of the episode. Sabido’s entertainment-education soap operas used to have three kinds of characters: positive role models, negative role models and characters changing from negative to positive behavior, transitional characters. There are several characters of each kind. Normally one of the transitional characters adopts the educational value approximately one third into the series, another one when two thirds have passed. The third transitional character doubts until the end where he/she is punished.

Sabido suggests that the design of an entertainment-education soap opera should start by creating a moral framework of the specific educational issues to be emphasized and a values grid for the educational messages. The moral framework can be derived for instance from the nation’s constitution, its legal statutes, or from documents such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights. (Singhal/Rogers, 1999)

Sabido constructed a three-phased production system for the entertainment-education soap operas:

Pre-production activities:
1. Identify the central educational value and related values grid. /—/
2. Evaluate the role of television in society, the television production and broadcast facilities, and the availability and appropriateness of commercial advertisers.
3. Evaluate the infrastructure that supports the educational issue to be sure it is adequate to meet expected demand.
4. Assess the appropriateness of the entertainment-education format, in light of demographic and sociocultural characteristics of the audience.
5. Assess the physical characteristics of the intended audience to design life-like characters, sets and costumes.

Production activities:
1. Collaborate with social scientists and formative researchers to inform the production team about the educational issue to be promoted.
2. Foster cooperation between the creative and production personnel.
3. Design character profiles and paths based on the values grid, and write the scenes, episodes, scripts and epilogues.
4. Shoot the episode. /—/

Post-production activities:
Assess the effects of the entertainment-education soap opera. (Singhal/Rogers, 1999, p. 70)
Towards a participatory approach

Behavioral change models have their roots in the modernization theory, roughly described a paradigm viewing communication as a transmission of information from sender to receiver with the goal to make the developing world adopt western innovations and values. Massmedia exposure and literacy is regarded as important means for development. In 1962 Everett Rogers presented the Diffusion of Innovations theory which has had an enormous impact during many decades and still is holding its position although it is being questioned from different directions. The premise of diffusion of innovations is that innovations diffuse over time according to individual’s stages. Rogers identified five such stages: awareness, knowledge and interest, decision, trial and adoption/rejection. During the 70’s and 80’s Rogers has developed his theory which originally regarded behavioral change communication as a one way transmission of information towards a more process oriented view where communication is regarded as sharing information in order to reach mutual understanding (Waisbord, 2001).

Family planning, social marketing and behavioral change communication all have their roots in the diffusionist communication theory and the modernization paradigm, which is also the basis of most entertainment-education initiatives. Today we can see a trend turning from behavior change towards social change. Past research on the diffusion of innovation shows that exposure to mass media messages mainly results in creating awareness-knowledge of an innovation. Seldom do the media change attitudes or overt behavior. (Rogers, 1995)

Diffusion of Innovations has been dominantly preoccupied with measuring communication effects. (Melkote/Steeves, 2001). Now we see a rising interest for understanding how and why entertainment-education has these effects (Singhal/Rogers, 2002).

The diffusionist school has been criticized for being vertical and top-down driven, a model favoring the source over the receiver. Receivers are treated as targets for persuasion and change. The individual is regarded as the locus of change as supposed to participatory theory where the receivers are regarded as participants (Melkote/Steeves, 2001). In participatory communication knowledge is not believed to automatically lead to behavior change. Social change is ideally internally driven and people regarded as agents of their own change. (Background Paper for Communication for Development Roundtable, 2001)

People should be actively participating in the process of social change and in control of the communication tools and contents during research, design and dissemination. The communication process should be adapted to the specific community or social group where it is meant to be used, in terms of content, language, culture and media. (Dragon, 2001)

Participatory communication scholars want to focus less on changing individual behavior and more on empowering communities and societies. Communication initiatives should address underlying causes such as discrimination, poverty, socio-economic status, culture, gender, and spirituality. These areas all lie out of the individual control, but do influence individual behavior. (Background Paper for Communication for Development Roundtable, 2001)

Singhal and Rogers seem to be following this trend towards a participatory approach. In a special issue of Communication Theory (2002; Volume 12 (2)), they are discussing a redefinition of entertainment-education, as they find their old
definition too limited, implying that individual-level behavior change is the main purpose. They now regard entertainment-education as "the intentional placement of educational content in entertainment messages". They regard entertainment-education not as a communication theory, but as a "strategy used to disseminate ideas to bring about behavioral and social change".

... an overwhelmingly focus on individual-level behavior change runs the risk of mistakenly assuming that all individuals (1) are capable of controlling their environment, (2) are on an even playing field, and (3) take decisions of their own free will. Such is seldom the case. For instance, whether or not a commercial sex worker can protect herself from HIV is often a function of whether or not her male client agrees to use a condom. She is often voiceless, powerless, and vulnerable in such encounters. (Singhal/Rogers, 2002)

According to Bandura (1997) social change requires a strong sense of collective efficacy on the part of individuals and collectivities. Entertainment-education interventions can model either or both individual self-efficacy or collective efficacy. Entertainment-education could play an important part in motivating collective action.

Collective efficacy emerges when people share ideas about the social problems facing their system and discuss ways of confronting resistance to their plans for social change. (Singhal/Rogers 1999, p. 175)

In 1999 UNAIDS presented a new communications framework where they take a clear standpoint towards participatory communication and addressing social change and contextual structures rather than individual behavior change.

As indicated, structured discussions based on research and practice yielded five key domains of context—government policy, socioeconomic status, culture, gender, relations, and spirituality. These domains are interrelated, although they do have different impacts on preventive health behaviors. The focus on the context in the new framework does not undermine the importance of the individual. The framework recognizes that the individual is a product of the context, and for HIV/AIDS communications strategy to have a meaningful effect, intervention programs should begin with one or a combination of these domains. Thus, individuals should still be targeted, but only in the context of their interaction within a domain or a combination of domains. (Communications Framework for HIV/AIDS. A New Direction, 1999, p. 30)

Is participatory communication radically different from diffusion? Both schools aim to empower people to make informed choices. It depends a lot on how participation is defined, as definitions can vary from representation or consultation of the public to self-management by the public. Paolo Freire stands for the most radical version of participation and his ideas are widely accepted within pedagogy all over the world. Freire thinks that communication should be dialogical and proposing collective solutions. UNESCO is for a more gradual progression towards a higher level of public involvement in communication systems. It includes the involvement of the public in the production process and also in the management and planning of communication systems. (Servaes, 1999) Melkote and Steeves (2001) believe that the goal should be to facilitate conscientization of unequal social, political and spatial structures. Communication channels should be used to generate dialogue, to help people understand each
other and identify their collective problems. As sweeping structural change in society is not always realistic, individual change may be significant in gradually leading to progressive social change. To them a participatory communication strategy is "where the beneficiaries of campaigns and projects play an active role in message construction and design."

Belgian communication researcher Jan Servaes believes that we right now are experiencing a bridging of paradigms within communication for development. He describes the contemporary movement within communication as the multiplicity paradigm, contrary to - but the same time building on - the previous paradigms of modernization and dependency.

These are some of the characteristics of participatory communication according to Servaes:

1. The participatory model views ordinary people as the key agents of change or participants for development, and for this reason it focuses on their aspirations and strengths. Development is meant to liberate and emancipate people and, in doing so, enable them to meet their basic needs. Local cultures are respected.

2. The participatory model sees people as the nucleus of development. Development means lifting up the spirits of a local community to take pride in its own culture, intellect, and environment. Development aims to educate and stimulate people to be active in self and communal improvements, while maintaining a balanced ecology. Authentic participation, though widely espoused in the literature, is not in everyone's interest. Due to their local concentration, participatory programs are, in fact, not easily implemented, nor are they highly predictable or readily controlled.

3. The participatory model emphasizes the local community rather than the nation state, monistic universalism rather than nationalism, spiritualism rather than secular humanism, dialogue rather than monologue, and emancipation rather than alienation.

4. In essence, participatory development involves the strengthening of democratic processes and institutions at the community level and the redistribution of power. Participation aims at redistributing the elite’s power so that a community can become a full-fledged democratic one. As such, it directly threatens those whose position and/or very existence depends on power and its control over others. Reactions to such threats are sometimes overt, but most often are manifested as a less visible, yet steady and continuos resistance to change in the status quo. (Servaes, 1999, p 93)

With the participatory model "the focus moves from a "communicator-" to a more "receiver-centric" orientation, with the resultant emphasis on meaning sought and ascribed rather than information transmitted. Experts and development workers respond rather than dictate; they choose what is relevant to the context in which they are working. The emphasis is on information exchange rather than on persuasion as in the diffusion model.” (Servaes, 1999, p. 93)

In an evaluation of the South African entertainment-education soap opera Soul City, Thomas Tufte is analyzing how an entertainment-education based communication strategy can contribute to a participatory process. Soul City is for instance narrating community-based solutions and promoting dialogue, challenging power structures and promoting community based action. Thomas Tufte concludes that Soul City is fulfilling in practice many of the goals of
participatory communication, even though the genre is springing from the diffusionist tradition. (Tufte, 2000)

Is this the case with other entertainment-education initiatives also? In the following chapters I will investigate where Amah Djah-foule stands in the context of participatory communication.
Method
I went to Côte d’Ivoire to study the film Amah Djah-foule during five weeks in July-August 2001.

Material
My material in this study has been (1) the film: Amah Djah-foule - ou le succès d’Amah, which I have analyzed textually, analyzing characters and themes. For the thematic analysis I have also used (2) the Discussion Guide of Amah Djah-foule. Third (3), it is based on participatory observation of the educational work performed at Clinique de confiance in Abidjan, mostly focusing on the daily showings of the film at the clinic and the following educational talks. I have also followed a couple of educational visits by peer educators in their respective districts. Fourth (4), it is based on interviews. Fifth (5), I have used a number of working documents and figures from Projet RETRO-CI.

I have interviewed 21 persons during the stay in Abidjan. Half of the interviews have been directed to persons involved in the production process: the producers (producteur exécutif, producteur délégue), the director, the scriptwriter, and other members of the message design team. I have interviewed all members in the message design team except one, who was not in Côte d’Ivoire during my stay there. The other interviews are with female sex workers visiting the clinic, that is the actual target group of the film, and with different representatives of organizations using the film in their work. The sex workers were chosen randomly and the representatives of the organizations were recommended to me by Projet Retro-CI following their distribution list for the film. All together this gives me a good overview of what the producers were aiming for with Amah Djah-foule and how the film is being received.

Method
The film had been released on the 12th of April 2001, three months before my study started. As the film was already in use at the Clinique de confiance I had the opportunity to study the reception of the film by its target audience, female sex workers visiting Clinique de Confiance in Abidjan. I have spent eleven days at the clinic, either doing interviews or just hanging around to observe the educational work performed by social workers and peer educators. I have also taken part in an educational day for the peer educators.

Before coming to Abidjan I had watched the film on video. I had prepared three sets of questionnaires for the different categories of people that I wanted to interview: people involved in the production of the film, people working with health education (both in Clinique de confiance and in NGO’s using the film) and female sex workers (target group). I have performed a series of semi-structured interviews. I did not want to direct the interviews too much but rather let the informants speak freely on certain topics.

