

***Resounding the Voices:***  
**Letter Writing, Audience Participation and  
HIV/AIDS Communication for Social Change**

**by**

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## ABSTRACT

The FEMINA Health Information Project in Tanzania has in its strategic plan for 2007-2010 stated as its vision 'an empowered society that fosters democratic values, critical thinking and positive attitudes towards health lifestyles, gender equality, protected sexuality and HIV/AIDS'. This is translated into two development objectives which both aim to build a supportive environment where:

1. 'Young people in the communities enjoy their right to access information & services and are empowered to make positive informed choices around sexuality and lead healthy lifestyles in order to reduce the negative impact of HIV/AIDS.
2. Communities exercise their right to express themselves, participate in public debates & engage in civil society'.

FEMINA pursues their objectives by producing two of Tanzania's largest magazines – SiMchezo and FEMA, targeting rural and urban youth in a participatory multimedia intervention communication strategy with these two magazines as the key vehicles. They are at the heart of a broader overall edutainment strategy.

The question addressed in this paper is what role letters - written by the youth targeted in FEMINA's interventions - can play in assessing and documenting the outcomes of FEMINA's work. To which degree do the letters reflect processes of empowerment, voice and participation? Or rather, *what* do the letters reflect in terms of audience involvement in the FEMINA project, its aims, objectives and vision.

The paper is based on a systematic quantitative and qualitative analysis of letters written to FEMINA HIP. Based on an outline of a theoretical framework and analytical approach, situation letters studies as an M&E tool within communication for development, and based also on a literature review of previous letter analyses, core quantitative and qualitative findings are presented and discussed. The paper will conclude by critically assessing possibilities and limitations of this methodological approach to assessing an HIV/AIDS focused communication for development and social change initiative.

## ***Resounding the Voices:***

# **Letter Writing, Audience Participation and HIV/AIDS Communication for Social Change**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Tanzania is changing. On one hand, the economy seems to be thriving with a 7% growth per year. The media sector is booming, with rapid growth in access to TV, radio stations proliferating, and the print media continuously expanding. Politically, changes have occurred with a gradual opening to a multi-party system in the early 1990s and with the first multi-party election held in 1995. Nevertheless, a series of huge challenges remain: Tanzania, with its 39 million inhabitants of which 80% live in rural areas, remains one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 159 on UNDP's Human Development Index; political impasse, with a lack of transparency and accountability is a recurrent problem and, as for public health, Tanzania is fighting an HIV/AIDS pandemic with a 5.7% prevalence rate (THIS 2008). In the midst of this situation, a growing civil society has in recent years taken up an increasing number of development challenges and has been working to improve life conditions and hold the government accountable to face and combat the most important of these challenges. One of them is undoubtedly HIV/AIDS.

Despite the African and international move towards economic liberalisation and electoral democracy in the 1990s, the government of Tanzania showed no deeper commitment to the process of democratisation, maintaining a tight grip over the political sphere (Tripp 2000). Thus, the development of a Tanzanian civil society in the 1990s took place within a very restrictive environment 'steeped in political culture and the legacy of the one-party state' (ibid) where political debate remained limited. Effective political participation was hampered by 'a background of disengagement and disenchantment among the largely rural population' (Evans & Ngalwea, in Booth 2003).

Over the past decade, significant changes have been seen in Tanzania, both with regard to the nature and breadth of the public debate and the role of civil society and public participation herein. The relationship between government, civil society organisations and ordinary citizens' public participation seems to have become more dynamic and interactive; the nature of the policy dialogue and the debate around policy development and domestic accountability seems to have reached an increased level of maturity. The number of registered non governmental organisations has grown from 17 in 1978 to 813 in 1994. Today there are more than 8,000 registered NGOs in Tanzania of which around 450 are estimated to be active (May and Magongo/CIS study 2005, in Corrigan 2006).

It was in the above context that Femina HIP was established in the late 1990ies and began to work with providing a mediated space where issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights could be discussed openly. At the core of the inquiry in this article lies the question: How, and to what degree are ordinary people actually getting involved in civil society driven initiatives to curb some of Tanzania's most severe development challenges?

### **1.1 FEMINA HIP**

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Tanzania is alarming: currently estimated at 5.7% of 15-49 year-

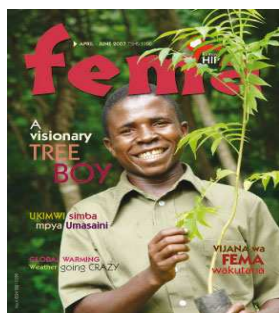
olds on the mainland, with the highest prevalence occurring amongst women in rural areas (THIS 2008). Young Tanzanians are amongst the most vulnerable and HIV/AIDS thus represents a huge communication challenge in Tanzania. It is obvious that the expanding media culture is a strategic site for pro-social communication about issues such as HIV/AIDS, and that the entertainment format is tactical in order to target young people, and to compete on the commercial market. Research on so-called Entertainment-Education (or *Edutainment*) has shown that such interventions can serve to trigger “*interpersonal peer communication* leading to changes in the *social discourse* of the audience” (Singhal & Rogers 2002 p130). It is in this environment that the Tanzanian NGO Femina Health Information Project (Femina HIP) is operating, trying to make an impact on the discourse around topics such as relationships, love, sex, sexuality and HIV/AIDS. Minou Fuglesang (2006 p3) writes:

With globalization and a growing market economy in Tanzania, media and information technology has become more accessible, dissemination and distribution facilities have improved. This has made it possible to increasingly work through and develop new media vehicles for HIV communication. If content is culturally relevant, linked and rooted in the face to face encounters of everyday life, reinforcing and creating legitimacy around these, media communication has vast potential to reach large audiences and effect positive social change. The HIP multimedia lifestyle initiative is a prominent example.

Femina HIP was founded in 1999 and has grown continuously since. It uses entertainment-education as its primary communication strategy to engage youth in the Tanzanian development process. Femina HIP is today a multi-media initiative with the overall objective to build supportive environments in Tanzania where:

1. Young people in their communities enjoy their right to access information & services and are empowered to make positive informed choices around sexuality and lead healthy lifestyles in order to reduce the negative impact of HIV/AIDS.
2. Communities exercise their right to express themselves, participate in public debate & engage in civil society. (Femina HIP 2007a)

Today, Femina HIP is engaged in the production of eight different types of communication activities, together creating a multimedia platform with the aim of stimulating open talk, critical thinking and social change that will foster healthy lifestyles and positive, responsible attitudes toward sexuality, HIV/AIDS and democratic culture. The focus of this study is on Femina HIP’s printed media; that is the two, recurrent, long term magazines:



*Fema* (name changed from *Femina* in 2006) - the original Femina HIP product and flagship activity. It is a 64-page, full-colour magazine in English and Kiswahili distributed quarterly. The main target group is youth in secondary schools all over Tanzania.



*Si Mchezo!* - a 32-page, bi-monthly, full-colour magazine in Kiswahili. It started in 2003, and the target audience is rural, out-of-school, semi-literate youth aged 15-30 and their communities.

At the heart of all activities is the “edutainment methodology” (often called entertainment-education, E-E, in the literature), which indicates that the aim is to entertain, and at the same time to educate audiences about certain life essential topics.<sup>1</sup> A participatory production process is applied, using testimonials – real-life stories of ordinary youth – to give voice to the questions and concerns of the audience. Research and constant monitoring is carried out in order to ensure that the products are relevant to local contexts and to investigate whether they really stimulate social and behavioural change.

Feedback studies show that HIP products like *SiMchezo!* and FEMINA have succeeded in creating an empowering ‘lifestyle brand’ for young Tanzanians with clearly documented change effects. Not only have the different media products created forums for open talk about sensitive issues, stirring engagement and debate, they have with their long-term recurring presence in the audiences lives, become trendsetters, sources of comfort, critical thinking, knowledge and fun as young people grow up and have to deal with a range of serious lifestyle issues. The edutainment methodology HIP has created and put to use, is working. (Fuglesang 2006 p2)

## 1.2 LETTERS FROM THE AUDIENCE

A central aspect of the edutainment methodology is the “interactive participatory production process” (Fuglesang 2006 p5). One significant way in which the audience can participate is through writing letters, e-mails or sending sms (text messages) to Femina HIP, in the hope of being published in one of the magazines, being invited to participate in the talk show or simply getting a reply from the team. The ever-increasing amount of correspondence (including letters, emails and SMS) from the readers that reach Femina HIP is a valuable source for scrutinizing whether the project actually lives up to its objectives, as well as a source for studying “audience involvement”<sup>2</sup> and the impact of the project. Femina HIP has been part of the Tanzanian media landscape since 1999, and the letters dating back from that time also offer an opportunity to analyse whether, and in what way the discourse around Femina HIP relevant issues – such as relationships, sexuality and HIV/AIDS – have changed over time.

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<sup>1</sup> Tufte, Thomas (2005; 162) gives the following definition: Entertainment-Education is the use of entertainment as a communicative practice crafted to strategically communicate about development issues in a manner and with a purpose that can range from the more narrowly defined social marketing of individual behaviours to the liberating and citizen-driven articulation of social change agendas.

<sup>2</sup> A term often used in measuring effectiveness of EE interventions. See e.g. Sood, Suruchi (2002) “Audience Involvement and Entertainment-Education” in *Communication Theory*, Vol. 12, issue 2 (page 153-172).

According to an overview of the incoming letters between 1999 and 2002, Femina HIP received a total of 7 letters in 1999, 55 in 2000, 175 in 2001, and 138 in 2002 (Femina HIP). By 2007 the organization received at least 100 hundred letters per month, excluding emails (Femina HIP 2007)<sup>3</sup>.

All incoming letters to Femina HIP go through a certain procedure. The letter reaches the reception where it gets a date stamp, and is sent onwards to one of the following departments as appropriate:

- (1) The Media Communication Unit, where the editors select letters to publish in the magazines. They sometimes personally respond to letters. Those not published are sent on to the Community mobilization unit.
- (2) The Community Mobilization department, which is responsible for responding to all letters, categorising and filing them into different folders depending on their aim and content

There are several different categories (/files) of letters which include:

- a. Si Mchezo! My Voice (Sauti Yangu)
- b. Si Mchezo! Advice (Ushauri)
- c. Si Mchezo! Letters from Readers
- d. Fema Dear Aunty /Uncle (Advice column)
- e. Fema Your Voice (Sauti Yako)
- f. Fema Letters from Readers (Barua)
- g. Fema Games (competitions entries)
- h. Fema Clubs – registrations / reports
- i. Fema Clubs – quarterly reports
- j. Fema TV Talk show letters
- k. Femina HIP Ambassadors' letters
- l. Invitation letters (from schools, organisations etc.)
- m. Requests for copies (FEMA, Si Mchezo)

Although emails are extremely common, they were until recently not treated the same as letters and therefore only a small proportion have been saved within the paper files.

In this study the letters in focus have been selected from six different files (a-f from the aforementioned list). This is explained more in detail in the research design section.

### 1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overarching purpose of this study is **to contribute to the assessment of Femina HIP's role in contributing to social change among Tanzanian youth**. This will be done through an analysis of particular categories of reader letters to *Fema* and *Si Mchezo!* magazines.

The key research questions guiding the analysis are:

- (1) What are the most important **themes/topics discussed** by letter writers to *Fema* and *Si Mchezo!* magazines over the years (1999-2007), and **by whom**?

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<sup>3</sup> This data and all information regarding letters in this paper refers to letters from audiences and excludes *official* letters to the administration and finance unit of Femina HIP

- (2) What kinds of **audience involvement and citizen participation** are expressed in the letters?
- (3) What does the analysis of the letters say about Femina HIP's ability to meet its **overall development objectives**?

## **2. THE CONCEPTUAL MOVE: FROM BCC TO CFSC**

### **2.1 FEMINA HIP'S COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES**

The communication practice of Femina HIP and the underlying conceptual basis of Femina HIP's work has undergone changes over the period of almost a decade of Femina HIP's existence. The focus has always been and continues to be heavily focused on 'conquering' and establishing discursive spaces where issues of sexuality, love, relationships and HIV/AIDS can be discussed openly and freely. However, the debate was in the early years often framed within the logic of behavioural practices and emphasizing 'messaging', that is mention of relevant, adequate and correct messages to guide young people in their sexual behaviour. This has somewhat changed, in the sense that the content of the Femina HIP media outlets today is more on emphasizing dialogue and debate connecting the realities of sexuality and love to the context of the underlying socio-economic problems influencing them. Thus, issues of unemployment, unequal power relations between men and women, problems of sexual abuse and other issues have gained prominence. The conceptual move herein has been from framing the content within the logic of behavioural practices to now framing the content within a broader logic of social change, power relations, social justice and policy concerns. This has been reflected in the recent revision of Femina HIP's mission statement and development objectives, where the second objective was added in 2007 (building supportive environments in Tanzania where 'communities exercise their right to express themselves, participate in public debate and engage in civil society').

In many ways, Femina HIP's conceptual move reflects the conceptual developments within communication for development, from the narrow focus on behaviour change communication to the increased attention towards social and structural determinants of behaviour and the need for civil society participation in improving the often detriment conditions.

### **2.2 FROM BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE COMMUNICATION TO COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE**

When discussing communication strategies in the combat of HIV/AIDS, we have elsewhere pointed out that there is a gap between the practices of development communication (under which HIV/AIDS communication pertains) and recent progress within communication theory (Tufté 2005a p 118). Particularly problematic is the gap between the theoretical and methodological advances within qualitative audience analysis that has so far been very little connected to HIV/AIDS communication practices (Tufté 2004). One of the main theoretical concerns within this field of research is to contextualise media use and appropriation, socially and contextually. However, it seems that in recent years more and more work within the area of HIV/AIDS communication has also applied a much more contextualised approach:

The international debate in this area has in recent years increasingly centred discussions around three different approaches to HIV/AIDS communication: Firstly, *behaviour change communication*

(BCC). This has traditionally been the approach in HIV/AIDS communication, focusing on individual behaviour change and often grounded in an understanding of the problem as being lack of information. Based on theories of diffusion, these initiatives are often large scale media campaigns that spread information in the hope that in knowing more, people change behaviour. The focus on the ABC of HIV/AIDS communication (*Abstain, Be faithful or use a Condom*) has been at the heart of this approach. Experiences in many countries are however showing that people have increasingly high levels of factual knowledge, knowing the key messages and behaviour to follow on HIV/AIDS, but it is not leading to behaviour change. Thus, the debate is increasingly focusing on two other approaches: advocacy communication and communication for social change.

