

SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY

RADIOS – MODULE II

A Training Guide



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INTRODUCTION



This module represents the second in a series of brief guidebooks aiming to support the Sustainability of Community Radios. It responds to the growing prevalence of community radio in Sub-Saharan Africa and the challenges these stations face in their governance and operation. Drawing on years of experience in training, coaching and support in Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, among other settings, the guidebook provides concrete advice to help stations by exploring areas related to administrative management, resource generation, financial tools, marketing strategies and guidelines for programming.

This second module focuses on two main aspects of managing community radio stations. First, it examines the governing bodies of a station and gives succinct descriptions of each body's function and structure as it relates to the governance of the radio. The second section of this module serves as a guide for human resources management. It presents the roles and responsibilities involved for each staff- and volunteer position, and gives an overview of the recruitment process for new personnel. It builds on the principles and documents discussed over the course of Module I, available at <http://www.radiopeaceafrica.org/assets/texts/pdf/2012-manual-sustain-color-en.pdf>

Module II takes a highly comprehensive approach and can be useful for everyone whose role is essential in the day-to-day operations of a radio station: station managers, programme directors, technical directors and members of the Board of Directors, as well as other interested parties.

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!



INTRODUCTION TO GOVERNANCE OF COMMUNITY RADIO

The participation of members of the organisation or the community in the management and oversight of the radio's activities is a fundamental characteristic of community radio.

Besides this aspect of participation, community radio is distinguished from other types of radios by the following characteristics, all related to community involvement.

- Community radios are created to serve the interests of the community;
- Communities should have access to radio: they should be able to listen to broadcasts, access stations freely, participate in programme production and be part of the decision-making bodies;
- Community radios should be directed toward the development of the community and contribute to capacity building of community members;
- Community radios should promote diverse forms of cultural expressions;
- Community radios are non-profit organisations. They must be guided by the needs of the community and not by commercial interests. The entire community should benefit from the services of the radio. This does not prevent the radio from making profit but it must be reinvested in the radio.
- The management must be community-based. Of the same token, the ownership and oversight must remain in the hands of the community. The stations should not be co-opted by specific groups or individual interests.

These elements are extremely important for a genuinely community-based radio.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

The following structures are responsible for managing and coordinating the financial and operational aspects of a community radio station. In order to make sure that the station functions according to the principles of good governance, it is important to have separate bodies for oversight and execution of activities.

The General Assembly

This is the highest authority of the radio. Depending on its size, it is usually composed of the regular and associate members (with or without voting rights). It determines the mission and the main orientation of the radio. Its members are selected from the community and represent the interests of their constituency. They can be community leaders, media experts or locals. The functions of the General Assembly are the following:

- Electing members of the Board of Directors;
- Determining the main direction and the strategy for the station;
- Adopting the budget as well as the activity- and financial report ;
- Adopting and amending the budget and the rules and regulations of the radio.

This is the executive body implementing the General Assembly's decisions. Its members are elected by the General Assembly. Nomination of candidates should ensure the diverse representation of different interests in the community, including groups that are typically marginalised from decision-making such as women, youth, ethnic minorities, and others. The number of members of the Board of Directors will vary by station, and will depend on the size of the community that the station is serving, the diversity of community groups, and other interests that need to be taken into consideration. The Board should be large enough to be representative, but small enough to be manageable in terms of meetings and governance. In most Board structures, committees are named that are responsible for specific purposes. These could include fundraising, legal issues, community relations, and programme development, as some examples.

It should be noted that the Board of Directors does not carry out the day-to-day activities.

Below is an example of a possible setup of the Board of Directors:

- President
- Vice-President for Programming
- Vice-President for Radio Development
- Vice-President for Technology
- Chief Treasurer

***N.B.:** The director of the radio station participates at the meetings of the Board of Directors but is not a member and **does not** have voting rights.*

In order to facilitate the work of the Board of Directors, different committees may be established within the framework of the Board. Members of the Board may participate in the work of these committees; however, staff with no voting rights (such as the station manager) or community members with the necessary skills and knowledge may also be involved in the work of the committees, depending on the expertise required. Not all of these Committees are required for the functioning of the radio station. However, they contribute to efficiently coordinate work by areas of expertise and facilitate the oversight for the Board of Directors.

Oversight Committee

This Committee is a supervising body with power to control the different bodies of the community radio station. The Committee monitors the activities of the Board and the daily management of the radio and reports to the highest authority, the General Assembly. It can initiate an internal or external audit. Its main functions are the following:

- Developing the programme schedule and content ;
- Developing the overall action policy and strategy for the station;
- Resolving management issues;
- Establishing financial accounts and developing funding strategies;
- Nominating a station director;
- Conceptualising development strategies for the radio ;
- Purchasing equipment;
- Interacting with local authorities, partners and donors.