The interviews with the producers and the collaborating organizations have taken place in their respective offices. This was a practical solution, as I did not want to take too much time from them. The interviews with the sex workers have taken place at Clinique de Confiance on days when the girls were visiting. I talked to the girls while they were waiting for their turn or after they had finished and waited for the bus to go back to their neighborhood. The medical staff at the clinic could facilitate getting in contact. I actively chose to perform the
interviews at the clinic and not in the districts where the women live. Partly because it could be too dangerous for me to go looking for them at night, and partly because it would be their working hours and I would have had to compete with customers and probably have to pay them for their time.

I have recorded most of the interviews on tape and also transcribed them in English. A few interviews were not recorded because of technical problems, but these I have written out of my memory as soon as possible after the interview.

All informants are represented with their names in the report. Sex workers that are quoted are referred to only by their first name, leaving their family name out to give some protection to their identity. None of them have requested total anonymity.

The textual analysis of both messages and characters build on the theory of Miguel Sabido. In my wider analysis of the communication strategy of Amah Djah-foule I also incorporate participatory communication theories in combination with experiences drawn from previous entertainment-education projects. I have chosen to work with Sabido’s theory, as it is comparatively old and well established. It offers easily identified parameters to take a starting point in. Participatory communication on the other hand is still developing, and very much on the mode in development communication.

My person

I came to Abidjan with some knowledge about both Abidjan and Ivorian culture(s), having an Ivorian partner and having made two previous journeys in the country. I was expecting it to be a lot harder to get in contact with the sex workers visiting Clinique de confiance. I was expecting the girls to be embarrassed to talk about their work and unwilling to open up to a total stranger, especially to a white European with university background. This turned out not to be the case at all. In general they were happy to make friends and find someone who actually was interested in listening to their story. A problem was that it was sometimes hard to direct the conversation towards the topics I wanted to talk about, as their main focus was, understandably, on how they were supposed to make their living. I also had a feeling that some of the girls had been in similar interview situations before, either with researchers or with journalists, and that they had certain expectations about what kind of information I wanted and what kind of answers - politically correct answers - they should give. Some of the girls expected money for the trouble, but I was not allowed to pay them because of the clinic policy.

Language was a problem in the interviews with the sex workers. Some were done in French and some in English, depending on the origin of the girls. I am not fluent in French, but familiar with the Ivorian accent and jargon, which was just as important for the comprehension. Some of the girls spoke mainly African languages and a little bit of English or French, which limited the conversation. If I compare the duration and the content of a conversation with some of the sex workers to an interview with one of the representatives of collaborating organizations the sex workers have not had the same chance to speak for their selves. In this regard the study suffers from biases of race, gender, educational level and social class. Contrary to the sex workers, the professionals from Projet RETRO-CI and different NGO’s were prepared for my interviews, as they were appointed in advance and as they had a professional idea of the reasons for my study.
In my participatory observations at the clinic it was of course difficult (impossible) to just melt in. As the only white person I would stick out. My strategy was to hang out for quite some time so that both staff and clients would get used to me being there. I used to sit in the waiting room during the showing of Amah Djah-foule and try to start small conversations with some of the girls by commenting the film. If one seemed interested, I asked her for an interview after the film. I also participated in a couple of educational talks after the film. I have taken part in an education day for the peer educators at Clinique de confiance, which is a monthly occurring activity. On two occasions I have followed the cars to local districts to observe peer educators in their work.

The observations have served mostly to gather background information for better understanding the contexts in which the educational work is being done and where Amah Djah-foule is being implemented.
The organizations behind the production of Amah Djah-foule

Projet RETRO-CI

Projet RETRO-CI was started in 1988 as a research project in collaboration between the Ministry of Health (Côte d’Ivoire), Centers for Disease Control (USA) and Institute of Tropical Medicine (Belgium).

Projet RETRO-CI is working with research, training and technical support. The research objectives are (1) to prevent HIV infection in uninfected persons; (2) to prevent AIDS in persons already infected with HIV, (3) to study the pathogenesis of the HIV virus. Projet RETRO-CI has four branches: Tuberculosis, STI, Virology and Mother to child transmission. Projet RETRO-CI employs approximately 140 persons. Though the focus is on research they have also developed some activities in health care and health education. The largest effort in this is Clinique de confiance, which is organized under the STI section and was started in 1992. Recent initiatives in health education are a television quiz show for schools on AIDS called "Generation sans SIDA" (Generation without AIDS) and the film Amah Djah-foule. (Bea Vuylsteke, 2001-07-12)

Clinique de confiance

Clinique de Confiance is a medical clinic open to female sex workers. The clinic offers free services including consultations, check ups, medication and condoms. The clients are also able to buy subsidized female condoms and lubricating gels. The clinic can not offer anti retro viral therapy to those who are seropositive because of the high costs. Instead they give cotrimoxazole, a kind of antibiotic, to save the clients from various infections and prolong their lives. Approximately 30% of the clients are seropositive, while the figure for Côte d’Ivoire in general is 12 %. In 1992 as many as 89 % of the clinic clients were seropositive. (Dr. Anoma, 2001-07-12) According to clinic figures the regular utilization of preservatives among the clients reaches over 80%.

Clinique de confiance is collaborating with 16 peer educators, two for each community of Abidjan (Abobo, Adjame, Cocody, Youpogan, Treichville, Koumassi, Marcory, and Port Bouét). The peer educators themselves are former or current sex workers. They are employed part time by Clinique de Confiance and part time by PPP (Programme de Prévention et de Prise en charge des MST/SIDA chez les femmes libres et leurs partenaires). The peer educators work in their neighborhoods to get in touch with sex workers and especially the newcomers. They pay visit to the houses where they stay and talk about safe sex and the risks of STI’s and AIDS.

The clinic has two cars that roll out every morning to bring girls to the clinic from different districts. It is a powerful tool for the peer educators being able to offer the girls to come to the clinic already the next morning. First time visitors are invited to an educational session with the social workers. They get information about the clinic services and about the risks of STI’s and HIV/AIDS. Afterwards the girls are placed in the waiting room with the others. When all of them have been examined the cars take them back to where they live, usually by two o’clock in the afternoon. Most of the time the girls are satisfied with coming to the clinic and become regular visitors.

In the waiting room of Clinique de confiance there are a lot of activities
Elise Youkou and Toutou Gaye, two of the peer educators at Clinique de confiance, and also members of the message design team of Amah Djah-foule.

In the waiting room of Clinique de confiance, peer educators giving a demonstration of the female condom.

One of the clinic cars that is used to bring clients from the districts to Clinique de confiance.

Dr. Anoma, head of Clinique de confiance.
going on. The clinic receives between 10-40 clients a day. Quite a large percentage consists of new clients, between 1-10 each day (Dr. Anoma, 2001-07-17). Each day there are two peer educators at the clinic as girls from their district are visiting, one French-speaking and one English-speaking. Many of the sex workers attending Clinique de Confiance are immigrant workers and English speaking. About 40% are from Nigeria. According to Dr. Anoma, women from neighbouring countries are being persuaded into coming to Côte d'Ivoire to work. They are handicapped by not speaking the language, having no money and contacts.

The peer educators are responsible for selling lubricating gel and femidom (female condoms) in the waiting room. There is a television and video set where they show educational or entertainment-education films. Most popular are episodes from the television soap opera SIDA dans la cité and since last April, Amah Djah-foule. Amah Djah-foule is being shown every day at 11 am. During the film girls are called in for examination and members of the staff are coming and going. There is a phone in the waiting room disrupting from time to time with incoming phone calls to the staff. As the girls are staying for quite a few hours, they sometimes go to buy food on the sidewalk and come back to have their meal in the waiting room. Despite all the distractions, I find that there is an enormous interest for the film. On good days, when the concentration was high and the disturbance low, the girls were very engaged in the story and discussing it between themselves. Other days the concentration was low, sometimes because of the high frequency of non-French-speaking girls, sometimes because they were tired or preoccupied with other problems. After the showing of the film there use to be held an educational talk about the messages of the film. This was lead by a social worker from the clinic together with one of the English-speaking peer educators, so that questions could be asked in both French and English. The discussion takes it’s starting point from situations and characters in the film to see whether the audience has understood the messages. Why was Fortuna crying? Because she had learnt that she was seropositive. What does it mean to be seropositive? That you have AIDS. How is AIDS transmited? How can one protect oneself from AIDS? etc

Observation going with the team to Youpogon, 2001-07-16

This is a description of an education visit in one of the municipalities of Abidjan based on participatory observation. With the team was a driver, Mme Kakou, social worker at Clinique de Confiance, and in Youpogon we picked up Veronique, peer educator in the area.

Veronique, who lives in Youpougon, took us to a house where there was living a group of sex workers and their boyfriends. There was a mixture of Nigerian and Ivorian girls. Veronique was already acquainted with the girls. We were invited to come and sit and they gathered a group of approximately six girls (they were coming and going a bit during our visit).

Veronique tried to establish an easy climate, saying that we have come here to have a chat. She presented herself, Mme Kakou, my assistant and me. Veronique took out her first album containing posters in comic book style. With the help of the pictures, she told the story to the girls. It is about one old sex worker and one newcomer, where the more experienced gives the newcomer advice about how to protect herself from STI’s and HIV. This is also handed out as a small brochure called ”Advice for a friend”, with French text on one side and English
text on the other. Then Veronique took out her other album containing authentic photographs of different STI's and what the symptoms look like on both men and women. The important message was that all these diseases could be cured. You should not go around with diseases like this, because after a while it can cause serious complications. And when you have wounds on the body it is easy for the HIV virus to enter the body. The girls were now much more interested than before. Veronique also told them that in Clinique de Confiance they were giving treatment for free.

She also showed a picture of how a HIV blood test is being done, and that it is not large at all. There are rumors that they take a whole liter of blood, but the picture showed how small the blood sample is. One girl said that she had done her test two or three months ago, but nobody had come to give her the result. Veronique explained that she must come to the clinic to collect the result herself.

After this they continued with demonstration of preservatives. Veronique showed the female condom and how it is being used. One boy had added to the group and he was very interested in the function of the female condom. Veronique explained that it could be placed in advance while waiting for a customer, that the woman can walk around with it and that in will not fall out. Then Mme Kakou gave a demonstration of correct condom use, using a wooden penis. They also showed the lubricating gel. The female condom is sold at the clinic for 100 CFA (app. 0,14 dollars) and the gel for 250 CFA (app. 0,4 dollars). Condoms are for free. The talk ended with an invitation to the girls to come to the clinic the following day and that the clinic bus would come to pick them up at eight a’ clock.

**PSI – Population Services International**

PSI is an international social marketing organization based in the United States. PSI is mainly working with social marketing, AIDS prevention and family planning promotion, primarily in the behavioral change tradition. PSI was established in Côte d’Ivoire in 1991 in collaboration with the Ivorian government under the name PSI/ECODEV. (The name ECODEV was under the process of being changed to ”Agence Ivoirienne de Marketing Social”, so I have chosen to refer to the organization just as PSI). Their social marketing products in Côte d’Ivoire are ”Confiance”, a contraceptive pill, and ”Prudence” preservatives. Prudence has been an enormous success in Côte d’Ivoire. Sale began in 1991, and by the end of the first year 800,000 condoms were sold, representing 80% of the market share. In 1997, with sales of 16.3 million condoms, Prudence had 95% of the market share. PSI Côte d’Ivoire is currently funded by KfW (German development agency), USAID and UNICEF (http://www.psi.org, 2001-08-10).

