

LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE

**The Evaluation of a Television Event
and Educational Adventure**

Submitted To

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1987, World Development Productions, writers and creators of the television series, LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE*, launched a bold experiment in media outreach that has yielded exciting lessons for public education. The producers, in partnership with two consortia of religious and secular organizations, devised a community educational formula that went well beyond the crafting and airing of television programs.

The series' creators designed an intended remedy for the "information lag" that persists between knowledge of advances and challenges in developing nations and their inter-connections with trade and economic issues in the United States. The producers sought to engage therefore an expanded audience that would view a series of programs on trade and development linkages; would be moved by the economic, moral and spiritual issues raised; and would then seek to get involved. The necessary ingredient for success: to partner with organizations that could help attract a broader audience than might ordinarily be expected.

Strategy

The producers' strategy was straightforward. First, they had to find seed

*Originally titled "Breakthrough on Hunger"

money to deploy resources to staff and support the creation of a coalition. This was accomplished, and the result aptly described as the Citizen Involvement Network. Many of the organizations involved dealt with development issues on a day-to-day basis, while others had a more tangential interest. Several provided valuable input to the producers on the content of the series, identifying issues, contacts and perspectives that could serve the series well. (The organization of the Interreligious Coalition proceeded differently, and will receive less attention in this report).

Second, the producers tapped the pulse of a potential "grassroots" audience through focus group research to determine if a broad viewership was possible. Research conducted by Martin and Glantz and their associates yielded valuable information on different levels of understanding and approaches or "models" to galvanize viewer interest and attention.

The third step was to share that research with the Network and others interested in getting the word about the coming series to their own constituencies. The hope was that knowledge about different ways to organize viewer groups would stimulate corresponding action to follow through.

Fourth, the Network coordinator worked with producers to develop and share

other aids that organizations could use to promote, plan and stimulate discussion among their members. The last program in the series received special attention since it was seen as a particularly appropriate vehicle for viewer group discussion.

The fifth phase was to take full advantage of the whole process as a learning experience, a laboratory for the testing of public education strategies. A commitment was made to evaluate results and determine to what extent organizational promotion of the series resulted in viewing, discussion and follow-up action. An important expected outcome: defining lessons learned and recommendations for the future.

Outcomes

There is no doubt that World Development Productions, in conjunction with its PBS presenting station, South Carolina ETV, succeeded in developing a documentary series that could and did inform. All available data confirm that LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE put a human, engaging face on the economic, political, social and spiritual questions associated with international trade and development issues and relationships between the North and South. Thus as an educational resource, LH/GC clearly has the potential, where and if properly used, to redress the "information lag" pinpointed by the producers as an essential

motivation. As will be discussed below, the potential to activate grassroots participation has yet to be fully realized.

The experiment met other goals as well. Both producers and Network organizations benefited from the consultative process. Greater accuracy and sensitivity and an enhanced sense of "ownership" were among the gains perceived.

Grassroots research yielded valuable data for use in the production process. Obtaining data about possible viewer attitudes also helped producers clarify their thinking about the target audience. The concept of the "viewer group" emerged after field research as the centerpiece of the series educational design. This proved to be a watershed decision, tying promotional and organizing activity to the airing of program series, and particularly the last program.

Two kinds of resource materials developed to help Network members (and other organizations expressing interest) stage successful viewer group activities.. Promotional materials designed for easy use and duplication included one page brochures, posters and press release information. A one page reproducible discussion guide for program four and return postcards for Congressional contact and evaluation feedback were additional aids. Development of a more detailed

teacher's guide, written by LH/GC producers with help from the Network and distributed by South Carolina ETV, proceeded concurrently with the television production process. This timing sequence resulted in much less advance circulation of printed materials than had been originally intended.

In order for any experiment to be successful, conditions must be controlled and predictable. The initial viewer group hypothesis was that effective education could take place through organized local viewer group events geared to a television event. However, such a premise required conditions that in practice could not be assured in the world of public television -- conditions such as ample advance notice of uniform airing schedules, and air dates and times most conducive to grassroots organizers' needs. Thus, whereas the Network organizations, using their own outreach networks, could promote the series in advance, organizing constituents to watch and discuss the series together proved to be much more difficult.

To be sure, the series did stimulate abundant discussion. Survey evidence suggests that all four segments offered rich opportunities for dialogue and interaction. But the logistics involved in large scale mobilization of viewer groups around a PBS broadcast schedule that was out of the organizers' control proved

to be a hurdle that could not be fully conquered in the spring and summer of 1990. Still, issues raised and lessons learned provide solid evidence that planners of future educational events can gain from this "experimental" experience.

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

One lesson is clear. "The Local Heroes" experiment could benefit from another public sharing, either based on renewed PBS broadcasts or highly promoted video use. The issues so effectively presented are current and persistent. Given recent international trade developments, the series is expected by many in the field to have a long shelf life. Therefore, the reairing of the series or a major educational campaign featuring the videotape series present the same opportunities as the premiere showing offered. New assets are also in place. The Citizen Involvement Network now has institutional memory. Promotional and discussion materials are at hand. Data have been gathered on a communication and outreach network that can be pressed into service. With these advantages, and the necessary commitment and resources to mobilize them fully, prospects for success the "second time around" are far greater than before.

