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Lauren Kogen
University of Pennsylvania

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Abstract

For the past decade, Radio La Benevolencija (RLB) has worked in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC to provide citizens with tools for recognizing and resisting manipulation to violence and healing trauma. Until now, however, its numerous programs, projects, and contributions had not been synthesized, and its findings had not been evaluated as whole.

The Center for Global Communication Studies at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania conducted an evaluation of RLB's past ten years of work in the Great Lakes Region. In addition to understanding the aggregate impact of RLB's programs, this meta-evaluation seeks to investigate what RLB's work offers to others engaged in this field. We therefore seek to understand the adaptability of RLB's methodology to other countries and contexts and how the RLB model might be used a prototype for future interventions.

Disciplines

Communication | International and Area Studies

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Assessing Impact, Evaluating Adaptability:

A Decade of Radio La Benevolencija in Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC

Lauren Kogen, Center for Global Communication Studies, May 5, 2014



Assessing Impact, Evaluating Adaptability: A Decade of Radio La Benevolencija in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC

A report to Radio La Benevolencija

May 2014

Lauren Kogen, Author

Lauren Kogen received her doctoral degree from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania in 2012, and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Media Studies and Production at Temple University. Dr. Kogen's research focuses on U.S. news media coverage of foreign crises, the role of foreign aid and charitable donations in development, and the use of media to promote peacebuilding and governance in conflict-affected areas. She has published numerous articles on these topics, in journals including *Media, Culture & Society*, *Media, War & Conflict*, *Political Behavior*, and *Mass Communication and Society*.

Monroe Price, Advisor

Monroe Price serves as Director of CGCS and Director of the Stanhope Centre for Communications Policy Research in London. Professor Price is the Joseph and Sadie Danciger Professor of Law and Director of the Howard M. Squadron Program in Law, Media and Society at the Cardozo School of Law, where he served as Dean from 1982 to 1991. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Yale, where he was executive editor of the *Yale Law Journal*. He clerked for Associate Justice Potter Stewart of the U.S. Supreme Court and was an assistant to Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz.

Professor Price was founding director of the Program in Comparative Media Law and Policy at Wolfson College, Oxford, and a Member of the School of Social Sciences at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. He was deputy director of California Indian Legal Services, one of the founders of the Native American Rights Fund, and author of *Law and the American Indian*. Among his many books are *Media and Sovereignty*; *Television, The Public Sphere and National Identity*; and a treatise on cable television.

Altai Consulting

Altai Consulting has developed innovative tools to design strategies and to measure the impact of development activities in the fields of media, elections, civil society and local governance that support the democracy & governance pillar in fragile states. Altai Consulting provides research services, and currently operates in more than 20 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia.

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Executive Summary¹

For the past decade, Radio La Benevolencija (RLB) has worked in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC to provide citizens with tools for recognizing and resisting manipulation to violence and healing trauma. Until now, however, its numerous programs, projects, and contributions had not been synthesized, and its findings had not been evaluated as whole.

The Center for Global Communication Studies at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania conducted an evaluation of RLB's past ten years of work in the Great Lakes Region. In addition to understanding the aggregate impact of RLB's programs, this meta-evaluation seeks to investigate what RLB's work offers to others engaged in this field. We therefore seek to understand the *adaptability* of RLB's methodology to other countries and contexts and how the RLB model might be used a prototype for future interventions.

Overall Findings

- RLB's interventions in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC have achieved significant knowledge, attitude, and behavior changes. Among the most notable of these:
 - With respect to gains in *knowledge*, members of RLB's audience have gained better understandings of the cycle of violence and methods used by politicians to manipulate audiences.
 - With respect to *attitudes*, members of RLB's audience have experienced positive attitude changes regarding trust in communities, the importance of dealing with trauma, the dangers of scapegoating, the importance of active bystandership, acceptance of marriage outside one's own ethnic group, and the importance of understanding complex truths about the past, developing a shared history, and seeking justice.
 - With respect to *behaviors*, members of RLB's audience became more willing to hear an opposing group's side of the story, became less willing to automatically cede to authority, become more willing to attend reconciliation activities, and increased discussion of topics presented in RLB programming with friends and family.
- Given the challenges of conceptualizing and implementing peacebuilding activities in conflict-affected areas, the amount of research, evaluation, and adaptation that has gone into RLB's work is noteworthy and unique.
- RLB's "prototype" for implementation was composed of carefully considered building blocks, rendering its method adaptable in different contexts.
- RLB's radio drama Entertainment-Education efforts (implementation of story development and incorporation of audience feedback) have been especially effective, in particular in Burundi and Rwanda, reaching approximately 70 to 90% of their target audiences, respectively.
- The programs' effects are amplified over time.

¹ This report is an abridged version of a longer internal evaluation report produced by the Center for Global Communication Studies for Radio La Benevolencija. This report seeks to take the findings useful for adding to the knowledge base on the role of media in peacebuilding, so that scholars, practitioners, and funders can learn from RLB's work and use their experience to inform future projects.

*Findings & Recommendations Regarding Adaptability:***Finding**

RLB has successfully devoted time and research to adapting the original Rwanda program to Burundi and the DRC. Its experiences offer insight into how the model might be adapted elsewhere, but RLB would benefit from simplifying the prototype to maximize adaptability to other organizations and other contexts.

Recommendation: The RLB model should be reframed to emphasize transferability and adaptability. We propose a prototype that captures the *theory* behind the activities, with RLB's activities serving as guideposts – ideas for interventions that epitomize the operationalization of the theory, but that should be adapted based on local needs.

Finding

The Burundi and DRC projects expanded the RLB methodology from one concentrated on psychology – the role of individual psychological factors in the continuum of violence – to one that also encompasses activities designed to promote strengthening of the media sector. Several of RLB's evaluations emphasize journalism strengthening, reducing, somewhat, the centrality of the psychological factors.

Recommendation: The psychological aspects of RLB's interventions are an important contribution to the field of peacebuilding, and an innovative and much needed piece of the media and peacebuilding terrain that complements the many media strengthening activities (e.g., media infrastructure development, journalist trainings, ethics standards trainings) that already exist. Therefore, RLB should maintain the Staub continuum as the backbone of the program, even as other elements are added, and be sure that elements of the continuum are embedded in the media strengthening program design, outcome goals, and M&E efforts.

1. Introduction

Scholars and practitioners frequently lament the difficulty of understanding the impact of media interventions on peacebuilding. It is difficult to isolate the effects of media when on-the-ground realities are complex, and media are part of a host of factors influencing attitudes and behaviors. Radio La Benevolencija (RLB), which has been working in this field for nearly a decade, offers what is perhaps the longest continuously monitored intervention of this type. The wealth of data available from the organization's evaluations and reports offers a rare opportunity to assess how media interventions in conflict-affected areas function over time.

RLB has conscientiously and persistently monitored and evaluated a variety of its programs over the years. But it has not evaluated its programs as a whole. RLB and its donors have sought a systematic assessment of 1) RLB's impact on peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region, and 2) what its activities, taken together, can teach us about best practices in peacebuilding media interventions. This report addresses these missing pieces.

In the course of this document, we discuss RLB's impact on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors relating to the continuum of violence, trauma healing, and reconciliation. We do so, however, through a particular prism: This meta-evaluation seeks to understand the *adaptability* of RLB's methodology. How can RLB use the information gathered not only to improve RLB's own work, but also to give guidance to others working in this field?

Our approach to this evaluation looks at RLB's methodologies and implementations as a 'prototype.' In other words, we seek to examine how RLB's approach to peacebuilding can be understood as a model for other contexts and other organizations engaged in peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected regions. This means we will not only compare the impact of the project in the three countries, but will also interrogate whether the model is adaptable and suitable as part of a 'toolkit' others can employ in their own media projects.

RLB's projects in the Great Lakes Region grew from the organization's formative years working in Rwanda, where the methodology was initially developed. After reviewing RLB's reports and evaluations from this period, and interrogating the theories utilized and how they were implemented, it is evident that the organization has had a significant positive effect in Rwanda. But is this method scalable and adaptable? Interrogating the suitability and efficacy of the experience as a prototype means evaluating the DRC and Burundi projects *as extensions and adaptations* of the Rwanda project. Together, this provides information about the feasibility of using the RLB model as a prototype and best practices for applying the prototype elsewhere.

2. Goals of Evaluation

Our evaluation sought to realize four goals:

- 1) *Assessing the extent of impact of RLB based on previous documentation.* Here we examine what can be said about cumulative changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of audiences in line with RLB's goals regarding the continuum of violence in the three countries. This includes a comparative analysis of the countries.
- 2) *Assessing the extent of impact of RLB based on in-depth interviews with key informants and the general public.*
- 3) *Examining the suitability of the methodology and implementation design to the goals of the program.* Here we ask whether RLB's methodology and implementation plans were grounded in existing research

and theory, and whether M&E was implemented in a way that would allow RLB to appropriately assess outcomes and impact.

- 4) *Determining adaptability of the RLB prototype.* Here we examine first how the Rwanda model was translated to the Burundi and DRC contexts. Second, we look at whether the model is adaptable and suitable as part of a ‘toolkit’ others can employ to use media for peacebuilding.

The next sections of this report include:

- The methodology of our evaluation design
- Background to the project
- A comparative analysis of the overall impact of the three programs
- An analysis of the in-depth interviews
- An analysis of the Rwanda model as a ‘prototype’ and its potential for adaptation
- An analysis of the theories embedded in RLB’s work and how those theories were embedded into program design and M&E plans
- A discussion of the findings

3. Methodology

3.1 Literature Review on Peacebuilding and the Media in the Great Lakes Region

This review included an overview of media theory relevant to RLB’s programs and a review of the work being conducted by other NGOs and civil society groups in the field of peacebuilding in Africa. This section provides a backdrop for our analysis of RLB’s theories of change and how certain aspects of its programs might be adapted to better align with current media theory and practice, as well as add to the knowledge base in the field of media and peacebuilding.

3.2 Review of the Existing Evaluations

The second stage of the evaluation involved a qualitative assessment of the three country projects based on a critical evaluation of all of the evaluations already conducted, RLB’s proposals and reports to funders, as well as other items published out of RLB’s work (e.g., journal articles, conference reports, storyline summaries, guidelines, etc.). This thorough review 1) places the three projects in context; 2) examines the theories of change that RLB used explicitly (meaning the theory was clearly articulated) or implicitly (meaning the design and explanation of the project implied a certain understanding of how change occurs); 3) integrates the qualitative and quantitative evaluations that have already been conducted to assess the aggregate impact of RLB activities in each of the three countries; and 4) compares the outcomes in Rwanda, the DRC, and Burundi to assess the complementarity of the three country programs – complementarity defined here as the relationship between the three programs within the overall methodology of the RLB framework and its three main axes (radio dramas, factual programming, and grassroots groups) while recognizing that these programs take different shapes in the three very different country contexts – and their potential for replication (or not).

This review included an analysis of more than 80 reports, proposals, evaluations, and other publications arising from RLB’s work, spanning eleven years (2003-2013), and making up over 2,500 pages of documentation.