PSI Côte d’Ivoire has established an audiovisual production unit, to develop advertising and communications mass media campaigns. They have made a huge success with the entertainment-education soap opera, SIDA dans la Cité, produced in 1995-1996. PSI also has a Mobile Video Unit with the capacity to conduct a traveling road show throughout the country projecting film.

**Distribution and use of Amah Djah-foule**

There are three organizations involved in the distribution of Amah Djah-foule: PSI, Projet RETRO-CI and SFPS (Santé Familiale et Prévention SIDA). PSI is responsible for producing copies of the cassette. PSI has handed out copies to their offices in neighboring countries and to people that has contacted them after
reading about the film. Videocassettes are given for free to important partners in HIV prevention programs and implementing agencies, including NGO’s, for distribution and use in the field. Each cassette contains a discussion guide.

Projet RETRO-CI is responsible for the actual distribution of the film within Côte d’Ivoire. They have distributed the film to a number of organizations working with HIV education: ONUSIDA/UNAIDS, ACDI, CCISD, Ruban Rouge, CARE, PPP, Prospérité and UNICEF. The PPP and Prospérité are working explicitly with female sex workers. SFPS has distributed 97 copies (August 2001) of the film to organizations working with HIV education in other West African countries.

Since the premiere of Amah Djah-foule in April 2001, the film has been used in the daily work at Clinique de confiance. The film has been shown in the waiting room every day at 11 am and normally been followed by a discussion with the audience. According to Dr. Anoma (2001-07-17) Clinique de confiance receives between 15-40 clients per day. Many of the clients are attending the clinic regularly and have the opportunity to watch the film repeatedly. According to clinic figures they reached more than 700 new clients in year 2000. This figure should be compared to the estimated number of professional sex workers in Abidjan: 5000 persons (Michel Ayockoin, 2001-08-09). Through the showing at Clinique de confiance the film reaches at least 14 % of the professional female sex workers of Abidjan, probably more.

In numbers, the film is reaching a large part of its target group just by being shown at Clinique de confiance. But that doesn’t make sure that everyone visiting the clinic will actually watch the film and appreciate the messages or in the end adopt new attitudes and behavioral change. During my observations at the clinic I have learned that the film is received differently on different occasions. The environment in the waiting room can sometimes be a bit disturbing with clients and medical staff coming and going. On days when the film has been presented before and an educational discussion held afterwards the audience has been much more focused on watching. The reception of the film has also a lot to do with the composition of attending clients. There have been days when everyone has been very interested in the film and discussing it between themselves. Other days the clients have shown very little interest in the film. Especially on days when the group has consisted mainly by English speaking clients, the interest has been lower, which is understandable as they miss a lot of information by language exclusion. A solution to this is that PSI will produce a dubbed version in English in the beginning of 2002.
The creation process of Amah Djah-foule

The initiator of what later became Amah Djah-foule was Dr. Bea Vuylsteke, head of the STI section at Projet RETRO-CI. She tells about the background of the film in an e-mail:

Before coming to Abidjan (June 1999), I explored the IEC (information, education and communication) materials existing on HIV prevention for female sex workers in the world. I did not find a lot for developing countries, and decided that would be one of my priorities here. The project RETRO-CI has a confidential clinic for female sex workers in Abidjan, called the "Clinique de Confiance" since 1992. At this clinic, female sex workers receive free testing and counseling, prevention messages and advice, STI (sexually transmitted infections) screening and free treatment, and other health services. However, IEC materials are poor and not very targeted for this population. But I realized very soon that video and film were very popular and that series like "SIDA dans la cité" made by PSI were watched in the waiting room of the clinic over and over again. During a site visit of the Belgian Cooperation in February 2000, I proposed to make a prevention film targeted for female sex workers, and they were willing to fund it. I immediately contacted PSI, who was very enthusiastic about the idea. We did some preparatory work and meetings to decide on the messages to bring with the film, and to supervise the scenario, who was written by a professional scenario-writer. Realization, sound track, and editing of the film were all done by PSI. The film was first presented on 12 April 2001. (Bea Vuylsteke, 2001-05-30)

The film Amah Djah-foule was produced by PSI/ECODEV and Projet RETRO-CI, with support from the National Institute of Public Health in Côte d'Ivoire, the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Anvers, KfW, and SFPS (supported by USAID) (Bea Vuylsteke, 2001-05-30). According to Jeff Barnes, Director of PSI (2001-08-09), the production cost for Amah Djah-foule was 28 000 000 CFA (app. 40 000 dollars).

The film was primarily produced to support the educational work at Clinique de confiance, but also as a possible tool for other organizations working with female sex workers but also in a wider context of HIV education.

Projet RETRO-CI commissioned PSI to produce the film and together they set up a design team to formulate the messages of the film. The members of the design team were: Dr. Bea Vuylsteke - Projet RETRO-CI; Dr. Virginie Ettiegne-Traoré - Projet RETRO-CI; Claudia Vondrasek - communication specialist at SFPS; Jeff Barnes – managing director of PSI Côte d’Ivoire, Alexis Don Zigré – film director and co-scrip writer at PSI; Elise Youkou - peer educator at Clinique de confiance; Toutou Gaye - peer educator at Clinique de confiance. Five of the group members are experts in either the field of medicine or in the field of communication. Two of the members are peer educators working with Clinique de confiance and well familiar with the sex work environment. Half the group members are Ivorians and half the group members are European or American.

I believe that the message design team had an excellent composition considering professional experience and sociocultural knowledge. But I suspect there could have been a possible gender bias due to the composition of the group members. The target group of Amah Djah-foule is female sex workers. The initiators of the film and also the sources for background information were women; executive producer, medical doctor, communications specialist and the two peer educators. But in the message design team all the creative positions were held by men: script writer, director and producer (délégué).
Prerequisites

There seems to have been a consensus in the group on the character of the messages that they wanted to present in Amah Djah-foule. This is not surprising as the film is basically communicating within the dominant paradigm of diffusion theory, focusing on individually directed messages for behavioral change. PSI is working in this tradition as well as SFPS who are cooperating with John Hopkins University. For Projet RETRO-CI it was the first time to be involved in an entertainment-education production. They were probably guided by their overall research objectives: to prevent HIV infection in uninfected persons and to prevent AIDS in persons already infected with HIV.

How were the problems that they wanted to address identified? Dr. Ettiegne-Traoré discusses this in an interview (2001-07-16), saying that Dr. Vuylsteke and herself had their idea about the messages as they work closely with the sex workers. Sex workers are a group at risk and very vulnerable and in this group infections are often transmitted. So if you want to control the HIV epidemic it is an important target group. The most important message was to make women use condom in all sexual contacts, especially with their boyfriends. They also wanted to promote the use of lubricating gel and the importance of testing oneself. Another objective was to promote Clinique de confiance.

In Clinique de confiance studies have shown that 80% of the female sex workers attending the clinic are using preservatives regularly (figure given by Bea Vuylsteke). The experience of from Clinique de confiance also shows that sex workers typically use preservatives with customers but not with their boyfriends. This is assumed to be a reason for the high prevalence of HIV among sex workers and is addressed in the film with the message of the importance of regular and consistent use of preservatives in all sexual contacts. A person carrying a sexually transmitted infection is more likely to be contaminated by HIV virus than a healthy person is. Therefore they have implemented the message of the importance of regular medical check-ups and follow-ups for sex workers and of voluntary counseling and testing. A generally raised awareness of the risks incurred was also desirable to motivate willingness to adopt extra precautions.

Formative research

Jeff Barnes, managing director of PSI in Côte d'Ivoire, describes the working process in an interview:

I think the process was rather well structured. You want to start out with as broad input as possible and structure the process such as decisions were made and things were narrowed down. Even in the beginning with finding your objectives, finding the key messages in the film. You start with this fairly long list and as you realize it might not be workable, you narrow it down and when it comes to the final editing, even if there is one that's not in the plan, you say let's chop that, otherwise our product is going to be too muddled. (Jeff Barnes, 2001-08-09)

The scenario was chosen through a competition. The design team gave a briefing about the messages to a number of scriptwriters and asked each and one of them to draft a scenario. The proposition by Antony Silvère Zokou was chosen to be further developed. The competition process helped the design team to get a clear idea which direction the film should go in (Jeff Barnes, 2001-08-09).

Scriptwriter Antony Silvère Zokou tells about his collaboration with the design team:
I was not discussing with the group; I was discussing with Alexis Don Zigré. He was mediating between the group and me. He gave me the big lines, the themes. He knew exactly what he wanted to say. So from this I wrote the first project and it was presented to the team, together with several other scripts. And they chose mine. I wrote several versions, and for each time I went to see Alexis who gave me some instructions. (Antony Silvère Zokou, 2001-08-07)

Most of the people involved in the message design team were already professionally familiar with the sex work environment. Still there was need for formative research to be able to create realistic environments and situations. I asked Antony Silvère Zokou about how he went about it.

It is normal process in script writing to make an inquiry. It was quite entertaining. I don’t know if you are familiar with Rue de Princess? I went there with a friend. I did not want to discuss directly with them, because it would not be spontaneously. So I pretended to be a client asking about the price. There are certain sequences that I have used in Amah Djah-foule. For example when there is a client who wants to go out with Amah and he says they are four. This was something that I tried with a prostitute and she was in on it, not even surprised. This inquiry was a meant for understanding. For instance, if you propose a lot of money to a prostitute, she might be willing to make love without preservatives.

I also went to the Clinique de confiance in Koumassi. I spent a day there, discussing with the doctors. And I met a prostitute who is now a peer educator, Toutou Gaye, very nice. We talked a lot. I have used some sequences in the film; the reaction when someone finds out she is seropositive and how the blood test is conducted. These are things that I learned there and that I used in the film. This was to better understand the prostitutes. (Interview with Antony Silvère Zokou, 2001-08-07.)

The director of the film and also co-script writer Alexis Don Zigré gives his picture of the formative research:

We have been talking to prostitutes, to the staff at Clinique de confiance. We have been talking to the women in Rue des Serpants, that we have imagined in the film; we were in Youpogon and other places. In Europe one often speaks about pimps, but here often a prostitute has a boyfriend who protects her, that she loves. We found out that in the contact with their clients they were always negotiating condom use, but together with their boyfriends they did not use preservatives. (Alexis Don Zigré, 2001-07-25.)

One of the peer educators at Clinique de confiance, and also a member of the design team, gives her view of the process:

--Image of Antony Silvère Zoko and Jeff Barnes, scriptwriter respectively producer of Amah Djah-foule.

26
I got to know Sylvester Antony. It was he who wrote the film, the scenario. He came here and we talked about everything that is going on. How do the prostitutes do when they talk to their clients, how do they lead their lives. He sent us his text and we read it. For example there are certain terms, special words, certain ways between the women that I explained. In the film there are many words that I have said. For example the scene when there are three men that all want to go out with Amah Djah-foule. (Toutou Gaye, 2001-07-19)

The other peer educator representative states the following about the message design process and her contribution:

Us that are working in the field, we see the problems that women have. We are always with them. Their problems are exposed to us. Women are being beaten; there are women who have miscarriages… (Elise Youkou, 2001-07-23)

From what I can understand the message design team did not carry out any formative research in the sense that Singal/Rogers or Sabido would suggest. The commissioners from Projet RETRO-CI already had a clear idea about the messages they wanted to communicate. There was no need for collecting data as problems were identified through the work in Clinique de confiance and figures and statistics were available. This was also the strength of the message design team, representing a lot of experience in the specific topic. The formative research that was performed seems instead to have had the function of creating a high degree of realism in situations, settings and dialogue. The message design team functioned also as the focus group, testing the scenario and giving feedback to the script writer.