World Development Productions is to be commended for lifting horizons and adding new dimensions to media-related educational concepts. Any barriers and

detours encountered in this experience should be viewed as prerequisites for the drafting of a more accurate map of unexplored terrain.

Lessons learned can be applied not only to other television events, but also to renewed efforts to capitalize more fully on the still untapped potential of this series to inform and engage citizens of conscience.

Specific findings and strategies for maximizing the educational impact of television programs with similar missions are detailed in the accompanying full report.

BACKGROUND

In August 1987, the planners of LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE (then called "Breakthrough on Hunger") issued an invitation to aid agencies, civic groups, educational institutions and other interested organizations to enter into "a unique collaborative process".

Producers of the documentary envisioned creating a television series which would serve as a catalyst for the public to explore the economic, political and social issues and linkages associated with international trade and development in the South. They also intended for viewers to become engaged in public debate about the moral, ethical and spiritual implications of these inter-relationships. They

further wanted to attract and engage a wider viewing audience, the so-called "non-choir", a new set of people who may not have previously participated in learning about the linkages among all participants in a common global economy.

Obtaining Funding Support

The aims of the planners blended harmoniously with the interests of the Agency for International Development (AID) and its Biden-Pell program, which made available a grant in late 1987. The new funds provided support for the development and coordination of a coalition of organizations that could help reach that broader audience. This Citizen Involvement Network comprised groups for whom development, trade and international linkages took center stage or were less central to their mission. It became, along with an Interreligious Coalition organized under separate arrangements, the vehicle through which the envisioned "collaborative process" could occur. These resources also made possible the hiring of an experienced development education consultant, Elise Storck, who came aboard as network coordinator.

The Kellogg Foundation's Expectations

A Kellogg Foundation grant, awarded in May 1989, created another dimension for this experiment in public policy education. Kellogg support provided

for the conceptualization of a "viewer group participation model" with several permutations. These "models" were put forward as options to spread the word about the coming series and to encourage citizens to watch and participate together in the viewing of the programs. They were developed after assessing the results of grassroots research conducted by a San Francisco-based consulting firm, Martin & Glantz, and their associates, Beldon and Russonello. Researchers obtained field data through focus groups and brainstorming sessions in various locations around the nation.

Kellogg's interests in the demonstration aspect of LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE were varied. First, how well did the Network and the advisory committee formats serve the needs of the project? Second, Kellogg wanted to know to what extent proposed models for outreach and education were actually used in real-world settings by Network and other organizations. Third, feedback from the field was important. What did viewers have to say about educational events related to the series in which they participated?

The Kellogg Foundation also expressed a clear interest in any recommendations that might result from the experience so as to enhance what is known about launching effective public policy education activities utilizing a

television series focus.

Evaluation - An Imperative

Given these expectations, a comprehensive evaluation effort was imperative. In fact, the producers had already described plans to use staff and outside consultants to "appraise the educational value of the TV program, producer-Network collaboration, and the citizen involvement events. It will also assess," said the producers in a 1988 planning update report, "whether the project bears replication by television producers and interest groups focusing on other issues".* Initial evaluation data were gathered early in the project by the network coordinator. Potential participants in the Network were asked to respond to an early questionnaire, suggesting ideas to the producers about the series content. Opinions were also solicited on possible settings for viewer activities and the kinds of educational materials that would be useful to their constituents. Careful records were also kept of expressions of citizen interest, orders of materials,

*Planning Update/Citizen Involvement Activities/"Breakthrough on Hunger", June 25, 1988

correspondence, newsletter articles and other evidence of dissemination and outreach activities through June 1990, when the coordinator's assignment came to an end.

In early April 1990, the producers selected Professional Associates (PA) as the outside evaluation consultants for the project. Early tasks included gathering and understanding data pertaining to the project's history. PA also developed a three-pronged evaluation focus - the Network as an organization, the Network's dissemination and outreach efforts, and grassroots discussion/education events regardless of sponsorship.

Evaluation Methodology: Data Gathering and Analysis

PA's entry at this late stage ruled out the development of a comprehensive evaluation framework tied to specific goals and objectives, and the collection of baseline data required to measure project progress systematically. But it was possible to move quickly to document and assess dissemination efforts completed prior to the series airing in May. (The national "feed" took place in the month of May with the last program airing Memorial Day). It was also possible to ascertain Network members' plans for educational events around the series and to assess the value of the Network collaborative experience from each member's perspective.

Twenty-two (22) of the 33 organizational representatives identified by the network coordinator as Network members were contacted by PA and gave telephone interviews. Results of that survey provided the basis for further contacts by the producers to encourage greater outreach and discussion activity. The interviews also provided data for the documentation of the potential outreach and educational capability of the citizens' coalition.

Obtaining participant feedback was another important evaluation task. Scheduling of interviews proved difficult because airtimes varied in different parts of the country. Thus, when telephone interviews proved premature in many instances, mail questionnaires were sent to individuals selected (not randomly) from the coordinator's master list of organizations (Network and non-Network) that had expressed interest in the series.

From a total sample of 67, 34 persons returned questionnaires. In addition, 11 of 19 Network representatives responded from a group contacted separately that had agreed to hold discussion groups. Thus, data were obtained using mail questionnaires from a total of 45 persons.

A third data base comprised the 50 postcards returned by participants in discussion groups who had received discussion materials regarding program four.

