



Media: A Voice for All – Final Evaluation Report

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFEM/SK	Association des Femmes des Médias du Sud-Kivu
AFJO	Association des Femmes Journalistes (Burundi)
AFPC	Association des Femmes Professionnelles de la Communication (CAR)
ARFEM	Association Rwandaise des Femmes des Médias (Rwanda)
CAR	Central African Republic
DM&E	Design Monitoring and Evaluation
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GJP	Groupe des Journalistes pour la Paix (RoC)
IFASIC	Institut Facultaire des Sciences de la Communication (Kinshasa, DRC)
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting
MWA	Media Women's Association
RFMGL	Réseau des Femmes des Médias des Grand Lacs
RoC	Republic of Congo
RTNC	Radio Television Nationale du Congo (DRC)
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SMS	Short Message Service
UCOFEM	Union Congolaise des Femmes des Médias (DRC)
UK	United Kingdom

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Executive summary of key findings and recommendations

This is the final evaluation of Search for Common Ground's project 'Media – a Voice for All', a project aimed at promoting women's voices in the Great Lakes' media. 'Media: a Voice for All' (referred to as 'the project') was a two year project funded by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) of the US Government covering five countries: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR), Rwanda, Burundi and the Republic of the Congo (RoC). Implemented in partnership with the Media Women's Associations (MWAs) in each country, the project had two specific objectives: 1) To increase diversity within the media sector in the Great Lakes Region and particularly to reinforce women's involvement in journalism; and 2) To increase the general public's access to high quality, gender-sensitive media programming, particularly on issues of women's rights.

The aim of this evaluation was to measure the change brought about by the project among its target groups and beneficiaries. The methodology was a mix of qualitative and quantitative data gathered by two external consultants in Rwanda (Kigali, Byumba (rural Rwanda)), Burundi (Bujumbura, Giheta and Ngozi (rural Burundi)), the DRC (Bukavu, Kinshasa), and RoC (Brazzaville). Some questionnaires were gathered remotely from Bangui, CAR. We used face-to-face and questionnaire-based interviews, focus groups, observation, content analysis and group discussions based on diagrams.

The majority of our respondents - a mix of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the project - were of the opinion that the project had increased women's participation in the media in their country to some extent (52% saying that the project had increased it 'somewhat', and 31% saying 'a lot'). Furthermore, the majority of our respondents were of the opinion that the project had increased public access to good quality programmes on gender and women's rights in their country (50% saying 'somewhat' and 24% saying 'a lot'). We gathered several eloquent success stories but generally most people were of the opinion that there was still a long way to go before women's issues were treated widely and seriously in the media in the Great Lakes region.

It is clear that the project has helped to give a voice to women on key societal issues in the media. Also there is no doubt that the project has strengthened all the five MWAs with which it worked. All of them are stronger organisationally and are more visible; they have all received a much-needed boost. But the level of maturity and stability of each organisation varies greatly; this report points out the progress and future needs of each MWA in detail. On the whole, the relationship between SFCG and the five MWAs was very good and all the chairs and other officials of each MWA we spoke to were very appreciative of their partnership with SFCG; however, we raise some ways that partnerships both with MWAs, individual grantees and media houses could have been optimised. We also detail ways that partners' radio productions could have been improved.

The project has certainly helped raise awareness among the five MWAs, and media houses who partnered with the project, about the problems women journalists still face. It has also made a substantial contribution as regards improving technical skills and has helped overcome obstacles to women's participation in the media. But giving a voice to women on key societal issues in the media in the Great Lakes is a large task and requires changing very entrenched attitudes and some quite major hurdles relating to legal and cultural issues so there is still a long way to go. Successes are also difficult to sustain: this report shows, for example, that the MWAs are still very donor dependent and achieving long-term impact will be a challenge.

In conclusion, we find that 'Media: A Voice for All' was a very relevant project overall with a number of good outcomes. The project's effectiveness was somewhat limited due to budget constraints and the need to cover five very challenging countries. As regards sustainability, many of its activities were excellent and deserve to be scaled-up but the project

partners (the five MWAs and the media houses) face sustainability challenges. We detail 16 recommendations for the future in order to scale up the successful elements of the project, and we hope that further funding will be available for a second phase.

