



**POPULATION
MEDIA CENTER**

Acting for Change



USING ENTERTAINMENT-EDUCATION TO FIGHT CHILD MARRIAGE

Entertainment can engage large audiences, introduce new ideas, and empower entire communities. Population Media Center (PMC) works to improve the health and well-being of people around the world through entertainment-education.

PMC creates long-running TV and radio shows, aired in an episodic, serial drama format. These popular melodramas use the power of fictional role-models to catalyze individual behavior change, encourage community discussion, and positively influence social norms. PMC specializes in addressing deeply entrenched beliefs, including child marriage, and since 1998 we have impacted more than 50 countries.

The strategy for decreasing child marriage must involve fundamental sociocultural shifts. There are complex systems at work, involving gender roles and expectations, education, and economics – to name a few. In order to effect meaningful and long-lasting change, child marriage must be addressed in individual, political, and social domains.

Broadcast entertainment reliably reaches significant percentages of entire communities – cutting across socio-economic, gender, educational, and other cultural strata – while providing nuanced, entertaining narratives and effective role modeling. Local writers and producers ensure the design of sensitive and appropriate storylines and engaging characters particular to the culture and communities being reached.

PMC has successfully used entertainment to address many deeply personal beliefs, such as family planning and girls' education. Included here are some examples from PMC dramas that have successfully addressed child marriage.



NIGERIA: *Ruwan Dare*

PMC produced the radio serial drama *Ruwan Dare* (“Midnight Rain”) in Hausa to air in northern Nigeria. The 208 episodes were broadcast over a two-year period in the Nigerian states of Kano, Kaduna, Sokoto, and Katsina. In the broadcast area, 72% of the population aged 15 to 59 years old reported listening to the show at least once every week.

Through character role-models and plot twists, the drama increased knowledge and use of existing health services, provided information about reproductive and general health issues, encouraged family planning, and promoted delaying marriage and childbearing until adulthood.

Results indicate that listeners were twice as likely as non-listeners to say that a woman should delay getting married for the first time until she is aged 19 or older. Listeners of *Ruwan Dare* (84%) were also significantly more likely than non-listeners (77%) to agree that “girls should continue their education.”

Senegal: *Ngelawu Nawet*

Ngelawu Nawet (“Winds of Hope”) was a 168-episode radio drama produced by PMC in Senegal. The drama aired nationally in Wolof, a recognized regional language in Senegal.

Ngelawu Nawet addressed a number of health and human rights issues, including HIV/AIDS, reproductive health services, breast-feeding and child nutrition, tuberculosis, and child marriage.

The results were significant with listeners being 6.3 times more likely than non-listeners to state that women should be 18 years old or older before marriage. Listeners were also 74% less likely than non-listeners to agree that “the practice of female genital mutilation is a cultural requirement.”

When researchers visited the Kaolack region, they found that children referred to people who were coughing as Bakk (a character from the series) and would tell them to get immediate medical help.



NIGER: *Gobe da Haske*

Gobe da Haske (“Tomorrow Will Be a Brighter Day”) was a 144-episode radio drama produced by PMC in Niger. The drama aired across Niger in Hausa, the most widely understood language in Niger.

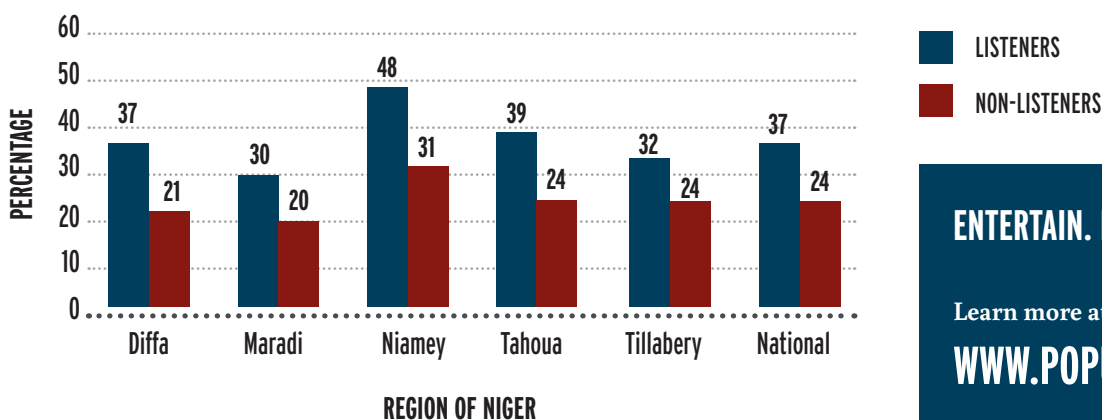
Gobe da Haske addressed a number of health and human rights issues, including family planning, child labor, and child marriage.

The graph below shows a comparison of listeners and non-listeners, region by region within Niger, about whether they favored girls waiting until age 20 to be married.



NIGER'S *GOBE DA HASKE*

LISTENERS AND NON-LISTENERS WHO FAVOR GIRLS WAITING UNTIL AGE 20 TO BE MARRIED



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