*Advocacy communication* deals with the specific objective of advocating the rights and problems of HIV/AIDS, for example the rights of People Living with HIV (PLHAs) or of orphans and abused children. It also deals with making governments more accountable and influencing policy-making.

*Communication for social change* is the term used whereby the underlying causes of HIV/AIDS are being recognised: poverty, gender inequality, unemployment, etc. Following this principle, HIV/AIDS communication must address the structural determinants that lead to these situations, and is often rooted in participatory processes where issues of empowerment and human rights are at the centre of concern. It also often ends connecting to advocacy communication. The fact of the matter is that the three approaches here outlined often end up being complementary to each other.

However, what also can be identified in the recent academic debate are a number of unresolved issues: Firstly, there is a clear *discursive consensus* around the terminology – everybody speaking of the need for participatory approaches. However, scratching the surface, a lack of conceptual clarity and clear definitions is evident: how do we define participation, social change, mobilisation and other key concepts. Secondly, there is *no uniform immediate objectives* when speaking about combating HIV/AIDS with communication. Obviously, reducing HIV/AIDS is the long-term objective everybody can agree upon, but should this require deeper social change, individual behaviour change, political change or other forms of change (cultural, legal, economic etc)? We have elsewhere argued that HIV/AIDS and the negative social impacts of globalization are pushing the agenda of strategic communication towards a more elaborate social change agenda (Tuftte 2005 p 158). Finally, looking back at the communication practice in recent years, it is obvious that there continues to exist very *differing methodologies*, reflecting the broad diversity of approaches to HIV/AIDS communication and prevention.

This all leads us to emphasize that there is no uniform way in applied communication, and emphasis must be put on understanding the communicative intentions of a specific organisation in order to be able to assess strengths and weaknesses of the effort. In the case of Femina HIP, these intentions have gradually changed, and thus, in conducting this longitudinal letter analysis, covering eight years of letter responses from the audience, we must bear in mind that many relevant contexts have changed – both the conceptual move and explicit objectives of Femina HIP as well as the political climate, the strength of civil society and the attitudes of citizens in engaging with civil society initiatives and overall development challenges in their everyday life. Contextualized analysis lies at the heart of understanding the content of the letters the audiences have written over the years.

### 2.3 CHANGING DISCOURSES IN PRACTICE

Consequently, when exploring the more specific area of entertainment-education (EE) research the interests have gradually evolved and diversified over the years in accordance with the trends outlined above. To a large degree, the conceptual expansion seen with Femina HIP's communication practice is also seen within EE-research. It reflects the conceptual move from behaviour change communication to communication aiming for social change and empowerment.

Still within the logic of behaviour change communication, a turn has occurred towards more and more assessing audiences' "degree of exposure" to the E-E intervention and to measure whether and how E-E interventions spur interpersonal communication between audience and non-audience members, thus a way to measure the "indirect" effects of an E-E intervention and a kind of "two-step flow" communication process (Singhal & Rogers 2002 p130). In the book *Entertainment-Education: A Communication Strategy for Social Change*, Singhal & Rogers summarize that research and theorizing in recent years have shown that entertainment-education has turned out to motivate audience individuals to talk to each other about what they learn from the E-E messages, and to engage audience individuals in what they call *socially supportive behaviour change*. According to many studies the effects of the entertainment-education implementations often come about as a result of *parasocial interaction* and *role modelling* by audience individuals with positive and negative media characters. There is evidence of how audience individuals incorporate the language of their role models when talking with others about the entertainment-education messages, as well as of how they carry out new behaviours in their real-life contexts. One example of how everyday discourse is influenced of the programs was when the broadcasts of *Simplemente María* in Peru 1969-70 led to that all housemaids in Peru were called Maria in Peru. Another example is how the name of the negative role model Mkwaju in *Twende na Wakati* became a nickname for sexually promiscuous men in general in Tanzania in the 1990's (Singhal & Rogers 1999 p144). Based on studies like these, Singhal & Rogers suggest that "entertainment-education has certain of its effects as a catalyst for triggering *interpersonal peer communication* leading to changes in the *social discourse* of the audience" (ibid. Italics author's own).

At the backdrop of these notes, a still weakly developed pathway of EE research is focusing on the discursive formations appearing in the EE texts. It remains to be further investigated the articulation of discourses on the levels of edutainment texts, as well as edutainment production and reception. According to Stuart Hall (1997 p6) discourses are "ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice". They are the clusters, or formations, of ideas, images and practices, that provide us with modes of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institution in society. *Discursive formations* define what is and is not appropriate when talking about, or acting in relation to, a particular subject or area of social activity. Discursive formations define what knowledge is considered useful, relevant and 'true' in a particular context, as well as what sorts of persons or 'subjects' embody its characteristics. When comparing the discursive approach with the semiotic approach he writes that:

[...] the *discursive* approach is more concerned with the *effects* and *consequences* of representation – its 'politics'. It examines not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct, makes up or constructs identities and subjectivities, and defines the way certain things are represented, thought about, practiced and studied. The emphasis in the *discursive* approach is always on the historical specificity of a particular form or 'regime' of representation: not on 'language' as a general concern, but on specific *languages* or meanings, and how they are deployed at particular times, in particular

places. It points us towards greater historical specificity – the way representational practices operate in concrete historical situations, in actual practice (Hall 1997 p6)

## 2.4 CONCLUSION ON THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

We have described and discussed the growing attention towards social and structural determinants to peoples behaviours and actions. A pertinent issue to further consider is the growing attention towards issues of governance. Many governmental and inter-governmental bodies have begun to be interested in ‘listening’. Communication for empowerment studies in UNDP’s Governance Centre, listener studies in SIDA, community conversations in UNDP and the World Bank’s incipient interest in participatory communication and in governance and communication.

These discursive and policy-oriented trends in development practice and cooperation speak to the need for other sets of indicators that capture these processes which lay far from the traditional indicators within, for example, HIV/AIDS communication. Communication for Social Change is about enhancing dialogue, critical thinking and stimulating synergetic and dialogic processes between action and reflection. It opens up for an increased attention on broader societal and often community-oriented issues of participation, voice, collective efficacy, and social cohesion.

It also poses a series of methodological challenges as how to assess if a communication intervention - as for example Femina HIP - is contributing to processes of empowerment and social change.

## 3. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

### 3.1 METHODOLOGY

In the article “A Theoretical Agenda for Entertainment-Education” Singhal & Rogers (2002 p120) propose a theoretical agenda for the field of entertainment-education, summarised in the following five points.

- (1) Theoretical investigations of entertainment-education should pay greater attention to the **tremendous variability among E-E interventions.**
- (2) Theoretical investigations of E-E should pay more attention to **the various resistances to E-E interventions.**
- (3) E-E theorizing will benefit from close investigations of the **rhetorical, play, and affective aspects of E-E.**
- (4) E-E “effects” research should consider employing **a broader understanding of individual, group, and social-level changes.**
- (5) E-E “effects” research should be more receptive to **methodological pluralism and measurement ingenuity.**

This research agenda remains somewhat rooted in the paradigm of behaviour change communication, reflected in for example point 2 and point 5. Point 2 speaks about exploring ‘resistances’ to EE interventions, which implies a directed form of communication which, if all ‘resistance’ is removed, can be transferred well. Point 5 speaks to ‘effects’ research which is only one conceptualization of the relation between communication initiatives and the people engaging with these. Nevertheless, this research agenda speaks to some of the breadth within research in EE and gives at hand some relevant methodological thoughts for this study:

### 3.1.1 ASSESSING AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT AND INTERMEDIATE EFFECTS

Much of the early research on Entertainment-Education focused on assessing *whether* the strategy had effects. These studies analysed the changes in audience members' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. But they did not look into *how* these changes took place. More recently, researchers interested in EE have begun to explore the process through which E-E interventions have their 'effect', and in which ways audiences involve in the programs. "Audience involvement is the degree to which audience members engage in reflection upon, and parasocial interaction with, certain media programs, thus resulting in overt behavior change," writes Suruchi Sood (2002 p153). The focus here is still primarily on emotional and psychological involvement, and is not oriented towards social action. Nevertheless, Sood's operationalisation of audience involvement represents an important opening towards the broad field of reception studies which grew out of British Cultural Studies in the 1980ies.

However, most EE research is still today rooted in communication studies (including marketing and PR) and especially in exploring behaviour effects, drawing on social psychological theories. As mentioned in section 3, the epistemological aim of communication for social change is not only about individual behavioural change, but speaks to human rights, citizenship and social justice agendas, thus digging deeper into the relation between communication and empowerment, communication and collective action, communication and the articulation of critical thinking, etc. The communication objective lies beyond individual behaviour change and rather in achieving changes in society, changes of a structural and political nature. 'Communication for social change' is thus posing new challenges to the history, trajectory and body of knowledge upon which most EE research lays, pushing the focus beyond 'effects' research and into a more political arena. Communication for social change is, ultimately, political communication.

#### **Audience Involvement**

Suruchi Sood (2002 p157) provides clear definitions of the most commonly analysed forms of audience involvement in her article "Audience Involvement and Entertainment-Education".

- (1) *Reflection* is described as "the degree to which audience members consider a media message and integrate it in their own life," and divided into (a) *referential reflection*: "the degree to which audience individuals relate a media program to their personal experiences" by for instance discussing it with others in terms of their own problems, and (b) *critical reflection*: "the degree to which audience members distance themselves from, and engage in, aesthetic construction of a media program" by for instance reconstructing the program or suggesting changes in the program.
- (2) *Parasocial interaction* is divided into (a) *affectively oriented interaction*: "the degree to which audience members identify with characters or with other salient characteristics of a media program (for example, a place or community)," (b) *cognitively oriented interaction*: "the degree to which audience members pay careful attention to a media program/episode and think about its educational content once it is over," and (c) *behaviourally oriented interaction*: "the degree to which individuals talk to, or about, media characters and rearrange their schedules to make time for exposure to a media program"

In addition to these levels of involvement, Sood, in line with others, also discusses three specific forms of *intermediate effects* that are often analysed in E-E research. These are (1) an increase in

*self-efficacy*, (2) an increase in *collective efficacy*, and (3) increased *interpersonal communication* among audience individuals, defined as follows:

- (1) *Self-efficacy* is a term used by social psychologist Albert Bandura, and defined as “peoples’ beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over events that affect their lives” (Sood 2002 p159). This concept draws attention to the importance of a person’s cognitive reflections when he or she evaluates a media message (Papa et al 2000 p34), and according to Bandura it should be studied as situation-specific as possible (Sood 2002 p159).
- (2) *Collective efficacy* is a relevant concept in many countries where E-E interventions are implemented, since these cultures often are collective rather than individual. It is a system-level aspect of Bandura’s social cognitive theory, and in his words it is defined as “people’s beliefs in their joint capabilities to forge divergent self-interests into a shared agenda, to enlist supporters and resources for collective action, to devise effective strategies and to execute them successfully, and to withstand forcible opposition and discouraging setbacks.” (Bandura 1995 in Sood 2002 p159).
- (3) Spurring of *interpersonal communication* is believed to be an essential step for social change, and research of E-E programs have shown that E-E implementations often lead to discussions about the programs and their educational themes among peers and in their communities.

As often is done in EE effects research, Sood conducts a quantitative analysis of audience involvement in *Tinka Tinka Sukh* in India, using these terms as pre-given categories. She suggests in the end that “sense-making and reception analysis techniques” could be utilised in order to take this analysis a step further. Interestingly enough for our study, she mentions that “[f]or example, qualitative textual analysis of letters by audience members can help in understanding audience involvement through the words of the audience themselves” (Sood 2002 p168). A problem with this quantitative approach, which we have brought forward elsewhere<sup>4</sup> (and which Sood is also admitting herself), is the total lack of cultural contextualisation. Furthermore, her suggestion of using ‘reception analysis techniques’ does not change the epistemological aim of the study, but rather introduces new techniques to better understand how the communication intervention impacts upon individual behaviour.

Despite the limitations identified in Sood’s methodological proposal, it constitutes a useful first step to explore audience involvement and ‘intermediate effects’. For that purpose, the above conceptualization of audience involvement is relevant.

Methodologically, we could find inspiration in the article “Efficacy in Letter-Writing to an Entertainment-Education Radio Serial” by Sweetie Law & Arvind Singhal (1999), where they are using a qualitative analysis of letters to *Tinka Tinka Sukh* in order to *inductively* find out what sorts and levels of audience involvement are taking place, instead of *deductively* searching for already defined types. They found four types of efficacy effects – cognitive, affective, motivational and behavioural – and three aspects of efficacy – strength, magnitude and generality.

Theoretically, we could find inspiration in Papa et.al. “Entertainment-Education and Social Change: An Analysis of Parasocial Interaction, Social Learning, Collective Efficacy, and Paradoxical

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<sup>4</sup> See e.g. Tufte, Thomas (2003)

Communication” (2000), where they remind us that the process of social change is not a linear one, and where they also add the theoretical dimensions of power and hegemony to the analysis.

### 3.1.2 CONTEXTUALISING THE LETTERS “ETHNOGRAPHICALLY”

In previous work, Thomas Tufte argues for audience ethnography in E-E research, and underlines that the difference between audience ethnography and reception analysis is of both epistemological and theoretical nature. Thus, while reception analysis represents a move away from effects research towards a deeper phenomenological orientation, reception analysis still has the object of study in common with effects studies: both limit their focus to study the narrow relation between the media text and its audience.