The original plan did not include evaluation of the results of the film. On the other hand Projet RETRO-CI and Clinique de confiance are working with the target group on a daily basis and will receive direct input in their use of the film, although not quantitative.

Realism and identification

In entertainment-education realism is highly valued in the presentation of environments and characters in order to make the audience identify with the story. The characters should resemble the people that you want to educate and motivate. The characters should share identities with the audience, such as their language, names, occupations, daily and weekly rituals, the food they eat and so on. The music should be local and familiar. (Soap Operas for Social Change: a PCI Methodology for Entertainment-Education, 2000)

The cultural context was thoroughly considered in the production of Amah Djah-foule. The environmental settings in the film are very authentic and there is a high degree of situational realism. The names of the characters have been carefully chosen, not to indicate any specific ethnic group in society. The team has also made an effort to find a language that corresponds with the common street language of Abidjan, but still using a French that is comprehensible to everyone, also in neighboring countries.

Dr Ettiegne-Traoré tells about how they have given a special thought to the title:

-It was very important to find a title in their spirit. The idea of Amah Djah-foule came from the director and scenario-writer Alexis Don Zigré. "Djah-foule" is street
language with the meaning of making an impression, to "kill" someone. (Virginie Ettegne-Traoré, 2001-07-16)

I discussed the level of realism with the peer educators at Clinique de confiance:

*What do you think of the picture that the film gives of women sex workers?*
*It is a good picture. The film is educating.*

*Do you think it is realistic?*
*Yes, it is realistic. Everything that you see in the film is the truth.*

*The others also, the men?*
*Yes, they are real. (Elise Youkou, 2001-07-23)*

Another peer educator, Toutou Gaye, states:

Everything that is going on between us, I have told about it in the film. I have not lied. But you can not feel everything in the film. For instance there are luxury prostitutes, there are prostitutes on drugs. There are women who can get 100 000 CFA from a client, that depends, but this is a small minority. But if it is the men that push the chariots, the charcoal salesmen you can’t get even 1000 CFA (=app. 1,4 dollars).

There is one situation when Amah Djah-foule has had a date with a man and afterwards he doesn’t want to pay her. He says, wasn’t it good for you too? All these things happen. They say that they have used condom and didn’t feel anything so they don’t want to pay. And they beat you.

(Toutou Gaye, 2001-07-19)

One sex worker at the clinic talks about identification with the film:

We all have boyfriends at home. And like in the film, when we are hustling, the boyfriends come to collect money. (Juliette, 2001-07-17)

Mr. Yapo, Manager of K-pot K-fe has shown the film in their bar twice on the 17th of May, one presentation was for youth and one was for a general public. He too stresses realism and identification:

The audience was laughing a lot as they can recognize themselves in the film. The young audience has asked for a new showing of the film. (Ako Cyriaque Yapo, 2001-07-23)

Dr. Vuylsteke who initiated the creation of the film is pleased with the degree of realism or even authenticity:

One of the strong points of the film is that it is, through the language used, and the realistic setting, culturally adapted to Abidjan for sure, but also culturally sensitive to the sex workers of the whole region. Sex workers identify themselves with Amah, and want to be as her. (Bea Vuylsteke, 2001-12-20)

PSI has professionally experienced staff in house. All staff in the production was local. The team has chosen to work with actors that are popular and known in Côte d’Ivoire. Well-known comedienne Suzanne Kouame (from television drama series "Faut pas fâcher") plays the leading part of Amah and was interviewed in Ivoir Soir. The question was if well-known actors have a better chance of passing the educational messages on to the viewers.
Naturally. Everyone listens to us: we are the mirrors of society. For example, when
the projection was finished (at the launching event) a woman walked up to me
greeting us being able to speak openly about the dangers of AIDS confessing that
she herself was seropositive. (press cut from Ivoir Soir)

Amah Djah-foule is successful in its high artistic standard and technical quality.
PCI has formulated what it takes to be successful in entertainment-education
production:

But what makes these stories and characters really come together is the talent and
experience of the local writers, producers, directors and actors; the energy and
dynamics of the group; and the team’s hard work and commitment. The more the
writers and producers are “in touch” with the concerns and fears, likes and dislikes of
their local community, the more effective they will be in creating a drama that moves
its audience to laughter, tears, anger and action. Before behavior can change, there
must first be the acquisition of new information and a change in attitude. These will
only happen if the story is truly dramatic. (Soap Operas for Social Change: a PCI
Methodology for Entertainment-Education, 2000, p. 18.)

The image of sex workers
The design team has made a big effort not to stigmatize sex workers. In my
interviews the members point out the importance of not presenting sex workers
as responsible for transmitting HIV more than anybody else is.

It is important in the film not to stigmatize prostitutes as a group in society. They
must not be identified as a source of HIV transmission. It is also important that the
sex workers in the film are not representing any special tribe or group of immigrants.
Therefore they have been very careful in choosing the names of the characters in the
film. (Dr. Ettiegne-Traoré, 2001-07-16.)

It is a story about a prostitute and what she does. I don’t want to accuse them,
stigmatize them or point them out. We just want to tell that these women are facing
certain social problems in their lives and they have decided to have this profession.
We wanted to show that there are risks with this profession and that these risks can
be eliminated if you follow certain rules. When you are a driver there are certain risks,
when you are a military there are certain risks. (Alexis Don Zigré, 2001-07-25.)

Because the scenario was a bit delicate. When you speak about prostitutes people get
a negative image. The prostitute is an object; she does not mean anything. In the
scenario we wanted to present the prostitute as a person with her needs, who can feel
love. A human, who is doing her profession like anyone else, like a driver or a
director. It is a profession that she has chosen, but there are certain circumstances
where she has no power. This was a bit difficult and at the same time interesting – to
present a prostitute. I remember that during the shooting of the film I met actors
who gave their opinion on the scenario. They did not like the way the prostitutes
were presented. It would encourage prostitution. I want to say that it all depends on
your objective. The objective of this film was not to judge the prostitutes but to ask
prostitutes to avoid AIDS. That is different. Not to say that their profession is good
or bad. Just to say that you should not do it without thinking about AIDS. (Antony
Silvère Zokou, 2001-08-07.)

In the film you see that it concerns not only the prostitutes but also many other
groups in society. I think it is more important to them. As I am a prostitute, if I
have a STI I have a pain and I can’t find clients and I have to go to the hospital or
the pharmacy to have medication. It is not only the prostitutes that can be infected
by AIDS. There are many other in their houses who are not hustling that are not using preservatives. Normally the men have a little more confidence in the prostitutes than in other girls. If one could do another film targeting the local girls, the informal prostitution, as they are even more dangerous than the real prostitutes are. (Toutou Gaye, 2001-07-19)

One of the strengths with Amah Djah-foule is the careful consideration about the image of sex workers that is being presented. It works in changing the stereotype and as advocacy towards the general population, raising awareness about the difficult conditions for sex workers and sympathy for their vulnerable and exposed situation. It works also internally among the sex worker population strengthening their self-esteem and possibly their self-efficacy.

**Advocacy for social change**

Amah Djah-foule is not only trying to communicate behavior change on the individual level. There are also elements directed to social change, addressing attitudes towards female sex workers and destigmatizing AIDS and those who are seropositive. The film puts controversial issues on the agenda, for instance the informal prostitution among teenagers. The director of Amah Djah-foule speaks about the empowering of women:

> In practice, this is my opinion, men in Africa think that the woman is nothing, as men have the power economically. I want all the Africans to think about that. I don't know if I am right, but as I have the possibility to give a picture of my perception. I want men to think that women are equal to men and that women can do other things. In the film we see that Amah she is more combative, she takes decisions. It is her that decides to take the test and it is her profession that is at risk. You see for example Mr. Kokou with his degree, his car, his big office, is criticized by his wife. I would really like things to change. Because here, families choose to send the boys to school. I think the women should take the power so that one can re-establish the image of women. It will change slowly. (Alexis Don Zigré, 2001-07-25)

In a way the character of Amah represents a new model to femininity in Côte d’Ivoire. She takes her own decisions, provides for her self economically, and knows how to negotiate with customers. But it is an image of quite a lonely individual who cannot expect much support either from society or from men in general.

**Format**

The model for Amah Djah-foule was actually the television soap opera SIDA dans la cité. Yet, the producers decided to make a film (Bea Vuylsteke, 2001-05-30). I think it is important to remember the different possibilities offered by the different formats. A film has an approximate length of 1-2 hours. Amah Djah-foule is 55 minutes long. This is limiting, as you cannot include too many topics and discussions in such a short time, as they all have to be finished before the end. A drama series consisting of many episodes has a different possibility to deal with many topics, as you can start a story line and return to it many episodes later.

Audience in Côte d’Ivoire is very used to the soap opera format, not only from the successful entertainment-education series SIDA dans la cité, but also from numerous Brazilian and French television drama series that are broadcast on RTI national television. It is natural for audiences to compare Amah Djah-foule
with soap operas rather than with other films. As I will show in my analysis of the audience reception of Amah Djah-foule, audiences tend to wish for the film to deal with a list of additional subjects that they feel have been left out.

Why was film the good choice of medium in this case? First of all, Amah Djah-foule is targeting primarily a clearly defined group of female sex workers. This target group can be reached effectively through various educational and health programs directed to them. For its target group the film deals with specific issues that are well elaborated in the film. But the producers also had a wider motif of reaching a general audience:

At the clinic, the film is shown in the waiting room. It will also be used in projections in the high-risk community (small video-rooms and cinemas) for a limited audience, always followed by a discussion. But there are plenty of possibilities. The film has already been shown in a school and in a condom-bar for youth. The original concept was to use it only for the target population, but I feel that the film is so popular that we could do more with it. (Bea Vuylsteke, 2001-05-30)

After investing a lot of money and creative effort on the production, it is natural to be wanting for the product to get as high exposure as possible. Amah Djah-foule holds high quality both technically and artistically. The messages of Amah Djah-foule are highly relevant also to the general population, considering the importance of safe sex and staying healthy. It also has an important role to play in advocacy and agenda setting, raising awareness of sex work and how everyone is concerned by it.

Jeff Barnes explains that in the design process there was an idea of making two versions of Amah Djah-foule:

When we initially were conceiving this film we thought what we are able to do will only have to be used for peer education, because if we target the issues directly enough it will be too offensive for a general population. We thought at one point of doing two versions. One for using in a peer education setting, where there might be some more explicit scenes or more explicit discussions about, I don't know, putting on condoms while you are giving a blow job or something like that. And those kinds of scenes were taken out. As it turns out in the editing we were able to, I think they compromised, it was basically the same film that we think was both for the general population and for sex workers. But the original idea we were dealing with was that how are we going to distribute this, who is the target, will it be too weak for sex workers on critical issues, will it be too explicit for general population. So that is what we were thinking about. As it turns out, we didn't do that, that's just an example of giving sufficient thought to the part of the target and how to reach that target. If you think about these steps carefully you will avoid having problems afterwards. Had we done an explicit version that would have limited how we distribute it. (Jeff Barnes, 2001-08-08)

It is my opinion that the producers of Amah Djah-foule have managed to balance these two sides in an excellent way. The film speaks on different levels giving direct advice on individual behavior change and advocatively on a social change level.