There were two significant limitations of this data base. First, the 50 postcards actually represented only 16 discussion groups, since several postcards were received from each group. Second, the postcard format did not afford much space for substantive responses and yielded little information about the educational event itself.

Finally, PA had access for comparison purposes to questionnaires completed by members of the Interreligious Coalition, which functioned concurrently with the Citizens Involvement Network. Although these were a source of valuable information on another kind of collaborative process, they yielded almost no information on discussions, educational activities or actions taken in response to the series.

Study Limitations

Time and financial resources for evaluation did not permit the kind of assessment that would have fully illuminated this experiment's results. Data gathering in May, June and July did not capture use of the LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE series in videotape format for discussion or education events. (For example, a community-wide forum was sponsored in Chicago by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in October 1990 that featured a

series of public policy education activities using the videotapes over a four week period).

Further, data samples as noted were small and did not yield scientific inferences. Finally, given that feedback from the field was a voluntary process, neither the LH/GC producers, coordinator nor Network members had a firm grasp on what was happening in the field around the airing of the series. In fact, a substantial portion of the data received, concerning discussion/education events occurring or planned, came from organizations that were not involved in either of the citizen involvement coalitions.

Given these limitations and constraints, we present conclusions as suggestive patterns and trends rather than hard and fast "results". Still, these trends, the television series and the experimentation around it have much to teach those who would use a television series format for public policy education. Based on preliminary conclusions then, we offer lessons that were learned, "successes" to be emulated and recommendations to be tested in future efforts of this kind.

LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE: STRUCTURING A "MODEL" EVALUATION

The word "model" means different things in different contexts. In an experimental undertaking such as LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE, "model"

connotes a mode of demonstration, one of several approaches that could be devised to solve a problem or to test a hypothesis. It does not necessarily represent, given the pathfinding nature of this project, a strategy to be "replicated because of its proven effectiveness".

The creators of the LH/GC experiment have tested two such experimental models for public policy education. One addresses sustained networking around the development of a television series. The other approach focuses on strategies for grassroots issues and policy education.

With regard to networking, the Citizen Involvement Network was a model for bringing together organizations in an elastic, ever changing grouping which invested minimally in the collaboration process and operated in nearly ad hoc fashion. By contrast, the networking model used by religious groups - the Interreligious Coalition- forged a union that, much like a federation, drew upon financial and other contributions of member groups to function as a more cohesive entity. Although a full description of both models lies beyond the scope of this evaluation, we will take a closer look at the Citizen Involvement Network later in this report to assess its functioning. We will also share some observations concerning the approach of the Interreligious Coalition, its relative advantages and

disadvantages and the similarities between the two.

The second model used in the "Local Heroes" experiment presents options for public policy education involving expanded grassroots audiences through involvement and discussion around a television series programs. The producers retained a market research firm, Martin & Glantz, to conduct grassroots field research by way of focus groups in Towson, Maryland and Fredericksburg, Virginia and brainstorming sessions in San Diego, California and Madison, Wisconsin. These grassroots encounters yielded helpful suggestions regarding the series content. They also resulted in recommendations for the organization of viewer groups (i.e., groups convened to watch the series together).

The suggestions of Martin and Glantz addressed ways in which multiple agencies might organize and coordinate viewer group activities at the local community level. The researchers also identified different models through which participating agencies could educate participants via substantive discussion events (e.g., through debates, panel discussions, house party discussion groups). They also proposed incorporating entertainment in educational models as a different approach, such as international food fairs, celebrity events, and storytelling activities. Additional ways in which local organizations could plan multiple events

were building programs around "significant dates" (e.g. World Food Day, Spring CROP Walk) or coordinated "teach-ins" tied to the television series.

An integral accompaniment to the menu of grassroots education models advanced by the researchers was the concept of "community targeting". This term referred to the identification of selected communities based on success factors, such as the presence of Network and Interreligious members; local leadership capacity; PBS market penetration, etc. Assuming the interaction of a strong series theme, "an organizing program menu and a targeted field program," the researchers were prepared to predict success for the LH/GC experiment --- greater public awareness and involvement in trade, aid and development linkages.

THE CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT NETWORK: THE KEY TO ENGAGING AN EXPANDED TELEVISION AUDIENCE

The call for collaboration went forth in the early days of LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE, reflecting a commitment from the outset to stage citizen involvement events that engaged viewers in discussion - and action. A brochure disseminated by the producers in the fall of 1987 described the need to really reach the American public with lessons learned through development in the South. Noting how important "wide civic involvement" was to this unique educational program, the series producers announced their intention to plan public involvement

events through "a unique collaborative process involving private aid agencies, civic groups and religious organizations concerned about hunger education".

The Network's Composition

Using the resources afforded by a Biden-Pell Development Education Grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development, the series creators hired Elise Storck, a development education consultant. Her assignment was to help construct and coordinate a network of organizations likely to have programmatic interest in the telecast. Initially 32 organizations (listed on the one-page LH/GC one-page brochure) became affiliated with the Network. It comprised organizations with strong international interests and ties (e.g. African Development Foundation, CARE); activists (e.g. Results); groups serving educators (e.g., American Association of School Administrators); and organizations with traditionally domestic interests seeking to increase their members' competence on trade, development and related questions (e.g., National Association of Social Workers).