Audience ethnography looks into wider relations, between media, people and everyday life, and seeks to detect as many aspects as possible of the cyclical process of communication. As such, methodologically, it connects well with the wider societal aim of communication for social change, seeking to understand how a communication initiative relates to social and cultural practices more broadly. Audience ethnography is consequently more of a cultural analysis than a media analysis. While effects studies and also reception analysis is media-centric, audience ethnography suggests socio- and culture-centrism (Tufte 2003). Instead of seeing culture as an obstacle for information and knowledge, as was often the case in early communication for development, culture is regarded as the “way of life” within which the “articulation of political and social processes, structural change, collective action” should take place (ibid). Therefore, the culture has to be interpreted and understood in the analysis. The narratives of audience members have to be contextualised within their social, cultural, and historical context.

The method of observations or interviews – that often are part of audience ethnography – has not been used in this particular study, but instead the narratives of the audience expressed in the letters have been analysed and positioned in a wider cultural context. The letter analysis is a way to interact with the audience on their own terms, in their own words as they have written the letters and sent them in on their own initiative, and a promising site for analysing such things as self-efficacy.<sup>5</sup> As Singhal & Rogers (2002 p130) write in their theoretical agenda:

Audience letters represent a rather “pure” form of audience feedback, and E-E scholars should consider tapping the research potential of these messages more fully. These letters are usually unsolicited, unprompted (and, hence, free of researcher bias), in the writer’s own language, and rich in insights about how the E-E intervention affects the audience.

Leif Galaen (2003 p5), inspired by the thoughts above, suggests in his study of viewers’ feedback to the South African E-E program *SoulBuddyz*:

Letter writers themselves dictate what ideas and issues to bring up in their letters, what views to express on the issues and in what form and way to express the views. Many original ideas may come from this feedback. This reserve of feedback remains idle if lying unanalysed in the drawers of media organisations.

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<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Law, Sweetey & Arvind Singhal (1999)

And when analysing the listeners' feedback to the E-E radio serial *Tinka Tinka Sukh* in India, Sweety Law and Arvind Singhal (1999 p360f) underlines that:

The importance of letter-writing as a domain of studying mass media effects is especially pertinent in developing countries such as India. Unlike the USA, or any developed country, where listeners can easily call in to a radio show, in India, which has only one telephone per 100 people, letter-writing is often the main mode of listener feedback. When listeners write on their own initiative, they display 'agency', that is, self-directed activity. Human agency is central to the causal processes governing change (Bandura, 1989). This display of agency is an important fact of efficacy expressed at the belief as well as the behavioral levels. [...] Thus, letter-writing, whether voluntary or prompted, is an important activity by listeners and can be a key to an enhanced understanding of the extension of issues central to their lives that the mass media intervention seeks to mediate and change.

As several researchers that have dealt with letters from the audience are pointing out, the letter writers should not be regarded as representative of the average audience member; they often represent a highly involved audience group.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, could we argue that their narratives can be used to show indications of how young Tanzanians are talking about Femina HIP relevant issues. As the letter writers are readers of the magazines, quite probably even influential readers (potential opinion leaders), their letters will in many cases indicate in what ways the magazines have influenced them, and how they will influence their communities.

In addition to contextualising the letters in the socio-historical environment of Tanzania of the particular time, it will also be necessary to relate the letters in various ways to other research that has been done on Femina HIP; to make comparisons with results from focus groups and surveys with the audience as well as to relate the letter narratives to the content (with its educational themes) of *Fema* and *Si Mchezo! magazines*<sup>7</sup>. This, however, constitutes a broader research agenda for the study of Femina HIP's impact on Tanzanian society and thus beyond the more immediate scope of this letter analysis.

### 3.1.3 MEASURING SOCIETAL IMPACT

Complementing the work to assess 'intermediate effects' which Sood's outline has helped us delineate, growing academic attention is being given to develop monitoring and evaluation instrument that can assess the outcomes of communication for social change. An early piece was developed by Figueroa et al (2002), identifying 7 key indicators of social change. Developed within the logic of effects studies, the study developed a methodology to quantify the changes occurring, thus seeking to numerically 'weigh' the change. This is a difficult task, as the indicators are seeking to capture social change processes. However, despite the limitations, these indicators are what we also have used in this study. The seven social change indicators are: Leadership, Degree of equity of participation, information equity, collective self-efficacy, sense of ownership, social cohesion and social norms. These indicators have been incorporated into the coding scheme where a total of 11 indicators were thematized (see Annex 1). The indicators of audience involvement and participation have thus been develop to both capture processes of individual reflection and interpersonal dialogue, as well as processes contributing to societal change.

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<sup>6</sup> See e.g. Galaen, Leif (2003); Law & Singhal (1999 p 360f).

<sup>7</sup> For letter studies conducted internally, see Femina HIP (undated); *Dallmer*(2006). Also relevant are Fuglesang (2006) and the evaluations referred to there.

### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

As discussed, Femina HIP receives hundreds of letters and emails each month which are filed in to more than a dozen categories depending on their destination, purpose and content. The categories and filing system has evolved over time as the organization has grown and expanded in scope.

This study focuses on three categories of letters to each of Fema and Si Mchezo! magazines: *Advice*; *Voices*; and *Letters from readers*. Each of these categories corresponds to an editorial section in the magazines where letters are printed and responded to<sup>8</sup>. Though they vary in content and format, these letters have certain commonalities: they are all spontaneous in terms of content (although the editors encourage readers to write in) and it is logical to assume that the writer is hoping to see his/her letter published in the magazine. Of course, not all letters can be published and this study did not discriminate on the basis of whether a letter was published or not. Femina HIP does, however, make an attempt to directly respond to those letters that are not published to ensure that a dialogue is maintained. These categories of letters were also chosen as they were deemed to be some of the richest in terms of audience engagement as they are generally written to seek or give advice, express opinions or share experiences.

The folders containing letters falling under the selected categories since the inception of Femina HIP in 1999 up until the end of 2007 were targeted for this study. However, it was noted in the process that the file names and filing system has not been consistent over the years and that some letters were probably missing, especially from the early days of the project. The total number of letters that emerged in these categories was approximately 2040<sup>9</sup>.

A limited number of categories was also considered necessary to keep the study manageable. It may also have added some limitations as other, valuable categories of letter were excluded in the process. One pertinent example is letters written from Fema Club members. These letters are sometimes in the form of reports, other times in the form of letters discussing their latest activities and they regularly include photographs. In the future, it may be useful to compare these letters to the categories analysed in this study, especially in relation to the types of audience involvement demonstrated.

#### **Sampling procedure for quantitative study**

The quantitative content analysis was based on a 33% sample of the 2040 letters located within the aforementioned category files. Every third letter was selected from each folder and photocopied in full.

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<sup>8</sup> The editorial sections are as follows: Fema Dear Aunty / Uncle (advice); Fema Your voice (Sauti yangu); Fema letters from Readers (barua); Si Mchezo! Advice (Ushauri); Si Mchezo! My Voice (Sauti Yako); Si Mchezo! Letters from readers (barua).

<sup>9</sup> About 100 emails were also found but these were excluded as Femina HIP staff with responsibility for letters stated that they had only recently begun filing email correspondence.

**Table 1: Sample size**

	<b>FOLDER NAME<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>No. of letters sampled</b>
1	Letters from readers (2004/05)	64
2	Questions & Answers (aunty/uncle 02-04)	29
3	Si Mchezo! Letters (2003/04)	80
4	Si Mchezo! Letters (2004/05)	55
5	Dear uncle/aunty (Fema-2006/07)	61
6	Si Mchezo! 2006	17
7	Femina letters from readers 2002	44
8	Sauti Voices / Fema( 2005-2007)	99
9	Your voice (2003)	70
10	Si Mchezo! 2007	62
11	letters from readers 2003	53
12	Letters from schools 2002	46
	<b>TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE</b>	<b>680</b>

### **Quantitative coding of letters**

A quantitative code sheet was developed containing 44 questions divided in to the following four sections: demographics of the writer; characteristics of the letter; content of the letter; and types of audience involvement.

As previously mentioned, the analysis was designed to incorporate different types of indicators of audience involvement and participation – at once drawing inspiration from Suruchi Sood and indicators of behavioural change (e.g. referential reflection, parasocial interaction and efficacy), as well as complemented by indicators and processes relating to societal change (e.g. leadership, social cohesion, participation in the public sphere). This section of the quantitative code sheet can be referenced in Annex 1.

A pilot study was conducted where a small sample of letters were looked in to in order to refine the code sheet. Following revisions and an orientation session for coders, the full sample of letters were coded over the course of a three-day workshop<sup>11</sup>. Definitions and examples were provided to coders for all of the types of audience involvement as some were deemed to be complex (Annex 2). The coding nevertheless required a significant degree of personal judgement as many of the concepts under investigation are nuanced.

During the workshop 42 letters were spoiled or eliminated from the sample as they had been misfiled and bore no relevance to the categories chosen for this study (e.g. distribution requests). This resulted in a final sample size of 638 letters.

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<sup>10</sup> Note that the date on the file names does not always correspond to the dates on the correspondence contained within

<sup>11</sup> The coders comprised Femina HIP personnel (magazine editors, community mobilisation department and monitoring & evaluation staff) and four students from the Department of Sociology at the University of Dar es Salaam, under the supervision of Femina HIP's Monitoring & Evaluation Manager and Officer

At the end of the workshop the questions most prone to subjectivity were identified and discussed and five questions were cross-checked / re-coded<sup>12</sup> across 25% of the sample. This resulted in 10-15% of letters being re-coded. Data entry and analysis (using SPSS-X) was conducted by the Department of Sociology at the University of Dar es Salaam.

### **Qualitative sampling**

A qualitative analysis was conducted with the objective of exploring the types of audience involvement that are taking place in more depth. An inductive approach was utilized, meaning that the material informed the analysis and governed how the concepts were understood in the particular Femina HIP context. The different expressions of audience involvement were interpreted taking in to account power dimensions, especially gender, age and education.

50 letters (8%) were chosen from the coded sample of 638 and translated in to English. This was done by sorting letters in to three meta categories based on the types of audience involvement detected in the quantitative coding exercise. The categories were as follows:

#### **Category I - Individual reflection**

Themes: Referential reflection, affective par asocial interaction, self efficacy

#### **Category II - Interpersonal dialogue.**

Themes: Critical thinking, collective efficacy, community dialogue,

#### **Category III - Social Action**

Themes: collective action, leadership, social connectedness, social cohesion, participation in public sphere

This categorization was organized to work with three groups of indicators: the first dealing with individual psycho-social processes of identification and reflection (labelled individual reflection); the second with collective processes of reflection, critical thinking and dialogue (labelled interpersonal dialogue) and a third dealing with the collective and public processes of action that may have societal impact (labelled social action).

Each of the three categories was treated individually and sampled independently without assuming any linear connection from one behaviour change process to another. This enabled the study to explore three different categories of audience involvement independently from each other. A linear relationship was not excluded, but it did not guide the selection. The analysis did explore a possible 'continuum' of audience involvement or rather circular, reciprocal linkages that may exist between different change processes.

### **Limitations in research design / methodological constraints**

Despite their 'purity' letters are also somewhat limiting as a medium of analysis. By their very nature, they differ hugely in terms of the amount of information contained, making certain variables difficult to assess. For example, few letters contained information on the religion, occupation or educational level of the writer which are important demographic variables. This further limits our ability to profile and segment letter writers or to clearly understand who is engaging most with the project.

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<sup>12</sup> Questions 21, 22, 31, 33 and 41.

A further constraint is that letters can be nuanced in terms of sentiment, tone and intent. This also implies that a certain amount of judgement has to be used in coding and analyzing the content of letters which can invariably lend itself to subjectivity, inconsistency and error. For example, most but not *all* coders assumed that teachers had higher level education; and most but not *all* coders identified the writer's religion on the basis of the their name. This is also an indication that the criteria for coding were not as clearly established as they should have been and that a higher percentage of letters (if not all) should have been cross-checked.

During the qualitative analysis it emerged that several letters had been incorrectly or inconsistently coded. It was further noted that many letters are very layered and express themes in an ingenious way: therefore the categorisation of letters by theme in the qualitative analysis was somewhat limiting and ultimately letters were analysed broadly rather than specifically by category theme.

Although this study was designed to be longitudinal, the analysis was not broken down in to phases/periods/years to identify possible changes in terms of theme and type of letter, or profiles of writer.

#### 4. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

*The quantitative analysis attempts to do the following:*

- (1) *Provide a basic demographic profile of letter writers*
- (2) *Assess the most common letter characteristics*
- (3) *Assess the most important themes and topics discussed by letter writers over the years in relation to the intended educational themes of Femina HIP*
- (4) *Provide a typology of audience involvement that is detected in the letters, over time, by type of writer and by magazine*

##### 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF LETTER WRITERS:

The quantitative analysis of the sample set enables us to compile a profile of who is writing to Femina HIP in terms of gender, age, geographical origin and educational standard. As mentioned above, several demographical features proved difficult to code (often resulting in coding as 'not clear') due to the limitations in terms of information provided within the letters<sup>13</sup>.

**Gender:** 55% of letters received came from males, whereas 28% came from females. In the case of 16% of letters the gender was not clear. This is because the gender of the letter writer was deduced from the name and in some cases it was difficult to decipher (surnames are commonly used in place of forenames in Tanzania).

On the basis of those letters where gender was known (n=533), letters from males accounted for 66%, or two out of every three letters. Gender is therefore a significant determinant of letter writing and therefore a key variable for the analysis in this paper. The gender findings in this study are consistent with previous studies undertaken by Femina HIP and a reflection of the Tanzanian socio cultural context whereby male involvement tends to be significantly higher than female involvement in most aspects of the public sphere.

