SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY RADIOS

A Training Guide

radio for PEACEBUILDING africa

Two decades ago community radios were still rare in Africa. Only a few of them were active, mostly in South and East Africa. Throughout the rest of the continent and in Western and Central Africa in particular, community radio stations were almost non-existent.

Nowadays community radio is experiencing a remarkable growth. There are more than 200 stations in Mali, more than 70 in Burkina Faso and approximately 170 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Often scattered in small cities or in outlying communities, these radios provide their population with local news and information and, to a lesser extent, the national news too. Once intended as a simple means for mobilising people for community development, community radio stations are increasingly sought after by decision makers. At a time when most African states are experimenting with democratisation and decentralisation, these stations play a crucial role in communicating information between authorities and the population, politicians and voters, and also horizontally amongst individual citizens. By doing so, they facilitate an ongoing debate on social issues.

Community radio stations have become, by sheer necessity, one of the key areas where good governance is created and supported. They give voice to citizens by allowing them to participate and provide their input on the community's issues. They provide information about national and local electoral processes, procedures, and dates. They also make it easier to promote transparency in public affairs: when elected officials are asked to report on their accomplishments, they typically use these channels to reach their constituents. In countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, where the majority of the population cites the radio as their primary source of information, radio is the best way to inform rural areas and small villages.

Nevertheless, community radios face at least two crucial obstacles that can slow down their development and effectiveness, make them the object of political manipulation or simply reduce their number. These challenges are:

1.   Confusion by different stakeholders about the purpose and role of community radio stations
2.   Financial sustainability

The first aspect concerns the professionalisation of the stations and their protection from manipulation, while the second relates to generating the necessary resources for operations from within the community served.

To respond to these challenges, RFPA is producing a series of modules that provide guidance on different aspects of management and operations within community radio stations. The series of 10 modules will explore areas related to administrative management, resource generation, financial tools, marketing strategies and guidelines for programming. The modules are based on a training programme that SFCG has

been implementing in the DRC to support the development and sustainable management of community radio stations as a tool for peacebuilding and strategic communication.

The first module covers the different aspects of administrative management. The sub-module on good governance intends to facilitate analytical thinking about good governance in order to gain a better understanding of the notion and its applicability to community radios. As a follow-up, the second sub-module provides an overview of the most important legal documents, their content and their roles. The second module released will review issues related to management structure and human resources.

According to data collected on 20 radio stations in Katanga, South Kivu and Oriental Provinces of DRC by SFCG, only 20% of them use a manual of procedures; 35% said they provided their staff with a contract; and approximately 20% evaluate their staff's performance. Weaknesses in management and limited capacity to generate resources make it difficult to operate a station. This manual and its modules seek to respond to these challenges, aiming to serve as a management training tool for community radios in Africa.

The manual's target audience covers everyone whose role is essential in the day-to-day operations of a radio station: the station managers, programme directors, technical directors and the Board of Directors.

In addition, the different modules provide sample management tools, which can be adapted as necessary to help the senior management better structure their station, manage their staff and equipment, plan activities, evaluate programmes and staff, and do development planning.

RFPA looks forward to sharing these modules over the course of the coming months, and invites your feedback on their relevance and usefulness within your stations and work. Comments are always welcome at rfpa@sfcg.org!

GENERAL APPROACH OF THIS MODULE

Global objective:
- Learn how to manage a radio station from the administrative point of view.

Specific objectives:
- Understand the principles of good governance.
- Get acquainted with the management-related material of a radio station.
- Contribute to establishing an effective human resources administration policy.

Activities:
- (1) Exchange about good governance principles.
- (2) Assessment of the functions and operation of a radio station.
- (3) Analysis and sharing of basic documents related to community radio management.
- (4) Discussion on the elements of democratic management within community radios.
- (5) Identify and promote best practices in human resources management.

