



'Final Destination' TV drama and 'Directions' radio drama Monitoring Report



**Gobisumber and
Dundgobi Aimags
9th-13th April 2007**



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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COMMONS DEED

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Background:

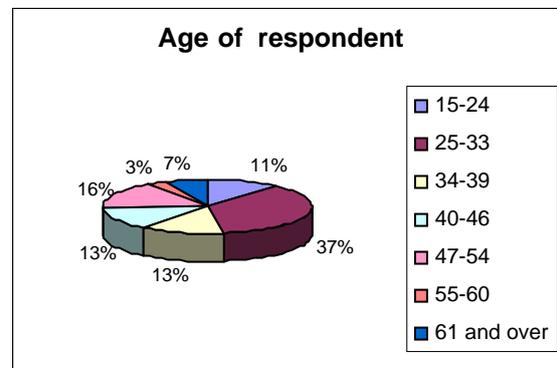
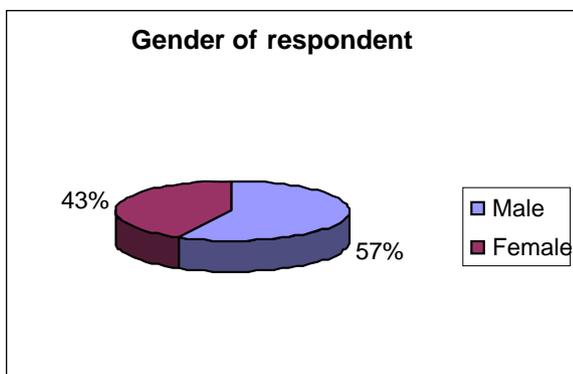
Monitoring activities for two products created under the Gobi Initiative project, 'Directions' radio drama and 'Final Destination' television drama, were carried out in two Gobi aimags between the 9th and 13th of April 2007. In total, sixty-one people were interviewed in seven soums - five in Gobisumber and two in Dundgobi. Unbeknown to the organizer of the trip, one of the soums selected was the town in which Final Destination was filmed.

The monitoring aimed to:

- Assess user response to both products.
- Monitor the dissemination of the information contained in the shows.
- Gather feedback for the continued improvement of Pact productions.
- Examine the level of impact of the products on the activities and knowledge levels of the target beneficiaries.
- Introduce target beneficiaries to RBN products and subscription options.

The methodology employed in this exercise included a questionnaire completed by the Pact moderator through one-on-one discussions with participants. It is now an established factor that people prefer not to fill in a survey, but like to talk, and more can be garnered from these conversations than can be expressed in writing.

Copies of past RBN magazines were distributed to participants, and subscription options discussed with them.



*'I liked that the series [Final Destination] looks at a veterinary clinic' -
Choir, Gobisumber aimag*

Findings:

This exercise brought to the fore the widening chasm between **radio and television**, with television being the preferred medium.

Three of the soums in Gobisumber aimag were along the either the railway or a road; therefore these communities are more sedentary than others, with people watching more TV than they listening to the radio. However, the soums in Dundgobi are more isolated and TV reception isn't as good as radio reception, and so they listen to radio programs more. Inhabitants of these soums, however, were quick to stress that, had they alternative energy sources or decent reception devices, they would watch television rather than listening to the radio, and when they are in a place with a television, they unflinchingly do so.

Gobisumber and Dundgobi have household populations of 3.8 and 3.9 respectively¹. The average number of people listening to the radio in each household surveyed in these aimags was two, while the average number of people watching television was three. Seven percent of respondents replied that they did not own a television set, and ten percent replied that they didn't own a radio. The television audience is larger than radio listenership.

Responses received for **Final Destination** continually stressed the applicability of the series, of how it accurately portrayed soum life. When respondents were asked what they most liked about the program, twenty-one percent replied that 'The show portrayed real Mongolian countryside life successfully', with seventeen percent stating that, 'The characters were believable, real and easy to relate to'. Nineteen percent of respondents said that they liked how the show had 'increased my knowledge about veterinary matters', and eleven percent felt that the show had allowed them to 'learn[ed] about good business practice'. Only seven percent of respondents were unable to name a character from the program, or supply a word to describe the character.

Almost half of those questioned replied that the series had made it possible for them to 'broaden their base knowledge of veterinary activities and value', with specifics including understanding the value of a good vet clinic, learning about livestock vaccinations, learning how to differentiate between real and fake medicines, increasing knowledge about how to improve the health of livestock, understanding the importance of timely administration of vet medication and learning how to remove internal parasites with laxatives. Sixteen percent replied that they 'understood about what constitutes a good vet clinic and how important it is'.

