

# Youth Radio for Peacebuilding

a guide  
2<sup>nd</sup> edition

Michael Shipler





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## 2006 Search for Common Ground

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A large, light-colored graphic of a radio antenna is centered in the background. It consists of a vertical rectangular base and a circular top section with several concentric circles inside, representing the antenna's structure.

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## How to use this Guidebook

This is a guidebook, not a workshop or conference report. It has been written for radio broadcasters (adults and youth) who want to make good, entertaining youth radio programmes which also build peace. The tools described here are meant for use by those working in radio, but they can also be used by youth workers and young leaders to design and implement their own radio initiatives. Some broadcasters may be familiar with some of the ideas, but we hope that it also contains a lot of new and useful material.

Everyone would like to live in a peaceful society, one not driven by hatred and violence, but the question is how to get there. This guidebook is packed with a wealth of examples and tools to help radio professionals and young people produce youth programmes for peacebuilding. Each chapter begins with a short summary of the main ideas and concepts it contains, but overall the guidebook includes:

- A how-to guide to analysing conflict
- An analysis of what happens to young people in conflict and how radio can help
- Tools and examples of how radio professionals can create youth radio initiatives
- Guidance for adults working with young people on radio programmes for peacebuilding; and
- Tools to help young producers participate in creating radio for peacebuilding

You'll also find quotations and examples in boxes, while some important ideas which could help you design your programmes are set out as tables.

Most of the examples are drawn from African countries, and the guide is written with that continent in mind. But the issues, discussion and skills are relevant to a much wider spectrum of countries.

*Youth Radio for Peacebuilding - a guide* is one of a series<sup>1</sup> of guidebooks developed for radio producers and others involved in making positive radio in Africa - radio which makes a difference. It has been produced by the Radio for Peacebuilding, Africa project<sup>2</sup>, which is a project of Search for Common Ground. It can be read straight through, or you may simply use the tables to help you design your programmes, but whatever you do your comments, ideas and experiences will help improve it so please send feedback to [radiopeaceafrica@sfcg.be](mailto:radiopeaceafrica@sfcg.be)

This is an up-dated edition of the original guide published in 2006. Changes to that guide have been based on feedback received from you, the readers, and on the recommendations of focus groups with stake holders organised by the project in Belgium, Burundi and Sierra Leone.

<sup>1</sup> The others are; *Radio Talkshows for Peacebuilding - a guide*, and *Radio Soap Operas for Peacebuilding - a guide*

<sup>2</sup> The Radio for Peacebuilding, Africa project ([www.radiopeaceafrica.org](http://www.radiopeaceafrica.org)), was set up and is run by the conflict transformation NGO Search for Common Ground ([www.sfcg.org](http://www.sfcg.org)). The project is entirely funded by the British Department for International Development (DFID).



*The term **youth** is defined differently in different cultures. For the purposes of this guide, we use the term youth and young people interchangeably to mean adolescents (12 to 19) and young adults up to 24 years of age.*

*A **child** is defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as anyone under the age of eighteen years.*

*The term **elder** refers to those who are older, respected leaders of communities.*

Our vision is that radio stations come to use youth radio as a tool to help resolve conflicts and build peace. This can be done by giving young people the chance and the means to communicate with adult decision-makers. It can also be done by educating young people about the power they have to build peace in their own communities. Youth radio can contribute to peace by educating adults so that they have more and better information about the experiences and vulnerabilities of young people in conflicts. It helps youth resist manipulation to violence and encourages them to take active roles in building bridges across the dividing lines in their societies.

This guide also aims to motivate those who have power over radio outlets to encourage radio initiatives for young people, and to equip those who are committed to youth radio to do their work more effectively.

**Summary:** This chapter takes a look at both theoretical and practical approaches to conflict. Conflict itself is neither positive nor negative, only violent conflict is negative. What's important is how conflict is managed, so as to ensure that it doesn't develop into violence. Conflict runs along a continuum from, at one end, interpersonal conflict at work with a colleague (unlikely to lead to violence) to violent armed conflict between militia groups at the other end.

## 1.1 Understanding Conflict

For a radio professional to have a positive impact on violent conflict s/he has to understand it properly first.

Diplomats, negotiators and social scientists have developed a sophisticated understanding of conflict but few journalists and presenters know much about it. Journalists make news reports on violent conflict as it happens, and presenters talk about it on the air, often without an appreciation of the root causes, knowledge of the different kinds of conflict, or awareness of how it can end. As conflict analyst John Galtung observes, that is like describing an illness without reporting on what causes it and without reporting on the medicines that can cure it<sup>1</sup>.

### What is conflict?

A widely accepted definition of 'Conflict':

*Conflict is the relationship between at least two parties (individuals or groups) who have, or who think they have, incompatible objectives, needs and interests.*

Conflict is a widespread phenomenon, and there are many different types (political, social, economic, religious etc.) all of which may or may not result in violence. They can also be categorised according to the groups or individuals involved (generations, castes, ethnicities, nationalities, etc.). Equally, some specialists describe conflicts according to different phases, distinguishing, for example, 'pre-conflict', 'confrontation', 'crisis', 'resolution' and 'post-conflict'<sup>2</sup>.

These categories can be useful because they allow us to analyse a situation, but we mustn't forget that conflicts evolve; conflicts aren't static, they transform and even superimpose themselves one on top of another, altering over time and depending on events.

Conflicts are often caused by more than one of these factors. Indeed it is important for broadcasters to remember and to recognise that conflicts are usually the result of a combination of impulses, desires, needs, beliefs and perceptions. In violent conflicts there are often multiple perceptions

<sup>1</sup> For details on causes of conflict, forms of violence and ending conflict, see: J. Galtung, *Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means*, 2000. Available at [www.transcend.org](http://www.transcend.org)

<sup>2</sup> S. Fisher (ed.), *Working with conflicts : Skills and Strategies for Action*, Zed Books, 2000



of causes; they are almost never simple tugs-of-war between two groups. Most violent conflicts result from a whole collection of sometimes widely differing and even incompatible views, ideas, ideals and perceptions.

Conflicts can also result from the clash of beliefs with facts. Female circumcision or female genital mutilation is one such example – even the different ways of describing the practice demonstrate that it is a conflict issue. In this case the clash is between cultural traditions (values), and the physical consequences of the practice (facts). Presenting practitioners with the facts of its physical impact has convinced many that the practice needs to be changed, and/or eradicated.

Most lasting changes in a society are brought about by questioning and debate on the merits of the changes. In short, this disagreement or conflict is an integral part of everyone's lives. If conflict is well managed the parties will develop a common approach about the speed and dimension of the changes they want. If it's badly managed, then the conflict will probably become violent.

## Violence

Violence, 'consists of actions, words, attitudes, structures or systems which create physical, psychological, social or environmental prejudice, and/or which prevent people from achieving their full human potential'<sup>3</sup>.

**Physical violence:** (or visible violence) is the best known. It's often the only type of violence mentioned in the media. Visible violence aims to 'intimidate, constrain, wound or even to kill people'<sup>4</sup>.

But there is also 'invisible' violence. This is just as dangerous because it prevents individuals from realising their potential, and is liable to turn violent.

Generally two main categories of invisible violence are recognised: cultural violence and structural violence.

**Cultural violence** describes cultural products which justify or glorify violence. It includes hate speech, religious justification for war, the use of myths and legends about war heroes, etc<sup>5</sup>.

Hate speech, where one group speaks of another group as unequal and unworthy of respect, or blames it for current problems and suggests violence to eliminate that group. Hate speech may be used by one country against another country, or another social group (ethnicity, religion, class, etc.)

A second form of cultural violence is extreme religious intolerance of others' faith and practices. A third form is gender discrimination, which allows or endorses practices against the best interests of women.

<sup>3</sup> S. Fisher (ed.), op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> L. Reyhler, T. Paffenholz, *Peacebuilding : A Field Guide*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000

<sup>5</sup> J. Lynch, A. McGoldrick, *Peace Journalism*, Hawthorn Press, 2005



Talkshow hosts can contribute to conflict by showing their own preferences and prejudices

**Structural violence** occurs when the laws and traditional rules of a society permit or encourage harm against one group. It includes, notably, slavery, colonialism, racial segregation, etc. And even corruption, when it's organised and systematic, is a form of structural violence.

It includes political or legal systems (such as the former system of apartheid in South Africa) which don't treat everyone as equal, but also societal norms and values which prevent some individuals from reaching their potential.

Clearly, ending physical conflict isn't enough to bring long term peace in such cases. The conflict will erupt again if these other forms of violence are ignored.

### How conflict becomes violent

Circumstances in which conflicts are likely to turn violent are the same almost everywhere in the world:

- Little or no communication between two or more sides who disagree
- False ideas and beliefs about each other held by the different sides
- Historical, long-time grievances between the different sides
- Uneven distribution of power, and/or resources (such as food, housing, jobs and land)

With reference to this last, the inequitable distribution of resources, it's important to remember that people involved in violent conflict are very unlikely to accept as an 'outcome' any arrangement which leaves their basic human needs unmet – not only secure supplies of food, water, shelter and basic medicine, but also identity and recognition.