Network members included groups with large constituent networks (e.g., YWCA of the USA), as well as those with a professional focus (e.g. American Home Economics Association). All answered the call, however, to help advise the series producers; to receive advance notice of the coming series so as to inform

their constituents; and, as envisioned by the producers, to stage viewer events (e.g., regional interactive and/or local educational activities) focused particularly on the last program in the new series.

The Network in Action

The Network operated in a rather ad hoc fashion. Members were bound by a common interest, the anticipated television documentary, and by professional relationships to either the coordinator of the producers, or both. The group did not establish a collective mission of its own, nor did it formulate operating procedures. Network members related to each other principally at meetings (a total of seven were held over the three year period). In addition, both the coordinator and a producers held individual consultations with organizations in the Network on a selective basis.

As plans for the airing of the series progressed, the Network experienced some changes. Some organizations originally listed as Network members apparently drifted away (e.g., American Dietetic Association and American Home Economics Association). Several organizations that were active in the early stages lessened their involvement as time went on. Some new groups joined the Network: the Interfaith Hunger Appeal, Winrock International and the American

Jewish World Service. The last also participated in the Interreligious Coalition.

This ebb and flow of participation is not surprising. It reflected the loose and flexible character of the Network, as well as the differing expectations of its members. For example, those who were principally interested in having input regarding the series content fell away when that phase of the project was completed. Those on the other hand that desired to make the new television resource available to their members remained active throughout.

The core of the Network, based on our assessment of sustained activity, responsiveness and action taken, constituted twenty (20) organizations. These organizations played multiple roles in support of the effort. They provided input to the producers; helped review and edit educational materials; assisted with field research planning; and of course, attended meetings.

They also provided contacts for field shoots; offered opportunities for presentations at their own conferences and workshops; hosted Network meetings; and maintained regular telephone contact with LH/GC staff. In addition, they disseminated brochures and discussion packets; circulated information about the series in newsletters, press releases, special mailings and action alerts.

Network Achievements

Although it is impossible to calculate just how many people were reached through these promotional efforts, our estimates are that at least 500,000 contacts were made, many of whom in turn were in touch with wider networks. Although survey data can only be suggestive, it is evident that 86% of the promotional materials sent out by the network coordinator were in response to requests from Network organizations. Further, well over 50% of the persons who contacted the coordinator for information about the series had been made aware of LH/GC by a network-affiliated organization.

To summarize, the preliminary data available from our survey indicate that the coalition members did indeed "get the word out", and successfully promoted interest in the series among their national constituencies. Even the Publicity Report (compiled by SCETV for World Development Productions) attests to coverage of the series in areas where there had been no consistent PBS promotional activities, thus providing further evidence of the Network's impact. It is interesting to note moreover that based on interviews, expectations of most Network organizations concerning the series, the Network and their role in the promotional and outreach process were essentially met.

Widespread Grassroots Involvement: An Unmet Expectation?

And yet, from the outset, the creators and producers of LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE had made it clear that they sought to do more. The hope was that the Network would not only "get the word out", but would also engage an expanded audience in discussing the series, becoming involved and taking action that a new or heightened reflected understanding of the issues and linkages presented. In a June 1989 communication, coordinator Elise Storck wrote: "In order to engage viewers in discussion groups and other educational activities, we will depend on your help in getting the word out and encouraging your local staff and members to participate". A summary of the field research results was circulated in the same period, which clearly spelled out options or models for the organization of educational events around the series.

After the broadcast, answers to the questionnaire were received from 11 members of the Network and 34 other contacts identified in the coordinator's files. Of the 45 responses, only eight (8) persons reported having actually participated in discussion groups. Three of the five organizational sponsors involved were affiliated with the Network effort. The postcards received provided information on a total of 12 Network-affiliated groups out of 16 groups identified.

Even with such limited data, one can conclude that the Citizen Involvement Network members were not as successful in actually convening discussion groups as had been hoped. Several Network participants personally convened groups to discuss one of the programs, but there is no evidence that any Network member was able to fully mobilize his or her organization's resources for grassroots education as originally envisioned. [The only such example encountered during this assessment comes from the Interreligious Coalition, not the Citizens Network - the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.]

It follows then that there was relatively little experimentation with the Martin & Glantz community organizing models. Most discussion took place in "house party" or "brown bag" settings. It is not surprising that this occurred since these formats were the easiest to arrange on relatively short notice. Further, most discussion groups did not involve "experts" as presenters or panelists, but rather as participants. Indeed, the reported level of knowledge of the issues addressed in the series was generally high, with most respondents reporting a good to excellent level of knowledge of the series content.

Unanticipated Impediments to Educational Mobilization

Why were discussion groups and community organizing so difficult to

arrange? To answer, we must be aware that production planning and logistics encountered more than one detour along the road to broadcast. First, the original title of the documentary, "Breakthrough on Hunger" changed mid-stream, an apparent artistic necessity but an event that had considerable negative repercussions for the organizing activities already underway. Even more difficult was PBS' delay in scheduling the national air date for the series. Firm information about dates and times could not be shared with Network and other contacts until approximately 90 days before the national feed. Further, the carriage schedule, consecutive Mondays in May at 10:00 p.m., concluding with Memorial Day, disappointed many organizational representatives. The holiday and late hour showings alone presented logistics challenges that could not easily be solved by participating groups. A further complication was that airtimes differed in different parts of the nation, a particularly vexing problem for any nationally coordinated educational activity. Finally, educational materials were also delayed, and hence, could not always be circulated sufficiently in advance of airtime.