On the 1st and 2nd of December 2001 (the International AIDS Day is on the 1st), Amah Djah-foule was shown on national television in Côte d'Ivoire. It was shown at 11 p.m. and the following day at 2 p.m. On the second day, it was followed by a discussion, produced by PSI. Members of the panel were: Alexis
Don Zigré from PSI; Dr. Camille Anoma, Head of Clinique de Confiance; Mme. Traore, sociologist at Projet RETRO-CI; and Suzanne Kouame, lead actrice in the film. (Bea Vuytlesteke, 2001-12-20)

Jeff Barnes, PSI, writes in an e-mail:

All of the feedback I have received has been positive. Even though the Sunday showing was during a more “family” hour, there seems not to have been a problem with the content being too shocking for the greater public. (Jeff Barnes, 2001-12-04)

A multi media approach

A general advise for a successful communication campaign is to use a multi media approach. Soul City has been very successful working with this method. Amah Djah-foule is a much smaller scale initiative but is in it’s own way they are running a multi media campaign, combining the film with live educational discussions and with the educational work performed at the clinic and in the local districts by social workers and peer educators.

If I were to suggest the development of complementary media in the Amah Djah-foule campaign I would suggest a print booklet for use in the educational work with sex workers. It could be booklet either with photographs from the film or in a comic book style. The important thing is that it would reconnect to the characters of the film. The strength of a print material is that it can carry more detailed information and that it can be kept for reference. A print could work as the literacy rate among sex workers in Abidjan is rather high, according to Dr. Anoma at Clinique de confiance. The musical theme of Amah Djah-foule could also be commercialized. “Il faut se proteger” has good potential of becoming a hit and will remind people of the message of the film a long time after it has been broadcast in television.
Analysis 1: The characters in Amah Djah-foule

Here I will try to give an analysis of the main characters in Amah Djah-foule to discover what they are representing, taking a start in the theories of Miguel Sabido about positive, negative and transitional role models.

Amah

Amah is the central figure of the story. We don't know anything about her background. She is presented to us as a healthy and beautiful young woman, making her living from sex work. She has a son and a boyfriend that she takes well care of and supports economically. Amah has a bright mind and is sure of herself. She knows to negotiate condom use with customers and to get a good price.

How does Amah develop throughout the film? Already from the start she is firm in her belief that she must protect herself in every intercourse that she has, being it with a client or with her boyfriend. She learns the use of lubricating gels and she is introduced to the Clinique de confiance where she is offered free counseling and HIV testing. Amah takes the consequences of her new knowledge and has a medical check up and soon also a HIV test. When Amah's boyfriend Boni is cheating on her she is of course disappointed, but she is rewarded in the sense that she doesn't have to worry about STIs and HIV as she has always insisted on him wearing a condom when they were together. In the end she is rewarded by testing seronegative and staying in good health.

Amah is from the start and throughout the film a positive role model that learns from her mistakes. She is self-efficient and has the power of her own life. She is consequent in her actions and she is rewarded.

Fortuna

Fortuna is an experienced sex worker and a good friend of Amahs. When Amah suffers from vaginal problems she gives her advice about lubricating gels and introduces her to the Clinique de Confiance. When Amah is beaten by Prince (Fortuna's boyfriend and pimp) for taking all the customers from the other girls, she defends her from him, even though she herself will lose money and have problems with Prince. Fortuna confesses in Amah that she is making unprotected love to Prince, although she knows that he is sleeping around. Amah tells her to stop and that her life is more valuable than the relation with him is. When Fortuna and Amah go together to have their HIV test, Fortuna turns out to be seropositive. Fortuna has to take the consequences of her earlier behavior, in Sabido's terms she is punished. When she is asked by the clinic to use her experience to educate other women she first hesitates in doing so, feeling ashamed to let the world know about her troubles, but in the end she agrees.

Fortuna starts as a positive role model by helping and advising Amah, she then changes into a negative role model having unprotected sex. She is punished and in the end she turns into a positive role model again by helping others.

Boni

Boni is the boyfriend of Amah, but apparently not the father of her son. Their relation started by him being a regular client of Amah's. He is a musician, playing in bars at night and sleeping in the mornings. He tries to talk Amah into having
sex without condom, even though he knows that she has a risky profession. But Amah is persistent about condom use and he gives in for her wish. Boni is flirting with a girl in the audience and the following day Amah catches him kissing the girl. Boni is not 100% faithful to Amah. On the other hand he shows his engagement by finding money to pay for medication for Amah’s son when he is in hospital.

When Amah brings up that she is going to have a HIV test Boni gets furious. He is scared and accuses her for not protecting herself. Amah goes ahead with the test anyway, and after calming down Boni accompanies her to collect her result. He also declares that he wants to take the test himself. But when Amah gets her negative result, he wants them to go celebrate instead, even though he promises to return to have his test later.

Boni is an ambivalent character all through the story, balancing between good and bad. I think the scriptwriter and the director intended for him to be a transitional character, but the story is not clear. The destiny of Boni is a loose end.

Prince

Prince is the boyfriend of Fortuna and also the pimp of the neighborhood. He is aggressive and non-communicative. He is tough with the girls, threatening them to bring home money. Through the words of Fortuna we learn that he is sleeping with all ”his” girls and that he refuses to wear a condom. In the end when Fortuna has had her test result he suddenly shows a more sympathetic side of himself, trying to comfort her. This serves as an example that a HIV positive person does not have to be isolated and can still be loved by others. But we never get to know weather Prince will have his own test or with what result.

Prince is a negative role model with little development, unexplainably softening up in the end.

Mr. Kokou

Mr. Kokou is a client of Amah’s that picks her up in the very first scene of the film. Mr. Kokou is a wealthy businessman in his fifties. He is depicted in his furnished bourgeois home and in business negotiations. Mr. Kokou becomes a regular client of Amah’s and asks her to have confidence in him and to have sex without condom. Amah insists on using condoms as always and also manages to keep him in good mood. One morning Mr. Kokou picks up a young student on her way to school. She comes with him to a hotel. When the girl asks him for a condom he first pretends not to understand and then he starts to convince her that there is no risk involved, him being a married man and her being a young and innocent girl. The girl starts walking for the door when Mr. Kokou offers her 100 000 CFA to have unprotected sex (which is an enormous amount in the Ivorian context) and she takes the offer. Later Mr. Kokou is at a doctor’s appointment. It turns out that he has contracted a STI and the doctor hands him a package of antibiotics. Back in his house Mr. Kokou has to inform her wife so that she too can get medical treatment. He does so by accusing her of being the one that has contracted the disease though having young lovers.

Mr. Kokou is a negative role model all trough the film and he is consequently punished by contracting a STI and by loosing his face in front of his wife.
Mme. Kokou

Mme. Kokou has only a small part in the story. We see her in the house when Mr. Kokou leaves for his date with Amah, asking him not to stay out late. The next time we meet her is when Mr. Kokou has to break the news about the STI. She sees through his accusations and embarrasses him by revealing the connection between his sudden interest in business dinners, his new car, gold watch and fancy costumes and concludes that he has contracted a disease from a young mistress.

We never know if Mme Kokou has been suspicious about her husbands whereabouts or not. Either she has been ignorant or she has chosen to ignore the signs, as she is quite happy with the material circumstances that she has. But she does not hesitate to say her piece when the truth is revealed to her. In that sense she is confident in her self and self-efficient.

Mme. Kokou is a somewhat unclear role model, but I chose to interpret it as a positive role model from beginning to end. For women in the general public she represents an important character showing that married women can be at risk of contracting HIV through their husbands, even if they themselves are not practicing risky behaviors.

The student

In the film there is a young student. One morning on her way to school Mr. Kokou asks her for a ride in his car. They end up in a hotel room. When the girl asks Mr. Kokou for a condom he pretends not to understand the question. Then he starts convincing her that there is no risk involved, him being a married man and her being a young and innocent girl. The girl starts walking for the door when Mr. Kokou offers her 100 000 CFA and she takes the offer.

The girl changes from a positive role model, able to set her limits and to demand for condom, to a negative role model gambling with her life over money. Her character raises awareness about clandestine or informal sex work, which is said to be a large problem among teenage girls in Côte d'Ivoire. Her part could work as an agenda setter about this problem in relation to the responsibility of parents, schools and other adults.

Role modeling in Amah Djah-foule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Role model development</th>
<th>Rewarded/Punished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amah</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>App. 25</td>
<td>Positive – positive – positive</td>
<td>Rewarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortuna</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>App. 35</td>
<td>Positive – negative – positive</td>
<td>Punished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>App. 35</td>
<td>Negative – negative - negative?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Kokou</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>App. 50</td>
<td>Negative – negative – negative</td>
<td>Punished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mme. Kokou</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>App. 50</td>
<td>Positive – positive – positive</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>App. 15</td>
<td>Positive – negative - negative</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table presents the seven major characters of Amah Djah-foule. They are representing different ages, all within a span of sexually active years. There are four female characters and three male characters. By choosing this distribution of characters the scriptwriters have the opportunity of appealing to a large spectrum in the audience who can identify with at least one of the characters. As the
The positive and negative characters offer powerful examples of positive and negative behaviors and their respective consequences. However, it is the transitional characters, or the characters wavering in their behaviors, to whom the audience will look for guidance in how to change from negative values to positive values. /—/ It is these transitional characters whom the writers should strive to make most similar to the audience members they want to motivate. If audience members identify and form parasocial bonds with one of these transitional characters, they will see that someone just like themselves was able to overcome barriers to change and will be motivated to ultimately change their own behavior. (Soap Operas for Social Change: a PCI Methodology for Entertainment-Education, 2000, p. 25)

In comparison to the theory of Miguel Sabido, most characters in Amah Djah-foule are static in their status as either positive or negative role models. There is little development. Fortuna, changes her status from positive to negative and logically she is punished by finding herself seropositive after not having followed the recommended educational behavior to use condom in all sexual contacts. And then she changes into a positive role model after deciding to use her experience to support others in the same situation by becoming a peer educator. The student also changes from positive to negative, accepting a large amount of money to have unprotected sex. The character of Boni might give some hope to the spectators. But is he honestly in favor of having his test? Will he go through with it? If you interpret his intentions positively he develops from a negative to a positive role model during the film. But the film lacks a truly transitional character changing from negative to positive to show us how adopting the desired behavioral change will be rewarded.

One of the peer educators criticizes the character of Boni:

But where the film wasn’t finished is when the girl had taken her test, the man should also take his test. He didn’t do that. And Fortuna is infected. But what is it that proves that she was infected by her boyfriend? You have to test both persons. (Elise Youkou, 2001-07-23)

What is even more serious is that the film lacks a male role model. In my interviews with audience of Amah Djah-foule some have pointed out the problem of the character of Boni. They would like Boni to take his HIV test in the film. Why is it important? Because Amah is the female role model in the film – if you follow her advice you will be successful like she is, in her context as a sex worker. She is self-efficient, independent and healthy which guarantees that she will be able to support herself continuously. But all men in the film are irresponsible. There should be a transitional male role model that develops from irresponsible/ignorant towards a responsible behavior. Boni has the potential of
being that character but it never happens in the film. Instead you have the feeling that he will continue to avoid taking responsibility.