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<sup>13</sup> For this reason, religion and occupation of writers has not been commented on in this paper

The gender discrepancy also raises a series of important questions for further evaluation: Is it an indication that Femina HIP magazines are reaching more males than females and therefore a challenge to the distribution system? Or is the editorial content more male in orientation and therefore more involving for males? Or is the discrepancy simply related to the fact that males have greater agency / wherewithal to send a letter (e.g. access to the district centre and post office, money to buy a stamp, photo that can be included)? Some of these questions are explored in subsequent sections.

**Age of writer:** In total, only 20% of letters writers indicated their age. From these the vast majority (81% of all letters) fell in to the 15-19 and the 20-24 age categories. This correlates closely to Femina HIP's defined core target audience of youth aged 15 to 30, with a bias towards the 15-19 year old bracket<sup>14</sup>.

A further analysis of age group by type of letter written indicates that younger writers (15-24 years) had a stronger tendency to write to Fema magazine to either the 'Advice / Dear Aunty' or the 'Letter from reader' sections. These letters tend to be asking advice or expressing opinion about the magazine (the latter usually more congratulatory than critical in style). Older writers (25 years +) tend to preference the Fema and Si Mchezo! 'voices' and Si Mchezo! 'advice' sections. These sections tend to express perspectives on a particular issue (e.g. the threat of HIV/AIDS) or offer advice (in response to a question raised by another reader). Amongst the very small number of letters received from under 15 year olds, the majority of these were written to the Si Mchezo! advice section.

**Education level** of the letter writers was often difficult for coders to decipher. In the case of Fema letters at least one in two writers had secondary level education. This could be detected because they often mentioned their school or used the address of the school in their correspondence. What is not clear is whether these secondary school students have gone on to complete secondary education. 7% of Fema letter writers were classed as having higher level education such as college or university. In some cases this was stipulated, in other cases letters from teachers were automatically coded as having higher education. Si Mchezo! letter writers were more difficult to code and in at least two out of three letters the educational level was not clear. Although Si Mchezo! magazine targets out of school youth, many of whom have little or no secondary education, it reaches broad swathes of communities and sometimes finds its way in to the secondary school setting. Therefore it is likely that letter writers come from a broad range of educational backgrounds.

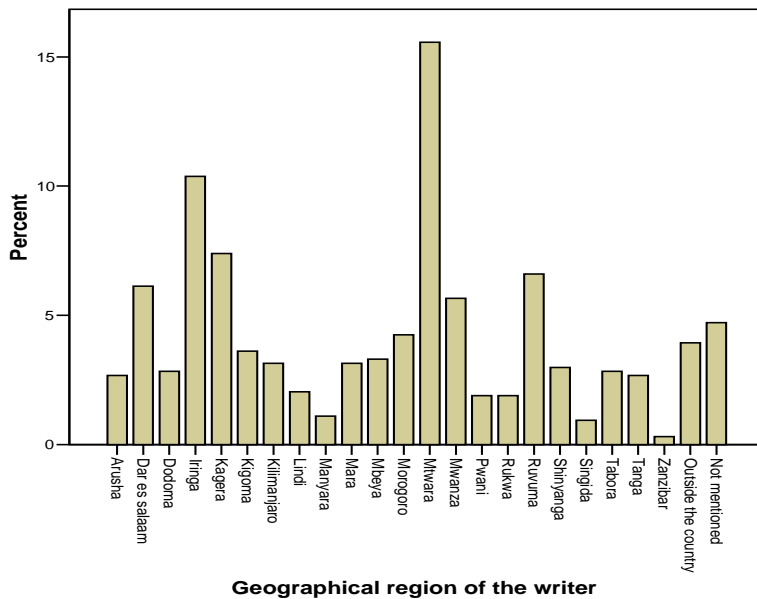
In terms of the **occupation** of writers, a large proportion of letter writers are students (47%) and are likely to have written to Fema magazine as this is distributed directly in the secondary school setting. Beyond this, the writer's occupation was rarely mentioned and 39% of letters were coded as not clear.

Analysis of the letters by **geographical regions** shows that letters come from all over the country. The two highest ranking regions – Mtwara at 16% and Iringa at 10% – are in the South of Tanzania and are high priority areas for Femina HIP in terms of its distribution strategy. It is nevertheless noteworthy that letters came from every one of the 21 regions in Tanzania plus Zanzibar. Out of 638 letters sampled, 25 came from outside Tanzania.

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<sup>14</sup> This bias can be attributed to the fact that *Fema* magazine primarily targets secondary school students in its distribution strategy.

**Figure 1: Geographical region of the Writer**



It is often assumed media initiatives largely reach urban area such as the five main cities of Tanzania. However, this data shows that most writers come from towns (58%) or villages (19%). It could in fact be true that even more writers are village based, due to the tendency of villagers to use a PO Box in the nearest town in their correspondence. Fema letter writers had a higher tendency to come from towns or cities than Si Mchezo! writers, the latter having a strong tendency to come from villages.

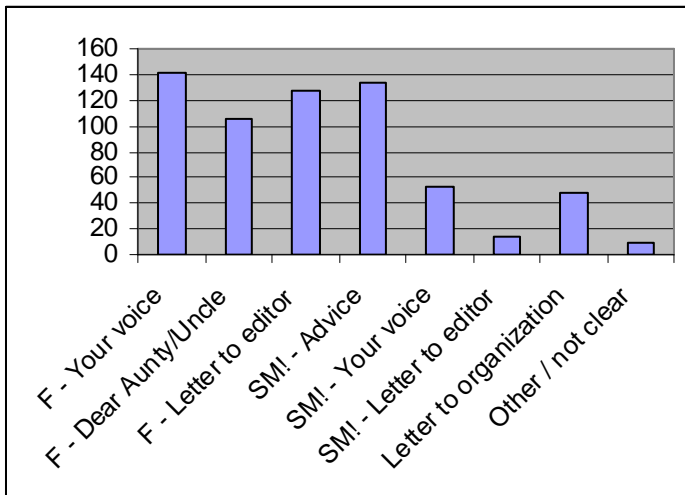
Nine out of ten letters were written by one person, whilst one in ten came from more than one person, such as a group of peers or Fema club members.

**4.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF LETTERS**

Of the 638 sampled letters, almost two thirds (403) were written to Fema magazine while 203 were received by Si Mchezo!. This is logical given that the sample included letters since the inception of Fema magazine in 1999, whilst Si Mchezo! magazine was only launched late in 2003. A small quantity of letters have been coded as ‘other’ (24) as it was not clear which magazine they had been written to.

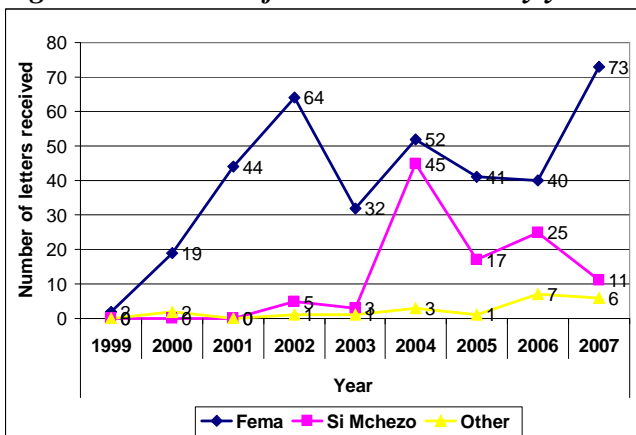
As mentioned, the sample for this study focused on three categories of letter to each magazine (Advice, Voices and letters from readers – each relating to a section in the magazines). Fema *your voice* has received the highest number of letters, closely followed by Si Mchezo! advice page. Given that Si Mchezo! has existed for less time than Fema, it is likely that Si Mchezo! advice is actually the most popular category of letter. Looking at all letters to Fema magazine, Advice (Dear Aunty) has received the fewer than the other categories, but all categories are popular. In terms of Si Mchezo!, letters to the advice page are significantly more prevalent than the other categories. This is linked to the fact that these types of letters are often collected by hand when editors travel to the field.

**Figure 2: Frequency of letters by category**



There has been considerable growth in the total number of letters received each year to these categories. 2004 registered a highpoint, which corresponds to the launch of Si Mchezo! in late 2003. The volume of letters received dipped in 2005 and has grown moderately since<sup>15</sup>. It is important to bear in mind that this study focused on a sample from certain categories of letters and therefore does not reflect the overall level of correspondence to the organization. As the organization has evolved, new types or files of letters have been introduced (e.g. letters from clubs, letters from organizations etc.). These new files did not form part of this study and therefore it is likely that the total number of all types of letters received by the organization has increased significantly over time.

**Figure 3: Number of Letters Received by year:**

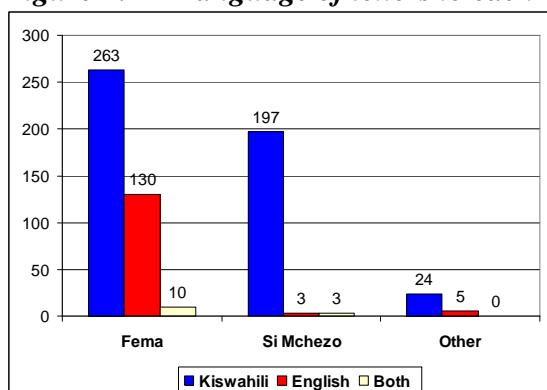


The majority of letters received were one page or less in length, although a small proportion (20 letters) were three to four pages in length. 90% of letters were handwritten, whilst the remaining 10% were typed. More than three quarters of letters were written in Kiswahili, the remainder in English asides from a small proportion (2%) that contained a bit of both. Almost all English letters were written to Fema magazine, reflecting the fact that many letters come from secondary school

<sup>15</sup> This data should be treated with some caution due to the nature of the sampling technique used as well as certain inconsistencies in the filing system

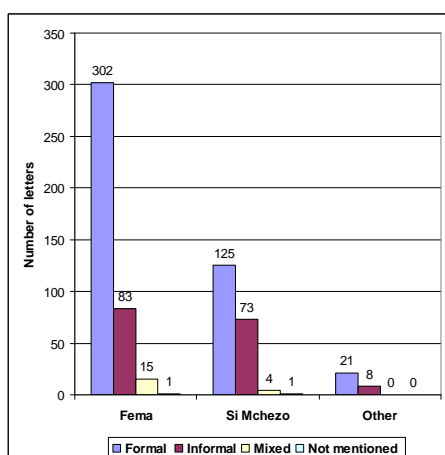
students. In fact, every third letter sent to Fema magazine was in English, whereas virtually 100% of Si Mchezo! letters were in Kiswahili<sup>16</sup>.

**Figure 4: Language of letters to each magazine**



The **style of language** used by writers tended to formal – 77% of writers to Fema and 62% of writers to Si Mchezo used formal language. The larger percentage of formal letters to Fema magazine may be linked to the higher proportion of letters written in English rather than the vernacular.

**Figure 5: Style of Language**



Almost one in five letters contained a **graphic** of some form such as a photograph or drawing. The inclusion of a graphic was stronger for letters to Si Mchezo! (21%) than to Fema magazine (15%). Letter writers send their photos to Femina HIP in the hope of having them published alongside their letters. The table below lists the types of photos received: it is noteworthy that 77% of photos are of males and a further 7% are mixed. Although two thirds of all letters were written by males, we see here that an even higher proportion of photos came from males. There can be several reasons for this, from males having more agency and access to money / photographs, to being especially keen to see their image in print.

**Table 2: Frequency Distribution of photos sent from letter writers:**

<sup>16</sup> Fema magazine is bilingual – about two thirds of the magazine is in Kiswahili. Approximately one third of articles / features are translated and appear in both English and Kiswahili. English is also the medium of instruction in secondary schools in Tanzania.

<i>Type of photo</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Male photo</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>76</i>
<i>Photo of more than one males</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Female photo</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Female and child</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Photo of more than one females</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Male and female photo</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Mixed group photo</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Male, female and child</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>98</i></b>	<b><i>100</i></b>

### 4.3 THEMES AND TOPICS DISCUSSED

All letters were coded according to the main educational themes presented, using fourteen pre-identified themes. These themes were selected by the Femina HIP staff in accordance to the main themes prioritized in the strategic plan as well as the editorial content. Letters with themes that did not fit in to the pre-identified ones, were marked as ‘other’. As many letters contained more than one main educational theme, this question allowed for multiple responses<sup>17</sup>.

More than a quarter of the letters (26.2%) contained HIV/AIDS themes – which is the number one content theme in both Fema and Si Mchezo! magazines. Almost 20% of letters focused on the theme of career/education, 18% on ‘healthy lifestyles’, 17.5% on sex and sexuality, 15% on relationships, and 10% on youth involvement in society – all of which are key content priorities for Femina HIP. Only 12% of letters did not fall in to pre-identified themes. The results are summarized in the table below.<sup>18</sup>

As Femina HIP has evolved over time, the content of Fema and Si Mchezo! magazines has also become broader, reflecting increased emphasis on governance issues. In concrete terms, this means editorial content on themes such as civic education, democratization, involvement in community decision making and poverty reduction. A further and more recent focus has been on environmental issues. These themes still only appear in a minority of letters: democracy and accountability (2%), youth involvement (10%) and environment (1%). Another theme which is surprisingly uncommon is gender, as this is one of Femina HIP’s core strategic priorities<sup>19</sup>.

**Table 3: Main Educational Themes**

	Count	% of responses	% of cases
Relationships: Men and women	73	8.4	11.6
Relationships: Youth/children and adults	24	2.8	3.8

<sup>17</sup> Letters were coded for sub-themes as well as main themes, as many letters have a main theme (e.g. HIV) and a sub theme (e.g. relationships). However, as the data for sub-themes is largely consistent with the data on themes, it has not been presented here.

<sup>18</sup> When sub themes are included almost all of these themes are even more prevalent – e.g. Sex and Sexuality is a sub theme in 24% of letters, parent-child relationships in 7%.

<sup>19</sup> Once again these percentages rise with the inclusion of sub themes. However, they remain lower than other educational themes.

