

## OVERVIEW

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The big news for DMI during this quarter was the success of our public engagement team in raising funds for future DMI projects. Funding has been confirmed for a family planning RCT in Burkina Faso, allowing the team to build on the success and experience of the current RCT. The family planning RCT will run from autumn 2015 until the end of 2018 and allows DMI to maintain an office in Burkina Faso for the next 3 years. DMI will also begin operating in a new country, Tanzania, this autumn. The campaign is a 5 year nutrition and stunting campaign funded by DFID, with DMI working alongside IMA who will focus on capacity building in the healthcare system. In addition, the first half of the funds required for a maternal and child health campaign in Mozambique have been raised subject to match funding being found.

For the RCT itself, LSHTM continue to analyse the endline data. This will continue over the next quarter with initial results due in October 2015. In the next quarter DMI will begin the detailed planning process for the dissemination of endline results and these will be shared with funders.

In Burkina, the political and security situation continues to be uncertain (see the Country Director's report for some detailed analysis). The presidential election is still due to take place in October 2015 although this is not certain. The situation will not affect the RCT but does impact on DMI's other activities in Burkina Faso. We continue to monitor the situation.

Jennifer Steel | Head of Operations and Finance | [jennifer.steel@developmentmedia.net](mailto:jennifer.steel@developmentmedia.net)

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## COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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### Political developments

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There is a line from a popular Congolese song that succinctly describes the political situation this quarter in Burkina; *'Those who are talking don't know, those who know aren't talking.'* With presidential elections rapidly approaching (they are scheduled for October) the political situation remains confusing. This confusion is generated by several ongoing conflicts; serious tension between the military and the prime minister, political jousting between the transitional parliament and the ex-majority party (politicians who supported Blaise Compaore), and competition among civil society organizations for popular legitimacy and money.

The conflict between the military and the prime minister is the most opaque, the most volatile, and the most worrisome. The latest flare-up occurred on Sunday June 28, the day Prime Minister Zida returned to Ouagadougou from a trip to Taiwan. Upon landing at Ouagadougou's airport, Zida's plane taxied to the secure air force terminal—the temporary home of US and French Special Forces—as opposed to the VIP terminal reserved for high officials and visiting dignitaries. The next day, three senior officers from the Regiment de Sécurité Présidentiel (**RSP**) were brought to national police headquarters for questioning and later that same evening shots were fired at the RSP camp, located behind the presidential palace. On Tuesday the news leaked that the Prime Minister's plane had been diverted and the officers brought in for questioning because the government believed the RSP was preparing a coup d'état; a coup that would be triggered by Zida's arrest at the Ouagadougou airport. (The Regiment de Sécurité Présidentiel is the country's elite military unit. Prime Minister Zida was an officer in this unit for twenty years. He was catapulted into national politics by his commanding general Gilbert Diéndéré, the power behind Blaise Compaore's throne). What does all this mean?

There are two competing explanations of what happened between Sunday June 28 and Tuesday the 30<sup>th</sup>. The Prime Minister's explanation, articulated most forcefully by the civil society organizations loyal to him (on his payroll?), is that the RSP, with the backing of Blaise Compaore's political machine are determined to undermine the transitional government and sabotage the upcoming elections. The competing interpretation, articulated by political parties that supported Blaise Compaore, and several influential journalists, is that Prime Minister Zida staged this attempted coup to demonize the RSP. According to their narrative Zida is getting comfortable at the prime ministry and doesn't intend to hand over power. In demonizing the RSP, Zida can both feed the revengeful bloodlust of his core constituency (the 'revolutionary' civil society organizations) and create the instability necessary to postpone the presidential elections, allowing him to hold onto power.