Amah Djah-foule is targeted towards female sex workers and logically the message to the target group is to look out for them selves as their own person is the only thing they really are in power of. But the film actually gives the message that men are allowed to be irresponsible and that it is up to women to protect themselves. The negative image of men is problematic both for female and male members of the audience. There should be a male role model that men can identify with in the film. This role model could help changing men's attitudes towards sexual health and responsibility. The complex problem of HIV/AIDS concerns all members of society and will require attitudinal and structural changes. Women today are often powerless and victims in situations where they cannot say no to unprotected sex because of economic and social reasons as well as a result of power relationships. An entertainment-education product has the potential of motivating collective action by questioning a system. It could work as an agenda setter and a catalyst for social change.

The Director of Amah Djah-foule, Alexis Don Zigré gives his view on the role modeling of characters:

Yes, she (Amah) is an ideal for female sex workers. As it is an educational film you must pay attention to certain things. Amah is a prostitute. She knows the risks of this profession. In fact, she knows that she must take care of herself, that she must dress well, that she must go to the hospital to know her serologic status. I think she is a good image.

Secondly… Many people, when they talk about prostitution, they say this and that about those women. In the film there are three women. There is Amah, the prostitute. There is the student, that normally has a future, parents, she is in school, she has no problems, but she is a prostitute just like Amah. Amah sleeps with Kokou and Kokou has no problems. And the student sleeps with Kokou. She had problems and he too gets problems. The wife of Kokou has no problems. She has a nice car, a good husband, a big villa - that's security. But she can also have problems. I think that when women watch this film they will make an analysis of these three characters. It is true that Amah is a prostitute, but she is successful because she takes responsibility. She is an ideal concerning responsibility.

Is there no male ideal in the film?
What is an ideal man? No, I don't think there is an ideal man. You can't find an ideal man even if you go looking for him with a torch. (Alexis Don Zigré, 2001-07-25)

Conclusion
I believe there is a tension between the professional dramatic point of view and the entertainment-education point of view. The former is looking to present and interpret the complexity of life and the latter seeking clarity and consequence to communicate educational messages. Alexis Don Zigré might have one foot in each profession, being a trained actor and director in theatre and television, presently producing entertainment-education products for PSI. I believe that it is important to recognize that entertainment-education requires its own form of dramaturgy. The same time here lies a risk in entertainment-education seeming too simplified, too naïve. The audience needs to be surprised, otherwise it will loose interest.

Finally I would like to address the possibility of modeling collective action,
which PCI have managed to do successfully in Indian soap opera Tinka Tinka Sukh:

The soap opera can also provide role models for group action or collective efficacy. For instance could the female characters form a women's group to tackle certain social issues. Just as individuals can be empowered by observing role models, so can groups of people. (Soap Operas for Social Change: a PCI Methodology for Entertainment-Education, 2000)

Amah Djah-foule could have addressed ideas of collective efficacy, for instance by modeling a collective decision between sex workers about persistent condom use or alternative ways for making a living.
Analysis 2: The educational messages in Amah Djah-foule

In this analysis I will try to reveal in what situations in the film the messages are communicated. How are the issues presented? Is the same message repeated several times? According to Miguel Sabido a message is more likely to go through to the audience if it is repeated, preferably in different forms. The messages are based on intellectual arguments. But you are more certain to reach the audience if a message is communicated on three levels, intellectually, emotionally and physically. What potential does the messages have to touch the audience emotionally?

The message design team of Amah Djah-foule has formulated the objectives of the film. I have chosen to regard the objectives as the value grid that Miguel Sabido proposes as the ideological base of an entertainment-education intervention. What are the messages of Amah Djah-foule and how are they communicated?

In the press release for Amah Djah-foule the producers present their objectives for making the film as follows:

* to emphasize the risks of the profession of prostitution in order to help sex workers protect their lives and their futures
* to encourage sex workers to use condoms correctly and regularly with all their clients, including their regular sexual partners
* to help sex workers improve condom negotiating skills
* to encourage sex workers to take advantage of available health services targeting sex workers, including STI diagnosis and treatment, and voluntary testing and counseling
* to raise awareness among the general public about the realities of the lives of sex workers and to illustrate that these women live in very challenging and often dangerous environments which increase their vulnerability to HIV.

In the Discussion Guide that has been produced together with the videocassette, the film is said to have seven themes:

* the risks incurred by sex workers
* condom negotiation
* correct condom use
* the role of lubricating gels
* the importance of voluntary counseling and testing
* the importance of regular medical check-ups and follow-ups for sex workers
* the role of peer educators in raising awareness among sex workers

Those are nearly the same as the objectives listed above, with the addition of the role of lubricating gels and the role of peer educators.

The risks incurred by sex workers

The risks of being a sex worker are obvious all through the film. They work the streets late at night, customers are trying to cheat them on money, pimps are threatening them, they are exposed to violence from men in all categories, customers and boyfriends are trying to make them have unprotected sex through
paying extra or sweet talking them, their boyfriends have multiple partners exposing them to risks of contracting STI's and HIV, etc.

This message is important when a general audience views the film. It could bring the public to question the system and the part that they themselves play in relation to prostitution. This message also works to destigmatize women in sex work, facilitating understanding and sympathy for their situation. But there is also a risk that it can have the opposite effect, reinforcing stereotypes and prejudice.

**Condom negotiation**

The subject of condom negotiation is repeated all through the film. The first scene is in the beginning when Amah finds herself in bed with her boyfriend Boni. Boni wants to make love without condom, but Amah insists on using it. Her argument is that he would not want her to become pregnant and that she already has one child to take care of. And that Boni’s work as a musician doesn’t bring home a lot of money. And that condom is the only protection from contracting STI’s. Boni gives in for Amah’s argumentation.

The second situation where Amah’s condom negotiating skills are tested is in bed with Mr. Kokou. He claims that she has known him long enough that he should be trusted to have sex without condom. Amah says that it is not a matter of knowing each other or not, it is about protecting ones life. She says that they don’t know each other’s past. If you love me you wouldn’t want to expose me to risks. And Amah gives Mr. Kokou an advice: if you love more than one woman, you should always use condom.

The third situation is between Mr. Kokou and the student. She has come with him to a hotel and she asks him for a condom. Mr. Kokou says that he doesn’t have one and tries to convince the girl that there is no risk as he is a married man and she is so young and innocent. The girl walks for the door saying: Doesn’t AIDS mean anything to you? Then Mr. Kokou offers her a large sum of money to make love anyway and the girl agrees. This situation is not crystal clear as the girl starts out by acting the desired behavior, but in the end is convinced to give up her principles. It is a loose end, as the girl never suffers the consequences. But the situation about men offering extra money for unprotected sex comes back in the story, so there is a point in the story line.

Fortuna takes Amah with her to the Clinique de confiance. They take part in a group session about the risks of STI’s and HIV. The educator shows slides with pictures of symptoms of different STI’s and tells about the importance of using condom in all sexual contacts. The girls in the audience discuss when leaving the room and two of them states that they will never again have unprotected sex.

In the end of the film Fortuna has become a peer educator. She admits to her colleagues that she has had sex without condom and that the result today is that she is seropositive. She does not even know whether she got it from a client or her boyfriend. She advises the girls to use condom in all their sexual contacts.

The film ends by a scene similar to the introduction where another young girl is being picked up in the street. The client wants to have sex without condom and offers to pay 50 000 CFA. The girl answers: 50 000? Can it cure AIDS? She tells him to keep his money, because she wants to stay alive.

By far, messages about condom use are repeated most frequently in the film. Promoting condom use is also the expertise of PSI that has produced the film. According to Jeff Barnes (2001-08-09) they have come a long way to destigmatize condom use which is widely accepted in the country and sold
everywhere. The messages in Amah Djah-foule are concentrating on exemplifying good arguments for condom negotiation and the importance of consistent use in all sexual contacts.

Correct condom use

The subject of correct condom use is never brought up in the film, even though the producers claim that it is one of the themes of the film. It would probably be hard to fit in such information in the film without making it look like an instruction film and probably this film is not the right forum for such an information. The subject is in the discussion guide that comes with the videocassette. It is strongly recommended that the film should be followed by a discussion about the different themes of the film. During my field study I have learned that the peer educators are teaching correct condom use when they have educational sessions in the field.

I think it was a logic choice not to deal with correct condom use directly in the film. But it is an important message in HIV education as not correctly used condoms burst easily, which makes people not trust condoms and maybe not bother to use them.

The role of lubricating gels

The role of lubricating gels is presented in the scene when Amah is having vaginal irritations after having had sex with three men in a row the evening before. Fortuna talks to her about lubricating gels, explaining that it is not good to use grease ("Beurre de carité") but that she should get lubricating gels that are specially made for using together with condoms. Later at the clinic, the audience is reminded about this message, when Amah and Fortuna have been given free samples of lubricating gel.

This message is of specific importance to sex workers who typically have many intercourses per day with clients and in situations where they are not sexually aroused. I believe that the producers could have elaborated this message to explain that by avoiding genital irritations and wounds (and STIs) a woman is less vulnerable to the HIV virus.

The importance of voluntary counseling and testing

When Amah has been examined at the clinic, the doctor talks to her about testing herself for HIV. Amah wants to know why it is important and the doctor responds that it is important to know ones serologic status. If she is seropositive she could live longer by taking good care of herself. And if she is planning to have another baby it is important to know her status.

Amah tells Boni that she wants to have her HIV test done. Boni is against it. Amah tells him that in her profession she is exposed to a lot of risks. Boni answers that everybody is at risk, you (Amah), me, the clients, the wives of the clients, the lovers of the wives. Condom is the only way to protect oneself. Amah tells him that she wants to be able to offer him a healthy love. And that it is important to know ones status, to be able to live longer or if you are planning to have more children.

When Amah has her HIV test at the clinic, the film shows the procedure of the test. How the blood is taken, how much they take, and that you have to come back to collect you result.
When Fortuna is at the clinic and gets her result from the HIV test, the doctor discusses with her why it is good to know her serologic status, even though AIDS cannot be cured. But she can be helped to live longer and she can be given medication to avoid turning sick.

When Amah and Boni are at the clinic to get Amah’s result from the HIV test, the doctor discusses why also Boni should have his test taken. She tells Boni that he might have had some girlfriends before Amah and that he has probably had sex sometimes without condom, which Boni admits. In that case, she advises him to have his test.

Sex workers as well as the general public are scared to test themselves for HIV. The film addresses some of those fears by showing how the test is done. Knowing that you are seropositive you can take precautions so that you stay healthy and live for many years.

The importance of regular medical check-ups and follow-ups for sex workers

When Fortuna brings Amah with her to Clinique de confiance, the audience is presented to the idea that there are special clinics targeting sex workers. Through the story they show what kind of services they offer: medical check-ups, medications, STI-treatment, HIV testing and education. By showing the name of Clinique de confiance the film also promotes this specific clinic in Abidjan, making it possible for people to go looking for it.

Fortuna tells Amah that it is important that she takes care of her health, as it is her body that feeds her. Several of the peer educators at Clinique de confiance seem to use this argument, that you need to stay healthy to be able to work and make money. Maybe it could have been given more space in the film?