This is particularly important for radio professionals to understand as it means that people whose needs are unmet should not necessarily be seen as 'unreasonable' if they keep up their struggle, even if it seems hopeless or self-defeating. What it means is that some form of structural change has to be on the agenda, to allow those human needs to be met. If there is no agreement on changing these conditions, violent conflict is almost inevitable.

## Ending conflict

So how does conflict end? Firstly, there are many traditional conflict resolution techniques which are still in use in many parts of Africa, but they still fall into one or more of the categories outlined below.

Conflict analysts say that conflict between protagonists, whether they are a man and woman, or a number of villages, militias or countries, can end in at least four different ways;

**One side wins (or one-party dominance):** Because it is physically stronger, or is financially more powerful, or is supported by some authority such as the courts, one side wins and the other loses. The loser is likely to be unsatisfied, and may suffer violence and harm. The 1967-70 war against the secessionist movement for an independent Biafra in Nigeria ended in a total victory for the central government, but some Igbo remain unsatisfied and still talk about independence.

**Withdrawal** is another way of ending a conflict, at least temporarily. One or both sides back away, although neither side is really satisfied. At the end of May 2000, exhausted by an expensive and bloody border war both Ethiopia and Eritrea temporarily withdrew their forces (Ethiopia claimed a victory). But the underlying problems were not resolved and continued to create serious tensions.

**Compromise** is the beginning of a solution to the conflict. The two sides agree on at least a small change, such as sharing the resource about which they quarreled. The share may be unequal but it is temporarily satisfying enough to both groups. The 1996 agreement between the government of Mali and northern Touareg groups is an example. The government decentralised local authority and economic development to the north; the Touareg abandoned their weapons and efforts to achieve outright independence.

**Real common ground (or Transcendence),** involves both sides achieving a new understanding of their real needs, and finding a new way to share the benefits of cooperation. They respect their differences and recognise their common problems. They work together for their common good. Violent conflict becomes a less desirable way of resolving their differences. This is the most likely way to achieve lasting peace. The 1992 peace accord to end the long civil war in Mozambique is an example. In a 10-year process, both sides agreed that rebuilding the agricultural economy, tolerating regional self-governance and moving to free elections were the best ways to improve everyone's lives.

## 1.2 How to Transform Conflict

Peace building techniques have existed for a long time. These are actions which help prevent conflicts from becoming violent.

Traditional techniques include facilitation and mediation between political actors (official and unofficial diplomacy), the creation of local organisations to resolve individual conflicts, judicial mediation, etc.

More recently new techniques have been successfully developed and used. These include the use of sport, or other cultural activities in order to build relationships between social groups or between political actors. And among the more important new tools is the media - particularly radio.

## Radio and Conflict

Of all the audiovisual media, radio is the most direct and reaches the most people. This makes it an essential element in peace building, particularly in the South.

Radio contributes, significantly or not, to either exacerbating tensions, or to reinforcing a culture of dialogue and tolerance. Every radio station plays a role in the way its audience, and therefore society, perceives different groups and the conflicts which bring them into opposition.

It's not only the famous hate radios and propaganda media which have a negative influence on the evolution of a conflict. For example, working in an unprofessional way can be enough to reinforce stereotypes and tensions. In fact, a large number of radio professionals have a negative impact without meaning to. By using imprecise and sensationalist words many journalists and presenters contribute to increasing tensions and to making dialogue difficult.

Less well known are the radio initiatives which have had a constructive influence, those which emphasise dialogue and which encourage mutual understanding between ethnic, religious, linguistic or other groups. Here are a few examples of positive roles which a radio can take on.

It can:

- be a form of communication between protagonists
- correct misperceptions by inviting guests and experts to explain themselves clearly
- make one side more human to the other
- personalize an ideology or a myth, by giving them names and voices and airing real stories
- give protagonists and listeners an emotional outlet, or a new way to see the problem, or an opportunity to hear about solutions and/or positive changes achieved elsewhere.

These are precisely some of the essential roles played by professional conflict negotiators, dispute counselors, and diplomats in trying to resolve conflict. But these are also the everyday roles of professional radio broadcasters. When they do these things, radio professionals mediate conflict.



Talkshow hosts often use conflicts in order to attract a larger audience

## Conflict transformation techniques for the media

The way in which a conflict is presented is decisive because it encourages or discourages resolution between those involved. Journalists and producers tend to think of a conflict as being a 'zero sum game', or a battle between two parties for whom there is either victory or defeat. If I win, you lose, and vice versa. But the only way of coming out of a conflict is to find a solution in which everyone is a winner (the 'win-win' approach). The way in which we describe or see the conflict is therefore fundamental. At this level, the men and women who work in the media play an essential role.

The tools presented below (conflict map, positions/interests, and facts/values) helps us to see conflict in a different way.

### Conflict mapping

This exercise helps us to understand a conflict more deeply as well as the different factors which are involved. It helps us as radio professionals to think of questions which we may not have thought of before, and should give us a better understanding of the situation.

Conflicts are complex and it's difficult to summarise them, so remember that the objective of the conflict map isn't to simplify things. Creating a conflict map simply allows us to see the situation with more clarity. And this may lead towards resolution.

There are many ways of creating a conflict map. Writing the results of the discussion outlined below on a flip chart will help 'visualise' the conflict.

#### Identifying the actors

This means identifying:

- the main protagonists/key actors in the conflict
- the other parties implicated or associated with the conflict in one way or another (including marginalised groups or external players)

Replying to the following question will help in the identification process: *Who has an interest in being involved in the conflict?*

It's equally useful to imagine and to visualize the relationships between the parties in the conflict (alliances, breakdowns in communication, confrontations, broken contacts etc.).

#### Identifying the issue

This means:

- identifying the positions of each of the parties (see the next section). List the positions of all the parties (their needs and declared objectives)
- defining the problem. This isn't easy because it means describing what the conflict is about. And often there is no single definition. Write them all down, this exercise helps to demonstrate the complexity of conflict.

Equally, it's good to identify the fears and the needs of the actors, because at the end of the day, there won't be a satisfying and durable solution to the conflict if the fundamental needs of the actors haven't been met. It's also important to accept the subjective nature of fears and needs. The objective of this exercise isn't to decide what's reasonable and unreasonable, but to explore different perceptions of the reality of a conflict.

## Positions and interests

An important skill for radio professionals discussing conflict is the ability to identify the positions and the interests of the opposing sides.

**A position** is often where people first focus their attention in a conflict. A position is a statement or action taken to support a claim, or a point of view. It can be a belief about how to get or defend what one side thinks it needs. People can cling to a position, or change their position as they seek new ways to advance their claim.

**An interest** represents a more fundamental need, and is the real reason for taking a position. An interest may often go unstated but it is real. There is at least one interest behind every position. Sometimes two sides may have positions which appear totally opposed but the interests underneath may have similarities, or even share common ground.

A conflict may be irresolvable as long as the debate focuses only on the positions, without examining each side's interests. Positions separate the sides whereas interests hold the possibility of bringing them together. However, the different participants, on all sides, to a violent conflict may hold many different positions - and this is partly what makes violent conflicts so difficult to unravel.

## Facts and values

**A fact** is a truth about the world. It is information which can be observed or calculated, such as cows eat grass, or the height of Mt. Kilimanjaro. A fact does not change, regardless of who presents it. Eventually, perhaps with independent verification, facts become accepted.

**A value** is different. It can be a deeply held personal belief or a widely-shared viewpoint, such as: killing is wrong except in self-defence. But values are not verified by fact. They are subjective. A belief that one political party has better policies for farmers than another party is a value. As another example, it is a fact that smoking causes cancer. But the right to smoke in public is a widely-held value. Even if they are not verifiable, values may be very resistant to change.

For example, a conflict between two leaders over how many rebel soldiers have been demobilised is a fact-based conflict. The number can be verified, by independent sources if necessary.

But disagreements over allowing or banning polygamy, homosexuality, or abortion are value-based conflicts.

The essential skills for first turning a talkshow towards conflict resolution is to listen for, identify and then act upon facts.

The point here is to turn the discussion from being about value-laden perceived causes of the conflict to being about verified facts and a search for solutions to other facts.



Value-based conflicts are more difficult to resolve. People do not usually give up their values easily. But it may be possible to use agreed-upon facts as a starting point to encourage tolerance for different values. It may also be possible to search for other values which both sides share.

For example, in a number of African countries health and education campaigners have worked with communities to end female genital mutilation. They encourage communities to retain a special initiation rite (a value) to signify womanhood, but now the ceremony involves sacrifice of a goat or cow instead of physical harm to a young woman.