Programming Committee

This body formulates the programming strategy, supervises its implementation and coordinates staff trainings. It is chaired by the Vice-President for Programming. The programme director is also a member, and participates in the activities of the Committee. In fact, s/he is the one in charge of putting forward recommendations for the programme schedule and of its revision. Once the schedule is approved by the Committee, s/he must oversee its implementation. The Committee may have a maximum number of 4 to 5 people to be efficient.

Finance Committee

This body is responsible for the financial oversight of the radio. In particular:

- It recommends the appropriate financial policies for the radio and is responsible for overseeing the proper safekeeping and management of funds;
- This Committee is headed by the Chief Treasurer ;
- It may have up to 5 members ;

Committee for Technology

This Committee is responsible for proposing an acquisition policy and is in charge of managing the equipment. It is headed by the Vice-President for Technology who is joined by up to 5 other members with technology background. The Chief Technician, or a person at a similar post within the radio station, is a member and attends the meetings of the Committee.

Radio Development Committee

- It is in charge of exploring prospective financial and revenue opportunities for the station;
- It makes recommendations for short-term, mid-term and long-term development strategies;
- It identifies the resources and the needs ;
- It is headed by the Vice-President for Radio Development.
- The station manager participates in the work of this Committee.

It should be noted that the function of this Committee may be assumed by the Chairman of the radio should s/he has the required profile and competence. In this case the establishment of the Committee is not necessary. However, the position of the Chairman is often honorary and does not involve any specific skills, in which case the Committee should play its role.

THE ROLE OF THESE BODIES IN DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT

It is extremely important to underline that these structures are intended to guide and support the operation of the radio station. Their role is **not** to take on the day-to-day management of the radio. This task falls to the station management. Failure to comply with this principle could lead to conflict and deadlock as responsibilities and supervisory authority would become unclear. Adherence to this principle is crucial for the proper functioning of the radio.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT



Human resources management has great importance in the life of a community radio station as it helps to ensure that the personnel of the station are competent. In order to make community radio stations financially sustainable but also to produce competitive programming, the person in charge of human resources (HR) must make sure that the skills of the staff members complement each other and respond to the station's needs; and that the personnel is representative of the community they work for.

Human resource management can be broken down into three areas: personnel; the recruitment process; and training.

MANAGEMENT OF STAFF

Each community radio station should have a staff member designated as the person responsible for Human Resources Management. This can be the Station Manager, the Programme Director or another member of senior management. The main responsibilities related to Human Resources Management at the station, or at most places of work for that matter, are the following:

- Recruitment
- Training
- Motivation
- Communication
- Conflict prevention
- Conflict management

As most community radio stations rely largely on volunteers, many of whom have little training and little work experience, human resources management is critical to the effective operation of the station. A good manager needs to see how to manage relationships between people working at the station as well as between the station staff and the community. A station should reflect the different interests found in the community, and therefore is also likely to reflect the different conflicts that emerge as well. A good station manager needs to prevent grievances before they arise and resolve conflicts when they can be prevented, while at the same time ensuring that quality, reliable programming that responds to the information needs of the listeners is being aired.

Motivational tools can include: compliments and positive reinforcement, training and skills-building opportunities, team-building opportunities like staff meetings, working lunches, and solidarity events, and periodic stipends when revenue allows.

STAFF STRUCTURE AND STAFFING GUIDELINES

While specific positions and structures will vary station by station depending on the size of the station and its resources, the following positions provide examples of some of the key roles and functions for operations. Positions can be combined or separated depending on the particular needs of a station.

Senior Management

The Senior Management of a community radio station must be dynamic, involved and competent. It is an executive body that is in charge of implementing the decisions of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors.

1. Director

<u>Tasks:</u>	<u>Profile:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Day-to-day management of the station ; - Implementing the decisions of the Board of Directors ; - Management of financial and material assets as well as that of HR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Her/his appointment must be based on specific criteria such as competence, sense of responsibility, integrity, familiarity with the community, communication skills, ability to lead his team in line with the objectives of radio; - Holds at least an undergraduate degree.

2. Senior Programming and Production Manager

<u>Tasks</u>	<u>Profile</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and propose draft programme schedule to the Committee for Programming ; - Ensure compliance with the main goals of radio through the programme schedule; - Coordinate and distribute tasks among programme hosts and producers and oversee the implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience in the field highly desirable – in case this lacks, provide prior training (as he plays a strategic role in programme planning and production); - Excellent ability to listen to the audience ; - Knowledge of languages spoken by the community.