The role of peer educators in raising awareness among sex workers

When Fortuna has had the result that she is seropositive, the doctor pays her a visit to ask her to be a support to other women in the sex work business. Fortuna says that she cannot tell the world that she has HIV and that no one will want to talk to her if she does. After some reflection Fortuna decides to do it anyway and in a group session at the clinic she tells her story to the group.

Conclusion

The educational messages of Amah Djah-foule are naturally integrated in the dramatic scenes. Messages are repeated in multiple forms, which is good as it supports comprehension. If you regard the amount of time that is occupied to different issues the producers have place most importance on condom use messages and on voluntary testing.

There seems to have been a consensus in the group on the character of the messages that they wanted to present in Amah Djah-foule. This film is focusing on individually directed messages for behavioral change. The audience is regarded as a target of information. PSI is working in this tradition as well SFPS who were represented in the message design team and are in collaboration with John Hopkins University.

Dr. Vuylsteke writes about the message design process in an E-mail interview:

The 6 main themes in the film were the themes originally planned for the film. So the script was adapted to fit the themes, not the opposite.
The messages of Amah Djah-foule are all on the individual behavior change area. Did you discuss the possibility of incorporating messages that address larger structural issues in society? For instance power relationships, collective solutions etc?

The main themes are on individual behavior change indeed. We felt there were many possible themes, but we really wanted to focus on the main ones. One cannot include everything in 55 minutes! But I think that other themes are being touched, although not explicitly. Examples: power relationships (between Fortuna and Prince, Mr. Kokou and the school girl), feminism and women’s rights (Mme. Kokou), general preventive and health messages to all women (Clinique de Confiance), need for having an HIV test done (Clinique de Confiance). (Bea Vuylsteke, 2001-12-20)

The nature of the arguments in Amah Djah-foule are directed to individual level behavior change. But there are also elements directed to social change, addressing attitudes towards female sex workers and destigmatizing of AIDS and those who are seropositive.

The messages are based on intellectual arguments. According to Sabido you are more certain to reach the audience if a message is communicated on three levels, intellectually, emotionally and physically. This is very challenging, but I believe that the producers of Amah Djah-foule succeed in creating an emotional involvement in the characters and the dramatic development. The arguments are still on the intellectual level but complemented by the audience identification and recognition with the naturalistic situations that occur. This effect would have been strengthened if the characters were designed to be stronger role models that were rewarded and/or punished in their development.

Sabido suggest that each soap opera episode should finish with an epilogue where the messages are summarized in words. In the educational context Projet RETRO-CI and PSI a similar but different model. They recommend that Amah Djah-foule should always be followed by an educational discussion. They have even produced a discussion guide that is packed in the video case with the film to help the discussion facilitator. This is a good model for other entertainment-education productions attempting to reach an explicit target group.
Analysis 3: The audience's reception of Amah Djah-foule

In the analysis of the audience's reception of the film, I will discuss the reception of the messages in Amah Djah-foule and the general perception of and opinions about the film. The audience in this case is consisting both of sex workers visiting Clinique de confiance and some of the peer educators collaborating with the clinic. The peer educators are naturally more informed about HIV prevention and familiar with the film than the clients are, as two of the peer educators have participated in the message design team. I have also quoted a couple of professionals representing organizations that have used the film in their own work.

I did experience some difficulties in interviewing sex workers about the film. From what I can tell the girls that I have spoken to were well aware about the risks of selling sex and well informed about how STI's and HIV are transmitted. It was hard to tell how much the educational work carried out by Clinique de confiance and the peer educators had to do with it or if Amah Djah-foule had contributed to their awareness. Sex workers accepted to be interviewed and answered patiently and polite to my questions. But I do suspect that they have given sometimes politically correct answers, knowing what they should respond and what to leave out.

Messages about condom use

In my previous analysis of messages in Amah Djah-foule, I came to the conclusion that messages about condom use and condom negotiation were most frequent in the film. This is also what the seemed to have caught most attention with the audience. Here are some voices from sex workers speaking about the messages of the film:

The importance of using preservatives. And you should avoid having many boyfriends. (Edvige, 2001-07-17)

Don't trust nobody. You cannot see who is sick. To always use condoms. It is about heads. To use heads. (Juliette, 2001-07-17)

The most important message is that you have to use condom. Otherwise disease gets you. Not even AIDS. There is a lot of other diseases. Preventing that you have to use condom. /—-/ Do you think it is difficult to discuss with men to use condom? Do they refuse? It is not difficult. Most are so shy. Most men they don't like condoms. To avoid infection of AIDS, it is important for we girls. How can you argue to make a man use condom? Not accept no matter the amount of money you are given, for your own security. We change position. You also love somebody. And you give that man love. And the man say no, I will give you 100 000, will you except? (Mary, 2001-08-02)

We get it we look after the film we understand the use of "kapot" (street slang for condom) and the use of "sans kapot" (without condom). The cassette gives us advise we should use always "kapot". SIDA (French for AIDS), that is difficult. /—-/ Yes, the wrong situation is that you should not use ordinary body. When a man is not used to the thing … for example when you see money, you love money. You see dollars, he might give you some big money, he want to make a nice body.
You don’t know if the person is carrying the virus like AIDS or gonorrhea and because of that he give the advice not because of money you not use ordinary body. (Queen Elisabeth, 2001-08-01)

What have those members of the target audience concluded from Amah Djah-foule?
- That by using condom you can protect yourself from STI’s and AIDS.
- That you should use condom always, as you cannot know who has a disease or not.
- That you should not accept to have sex without condom even if you are offered a lot of money.
One girl says that you should avoid having many boyfriends, but that is not a message in the film.

A campaign is not communicating in a vacuum. The audience has been the target of previous campaigns, many of them focusing on condom use. Social marketing of condoms has grown very strong in Côte d’Ivoire since PSI established collaboration with the government in 1991. Audience has their perception of what AIDS campaigns use to communicate. I believe that this colored my interviews and in this case that the audience have perceived the condom use messages better than the other messages in the film.

Other messages in the film
I asked a peer educator what she thought was the most important message in Amah Djah-foule:

It is when she says it is your body that feeds you. You should not use this grease, you should come to Clinique de confiance. There is a gel. You should not use Beurre de carité. And that Amah insists on using preservatives with her boyfriend. That is a good message. (Elise Youkou, 2001-07-23)

"It is your body that feeds you" implies the importance of taking care of ones health to be able to work and make money. This argument is popular among the peer educators for motivating sex workers to come to the clinic.

In the film Fortuna, after being infected by HIV, is asked to go out to educate others. Yes, that is well done that she wants to do that. There was someone who had the disease who came to talk about it in church. He took the courage to do that. To stand up in television and say that I have the virus. Then the Ivorians will understand. (Elise Youkou, 2001-07-23)

Elise’s answer addresses the need for examples or models to make people in general aware of the risks of contracting HIV. It also addresses the stigma related to AIDS and its victims.

We aslo discussed peoples knowledge about AIDS:

People know more nowadays, but they do not take this in consideration. What can one do to increase knowledge?
One must work hard with education. In the mosques. Our Muslim sisters don’t take AIDS seriously. They go to a hotel to look for money, during years before they find a husband. And he has many wives. But she was already infected during these earlier years, and the husband doesn’t know, so he transmits it to his second wife. We must keep on educating. In the mosques, after prayer. (Elise Youkou, 2001-07-23)
Yes, there is much ignorance about AIDS in Côte d'Ivoire. There are both men and women that don’t want to believe it. They ask if it is an animal that will kill you. And they say that it is the white that just wants to deceive people. They think that STD is nothing. I say that STD is a small thing. If you don’t take care of a small thing it will come to a big one. (Millicent Kodjo, 2001-07-17)

The director of a local NGO, K-pot K-fé, appreciates the modeling in Amah Djah-foule, where characters are punished or rewarded according to their actions.

The film shows that the person who uses preservatives always are not infected by HIV, while the other person is infected. And the HIV test. The film shows clearly the procedure of an HIV testing. How the test is done, how you get your test result reported etc. And that you should use gel when using preservatives.

What do you think about the knowledge about AIDS in the general population?

People nowadays are pretty well informed about AIDS and preservatives. But it has not yet become practice. AIDS is not taken seriously and preservatives are considered to be expensive and sometimes hard to get. (Ako Cyriaque Yapo, 2001-07-23)

I was surprised how quickly the clients at Clinique de confiance identified Amah Djah-foule as "educating", as I believe that it first of all would strike them as entertaining. Does the educational character of the film put the audience off? I don’t think so, it is often mentioned as a positive criterion that you can learn from it:

Who do you think would like to see the film?
Everybody would like to see it. Because they are all women.
Do you think your boyfriends would like it?
They’d like to see it, to advice. (Queen Elisabeth, 2001-08-01)

Do you think that you boyfriend would like to see this film?
of course he would like it. It is about education. (Mary, 2001-08-02)

I think one should show it in the lower class neighborhoods. One could show it in a public hall, like a school, and one could invite the parents to come and see it.
(Edvige, 2001-07-17)

They should show this film in television, for everyone. The Ivorian television. It would be educational. Men who go out without preservatives, who leave their families and get the virus. It is the women who don’t go out who catches the sickness. (Elise Youkou, 2001-07-23)

One of the peer educators feels that the educational messages are not imposed on the audience:

When you see the film, do you think the girls are embarrassed?
No, I think it is like in the church, when the pastor is preaching. He speaks as if he has seen you, even if he doesn’t know your problem. It depends on you to repent now, what to do. There is no embarrassment.
The women that are hustling. The men have no work. The family has to eat. I think it is a fine film. (Millicent Kodjo, 2001-07-17)
Lacking subjects

Audience in Côte d'Ivoire are used to the soap opera format, not only from the successful entertainment-education series SIDA dans la cité, but also from numerous Brazilian and French television drama series that are broadcast on RTI national television. It is natural for audiences to compare Amah Djah-foule with soap operas rather than with other films. The audience tend to wish for the film to deal with a list of additional subjects that they feel have been left out, not taking in consideration the limits of the film format.

Here are some topics that they would like to address:

But the film does not inform about the female condom. It is only mentioned as "femidom", but not everyone knows what that is. It should be explained in the film.
/---/ If one could do another film targeting the local girls, the informal prostitution, as they are even more dangerous than the real prostitutes. (Toutou Gaye, 2001-07-19)

It seems natural to think of a sequel to Amah Djah-foule:

I think the film should be followed up with a Amah Djah-foule 2, where one for example should discuss the clandestine prostitution, the reasons why people come to prostitution - poverty, family problems, copying popular behavior from friends etc, pedophilia - as young girls are becoming pregnant at the age of twelve and even younger, etc. These are aspects that are not in the film. (Alassane Koné, 2001-07-19)

Even the director of Amah Djah-foule can’t help having ideas for a sequel:

I had an idea that we should continue some of the questions presented in the first film. Will Boni take his test? Will Mr. Kokou go to the hospital with his wife? Will their relation end? Or will Mme Kokou, now knowing that her husband is sleeping around, negotiate the use of preservatives? Will Mr Kokou go looking for the young student to tell her that he caught an STI from her? Does she have a boyfriend in her life? I have given all these ideas to Bea. So it depends on if we can find the funding. And it depends on the interest from the audience when it is broadcast on television. (Alexis don Zigré, 2001-07-25)

Social change

In my interviews I have tried to grasp whether the audience found that the underlying causes for turning to prostitution should be explained in the film. I did not get any response on that topic from the clients of Clinique de confiance. But the two peer educators that took part in the message design process both had their view on this:

The reason that women turn to prostitution is that they want to dress well, it is poverty. The two reasons. Why wasn’t this problem revealed in the film? I started looking for money to help my mother, because my father did not live anymore. To take my smaller brothers to school. That’s poverty. Other people say that as they will soon be married, they go looking for money to buy textiles, this is among Muslims. To by textiles, plates, to make merchandise when they come to live with their husband. I am in prostitution to pay my school. To take care of children that have no father.
Would you like these aspects to be in the film?