Approach:
- (1) Perceptions exercise: The trainer provides 10 participants with three fruits (oranges, etc.) and asks them to distribute the fruits to the entire group (120 min).
- (2) Discussions in two groups of 5 people, then exchange (60 min).
- (3) Q&A Game to get to know existing texts, then simulation exercise (for the operating manual). A client will request the diffusion of his/her press release to the radio; he thinks the receptionist, the secretary/accountant, the program office and the director are all available for that. What is the process? (135 min)
- (4) Group discussion (60 min).
- (5) Case studies of three participants about their recruitment process. How many times have they been evaluated? How many trainings have they received on their duties and position? (45 min)

Expected results:
By the end of this section, participants will be able to:
- Identify and understand the five key principles of good governance to analyse the administration of any given community.
- Assess the situation of their radio stations.
- Use human resources management tools.

Total duration: 420 minutes/ 7 hours

I. PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

A Sub-module on Good Governance Training

This sub-module is created to:

- Show simple principles of operation of good governance;
- Provide a guide for the proper functioning of a community radio.

Structure:

> **Unit I   : Perception of governance**
>
> **Unit II   : Elements of good governances**
>
> **Unit III : Key principles of good governance**

Objectives:

> – *Help participants discover or remember what is governance*
>
> – *Understand how governance works*
>
> – *Remind participants of good governance principles*
>
> – *Establish the link between good governance and community radio management*

Objectives of the section:

- − *Familiarise participants with the notion of good governance*
- − *Determine the idea(s) participants have in mind about governance*
- − *Reveal the potential advantages of governance for the participants*
- − *Help participants understand the gap between the vision they hold of good governance and the reality of their community*

Notes for the trainer	Activities

Duration : 40 minutes
 	
Materials :
 	
▪ Flipcharts
 	
▪ Markers
 	
▪ Scotch
 	
Journalists, just like other citizens, have their own perceptions of governance.
 	
In the first exercise the trainer will try to have participants to work in groups to create a representation of what good governance means to them. The different images they create will allow participants to visualise their ideas about the issue in question.
 	
It could be revealing to create a separate group for women in order to compare the differences in perceptions based on gender.
	▪ Participants will be divided up into groups of 3; with one flipchart and different colour markers. The paper is scotched to the wall.
	
	▪ Instructions: draw an image of what you imagine as the effects of good governance on the paper but make sure to draw collectively, one after the other.
	
	▪ Observation and explanation: participants stand back a little to observe the different drawings and people from the other groups comment on what the drawings mean to them. Everyone explains what he/she understood from the others' drawings. At the end participants explain the meaning of their own drawing.
	
	▪ Guiding questions :
	
	    o What do these drawings mean to you?
	
	    o Explain what governance means for your group
	
	    o Explain to us what your drawing represents
	
	▪ Comparing it to reality :
	
	    o Is governance different in your community than what your drawing envisions? Explain.

Objectives of the section:

– *Help participants break down the notion of good governance for analysis*
– *Define the "essential elements" of good governance*

Notes for the trainer	Activities
Duration : 60 minutes **Resources :** *1 flipchart* *Cardboard papers* *Markers* Many people see governance as a whole: for them, it means to be a good leader. This approach consists of pushing participants to explore the notion of good governance by pulling it into simple pieces. The exercise gives an opportunity to highlight what are thought to be the "ingredients" of good governance. It is the trainer's job to classify all the good answers in order to demonstrate that in reality all these ingredients fall into one of these four categories: ▪ Representation ▪ Transparency ▪ Citizen participation ▪ Accountability	▪ Give five pieces of cardboard papers to each participant. ▪ Ask participants to write five basic ingredients on the paper to create a definition of good governance by saying "You want your leaders to manage your village effectively. Give them the five criteria or principles they need to respect in order to get there." ▪ Stick all the answers/ Bristol papers to the flipchart or to the board. ▪ Ask participants to read the responses ▪ Identify the answers that are related/linked to each other ▪ Ask participants to give a name to each group of elements ▪ Put these categories on the flipchart ▪ Tape flipchart pages next to each other on the wall For other purposes: link the identified elements with the key principles of good governance.