Sorting out facts from values is an essential first step to positive discussion of a conflict. Well-supported facts can be powerful points of first agreement between the protagonists.

### **Finding common ground**

Identifying facts, recognising values, and establishing the real interests behind positions are tools for directing those involved in the conflict away from angry disagreement towards the exploration of common ground. Such techniques can attract listeners precisely because they deal with real conflicts but move the conflicts towards resolution, rather than exploiting them and creating more problems in the process.

This kind of radio requires research and work in advance. It requires applying a basic conflict analysis to identify the sources and forms of conflict. It requires preparing questions in advance to help identify and separate facts from values. It requires careful interview techniques to point the antagonists past their opposing positions towards possible shared interests and common ground.

## 2. Youth, Conflict, and Radio

**Summary: Young people get sucked into conflict; they are easily manipulated to participate and are also conflict's greatest victims. Yet in many places groups of youth have resisted, and are involved in peacebuilding efforts. Radio is a force which can be used by youth themselves and by radio professionals to mobilise young people to build peaceful communities.**

### 2.1 What happens to youth in conflict?

There is a youth crisis throughout Africa. Even in countries which are not at war, youth suffer from high levels of violence and poverty, a lack of educational opportunities, an increasing HIV/AIDs rate, and family problems. Youth make up a large proportion of the populations of most African countries, and high unemployment rates leave young people, particularly in urban centres, idle, poor and easily manipulated.

The problems faced by young people are made worse by conflict. Youth are displaced and victimised by violence, and young women in particular face a greater risk of sexual assault. Their livelihoods and educational opportunities are destroyed. Some children are separated from their families, and others head households. In fact, the entire system that is designed to support young people in the transition to adulthood is destroyed by armed conflict.

All these terrible things leave young people vulnerable to being pulled into violence. There are an estimated 300,000 children serving in armies world wide, at least 120,000 of them in Africa. Countless other soldiers are young adults who have been recruited into armed groups by war lords and political elites; youth are essential to many armed rebellions. They are the fuel for many conflicts; many are forced into violence while others choose to join armed groups.

Yet there are also countless cases of young people creating organisations and clubs to prevent their manipulation into violence, to protect their rights, and to build peace. These groups are at the frontlines of peacebuilding, working directly with those who are most vulnerable. Youth organise to have a voice and to influence political events in positive ways. Just as youth can fuel destructive movements through violence, they can also be a powerful force for peace.

*In 2003 Search for Common Ground's (SFCG) lead cub reporter with Golden Kids News, a hugely popular kids' programme in Sierra Leone, was an 11-year-old boy. He had been abducted by the rebel RUF when he was five years old and trained as a fighter from six years old. He fought in many battles in various parts of the country. The stories he recounts of walking across the country with the RUF are harrowing. He had lost touch with his family. On the last day of his training as a reporter, when asked what was the most important thing in his life at this time he answered that he was tired of taking care of himself and above all else wanted to meet his mother again so she could take care of him.*



## 2.2 Why Youth Radio?

### What is Youth Radio?

The term *youth radio* refers to radio programming that is produced by or for young people. Around the world much radio targets youth, but it is often *only* for entertainment. For the purposes of this guidebook, youth radio refers to programming which deals with young people's issues and which hopes to change how they react to conflict. For the most part, these programmes are produced by young people, often with the help of adults.

### What Can Radio Do for Youth in Conflict?

The problems facing youth in conflict are huge. Clearly, radio cannot solve all of them, but the information that they get from radio can help them make decisions about how to react. This power has been used for destructive ends, to fuel conflict and to mobilise young people to join militias and armed groups.

It is up to radio producers across the continent to use the power of radio to build peace, to mobilise young people to build relationships across dividing lines, and to avoid violence.

Youth radio can have a big positive impact on young people in the midst of terrible circumstances. Youth radio can:

- Fill the information void that most young people experience in conflict zones. Young people say that the lack of access to accurate information leaves them vulnerable to manipulation;
- Help youth to understand root causes of conflict. Youth are often pulled onto one side or another without understanding why there is conflict in the first place.
- Teach youth about their rights and how to protect those rights. In situations where young people's rights are so severely violated, it is important that they know what rights they have.
- Help youth make good decisions in response to things that are happening to them. Young people often feel that they have no choice but to respond with violence.
- Spark youth to action so that they take on positive roles in their own communities.
- Create outlets for youth voices, helping them communicate with each other and with adult decision-makers. Radio programmes which put young people's voices on the air help them speak directly to their elders about the issues that they face. And when young people hear themselves on the radio they begin to feel that someone does care about the issues which concern them.
- Model positive responses which youth can have to conflict, showing all listeners that youth don't have to be seen as The Problem, that they can play a positive role in building peace.

## 3. Common ground youth radio in conflict contexts

**Summary:** This chapter is based on the experiences of African youth radio producers. It goes through some basic tools which are used by them to build peace, including; building partnerships with other organisations; figuring out what you want to achieve; identifying your target audience; how to create an impact; and how to deliver messages successfully.

### 3.1 Building Partnerships

Youth radio is most effective when done in partnership with other, existing groups and networks. It can be very difficult for those in the media to identify the issues that youth are facing, get them to express their ideas, foster their growth, and to help them produce radio shows that build peace.

#### Why build partnerships?

Some youth radio programme makers have found that working directly with other groups who are involved with youth in conflict situations means they produce much better programmes. There are a number of ways that such partnerships can help:

- Groups which work with youth have access to the best young people to become journalists, producers or presenters for your programme;
- Many organisations know a lot about how to work with youth and how to structure a programme so that it deals with the needs of youth participants;
- Partner organisations know a lot about the issues affecting youth in conflict contexts.

#### Who should we partner with?

It is important to start by deciding which groups would be the best partners. The following questions should help you figure out who can help build the initiative:

- Who knows the problems of young people well?
- Who is affected by conflict and should be involved?
- What can they do to help you achieve your purpose?

Some of the groups that radio producers work with include:

- *Schools and universities* – These, of course, are the main institutions which work with youth. They are often politically vibrant places with people seeking to solve the problems afflicting a country. Student organisations are often involved in the political conflicts and represent all sides. However, working only with educational institutions can be limiting – most young people don't study past primary school
- *Youth-Serving Organisations* – In most societies, particularly in urban areas, there are organisations which serve young people. Often these organisations are working with 'street kids,' and others who are particularly vulnerable
- *Child Protection Organisations and Child Welfare Committees* – In areas where children have faced severe abuse, particularly in war zones, citizens respond by setting up programmes to protect children's rights. In many war zones groups of community leaders and parents come together to protect children. They work to identify risks and create solutions
- *Youth-Led Organisations* – Youth of all sorts come together in groups and even formal organisations to work on a whole range of issues. They often work on generating incomes, protecting their rights, and building peace. They seek to have a voice and to help members of their generation be useful members of society. They are often based in a community and have a lot of power to mobilise other young people. Often there are youth organisations led by women, who mobilise on young women's issues, which should also be engaged.

Sometimes these groups can be associated with political parties or with one of the groups involved in a conflict. This is a risk for a media organisation. One solution to this is to select multiple partners who represent different sides of a conflict. This will help you to avoid being seen as favouring one side or another, and to address all the issues better in your programme.

### **How to work with your partners**

In order to develop an effective partnership, you need to know the gaps in skills and resources that you may have. Then you can see how your partners may fill those gaps. For example, if you are struggling to find articulate youth to be part of your programme, one of your partners may have connections with youth leaders. Youth radio producers throughout Africa work with partners in many ways. Here are some examples of good partnerships:

- You might get your partner involved in all aspects of your programme. You could establish your radio initiative as a joint project. Your partner could help with everything from starting up to choosing topics for programmes. This can help you be sure that your radio work is linked to realities on the ground and to changes that young peacebuilders are trying to encourage.
- You could ask them to provide youth participants for your programme. Those groups that are already working with youth, or are made up of youth, are in a great position to help you put your team together. They can often identify young people who have the skills and characteristics to be effective in producing radio programmes.
- Ask them to be sources for stories. People who work for these sorts of organisations are often well positioned to give accurate information about what is happening among youth.





In establishing a relationship with such organisations, you may want to see how you can help them. If you link what you are trying to achieve to what they want to do, you will both benefit. For example, if you find a partner who is trying to prevent youth from being manipulated to violence, then you can set that as your own objective. You can then pick up directly on your partners' issues and address them in your programme. Or, if your partner, is mobilising youth to do positive activities in their own communities, you could produce a programme that talks about those opportunities. The programme could model the desired behaviour and demonstrate the benefits.