Sex and sexuality	110	12.6	17.5
Healthy lifestyles	111	12.8	17.6
Reproductive Health	49	5.6	7.8
STI/HIV/AIDS	165	19.0	26.2
Livelihoods	32	3.7	5.1
Career/education	122	14.0	19.4
Democracy and accountability	16	1.8	2.5
Youth Involvement in society	64	7.4	10.2
Environment	8	0.9	1.3
Gender: girls' perspective	10	1.1	1.6
Gender; boys' perspective	5	0.6	0.8
Violence	5	8.7	0.8
Other	76	100	12.1
Total	870		138.1*

\*Percentage of cases do not add up to 100% because of multiple responses

Young Tanzanians write letters to Fema and Si Mchezo! magazines for a wide range of reasons and it is interesting to look at the form that the letters takes. Letters were therefore coded under descriptive (telling a story or describing a situation); advisory (giving advice or making recommendations); questions (raising questions or seeking information); or opinions (expressing views on a topic). It is revealing that almost one in two letters is advisory in nature, demonstrating that readers like to advise their peers on issues of importance, and a further 38% of letters are written to express opinions. Fewer are raising questions, although 22% remains significant. The findings are positive in terms of Femina HIP's stated objective of communities exercising their right to express themselves, participate in public debate and engage in civil society (Femina HIP 2006).

**Table 4: Form of Letter Content**

	<i>Count</i>	<i>% of responses</i>	<i>% of cases</i>
Descriptive	174	21.0	28.2
Advisory	287	34.6	46.5
Questions	136	16.4	22.0
Opinions	233	28.1	37.8
Total	830	100	134.5*

\*Percentage of cases do not add up to 100% because of multiple responses

The study also attempted to categorise the **reasons for writing the letter**. Again we see the most common reasons are to express opinions, pose questions, feedback on themes raised and provide advice. Femina HIP staff often comment that letters are excessively positive and that very few are critical in nature<sup>20</sup>. The data confirms this, with 17% of letters being written with a view to praising the organization and only 2% being written to complain or critique. Furthermore, only 1% of letters were negative and 4% mixed (both positive and negative) in terms of tonality.

**Table 5: Reasons for writing letter**

Reason	Count	% of responses	% of cases
Posing questions	148	16.8	23.8

<sup>20</sup> Femina HIP aims to foster critical thinking amongst Tanzanian youth and therefore welcomes critique and challenges from readers, be it in terms of the content of magazines or more broadly in terms of the issues discussed.

Reply to Femina HIP product	73	8.3	11.7
Expressing opinion raised by Femina HIP	182	20.6	29.3
Expressing opinions in general	177	20.1	28.5
Praising Femina HIP	104	11.8	16.7
Complaining about Femina HIP	15	1.7	2.4
Feedback on how Femina HIP has affected the writer's life	52	5.9	8.4
Raising new topics	26	2.9	4.2
Providing guidelines/advice to support social action	63	7.1	10.1
Other reason	42	4.8	6.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>141.8</b>

*\*Percentage of cases do not add up to 100% because of multiple responses*

Approximately 10% of letters contained explicit moral or religious judgments. This is where, for example, the writer expresses that a certain behaviour is sinful or wrong and usually advises abstinence.

#### **4.4 AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION**

All letters were coded for 11 types of audience involvement and participation, the analysis of which has been used to guide the qualitative sampling methodology.

The most frequent types of involvement detected are referential reflection, self- and collective efficacy, occurring in approximately two out of every three letters. This strongly suggests that writers are relating the content of the magazines to their own lives, and gaining confidence in terms of their own perceived capacity for change. Though not as high, the presence of most other forms of audience involvement in every third or fourth letters remains significant. The results imply that Femina HIP products have managed to create audience involvement in matters that affect their lives, in the form of active participation in discussions, opinions and posing questions.

**Table 6: Frequency Distribution of Type of Audience Involvement**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Number of letters</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Referential reflection	413	65.1
Critical thinking	212	33.4
Affective parasocial interaction	222	35.1
Self-efficacy	432	68.6
Collective efficacy	395	62.4
Interpersonal communication/	213	33.7

Community dialogue		
Individual/collective action	149	23.6
Leadership	141	22.4
Social connectedness	112	17.7
Social cohesion	84	13.3
Participation in public sphere	181	28.6

It is interesting to analyse these indicators in more depth to understand who is most involved overall, as well as in particular types of audience involvement. Some highly thought provoking findings emerge:

- Most types of audience involvement are more common amongst females than males. Given the trend for higher male involvement in letter writing, and indeed most areas of the public sphere, this is very significant.
- Interestingly, the exceptions to this, where male involvement is higher than female (albeit marginally), are in the less prevalent areas of audience involvement including ‘interpersonal communication’; ‘social connectedness’ and ‘participation in the public sphere’ (with the latter the gap between males and females is significant). All of these are highly public forms of effect and perhaps more male oriented.

**Table 7: Breakdown of Audience Involvement by gender**

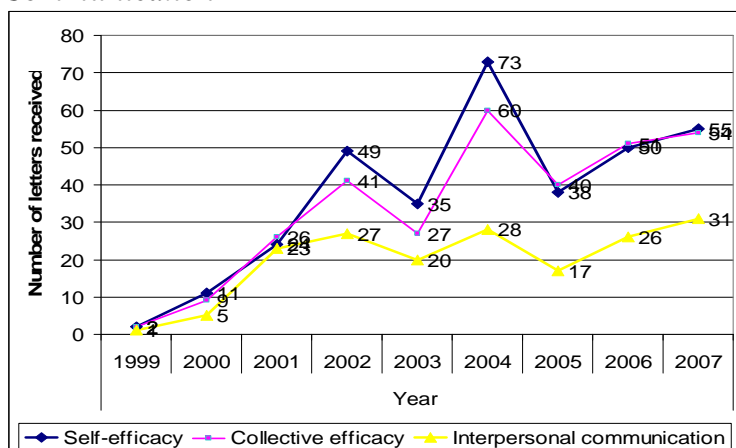
	<i>Percentage of kind of audience involvement by gender</i>										
	<i>Referential reflection</i>	<i>Critical Thinking</i>	<i>Affective Parasocial interaction</i>	<i>Self-Efficacy</i>	<i>Collective Efficacy</i>	<i>Interpersonal communication</i>	<i>Individual and/or Collective Action</i>	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Social Connectedness</i>	<i>Social Cohesion</i>	<i>Participation in Public Sphere</i>
<b>Gender</b>											
Overall <sup>21</sup>	65	33	35	69	62	34	24	22	18	13	29
Male	64	32	35	71	62	<b>34</b>	23	22	<b>19</b>	14	<b>31</b>
Female	<b>68</b>	32	<b>38</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>63</b>	31	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	18	14	26

- Audience involvement seems to be more common amongst slightly older writers and the under 14 year old group.
- It is also notably high amongst letters from club members, groups of peers, teachers and organizations (rather than individuals), demonstrating a certain strength or impact in numbers

When viewed over time we see that audience involvement closely matches the trend in terms of the total number of letters received each year (figure 6). We do not see any particular deviations or fluctuations in terms of a particular type of involvement.

<sup>21</sup> Note that for 16% of letters the gender was unknown which explains the discrepancy between the overall percentage and the male / female percentages highlighted in this table

**Figure 6: Audience Involvement over time: Self-Efficacy, Collective Efficacy and Interpersonal Communication**



This can also lead us to conclude that audience involvement in Femina HIP is higher in 2007 than in 1999 and will continue to grow in proportion to the number of letters received. It also raises questions as to why certain types of involvement are consistently high, and others are low and registering little growth (e.g. social cohesion). The answer may simply lie in the nature of the categories of letters analysed in this study<sup>22</sup>.

#### 4.5. CONCLUSIONS ON QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The quantitative analysis has highlighted the following points of interest:

- The majority of writers are male, and an even higher percentage (reltively) of photos were sent by males. This is evidence of greater male agency as well as perhaps a higher desire to participate or be seen in the public sphere. However, the fact that female writers show higher audience involvement is very significant.
- The average age of writers correlates closely to Femina HIP's core target group
- A large proportion of writers are students – the core target audience for Fema magazine
- In terms of geography, letters come from all over the country, not only main cities
- The total number of letters is increasing over time as the magazines expand their reach
- Every third letter written to Fema was in English – this is undoubtedly linked to the high number of letters from students in secondary level who are schooled in English.
- Many letter writers used a formal language which could also stem from the use of english or the fact that students are putting their formal letter-writing teaching in to use
- The themes and topics presented in the letters are highly relevant to Femina HIP's core strategic priorities. HIV /AIDS is the most common theme. Gender is, however, very uncommon.
- Almost 50% of the letters are advisory in nature, whilst a further 38% are expressing opinions, demonstrating that readers are using the magazine to advise their peers on issues of importance and share their views

<sup>22</sup> For example, letters from Fema clubs is a separate category and was not included in this study. These letters are likely to demonstrate high levels of leadership and social cohesion due to the nature of Fema club activities.

## 5. QUALITATIVE LETTER ANALYSIS

*The qualitative analysis attempts to do the following:*

1. *Provide a deeper insight into the content of the letters submitted to Fema and Si Mchezo! Magazines*
2. *Analyse the main qualitative characteristics of the letters*
3. *Assess how these letters relate to the analytical framework established for the analysis of audience involvement. This includes providing critical self-reflection as to the validity of this instrument as a means to assess audience involvement*
4. *Provide recommendations, both to FEMINA HIP specifically, as well as to other organisations and researchers interested in working with letters when assessing how audiences receive and engage with NGO-driven media outlets.*

### 5.1 Findings (1): Referential Reflections, Parasocial Interaction and Self Efficacy

#### **Referential reflections**

In the following letter a PLHA letter writer strongly expresses how he relates the content of Femina HIP products to his own life:

*I am a young man of 25 years old who is infected with HIV and I am very open about it in society. I was very glad to read Femina magazine and see some of the people living with HIV has been used to educate the society by using your magazine. Therefore, I would like to know about how am I going to be used as my fellow, in educating the society? (346) (1:SE).*

The writer is happy to see how people living with HIV, like himself have been used to educate the society. The writer seems to believe in his own capability to control his own life and not be brought down by stigma. He is clearly empowered by the possibility of sharing his experiences in Fema magazine and wants to participate in educating the wider society, obviously realizing how important this is in order to fight stigma and discrimination. So aspects of ‘self efficacy’ are also expressed as part of category 1. Important to note is however also the fact that Voice, or the wish to ‘participate in the public sphere’ and engage in a discourse around living positively with HIV is clearly expressed. The young man is offering to be amongst the ones who take a ‘leadership’ role, coming out openly to share their experiences with the general public, something which is rare in Tanzania. The letter is therefore expressing cross cutting issues, also covering elements of category 3.

Another letter expressing ‘referential reflection’ comes from a school teacher, and it is interesting as it expresses how reading and engaging with the Fema magazine has changed her over time and empowered her in the long term process:

*I am a teacher at Maranje primary school and a good reader of Femina since I was in secondary school. The magazines have helped me to change a lot and very time I read them I get stronger. They also help me to prepare my lectures by using some of the things written in the magazine such as lifeskills and counseling. ....If possible I would like to appear on the cover with my story. I would like to tell the youth about my experiences because this chance is meant for everyone and not the artists in Dar and the big cities only. (302)(1:RR)*

The teacher started reading the magazine as a student and now uses it as a tool for teaching her students, she is using the magazine proactively to prepare her lectures. The letter also expresses 'self efficacy' and empowerment to the degree that the teacher sees herself as a role model, she wants to appear on the cover of the magazine so that she can share her story. It is clear that the teacher is engaging in substantial 'interpersonal communication' with students and probably other teachers and is also embedded in 'social connectedness', themes from category 2 and 3. Her actions also reflect individual action, she has taken steps as well as leadership in the field of providing students with sexuality education. The fact that she wants to appear on the cover with her story could also be interpreted as an indication of wanting to enter into the larger public sphere to engage with her views and experiences. This letter is then cross cutting and contains layers also demonstrating to us that once a reader engages in fundamental way with the Femina HIP content it triggers readers to take further steps to share and discuss the magazine.

### **Affective parasocial interaction**

The following letter writer who shows clear signs of identifying with characters or the editorial team of Femina HIP:

*Dear sister Jamila, (former editor of Femina magazine)*

*Receive my greetings which are accompanied with my congratulations for your good work which have impressed a lot of people. My intention of writing to you is to request for your assistance in publishing my book titled "The secret of good life". I am writing to you in person to emphasize on my request so that you can help because god has given you so that you can help the poor like me. (361) (1:RR)*

The letter expresses a strong personal identification, and a 'parasocial relation' with Jamillah, one of the former Fema magazine editors, who appears to have become a role model for the writer. The letter writer has been affected by the magazine, however perhaps as much by editorial function, writing and expressing oneself as by the content. She is now seeking Jamillah's help to publish her own book on lifestyle issues. The writer expresses 'self efficacy', confidence in her own wish and capacity to express herself as well as 'referential reflection', she clearly identifies with the work of Femina HIP. The letter writer also expresses layers of issues, a strong wish to share Voice and 'participate in the public sphere' as well as 'leadership' in terms of wanting to educate others. These are themes that are reflected in categories 2 and 3.

Another letter expresses strong affiliation with a Femina magazine character, namely Aunty and her advice page:

*.....So aunty, what should I do to overcome this problem? When I saw Fema magazine at my friends place I read a section where people are allowed to speak out of their problems, family problems, even problems with friends, you can just ask for advice. In fact I was so happy I was like a blind person seeing the moon, I again ask please print my answers in the Fema magazine issue because where I live is very rural so I cant get your answers via TV or radio. We are currently arranging how to join the Fema club and so I believe that Amabalis Batamula will help us so that we can also get a chance to be educated through Fema Club. (142)(1:SE)*

The letter expresses clearly how the writer is identifying with Aunti and the advice she and the magazine provides, establishing a 'parasocial relation'. The writer is empowered and enamoured by

the advice content and form of the magazine, i.e. self-efficacy. She is eager to participate and do more. A **WE** also appears in the letter showing that the writer is communicating and discussing with others in her environment so 'community dialogue' and 'social connectedness' is expressed and furthermore, taking 'social action' by setting up a club. This again underline that when readers get engaged, they start sharing the magazine content and the organized and best way of doing that is by starting a club.