Recommendations to SFCG

Future initiatives: general approach and project design

1. We recommend a second phase of this project, in order to build on the energy that has been generated. If this is the case we would recommend a larger budget and a longer time-frame; if not then there should be a less ambitious programme of activities and/or the project should cover fewer countries.
2. Partnering with the MWAs was a good initiative. Now that there is better capacity within these bodies (particularly AFJO and UCOFEM) there may now be a case for targeting some specific **legal issues** at national level such as the lack of maternity provision and lack of permanent contracts for women journalists as a focus for lobbying. Scaling up the **educational work** with female students in journalism schools could also build on the energy already created in Rwanda, Burundi and DRC. A focus on **better transport** for women journalists and other practical measures are a challenge throughout the region and something that a second phase of the project could tackle specifically.
3. The **innovation grants** were small-scale initiatives that deserve scaling up – for example, all the radio programmes and the press articles featuring women role models could be substantially expanded.
4. We recommend more sensitisation of heads of media houses about the advantages of employing women and how good quality women's programmes can attract advertising and the female audience.
5. Future projects need better thought-through baselines and more systematic ongoing monitoring systems on all aspects of the project, from partner-relations, financial matters and quality control of programme outputs. For this to happen we recommend more synergies between SFCG staff who are designated project 'focal points' and their DM&E (design, monitoring and evaluation) colleagues.
6. Ensuring that more media programming is produced by and for women is a good overall aim (and this should be maintained if there is a second phase) but the concept of 'women's voices' needs to be better defined; in the future the voices of educated elite women from the capital must be given less priority than those of poorer rural and marginalised women.

MWA capacity-building

7. Transforming the MWAs into viable, autonomous, mature organisations will take a long time and will probably need sustained support from SFCG in the form of paid personnel. We recommend more training on financial management and fund-raising (including helping MWAs to identify other donors).
8. More could be done to enhance the visibility of all MWAs and encourage women journalists in remote rural areas to join these MWAs.
9. If there were a second phase we would recommend enlarging the partnership to include the MWA in South Kivu, DRC: AFEM / SK because it is the most active MWA in the East of DRC with strong leadership and growing membership.

Media programming

10. Any future support to sub-grantees for the creation of media content (i.e. grants for gender sensitive radio programming through competition) needs to have a clear and consistent approach to the way competitions are

run and grants allocated. Firstly, SFCG needs to be consistent in terms of who's eligible for the grants, i.e. all media professionals or MWA members only (we recommend that it would be most productive to open such competitions to all media professionals, including those outside partner MWAs). Secondly, SFCG should be consistent in the way it allocates funding to the winners, i.e. either directly or via the MWAs. There is a need to focus partnerships on organisations (radio stations, MWAs) and not on individuals (journalists) in the case of sub-grants. This would enable media managers (station directors) to be more involved in helping to monitor the work of their journalists and would contribute to organisational strengthening of media houses across the region.

11. SFCG needs to do more quality-mentoring of content or coaching with partners (i.e. with MWAs, individual beneficiary journalists and with radio stations who win grants) and could consider a more concerted training programme for grantees to ensure they produce noticeably better quality and more gender sensitive media programmes, should there be a second phase.
12. More thought needs to be given to ensuring good time-slots for broadcasts so as to reach more listeners and, in particular, more women-listeners.

Regional networking

13. The creation of the regional network for women journalists, the RFMGL is one of the project's key achievements but it is unlikely that it will be able to sustain itself without SFCG (or another organisation) supporting it. We recommend that SFCG allows a gap in support for RFMGL of no more than 6 months from now, otherwise it is likely to die and SFCG will have difficulty reviving the momentum that has been generated during the project.

Recommendations to MWA Partners

14. Develop more sustainable partnerships with radio stations and/or negotiate permanent slots that the MWA will manage itself, at least with one radio station each.
15. Become more involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the project, if it has a second phase.

