



Engaging Mass Media in Communicating SRH Research in sub-Saharan Africa *Experiences & Lessons*

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***Promoting the wellbeing of Africans through policy-relevant research on
population and health***

Overview

- APHRC's mission
- Strategies – creating interest, building capacity, working with media as intermediaries
- Lessons
- Conclusions



APHRC's Mission

- “promoting the wellbeing of Africans through policy-relevant research ...”



Why mass media (in general)?

- Power to inform and shape opinions, attitudes, and therefore reduce stigma
- Wide reach – general public, policymakers



Why mass media (for this paper)?

- APHRC's longstanding engagement with media
- APHRC's varied approaches in engaging with media
- APHRC's varied levels of success with different aspects of the media



Main Media Engagement Strategies

- Enhance interest and motivation
- Build capacity of journalists and researchers
- Work with media as intermediaries



Enhancing Interest & Motivation

- Awards of excellence
 - Sexuality journalism award of excellence
 - 5th African Population Conference Journalists' Competition



Building Capacity

- Two-way process – building capacity of media reps to using evidence, and of researchers in simplifying research evidence
 - TV drama – Makutano Junction
 - Addresses stigma associated with SRH-related issues & provide information on SRH services
 - Promotes public engagement
- Sensitization workshops for journalists
- Sensitization workshops for researchers



Working with Media as Intermediaries

- Working through journalist associations
 - KUJ - 2004
 - MESHHA - 2008
- The fostering of personal relationships with journalists



Lessons Learned

- **Enhancing Interest ...**
 - Amount of cash awards; number of winners;
 - Increase and enhance quality of coverage
 - Sensitization on subject matter needed for poorly-understood topics
- **Building Capacity ...**
 - Greater appreciation among researchers for the need to move their research to another level.
- **Working w/media as intermediaries ...**
 - Journalist associations are effective platforms for reaching journalists
 - Respect and trust btw journalists and researchers can be built



Conclusions

APHRC's efforts have led to:

- Two-way learning and engagement
- Enhanced capacity, confidence and motivation of researchers to engage with journalists and vice-versa
- Increased coverage of APHRC's SRH research
- Increasing demand for APHRC's SRH research by journalists





THANK YOU