In assessing RLB’s previous evaluations, several strategies were implemented to make the most of findings. The changing nature of RLB’s programs, in particular its grassroots and factual programs, due to factors such as changing contexts, strategic changes in programming, funding gaps, and donor requirements, posed a challenge

for trying to understand the inter-relationship between evaluations and between programs. We addressed this through the following mechanisms:

- 1) As many of RLB's interventions have changed quite a bit over the past ten years, and several programs have only recently begun, we focused on the project components and theories that have endured over time: the radio dramas, the radio and television factual programs, and the grassroots groups.
- 2) Our analysis emphasizes the project components and theories that stem from a psychological understanding of the evolution of violence and of healing. These psychological interventions form the cornerstone of RLB's work, and represent, in our opinion, a significant contribution to the field. We therefore devote less of the analysis to radio production efforts that focus on the production side of media in favor of those that focus on the psychology of the end-user (the listener). While we recognize that RLB's production work is also psychologically oriented – aimed at media producers rather than media consumers – and seeks to increase their understanding behind the psychology of violence as well as their capacity to recognize hate speech and counteract it in media reporting and news production, the different target audience makes the interventions sufficiently distinct to warrant separate analysis. All techniques are discussed, however, throughout the report, insofar as they influence the overall impact of RLB's more psychologically oriented work.
- 3) Our analysis focuses on audience impact, and what project outcomes can tell us about a potential 'prototype' model, rather than on output measurements over time (e.g., questioning whether RLB broadcast as many episodes of the radio drama as it planned).

3.3 Field Work: In-Depth Interviews with RLB Staff, Community Leaders, Political Elites, and the General Public

After the initial documentation review, this information was then supplemented by in-depth interviews with key informants and the general public. We interviewed program and project staff who could add insight regarding how activities were implemented on the ground, how evaluation findings influenced decision-making within the project, and whether project staff were able to adapt / improve the programs based on evaluations. We also interviewed target audience members and in-country elites who could speak to overall impact of the programs and whether the vehicle or medium for the interventions (radio news programs, grassroots debates, etc.) was appropriate given the project's goals.²

Key informant interviews are designed to provide detailed feedback on the subject of inquiry. They are far lengthier than the kinds of questionnaires and surveys implemented more frequently in quantitative research, but offer a more nuanced picture. They also differ from traditional surveys in that they seek a much smaller, but more potent, set of respondents. While surveys aim for a representative sample of respondents – in other words, a sample that can stand in for a larger population, such as a national population – key informant interviews take as their sample a limited set of individuals who can offer a particular kind of insight on the subject matter. In this case, part of this sample aimed to include those who could offer a broader insight on project impact. While members of the general public can offer insight into their own particular experience of an intervention, community leaders and other kinds of elites can offer a broader view, offering insight into the wider impact of an intervention on a community, or even on a region or country, over the long term. Given these priorities we chose to focus on in-depth interviews with 1) staff who could explain the project, logic behind strategic decisions, and gaps in documentation; and 2) local leaders and political elites who could give us a unique

² Interviews on the ground were documented through field notes, and were not recorded. They were also conducted in various languages. Therefore the quotes from the interviews presented in this report are not verbatim.

perspective on the overall, long-term impact of RLB programs. We also conducted interviews with the general public to round out findings and gain additional perspectives on some of the issues we were analyzing, although these only give a limited, often anecdotal, view of impact, on an individual or their close network.

An external organization, Altai Consulting, was brought on to conduct on-the-ground fieldwork in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC. Additional interviews were conducted by lead researcher Lauren Kogen over the phone. In total, we conducted interviews with 25 RLB staff, 5 external evaluators, 21 elites / leaders in the three countries, and 21 members of the public who have been engaged in RLB's work.

4. Background to the Project

4.1 *Radio La Benevolencija and its Methodology*

4.1.1 Overview of research and theory used in RLB methodology

RLB media and grassroots campaigns employ an Entertainment-Education (edutainment) strategy based on general learning theory. While RLB has conducted a variety of programs in the Great Lakes region, the project's core activities are divided along three main axes that are designed to be mutually reinforcing and complementary:

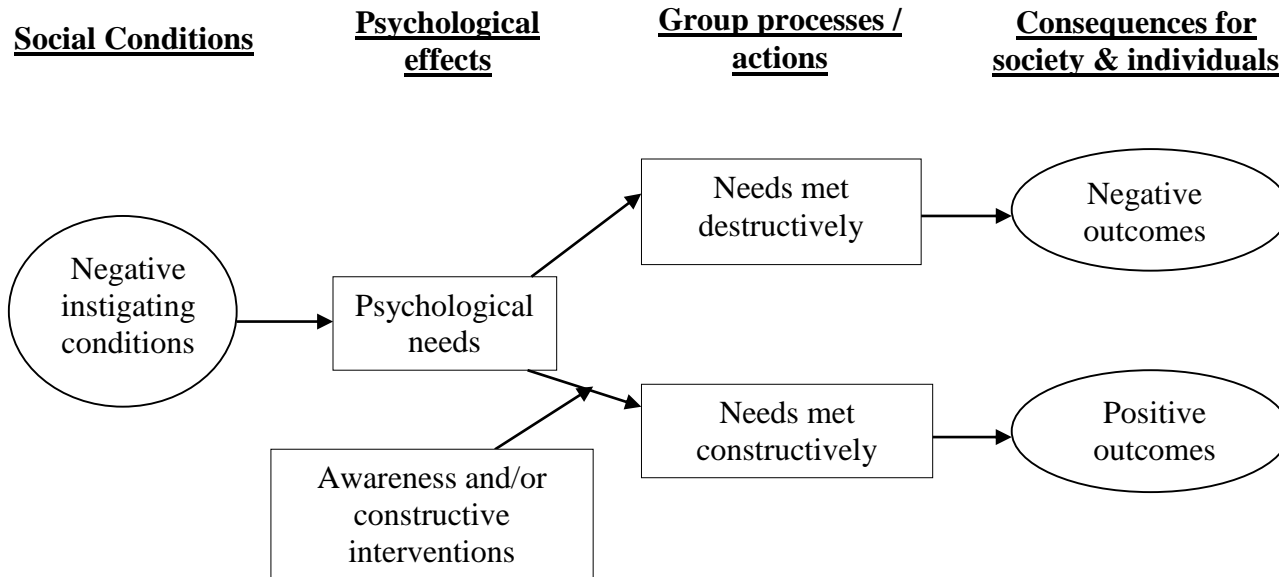
1. Targeting the general population with edutainment radio dramas
2. Targeting a leadership audience with weekly factual/journalistic radio and television programs
3. Creating practical experiences for the audience by implementing grassroots activities.

Using a combination of edutainment methodologies and comparative psychological research, RLB's media interventions in Rwanda, the DRC, and Burundi seek to embed, in national audiences, knowledge of how to resist the psychological pressures and demagoguery that, according to RLB's research, turn individuals into perpetrators of mass hate. The research and theories used as the backbone of the RLB methodology can be divided into four broad categories, as defined by RLB documentation and staff: 1) those dealing with human psychology and the psychology of mass violence; 2) those on how media interventions can influence the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of audiences; 3) the idea that media can help in developing a shared history; and 4) the idea that "virtual" discussion facilitates healing and reconciliation.

Other theories that feature in RLB's programming, but in less explicit ways, are covered in section 5.4.

4.1.1.1 Psychology of mass violence: RLB's theories regarding the psychology of mass violence can be summarized through its own model used in its training manual:

Figure 1. The relation among social conditions, psychological responses, actions and consequences (Staub et al., 2007, p. 28)



Ervin Staub’s “basic needs theory” (1989) posits that those living under difficult life conditions often find their basic psychological needs unmet (security, feeling of control, positive identity, etc.). Under such conditions, people may attempt to meet their own psychological needs in ways that are destructive: that is, their efforts to fulfill their own needs interfere with the psychological state and needs of others. This destructive behavior begins with the formation of in-groups, leads to the scapegoating of other groups in order to lay blame for difficult conditions, and culminates in the creation of exclusive ideologies that promise a better future for the in-group at the expense of the out-group.

Staub further argues that mechanisms exist to prevent or end to this cycle. One is to increase socialization between groups (though this is no guarantee of success, given, for example, that some married couples in which one partner was Tutsi and the other Hutu even turned against each other during the genocide in Rwanda). Another strategy is to develop the capacity for a *critical consciousness* within individuals. This concept forms the crux of the RLB methodology. By teaching members of society to understand how destructive needs and actions arise – “especially those that subvert moral thinking, feeling, and action” (Staub, 2012, p. 20) – they are more likely to recognize the truth behind their own behavior before it develops into violence. By “understanding the origins or influences leading to genocide and group violence,” citizens can become self-aware in a way that will ultimately reduce violence (p. 1). Self-reflection is thus promoted through the radio drama, the radio factual programs, and the grassroots groups.

Staub’s theories complement those of Laurie Pearlman, which focus on the healing process. Pearlman’s work looks at the effects of adult trauma, and the benefits of talking about traumatic experiences under safe conditions (see, for example, Staub, Pearlman, Gubin & Hagengimana, 2005). Some of Pearlman’s work, including that in Rwanda, focuses on training others to be empathic listeners, so that these safe conditions can be created.

According to Staub and Pearlman’s research, understanding how violence evolves aids the healing process for perpetrators of violence, who are more able to confront their own actions, but also for victims of violence, who are able to understand, at least to some degree, the actions of their perpetrators, resulting in more positive feelings toward the other group. Staub and Pearlman’s research in Rwanda (e.g., Staub et al., 2005) supports this theory. They found, through a controlled experiment, that training facilitators to lead groups that discussed their traumatic experiences not only reduced trauma but also increased positive feelings toward the perpetrator group. Their research provides solid rationale for trying to bring their work to scale through a media intervention that teaches the cycle of violence and the need for psychological healing and reconciliation.

The *gacaca* courts in Rwanda are a clear example of trying to use these two distinct avenues to promote reconciliation, and much of RLB’s early work revolved around the *gacaca* trials. Staub and Pearlman’s research illustrates the importance of trying to show victims how perpetrators might have come to engage in terrible acts of violence – to help victims understand the continuum of violence. According to the logic of the *gacaca* trials and the work of Staub and Pearlman, helping Rwandans understand that when people are scared and lack security, a sense of belonging, and basic material needs, they can become vulnerable to extremist thinking, may help people forgive.

The work of Staub and Pearlman is incorporated into RLB’s methodology primarily through a list of 35 “messages” related to the continuum of violence and to healing that RLB attempts to incorporate into its programs, and to use as indicators of success.

4.1.1.2 Use of entertainment media to impact knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors: Conceptually, the radio dramas are rooted in edutainment and social cognitive theory – concepts that have been used in the field of communication research since the 1970s or earlier but have developed and matured in the past decade. They focus on three routes to social learning: *efficacy* (the notion that one feels capable of carrying out a particular action, or that carrying out the action will have the desired effect); *modeling* (the notion that we learn our behaviors by watching, and emulating, others); and *parasocial interaction* (the idea that even fictional characters can serve as these models, if we think of them as friends or peers). It is well documented (e.g., Fisher, 2004) that RLB has designed the programs within this theoretical frame.