### **Self efficacy**

Of the many letter writers who take the time to write to Femina HIP many express a belief in her/his own capability to control her/his own life and a wish to share this insight. The following letter is a case in point:

***..... 'The easiest mathematics that the ladies can do is to get pregnant', that is what I once heard and was really hurt, so ladies let's put them into shame by taking care of ourselves and always be ready to say NO because it's our right. It's very much hurting that even the sugar mummies destroy young boys' lives threatening them with money. I HATE SUGAR DADDIES AND SUGAR MUMMIES. Why don't we have self control and value ourselves? Remember we are expensive and we should value our bodies. (222)(1:RR)***

The letter writers seems to feel strongly about the situation of her fellow youths, the need to say NO and the bitter strong feelings towards the sugar mummies and daddies who corrupt them. She speaks on her own behalf but wants to engage her fellow youths and remind them of the need to stand up for themselves and have self respect. She is mirroring the ethos of Femina HIP products. In so doing she is expressing traits of wanting to be a opinion leader, and Voice, wanting to express her strong views in a 'public sphere' for others to contemplate and get inspired by.

Another letter writer seem to believe in her own capability to control her own life and is therefore motivated to increase that empowerment and share it with others by taking individual action:

***Dear editor,***

***At first place I would like to congratulate you for what you have done and the contribution of what you are doing and let you continue to do. Actually it is a tremendous work due to the good information concerning with life processes. I am so curious and that is why I have been attracted to this magazine and also me to contribute my view I have learnt many things from this magazine and among them is to be a kind person and also how to control myself against dangerous things in my life. In so doing I encourage you to go with that spirit. I also want to know more about the establishment of Fema clubs so as to join together to establish the Fema clubs. We are in need of it, especially in my class. I simper you this due to that I do not know the process so as to succeed the establishment. Many thanks to you. 63 (IRR)***

The letter writer expresses strong identity with the magazine and the content and has become empowered by the content, 'self-efficacy'. She is also expressing a wish to move to the next level, to take a lead in establishing a Femina Club, a individual action for the collective. The need for a club at class level is expressed indicating that there is 'community dialogue' and 'social connectedness'.

Analysing the letters in category 1, expressing the three themes of 'referential reflection', 'parasocial relations' and 'self efficacy' it is clear that those who feel strongly inspired by the

content of the Femina HIP products at an individual level soon want to share the content by discussing with their peers, and take action to create fora where this can easily be done through for instance the set up of Clubs.

## **5.2 Findings 2: Collective Efficacy, Critical Thinking and interpersonal communication /community dialogue.**

### **Collective efficacy**

In the following letter the writers seem to believe in their community's capability to control and change their reality:

*Dear editor. We are youth from a group called Security Care Educated Students for HIV of Mataka day secondary school. It is our first time to appear in the Fema and Si Mchezo magazine. Our group has done some analysis on the HIV pandemic, this group was founded in 2004.....We have come to realize that many students here in our school are intensively involved in unsafe sexual activity and this is because they lack people to educated them on the subject, ...so we established a group that will help our fellows here at school and the whole society concerning HIV. We have been in the front line in educating the society concerning HIV infections..... 311(1:CDialogue).*

It is clear from the letter that the group of writers are proactive and confident, and are exercising collective efficacy by having devised a clear strategy for strategic action in their community. There is also strong 'social connectedness' between the students in the school, they have analysed their own situation and taken on 'leadership' to do something about a situation they feel is unsustainable. They have taken 'collective action', and started a group and become peer educators. It is clear that this group is self confident and wants to be 'in the front line', also 'participating in the public sphere' with their voice and views for change.

### **Critical thinking**

The following letter is a sample where the writer critically reflects over the content of the Femina HIP products, by suggesting changes, new topics or different perspectives:

*...In page 30 in the Dear Aunti section, we thank you for giving out good advice but there are questions that are not supposed to be replied because they are too open and widely known I think maybe you just want to fill the space. You are forgetting the out of school clubs because you only give us some magazines but I think its better if you pay us some visits to find out if we do get the magazine and if we really read them. You only visit schools clubs but I believe even the out of school clubs can make changes in the society. (1) ???*

The letters expresses that the readers is engaging intensely with the content of the magazine, to the extent that he has 'critical' opinions about specific questions, feeling they are not potent enough and a waste of space. Furthermore, he has comments about the Femina HIP community mobilization programme claiming it is too focused on the in-school clubs neglecting the new wave of out of school clubs that have been established, driven mostly by the out of school youth themselves. The writer is obviously a member of such an out of school club and he is expressing like many before him that they feel neglected and that Femina HIP team should pay more attention to them and even visit them. The writer is demonstrating 'collective efficacy' he is confident that also the out of

school clubs can contribute to change. A 'collective dialogue' is ongoing among his fellow youth as well as 'social connectedness' and that they have gone as far as taking 'social action' and setting up an out of school club.

In another letter the writer clearly sees himself as a leader, who has taken upon himself to educate society inspired by Femina, he therefore has a 'critical' insider tone:

***Dear editor, I can say that I am now a pioneer of Femina readers and you can agree with me basing on my contributions in educating youth in the society and sometimes I use my resources to make this happen. I would like to comment on two things namely, readers contributions ( ideas) and the price of the magazine. Since the beginning of the magazine there has been a little space for readers to air their views this has led to some of the readers letters not to be published. Therefore I request for more space for readers letters.....For those whose letters will be published should be rewarded something like a Femina T-shirt. This is my second time but I have got anything. 178 (3: Social connectedness) ???***

The writer feels strong participation, ownership and self efficacy and has strong views and frustrations about the fact that his and others contributions to the Your Voice page are not used or acknowledged. The writer also expresses that he is even using his own resources to educate others and therefore feels that Femina HIP should clearly acknowledge his contribution.

#### **Interpersonal communication / community dialogue**

In the following letter the writers, a group, indicate that audience members talk about the Femina HIP themes with friends and community members:

***Dear editor, We congratulate you for your best job which you are doing with your Fema HIP team. Big up! We are requesting you to visit also in the rural areas, they don't get much education about HIV/AIDS. Also we welcome you to our school for seminars about HIV/AIDS and sexuality. We love your magazine because we learn a lot from it. 81 (2:CDialouge).***

The letter writers want to take this dialogue further by inviting Femina staff to come and hold a school seminar. Here they are expressing that there is community dialogue in the school.

Another writer seems to want to shout out that talk, talk for it is important with interpersonal communication and community dialogue and every means must be used:

***Dear readers of Si Mchezo magazine and everybody everywhere where my voice is heard and my words can be read, this is the time of openness and truth. ....I am a peer educator in Matiganjola village.... (558)(2: CDialouge)***

The writer expresses empowerment, he is a peer educator, a leader among his peers and he harbours strong views of urgency around the matter. He is facilitating 'community dialogue', he is obviously talking to many he meets as a peer educator. He also expresses individual efficacy by his confidence, as well as collective efficacy, it is still possible to change the tide. Through his work as a peer educator he has taken 'individual action' and is doing something concrete which is being recognised in his community, this expresses 'community connectedness'. The writer wants his Voice heard and it is clear he is seeking any outlet that he can find to follow his mission.

When analysing the letters in category 2, we note that many letters express confident actions, like teaching, counselling others or working as peer educators all which entails ‘community dialogue’, and ‘social connectedness’ and reflects ‘individual and social efficacy’. We can note that many of the letters are written by a group of people that have come together to form a club or a common activity to further develop their engagement and share their learning. Critical letters, may not really fit under this category but it is interesting to note that while a majority of letters are positive and confirming all that Femina HIP does, a few in this case from men and out of school youth who have set up Femina Clubs often on their own initiative, are more critical as they feel that they are not benefiting from the same support as that of the in-school clubs. It would also be interesting to explore if men are more critical in their feedback and relate this to a discussion about men being dominant in the public sphere and that it is not encouraged for women in particular to be critical.

### **5.3 Findings 3: Collective Action, Leadership, Social Connectedness, Social Cohesion, Participation in the Public Sphere**

The letters coded and selected for category 3 were few, only 2-3 under each theme. Some were unfortunately wrongly coded and expressing other themes, we have therefore had to have a flexible cross cutting way of interpreting the letters in the different categories.

#### **Collective action**

The letter writer indicates that she/he is taking some kind of action (apart from writing the letter) because of the content in the Femina HIP products:

*Dear editor, Femina is a magazine that I love more than any other magazine because of the education found in it. I'm wishing to be in one of the columns giving out free advice and education to the society and I also like to educate through television, newspapers and the internet. I like to help the orphans, widows and PLHAs anywhere they are found as well as talking to youth about HIV&AIDS. Moreover I would like to know how to join your clubs because I really like to be in a club. I would like to urge you to keep it up because the magazine will help the youth in behavior change. 280 (3: Collective action.)*

It is obvious that the letter writer identifies strongly with the content, the ‘referential reflection’ is clear and that the content has had an empowering effect on her, she expresses ‘self-efficacy’. This has spurred her wish to help others, she says she wants to educate other groups in society. She is expressing an intent to become a ‘leader’ and start a club but she is not quite there yet.

Like this letter writer, many others as we have seen in category 1 and 2, who are inspired by the magazine and avid readers want to share and start up clubs, and by so doing many of the writers show and express ‘individual and or collective action’.

#### **Leadership**

In this illustrative letter the writer indicates that the Femina HIP product has prompted him to take on a leadership role. The following letter reflects many layers of both ‘individual and collective reflection, efficacy and ‘social action’ and is worth considering as a whole:

*Gratitude. On behalf of my students and members of staff may I extend our thanks for your kind considerations of including our school as recipient of your SELF AWARENESS magazine Femina. When I received the first copy of your cute magazine I was at crossroads. Not knowing exactly what to do. On one side I was concerned about the –slow to adapt to change – rural society, the die hard religious Gurus, they could accuse us, heads of schools - of turning schools into sexuality training college? But I AM happy, I had the courage to ask my audience what was their feeling about the subject. In addition we with the school chaplain arranged a lecture on the topic and we had a film show titled TRUE LOVE WAITS and another was arranged in conjunction with UMATI titled the CONSEQUENCES OF PREGNANCIES in schools. Now come the second copy of Femina and the third – it broke the ICE. To me with the experience of teaching for twenty years, it was an eye opener. To see and hear my girl students - of course I have had boys talk about these issues during the case of disciplinary misbehavior – but with girls it has not been so easy. But now it is a common thing for them to expose their feelings – sad ones, happy ones, even the traumatic experiences that can make someone feel like crying. Ultimately I believe with the technological changes – video, TV and what have you- your magazine has come in the time of succor. So the adage that – IF IT NECESSARY then play ‘it’ SAFELY, otherwise it is better to ABSTAIN has found no better place in the time than now. Because there are bigger and more important issues ahead of all the youth in this NATION. Once again please keep it up, and long live Femina HIP. Thank you, ever yours. 606(1: APara)*

The letter writer clearly identifies strongly with the content of the magazine. So is the individual and social empowerment as it comes to expression over time in his own life but also that of the collective of teachers, i.e. ‘collective efficacy’. The teacher takes his ‘leadership’ role seriously, takes a clear analytical approach and is delighted that his and the teachers ‘collective action’ to introduce the topic of sexuality education with support of Femina magazine and other media products in the school setting leads to new community dialogue and social connectedness.

### **Social connectedness**

This letter writer indicate that the Femina HIP product has actually led to new connections being formed within her school community and prompted a new form of communication between students as well as teachers:

*Dear editor,.....My school consists of 256 boarding girls and they have been reading your magazine for some time now. I assure you that it has helped a lot in changing their attitudes. Your magazine is both educative and informative. Teachers, parent, guardians and even their best friends cannot talk into details of some of the pressing issues that they are facing. Femina talks straight and hides nothing. This is so especially on the issues of HIV/AIDS. Transparency will rescue our young people from the dreaded disease. Femina keep it up and I wish you all the best ? Headmistress. 642 (3: Social cohesion)*

The letter writer expresses that the content of the Femina magazine has not only engaged students and teachers but it has also opened up for a new transparency and communication around sensitive issues of sexuality. This has lead to a feeling of a new ‘social connectedness’ and relief in the schools setting, as this teachers as well as others realize that open talk and education around such issue are vital for sustained health.

### **Social cohesion**

The letter writers, a collective WE, indicates that the Femina HIP product has prompted him/her/them to communicate with marginalized or vulnerable groups in his/her community: *First of all we would like to send our greetings and to congratulate you and all members of Femina HIP Thank you very much for the good advice you've been giving to us and the whole society at large. We've been reading the magazine for a very long time and we have enjoyed the teachings which we have read in the magazine. As students who read the magazine from Kagera Sec school we have decided to join the Femina HIP family. Our group is made of 7 members and is called Mtabadilika Club. Our main objective is to educate the society on various issues such as how to fight against HIV/AIDS and reduce the number of street children and orphans as well as other problems and therefore make students behave themselves and live a healthy lifestyle (83) (1:APara)*

The letter also expresses 'collective efficacy', the group is empowered and self confident that they can make a difference in their community by educating others, they can take a lead. There is obviously a lot of 'interpersonal communication'/'community dialogue', and feeling of 'social connectedness', the group has concern for their local community. This concern and engagement has lead to 'collective action', joining the Femina family and starting up of a club. The group mention their concern for reducing number of street children and orphans and this is an embryo to social cohesion.

'Social cohesion' is the most difficult category to identify in the letters, as it reflects the next step out of ones community and group to start engaging with other groups and doing something not just for oneself and the group members but also for other groups in society. Few of the letters of the 'spontaneous type', that is the advice and voice letters which are the object of this study fall in under this theme. If we look at the 'Fema Club report letters over activities conducted, we would probably find a lot more as Femina HIP encourages club members to go into the community to work with other vulnerable groups and share their knowledge and support.