A week after these events the entire military chain of command, including the most senior officers from the Army, Air Force, and RSP demanded that the president replace the prime minister and the three military officers currently serving in his government. The military's forceful demand sparked the most serious political crisis of this transitional regime. President Kafando submitted the demands to a 'Conseil de Sages', a council of wise men composed of former high officials, religious leaders, and traditional chiefs. This council led negotiations between the Prime Minister and the military command over the first two weeks of July. On the day after the Eid al Fitr, the Muslim holiday marking the end of Ramadan, a day of forgiveness, President Kafando presented his decisions in a televised speech. He announced that he will not replace the prime minister three months before the presidential elections but that he will reduce his powers; the ministry of defence will no longer report to the prime minister but to the president. Furthermore, the minister of territorial administration and internal security will be replaced—this minister, an army officer, was Zida's closest ally (his nickname in the press is 'Zida's brain'). The president's announcements have been well received and a larger crisis seemingly averted. The causes of the tensions between the military and the prime minister remain unclear; no military officers have spoken publicly.

The conflict between the transitional parliament and the political parties associated with Blaise Compaore is less opaque, if not less worrisome. Early in the year the parliament voted a new electoral code, one article of which excluded any politician having supported Blaise Compaore's constitutional amendment from running for president. The political parties most affected by the law challenged its constitutionality, first before the Burkinabe constitutional court (they upheld the law) and then before the ECOWAS constitutional court. This regional court announced its decision on July 14<sup>th</sup>; the exclusionary article of the new electoral code does not respect the regional charters on good governance that Burkina has signed. In his Eid al Fitr announcement the president announced that the transitional government would respect the court's decision, allowing a wider field of candidates to participate in the election. Several days later the transitional parliament announced that they will pursue Blaise Compaore for high treason as well as eight of his former ministers—including a presidential candidate—for corruption. The parliament voted a law instructing the attorney general to file charges before the Supreme Court.

The transitional parliament seems less concerned with building a new Burkina than with punishing the old.

In the midst of these conflicts the presidential campaign is ramping up. All of the political parties have chosen their presidential candidates and political meetings are held every weekend throughout the country. While the International Crisis Group recently published a report warning of the likelihood that the

presidential election will be delayed, there is reason to hope, after the president's speech last week that the elections will be maintained.

## **Security**

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Of more concern to DMI is the security situation in rural Burkina. Over the first six months of this year there seems to have been an increase in rural insecurity, with an increase in roadside banditry, more local political disputes erupting into armed conflict, and mob justice deciding more and more village conflicts. The area of most concern to DMI is Eastern Burkina. With the increase in artisanal gold mines in the region there has been an increase in armed robbery on rural roads. While our teams have not yet been targeted we continue to monitor the situation and assess our operational security protocols as the situation evolves.

## **Outreach**

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Much of management time this quarter was devoted to launching the SPRING and Alive & Thrive campaigns. Throughout the quarter we worked through the operational details of both campaigns. This has been challenging given the delays both organizations incurred in organizing their project management teams. The SPRING campaign started in May and Alive & Thrive broadcasts are scheduled to begin in October. We have started meeting with potential partners such as Marie Stopes International, ABBEF, and PROMACO to prepare our upcoming family planning RCT.

**Matthew Lavoie | Country Director Burkina Faso | [matthew.lavoie@developmentmedia.net](mailto:matthew.lavoie@developmentmedia.net)**

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## **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

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In May our research team were in the Gaoua region to oversee the endline survey for the Grand Challenges pilot study. The aim of this study is to investigate whether short films dubbed in local languages and shared on mobile phones, will spread through rural communities. In total 708 women were interviewed by a team of locally recruited and trained enumerators. Our research team carried out quality control checks by re-interviewing women. Results from the endline survey will be available during the third quarter of this year.

Using GiveWell funds, we have also been developing plans to build our own in-house research capacity to conduct times series evaluations. Starting from September, we will be recruiting a team of seven regional data collectors and a data manager based in our Ouagadougou office. This team will collect data on a monthly basis, on a wide range of indicators including demographic information, media exposure, mobile phone use, as well as knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to reproductive, maternal, neonatal and child health issues. This will enable DMI to perform time series analyses that can be used to monitor and inform program activities as well as to evaluate the impact of our campaigns. To help us get this started, we have consulted Medic Mobile who are experts in developing data collection tools using mobile phones.