The model for RLB’s radio dramas is based upon the work of edutainment scholars at Johns Hopkins University, and in particular the work of Esta de Fossard (see de Fossard, 2005), as well as other scholars working in this field (e.g., Singhal et al., 2003). Esta de Fossard also served as an evaluator for RLB in 2008. The programs are based on the principles of presenting information in an entertaining format and providing role models (some moving from positive to negative and others from negative to positive) that can inspire audiences to action. RLB also stresses in its narratives, based on de Fossard’s work, the importance of a “doubter” – a skeptic of the proposed behavior, who represents the doubts and fears of the audience and who “tries to point out every little thing that might go wrong with adopting the new behavior and block its adoption by others” (Fisher, 2004, p. 26, based on de Fossard, 1997).

4.1.1.3 Shared history: The theory that the media can help in developing a shared history, which in turn can contribute to peacebuilding, serves as the logic framework behind a large portion of RLB’s work. Although RLB’s theory of change for the factual programs is not clearly laid out in its reports, we can infer based on reports (and, to a lesser extent, discussion with RLB staff) that the organization’s ideas about these programs reflect the theory, based on Staub’s ‘continuum of violence,’ that developing a shared history of the past, justice mechanisms, and ways to mourn and memorialize past events leads to reconciliation and healing.

By the third phase of GLRM, the Burundi program began to focus on developing a shared history and a truth and reconciliation commission in Burundi, as well as understanding the continuum of violence “during the complicated... implementation of transitional justice...” (GLRM 3 proposal, 2010, p. 39). This focus began with *Mbariza* and *Inyanduruko* (the predecessors to *Akahise*). The importance of this adaptation is explained by RLB as follows:

During the last fifty years, Burundi has never had the opportunity to discuss within a peaceful setting its own past. The existing conflicts occupied people’s preoccupations on a day to day basis and a more distanced reflection, be it at academic level... or at popular level, did not take place. Five full years after the transitional government and ten years after the Arusha agreements, Burundi might be ready to reflect on its past. (GLRM 3 proposal, 2010, p. 36)

And:

The theoretical framework of developing a shared version of history should help to create opportunities for members of war-torn societies to come to terms with the conflict and their role in it and to heal the trauma they sustained... It is vital that a society that has experienced deep trauma and societal dislocation goes through a process for handling grievances, identifying what happened, and holding perpetrators accountable. (GLRM 3 proposal, 2010, p. 38)

Staub’s writing supports the idea that developing a shared history of the past is important for reconciliation and healing. Staub argues (2006) that society needs to understand the perspective of the other side in order for a justice process to begin, and for each side to take responsibility for its actions.

Developing a shared history is a key goal for RLB’s factual programming – in Burundi in particular. RLB’s early factual programs in Burundi sought to grant a public space to the transitional justice process which was not being addressed by the mainstream media. At that time RLB’s goal was to get the transitional justice process on the national agenda. According to RLB staff, now that the process has become part of the mainstream media and civil society discourse, RLB is beginning to create a platform it sees as “parallel to” Burundi’s formal Truth and Reconciliation Commission. RLB’s new project seeks to archive and broadcast Burundians’ stories and memories about the conflict. The aim of the project is to, among other things, “develop a shared concept of victimization, confront the past, build strategies for the future... [and] increase communal understanding of the need for non-politicized memorials and remembrance...” (George Weiss, personal communication).³ Burundi head of mission Deflander explains that “transitional justice will be achieved when people learn about the different versions of what happened” (personal interview, July 2013).

4.1.1.4 “Virtuality” in discussion of violence: RLB believes that one effective way to counteract polarization of its audience is to design “virtual scenarios” in its narrative and factual programming. Rather than discussing actual historical conflict in Rwanda, the radio dramas center around fictitious locations and tribes; the factual programming focuses on events occurring in countries outside of Rwanda. RLB believes that utilizing what it calls “virtuality,” through fictitious or foreign characters and locations, provides a safer space in which to discuss the issues presented and through which audiences can then reflect upon conditions in their own country

³ Beginning in 2014, RLB Burundi will be implementing a new independent media support program that aims to give voice to a wide range of social actors and special interests through the mainstream media as well as supporting the exchange of ideas, experiences and perspectives, resisting incitement to violence and hate speech, promoting understanding, mutual respect and active citizenship and improving social cohesion.

or village. The characters in the radio drama are never identifiable as belonging to one group or location in the country of broadcast, and both perpetrators and survivors of violence switch roles occasionally (i.e., demonstrating that everyone has the potential to become a perpetrator). Similarly, RLB's factual programs engage audience members by asking their opinions on events occurring outside their country that bear similarity to their own history.

Through this process RLB seeks to 1) find ways to safely engage with those audiences it believes are particularly resistant to discussing the conflict or reconciling with members of conflicting groups, thus avoiding "preaching to the converted"; and 2) offer scenarios that will allow conflicting groups to engage in discussions and debates about individuals or broader solutions without the discussion hitting too close to home, thus avoiding defensive audience reactions that may cause guilty parties in the audience to not take the content seriously or avoid it altogether. The process is meant to induce self-reflection in audience members.

5. Analysis & Findings

This section assesses the design and impacts of the activities analyzed (the three radio dramas, the radio news programs, the grassroots groups, and the documentary *Rwagasore* in Burundi). This is followed by an analysis of the adaptability of the prototype, and finally by an analysis of the theories of change behind the interventions.

5.1 Analysis of Impacts

5.1.1 The Radio Dramas: *Musekweya* (Rwanda), *Murikira Ukuri* (Burundi), and *Kumbuka Kesho* (DRC)

5.1.1.1 Comparative Assessment of Radio Dramas in the Three Countries:

Musekweya, the Rwandan radio drama series, is the longest running of the three, and the most popular. *Murikira Ukuri*, the Burundian radio drama series, was designed to address the continuum of violence, trauma healing, and in particular the development of a transitional justice mechanism (according to the Great Lakes Reconciliation Media (GLRM) 1, 2, and 3 proposals) and the development of a shared history (according to the GLRM 2 and 3 proposals). *Kumbuka Kesho*, the DRC radio drama series that started airing in 2006, is meant to emphasize all the RLB messages, but with a particular emphasis on the continuum of violence, trauma healing, and scapegoating (see GLRM 2 and 3 proposals).

Evaluations of *Musekweya*, and to a lesser extent *Murikira Ukuri* and *Kumbuka Kesho*, provide convincing evidence that the programs are indeed having a positive impact.

Significant changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors were found for *Musekweya* listeners in the 2005, 2006, and 2011 evaluations. Among some of the key findings, listeners were significantly more likely to have more trust in their community (Bilali et al., 2011; Paluck, 2005), not to advise their children to marry only according to social group membership (Bilali et al., 2011; Paluck, 2005), to have reasonable respect for authority, to believe that traumatized people are more likely to commit violence (Bilali et al., 2011), to believe in the benefits of talking about trauma, to believe in the importance of having a shared view of history (Bilali et al., 2011), and to have more positive feelings towards members of their out-group. An early evaluation of the radio drama in Rwanda (Paluck, 2006) found positive changes in beliefs about the importance of justice, but these effects were not found in the 2011 evaluation (Bilali et al., 2011). Importantly, the Rwanda evaluations show that over time, *with increased exposure to the radio drama*, knowledge about the cycle of violence, including knowledge about the effects of passive bystandership, increases (Paluck, 2006).

With regard to behaviors – typically the overall goal in peacebuilding interventions – the Rwanda evaluations also found positive behavior change regarding the attendance of reconciliation activities (Paluck, 2006), and, within an experimental setting, less willingness to automatically cede to authority (Paluck, 2005).

The evaluation findings, however, did not always move in predictable directions. This may have been due to several factors, including an inconsistency in evaluation methodology (phrasing questions differently, focusing on different audiences), actual changes in audiences' opinions, or a decrease in the respondent's desire to answer 'correctly' and please the evaluator (a suggestion made to us by Paluck as to why certain attributes, like trusting members of another group, appear to have increased in some years and decreased in others).

Overall, the evaluations support the general point that Entertainment-Education can have positive effects on beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Further, the long-running series design of *Musekeweya* coupled with attentive evaluation allowed RLB to uncover the interesting and important finding that greater exposure over time seems to lead to an increase in some effects. It is also exciting to see effects in the more novel context of mass violence prevention, peace, trauma healing, etc. compared to the more typical sexual health and family planning contexts.

Among the three countries, there is more evidence of positive impact in Rwanda than in Burundi and the DRC. There are likely several reasons for this, the most obvious being that the Rwanda program has been running the longest, which means there have been more evaluations of the activities, and thus greater evidence of impact.

Additionally, as shown in the *Kumbuka Kesho* reflection report, part of the reason messages may have had less penetration in the DRC is that populations in a country in open conflict are not keen to hear stories of suffering and trauma. As they are experiencing enough of that in their daily lives, they are more interested in stories that are uplifting and hopeful. These elements have recently been changed for the DRC drama, but since no evaluations have been published since the program's modification, we cannot confirm whether these outcomes have improved.

The less dramatic effects of the program in the DRC also may have been caused in part by issues of language. As described above, not only are there many local dialects in the DRC, but even for those who speak Swahili, accents and dialects vary from region to region. In the DRC, it is perhaps worth investigating whether the language factor is having a significant impact on the number of people listening to the program and / or their comprehension of the messages. If so, RLB may want to focus more of its energies in the DRC on grassroots efforts that allow local communities to interact with each other, and where language is less likely to pose a problem.

The fact that all three countries witnessed a positive attitude change with regard to the discussion of trauma is an important and hopeful pattern. However, one challenge seems to be that the concept of trauma is difficult to communicate in these countries, and the public is not sufficiently familiar with the concept. DRC Radio Drama Coordinator Loffe Chirali stated that in the DRC a Swahili translation of the word trauma does not exist, and so they have to find other ways to communicate the concept. In both the 2005 and 2011 evaluations of *Musekeweya* in Rwanda it was also clear that not all respondents understood the concept.

One final important measure of impact is how many people actually listen to the show. Even if an intervention has a strong effect, it is limited in its overall impact if few people receive the intervention. Popularity is hard to measure in these locations, especially the DRC, but it is evident from previous evaluations that the program is

very popular in all three countries. The following chart summarizes data from the various reports and popularity surveys conducted by RLB:

Table 1. Audience Reach of Radio Drama Series, in %

	GLRM 1 (2005-2008)		GLRM 2 (2008-2011)	GLRM 3 (2011-present)
Rwanda	2005: ≈90-97% urban ≈86-93% rural (Deflander, 2005)	2006: ≈93% urban ≈94% rural ("Resultat de sondage," 2006)	n/a	2011: 84% (Bilali et al., 2011) 2012: 65% (Kigali only) (GLRM3 Final Report, 2013) 2013: 84% (GLRM3 Final Report, 2013)
The DRC (North and South Kivu only)	2007 ≈30% (Paluck, 2007)		2009: ≈66% urban / 35% rural (Bigirimana, 2009a)	2011: ≈42% (almost every week) ≈67% (almost every week or sometimes) (Bilali, Vollhardt, and Helbig de Balzac, 2011)
Burundi	n/a		2009: ≈66% urban ≈76% rural (Bigirimana, 2009b)	2011: ≈67% (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2011) 2013: 70% (GLRM3 Final Report, 2013)

5.1.2 The Factual Programs: *Kuki* and its Variants (Rwanda), *Akahise* and its Predecessors (Burundi), and *Nia Moja* (DRC)

5.1.2.2 Comparative Assessment of Factual Programs in the Three Countries:

RLB Founder and CEO George Weiss defines one of the original strategies of the factual programs as targeting elites that tend not to listen to drama series on the radio. According to Weiss, in Rwanda, RLB wanted "leaders to realize how survivor trauma could influence their own decision making" in order to help them make better policy decisions (personal interview, June 2013). The GLRM 2 proposal further argues that "ethnic tensions are often instrumentalized in the region to serve political purposes," and that "politicians of the region are prone to the same traumas and fears that mark the general population, [but] they are in a much clearer position to really *act* against any circumstance they feel to be threatening to them" (GLRM 2 proposal, 2008, p. 25).