### **Participation in the public sphere**

This letter writer expresses a wish to use the Femina HIP product(s) as a platform to interact with others outside her/his own immediate community? (e.g. my fellow youth). His contribution is to the Si Mchezo! readers advising readers page:

*Answer for the Si Mchezo issue no 9). My friend, I advise you not to marry the woman because those are just temptation. She will not be good for you in your life taking into account the age difference between the two of you and the source of HIV/AIDS is people like her. Try your level best to avoid her even if she will be pushy. Yours, Si Mchezo ! Lover! 444 (3: Leadership)*

The letter express a wish to share a view and advice others and use the Si Mchezo! magazine as the base for this. In advice there may be leadership, but this dimension is rather weak here.

Throughout category 1 and 2 there have been many other letters that have expressed this theme in a very potent way.

## **5.4 Conclusion on Qualitative Analysis**

One of the most striking elements of these letters from readers engaging with Femina HIP readers is the confirmation that humans are basically social animals that once inspired and engaged strives to share, gather and organize themselves in groups, in this case Fema Clubs. The benefits of being in a group are many, crating meaning, interpreting, learning, and taking action is much easier. It is an empowering process for people to be part of a collective.

Category 1 letters shows us that many of the letters are expressing ‘referential reflection’ and ‘parasocial relations’, an engagement starting often at individual level showing that people are enthusiastically reading and engaging with the material. Femina HIPs methodology of edutainment speaks to people, engages them and speaks to their emotions and experiences. It empowers and triggers an inspiration to share, discuss with others in the group and make the engagement a collective affair.

In Tanzania readers are thankful. They are enthused with getting Femina HIP products as they get nothing, so it is **unique**, a **FIRST** possibility to voice their view and express themselves and it resonates very well with where people are at. Wanting to be part of something and speak up, the potential is overwhelming. One of the reasons for why so few voices are critical has to be discussed perhaps together with the overwhelming positive voices.

This says something about the polite Tanzanian mentality, especially when addressing the public sphere, we lack political, music and art critiques in this country, people will not criticize you to your face. This again is a reflection of the once so state dominated, totalitarian society, the state was the all given, Nyerere the father and mind of the nation. Criticism has not been encouraged. Free media is also not well developed particularly not for the rural areas, but things are changing and the large amount of positive voices express wish to participate, wish to be heard, **seeds of democratic voice and participation**. The fact that the critical voices are coming from out of school Club members and males should also be explored more in relation to the gender dimension but also the focus and support of the Fema clubs as a school phenomena. The out of school youth are restless but very eager to be part of the Femina HIP initiative and their participation in the Fema Clubs comes more on the initiative from them than from Femina HIP and is interesting to note.

The analysis of the category 2 and 3 letters is interesting as it shows clearly the general progression.

It takes a bit of time before people get used to the style of communicating and internalize the way of communicating but this is what happens after a while. A natural stepping stone from there is to start sharing and talking to other people about the issues, and then wanting to get engaged as peer educators, councillors and in groups starting up Clubs. Those who are empowered to write letters are also often the ones who are taking ‘leadership’ and getting clubs and other activities organized. Someone has to drive the process and it is clear that leaders are often those who have come to feel strongly about the Femina HIP mission and made it their own.

Categories such as social efficacy, community dialogue and social connectedness are very similar and interdependent and vital for social action

The letters reveal that the **long-term, recurring nature of the Femina HIP media** is vital for creating a gradual process of engagement resulting in group and clubs taking on the agenda. It also underlines how important it is for Femina HIP to work with **community mobilization** and to help ensure that groups and clubs are set up as it is a dynamic forum for learning, interpreting and taking action not just as individuals but as a collective. Herein lies the challenge for communication for social change.

## 6. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

### a. A recap of the most important findings from the letter analysis

The core question driving this study has been: *How, and to which degree, are ordinary people actually getting involved in the civil society driven initiatives to curb some of Tanzania's most severe development challenges?* The simple finding that Femina HIP's correspondence from the audience is steadily increasing is in itself illustrating that there is a growing eagerness among young Tanzanians to participate in the public sphere. That the letters originate from all the 21 regions of Tanzania plus Zanzibar, and to a large extent from small towns and villages, further shows that a media initiative like this is no longer a pure urban phenomenon in Tanzania (something development communication initiatives such as Femina HIP are often criticized for). The results of this study indicate that Femina HIP has managed in its attempts to reach out to people all over the country. A big proportion of the writers are between 15 and 24 years old, and almost half of those letter writers that indicate occupation are students. These findings contribute to our positive assessment of the initiative's ability to reach out to its central target groups, and to manage to get them involved. But, a noteworthy and rather alarming result is that only one third of the letters that indicate gender, are written by females. Thus, although gender issues have always been at the top of Femina HIP's educational agenda, and even though attempts have been made to involve and engage boys and girls as much, mainly the male readers are taking the opportunity.

In relation to research question (1) *What are the most important themes/topics discussed by letter writers to Fema (earlier Femina) and Si Mchezo magazines over the years (1999-2007), and by whom?* it is of great significance that the themes and topics reflected in the letters analyzed in this study correlate very well to the educational themes of Femina HIP. It shows that the organization manages to involve and engage its audience through its products. More than a quarter of the letters deal with 'HIV/AIDS', the most important educational theme of the magazines *Fema* and *Si Mchezo!*. 'Sex and sexuality', 'healthy lifestyles' and 'career/education' are other frequently discussed topics in the letters that are also within the focal area of the magazines. Themes such as 'youth involvement in society', 'livelihoods', 'democracy and accountability' and 'environment' are not as widely discussed – yet. This might be a sign that these topics have not been picked up by the audience yet. They are as mentioned earlier quite recently included in the Femina HIP agenda, and the discourse around these topics is not as elaborated in the Tanzanian context yet. Nevertheless, especially issues concerning livelihood and youths involvement in society are of great importance as well as interest for youth in Tanzania, as shown in recent research (see e.g. Helgesson 2006). But the findings might also point out that HIV/AIDS, sex matters, and questions about healthy lifestyles are the kind of topics that young people in Tanzania have no other forum in which they can discuss them openly. Maybe this is the area where Femina HIP after all fulfils its most important function.

The letters are for the most part advisory and expressing opinions, which implies that the engagement is high. In order to answer research question (2) *What kinds of audience involvement and citizen participation are expressed in the letters?* all the 638 sampled letters were coded for 11 types of "audience involvement and participation". The quantitative analysis shows that audience involvement is strong, especially when it comes to referential reflection, self- and collective efficacy. Critical thinking on the other hand, as well as those indicators of more "citizen participatory" kind of involvement are not as frequently detected. This finding could be related to where Tanzania is at in terms of civil society development and people's (lack of) participation in

(participatory) governance. As briefly discussed in the introduction, the development of a Tanzanian civil society has taken place within a very restrictive environment, coloured by a long history of one-party tradition, which culture has cast its shadows over the public sphere until today (see e.g. Corrigan 2006). But, when digging deeper into the letters in the qualitative analysis it becomes evident that, however few they might be, those letter writers that do fall within the categories of citizen participation in the public sphere do so with strong and engaged voices. They often refer to how they are committed to engage their peers, class mates, students, club friends or the community in general in these issues that they feel urgently need to be discussed. These are important seeds of participation in the expanding civil society.

There is not only a lack of critical thinking but also a lack of criticism towards the Femina HIP products. Only very few of the writers express complaints about the magazines, whereas quite many are praising Femina HIP (even so when their main reason for writing may be another). This can, as has been pointed out in section 5, be related to the scarcity of this kind of products on the still emerging Tanzanian media market. When delivered to secondary schools or youth centres around the country *Fema* or *Si Mchezol* serve as extraordinary “modern” and up-to-date products both in terms of quality and content, as compared to the ordinary school books or media material the youth have access to. Furthermore, the lack of critical voice again says something about Tanzanians relation to the public sphere, as a result of the above-mentioned history of strict political culture. A political culture that also has cast its shadows over the media market, where free, open and critical media is still rather undeveloped (see e.g. Kilimwiko 2002; Hydén et.al 2002; Ekström 2008). Participatory media is not very widespread, and especially not in the rural areas. But as other recent studies have shown, and as this analysis shows, things are changing and the large amount of voices that wish to be heard are, as we mentioned before, important seeds of democratic voice and participation.

Research question (3) reads: *What does the analysis of the letters say about Femina HIP’s ability to meet their overall development objectives?* Many of the voices of the young Tanzanian people quoted in the qualitative section of this analysis state that they do “enjoy their right to access information & services and are empowered to make positive informed choices around sexuality and lead healthy lifestyles in order to reduce the negative impact of HIV/AIDS.” Many of the letters further show that the readers of *FEMA* and *Si Mchezol* are inspired to take social action, individual as well as collective. Some letters are from writers interested in starting a FEMA club and other are written by a whole group, which in turn also shows signs that “[c]ommunities exercise their right to express themselves, participate in public debate & engage in civil society”. Although this would probably become even clearer if the club letters were to be included in an analysis as well.

**Femina HIP’s Development objective:**

To build supportive environment where;

- Young people in their communities enjoy their right to access information & services and are empowered to make positive informed choices around sexuality and lead healthy lifestyles in order to reduce the negative impact of HIV/AIDS.
- Communities exercise their right to express themselves, participate in public debate & engage in civil society.

Femina HIP delivers against its development objectives through the following program areas:

**Program Objectives**

1. Media Communication Program: To interactively produce and disseminate long term recurring, as well as one-off media products that create a media platform which uses EE to promote audience voices, life skills, positive role models and entrepreneurship.
2. Community Mobilisation Program: To cultivate community-oriented supportive environments for open talk, critical thinking and social change that will foster healthy lifestyles and positive, responsible attitudes towards sexuality, HIV/AIDS, gender equality and democratic culture
3. Research, Advocacy & External Relations Program: To develop strategies and partnerships that sustains an open public debate and momentum for social change, and to promote a lifestyle brand in support of civil society, the corporate sector and government efforts.

### **b. A particular emphasis on gender**

Women have turned out to be less visible in this study, both in terms of that they tend to write fewer letters, and in terms of that they much more seldom send photos with their letters. The number of letters from males reflects the societal trend for greater male involvement. One could argue that it may pose a challenge to Femina HIP's distribution systems (i.e. do they need to specifically target women?). Or it may not imply higher male readership but rather that males have greater agency / wherewithal to send a letter. The latter is most probably the case, and it correlates well to the "traditional" gender roles that still to a large extent prevail in the Tanzanian society, where girls and women for instance do not have the same access to public spaces as do men (see e.g. Ntukula & Liljeström 2004; Rwebangira & Liljeström eds. 1998; Tumbo-Masabo & Liljeström eds.1994). But it is an alarming result, in particular when seen in relation to the trend of the HIV pandemic, where young women are the most vulnerable group in contemporary Tanzania (THIS 2008). And it is perhaps a rather surprising result in a country where the women's movement at least has grown quite strong among educated women (Mbilinyi et.al 2003; Chachage & Mbilinyi 2003).

At the same time, it is of importance to note what has been shown in both the quantitative and qualitative analysis that more women than men show signs of audience involvement. However, they mainly tend to do so in those kind of more emotional and psychologically reflective forms of involvement, such as 'referential reflection' and 'affective parasocial interaction'. When it comes to the more public sphere oriented forms of involvement /participation, such as 'interpersonal communication', 'social connectedness' and 'participation in the public sphere' the male writers (however marginally) are dominating. So, the "traditionally" gendered binary order still remains: female equals private and emotional issues, male equals public and intellectual issues.

### **c. Communicating for social change**

The overarching purpose of this study was to contribute to the assessment of Femina HIP's role in contributing to social change among Tanzanian youth. Once again it is important to underline that the pure existence of, let alone ever-increasing number of letter-writers that wish to make their voice heard is a promising sign. Femina HIP are contributing to that social change is taking place, in a country where the central topics on Femina HIP's agenda have been (and still are) surrounded by a culture of silence (see e.g. Ntukula & Liljeström eds. 2004). That not only youth themselves, but also teachers are writing to describe how they are using the Femina HIP products in their teaching job is promising, as we can see again in the following quote:

*I am a teacher at Maranje primary school and a good reader of Femina since I was in secondary school. The magazines have helped me to change a lot and very time I read them I get stronger. They also help me to prepare my lectures by using some of the things written in the magazine such as lifeskills and counselling. (302)*

This writer like many others in this study show signs of strong commitment to Femina HIP and its educational themes, and they show strong signs of wishing to spread the words in the society – a wish to contribute to social change! This quote, like many other examples in the qualitative analysis, shows that one letter often shows sign of a multitude of involvement and participation

indicators. Audience involvement over time is however consistent with the trends in the total number of letters received over time. An interesting question is why we are not seeing more fluctuation in terms of particular types of involvement over the years. Maybe, the answer to this question is of the same kind as the answer to the question of topics discussed. The answer might be that it still is in relation to the more psychological forms of audience involvement – leading more to individual behavioural change – that Femina HIP plays its biggest part in the Tanzanian society. But, when digging deeper into the voices expressed in the letters in the qualitative analysis, we have already seen many clear signs of strong eagerness to participate in the public sphere, willingness to contribute to, and belief in collective social change. Probably the figures would look much different if the letters from the Fema clubs were also included in the analysis. We suggest that this could be a possible next step for the further analysis of the audience correspondence to Femina HIP. The club letters could possibly speak even louder to the issue of social mobilisation and emerging civil society, and thus the indicators of citizen participation would show to be stronger. Another possible next step could be to analyze how the discourse around certain Femina HIP relevant topics (such as HIV/AIDS and/or sex and sexuality) have changed throughout the years – through a thorough critical discourse analysis of both letters and Femina HIP content.