To summarize, the Citizen Involvement Network worked well as a collaborative model in certain respects. The dialogue between participating civic organizations and producers around the content of the series proved to be mutually

beneficial. The Network's performance in disseminating information about the series was similarly effective. However, use of the Network as a laboratory to test public policy education models was less successful, for reasons related in part to external constraints. Other reasons pertain to the structure of the Network itself. To shed light on the nature of the Network as a contributing factor to this shortfall in expectations, we turn to a brief comparative assessment of yet another form of association, the Interreligious Coalition, and its relative effectiveness.

THE INTERRELIGIOUS COALITION: AN ALTERNATIVE COLLABORATIVE MODEL

Although Professional Associates was not retained to evaluate the Interreligious Coalition, we had the unexpected opportunity to observe a final session in which Coalition members assessed their collective experience. We also had access to written questionnaires prepared by Coalition members to assess the Coalition process and its results. These glimpses into the other citizen involvement process initiated by the producers of LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE offer a valuable comparative evaluation perspective.

The Interreligious Coalition actually came into being first, having been organized in early 1987. It comprised 21 agencies of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish denominations. The Coalition set out to interact with the producers,

providing input and advice as did the non-denominational Network. This early phase of the organization's work was viewed most positively, since it afforded a "rare interchange and dialogue with media producers" that provided mutual benefits.

The Coalition also established a much more ambitious agenda. Substantial "dues", generally \$2,000 per organization per, year were collected over the three year period to support other activities. The group engaged staff to coordinate and develop a study guide for congregational use, as well as an audio visual tool integrated with the study guide. The staff coordinator also assisted the Coalition as it prepared, printed and distributed 150,000 brochures, and helped launch a program of promotion and publicity, mainly in the church press.

Notwithstanding these tangible accomplishments, some prominent members of the Coalition appeared to assess the experience with LH/GC with considerably less enthusiasm than could be found among Network members. The long lead time during series production was seen as a serious impediment by Coalition members. Understandably, changes in the concept, title and content of the television series by producers had a much greater impact on the development of a companion guide. Coalition members generally perceived such changes as

having created great confusion among their constituents (a fact that was not fully documented), and hence, in response to that perception, appeared to have lessened their activities in the period immediately before the series release. Thus, although there were sales of approximately 22,500 congregational study booklets (18,000 went to ELCA), that number represented a very small proportion of the audience that could have been reached by this group.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America represents a very interesting exception to this scenario. ELCA was one of the most heavily "invested" of the Coalition members, having paid \$10,000 for their own study booklets and contributed substantially to the total effort. ELCA's representative expressed a strong sense of "ownership" concerning the series. She reported having been highly motivated to promote and push the series with her constituency because of the ongoing evolving relationship with the TV producers and the opportunity to see some of her ideas and suggestions actually incorporated into production plans. She was not convinced that the initial PBS airing was the best vehicle to organize around, and had not pushed to organize a community education activity at that time. However, she had initiated under ELCA's auspices a community-wide educational series around the consecutive showing of the videotapes on a four

week consecutive basis in October 1990. As noted, ELCA was the only organization in either national consortium that had initiated such plans at the time this report was written.

Comparing the Coalition and Network

There are obvious differences between the Network and Coalition approaches. One group operated in ad hoc fashion, with responsibilities assumed for the most part on an individual rather than a collective basis. The Coalition on the other hand became an organization in its own right, investing a great deal of time, energy and money to advance a shared agenda. Most Network members reported having met their expectations; there was much less agreement on that score in the Interreligious Coalition. Both organizations helped promote the series, but in different ways and time frames. The Coalition's intense efforts, involving the circulation of their own brochures and discussion materials, appeared to have been premature, since they occurred at a time when the series was evolving, and hence, was not yet available in its final form. In contrast, promotional efforts by Network members took place quite late in the process, too late in some instances to meet internal publication deadlines. Nevertheless, 60% of the Network (and over 90% of its core membership) ultimately made some attempt to reach their

constituencies, with documented results.

The two coalitions had one thing in common. In general, they failed to engage their constituencies in discussion of the initial LH/GC series at the community or grassroots level at the time of initial presentation by PBS. In fact, although such involvement was clearly expected by the LH/GC staff, there is no evidence that members of either group (with the exception of ELCA) had committed to move in that direction. Given actual experience with production delays, PBS scheduling difficulties and the like, their reluctance to commit beyond the promotion stage of the project is understandable. It is still noteworthy however that there was such a gap in these respective expectations.

PA FINDINGS: INGREDIENTS FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

Expanding the Viewer Group Concept

The inability to engage discussants at the grassroots level as envisioned gives rise to the question of feasibility. What conditions would have to exist in order for the "viewer group hypothesis" to work, that is, the organization and convening of discussion groups around the airing of a TV program? Ideally, there would be built-in "lag time" between the end of production and the airing of the series to allow for maximum media promotion, widespread dissemination of

discussion materials, and sufficient lead time for the news to "trickle down" to local chapters, using intra-organizational dissemination vehicles. Further, additional time and resources would be needed to involve non-organizational discussants, an important consideration if persons unfamiliar with the TV series issues (the "non-choir" as described by Martin & Glantz) are to be reached. If such a hiatus between production and airing is not possible because of the series topical nature or other factors, then there must be alternative strategies to pursue.