But RLB’s proposals indicate that these factual programs were meant to reach the general public as well. According to RLB’s GLRM 1 proposal, the factual programs were designed to “improve... public access to information by increasing citizens’ involvement in thematic debates on national and local radio broadcasts, thus facilitating discussions at decentralized levels” and to “counteract tendencies toward hate and conflict by focusing on the dangers of manipulation” (GLRM 1 proposal, 2005, p. 17). Increasing citizens’ involvement is done in part through call-in segments of the radio programs.

While *Kuki* in Rwanda and *Nia Moja* in the DRC both focus specifically on the continuum of violence, *Akahise* in Burundi has a variety of foci, including transitional justice, the development of a shared history, and the development of a truth and reconciliation commission.

RLB considers the factual programs to be a core component of its methodology, and describes some of them as targeting elites in the region in the same way that the drama series target a more general audience. However, this component of the methodology has not yet been sufficiently solidified to allow for a thorough assessment of its theoretical framework, implementation strategy, or impact.

Finally, while not as popular as the drama series, the factual news programs also garner a substantial share of the population, as can be seen in the table below:

Table 2. Audience Reach of Radio Factual Programs, in %

	GLRM 1 (2005-2008)	GLRM 2 (2008-2011)	GLRM 3 (2011-present)
Rwanda (<i>Kuki / Ingiro Inkwiye</i>)	2005: ≈36% (Deflander, 2005) 2006: ≈28% ("Resultat de sondage," 2006)	n/a	2012: 44% in Kigali with TVs watch <i>Ingiro Inkwiye</i> (GLRM 3 third interim report, 2013)
The DRC (North and South Kivu only) (<i>Nia Moja</i>)	n/a	n/a	2012: ≈31% listen regularly 34% have heard the show several times (Peters, 2012)
Burundi (<i>Mbariza Ntore / Akahise</i>)	n/a	2010: 27% listens to/reads <i>Mbariza Ntore</i> regularly (Helbig de Balzac, 2011)	n/a

5.1.3.1 Comparative Assessment of the Grassroots Activities in the Three Countries:

RLB engages in many activities that could be considered ‘grassroots’ activities, but we focus here on those designed to promote discussion of the radio drama and / or reinforce RLB’s 35 messages about the continuum of violence and trauma healing. These include the grassroots groups in Rwanda and the DRC and the documentary *Rwagasore* in Burundi.

One primary outcome goal of the grassroots groups set up through RLB (and in particular those in Rwanda) is the amplification of the effects of the radio drama series (and the factual news program in the case of the DRC

and Burundi). This takes two key forms: taking part in ‘listener groups’ that discuss the radio program(s), and holding direct trainings of group members who can spread RLB’s messages in their community both indirectly, by acting as role models, and directly, by passing on knowledge. The listening group discussions and the trainings are carried out with the same groups.

One of RLB’s early funding proposals states that the groups “will be engaged in discussions stimulated by the radio programs” (GLRM1, 2005, p. 29) and that RLB will train some participants “both to help with these activities and to be able to initiate and lead new discussion groups” (p. 29). This is the beginning of RLB’s notion of ‘agents of change,’ who “will train and empower people to work in the community on reconciliation, healing and peace building” (GLRM 1, 2005, p. 25) and who will “initiate community activities where they use the knowledge and experience they have gained” (p. 25).

By RLB’s third continued funding proposal (GLRM3, 2010), the mechanisms for spreading knowledge through grassroots activities range more widely, and include activities such as creating civic associations, conducting community debates, performing participatory theater pieces, and holding community mediation activities.

RLB’s theory of change regarding why these groups should be effective is not explicit, though pieces of the theoretical framework can be inferred from the reports. Still, the absence of a clearly articulated design (as with the radio factual programs) seems to be reflected in how the activity was ultimately implemented and monitored in the three countries. This absence also has implications for what evaluations arising from the grassroots activities can tell us about the impact of the activities and their potential for adaptation.

Bert Ingelaere, a researcher from the University of Antwerp, led the 2009 evaluation of the grassroots groups in Rwanda. Ingelaere reports that 71% of those living in communities with grassroots groups have seen “a visible change in the community due to the programme” (p. 29). Ingelaere finds that in the communities with the grassroots groups, social cohesion increased, and knowledge about the continuum of violence and trauma healing also increased. The evaluation found that trained agents of change could also recognize symptoms of trauma.

Ultimately, in both the 2009 and 2011 evaluations, the main goal of the grassroots groups seems to be to reconcile community conflicts (such as problems between husbands and wives, between families, between people going through financial problems or emotional problems, even encouraging people to get screened for HIV, among other activities).⁴ The overall methodology therefore seems to be informal: to equip members with the RLB tools through training, but give them the freedom to determine how to best use those tools in their own communities.

The above are positive and important outcomes, but while the report indicates that the intervention *did* work, it cannot tell us much about *why* it worked. The 2011 evaluation does not add any additional insight into the mechanisms that bring about change for the grassroots groups. It *does* reveal, importantly, that the grassroots groups continued to live on even after RLB funding ran out.⁵

⁴ Some of these activities are listed on p. 45 of the 2009 evaluation.

⁵ However, there is a discrepancy in some of the documentation regarding both the total number of grassroots groups and the number of groups that were maintained. While the 2011 evaluation states that 35 of the 37 grassroots groups were still meeting regularly, the third interim report for GLRM 3 (2013) cites the 2011 evaluation as indicating that only 17 of the 31 grassroots groups were still viable.

Burundi is currently exhibiting a documentary, *Rwagasore*, as a key feature of its grassroots efforts, rather than listener groups designed to discuss the drama and serve as role models.⁶ The subject of the film is Rwagasore, a Tutsi prince and the son of the last King of Burundi, who was assassinated in October 1961, nine months before the independence of Burundi. In this film, RLB focuses on the key role Rwagasore played in developing a practical philosophy of equal access to power within an ethnically divided society. RLB's hope is that by showing audiences how violence, and ultimately the assassination of Rwagasore, arose, audiences will see the parallels between the past as portrayed in the film and Burundi's present, alerting them to the fact that there is potential for an egalitarian society but also a danger of repeating the past by resorting to violence to solve conflicts (Bitagoye & Capitolin, 2012). RLB aimed for rural viewings of the film to be accompanied by group discussion about the importance of inclusive ideologies and of an appropriate justice mechanism (p. 5-6), as ways to promote reconciliation and healing and inhibit acts of violence. This design of using media to engage audiences and promote discussion therefore parallels the design of the original grassroots groups in Rwanda used to promote discussion of the radio drama. The film began screenings in July 2012. No formal evaluations of its impact have yet been conducted, but the film is clearly well liked: more than 60,000 Burundians have attended the screenings, and RLB has collected much positive feedback about the film ("Projection Publique," 2013).

In the DRC, the number of grassroots groups recently increased due to funding by UNDP and USIP, but the role of the groups, and their impact, is unclear. The groups meet regularly, but DRC head of mission Wagenbuur was unsure of the exact frequency of the meetings. However, the current grassroots coordinator, Jean de Dieu Alingwi, provided several anecdotes regarding the effects of the groups, including several communities that he claimed were experiencing higher levels of cohesion.

Overall, the evaluations show that some of the grassroots activities *did* have an impact. It is less possible, from the evaluations or from our interviews, to indicate the reasons the impacts came about. In addition, as shown above, there was little evaluation done for the grassroots activities in Burundi or the DRC (though the documentary screenings in Burundi have only recently begun). This is in part due to the fact that donors often do not prioritize M&E in their budgets, but this limitation makes comparative assessment difficult. The documentation suggests that baseline data was taken for the grassroots groups in the DRC in 2008 and 2009, but we were not able to access this data. While our fieldwork revealed some evidence that the DRC grassroots activities were positively impacting cohesion (see section 5.2 below), more systematic evaluation is needed.

5.2 Analysis of Impacts: Evidence from the Field Interviews

Overall, the in-depth interviews conducted support or confirm many of the findings from RLB's past evaluations, particularly with respect to the complementary relationship between the radio drama and the grassroots groups. Interviews with community members confirmed that audiences not only enjoyed the radio dramas, as well as RLB's other media products, but also felt personally impacted by them. Interviews with community leaders and elites were particularly helpful in assessing overall impact of the programs, as community leaders have a good sense of the programs' overall impact on their own communities. Rather than providing anecdotes or personal stories of impact, community leaders can describe impact on a larger scale. Evidence from interviews with community leaders and political leaders is therefore highlighted in this section,

⁶ Some of the sketches from the radio factual programs were also used in Burundi for direct grassroots dialogue as well, facilitated by Impunity Watch (see GLRM 3 second interim report for more details), but the funding for this has ended. Impunity Watch produced a report on the impact of these sketches, according to the first interim report of GLRM 3 (2012), but we were not able to access it. RLB has also scheduled a series of trainings for 64 peace clubs, in conjunction with CARE, for 2014.

with comments from community members serving as illustrations of findings. As shown below, the fieldwork found convincing evidence that RLB's programs are having strong impacts in local communities.

Those who carried out the fieldwork asked community leaders and elites what programs or organizations they thought were doing the most important work in peacebuilding and reconciliation. For the most part, the Altai fieldworkers reported that RLB's name did not come up spontaneously in the interviews, but was recognized once the respondents were prompted. This was particularly true for Burundi and the DRC. Given that RLB has been active in Burundi and the DRC for much less time, and for other organizational reasons, RLB may have a lower place in participant consciousness in these countries; it may also indicate that RLB is not doing enough to make the organization's name known to leaders in the regions it is working in.

5.2.1 On the Soap Opera

Mokakarangwa Oriva, Head of Rebeiro village in Rwanda, believed that the soap opera greatly improved reconciliation in his village. A common refrain by Oriva and others was that the show was impactful because it demonstrated for audiences examples of characters interacting in positive ways: by showing "examples of peace at home" (Oriva) the show in essence provided instructions on how to interact in peacebuilding-oriented ways with members of other groups in their own communities. Munyesanga Jamali, Head of Dihima village in Rwanda, explained that in his community, since the show presents examples of cohesive, well-functioning communities, it provides a target for communities to work toward in their own community building. Leaders and community members in Burundi had similar stories of how the soap opera promoted peace and unity in their villages. One community member in Jienda, Burundi, had two brothers that were killed by their neighbors. He is trying to learn to live peacefully with them and forgive them, and the program taught him "that people may become angry and enter into conflict but can then reconcile and sit down and discuss to resolve their conflict." He said the soap opera gave him a "more conciliating mind" and "helped him to forgive." Patrice, Head of Hill in Rwivaga village in Burundi explained that in his community the radio drama was preventing youth from "forming bad habits" such as engaging in conflict with other groups and blaming other groups for the community's problems.