One of this study's important contributions – in addition to assessing Femina HIP's activities as it is shown in its ability to spur audience engagement, and to analyze that audience involvement and participation in depth – has been to develop further the so-far utilized methodology and methods for analyzing audience involvement. It has aimed at contributing to a methodological shift that correlates to the theoretical move from BCC to CFSC within research and within the Femina HIP organization itself, and it has done so by combining indicators of audience involvement and participation that capture both processes of individual reflection and interpersonal dialogue, as well as processes contributing to societal change. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods for analysis, this study has managed to get under the surface of the figures and numbers of the otherwise most commonly used quantitative analysis. This study is through its extensive quoting of the words of letter writers' to Femina HIP giving voice to the growing group of young Tanzanians that are truly engaged in some of Tanzania's most severe development challenges. A group of young people that express eagerness to speak out about the challenges in the public sphere. A group of young people that express interest and willingness to contribute to social change.

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**ANNEX 1:**

**QUESTIONS ON AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT WITHIN QUANTITATIVE CODE SHEET**

<b>IV. KIND OF AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT</b>		
31.	Does the letter writer relate the content / theme of the HIP products to her/his own life? (Referential reflection)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
32.	Does the letter writer critically reflect over the content / theme of the HIP products? For instance by suggesting changes, new topics or different perspectives? (Critical thinking)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
33.	Does the letter writer show signs of identifying with characters / editorial team / the Femina HIP brands? (Affective parasocial interaction)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
34.	Does the letter writer seem <u>to believe in</u> her/his own capability to control her/his own life? (Self-efficacy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
35.	Does the letter writer seem <u>to believe in</u> the community's capability to control or change their reality? (Collective efficacy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
36.	Does the letter writer indicate that she/he talks about the topic / theme / problems / Femina HIP product(s) with friends / community members? (Interpersonal communication / community dialogue)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
37.	Does the letter writer indicate that she/he is taking some kind of action, alone or with others, (apart from writing the letter) because of the topics / themes / Femina HIP products? (Individual and/or collective action)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - individual <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - collective
38.	Does the letter writer indicate that the Femina HIP product has prompted him/her to show leadership / take on a leadership role? (Leadership)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
39.	Does the letter writer indicate that the Femina HIP product has actually led to new connections being formed within his/her community / prompted collaboration or networking? (social connectedness)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
40.	Does the letter writer indicate that the Femina HIP product has prompted him/her/them to communicate with / integrate marginalized or vulnerable groups in his/her community? (social cohesion)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
41.	Does the letter writer express a wish to use the Femina HIP product(s) as a platform to interact with others outside her/his own immediate community? (participation in public sphere)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## ANNEX 2

### **GUIDELINES FOR ANALYSIS OF AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT (Q31-42)**

*The following guidelines were given to all members of the coding team and discussed at the briefing meeting.*

#### **Q 31 REFERENTIAL REFLECTIONS**

Referential reflection is the degree to which an audience individual relates the media product and its content to their own life, personal experiences, and problems, by for instance discussing it with others in terms of their own problems.

*Example: Mpendwa mhariri, nashukuru sana kuweza kuelewa kuhusu ukimwi. Hapo mwanzo sikuelewa kama kweli ukimwi unaweza kuepukika lakini kupitia Femina nimeweza kuelewa njia mbalimbali za kuepukana na ukimwi. Nashukuru sana kwani elimu hii niliyoipata itanisaidia sana.  
(From an untitled letter, female writer, 07/12/2005)*

*Example 2: Nashukuru kupata nafasi hii katika jarida maridhawa la si mchezo!. Napenda kuwashirikisha wenzangu machache niliyo nayo. Kwa kusoma jarida hili nimejifunza mambo mengi sana tena limenipa faida kwa namna moja au nyingine.*

#### **Q32 CRITICAL THINKING**

Critical reflection is the degree to which an audience individual distances her-/himself from the product, and respond to it by for instance reconstructing its content, and suggesting changes in it.

*Example 1: Ushauri wetu kwenu ni kuongeza mabalozi wengi huhusani katika mashule ambako watu wengi wapo. Kama mtafaulu kuwa na wawakilishi wengi ambao ni wanafuni itakuwa rahisi watu kupata ujumbe kwani wanafunzi wanatoka sehemu mbalimbali hivyo watawaelimisha ndugu zao pindi waendapo likizo.  
(From an e-mail from a male teacher, 20/04/2007)*

#### **Q33 AFFECTIVE PARASOCIAL INTERACTION**

Affective parasocial interaction is the degree to which an audience member gets personally involved with, forms a relationship with / or identifies with the media product, brands and the persons involved in it (for example, a place or community or in our case, an editor).

*Example 1: Dear Aunt Grace, How are you doing??? I hope life is treating u okay. Am physically okay but mentally not so sure because studies are damn hard. Thank you for the letter and for the kindness you have showed towards me & us, Aunt Grace. [...] Aunt I know that you won't let our fantasies fade away and that you will help us so much. Pass ma greetings to Aunt Lydia. WE LOVE U FEMINA MAGAZINE!!! (From a letter from a (group of) female writer, 25/10/2005)*

*Example 2: whatz up fema. Masela wa SONGEA BOYS, tunaifagi sana kwa jinsi mnavyo tufumbua vijana kwa ushauri na mambo mengi ya husuyo UKIMWI NA AFYA YA UZAZI. Tunawapa BIG UP NYINGI NI SISI STEV MSHUZA, INNOCENT CHRIS, ZEROY, HAFIDHI MBAWALA, SIMSOKWE, HENRY ALL FRM 6PCB WE SEND OUR WISHES TCHAO! (E-mail from a (group of) male writer, 13/06/2007)*

#### **Q34 SELF EFFICACY**

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in her/his own capabilities to exercise control over events that affect her/his life. (e.g. to change his/her circumstances, to devise effective strategies and to execute them successfully, and to withstand forcible opposition and discouraging setbacks).

*Example 1: So long as I am one of the students, I'm playing a great role in my society on providing education about HIV/AIDS. (From a letter titled "Let us change", male writer 28/02/2007)*

*Example 2: ...kwa kweli Femina inanivutia na inanipa msukumo wa kuelimisha vijana wenzangu na kuwapa hamasa ya kujikinga na maambukizi dhidi ya ugionjwa wa ukimwi ambao wengi wao waamezama kwenye dimbwi la ulevi na anasa za kila aina ambako huko ndiko kwenye asilimia kubwa ya chanzo cha ongezeko la ugonjwa huu wa ukimwi...( From an untitled letter, male writer,28/08/2006)*

*Example 3:...abstinence is quite possible; in fact I'm not missing anything by having refrained from sex. I still have friends both girls and boys with whom I exchange views, still our relationship remain cemented...may I suggest that "sex can wait,so our lives should come first" should be our motto in this war. (from a letter "abstinence", a male writer, with no specific date)*

### **Q 35 COLLECTIVE EFFICACY**

Collective efficacy is people's beliefs in their **joint** capabilities to capabilities to exercise control over events that affect her/his life. (e.g. to forge divergent self-interests into a shared agenda, to enlist supporters and resources for collective action, to devise effective strategies and to execute them successfully, and to withstand forcible opposition and discouraging setbacks).

*Example 1: Dear brothers and sisters, let's help each other in educating ourselves about different STD's disease, by forming discussion groups and so on (Congratulations to all who have formed discussion groups). In discussion groups we can have dramas, songs, poetry and so on, all in all to educate the young people (our fellows). As yourself as a young people, have you ever discussed anything with your fellow about your life as young? I think you got the answer on your own. (From a letter titled "Attention please", male writer 10/01/2007)*

*Example 2: Its high time now for every one among we youth/students to change his/her mind and join together to fight against this disease (AIDS). Its not matter of only institutions which fight against AIDS but we should give full cooperation. Europeans say "There is nothing impossible under the sun." even I believe that we can cooperate and fight against AIDS and we shall reach to the plan if all of us will reinstate his or her own behaviour. (From a letter titled "Concerning: Reinstate of our behaviours", male writer 26/06/2007)*

### **Q36 INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION / COMMUNITY DIALOGUE**

Spurring of interpersonal communication is when the media product seems to inspire audience members to start discussions about the media products and their educational themes among their peers and in their communities.

*Example 1: One day I was going home from school with my friend. Suddenly we saw a beautiful girl passing in front of us. Then my friend told me that: "You that girl is very girl is very beautiful, I'm in love with her, I want to enjoy her." I told him "You just wait." "Why should I wait?" he asked. I told him: "First you don't love her, but you want to have sex with her. Did you have any back information about her?" He said: "No, but she is so beautiful." I told him: "You are playing with fire. Better wait in this world, than early to the next. Did you think she is attractive only to you?? How many eyes have been attracted by her?? Oh! My friend!! Sex is a wonderful servant but a terrible master." (From a letter titled "The sex hang up", male writer 10/01/2007)*

### **Q37 INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ACTION**

Individual and collective action is when the letter writer him/herself or in a group, is spurred to action by the Femina HIP material. The type of action can vary from having a discussion to hosting

an event, but it generally means they have made efforts to rearrange their everyday schedules to make time for this activity.

*Example 1: Thank you for the letter and for the kindness you have showed towards me & us. Aunt Grace we are already in a group of more than five; They are: Me, Lena, Queen, Mary, Ivane; Reinfrida, Linda and Vicky. These people are from form I-III. We are interested in two activities is Acting and Dancing. We have really thought about it and Yes! Yes! We wanna do this. It was my dream since I was young to become an actress and a dancer and if possible a singer. I know I can dance because it has been 8 years now that I have been performing in different areas. And I believe through this magazine our fantasies may become reality. (From letter from a (group of) female writer, 25/10/2005)*

*Example 2: Mimi ni mama wa familia, lakini jarida lenu la Femina (Fema) linasomwa na watu wengi sana nikiwemo mimi. Mimi ni mpenzi sana wa jarida hili tangu mwaka 1999 nikiwa nafanya kazi la ACORD Biharamulo, tulijiunga nanyi kupitia makao makuu ya ACORD Mwanza, niliweza kuunda Club 3 ktk shule za msingi, natukawa tunapata copy toka kwenu. Lakini kabla hazijakomaa nakuelewa nini cha kufanya mktaba wangu ukaisha na shirika hilo. (From an e-mail from a female writer, 01/03/2007)*

### **Q38 LEADERSHIP**

Leadership is where the letter writer indicates that s/he has taken **concrete action** to lead, inspire, and motivate others. It may involve playing a key role in a new initiative. It usually involves taking charge and responsibility and setting direction. (N.B. Simply advising others in the letter / proclaiming oneself a role model is not sufficient in this case)

*Example: Kwa Femina Hip, Nafurahi kwa kupokea majibu ya barua yangu ya tarehe 24 June 2007... kuhusu kufungua klabu ya fema ,nimeongea na uongozi wa shule hivyo natumaini hivi karibuni tutakuwa na klabu ya Fema. Nafurahi kuwa wanafunzi wangu wataelimika kupitia kwenu...(from an untitled letter, male teacher, 05/07/2007)*

### **Q39 SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS**

Social connectedness is when the letter indicates that they have been helped or inspired by Femina HIP (or the products) to form new networks or connections within the community such as clubs, committees, networks and so on.

*Example: Mpendwa mhariri, Pole sana na kazi nzito unayoifanya na timu nzima ya FEMINA ya kuilimisha jamiihasa sisis wanafunzi. Nimepata msukumo waq kuandika barua hii baada ya kusoma majarida mengi ya Femina na kuweza kunibadilisha kitabia mimi na rafiki yangu mmoja, hivyo uongozi wetu wa shule umetuhimiza kuunda club kupitia kwa mwalimu wetu mpendwa Noela Mushi na hivi sasa iko tayari hivyo tunaomba mtutembelee siku moja. (from letter by male writer, 08/08/06)*

### **Q40 SOCIAL COHESION**

Social cohesion is when the letter writer indicates that Femina HIP has prompted the coming-together or new connections between usually separate groups within society / within the community. EG PLHAs being included, clubs visiting poor and elderly etc.

*Example: Mpendwa mhariri, inawapongeza kwa kazi yenu ngumu na nzuri ambayo mnaifanya. Ni kweli kabisa kazi mnayoifanya ni nzuri sana. Jamii kwa ujumla inaelimika kupitia kazi yenu hasa katika majarid ya Femina. Ninachowaomba ni kwamba mzidi kutoa elimu nzuri kaika jamii nzima iweze kuwalea na kuwatunza waathirika wa ukimwi pamoja na mayatima ili waweze kufurahi pamoja na jamii nzima. ahsanteni sana. (from a letter titled "Maoni", male writer, 27/02/2007)*

#### **Q41            PARTICIPATION IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE**

When a letter writer uses Femina HIP as a way of speaking or communicating with a broader group, such as youth or society, this indicates that s/he wants to use the medium as a way of participating in the public sphere.

*Example 1: Dear editor, Thank you very much for giving me a chance in your magazine to express my opinions to advice the youth, especially students.*

*(From a letter titled “Concerning: Reinstate of our behaviours”, male writer 26/06/2007)*

*Example 2: Lastly, I advice all people especially students taking much care with this situation because it jeopardizes their life. If possible try for your level best to abstain sex until a proper time and get married as this will eradicate problems of abortion and even diseases like HIV/AIDS, never be cheated by any one just study all the rest will come by themselves and remember that Abortion is out of God’s will. MESSAGE: WATCHOUT! BEFORE YOU ARE JUDGED FOR MURDERING AN INNOCENT SOUL. This message goes to all students. (From a letter titled “Problems of abortion and how the people neglect it”, male writer, 18/06/2007)*

*Example 3: Kwa ujumla, mimi napenda kuwaonya na kuwashauri wale wanaofanya na wanaotarajia kufanya hivyo mweze kusitisha kabisa wazo hilo. Ukitaka kufanya jambo, fikiri kwanza kuhusu faida na hasara zako na hata kuomba ushauri kutoka kwa wenye busara.*

*(From a letter titled “Usipende kuonjaonja”, male writer 02/06/2006)*