*Search for Common Ground (SFCG) in Sierra Leone has been running 'Golden Kids News' for several years. By broadcasting a youth news programme twice a week, SFCG gives young people a chance to express themselves and to discuss the issues that are most important to them. The programme has cub reporters, in every district of the country. In order to build this initiative, SFCG has built partnerships with many organisations that are working at a local level. In each district, SFCG works with a local child-protection organisation. The partners identify young journalists, organise trainings, select topics to cover and supervise the work of the young people as they cover stories. These partnerships make sure that 'Golden Kids News' is really rooted in the everyday problems of young people at local levels.*

### 3.2 What do you Want to Achieve?

It helps if radio producers can put into words what they hope to achieve. These objectives then become a guide in defining the target audience, aid in the selection of presenters, and most importantly, determine what the programme will be about. You can ask, *What do we want to achieve? What changes need to occur to help young people in conflict situations? How do we use the radio to encourage those changes?*



A radio producer could set these objectives with two steps:

- Gather information on youth issues by talking with young people;
- Use that information to make decisions about what s/he wants to do.

### **Gathering Information**

Young people themselves know about the things that are happening to them, and can be directly involved in the development and creation of a programme. By working with your partner organisations, you can talk to many young people who have different view points and experiences.

With your partners, you can organise meetings with different groups of youth and individuals to discover their views on conflict. It helps to meet with people from all sides of a conflict and from many different backgrounds.

#### **Interviewing Youth: Key Questions**

The following are some questions to ask young people and those who work with them, to be sure that your initiative is rooted in their needs and perspectives:

- What are the main things that are happening to youth?
- What is the impact of the conflict on young people?
- How are young people involved in conflict?
- What do you think young people need to know?
- What do you think young people need to believe?
- What should young people do to build peace?
- How can youth radio build peace?

The information that you gather here will be very valuable to you not only in choosing objectives, but in giving you a set of topics that you can use in future programmes.

### **Choosing an Objective**

Once you've gathered information, the next step is to make some decisions about what you can achieve. You will probably have some details about how youth get pulled into violence and the impact of conflict on their lives. This can help you to identify particular actions and radio shows which could have a positive impact. You may also have identified ways that young people can contribute to peace in your society.

*In the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) created a radio programme called 'Sisi Watoto' (We, the Children) to help youth in conflict contexts. After learning about the issues affecting young people, SFCG chose three main objectives for the programme:*

- *To sensitise youth and young adults about the effects of armed conflict;*
- *To support the reintegration of youth into their communities; and*
- *To support the participation of youth in rebuilding their communities.*

For example, in many contexts youth are manipulated to violence by adults, particularly by politicians and other leaders. This manipulation is achieved through the spreading of misinformation and fear, and by promises of financial rewards, power, and status in the community. In such a situation, a producer could decide that what s/he wants to achieve is to *use radio to reduce the manipulation of youth to violence by political elites.*

Your analysis may result in many different goals; for example in situations where stereotyping has led to ethnic clashes, you might want your programme to help break down the stereotypes which youths have of one another by demonstrating their individual humanity. Or your programme might focus on educating young people about their rights, communicating youth's views to adults, or on encouraging parents to keep their kids in school.

### 3.3 Who is Your Target Audience?

Radio producers know that it is important to decide who their audience will be. They ask: who do we want to speak to? Who are the people we want to listen to our programme? Why them? The answers to these questions determine the format that they will use for their programmes, and how they keep it entertaining for listeners.

Deciding who your audience is should be based on what you want to achieve with your programme. If, for example, you're seeking to reduce the manipulation of youth by adults, then the audience will probably be mainly young women and men who are being encouraged to commit violence.

While youth themselves are naturally the main target group, youth radio programmes can also speak to adults. For example, the main audiences for *Sisi Watoto*, one of SFCG's programmes in Eastern Congo, were both youth and adults in rural areas, including parents, teachers, and community elders.

One way you can decide on your target audience is by thinking about who is speaking through the radio to whom. Some examples include:

- **Youth to Youth** – These are programmes in which youth produce programmes for youth about the issues that concern them. For example: a programme hosted by former child soldiers can encourage existing child soldiers to leave the group they are with despite the fears they may have of going home.
- **Youth to Adult** – These programmes identify older people as the primary audiences and provide outlets for young people to speak to the older generation. For example: one which gives youth a chance to communicate their needs to their elders provides a non-violent outlet for frustrations and can foster dialogue.
- **Adult to Youth** – This style of programme is designed and produced by adult professionals with youth as the primary target audience. For example: one which provides former rebels or soldiers with information on rehabilitation processes.
- **Youth to Youth and Adults** – These programmes provide opportunities for young people to communicate with both their age group and the older generation, particularly those who influence youth. For example: a programme which discusses the needs and particular experiences of young people in the conflict.

Defining your audience helps you choose your format so that the programme can be both accessible to your listeners and entertaining. It also helps you make decisions about what knowledge you wish to get across to your audience, and what changes in attitudes and behaviour you are hoping to stimulate. These topics are discussed in the next section.

#### Defining Your Target Audience:

*As you develop your radio initiative and see its impacts, you might want to get more specific about who you want talk to, beyond the broad categories of youth and adults. Depending on your programme's goals, you could identify sub-groups such as:*

#### Youth

- *War-affected youth*
- *Youth leaders who are opinion formers*
- *Refugee and displaced youth*
- *Victims and perpetrators of violence*
- *Youth who are vulnerable to recruitment into violence*

#### Adults

- *Parents*
- *Teachers*
- *Elder decision makers*
- *Politicians and community leaders*
- *Civil society leaders*

### 3.4 Creating an Impact

Many radio producers decide what they want to change, then try to break that down further. They seek to identify what *knowledge* they want their audiences to gain from the programme, what *attitudes* they hope to shift and finally what *behaviour* they are hoping to inspire.

- **Knowledge** – information which the audience can use after listening to your programme
- **Attitudes** – what people think and feel as a result of the knowledge which they have gained
- **Behaviour** – what people actually do as a result of the knowledge they have gained and the attitudes which have changed

The idea here is that increased access to more or better information and knowledge about a situation can lead to changes of attitude, which creates changes in behaviour. But it is important to acknowledge that many things influence how people behave, and knowledge gained from the radio is only one of them.

#### **STEP I: What *knowledge* do you want your audience to acquire?**

This is key to developing a youth radio programme for peacebuilding. It will help you decide what your programme is about and what format you should use.

You can ask yourselves: *In order to create the change that we have described, what knowledge does our audience need to acquire?* The knowledge you can pass on ranges from teaching young people about their rights to helping decision-makers understand youth issues better.

For example, if the overall objective is to reduce youth manipulation to violence by political elites, knowledge you could get across includes:

- What manipulation is;
- How young people are manipulated to violence;
- Ways that young people can avoid manipulation;
- That youth on all sides of a violent conflict are manipulated equally; and
- Many youth do not choose violence as a means for resolving conflicts.

#### **Knowledge**

Some examples of knowledge that a radio programme can help listeners acquire are:

- Some young people are actively contributing to peace and development in their communities;
- Young people have the right to express themselves;
- Details of existing laws and democratic principles; and
- Understanding of the cultural practices of different ethnic groups.

The list that you generate during the planning process will probably be rewritten as you respond to feedback from your listeners. Your list is a guide, leading the development of each of your messages.

## STEP 2: What *attitudes* do you want your audience to have?

You might start by asking: *In order to create the changes that we have described, what attitudes would we like our audience to have?*

If we are seeking to reduce the manipulation of youth to violence, then what attitudes do we hope the audience will have as a result of our programme? Some attitudes that we could hope to inspire include:

- The belief among young people that their involvement in violence is the result of manipulation;
- The belief that youth can contribute to political processes in positive ways;
- The belief that youth gain no long term benefits from violence;
- An increased sense among youth that they have a voice; and
- An increased sense among youth that they can make choices and have some control over their own lives.
- At this point you can go back to Step 1 and ask; Is the information that we're providing likely to lead to the changes in attitudes that we want?

### Attitudes

Some examples of attitude changes that you might want to inspire:

- More respect for differences in culture, religion, ideology, etc.
- Increase in the belief that young people can be active participants in developing their country and community;
- Better sense of the independence of youth to make their own decisions;
- Belief that following a path of non-violence can lead to success.

## STEP 3: What *behaviour* do you want your audience to undertake?

Information, and how it's delivered, has an impact on people's behaviour. So it's important for radio producers to identify the changes in their listeners' behaviour which they want to encourage.

It helps to link the your overall goal and the changes in people's actions by asking: *In order to achieve our overall goal what do we want our audience to **do** as a result of our programme?*

For example, if we are seeking to reduce the manipulation of youth to violence, what changes in behaviour need to occur? In other words, *What do we want people to **do** in order to prevent youth from getting involved in violence?* Some behaviour changes that we could aim for include:

- Youth get engaged in positive activities in their communities;
- Youth get involved in decision-making processes on issues that affect their lives;
- Youth mobilise for peace rather than for violence; and
- Youth resist the manipulation to violence.

### Behaviour

Some examples of behaviour changes that you might aim for:

- Increase in youth developing friendships and relationships across conflict lines;
- Youth develop and implement peacebuilding activities in their own communities; and
- Youth choose not to get involved in violence.