It is also evident from the interviews that audiences not only identified with the characters in the program, but also *related the fictional story to their own lives*. Interviewees cited instances in which they referenced story characters in their own villages. Munyesanga Jamali, Head of Dihima village in Rwanda, even stated that in his community, "when someone is doing something bad, they say, do you want to be like so and so from the soap?"

RLB, in its theoretical framework for the radio drama, argues that because the stories take place in a "virtual" setting, comparison and identification is "safer" because audience members can relate to the characters without having the storylines hit too close to home. This lessens the risk of audience members reacting defensively to negative characters or actions. The logic of this approach was supported through the interviews. Interviewees felt that they could relate to the shows' characters, and to the storyline, but no interviewees felt that the story was *exactly* a portrayal of local dynamics, and no interviewee felt the dramas were unfairly portraying their own group or others. Dr. Habayalimana, Executive Secretary of the National Unity & Reconciliation Commission in Rwanda, thought that the show worked because it is not confrontational – it does not try to teach audiences about the conflict directly, and does not point a finger at anyone or any group. Rather, the program simply provides examples for audiences to emulate. Similarly, Ciza Emmanuel, Head of Hill in Bukirasazi village in Burundi, stated that because *Murikira Ukuri* and *Akahise* discuss the conflict generally, rather than assigning blame to specific groups, RLB has become a trusted source for the local population, which makes it "an exception to the general distrust of the media."

Emmanuel also confirmed a finding from the surveys: He argued that in his village, entertainment forms of messaging are far more effective than more direct messaging or messaging through news. As he stated, “villagers prefer programs that are entertaining. Purely educational programs attract relatively educated people.” This is important to remember for RLB’s, as well as other groups’, interventions. Although RLB specifically created radio programming to attract rural audiences, there are many news-related interventions that assume that bringing relevant and accurate news to the public will automatically improve political engagement. The evidence from RLB’s work suggests that more attention needs to be paid to *who* is actually listening to such programs.

At the same time, Joachin, Head of Hill in Nyambuye, Burundi, argued that the news media works because “educated people” listen and then spread the information, suggesting that both media platforms – the entertainment drama and the factual news programs – have potential roles in reaching less educated audiences.

RLB’s success with its drama series, especially in Rwanda, has additionally led to the buy-in of the national government and government support for RLB’s programming. Jean de Dieu Mucyo, Executive Secretary of the Commission Against Genocide in Rwanda, felt that RLB has gained substantial experience with the topic of peacebuilding through its Rwanda program. He described the radio drama as providing examples of how unity is cultivated, and praised RLB for enlisting the help of experts and advisors to develop key messages. Dr. Jean Baptiste Habyalimana, Executive Secretary of the National Unity & Reconciliation Commission in Rwanda, argued that one of the reasons he felt the radio drama was so effective was that Rwandans always wanted to find out what was going to happen in the next episode. This curiosity led audience members to discuss the program, as well as its embedded messages. Overall, members of national bodies that Altai spoke with very supportive of RLB’s work and felt it was having a positive effect on their countries.⁷

5.2.2 On the Grassroots Groups

Impact from the grassroots groups was cited on two fronts: reinforcing the messages from the radio drama and directly helping to heal conflicts within communities. With regard to the radio drama, the grassroots groups were seen as helping community members “further understand the information they had been given” through the radio drama (Oriva, Head of Rebeiro village, Rwanda).

With respect to healing conflict within their own communities, the grassroots group members were seen as facilitators of conflict resolution. Joseph, Head of Rujumbura village in Rwanda, even stated that the groups had contributed to “removing all divisions related to ethnicity” in his village. Idrisah Ayugarurema, a member of the village council in Taba village, Rwanda, likewise stated that she had witnessed a significant change in the people in her community following the activities of the grassroots groups. She stated that the groups’ messages of reconciliation had penetrated the villagers and had lasting impact. Daniel, Vice President of the Centre Communautaire Polyvalent in Mugunga, DRC, explained how in his community, “before only Hutus, Tutsis and Hunde could become chief of neighbourhood or avenue but now some people are now understanding that this is not a productive approach.” Several community members and community leaders Altai spoke with offered anecdotes about how the grassroots group members had solved some conflict or repaired conflict between individuals in their communities.

⁷ One exception to this was Pierre Bambasi, of the Commission Nationale de la Communication, in Burundi. The interviewer and fixer felt strongly that Bambasi’s responses to questions were canned, and belied some hostility and resentment to NGOs, including RLB, that seek to promote freedom of expression.

Overall, the interviews suggest that the agents of change are having a kind of “ripple effect” in their communities. Beginning with the individual (the member of the grassroots groups trained by RLB), and then slowly impacting other members of the community, the grassroots groups are gradually bringing increased peace to their wider communities. As Uwimbabaz Shantal, an Agent of Change in Urgwego village, Rwanda, explained, addressing trauma and healing at the individual level will ultimately affect peace at the collective level. Moreover, RLB teaches individuals to create that peace within themselves before starting to serve the community, in acknowledgement of this principle: “I have peace myself and my family has peace, if we have peace it means that my neighbours will have peace, which then extends to their neighbours, and then the whole village.”

One reason the grassroots groups seem to be so successful is because of the place the members have taken on in their community. Not only are they “trusted” (Munyesanga Jamali, head of Dihima village, Rwanda), but there is the sense that because of their training by RLB they have expertise in trauma and healing, and so therefore have the ability to serve their community, and do. Ayugarurema, member of the village council in Taba village, Rwanda, stated that “the very fact that they are trained gives them status and position in the community.” Baguireh Ilumeneh, of Ruguruma village in Rwanda, stated that people prefer to go to the grassroots groups instead of the community leaders because “people are a bit intimidated by the leaders - if they have problems at home, they think that the leaders will be too harsh or punish them, so they prefer to come to us. People don’t like the whole community to know their private issues, so they usually just call one member of the group to come and give counselling. They call the group because they know they have the skills.”

Many members of the communities with grassroots groups, as well as members of the grassroots groups themselves, stated that they would appreciate more reenactments of examples of positive interactions between conflict groups by the grassroots groups, either in the form of role plays or theatre. Oriva, Head of Rebeiro village, Rwanda, stated that sometimes their community grassroots group did in fact engage in role plays, and said that the villagers were always very interested when they did so. Not only was it engaging because it provided examples of how to engage peacefully with other members of the community (several local leaders including Capitoline, head of Urwego village in Rwanda, stated that it showed the villages “that change is possible by providing examples”), but it was also entertaining: it was like “watching the radio program live” (Oriva). Kannath Charles, a community member in Bwegera, DRC, stated that when the groups act out a story with local relevance, people then better understand that the story has real life implications, and brings reconciliation, forgiveness, and improved cohesion. Given the frequent statement by interviewees made in reference to the radio drama – that one of the most useful features was seeing concrete examples of positive behaviors – this set of comments regarding the grassroots groups is not surprising.

One concern regarding the grassroots groups, voiced by Jean de Dieu Mucyo, Executive Secretary of the Commission Against Genocide in Rwanda, was that it is quite difficult to figure out which villages are most in need of peacebuilding, and therefore in need of the grassroots groups. In addition, he commented that it is difficult to ensure that group members represent a variety of positions within the society – for example to ensure that a group is not comprised of the already-powerful members of the community (a challenge found in the 2009 evaluation of the grassroots groups in Rwanda). Another commonly voiced concern (again echoed in the 2009 evaluation) was that groups need more oversight. However, the fact that the groups are sustainable even without RLB oversight is one of their compelling advantages.

5.2.3 On the Factual News Programs:

In general, community leaders and political elites did not have much to say about the radio factual programs. It is possible that these programs have not yet been sufficiently established, or sufficiently long-running, for leaders to notice a change in their communities or countries based on the radio factual programs.

However, one government official Altai spoke with, Dr. Habyalimana of the National Unity & Reconciliation Commission in Rwanda, praised the radio factual program for digging deeper into issues that were raised in a more superficial manner in the drama series. It was also evident from our interviews that those involved in the radio factual programs, particularly the journalists, felt the program was incredibly valuable.

5.2.4 On Developing a Shared History in Burundi:

With regard to developing a shared history of the past in Burundi, both community members and community leaders acknowledged the importance of learning about Burundi's past in order to improve its future. It was pointed out that this is particularly true among the younger generations, who tend to know less about the past or about how past events affect the present and future. Interviewees – both leaders as well as the general public – generally prioritized a better understanding of the past, as well as improved justice mechanisms, above peacebuilding, as they feel that many members of society are already living peacefully together. This echoes RLB's emphasis on developing a shared history and promoting justice mechanisms in Burundi. (It should be noted that a very similar theme arose for the DRC: Interviewees felt that lack of justice and impunity, as well as developing a shared history, were some of the most important issues facing Congolese.)

Some interviewees in Burundi, however, did believe that peacebuilding was also crucial in order to promote justice. Michel, a community member from Bukirasasi, for example, stated that “once the population is reconciled, they will be able to work together and develop in solidarity and in cohabitation,” and eventually achieve justice. Some of the interviewees – particularly community leaders – did feel that NGOs working on issues of justice had made concrete impacts in this vein, though these were generally cited as NGOs in general, not RLB specifically. For example, Niyonzima Godance, of Jienda village, stated that because of the NGOs in the area, people can speak more freely now than they could before: “They helped people express themselves as opposed to before when they were silent.”

The documentary *Rwagasore* was also very popular among the interviewed populations in Burundi. Audience members Altai spoke with not only enjoyed the film but also learned from it. Interviewees said it helped them understand the history of Burundi, and also how that history gave rise to “the different tensions remaining today,” that they “appreciated its messages,” and “wished that there were more films like that” (community members Burundi, various).

5.3 Analysis of Adaptability

To some extent, all of RLB's activities relate to the theories developed by Ervin Staub and Laurie Pearlman on the continuum of violence and trauma healing. Our analysis of RLB's programs as a prototype centers on the idea that these theories formed the crux of the Rwanda program and can, in theory (and as evidenced by RLB's work in Burundi and the DRC) be adapted to other contexts. “Adaptation,” in our view, requires thinking about which elements of Staub and Pearlman's theories are most appropriate for a particular context given differences in political, historical, social, and geographic settings, and presenting them in a format that is useful for local audiences.

5.3.1 Adapting RLB's Model to Other Contexts

Which aspects of the RLB project are, in fact, adaptable? Does RLB's experience produce "best practices" for adaptation? RLB operated in Rwanda for eight years and had significant positive effects. We have reviewed the existing evaluations, evaluated the theories, and interviewed staff and audience members on the ground. There is little doubt that RLB has developed an effective program. But what can be said about practices of scalability and adaptability?

Rwanda has presented important conditions for project implementation for an intervention focused on improving relations between two ethnic groups. The country is currently stable, and there is support by the government and the public to seek ways to foster reconciliation. The *gacaca* trials indicate a national desire to heal and move forward, even if the outcomes of the trials were not as positive as optimistic expectations predicted. In addition, the country's small size makes an intervention designed to impact a large portion of the population more feasible.