Returning to the survey data, 20 of the 37 survey respondents who reported they had not participated in a discussion group, also answered "yes" when asked if they planned to do so. They reported the intention of using the videotape version in college classes, community groups, church congregations, hunger organizations, Bread for the World and Results discussion groups, etc. Correspondence received by the network coordinator also attests to the extended "shelf life" of the LH/GC series, with educators particularly well represented among future users of the materials.

Organizing around the series in videotape format is a logical alternative, but it is not the only one. Several of the Network representatives, keenly aware of the difficulties posed by the LH/GC premiere airing, suggested other strategies for

wider dissemination of the LH/GC message. For example, several survey respondents urged that the series be presented again, at a different time slot and with much more advance notice to interested organizations.

In addition, both Network members and survey respondents perceived that a different kind of effort was needed, than either the Network or the Interreligious Coalition had undertaken, to truly engage citizens at the grassroots level. The following organizational comments are illustrative:

- * African Development Foundation - Need special efforts to engage minority communities Interaction - Use local structures, need greater ongoing effort in local communities
- * Society for International Development - If had more dollars, could have hired part-time staff and developed generic materials to use; Network should be an ongoing resource
- * United Nations Association of the U.S.A. - Need a guide to organizing/networking to give constituents more guidance in reaching and working with other organizations
- * YWCA - Organizations should network with others at the local level, using the series as a vehicle, especially organizations with grassroots

constituencies.

Clearly, a different approach will be needed to fully capitalize on more ideal airing or viewing circumstances. Survey responses from the field also confirm the importance of the allocation of adequate resources and the systematic preparation for viewer discussion groups at the community level.

- * "Needed to have organizations plan a discussion after viewing"
- * "Didn't know who are how or where to plan a group. Would have appreciated having names and addresses of key groups in my area - a true local network"
- * "800 telephone number for people to call to help facilitate formation of interest groups"
- * "Repeat of the series might be appropriate around UN Day, World Food Day, etc."

We think that evidence abounds documenting the fact that the "viewer group" concept can easily be expanded to include new audiences for LH/GC presented via videotape or re-presented via PBS. Ingredients for success "the second time around" obviously include not only maximum cooperation from PBS, but also organizational commitment, creativity and additional financial resources as

prerequisites for a potentially successful localized grassroots effort.

Coordinating a Citizen Involvement Campaign around a Media Series

Given its ad hoc configuration, it is clear that the Network could not have come into existence or have functioned without the assistance of a coordinator. The coordinator retained in this instance, Elise Storck, received high marks from Network colleagues for her knowledge of the development education field and its actors. She also received plaudits for her initiative, responsiveness and ability to maintain solid one-on-one contact with different Network representatives. These skills proved to be of utmost importance in the project.

It is something of an anomaly that the coordinator's services had to be terminated, because of budget constraints, just as the time the PBS airing of LH/GC was being scheduled in several communities (June 1990). Further, it was apparent that a part-time coordinator, while possibly adequate to support a national network, could hardly suffice if there was a more intensive campaign to engage networks of local Network counterparts and other local organizations. It is our opinion, in fact, that the availability of staff with the necessary skills to help "prime the pump" in local communities, identify existing community networks or bring together organizations with similar interests would be a prerequisite for a truly

effective community education campaign.

Based on these observations, it would also be important to maximize the communication and coordination between the producers and the coordinating staff to ensure that information about changes, schedules, availability of materials and the like is communicated to that individual's contacts as quickly as possible. In the case where the producer and coordinator are in separate cities, such regularized communication is imperative and should be built into the management process.

Public Policy Education from the "Bottom Up"

Many of the requests for information received by the coordinator came from organizations and institutions in the field which were entirely unrelated to either the Network or Interreligious Coalition members. Strong interest was expressed by activists, educators who had heard about (or seen) programs and the like. Such expressions of interest suggest that it would be a mistake to gear a community education campaign solely around those constituencies reached through national organizations alone. There are also coalition organizations already in existence, such as a hunger and education coordinating committee in Columbus, Ohio, FIDO in California) that could represent a ready-made vehicle for encouraging grassroots-level discussion, involvement and action.

The Preparation, Presentation and Reception of Educational Materials

LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE was generally well received by the individuals contacted during the PA evaluation. It should be noted that most of these respondents fell in the category of the "choir", persons who had some knowledge of the issues and linkages addressed in the TV series. In fact, only 7 of the 45 respondents reported a level of knowledge of the series content that was poor or fair, and all wanted to pursue the topics further.

It is instructive to report what viewers liked about the series:

"Local heroes segments - excellent, vivid, emotionally moving, very informational"

"New thinking on 'development' from below"

"Humanizing of ...development, showing real people and the process elements"

"real people with real problems"

"liked examples of development which countered western models"

"series dissected the problems without any clear ideology, but with a problem oriented analysis".