Our Lancet Viewpoint paper was published in the print edition of the journal on 4th July. The implementation paper titled "Implementing a mass media campaign to reduce child mortality in Burkina Faso: the Saturation+ approach" has been provisionally accepted for publication in Global Health Science and Practice, subject to minor revisions being made. GHSP is an open access journal with a wide-reaching readership.

**Pieter Remes | Head of Research and Executive Producer | [pieter.remes@developmentmedia.net](mailto:pieter.remes@developmentmedia.net)**  
**Joanna Murray | Research Manager | [joanna.murray@developmentmedia.net](mailto:joanna.murray@developmentmedia.net)**

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## QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

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Since completion of the endline survey, data cleaning is now on going. This includes locating errors or inconsistencies identified during the fieldwork, re-interviews being incorporated into the final datasets, and solving any issues with women's ID used for merging questionnaires.

Sophie Sarrassat | Epidemiologist, LSHTM | [sophie.sarrassat@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:sophie.sarrassat@lshtm.ac.uk)

Simon Cousens | Professor of Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, LSHTM | [simon.cousens@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:simon.cousens@lshtm.ac.uk)

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## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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### Project development

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In the second quarter of 2015 we built on the fundraising success of previous months by securing funds for three major new projects from 2016 to 2020:

- A second RCT in Burkina Faso, on the impact of a community radio campaign on family planning (increased modern contraceptive prevalence), in partnership with J-PAL. The total budget for this 39-month project is \$4.3m. We have raised 55% of the costs from the Global Innovation Fund and the remaining 45% from MaxMind, a US company. (We have since increased the budget to \$5m and are currently looking to secure the remaining \$700,000.)
- A nutrition and stunting project in northern Tanzania, funded by DFID, as part of a consortium led by IMA World Health. This five-year project will begin in late 2015; DMI will run a radio spots and phone-ins campaign with a budget of £3m over the five years, alongside capacity building of the healthcare system being led by IMA.
- A reproductive, maternal and child health radio and TV campaign in Mozambique, supported by local offices of bilateral and multilateral funders (USAID, DFID, UNFPA etc.). We recently secured \$2.5m from Unorthodox Philanthropy which can be accessed once we have raised matched funding. Our Country Representative, Antonio Cabral, continues to make good progress in building the necessary partnerships with government and broadcasters and is actively involving potential funders in the design of this project.

We also continued to develop proposals for several other media campaigns:

- We are in the process of designing nationwide child survival campaigns in our next two priority countries for the scaling up of our 'Media Million Lives' initiative: DRC (phase 2, after our initial work there this year) and Cameroon. We are not yet at the stage where we can approach funders for either project.
- A regional radio campaign on gender equality in the Sahel, encompassing family planning, girls' education and child marriage, and linking to other issues including agriculture and nutrition and climate change resilience, and focused on Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Chad and Cote d'Ivoire (with the most likely funder being the World Bank).
- A national radio campaign on early childhood development in Tanzania and potentially other African countries, encouraging parents to talk to their babies to increase cognitive development, in partnership with two NGOs in Tanzania (ZUMM and Children in Crossfire).

More broadly, we have met with a variety of potential funders and partners this quarter, including:

- Several Big Bang funders at the Skoll World Forum (DWWF, Jasmine, Cassia), as well as a number of similar organisations (Vitol, Emerson, Unorthodox Philanthropy) and the Skoll Foundation themselves

- Several potential partners in the San Francisco Bay Area (including the OASIS Initiative, Living Goods, VisionSpring, VillageReach and others) at and around a health grantees summit organised by the Mulago Foundation in June
- GiveWell (whom we finally met in San Francisco, and with whom we have regular update calls by phone)
- USAID (Katie Taylor and John Borrazzo, in senior positions in the global health division, who are keen to support us)
- Gates (there is growing interest in supporting us from the Integrated Delivery, Policy/Advocacy and MNCH teams)

### **Public engagement**

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We will soon be moving into the detailed planning phase for the dissemination of the endline results from the child survival RCT. We will share more information on this as it becomes available.

**Will Snell | Director of Public Engagement & Development | [will.snell@developmentmedia.net](mailto:will.snell@developmentmedia.net)**

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