An important question is whether the RLB model is adaptable and scalable. We seek to show in the examples of program expansion in Rwanda and application in Burundi and DRC that the process can and does function, with adjustments, in new environments. It is too early to indicate how scalable the program is and what adjustments are required, though our review points in some directions. To adapt the model to other contexts (Burundi, the DRC, and beyond) we outline an approach that combines the theory and best practices RLB has already developed with iterative evaluations that allow theories of change to evolve over time. We use this report to describe how this process already takes place within RLB and to suggest that a more explicit articulation of this strategic methodology will allow for quicker learning and modification of programs as RLB moves forward. A more strategic methodology will also provide for more useful collection of data for RLB's own future work and for others.

A model RLB prototype for adaptation should center on those elements that form the backbone of the RLB strategy: 1) the psychology of the public, as in the theories of Staub and Pearlman; 2) how organizations like RLB might shape the way audiences receive and interpret incitement through media (as well as how such media is produced), and 3) how media messages might manifest in the audience's engagement with their community. It must therefore concentrate on teaching and encouraging members of the public to be able to 1) understand how violence evolves (including through the media); 2) heal from trauma; and 3) hold leaders to account by demanding fair treatment of all groups. The premise that societal healing must start at the level of the individual is a significant contribution to the field, and an important contribution that RLB's ten years of work can offer in terms of new insights regarding peacebuilding in conflict-affected areas.

Therefore, the prototype should be thought of as capturing the *theory* behind the activities, with the activities serving as mere guideposts – ideas for interventions that epitomize the operationalization of the theory. Adaptation then relates to local needs.

5.3.2 Adaptations Based on Context

RLB began its expansion of the Rwanda project to Burundi and the DRC with rigorous pre-implementation research and analysis. A comparative analysis of the political and historical context of the three countries was carried out, which led to RLB's choice of message focus for the three countries.

In Rwanda, RLB had to negotiate a sensitive political context, and had to contend with the government's divisionism policies, which were vaguely defined, but generally prohibited any speech that could be considered

divisive. Considering that RLB's entire framework for Rwanda rested on the fact that members of different groups needed to discuss the conflict with each other, methodologies had to be extremely sensitive to the organization's political surroundings. RLB's radio dramas and factual programs, which focus on 'other' conflicts, are an innovative mechanism for avoiding this problem, even if this was not the central rationale. With regard to the grassroots groups, RLB has thus far managed to strike a balance between opening up discussions among groups and staying within the bounds of activities sanctioned by the government.

In Burundi, several elements forced RLB to adapt the program. Primary among these, Burundi did not yet have a justice mechanism in place to deal with the country's past conflict – something that, according to the theory put forth by Staub, is crucial for healing. While a justice mechanism had been proposed, it had not (and has not) been implemented, and transitional justice did not feature in the national agenda. Because of this, RLB emphasized the importance of creating such a mechanism, as well as what the organization considered to be the closely related topic of developing a shared history of the past. In Burundi, history has its own particularly controversial setting: Both sides are guilty of committing acts of violence against the other, which neither side denies. They have differing opinions about who is to blame, and how history has transpired. Reconciliation is therefore difficult because each side is “always seeing the other one as the main enemy,” according to Burundi head of mission Deflander.

The DRC context has far more variants, and therefore required much more adaptation of the RLB methodology. (For one, the conflict in the DRC does not center, to the same extent, on interethnic violence or genocide.) A key challenge for the DRC, according to RLB's analysis, is that Congolese politicians are consistently blaming others for the DRC's problems. This is not a strict replication of the kind of 'scapegoating' outlined in the Staub continuum, as it is less likely to be directed at one particular ethnic group; RLB adapted the idea to incorporate blaming other political leaders, countries, or groups. This led, in turn, to an emphasis on the portions of the Staub continuum focusing on motivations for power and the importance of positive leadership. By creating a public that recognizes political manipulation and is less willing to accept it, RLB believes it can change one of the elements standing in the way of repairing the DRC.

Secondly, the fact that the DRC is still in open conflict meant that RLB was trying to stop the continuum of violence in its tracks, rather than supporting prevention. While this provides more opportunities to see the continuum in action and work to fight against it (such as through the use of scapegoating by current politicians), it also made the situation (both for Congolese audiences and for RLB staff) more fraught, and the need for peacebuilding more immediate. As previously mentioned in this report, RLB discovered that open conflict makes some of its messages harder to sell, such as active bystandership when speaking out against others can put citizens in real physical danger, or promoting cohesion when tensions are high and individuals are more likely to feel hostility toward other groups.

DRC head of mission Wagenbuur told us that rather than encouraging individuals to speak out on their own, one way they have adapted the active bystandership message is by encouraging listeners to find others in their community who share their desire to be active bystanders. In this way, he argues, active bystandership is strengthened by numbers. RLB has also adapted to the more urgent context of the DRC, and so has moved away somewhat from the Rwanda model that centers on the radio drama, which affects listeners slowly over time. Instead, in the DRC there has been more of a focus on developing the factual programs, which provide “direct and immediate knowledge,” according to Wagenbuur.

Third, according to the RLB staff we spoke with, size also poses several challenges for the DRC project that did not arise in the much smaller countries of Burundi and Rwanda. The DRC covers an area of approximately

900,000 square miles – about 90 times the size of Burundi or Rwanda, and with far more ethno-linguistic diversity. While Swahili is the lingua franca, many Congolese, particularly in rural areas, speak different mother tongues. In addition, although there are two national radio stations in the DRC (Radio Okapi and RTNC), the current policies of the broadcasters prevent RLB from airing the program on those stations. Instead, the program is aired on several of the many small radio stations that exist. These factors present major challenges for radio programming, which aims to reach a large number of listeners and cannot broadcast in multiple languages.

RLB addresses some of these challenges by focusing on one region within the DRC, North and South Kivu, which borders Rwanda and Burundi, and which makes it susceptible to spillover from some of the issues in those countries (see MacDiarmid, 2012). RLB also broadcasts its programs in Swahili, but often receives complaints from Congolese that they want programming in their own language. We do not know if there is a significant portion of Congolese in the Kivus who do not listen to RLB’s radio programs but would if they were in another language; this may be worth investigating through audience research. The actors in the radio drama are also from South Kivu, which has a different dialect than North Kivu. Another strategy employed by RLB to confront the challenge posed by many small radio stations was to partner with sixteen local radio stations to help them produce their own programming, as well as to broadcast RLB’s programming.

Even with rigorous initial research, RLB could not have predicted every adaptation these complex contexts would necessitate. Instead, well-informed designs were implemented in Burundi and the DRC but continue to be adapted as new information arises. This is an ideal model for an adaptable program, but as we suggest in the next section, could be modified to more efficiently capture new information through more consistent evaluation.

5.3.3 Adaptation of the 35 Messages

The theories of Staub and Pearlman that form the backbone of RLB’s work are encapsulated in 35 “messages” that RLB seeks to impart to audiences.

To adapt the Staub continuum to different contexts, it must be treated as a flexible and organic tool, encompassing multiple routes to reduced violence. A prototype that is useful for scalability and adaptation to other contexts requires that it be theoretically rigorous, so that the ideas behind the model are sound and likely to be widely applicable, but also 1) that it be simple enough for other organizations to use, and 2) that it have enough moving parts to allow for modification based on context.

5.4 Communication and Media for Peacebuilding: A Review of RLB’s Theoretical Framework in Light of Theory on Peacebuilding and the Media

5.4.1 Summary of RLB’s Position in the Field

In addition to the group’s work on the continuum of violence and trauma healing, RLB makes three significant contributions to the field of peacebuilding. These contributions offer the possibility of expanding the evidence base when it comes to best practices for peacebuilding, and even furthering theory:

- 1) Virtuality: RLB’s focus on encouraging reconciliation by having groups discuss *other* conflicts represents a unique and potentially important contribution to the field.

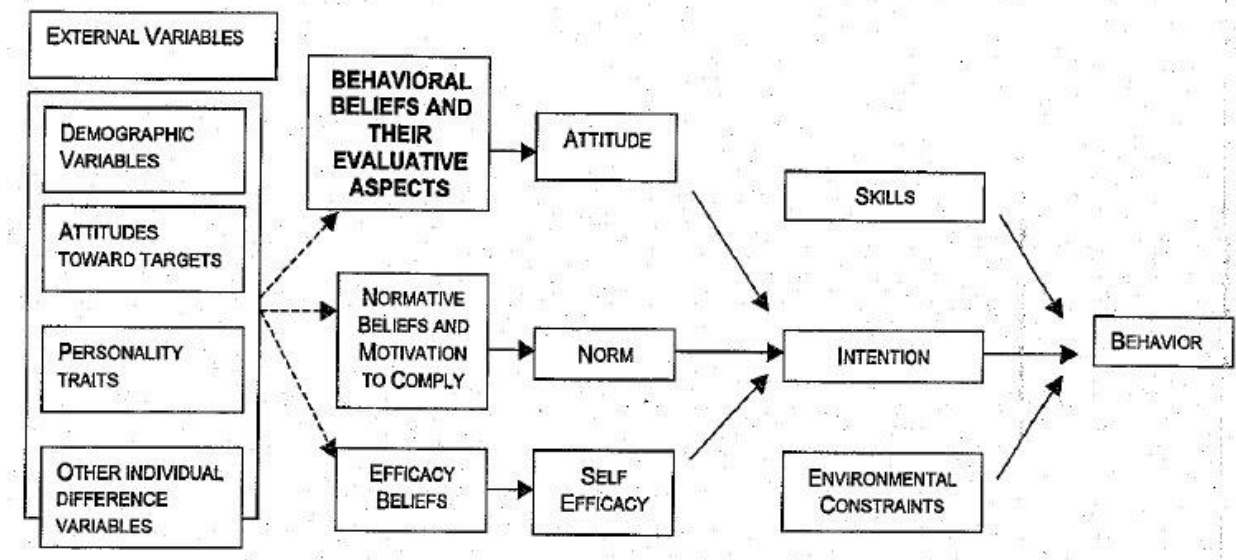
2) Journalism to support peacebuilding: RLB’s method of training journalists in the continuum of violence offers a potential extension of the literature on “peace journalism” and the idea that support of more positive, peace-oriented journalism may be needed in post-conflict societies.

3) Social norms and group discussion: While theories around social norms and group discussion are prevalent in the literature and often incorporated into interventions by other NGOs, there is broad acknowledgement that the field is still, in many ways, in its infancy when it comes to peacebuilding (Paluck & Green, 2009). RLB’s work has the potential to add significantly to scholars’ and practitioners’ understanding of social norms and group discussion in promoting positive behavioral outcomes in conflict settings.

5.4.2 Behavior Change Research

Many media interventions in the developing world or in conflict-affected regions are based on behavior change models. These models date back to early modernization theory (e.g., Inkeles, 1966; Lerner, 1958) which posited that *knowledge* (about culture, about modernity, about politics, etc.) was what was lacking in developing regions, and was what was needed to bring the developing world to the modern age. Communication theory has advanced significantly since the period of Inkeles and Lerner, and many additional factors have been identified as important for behavior change. The integrative model of behavior change (Cappella et al., 2001), one of the most frequently used models in behavior change research, posits that attitudes, norms, and self-efficacy are also important factors to consider. Scholars and practitioners thus build these elements into their persuasion messages.