Early in the project a decision was made to target discussion materials

disseminated by the network coordinator on the last program in the series. Organizers would be able, it was felt, to concentrate their efforts. Further, the themes of program 4 (U.S. - Third World linkages and the impact of policies) were perceived to be of particular interest to targeted participants. Our data indicate that such a perception may not have been correct. Actually, the smallest number of viewers (22) watched program 4, and some respondents reported liking that program least. On the other hand, the largest number watched program one (29), which elicited many favorable comments (particularly the Grameen Bank segment). In fact, several persons who viewed only program four commented that they needed more of an introduction to the series to understand the context. These data, albeit sketchy, suggest that it may be unduly limiting to promote only one program in a television series. Further, based on comments received, other programs served as effective vehicles for discussion of the issues addressed in the series.

It has already been observed that educators were among the most enthusiastic viewers of the series. Indeed, the educational value of the series was widely noted, confirming a finding of the field researchers that "basically education, not activism was the primary motivation for people who said they would watch and

attend viewer groups". Information collected by the coordinator also confirmed that the greatest number of educational events conducted or being planned were campus-based.

This high level of interest suggests an area for focus among educators in any subsequent promotional and organizational activity around the series. It also gives credence to comments offered by several observers, urging the reformatting of the series for more effective use in educational settings. For example, representatives of Global Learning, USDA Extension Service and Winrock International all recommended reformatting and consolidating the series in shorter segments (or collapsing the series into a one hour instructional videotape) for use by organizations with limited program flexibility (e.g., high school classes, 4-H clubs). These suggestions were intended to offer additional ways to make what was perceived as an excellent educational resource available to the widest possible audience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this discussion, we believe there are several ingredients required for the successful mounting of a citizen involvement and education campaign. It is interesting to note that many of these same suggestions surfaced in PA's

interviews with Network organization members as well as survey respondents in the field.

1. The "concept of a national network" or coalition has proved valuable for encouraging the interest of constituents and promoting information around a television series. It would appear however that having the capability to organize and mobilize "on the ground" in communities across the nation is also critically important. Thus, in the engagement phase of a public policy education campaign, networking and coalition building among the local counterparts of national organizations, or among other local community-based organizations, appear necessary. This approach, coupled with the "community targeting" concept recommended by Martin and Glantz, would represent a grassroots education model with great potential.

2. Networking and grassroots organization are not synonymous. Although every organization in the network made a contribution, special attention should be given in community education efforts to the involvement of organizations with proven ability to "get out the troops". Also needed are organizations that can involve people who may not be knowledgeable about the issues covered in the television series, the "non-choir" audience.

3. Making discussion materials available is not a substitute for actually convening discussion groups. Indeed, some of the liveliest discussions, as reported in surveys, took place without much reliance on the discussion materials prepared. It may be more important to get limited materials on "how to organize" in the hands of potential discussants in time for them to be used in the field, than to polish discussion guides to everyone's satisfaction and delay their arrival.

4. Producers should seek to negotiate, as far in advance as possible, agreements with the presenting network/station to air the series at the best possible time and date; to air the series more than once; and to advise the general public and interested organizations as soon as possible. In fact, if viewer groups are to be organized around a television presentation, an effective, multi-city public relations campaign is indispensable.

5. This experience confirms the need for staff to be available leading up to, during and following the airing of the television series, to encourage organizations to follow through on grassroots educational activities, and to respond to inquiries/suggestions from the field. During the community involvement and education phase of the effort, emphasis should be placed on staff organizing, coordinating and mobilization skills, as well as knowledge of the issues addressed

by the documentary.

6. Organizing viewer groups around the scheduling of a television series may present particular challenges for organizations that have established organizational priorities, operate according to established calendar events (e.g. school-based), or require multi-level approvals of recommended activities. For such organizations, there is a need to promote extensively the availability for videotapes and discussion materials as early as possible, at the time of airing and after the airing of the program series.

7. Every effort should be made to clarify the roles and responsibilities of production personnel and staff working on citizen involvement. We recommend the development and implementation of strategies for systematic information exchange and regular communication flow between them to maximize the effectiveness of the entire effort.

CONCLUSION

There are as many lessons to be learned for experiences that are somewhat less than totally successful, as there are in unquestioned achievements. We have drawn inferences from these assessments and comparisons that can serve as the basis for future organizing efforts.

LOCAL HEROES, GLOBAL CHANGE presented via public television or in videotape format offers renewed opportunities to put these recommendations into effect. In fact, given the challenges encountered in the current round of GATT negotiations, this television series could become a vehicle to promote greater understanding worldwide at a time when it is most urgently needed. As important, LH/GC's lessons can be applied to other television documentaries yet to come, which similarly seek to redress an "information lag" between changes in our world and our grasp of their significance for our lives.

Assessment of Network Participation/Local Heroes/Global Change by Organization

Organization	Brochures/Materials Ordered	Newsletter/Other Provider	Sponsored Discussion Group	Other Activity	Comments
African Devel. Foundation (Nash)	500	*Encouraged 30 staff to sponsor discussion groups *Shared information with Friends of ADF organizations	Sponsored by Nash at headquarters	*Advised producers/ *Hosted network meetings	
Agricultural Cooperative Development International (Rucker)	50 brochures 45-program #4 kits	*Growmark bulletin for 1,000 *Newsletter *Press release to 60+ coop communications *Asked 50+ people to watch (sent out E mail)		*Attended meetings *Advised the producers/gave input	Biden-Pell grantee (devel. ed. working with agricultural coops in US)
American Association of School Administrators (Buzman)		*Information shared with school district *General notice to 19,000 members		Attended meetings	*Biden-Pell *International curriculum in schools