Once you have described in words the way you would like people to behave, you can look back over the attitude changes and knowledge increases you wrote down earlier and see whether it all adds up. Is the information you have decided to give likely to lead to the changes in thinking and thus the changes in behaviour that you seek? Does it all make logical sense?

#### STEP 4: Putting it All Together

Once you know what behavioural changes you want to encourage, you can work your way backwards to see if you have done all that is necessary by filling in the blank spaces in this sentence; *In order for my target audience to **do** \_\_\_\_\_, then they have to **believe** \_\_\_\_\_, and they have to **know** \_\_\_\_\_.* If you can't fill in the blanks then you need to go back and look at the different steps again. It often takes several revisions to feel comfortable with what's written down.

*This table below can help you design your radio programme. You can copy out the table and then answer the questions to see if the knowledge that you give leads to the attitudes you hope to develop and then to the behaviour you are trying to change.*

Goal: What do you want to achieve? <i>Our overall goal is to reduce youth manipulation to violence</i>		
Knowledge	Attitudes	Behaviour
What do you want people to know as a result of listening to your programme?	What do you want people to think as a result of listening to your programme?	What do you want people to do as a result of listening to your programme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth learn how they are being manipulated</li> <li>• Youth learn about ways to avoid being manipulated</li> <li>• Adults learn about the risks that their sons and daughters face</li> <li>• Parents learn how to help their youth stay out of the violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people believe that they are being manipulated to violence</li> <li>• Youth believe that they should not be involved in violence</li> <li>• Youth believe that they can make positive contributions to building peace in their communities</li> <li>• Youth believe that taking part in the conflict will not bring them any lasting benefit</li> <li>• Adults believe that youth have positive contributions to make to society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth avoid being manipulated to violence</li> <li>• Youth participate in positive development and peacebuilding activities</li> <li>• Adults help youth participate in positive activities</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Delivering messages

Radio producers throughout Africa and elsewhere know that it is important to think about how to create and deliver messages in ways that are effective.

While knowledge of the local culture is important, there are some tried and tested guiding principles which have been used in many different places:

- *Make your audience think*, rather than making statements and hoping that they will agree with you. Your listeners will turn the radio off if they feel that you are trying to teach them something.
- *Keep programming interesting* – By making programmes entertaining and fun, they keep their listeners involved in the serious parts of the discussions.
- *Package radio programmes around one theme* – Choose one theme for each programme; as this means that the discussion can go into some depth, as well as showing problems and their solutions.
- *Reinforce messages* – By delivering messages in different ways during a programme, producers help listeners understand what the programme is trying to communicate. You can describe the issue, give examples of the problem and some possible solutions, and then state one or two possible solutions directly.
- *Include youth voices in radio programmes* – It is important for both adult and young listeners to hear the voices of youth in the programme. This helps young people relate to the content, and helps adults see the value of including the ideas of young people.
- *Establish flow* – Make sure that the content and the messages build on one another until they reach some resolution.
- *Make youth feel that they've got decision-making power*<sup>3</sup> – It is important to help youth develop opinions about the content of the programme and find ways of applying what they learn to their own lives. Discuss key decision-making moments which may arise in a conflict, such as when leaders are trying to stir up hatred, or when a peace process is under discussion, or when a particularly violent act has taken place.
- *Give listeners a stake in the outcome* – Create tension around particular moments in the programme so that listeners feel an emotional connection to the discussion, to the decisions that are made and to the results that could emerge.

<sup>3</sup> Engaging Young People: How Nonprofits Can Reach Young Adults, MTV / Ad.Council, [www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=313](http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=313)



## Possible Formats

### Magazine

Format – Short interviews, music, straight talk, news spots, vox pops, sports news and information, short interviews, jingles, PSAs etc.

#### *Advantages*

- Allows for a variety of inputs
- Practical – doesn't need tons of equipment, phones etc.
- Inclusive
- Less work intensive
- Colorful and variety keeps their interest in programme
- Can bring out a story, if packaged well.
- Can get to know a particular dimension of a conflict
- Very informative
- Can be done live, although this is complicated

#### *Disadvantages*

- Usually produced in advance – so not up to the minute with news
- Pre-packaged segments may not be current to breaking news
- Flow of segments has to be done carefully

### Radio Drama

Format – Soap opera or single episode dramatic performance targeting youth. Each episode or series of episodes can address one issue and its solutions.

#### *Advantages*

- Can be immensely popular
- Communicates messages in ways that are emotionally convincing
- Fosters adult-youth partnerships

#### *Disadvantages*

- Challenging and expensive to do effectively
- Difficult for youth to produce alone because of the time and organisation it takes
- Requires adult involvement

### Talk-Show

Format – Round table, phone-in or face to face. Or a mixture of all three.

#### *Advantages*

- Open format
- Allows people from outside to contribute by phone
- Possible to include a wide variety of different ideas
- Host and producer have strong roles in formulating the discussions

#### *Disadvantages*

- People stop discussing the issues and start attacking personalities
- Conflicts can spill off the air and onto the streets
- Censorship
- Hard for youth to produce professionally
- Popularity with youth depends on topic
- Easy for radicalised youth to call in to the programme, and youth hosts may not have the skill to manage them
- More high income people own phones to call in

### Packaging a Programme

It is good to package a programme, or plan it so that each section builds on what has come before, particularly if it is discussing aspects of a conflict and trying to find some solutions.

Step 1: Introduce the problem clearly.

Step 2: Analyse the issue and its consequences

Step 3: Provide possible solutions and the decision making processes that surround them.

Step 4: Model the most appropriate strategy to deal with the problem.

Step 5: Sum-up by clearly restating the problem and the suggested solutions

*One Nigerian radio show, entitled 'You and I', aimed to help prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS. Using a drama format, the show told the story of a young woman who was feeling pressured to engage in unprotected sex. A friend clearly described the risks she faced and how to protect herself. Despite this warning, the young woman engaged in high risk behaviour and contracted HIV. The drama firstly described the problem clearly, then shared with the audience a number of possible solutions, and finally demonstrated the probable consequences of not following the advice.*

*On page 40, you will find a table that can be used to design your youth radio initiative and to link together the messages that you want to communicate.*

## 4. Working with youth

**Summary:** This chapter is to help adults manage their working relationships with youth. It addresses some of the issues which come up in radio production, and includes a description of the good elements of inter-generational cooperation; a list of the adults' responsibilities; suggestions for building a good team; and ideas about topics for training and guidance.

### 4.1 Inter-generational Partnership

The most effective youth radio initiatives in Africa are those in which adults and youth come together to co-lead an initiative. This is an inter-generational partnership.

Most youth are not used to voicing their opinions to adults, and most older people are not used to engaging young people as full partners. Yet, in order for youth radio programmes to be effective, to address the issues that youth are facing, the old and the young need to find a way of working together.

#### **Why Inter-Generational Partnerships?**

Youth and elders both have abilities and strengths which they can use to create a radio programme. Few young people have the technical and other resources to produce radio shows, so they need to rely on adult radio professionals. Radio stations and studios are mostly managed or owned by older people, and they have the technical skills necessary; they have the credibility to access interviewees and to get programmes on the air. Young people, on the other hand, bring knowledge about what is happening to them in conflict situations. And they also know what messages are most important for young listeners and how to deliver those messages. Youth voices can influence young people and adults alike.

#### **Managing Inter-Generational Partnerships**

Managing inter-generational partnerships can be tricky. While both youth and adults have the responsibility to manage these relationships, the bulk of the burden falls on the elders.

Adult radio producers face the challenge of getting young people to express their opinions and of guiding them so that their work is effective. This balance requires that the adults show that they value the viewpoints of their youth producers, while also providing information and ideas to them. The key is open communication between the partners.

### 4.2 Responsibilities and Ethical Guidelines

Adults who work with youth take on a set of responsibilities and ethical obligations. There are four main categories of responsibility in radio for peacebuilding:

- Honouring the voices of youth;
- Providing training and guidance;
- Getting youth access to resources; and
- Ensuring protection for young people.

## Voices of Youth

The biggest responsibility of adults is to ensure that the programme truly presents *voices of youth*. Youth can sometimes talk about issues in ways that older journalists can not. Secondly, radio gives youth the chance to express themselves, keeping them from turning to violence if they are frustrated by the sense that no one is listening to them. This can be difficult as adult producers have their own viewpoints and may disagree with what the young people are saying. In order to help youth express themselves, adults can:

- *Respect youth opinions* – It is important to listen to and respect the viewpoints of your youth producers. Even if you disagree, their opinions do matter and may be representative of widely held views.
- *Bring out ideas and creativity* – Adults can help young people express their views about how to build peace. For many youth, it will be the first time that they have ever been asked their opinion by an adult. Therefore, it is important to create an environment in which young people to feel safe. It is particularly important to be sure that young women are able to express themselves as freely and as often as the young men – their ideas and opinions matter!



