The Population Foundation of India and the Rockefeller Foundation in collaboration with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, UNICEF and UNFPA invited a diverse community of cross-sectoral experts and professionals for a discussion on Investments in Entertainment Education as a Way to Catalyse and Sustain Social and Behavioural Change on 12 July 2016 in New York.

The discussions revolved around three critical pillars: the sharing of successful global case studies demonstrating the potential and impact of entertainment education (EE), critical explorations on evidence and evaluation, and deliberation on the sustainability of EE initiatives.

Three transcontinental case studies, Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon (MKBKSH) – I, A Woman Can Achieve Anything, from India; East Los High, a web series broadcast via Hulu in the United States; and Soul City, a long-running programme in South Africa, formed the pivot for the eclectic discussion.

The period, April to September 2016, marks significant milestones regarding family planning advocacy. Population Foundation of India (PFI) forged strong relationships with the state governments of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar for effective implementation of family planning programmes and strategies. Greater interaction with the media was planned for the coming months to ensure a better understanding of family planning and population stabilisation issues and their accurate representation.

The national and international appreciation that our programme, Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon, received generated further interest in the series. MKBKSH – Saathiya: PFI collaborated with the Ministry of Health and Family (MoHFW) and UNFPA in Season Two for the promotion and branding of the peer educator as Saathiya under the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKS). The RKS is being rebranded and launched nationally as Saathiya. MKBKSH Saathiya episodes on youth issues, will be part of the training toolkit for the peer educators. PFI is partnering with UNFPA on the branding for the Saathiya toolkit and the launch event.

The Advisory Group on Community Action (AGCA), constituted by the MoHFW, organised its 33rd meeting on June 3, 2016 in New Delhi. The meeting focused on the long term priorities for the AGCA. Mr C K Mishra, Additional Secretary and Mission Director, National Health Mission, Mr Manoj Jhalani, Joint Secretary, Policy, and Ms Limatula Yaden, Director, NHM, participated.

PFI collaborated with the State Health Society (SHS), Bihar to organise World Population Day, 2016 in Patna. The Family Planning Counsellors Study was released by Mr Jitendra Srivastava – Executive Director, SHS Bihar. Dr N Vijayalaxmi – Managing Director, Women’s Development Cell Bihar, Mr Anand Sinha, Country Advisor, Packard Foundation, India were among those who attended the event.
PFI’s book, India’s Family Planning Programme: Policies, Practices and Challenges, authored by Leela Visaria and Rajani R Ved, has been published by Routledge India. It examines the changes, challenges and shifts in India’s family planning programme since 1952 and is available for sale.

CONSULTATION ON FAMILY PLANNING

PFI co-hosted a Roundtable on Women in Media -- Coverage and Trends in Reporting on Family Planning and Reproductive Health with Women’s Feature Service on 29 September. The consultation saw journalists discuss trends in reportage and the opportunities to reach a wider audience, including policymakers on the issue.

REALISING COMMITMENTS TO FAMILY PLANNING

On 9 May, PFI organised a meeting with 13 Members of Parliament (MPs) on population stabilisation. Chaired by Dr Sanjay Jaiswal, MP from East Champaran, Bihar, the meeting generated ideas to engage with MPs on family planning issues in their respective constituencies. Mr P D Rai, MP from Sikkim and member of PFI’s Advisory Council was also present at the meeting.

A study tour was organised for six parliamentarians at ARTH, Udaipur to provide a first hand exposure to innovative family planning programmes at the grassroots level.

Media Workshop: A three-day workshop was organised on 19-21 September in Bhopal to sensitise and build the knowledge and capacity of 12 media persons from the Central India on health and population issues. The workshops have helped in leveraging support of the regional media on issues of women’s health and population.

WOMEN DELIVER

Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director, PFI was invited to speak at the 4th Women Deliver Global Conference organised in Copenhagen on 16-19 May. She spoke on Learning and Working Across Generations, and The Next Frontiers in Reproductive Health and Communications to Improve the Health of Women and Girls. PFI also showcased its communication materials at a stall provided by John D. and Catherine T. from MacArthur Foundation.