3. Chief Technician

Tasks:

- Responsible for radio equipment and other materials ;
- Maintains and repairs equipment ;
- Manages the service life of equipment, provides timely notice for their renewal;
- Proposes a technical development policy (such as adapting to the Internet to move off of the analogue to digital equipment, and so on) and manages technical staff.

4. Administrative Assistant

Tasks:

- Secretarial work;
- Administrative tasks ;
- Accounting.

Profile:

- Degree in administrative work or accounting

Key Principles of General Staffing

- Avoid overstaffing—remember that revenue will need to be raised every month to support the positions recruited;
- Do not waste the radio's resources by recruiting based on personal interest or connections ;
- Encourage diversity within the staff—the radio station should reflect the make-up of the community, by gender and ethnicity, as well as other considerations;
- Hire approximately six presenters and/or producers to meet programming needs;
- Recruit approximately four technicians.

Freelancers and Volunteers

Job descriptions and task lists should be clearly stated.

- Freelancers work on a temporary basis, for a set period of time. Their work may be required based on their specific skills in a given field. Their salary is determined by the senior management after negotiations.
- There are two types of volunteers :

- Individuals motivated by their passion for radio who would like to make a contribution for the radio and the community without any back intentions but the hope of possibly finding a job. This type of volunteers does not receive compensation.
- Individuals who already have a job and income but offer their free time out of love for the radio. Such volunteers are highly preferable.

RECRUITING FOR YOUR STATION

Hiring new staff is a process with multiple characteristics and steps. It should be in line with the objectives and financial means of the radio. The station must plan its recruitment on the basis of its need and not on individual favors, friendships or other relationships. Determining these factors should always be the first step.

Community radio is a matter of community. Therefore, it is important that its members are

Objectives of hiring

There are many reasons to recruit new staff. Below is a non-exhaustive list:

- Start up a station ;
 - Improve the quality of programming ;
 - Increase the number of productions ;
 - Develop new programmes ;
- Compete with other radio stations.

Drafting a Job Description

The hiring process starts with the senior management putting together a job description. This should describe the nature of the work and establish a job profile. This consists of the list of tasks and activities the job would involve, the expected results, the resources and the required skills and qualifications. In addition, it may include the profile of the ideal candidate, his/her education and professional experience, language fluency and other competencies.

The job description defines the specific elements that allow a potential applicant to identify the nature of the position as well as the expectations of the employer.

Once again, a job description should include:

- Context (why was the position created and what is expected from the ideal candidate)
- Hierarchical position within the organization
- Internal and external roles related to the positions
- Tasks and activities to be implemented (based on the pre-determined needs of the station)
- Degree of autonomy the position involves
- Salary range and benefits

N.B: Prior to the start of the recruitment process, its objectives must be defined by the senior management.

Staffs grow continuously over time according to the development plan devised by the General Assembly and the Board of Directors.

Launching the job posting

Once the objectives of the recruitment process have been clarified and the job description has been created, it has to go public. This can be done in a number of ways:

- In the newspapers
- In the radio
- By word of mouth

Selecting the Right Candidate

The purpose of hiring new staff is to provide the radio with qualified personnel as necessary. The number of staff needed to run the station must be determined by taking into consideration the financial resources available, among other things. The hourly rate for each position helps to determine the number of individuals to be recruited whether they are volunteers, freelancers or full-time staff. Employees must be carefully selected according to the station's needs and goals, and not based on friendship or other personal relationships. This is essential for the professionalization of a radio station.

In this respect, an important step in the recruitment process is to vet the applications and select a pool of qualified applicants to be interviewed. The selection process has the following steps:

- Going through the résumés of applicants to eliminate those who do not fit the job description and do not have the adequate profile;
- Conducting a written or oral exam;
- Interviewing with a selection committee to rank applicants;
- Decision-making by selection committee and senior management based on objective criteria (how well the candidate's profile aligns with the job description and the radio's needs; performance on the exam; etc.);
- Announcing the results.

Announcing the Results

Once the job interviews are over and the hiring process is completed, it is important to announce the results publicly. This highlights the credibility and professionalism of the organisation and is respectful towards the other candidates who did not get the position.

Just like it was the case for the original job post, results can be published in the newspaper, on the radio or on the phone.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



For more information on the management of community radio stations, please refer to the list below.

“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>

“Community Radio Handbook” by UNESCO. Available at:

<http://developingradio.org/files/UNESCO%20CR%20Handbook.pdf>

“Community Radio Start-Up Information Guide” by AMARC. Available at:

http://www.amarc.org/documents/manuals/community-radio-start-up-guide_e.pdf

“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!