Organization	Brochures/Materials Ordered	Newsletter/Other Provider	Sponsored Discussion Group	Other Activity	Comments
American Dietetic Association (Bronner)				*Attended meetings *Referred for participation in focus groups	
American Jewish World Service (Schwartz)	60 13 program # 4 kits	Yes - through network mailing to board members to encourage them to watch		*Involvement in planning	*Also in Interrel. Coalition *Biden-Pell grantee
CARE (Long)				Provided contacts for field shoots	*Wanted "airtime for own projects *NY CARE no longer has development education component
General Federation of Women's Clubs (Bartfield)		*Promoted in newsletter *April publication to 250 board members in 50 states		Attended meetings	Interested in what people can <u>do</u> . Name/date changes were confusing.
Global Learning (Brown)		Published one page brochure as back page of newsletter to 2700		*Responded by mail, shared resources *Shared information, minutes with others	*Works primarily with NJ school systems *In touch with anti-hunger activists
Global Tomorrow Coalition (D'Addio)				*Advised producers *Attended meetings earlier in project	Environmental development - sustained agriculture

Organization	Brochures/Materials Ordered	Newsletter/Other Provider	Sponsored Discussion Group	Other Activity	Comments
Interaction (Keehn)	300	Several newsletter article reaching 4,000		Ongoing telephone contact	Major coalition of PVDS
Interfaith Hunger Appeal (Savitt)		Teach Net newsletter to 500 college faculty and PVDS			*Biden Pell grantee *International curriculum at college level *Also in Interreligious Coalition
International Association of Lions Clubs (Cywinski)		Some items in newsletters			Vast network available but untapped for this purpose.
International Development Conference (Rice/Berg)	(Indirectly) 16,000	Provided entry as sponsor for inclusion in World Food Day mailing to 16,000		Attended and co-hosted meetings	Co-sponsor Ideas and Information in International Education Conference
USDA ISEC/OICS (Hively)	100	Mailing and other efforts have generated many inquiries		Attended meetings	International offices of land grant colleges Title 12 - collaborative training overseas wants copy of final report
National Association of Extension Home Economists (Huggins)				*Invited LH/GC coordinator to speak at national conference *Attended early meetings	

Organization	Brochures/Materials Ordered	Newsletter/Other Provider	Sponsored Discussion Group	Other Activity	Comments
National Association of Social Workers (Van Soest)	18-prog. #4 kits	*Send materials to state offices *3 mailings sent *Articles in chapter newsletter		*Identified focus group participants *Attended meetings	*Biden-Pell grantee *Professional skill building effort
National Committee for World Food Day (Young)	16,000 mailing			*Attended meetings *Annual telephone conference included film clips of series	National clearinghouse of 450 organizations
National Council/Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (Byergo)	250			*Referred persons for focus groups *Attended meetings *Editorial Assistance *Input to producers	*Biden-Pell grantee **"Bring the World Back Home"
National Council/World Affairs Organization (Chitwood)				First representative was on advisory committee	Loose confederation
OEF International (Radowski)		Flyers sent to contacts who also sent them out		Early meetings	*Formerly associated with League of Women Voters *PVO working with women
Pan American Development Foundation (Quintrell)					No longer Biden-Pell grantee

Organization	Brochures/Materials Ordered	Newsletter/Other Provider	Sponsored Discussion Group	Other Activity	Comments
Partners of the Americas (Russell)					"Twining" projects
Results (Harris)		Announced at nationwide conference with 250 volunteers		Participated in meetings	Non-church-based BFW, letter writers and activists
Sister Cities International (Oakland)					
SID National Chapters Center (Sween)	100			*Co-hosted and attended meetings	
Society for Nutrition Education (Goodwin)				*Attended meetings *Offered suggestions early in process	
Trade and Development Program (Reeves/Hall)	355	*Alerted BFW network *Mentioned series in meetings *The Grange, a member organization, sent newsletter to 4,100 chapter (325,000 Grange members) *Sent LH/GC letter to 1200 on TDP list *Congress contacts, news media and subscribers		*Major input on discussion guide *Advice to producers *Attended meetings	Coalition of 9 farm and church groups

Organization	Brochures/Materials Ordered	Newsletter/Other Provider	Sponsored Discussion Group	Other Activity	Comments
United Nations Association (Olson)		*Included materials in publications *Has sent out action alerts		Represented at meetings	Produces own study materials
USAID (Connolly)	200	Mailings to international faculty at agricultural schools	Plans at North Carolina State University	Memos to staff of Washington office	Works with science/technology centers at universities
USDA Extension Service (McGirr)	400	Letters sent generated many responses			Looking for resources to disseminate
Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (Buice)		*Sent out information to 350 volunteers and 1,200 CEOs of coops *Press release out *Required office staff to watch	House party format used in at least 3 different locations	Attended meetings	*Biden-Pell recipient *Peace Corps for farmers
Winrock International (Swegle)	10	Has promoted among Ark. leaders and bankers		Advice to producers via advisory group	*Part of Rockefeller empire *PVO and a foundation
YMCA of the USA (Spaulding)	35				Biden-Pell recipient
YWCA (Gillilan-Goldberg)	Brochures to 1,500 affiliates	Promoted LH/GC in-house newsletter *Used press release from Interrel. Coalition			Keynote speaker plugged series at international conference.