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Objectives of the section:

- *Encourage participants to give their own definition of the four key principles of good governance*
- *Encourage participants to determine the point of these principles and the best ways to implement them*
- *Help participants understand the importance of the key principles and how these work in their communities*

Notes for the trainer	Activities
Duration : Resources : • Empty sheet of Key Good Governance Principles • Flipcharts with the same sheet on them (the same number as the number of groups) • Markers • **EXERCISE SHEET 1: Key Principles.** This section is the continuation of Unit II and therefore is based on that. It uses a sheet that must be completed in small groups before sharing them. However, it can be filled out in plenary if the trainer is running out of time. The reflection session can be more dynamic if the facilitator manages it well.	• The trainer divides participants into small groups once again or uses the previous setup. • The trainer distributes the sheets using the template below **(EXERCISE SHEET 1: key principles).** • The groups fill out the sheet by responding to the questions. • Plenary: in order to complete the same sheet, each group has to defend their opinion. • Make sure to establish consensus before writing the final version on the flipchart. • Distribute the completed version of the sheet after the exercise: have participants read and discuss it. **Please note that the principles are the ones stated here but their implementations can take a number of different forms.**

Exercise:

Participants fill out the table in groups.			
Principle	**What is it?**	**Why?**	**How?**
Representation			
Transparency			
Respecting the rules			
Civic participation			
Accountability			

II. FUNDAMENTAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS

A Sub-module on Radio Station Management

Most community radio management structures rarely involve legal documents to guide its operations. Examples include a Statute of Regulations, Internal Rules and Procedures, work contracts, and individual performance measure forms, to mention the most fundamental. Yet these documents ensure that the station's functioning is in compliance with the law. They also contribute to the smooth operation of the radio and make the management of potential conflicts easier.
The following sub-module explores these regulatory documents and highlights how to apply them in community radio management.

I. The Statute of Regulations

The Statute of Regulations is a legal document that spells out and regulates the situation of a group of people, a company or an organisation, and their duties and responsibilities.

The Statute also helps to distinguish between independent workforce and other categories that are primarily composed of employees. There are different variations of Statutes but there are 3 most common types:

- Business statutes;
- Statutes of civil society organisations ;
- Statutes of corporations.

Community radios are considered as media businesses. To ensure their sustainability, they must have fundamental legal documents such as the Statute, which is the first document a radio station must obtain before it starts broadcasting.

II. Internal Rules and Procedures

The Internal Rules and Procedures is an important document that completes the Statute, giving more details to the general principles outlined in the Statute. The main provisions of the Statute are also incorporated in this document in order to have a single text that contains all basic regulations relevant for the station.

The Internal Rules and Procedures:

- Include the measures necessary to structure the day-to-day management of the station in order to avoid budgetary misuses and other functional errors;
- Cover the station's own procedural rules that supplement the Manual of Procedures (for instance, this can include the terms of reference for facilitating the listeners clubs, etc.);
- Outline the general provisions regarding the radio station or the company, the

compensation and benefits, the employment contract, and so on.

In short, this document is the backbone of the radio station, serving as a reference for how things function on a day-to-day basis and giving guidance when questions arise.

III. Work Regulations

Work regulations specify the general conditions of work and provide information to the employees on the structure and the operations of the organisation or company that employs them depending on the sector (private or public). Its content, scope, provisions and the process to amend it are always established by the governing law of the country in its Labour Code.

Work Regulations should include the following elements:

- Work hours: the hours for full-time and part-time employees, flexible work hours, and the opening hours of the company/radio;

- Evaluation methods to determine due compensation ;

- Payment methods ;

- Length of notice and serious reasons for breach of employment contract without notice or compensation by either party;

- Rights and obligations of the supervisory staff;

- Duration of leave and that of the annual leave.