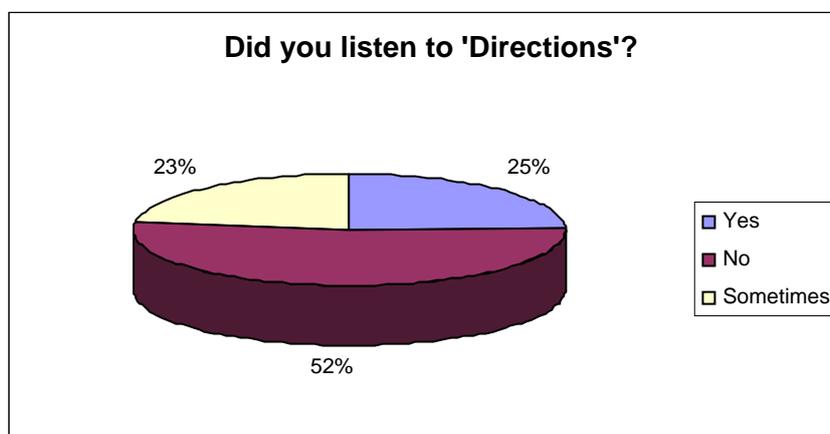
When asked what suggestions they have for future episodes, a number of participants called for an increase in the length of each episode, and that the broadcast channel be changed to Mongolian National Broadcaster (MNB) as the national broadcaster is accessible everywhere. There were also a number of calls to decrease the amount of music and monologues in the programs, and to increase the conversation and the action. Topics for future programs

¹ Mongolian Statistical Yearbook, 2005, pg 69,70

suggested by participants included information about desertification, zoonotic diseases, improving herd breeds, pasture and soil preservation and legal information.

A request was received from the Deputy Governor of Gobi-Ugtaal soum, Dundgobi aimag, himself the star of the Final Destination TV series, to broadcast the series on the Dundgobi aimag TV channel.

'Directions', unlike 'Final Destination', was not immediately familiar to most respondents. Those that did know about it were unable to recall the specific events of the drama. Forty-four percent of respondents were unable to recall the name of a single character from the series. Of those that were able to identify characters, Tudev was the most popular (25%), with Mydagmaa following closely with twenty-two percent.



Of those that replied 'no' to the question above, fifty-six percent replied that they had never heard of the program, and seemed unaware that a new series was underway.

Bearing in mind that broadcast had concluded earlier in the year, a number of participants were unable to recall the broadcasting hours and asked for the schedule. Given that the second series of the radio show has begun broadcast, a short reminder of the hours and brief introduction about 'Directions' should be given during the 'Rural Business News' radio program. It was noticed that 'Herder from the Future', a previous Gobi product produced by Pact, was recalled by participants of their own accord as enjoyable and interesting. However, this series ran for a number of seasons, and 'Directions', with just over 26 episodes under its belt, is relatively new.

Of those that had listened to the program, nineteen percent said that the program 'gave me good herding knowledge'; with seventeen percent stating that the program 'helped me stay abreast of vet issues and shared information with me'. A similar amount responded that Directions 'increased my business knowledge', and '...helped me understand the new tax laws'. Interestingly, a fair number of listeners from across the soums stated that the show had been significant in introducing them to livestock insurance.

The impact of the show on those that have been listening is evident, and serves as an additional appeal for a solid advertising and information campaign. Responses about how listeners had used the information supplied included the following:

'I learned how to heat a brick and put it in the dung floor so that it can defrost - I now do this regularly' - Choir, Gobisumber aimag

'I learned about herders co-operatives and joined one' - Tsagaandelger, Bayantal, Shivegobi, Gobisumber aimag; Govi-Utgal, Dundgobi aimag

'I learned about breeding dairy cows, and dairy technology, which is new for me' - Gobi-Utgal, Bayanjargalan, Dundgobi aimag

'I learned about improving the quality of livestock, and am implementing what I heard in the show' - Bayanjargalan, Dundgobi aimag

'I learned about livestock insurance, and how to access it.' - Shiveeovoo, Gobisumber aimag; Govi-Utgal, Dundgobi aimag

Requests for future programs included more information about taxes, livestock insurance, fencing pasture, preventing soil erosion and desertification, the environmental impacts of mining, breeding information, zoonotic diseases and legal advice on land privatization. This input, along with the suggestions received for Final Destination, will be fed into the planning cycle for the next program set.



'Hashaa' from Final Destination and the monitoring team in Gobi-Utgal soum

Recommendations:

- Investigate options regarding broadcasting on a fully nationwide television channel. This move to MNB, however, will have cost implications as prices previously quoted by the broadcaster were far more expensive than current funding allows.
- Consider increasing the broadcast length of television programs. Currently, Pact pays approximately twenty-five US dollars per minute for broadcast on TV9, which, in the case of Final Destination, totaled 16,768 US dollars. Increasing broadcast length would incur additional broadcast and production fees. An additional ten minutes per program will require an extra 6,500 US dollars per series for air time and 15,000 US dollars in production costs.
- Initiating a public relations campaign for 'Directions' radio series as a number of respondents were not aware of the program or when it was broadcast. This is especially relevant as the second series has recently begun airing.
- Consider scaling up television production as more and more people move towards visual media and away from the radio. The accessibility of television sets and alternative energy generating devices mean that increasing numbers of countryside residents, both mobile and sedentary, are watching television. According to the National Statistic Yearbook of 2005, the 611 000 households in Mongolia hold a total of 320 000 television sets - a television set in every second house.



Respondent reading her copy - she is a regular subscriber of RBN magazine