Yes, a little about this should be in the film. Why has she become a prostitute? Amah is from a poor family. She meets a friend that is well dressed, and she asks her what has happened? You are doing well? You have a lot of money? You are shining. And she answers that you should come with me and I will show you my secret. (Elise Youkou, 2001-07-23)

As a prostitute you have to take care of your self. If you get sick you cannot make money. It is you body that nourishes you. I am not in this business because of pleasure. I do it because I have to feed my children and send them to school. But now I would like to stop. /—/

If you don’t have a good economy, you are obliged to take on clients without condom. You have to pay rent, water and electricity. It is not only school children who does this as we saw in the film, there are also prostitutes who do. If you don’t take clients without condom, how are you going to eat and pay your rent? The rent is not per month; it is per day. You have to pay every morning. (Toutou Gaye, 2001-07-19)

Joan Sullivan at UNAIDS in Abidjan, one of the organizations that have received copies of the film, discussed the importance of social factors in the society. In the film the responsibility is very much on the individual level, that one must protect one self. She believes that one should take more in consideration the empowering of women. How to make the society more favorable towards women, give them education and other possibilities in life.

And if we really wanted to do something about HIV to help women get out of sex work, we would start with the informal sector. That means socializing, not only parents, but the community leaders, religious leaders. They have been silent up till now. This is an important film for the women that are involved with the sex work. But there is a big black hole, and many organizations don’t know how to get through with educational messages that are acceptable socially and culturally to these groups. (Joan Sullivan, 2001-07-18)

Conclusion

The producers of Amah djah-foule have made an appropriate limitation considering the number of issues that are addressed in the film. The messages do pass through to the audience and the audience truly appreciates Amah Djah-foule, not least because of its educational aim. The knowledge level about HIV/AIDS is good within the target group of sex workers. I believe that biggest hinder from going from knowledge and attitudinal change to adopting new behaviors is the sense that the sex workers feel unable to control their lives. The next phase in HIV prevention should be directed to empowerment and advocacy for social change. Using entertainment-education media is one way of modeling collective solutions and self-efficacy.

This view is supported by UNAIDS communications framework:

But if the aim is to change behavior, the focus must extend beyond the availability and use of condoms. Attention should be paid to the roles and responsibilities of men. Rather than focusing only on women, programs should include all the different social roles and norms that affect the sexual behavior of men and women. (Communications Framework for HIV/AIDS. A New Direction, 1999, p. 42)
Concluding discussion

Amah Djah-foule is an excellent example of a modern entertainment-education production that has developed organically from a concrete need within the organizations working on the site. Amah Djah-foule is designed to work primarily in the context of educational work directed to the target audience female sex workers. It is a mass media product designed to work in addition to interpersonal communication and education. As most mass media products it is a one way communication product and it is mainly concentrating on individual behavioral change messages. I think this is the most adequate choice in communicating with the target group. In a communication product targeting a wider population it would be important to address also social change issues in relation to sex work, for instance not making the sex workers alone responsible for effectuating condom use.

Entertainment-education is not one solid theory of communication. It is a multidisciplinary strategy. The same way one could say that Amah Djah-foule is multidisciplinary, picking elements from opposite scientific disciplines in both the diffusionist school (dominant but old paradigm?) and the participatory school (new paradigm gaining terrain).

Amah Djah-foule is a participatory communication production in the way that the target group was represented in the message design process through the two peer educators in the group. All the creative work (scenario, directing, actors, technical crew) was also done by Ivorian professionals. Amah Djah-foule is also participatory in the way it is being used as an IEC material in the work at Clinique de Confiance. Interpersonal communication is stimulated by showing the film in groups. The film is always being discussed in groups, in a way that the clients themselves make their own meaning of the messages. This allows the audience to draw their own conclusions about the messages. The messages of the film are supported by the services offered at the clinic.

Message design

The message design team included a lot of professional experiences, representing people working on the ground with HIV education and both medical and communication expertise. The formative research process functioned to create a high degree of realism and authenticism in situations and settings. The names of the characters have been carefully chosen, not to indicate any specific ethnic group in society. The team has also made an effort to find a language and a title that corresponds with the common street language of Abidjan. Amah Djah-foule holds high quality both technically and artistically.

The educational messages are naturally integrated in the drama. Messages are repeated in multiple forms, making sure that the audience remembers them. Amah Djah-foule has influences from both diffusion and participatory communication. The nature of the arguments in Amah Djah-foule is directed to individual level behavior change:

- The risks incurred by sex workers
- Condom negotiation
- Correct condom use
- The role of lubricating gels
- The importance of voluntary counseling and testing
- The importance of regular medical check-ups and follow-ups for sex workers
- The role of peer educators in raising awareness among sex workers

But there are also elements directed to social change, addressing attitudes towards female sex workers and destigmatizing AIDS and those who are seropositive. Amah Djah-foule is doing advocacy for social change, putting rather controversial issues on the agenda, for instance the informal prostitution among teenagers. These kinds of messages need to be repeated a lot too really be able to work as an agenda setter. Speaking to a general population Amah Djah-foule has an important role to play in raising awareness of sex work and how everyone is concerned by it.

One of the strengths with Amah Djah-foule is the careful consideration about the image of sex workers that is being presented. The design team has made a big effort not to stigmatize sex workers. The design team members point out the importance of not presenting sex workers as responsible for transmitting HIV more than anybody else. It works in changing the stereo types and raising awareness about the difficult conditions for sex workers. It works also internally among the sex worker population strengthening their self-esteem and possibly their self-efficacy.

**Role modeling in Amah Djah-foule**

The characters of Amah Djah-foule, four female and three male character, are representing different ages, all within a span of sexually active years. By choosing this distribution of characters the scriptwriters have the opportunity of appealing to a large spectrum in the audience who can identify with at least one of them.

Most characters in Amah Djah-foule are static in their status as either positive or negative role models. The film lacks a truly transitional character changing from negative to positive to show us how adopting the desired behavioral change will be rewarded. What is even more serious is that the film lacks a male role model. There should be a transitional male role model who develops from irresponsible/ignorant towards a responsible behavior. Amah Djah-foule is targeted towards female sex worker and logically the message to the target group is to look out for them selves as their own person is the only thing they really are in power of. But the film actually gives the message that men are allowed to be irresponsible and that it is up to women to protect themselves.

The producers of Amah Djah-foule have succeeded in creating an emotional involvement in the characters and the dramatic development. This effect would have been strengthened if the characters were designed to be stronger role models that were rewarded and/or punished in their development.

**Recommendations**

I believe that entertainment-education is a strong genre in communicating social and behavioral change. It is also a strong and qualitative alternative to the international entertainment industry, which is sometimes imposing quite depraving values on people in all parts of the world. In entertainment-education production lies the possibility of producing pro-social, culturally sensitive products by domestic professionals to be aired at prime time television or radio. Film production, as in this case Amah Djah-foule, is expensive but also a very powerful means of communication. Organisations funding entertainment-
education production should also think of funding education for artistic professionals in the genre. Supporting entertainment-education is also a support to the artistic environment and to freedom of expression and democracy.

I believe in the combination of interpersonal communication and mass media communication as Amah Djah-foule is being implemented at Clinique de confiance. The educational discussions strengthens the reception and understanding of the film. The audience is involved in the process of making meaning of the film which makes them involved in a much stronger way than a passive viewer. It also stimulates interpersonal communication between the viewers which could facilitate drawing parallels to their own lives. This combination of interpersonal communication and mass media could also include a multi media approach, for instance incorporating a print material that the audience can keep for reference. Music could also work on a advocacy level in the general society as there is a strong tradition in popular music to discuss political matters in West Africa.

I believe in the combination of addressing both individual behavioral change and collective social change. For future entertainment-education productions I would recommend a careful consideration about the special dramaturgy required for entertainment-education, specially concerning role modeling. I would also like to see more of modeling collective solutions and social advocacy. It would be very interesting to see if it is possible to further develop the participatory essence of entertainment-education by involving target groups in the creative process.
References

Literature


Prête à jouer tous les rôles, mais... Press cut from Ivoir Soir published the days after the launch of Amah Djah-foule, which was on the 12th of April 2001. No date and no author on my copy.


Internet references

PSI ewb site: http://www.psi.org

Soul City web site: http://www.soulcity.org.za

Other materials


Interviews

Anoma, Camille, Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-07-12.
Transcribed from French by myself.
Ayockoin, Michel, PPP (Programme de Prévention et de Prise en charge des
MST/SIDA chez les femmes libres et leurs partenaires), personal interview
2001-08-09. Transcribed from French by myself.
Barnes, Jeff, PSI, personal interview 2001-08-09. Interview conducted in English.
Barnes, Jeff, PSI, e-mail 2001-12-04.
Don Zigré, Alexis, PSI, Director of the film, personal interview 2001-07-25.
Transcribed from French by myself.
Transcribed from French by myself.
Edvige - client at Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-07-17.
Translated from French by myself.
Ettiegne-Traoré, Virginie, Projet RETRO-CI, personal interview 2001-07-16.
Translated from French by myself.
Gaye, Toutou, Peer educator at Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-
07-19. Translated from French by myself.
Juliette - client at Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-07-17. Interview
conducted in English.
Joy - client at Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-08-01. Interview
conducted in English.
Kakou, Mme, social worker at Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-
07-19. Translated from French by myself.
Kambou, Sara, CARE, personal interview 2001-08-10. Interview conducted in
English.
Kodjo, Millicent, Peer educator Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-
07-17. Interview conducted in English.
Koné, Alassane, ACDI, personal interview 2001-07-19. Translated from French
by myself.
Mary - client at Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-08-02
Queen Elisabeth - client at Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-08-01.
Interview conducted in English.
Sullivan, Joan, UNAIDS/ONUSIDA, personal interview 2001-07-18. Interview
conducted in English.
Veronique - Peer educator Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-07-16.
Translated from French by myself.
Vuylsteke, Bea Louise, Projet RETRO-CI, e-mail 2001-05-30.
Vuylsteke, Bea Louise, Projet RETRO-CI, personal interview 2001-07-12.
Interview conducted in English.
Vuylsteke, Bea Louise, Projet RETRO-CI, e-mail 2001-12-20.
Zokou, Silvère Antony, Scenario writer, personal interview 2001-08-07.
Translated from French by myself.
Yapo, Ako Cyriaque, responsable gerant K-pot K-fe, personal interview 2001-07-
23. Translated from French by myself.
Youkou, Elise, Peer educator at Clinique de Confiance, personal interview 2001-
07-23. Translated from French by myself.
Condom promotion is always present in Abidjan. On these buildings we read "Preservatives for love" (left) and "To love is to protect oneself" (right).