Objectives, methodology and limitations of the study

Objectives

This is the report of the final evaluation of Search for Common Ground's project 'Media - a Voice for All', a project aimed at promoting women's voices in the Great Lakes' media. Media – a Voice for All (referred to as 'the project') was a two year project (2012-2014) funded by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) of the US Government covering three core countries: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Burundi; and three expansion countries: the Republic of the Congo (RoC) and the Central African Republic (CAR). The project had two specific objectives:

- 1) To increase diversity within the media sector in the Great Lakes Region, and particularly to reinforce women's involvement in journalism; and
- 2) To increase the general public's access to high quality, gender-sensitive media programming, particularly on issues of women's rights.

The Media Women's Associations (MWAs) involved are/were:

- The Association des Femmes Journalistes (AFJO) in Burundi;
- The Union Congolaise des Femmes des Médias (UCOFEM), the national union of women journalists in the DRC, with affiliates around the country;
- The Association Rwandaise des Femmes des Médias (ARFEM) in Rwanda ;
- The Association des Femmes Professionnelles de la Communication (AFPC) in Central African Republic;
- The Groupe des Journalistes pour la Paix (GJP), in the Republic of Congo.

The aim of this evaluation was to measure the change brought about by the project among its target groups and beneficiaries. More specifically, the aim was to:

1. Measure the state of the project's indicators after implementation of the activities;
2. Analyse the effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of the project;
3. Extract lessons learned and recommendations from this experience to inform future programming for the promotion of women in the Great Lakes' media.

This report follows the above three-part structure, starting with how far the project's outcome indicators have been met, then goes on to a discussion of effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of the project, and finally presents lessons-learned and our recommendations.

Methodology

The methodology was a mix of qualitative and quantitative data gathered by two external consultants, Dr Mary Myers (from UK) and Pascal Chirhalwirwa (from DRC) who spent a total of 45 person-days in the field to observe the activities and speak to stakeholders and beneficiaries from all five countries involved. Interviews were conducted, mainly in French (some requiring translation into local languages), in Kigali, Byumba (rural Rwanda), Bujumbura, Giheta and Ngozi (rural Burundi), Bukavu, Kinshasa, and Brazzaville. Questionnaires were gathered remotely from Bangui because we were not able to visit the CAR in person because of security worries and travel restrictions due to the Ebola crisis. But key personnel from the CAR media women's association (called the *Association des Femmes Professionnelles de la Communication* (AFPC)) were interviewed in-person in Brazzaville. We used face-to-face and questionnaire-based interviews, focus groups, observation, content analysis and group discussions based on diagrams, and produced a field work report on 9th October 2014 detailing all activities. All interactions were based on standard interview-guides/questionnaires/focus group discussion-guides (in French) which we devised in consultation with Search for Common Ground key personnel, mainly during a participatory 'kick-off workshop' in Kigali on 8-9th September 2014 (see Annex 5 for detailed research instruments). We were able to pre-test the interview-guide in Kigali with two NGO key-informants before finalising it and we were also able to devise a number of questions alongside SFCG staff at the kick-off workshop. In total we spoke to 230 individuals (165 excluding focus group members) and analysed 27 radio programmes.

Table 1: Number of interviewees categorised by type, country, and sex

Type of Interviewee	Rwanda	Burundi	DRC (Bukavu/Kinshasa)	CAR	Congo- Brazzaville	Sex M	Sex F	Total
SFCG Staff/Volunteers	8	6	2	1	0 ¹	5	12	17
MWA Committee	7	2	1	3	3	2	14	16
Beneficiary Journalists	5	6	14	6	4	2	33	35
Non-beneficiary Journalists	9	5	9	6	6	19	16	35
Partner Radio Station Chiefs	3	2	3	2	0	9	1	10
Other Key Informants (NGOs, authorities, students, civil society, etc.)	4	8	24	11	5	32	20	52
Audience Members	11	24	28	0 ²	2	32	33	65
Total	47	53	81	29	20	101	129	230

MWA = Media Women's Association SFCG = Search for Common Ground NGO = Non-governmental organisation
(For a full list of interviewees see Annex 1)

For the focus groups with listeners of the radio programmes produced as part of the project, we tried as far as possible to compare those people who had definitely listened to the programmes and those who had not. The content analysis attempted the same: a sample of radio programmes produced during the project was compared with those produced before, to see if the project had made any qualitative difference to radio programme output.