Figure 2. Cappella et al.’s Integrative Model of Behavior Change (2001, p. 220).



5.4.2.1 Behavior change research and the RLB framework: While such models are well accepted in the communication literature, many development interventions continue to focus on lack of knowledge alone, ignoring or deprioritizing other factors that affect behavior change. RLB, in contrast, has gone far beyond the knowledge-only model, recognizing that it is not only attitudes, social norms, and self-efficacy that affect behavioral intentions; fear, trauma, and a desire to fulfill basic human needs play a role as well. This recognition is built into all of RLB’s programming. As we will describe below, this recognition is spelled out

more clearly in some cases than others, but a mainstay of RLB's programming is that the organization see its audiences as composed of complex psychological beings, rather than as vessels waiting to be filled with Western knowledge.

Affecting listener knowledge and attitudes is done by exposing audiences to new information and to characters (both fictional and real) that exhibit peace-oriented attitudes and behaviors. For the grassroots groups, the transfer of knowledge is far more explicit and pedagogically implemented; rather than learning through a narrative storyline, grassroots group members are taught about the continuum of violence by RLB staff who offer concrete strategies to combat the cycle of violence. RLB's first continued funding proposal argues that "by stimulating and supporting grassroots activities that will enable audiences to understand how to engage in concrete action on how to counteract violence, concrete results will come up" (GLRM 2 proposal, 2008, p. 16).

5.4.3 Edutainment

Entertainment-Education (or EE, or edutainment) is one type of behavior change model with increasing popularity in behavior change research. While the integrative model stresses a number of factors that influence behavioral intentions, edutainment is designed to specifically target a few of these factors – knowledge, attitudes, and norms – through engaging narratives.

Narrative can be defined as a story with "...an identifiable beginning, middle, and end that provides information about scene, characters, and conflict; raises unanswered questions or unresolved conflict; and provides resolution" (Hinyard & Kreuter, 2007, p. 778). From an influence standpoint, narratives are believed to offer persuasive advantage as they are well-suited to attract attention in a competitive media environment, hold attention due to their engrossing characters and plot lines, and reduce resistance often triggered by more obvious attempts at persuasion. Consequently, narratives are well-poised to influence knowledge, attitudes and, ultimately, behavior (Nabi & Moyer-Guse, 2012).

Historically, edutainment has been the dominant context of narrative and persuasion study. Edutainment refers to media programs that "entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members' knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, and change overt behavior" (Singhal & Rogers, 1999, p. 9), and evidence suggests that under the right circumstances, edutainment can be an effective way to influence viewers (for review, see Sangalang, Murphy & Cody, n.d.; Singhal & Rogers, 2004).

There are multiple, somewhat interrelated explanations for narrative's persuasive influence, generally suggesting that both *identification* (or character involvement) and *transportion* (or narrative involvement) are critical to edutainment success. Identification aids *role modeling*. Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory suggests that by observing others' behaviors, including those of media figures, one may develop rules to guide one's own subsequent actions.

5.4.3.1 Edutainment research and the RLB framework: As described in the section outlining RLB's methodology, the model for RLB's radio dramas is based upon the work of edutainment scholars at Johns Hopkins University, and in particular the work of Esta de Fossard (see de Fossard, 2005), as well as other scholars working in this field (e.g., Singhal et al., 2003). RLB has received expert advice from de Fossard on the edutainment production side.⁸ There have also been numerous planning meetings and workshops over the years to ensure that the radio programs are informed by a range of resources, including academics, creative talent, and audience members. In addition to on-going consultation with Staub and Pearlman, an academic

⁸ de Fossard also served as an evaluator for RLB in 2008.

support team of three consultants (Professors Johanna Vollhardt and Rezarta Bilali, as well as sociotherapist Adin Thayer) reviews the narrative scripts before broadcast and consults on factual programming. Thus, the programs appear to be well grounded in the EE literature and in theory related to mass violence.

5.4.4 Social Norms, Role Modeling & Group Discussion

Social norms are also considered, in the integrative model, to be crucial to behavioral intention. Theories behind social norms posit that people's behaviors are guided, in part, by what they believe *others* like them believe and do (Cappella et al., 2001; Crandall & Stangor, 2005). This can certainly be affected by what audiences see well-liked characters do in the media. However, it is likely that people's beliefs about social norms might be more strongly affected by a group of peers than by a character in a fictional storyline.

The theory that group discussion in itself will promote beneficial outcomes is also supported by social learning theory, and has received greater attention in recent years. Not only does talk about messages potentially disseminate the message to those who were not initially exposed, but it also aids in sense-making, meaning-making, and message reinforcement, and contributes to the perceived social norm around the issue or behavior.

The existing research on group discussion, however (including evaluations done for RLB's activities, as will be shown) illustrates that the dynamics of group discussion are complex and often unpredictable. Talk may be undermined if the nature of the conversation is not supportive of the message. With respect to interventions aimed at peer influence through discussion and dialogue (based on social norm theory, among other theories) some evidence has shown increased polarization or increased prejudice resulting from discussion (Paluck & Green, 2009, p. 354). As Paluck and Green argue (2009), we are "quite far from having an empirically grounded understanding of the conditions under which these programs work best," but this type of peer influence promoted by discussion "is a promising area of prejudice reduction supported by laboratory research and by creative real-world interventions" (pp. 357-358).

5.4.4.1 Social norms, role modeling & discussion research and the RLB framework: These theories are clearly an essential element of RLB's grassroots program (and, to a lesser extent, RLB's other programs, discussed below). RLB frequently describes its grassroots programs as taking the drama series from the radio into real-life settings. As with the radio drama, role models (in this case actual, rather than fictional) serve as an example for their peers, who may begin to emulate attitudes and behaviors that they see demonstrated by the role model. Transforming a fictional role model into a live peer, while tapping into the same underlying storyline, is a clever way to reinforce the attitudes and behaviors performed in the narrative.

The fact that RLB's agents of change were supported by RLB to become influential actors in their communities takes the theory of role modeling one step further. Some role models – such as opinion leaders, elites, and even celebrities – have been shown to be particularly effective in spreading knowledge, ideas, and attitudes. Some of the most well-known and oft-cited communication theory relates to ideas about how information and ideas spread. Katz & Lazarsfeld's two-step flow theory (1955) and Everett Roger's diffusion of innovation theory (1962) revolve around the idea that most people do not simply gain information from its original source (such as the media). Rather, ideas are spread through people. One influential person gaining a particular piece of information, or accepting a particular belief or attitude, can then go on to influence others, and so on. These ideas are crucial for understanding how media messages are spread, and how they ultimately influence the public. The idea that opinion leaders, influential peers, and celebrities have an important role in spreading messages has been incorporated into much of the work on behavior change (Kelly et al., 1991; Valente & Pumpuang, 2007). Given that many of RLB's agents of change have become leaders in their communities,

being sought out for advice and assistance, suggests that they are well positioned to spread the knowledge and ideas behind the show.

As ideas and attitudes become more widespread and entrenched within a community, they slowly become accepted as *norms*. While RLB does not explicitly reference the idea of utilizing the power of social norms, Paluck (2005) stresses the importance of this element in her first-year evaluation of *Musekeweya* when it comes to behaviors such as teaching children that they do not need to marry only within their own social group, and presumably on behaviors such as standing up when someone acts negatively toward a member of an out-group (active bystandership).

Group discussion, if it creates the impression that a group of peers promote the same ideas and attitudes, can also affect perceptions of group norms, and therefore affect attitudes and behaviors. Group discussion may be particularly crucial in Rwanda, where public discussion of issues related to ethnicity is essentially prohibited by the Rwandan government through its “unity and reconciliation” policies, and therefore potentially suppressed in private as well. It is not clear to what extent, if at all, Rwanda’s unity and reconciliation policies have succeeded in curbing ethnic tension, but RLB’s beliefs clearly rest on the opposing idea that discussion about the country’s ethnic violence is essential for healing and reconciliation.

RLB’s theories about the benefits of discussion also stem from the organization’s own experience: Staub and Pearlman’s work in Rwanda showed the benefits of discussing trauma in small group settings (Staub et al., 2005), and Paluck’s original evaluation of *Musekeweya* found that discussing the program in small groups amplified the effects of the show.⁹

One challenge of group discussion, however, is that key members of a discussion group may serve to polarize opinions in the group, or to exacerbate negative opinions (though this might be somewhat mitigated for agents of change, who are specifically trained by RLB to be positive role models). Paluck’s 2007 evaluation of *Kumbuka Kesho* in the DRC illustrates how difficult a line this is to walk. Paluck found that the addition to the radio drama of a five-minute talk show, intended to promote discussion, did indeed lead to more discussion but did not result in a greater acceptance of the messages from the show, and did not increase perspective taking or tolerance of out-groups in general. In fact, talk show listeners were more likely to exhibit *undesirable* attitudes. Paluck discusses this problematic finding in a journal article she published based on the study (2010) and questions whether, under certain circumstances, it is simply “better not to talk” in the DRC context.

When we spoke with Elizabeth Paluck, she said that it was “not surprising” that in a context of on-going violence, discussing the violence might make people angrier. She suggests this as one potential explanation for why the results of discussion would be so different in the DRC.

Another explanation may be that the Congolese groups were less closely monitored than the Rwandan groups, which might have allowed more room for polarizing viewpoints, or the formation of groups that were too like-minded to begin with. This would likely be a problem in both Rwanda and the DRC. The 2009 evaluation of the grassroots groups in Rwanda discovered that one of the groups (in the West province) had somehow been formed to only consist of genocide survivors, and the evaluators did indeed find that the group dynamic came to “reinforce the rifts and prejudices that exist in society” (p. 55).

⁹ It should be noted that this logic also infuses RLB’s radio factual programming, which follows the form of call-in shows, in an attempt to encourage participation and discussion.

Character identification may have also influenced the discussion in the DRC. One could imagine that talking about a program in which characters are liked would contain more positive discussion of the intervention goals than talking about a program with less well-liked characters. The analyses of the three radio dramas (Bilali et al., 2011) show that while the Rwanda drama had well-liked characters, the DRC drama had less well-liked characters, but was discussed even more than the Rwanda program (52% of respondents in Rwanda reported talking about the show “a lot,” compared with 61% in the DRC). Coupling the tense context of an active conflict with less-likeable characters might suggest an additional reason for a negative impact in the DRC.

In the 2013 evaluation of the Burundi factual program (Bigirimana et al., 2013), focus group participants stated that, while they believe it is necessary to talk about the past in order to avoid the continuation of cycles of crisis, some feared discussion would serve to revive ethnic hatred. They stated that lack of *preparation* for discussion was a concern, indicating that learning *how* to properly discuss sensitive events is vital.

5.4.5 Participatory Models

The above discussion has thus far focused on RLB’s efforts to persuade audiences to change behaviors through *behavior change models* – in particular the integrative model of behavior change and its focus on knowledge, attitudes, and social norms in persuasive messages. But recent work in development also recognizes the need to move *beyond persuasion* and focus rather on a more participatory process of social change in which participants and stakeholders are the ones communicating with each other, and persuading each other, rather than having information communicated through an external, foreign-produced media source. Morris (2003), among others, describes these as the “diffusion” (top-down) versus “participatory” (bottom-up) models, referencing Rogers’ diffusion of innovation model.

