The News-Heartfile public awareness campaign

‘The News International’ is the largest circulating English newspaper in Pakistan, reaching out to over 2.5 million readers every day. The prestigious national daily provided complimentary space for Heartfile articles as part of ‘The News-Heartfile Public Awareness Campaign against Heart Disease.’ The target group for this campaign was the English literate urban and rural population.

Weekly articles along with coloured illustrations of the Heartfile mascot and the logo lettering in red were prominently posted on the inside front page of the newspaper. The style of the articles varied from topic-oriented discussions on a specific aspect of a risk factor to information-based articles generated in response to a particular question; in addition, stories and checklists advocating healthier lifestyles were also published. Boxes were inserted in the articles, inviting questions via e-mail.

The campaign started in February 1999, and at the time of its conclusion in May 2006, as many as 259 articles had been published. The archive of publications can be accessed below. The project evaluation can be viewed here.

**Funding:**

Canadian International Development Agency; 1999-2001
Sally was overweight. And she was worried. She was 35 and weighed 85 kilograms. She was 55 years old and didn't exercise at all. Then one day, she had started noticing that she would start suffocate after walking only a few minutes and would have to stop to catch her breath. She knew that she had been putting on weight recently. She didn't want to be too big right? I mean, her since was even more overweight. But then, when she thought about it, she realized that her sister had faced a lot of health problems, including heart disease. She decided to go and talk to her doctor. She was very nervous, but when she weighed Sally, the doctor looked concerned.

"Sally, I am afraid you are putting too much stress on your heart," Dr. Johnson said. "You need to lose some weight." Together they sat down and discussed what Sally should eat and what exercise she should do. Sally started that very day, determined to get rid of the extra kilogram that were harming her heart and body. Even though it was sometimes hard, she stuck with it. She even started to go to the gym and met a new friend there. Sally had not only lost the kilograms that were harming her heart and body but also her heart was healthy again. She was back on her feet again. The doctor was very happy.

"My goodness," said the doctor. "When I first met Sally, she was so heavy. Now she looks so healthy." Sally was very happy. In fact, her husband and her two sons had been noticing the change in her. She had lost 5 kilograms, but she had had no idea that it was the weight that was the issue.

Three months later, she went back to the doctor. The doctor was very happy to see her. Sally had not gained any weight, but she looked slimmer and healthier."