IV. Manual of Procedures

The Manual of Procedures is an administrative document of crucial importance for companies, institutions and any other organisation. Generally speaking, the objective of the Manual of Procedures is to improve the functioning of the organisation. As opposed to the Rules and Regulation, the Manual of Procedures takes a more practical perspective and spells out the specific steps of different activities and working processes.

The Manual of Procedures allows the radio station to:

- Define the process to be followed in executing the main activities of the organization;

- Outline the ideal work cycle for both the administrative and finance departments;

- Describe the different activities assigned to different employees at each stage of the implementation of activities ;

- Specify the tools the employees must have access to in order to carry out their duties;

- Identify the different types of basic controls to be performed (daily, weekly, monthly or annually) as well as the different levels of control (auto-control, hierarchical control, audit, internal or external inspection);

- Spell out the administrative procedures, the responsibilities of the organization, the hiring process, and the terms of human resource management.

This document provides an excellent and invaluable legal instrument for the management of a radio station. Its general directions should facilitate the smooth and transparent running of operations and ensure good governance and sustainability within the organisation.

IV. Employment Contracts

Employment contracts are legal documents covering the conditions of short-term or long-term employment.

MAIN FEATURES OF AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT:

An employment contract is created when an individual (the employee) commits to work for compensation, on behalf and under the direction of another individual (the employer). Generally, the employment contract must be in written form. Its fulfilment results in the number of obligations for both the employee and the employer.

WHO CAN SIGN AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT?

The employer can be an individual or a legal entity. In the case of the latter, the contract is signed by the individual authorized to act on behalf of the organization (the manager, the human resources director, etc.). However, in the case of community radios, the employer is the Board of Directors.

Each individual may enter into a contract of employment but there are a number of restrictions concerning minors. In their case, the contract must be signed by their legal representative. Minors cannot enter into contract without the permission of their legal representative (parents or guardian) unless they are considered legally independent by decision of the court. In addition, certain rules must be respected depending on their age:

- It is forbidden to employ children under 14, except in family businesses;
- The employment of minors under 16 is only allowed during school holidays or with the authorization of the authorities;
- Minors aged 16 to 18 may be employed with specific constraints to the employer regarding security and duration of work.

WHAT ARE THE OBLIGATIONS ARISING FROM THE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT?

Both the employer and the employee must respect the obligations arising from the contract and implement it in good faith.

The employer must:

- Provide work within work hours;
- Pay the wages for the work done;
- Respect conditions of work spelled out in the contract (qualification, workplace, etc.);
- Have the work carried out in compliance with the Labour Code and the rules and regulations applicable to the organization.

The employee must:

- Respect the work hours;
- Carry out the work according to instructions ;
- Respect the terms of the employment contract.

To learn more about the management of community radio stations, we would like to provide you with an additional list of documents.

"*A Guide to Sustainability*" by Developing Media Partners. Available at
http://www.radiopeaceafrica.org/assets/texts/pdf/Lo%20Res%20Guidebook.pdf

"*Community Media Sustainability Guide – The Business of Changing Lives*" by Internews. Available at:
http://www.internews.org/research-publications/community-media-sustainability-guide-business-changing-lives

"*Governance, Management, and Sustainability of Community Radio Stations*" by J-A. 'Rantimi Jays, Leiden University. Available at: http://www.internews.org/research-publications/community-media-sustainability-guide-business-changing-lives

"*The African Community Manager's Handbook – A Guide to Sustainable Radio*" by AMARC. Available at:
http://www.amarc.org/documents/manuals/The_African_CR_Manager.pdf

"*What is a healthy station*" by Developing Media Partners. Available at
http://developingradio.org/files/WhatisaHealthyStation.pdf

We hope you will find our Manual useful and we always look forward to your comments and feedback. Please do not hesitate to share your thoughts at rfpa@sfcg.org!