- *Help youth find common ground* – While respecting the views of the youth involved in the programme, it is also the responsibility of the adults to push young people to find common ground with those they disagree with. This means discussing subjects, experiences and ideas which people from different sides of conflict have in common. Ask them to find things which they can agree about and base your programme on one of those subjects or issues. It may be something as simple as wanting better education, or agreeing that they feel let down and ignored by adults in the conflict.
- *Agree content jointly with youth* – The programmes will benefit if you jointly decide what each one will be about.

## Training and Guidance

It is the responsibility of the adult producers to provide *training and guidance* to the youth involved in their initiatives. Thanks to their experience, adults can assist young people produce good radio programmes which help resolve conflicts. (This responsibility will be addressed more in section 4.4.) This includes:

- *Training in the use of equipment and in production techniques* – Adult producers are responsible for training young people in how to use equipment and to produce effective and entertaining programmes.
- *Interviewing and Scripting* – Adults can help youth producers with interview techniques, and in writing scripts for magazine and drama programmes. This involves encouraging young people to focus on resolving conflicts by presenting solutions to problems and reducing stereotypes, rather than focusing on the problems and barriers to change.
- *Provide Ongoing Feedback* – Adults have much experience that they can share with youth. By organising regular listening sessions adults can provide feedback on each production. Such listening sessions can include questions about whether the youth radio programmes are really helping to resolve conflicts and bring people together.

## Access

One of the biggest challenges that youth face is access to the recording and broadcast equipment, and access to the best interviewees. Adults, therefore, need to help youth get this access. This is important for two reasons: young people's sense of marginalisation is often one of the root causes of their involvement in violence. Secondly, it helps make youth radio productions more professional. Adults can:

- *Provide access to airtime* –Adult producers are much more likely than youth to have the connections to create broadcast arrangements.
- *Provide access to equipment* – Adult radio producers can help youth get access to recording equipment and studios.
- *Be the Bridge* – Many adult supervisors help youth reporters arrange interviews. For example, adult supervisors can help their youth journalists get credentials to enter press conferences and other official functions. The adults involved can organise interviews with officials, famous figures, and others whom the youth wish to meet. Lastly, adults can help the youth get ready for the interview, and prepare the officials to speak with them.

## Protection

It is the responsibility of the adult producers to provide *protection* to those young people involved – particularly those under 18 years of age – while reporting on conflict. This includes:

- *Guarantee the confidentiality of vulnerable young people* – In zones of armed conflict, youth face particular vulnerabilities and need specific protection. It is good practice to get the permission of a child's guardian before putting his or her voice or name on the air. Those young people who have been victims or perpetrators of particular abuses, such as recruitment into armed groups or sexual assault, should not be named on the air if they are talking about those experiences.
- *Protect youth from 're-traumatisation'* – Those youth who have suffered severe traumas and violence must be protected from being forced to tell their stories on the air. It is important to allow the subject of an interview to control what he or she tells and not push them to discuss how they have been victimised. For more information on this, see the website of the Dart Center for Trauma and War ([www.dartcenter.org](http://www.dartcenter.org)).
- *Protect youth journalists from violence* – It is inherent in the adults' role as supervisors to help protect youth journalists from any sort of retribution or security risks. If journalists are under 18, their visits to the field must be supervised by an adult. It is important that the supervisor helps young adults identify security risks and set up a system so that they stay safe while doing their work.

*In October and November 2005, Search for Common Ground in Liberia decided not to use their teams of young journalists to cover the elections because of security issues. Although the stories by children about children's views of the electoral process would have been very useful, the safety of the young journalists was more important.*

### 4.3 Building Your Team – Selecting Youth Participants

The selection of youth producers is one of the most important steps in setting up a programme. It is central to being able to use your programme to address conflict in positive ways.

#### **Which Youth?**

Many radio producers find that it is helpful to choose their youth participants based on the goal of the programme. For example, if the programme is aimed at reintegrating young former combatants into their communities, they might create a group of young men and women which includes several former combatants from different sides of the conflict (ex-soldiers and ex-rebels for example), some youth who were never soldiers, people from both rural and urban areas, and so on.

In general, it's a good idea to include youth who represent all sides of a conflict (for example, different ethnic or religious groups), and different experiences. You will also benefit from creating a balanced team of both young men and women, with a mix of ethnicities, socio-economic classes, life experiences, and ages. Although this diversity can be hard to manage it is key to producing good youth radio for peacebuilding. The interaction among young people of different backgrounds helps you create a dynamic programme that is balanced and peace oriented.

Some producers establish criteria for the selection of participants based on what they are hoping to achieve. Some criteria could include:

- Strike a gender balance – Involve both young men and women equally in your programme as they have different issues and perspectives on the conflict;
- Seek youth who are representative of their generation and have influence with other young people;
- Identify young people who are motivated and interested not only to be involved in the media but to make a difference in their society;
- Engage youth who can serve as role models to their age group and others;
- Involve youth from both rural and urban areas; and
- Find youth who have a stake in achieving your initiative's goal.

### 4.4 Training and Guidance

Because young journalists and producers often lack experience and training, they rely on the adults involved to help them learn how to create good radio programmes. At the start of their involvement youth need basic training in many skills. Once they have begun creating programmes they need ongoing guidance and feedback to produce quality programmes and to strengthen their skills. And they need on-going discussion about how their programmes are helping to resolve conflict. This guidebook cannot offer modules for trainings, but below is a list of topics which should be covered.



### **Suggested Topics for Training**

- *Technical training on equipment* – Training in this area prepares youth producers to use the equipment that you have available.
- *How to identify topics to cover* – Adults can help youth select the topics to cover. It is important to guide youth to identify those issues that will help resolve conflicts. Most young people will need coaching. One good way of doing this is to ask youth about the major conflicts which are affecting them. This may be different for young men and women; both are equally important and should be addressed by the radio shows.  
The supervisor can ask the group of young producers to suggest issues which affect youth in conflict. S/he can get everyone to contribute at least two ideas. It's important to be clear that every idea is worth discussing. The supervisor writes all the issues mentioned on a big piece of paper or a flip-chart, and s/he then asks the group which ones are suitable topics for a radio show. Finally, the group picks four or five ideas and discusses possible stories in each issue.
- *Interviewing techniques* – Youth who have never been involved in journalism need training in interview techniques. Use the basic questions of “what?” “when?” “who?” “where?” “why?” and “how?” Additionally, you will need to help them push their interviewees to think about solutions to the conflicts that they are discussing.
- *Training in formats* – Youth producers also need guidance in choosing possible formats (such as vox pops, talk shows, magazine programmes, etc...).
- *Other topics* – Adult producers will have other topics on which they can provide training. It is good to have ongoing discussions with your youth journalists to find out where they need help, and create trainings in response.

### **Providing Support and Feedback**

Once initial training is completed and youth are producing their own programmes, they need ongoing support to refine their skills in radio production and peacebuilding. This includes:

- *Guidance in the development of radio programmes* – Depending on the formats chosen, youth producers will rely on the adults involved to help them with tricky editing or mixing. The adult producers could be in charge of packaging the final programmes based on the materials provided by youth journalists. Adults can play a big role in helping youth understand whether their show is helping to resolve conflicts.
- *Mentoring* – In order to get the most out of the youth journalists, it helps to build relationships of trust. Take an interest in their decision-making processes, their education, and their future. Help them generate positive opportunities for themselves.
- *Feedback* – One of the most important activities which adult mentors can undertake is joint critical listening sessions. Listen to the programmes that young people have created, point out what they have done well and what they can improve. For example, you might ask questions about each programme to help everyone get a sense of its strengths and weaknesses. What did you like about the programme? What didn't you like? What does the programme do to change people? How is it helping to resolve conflicts?

## 5. Section for youth journalists / producers

**Summary:** This chapter is meant for young people, particularly teenagers and children who are involved in producing radio shows for peacebuilding. It repeats some of the main ideas from the previous chapters, but it also stands alone and can be distributed to youth as a separate document.

This chapter contains a number of resources for you:

- A guide to help young broadcasters figure out what they want to say and who they want to talk to
- Some suggestions on how to get good stories and how to interview people, particularly adults
- A list of some of youth radio producers' rights
- A list of some of youth radio producers' responsibilities

As you read this and use it to improve your radio show, make sure that you ask your coordinator for help if you have any questions. He or she is there to support you.

### 5.1 What Do You Want to Say? Why? How?

Radio is a very powerful tool. Much of the information which people have about the events going on in their country comes from the radio. Radio influences what people know, how they think and what they do. For many people it is the main source of entertainment. People listen to the radio for music, dramas, and information. If you are producing radio programmes, you have the chance to encourage positive change in your community and your country. Once you've decided what it is you'd like to change, you can figure out what to say and how to say it. You can talk to kids, to youth, and to adults. You can talk to politicians, to elders, and to your parents.