5.4.5.1 Participatory models and the RLB framework: RLB’s grassroots work has strong participatory elements. This element of RLB’s programming puts more reliance on local community members as the source of information rather than the RLB-produced media tools. For these groups RLB works directly with communities on the ground, and puts the power of program decision-making, to a greater degree, in their hands. In Rwanda and the DRC, many of the groups decide what community activities they will carry out. This model allows the group members, who are the most aware of the needs of their own communities, to set the agenda based on what they think is appropriate. Seeking a balance between RLB’s basic model and a willingness to listen to the needs and ideas of the community helps ensure that RLB’s project remains relevant to those it serves.

5.4.6 Other Theories Employed by RLB: Critical Consciousness, Virtuality and the Benefits of Shared History

RLB’s work on the importance of creating a “critical consciousness” and encouraging self-reflection is based on the work of Ervin Staub and has been refined through the organization’s decade of work in the field. RLB’s theories on virtuality (described above in the section on RLB’s methodology) have been developed by RLB, through the work of Staub. RLB’s theories on the importance of shared history have been developed through its work in the field as well as through the research of Staub and other transitional justice scholars. RLB should continue to elaborate these theories, which are under-researched in the peacebuilding field. Empirical evidence regarding these theories is rare in the literature, and rarer still in the field of communication. For this reason we discuss them only briefly here, namely to indicate why RLB should seek to add to the evidence base in these fields, as it would be an important contribution, especially if it could be coupled with how media and communication fit into the theories.

With regard to the development of a critical consciousness and an awareness of the continuum of violence in order to encourage self-reflection, these theories are laid out in much of RLB’s documentation, particularly in

its staff training manual. RLB has received expert guidance from Ervin Staub and Laurie Pearlman regarding the continuum of violence and trauma healing and this theory of change. To our knowledge, however, there is little research being conducted outside of RLB on the use of this theory in peacebuilding media.

With regard to virtuality, the theory (and terminology) is, as far as we know, unique to RLB. As discussed in the section on RLB's methodology, part of the design of the radio drama was to allow audiences to discuss conflicting groups in a *fictional* world; part of the design of the factual programs was to show elites how mass violence evolved in *other* countries around the world. This mechanism provides a safer space in which to discuss the issues presented, and through which audiences can then reflect upon conditions in their own country or village to 1) find a way to safely engage with those audiences it believes are particularly *resistant* to discussing the conflict or reconciling with members of conflicting groups, and therefore avoid preaching to the converted only; and 2) offer scenarios that will allow conflicting groups to engage with each other in discussions and debates about individuals or broader solutions without the discussion hitting too close to home, and therefore avoid defensive audience reactions that may cause guilty parties among the audience to not take the content seriously or avoid it altogether.

Though not our field of expertise, our understanding is that theories regarding the importance of developing a shared history are also lacking a substantive evidence base. Mendeloff (2004) argues that “many truth-telling claims rest on the validity of at least eight psychologically rooted assumptions...” (p. 363) including that “truth-telling promotes reconciliation,” “divided societies are better off held together than separated,” “shared, collective identities are peace-promoting,” and “truth-telling can serve as the basis of a new shared identity” (p. 364). But Mendeloff argues that these claims lack supporting empirical evidence. Like the other two theories outlined above, we hope that RLB will use its programs to add to the evidence base in this area.

6. Conclusions & Final Recommendations

RLB is having significant impacts. These are described in detail throughout this report, but we summarize the most notable here:

Gains in knowledge regarding:

1. Cycle of violence
2. Methods of manipulation by politicians

Positive changes in attitudes regarding:

3. Trust in communities
4. The importance of dealing with trauma
5. The dangers of scapegoating
6. The importance of active bystandership
7. Acceptance of marriage outside of one's own ethnic group
8. The importance of understanding complex truths about the past, developing a shared history, and seeking justice

Behavior changes:

9. Young listeners more willing to learn the other group's side of the story

10. Listeners less willing to automatically cede to authorities
11. Increased attendance at reconciliation activities
12. Increased discussion of topics presented in RLB programming with friends and family
13. Reduction of ethnically based speech in the media in Burundi

Overall:

14. RLB has had significant and positive impact on knowledge, attitudes, and behavior regarding the continuum of violence and trauma healing in the Great Lakes region.
15. Given the challenges of conceptualizing and implementing peacebuilding activities in conflict-affected areas, the amount of research, evaluation, and adaptation that has gone into RLB's work is noteworthy and unique.
16. RLB's "prototype" for implementation is composed of carefully considered building blocks, rendering its method adaptable in different contexts.
17. The stronger testimony regarding impact in Rwanda over impact in the DRC in Burundi, in the fieldwork, suggests that the program increases impact over time.

The RLB program is based on a strong theoretical and evidence-based foundation that can be translated to other contexts.

Would that this meant that one can produce a recipe book for how to produce edutainment programming for peacebuilding that would apply to any context. While RLB's work does suggest guidelines for others seeking to engage in similar work (described at the end of this section), the 'recipe' requires ingredient substitutions based on local context.

6.1. General Recommendations for Practitioners, Scholars, Policymakers, and Funders, Based on Our Analysis

We end this section with a brief summary of our findings, broken down by how they can inform the work of practitioners, scholars, policymakers, and funders:

Recommendations for practitioners engaging in narrative peacebuilding work:

- An understanding of how cycles of violence and trauma affect audiences' attitudes and behaviors can strengthen *any* peacebuilding intervention, and should be considered during peacebuilding work.
- To incorporate the RLB model, organizations must seek to impart knowledge about the cycle of violence and trauma healing to audiences. This knowledge should be based upon RLB's 35 messages.
- Carefully develop a solid theory of change for why interventions are expected to work. Consider how factors such as social norms and self-efficacy might influence behaviors, and test the logic of the framework through evaluations.
- Create storylines that allow audiences to reflect upon their country's conflict, but without having so much similarity to the current context that audiences seek to avoid discussion about the program, or avoid the program altogether.
- Be sure to include storylines that feature positive outcomes and aspirational futures. If negative characters and upsetting storylines are included, they should not serve as the main storyline.
- Narrative programming, typically, is not enough to change long-term behaviors. Programming must be accompanied by group discussion. While this can take a variety of formats, it is a necessary corollary to

the programming as it aids in sense-making, meaning-making, and message reinforcement, and contributes to the perceived social norm around the issue or behavior.

- While discussion is crucial, it must also be approached with caution, as unstructured discussion can have the undesirable effect of reinforcing group divisions.

Recommendations for scholars engaged in peacebuilding theory:

- With regard to the psychology behind peacebuilding, and how that psychology might fit in with media work, RLB's use of the theories of Staub and Pearlman offers convincing evidence that helping to create a *critical consciousness* – developing the ability to self-reflect on the cycle of violence – can be useful in affecting attitudes and behaviors that can promote or deter future violence.
- With regard to edutainment, RLB offers a case study of the potential positive impacts of the genre with respect to changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Theory regarding the importance of identification in entertainment programming may be of particular interest, as RLB has data on a variety of more and less likeable characters that may produce in audiences a greater (or lesser) desire to take on particular attitudes and behaviors.
- With regard to social norms research, RLB's work offers preliminary evidence that attention to social norms in media work can have widespread impacts on audiences in conflict contexts. Additionally, RLB's work with agents of change offers insight into how to influence social norms within communities.

Recommendations for funders:

- Narrative is an effective, yet perhaps underused, mechanism for promoting peacebuilding. It serves not only to increase exposure to messages, but particularly to increase exposure to *controversial* messages that audiences might otherwise be resistant to if presented in a didactic format.
- Narrative projects are also useful for reaching rural and less educated audiences. While the majority of peacebuilding and post-conflict media intervention work focuses on news programming and strengthening the journalism sector (as described above in our review of the field), RLB's popularity surveys, as well as our interviews with community leaders, have shown that less educated or rural audiences are less likely to listen to news programs and more likely to listen to entertainment programs, and vice versa: educated and urban audiences are more likely to listen to news programs and less likely to listen to radio entertainment programming than less educated or rural audiences (in part because they have other media sources they can access). Given that messages regarding divisions between tribal groups are often targeted at rural and less educated audiences, narrative programming may deserve more attention in this arena.
- Research, as well as anecdotes, indicate that media can serve a powerful role in conflict-affected regions, but the nature of this role is complex, and much remains to be learned. Funding for groups involved in post-conflict peacebuilding should include sufficient resources for rigorous evaluations, so that practitioners and scholars can learn what works and what does not, and so that future work can be strengthened.

6.2 Concluding Remarks

Given the challenges of conceptualizing and implementing peacebuilding activities in conflict-affected areas, the amount of research, evaluation, and adaptation that has gone into RLB's work is noteworthy and unique. In

addition to providing a wealth of information that RLB has used to improve its own work, it also allows outsiders insight into the complex world of peacebuilding through the media.

RLB promotes “an agenda of sanity, empathy, and mutual help” (GLRM 2 Final Report, 2011). By emphasizing the psychology behind violent acts, RLB helps audiences understand what makes us human, and how the humanity of a community can ignite its own healing. The ambition and achievements of RLB are extraordinary and we hope that our evaluation advances that work. Finally, we would like to thank the RLB staff and network who were generous enough to help in our interpretation and understanding of the evidence.

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Appendix A: Additional Team Bios

Robin Nabi, Consultant

Robin Nabi received her doctoral degree from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania in 1998. She is now a Professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Dr. Nabi is an expert in behavior change theory, and her research interests focus on the interplay between emotion and cognition in understanding the effects of mediated messages. Specific interests include the effects of discrete emotions on the cognitive processing and persuasive effect of social issue/health messages, the role of emotion in perception of risk and decision-making, and the effects of entertainment media on attitude and behavior change. Her work has appeared in several journals, including *Communication Theory*, *Communication Research*, *Communication Monographs*, *Journal of Communication*, *Media Psychology*, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, and *Cognition and Emotion*. Dr. Nabi has also served or is serving on the editorial boards of several journals, including *Human Communication Research*, *Communication Monographs*, and *Journal of Communication*. She is currently a co-editor of *Media Psychology* and chairs the Mass Communication Division of the International Communication Association.

Arezo Malakooti, Field Researcher and Fieldwork Coordinator

Malakooti is a Senior Consultant at Altai Consulting. She specializes in media and governance and social research for policy.

Matthieu Dillais, Field Researcher

Dillais is a Project Manager at Altai Consulting. He specializes in civil society, media, governance, and stabilization.

Marie-Soleil Frere, Consultant

Marie-Soleil Frère is a professor in the political science department at the Université Libre de Bruxelles. She specializes in the role of media in sub-Saharan Africa in the so-called democratization process.

Nestor Nkurunziza, Consultant

Nestor Nkurunziza is a lecturer in the Faculty of Law at the University of Burundi, and is an expert on transitional justice mechanisms.

Jenneth Macan-Markar

Jenneth Macan-Markar is a Program Manager at Women's Campaign International (WCI), a non-profit working on women's leadership and advancement at a global level, based in Philadelphia, PA, USA.

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