For example, there is a young man who was once a child soldier in Sierra Leone. Once demobilized he got involved in a radio programme and decided that he wanted to help other children who had been negatively affected by the war to come home. So he used the radio to help adults understand what children like himself had been through, what they had experienced. *I interviewed some of my friends to explain their stories, he says, so the people in the community would be able to accept them back*<sup>4</sup>. His programme became extremely popular with both children and adults because it gave children the chance to communicate directly with adults.

#### Deciding What You Want to Change

To start with, it is important that you discover what your friends think and what they are concerned about. You can do this by sitting down with all the people involved in your project to talk about the things that are happening to youth. You can ask each person some simple questions to find out what they are worried about.

<sup>4</sup> Quote from "What's Going On? Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone." A film by UN Works [www.un.org/works/goingon/soldiers/goingon\\_soldiers.html](http://www.un.org/works/goingon/soldiers/goingon_soldiers.html)

- What are the biggest problems that youth are facing?
- What are you happiest about?
- What are you most worried about?
- What do you think that adults should be doing to help youth?
- What should our radio programme talk about?
- What should we, as youth, be doing to resolve conflicts?

If you are living in a zone of conflict, it will be very clear that war has a huge impact on young people. You are probably the most affected of the population. You will have heard about or know of youth forced to leave their homes, losing the chance to go to school and being forced to fight with one armed group or another. But just as youth are the most affected by conflict, so youth are in a position to build peace. Only you can decide how to use radio to build peace in your country. To help you decide, ask some of the following questions:

- What is the impact of conflict on your life?
- How are youth involved in conflict?
- What can youth do to build peace?
- How can we use the radio to get young people to build peace?

Ask other questions about the lives of your friends and age group to get as much information as you can. While you are discussing, write down the main things that they say. For example, if one of your friends says that her biggest problem is that she feels pressure to join an armed group, then you can write that down: *Pressure to join an armed group*. At the end of the conversation, you will probably have a whole list of topics that you can use for your programme.

When you are deciding on the topic for your programme, you can also ask yourself: *How does this help resolve conflicts?*

### **Who is your audience?**

Once you have chosen a topic or several topics, the next question you can ask is: who do we want our programme to talk to? Who should be our audience? You have many options.

- Adults including your parents, teachers, community leaders, and others
- Political leaders such as the mayor of your city, the chief of your village or even members of parliament
- Other kids such as those who have been most affected by violence, street kids, kids in school, etc.

For example, if you are going to do a radio show about how youth are manipulated to violence, you might want your programme to talk to parents to help them understand the dangers that their sons and daughters are facing, and how they are being used.

### **What do you want people to know?**

Once you have figured out who you are talking to, your next decision is what do you want to say. In other words, what do we want people to know after they have listened to our programme?

For example, if you have decided to talk to parents about youth involvement in violence, you might want them to know one of the following:

- What happens to kids who leave school
- How their children are being manipulated
- What young people think about the political situation
- What some parents have done to keep their kids out of violence

But don't try and cram everything into one programme. Decide on one thing you want to get across in each programme or even in a series of programmes, and concentrate on that alone.

You can fill out this box to help you decide what information is important.

**What is the topic of the programme?**

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.....

**Who are you talking to? Who is your audience?**

.....

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**What do you want them to know about the topic?**

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**What do you want them to think?**

Most people's opinions come from their experiences and the information that they have. As you give people information, you should also decide what opinions you'd like them to hold about the topic that you are covering. What do you want people to think about it? But remember that no one likes being told what to think, so you have to give listeners choices and let them make the decision themselves rather than lecturing them like a teacher.

For example, if you are covering youth manipulation, then you might want parents to think that:

- Youth should not be manipulated by their elders
- Youth should have other things to do that will benefit them, such as school
- Youth should be heard without having to resort to violence

**What is the topic of your programme?**

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**What do you want people think about the topic?**

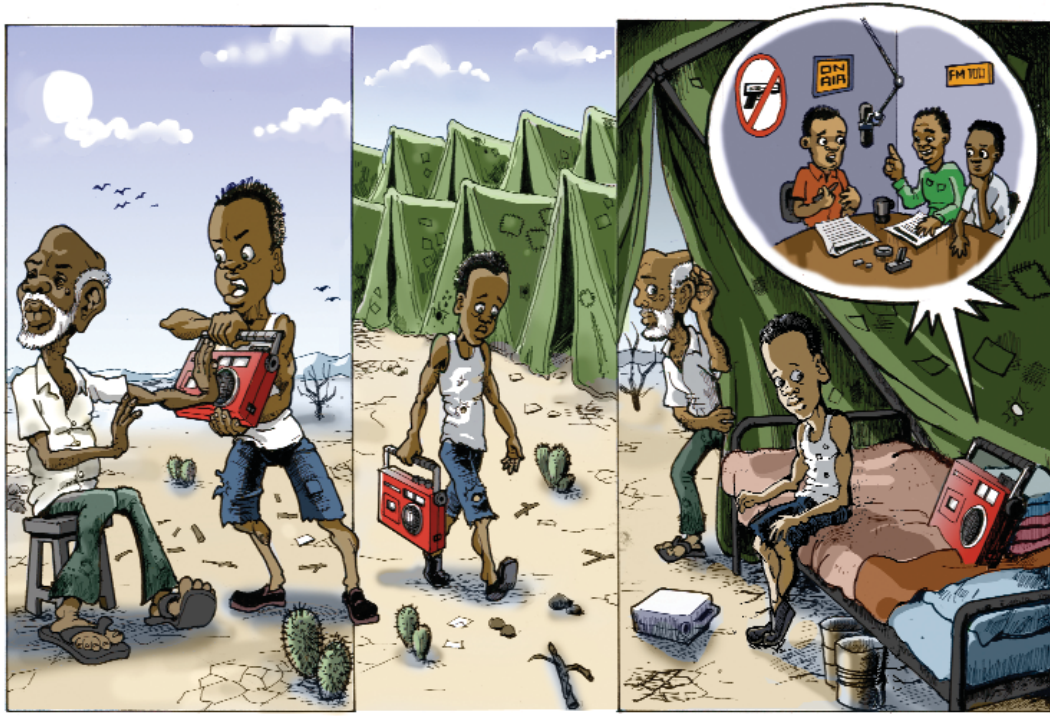
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### What do you want people to do?

Most people's actions are a result of the beliefs that they hold. By producing a programme about a certain topic, you have given your audience information and have helped them to think. Lastly, you can ask what you hope people will *do* after they listen to your programme. What action can they take to solve the problem?



Again, if your programme is educating parents about the dangers of manipulation to violence, and you have helped them believe that youth should not be involved in violence, then you are probably hoping that they do the following:

- Help their children know that education is important
- Talk to their children about the dangers they face
- Ask their children what they think of the political situation
- Help their sons and daughters to analyse what they are being taught

What is the topic of your programme?

.....  
.....

What do you want people to do about it?

.....  
.....  
.....

Once you have made these decisions, you are ready to produce your programme. You can work with your adult supervisors to decide on the best format available to you. You have many options of formats, from drama and comedy to doing interviews and news programmes. The most important thing is to ensure your radio show achieves all the things that



you have written here. You want to be sure that it does three things:

1. *Pass on the information* – You have identified all the information that you want your listeners to have. Don't repeat rumours. Be sure of your facts, and use those facts to build your programme. Be sure that the information is clearly stated and demonstrated.
2. *Encourage listeners to form opinions* - You can demonstrate the ideas that you hope your listeners will have once they have listened to your show, but don't force these ideas down their throats.
3. *Demonstrate the actions that you want people to undertake* – Suggest some solutions to the problems you are discussing. Describe actions or behaviour by people who have done what you would like your listeners will do.

## 5.2 Doing Interviews

When interviewing people or getting ideas for a radio drama, one of the biggest challenges is getting people to give you their own opinions and to tell you how they resolved those problems. While discussing with your friends, or interviewing other kids or adults, you can ask many questions which will help you get to the stories. The story is what makes a programme attractive to the listeners; stories have emotional impact and make it easier for listeners to relate to the event.

To start, you have the standard questions:

- Who?
- What ?
- Where?
- When?
- Why?
- How?

One of the elements of peace radio is that you get beneath the responses to these questions to find out *why* they think those things. This is particularly important if you are talking to people from different sides of a conflict; if you get into the values that they hold (see section 1.1 Understanding Conflict), you may help them see what they have in common with their enemies. You can use your interviews to explore why certain people hold certain views. This line of questions may help you do better interviews<sup>5</sup>:

- Start with questions about facts – *What has happened? Who did it? etc.*
- Then move to questions about opinions – *What do you think about what has happened?*
- Then find out the reasons that they hold those opinions – *Why do you think that?*
- Finally, ask them their feelings about the subject – *How do you feel about it?*

Following that line of questioning, your interview could go like this:

**Interviewer:** What happened?

**Youth:** The youth gang from the other district came here and caused violence.

**Interviewer:** What do you think about that?

**Youth:** I think that we should get back at them for what they did to us.

**Interviewer:** Why do you think that?

**Youth:** Because it's the only way to show that we're not scared of them, to show them that they can't come here and do whatever they like. That way we can stay safe.

**Interviewer:** How do you feel about the situation?

**Youth:** I feel scared. We need to protect ourselves.

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from a dialogue techniques training of the Conflict Management Group, 1996.



With this line of questioning the interviewer has helped the youth explain to the audience that he seeks safety and protection more than he seeks revenge.

A good peacebuilding radio producer will now go to the other district – if it's possible - to ask the same questions and to find out if those youth feel the same way about things. Do they too feel scared and want safety above everything? It may take a long time to get to these answers, it may demand a long process of building trust, but if you get to this point in such a situation then you can go on to show that that the youth could start talking to each other about the issues of safety and fear. That is what they have in common.

And don't leave it there. Discuss the subject of safety, and the fear which makes youth react violently, in many programmes in different ways. No one will change their behaviour as a result of listening to one radio programme – you have to keep at it over a period of time. Don't expect miracles in a matter of days.

### 5.3 Rights and Responsibilities

You have a number of rights and responsibilities as youth journalists. These go hand in hand. Just as you enjoy the right to express yourself, you have the responsibility to use radio to resolve conflicts and to help other young people put their voices on the air.

#### **Rights of Youth Radio Producers**

As youth radio producers, have the right to:

- Express your opinions;
- Access information that is relevant to you;
- Protection and security from any dangers that you may face;
- Be respected as members of the media;
- Access public figures for interview; and
- Determine what your programmes are about.

#### **Responsibilities of Youth Radio Producers**

As young people involved in radio production, have the responsibility to:

- Use the radio to help young people resolve conflicts in their societies and communities;
- Be objective in your reporting;
- Be respectful of other people's opinions;
- Be a role model for other young people to follow;
- Give listeners accurate information about young people's views on the issues that are affecting them;
- Keep your programmes interesting;
- Help the voices of other young people be heard; and
- Find ways of helping young people build peace.

As you read these lists, which of these things makes the most sense to you? Do you feel that you have all these rights? Are you living up to the responsibilities that you have?

In 2004 Search for Common Ground's project Radio for Peacebuilding, Africa conducted a major survey of African radio professionals about the use of peacebuilding techniques in radio. Almost 90 per cent strongly agreed that peacebuilding techniques on radio are an excellent idea, and that it is high time that radio stations use those techniques. Almost two-thirds of the several hundred radio professionals who answered the survey also said that conflict resolution is a part of journalistic responsibility.

These are powerful and very encouraging indications of sensitivity to conflict resolution, and the feeling of responsibility which exists among radio professionals in Africa and much of the world. And a follow-up survey undertaken in 2006 confirmed these results.

But most of the radio professionals indicated that what they have been doing for peacebuilding on air is not very effective. Perhaps in some cases this is because they are not permitted to use peacebuilding skills very much. In many cases, however, the radio professionals said they didn't know enough, and they very much wanted more information and training about how to use radio for peacebuilding. And they said they believed radio for peacebuilding will become more effective.

A few of those professionals participated in a workshop in Accra, Ghana in 2005 which gathered together radio professionals from across sub-Saharan Africa. The workshop involved both adults and youth, including three who were under 18 years of age. That workshop led to this guidebook.

At the end of the Accra workshop the participants articulated this vision for youth radio.

*Youth radio is a tool with tremendous power to promote peace. Just as youth are deeply involved in conflict, they have the possibility to play a role in building peace. Radio has the potential to harness the creativity of young people, create platforms for their voices, and enable them to lead dialogues on national levels toward building peace. As radio producers, we envision that across Africa, radio stations give increasing air time to youth-produced programmes that aim to help youth promote peace. These radio shows will provide information to young people to help reduce the manipulation of youth to violence by adults, and will help young people see that they can be forces for positive development in their communities. Through such programmes, adults will reduce their stereotyping of youth as The Problem, and will begin to see youth as resources for their communities.*

*We hope to see youth radio for peacebuilding gain momentum as a movement in the continent's media, with networks of producers, young and old, sharing tools and programmes that can influence an entire generation.*

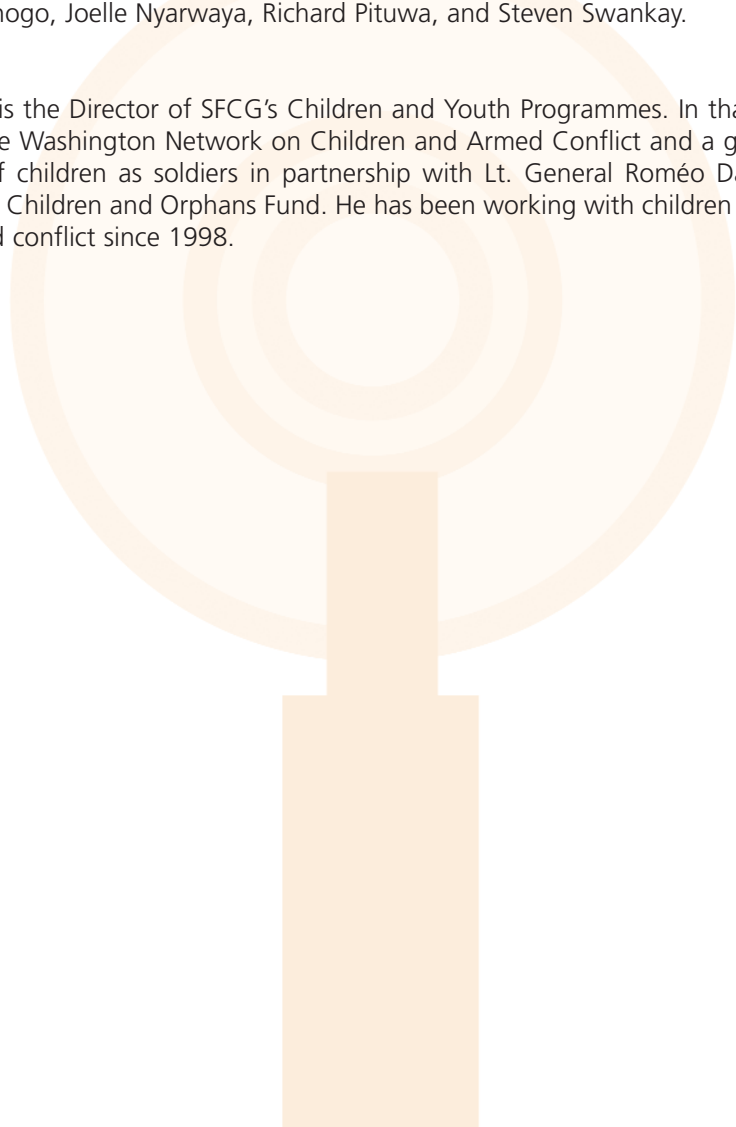
### Acknowledgements

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*This table can be used to design your youth radio initiative and to link together the messages that you want to communicate. Photocopy it and use it.*

**Youth Radio for Peace**

**Goal: What do you want to achieve?**

Knowledge Changes	Attitudinal Changes	Behavioural Changes
What information do you want people to gain by listening to your programme?	What do you want people to think and believe as a result of your programme?	What do you want people to do? What decisions do you want people to make as a result of your programme?

**Programme Plan**

Section Number	What will the listener hear?	What is the message?	How is the message being delivered?

## Resources

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English, French, Spanish, Portuguese [www.worldradioforum.org/icyrmanifesto.shtml](http://www.worldradioforum.org/icyrmanifesto.shtml)
- Engaging Young People: How Nonprofits Can Reach Young Adults, MTV / Ad.Council,  
<http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=313>

## Websites

- Dart Center [www.dartcenter.org](http://www.dartcenter.org)
- International Media Support [www.i-m-s.dk](http://www.i-m-s.dk)
- Plan International [www.plan-international.org](http://www.plan-international.org)
- Radio for Peacebuilding, Africa [www.radiopeaceafrica.org](http://www.radiopeaceafrica.org)
- Search for Common Ground [www.sfcg.org](http://www.sfcg.org)
- Transcend [www.transcend.org](http://www.transcend.org)
- TRRAACE (Resources for African radio stations) [www.mediafrica.net](http://www.mediafrica.net)
- UNICEF Magic [www.unicef.org/magic](http://www.unicef.org/magic)

**Youth radio** is a tool with tremendous power to build peace.

*Just as youth are deeply involved in conflict, so too they have the possibility to play a role in building peace.*

*Radio has the potential to harness the creativity of young people.*

*This guidebook has been written with such young people in mind. It is designed to help them and those who work with them design and produce entertaining radio programmes which help construct a peaceful future.*