Limitations

The main limitation of the study was that we were not able to measure one of the indicators of the project which relates to audience perceptions and attitudes to the extent that we had hoped, namely: “% change in gender attitudes among listeners in areas targeted under this project”, with the desired change being “50% reduction in gender-hostile attitudes”³. While this was only one among many other indicators; we could not measure this particular indicator for the following reasons:

- The baseline study done by SFCG (which questioned a sample of men and women in 2 provinces in the DRC (South Kivu, and Kinshasa) (1000), 5 provinces in Rwanda (North, South, East, West and Kigali) (1105), and 5 provinces in Burundi (Bujumbura Mairie, Kirundo, Gitega, Makamba, Kayanza) (199))⁴ was not sufficiently representative⁵ to constitute a reliable reference point on which to do a solid follow-up ‘endline’;

¹ There is no SFCG office in Brazzaville.

² We were not able to visit CAR, for reasons of security and due to travel restrictions imposed due to the Ebola crisis.

³ Ref. *Media: a Voice for All* project logical framework and due to travel restrictions imposed due to the Ebola crisis.

⁴ Ref. *SFCG Media Voice for All Baseline Study*, September 2013.

⁵ Ref. *SFCG Media Voice for All Baseline Study*, September 2013.

⁶ The baseline survey was not nationally representative in the DRC because it sampled only urban dwellers in a part of the capital, Lukunga (Kinshasa) and people in four territories in South Kivu (Fizi, Walungu, Kabare, Kalehe). In South Kivu it was unclear whether these were also just urban or a representative mix of rural and urban. Findings from the DRC can therefore only be said to be representative of the areas where the survey was conducted, not of the whole country. For instance, the study found that there were very few radio listeners in the Kinshasa sample, but this cannot be inferred to the whole population because in fact TV dominates in the capital unlike the rest of the country which relies on radio (see various studies by IMMAR and Frère, e.g. *Le Paysage Média Congolais*, 2008, updated 2013). For Burundi, the sample of 200 people was not large enough to constitute a nationally representative sample. However, for Rwanda, it is possible that the baseline survey was representative

- The baseline study asked survey participants only about their views on women participating in politics and only to a limited degree about other social and economic spheres, so we did not have a baseline to refer to on the wide array of subjects that the project was tackling, such as girls' education, gender-based violence, women's inheritance rights or sexual/reproductive health.
- Even if it had been possible to establish a reliable follow-up sample, we quickly realised that it was unlikely that we would see a change in attitude on gender issues among radio listeners after only a two year project with short radio programmes about women's issues being broadcast on a few channels in five countries, where audiences have a choice of many other channels.
- Furthermore the only way we could have been sure of discerning a change in attitudes towards gender issues among listeners after two years would have been to return to exactly the same individuals as for the baseline, and compare the attitudes of listeners to the programmes produced in the context of the project, with the attitudes of non-listeners. However, we concluded that it would be logistically impossible to find and return to the same people who were surveyed in the baseline survey, as well as very unlikely that we could attribute any change directly to the specific radio programmes produced by the project.

Another limitation of the study was that we were not able to visit the CAR in person because of travel restrictions due to the Ebola crisis, so that our data had to be, in part, collected remotely by third parties. Various other logistical issues and time constraints made the data gathering difficult at times (see our separate 'Field Work Report' dated 9th October for details). We were not able to organise as many focus groups with listeners as we would have liked because of various difficulties arranging transport. We had a particular problem in the RoC because SFCG does not have an office which could have otherwise provided support. Furthermore the partner in RoC (GPJ) expected payments for interviewees and for focus group participants, which we judged would have been unreasonable and inappropriate. For the content analysis, we had difficulty obtaining recordings of programmes, particularly in CAR and RoC because of having to collect data remotely from CAR and because SFCG does not have an office in RoC. Therefore the sample of programmes we obtained in CAR and RoC was probably not representative or random, and did not enable us to compare the quality of programmes 'before' and 'after'.

However, these difficulties notwithstanding, we believe we spoke to all the relevant stakeholders and were able to substantiate our findings by getting different perspectives on the project from many different angles.

1. Research findings and analysis

1.1. The project's indicators

The following table summarises the project's logical-framework outcome indicators (or desired results) that we attempted to measure, and the results that we have recorded. Further details and discussion about the achievement of these indicators can be found in section 2.3 below.

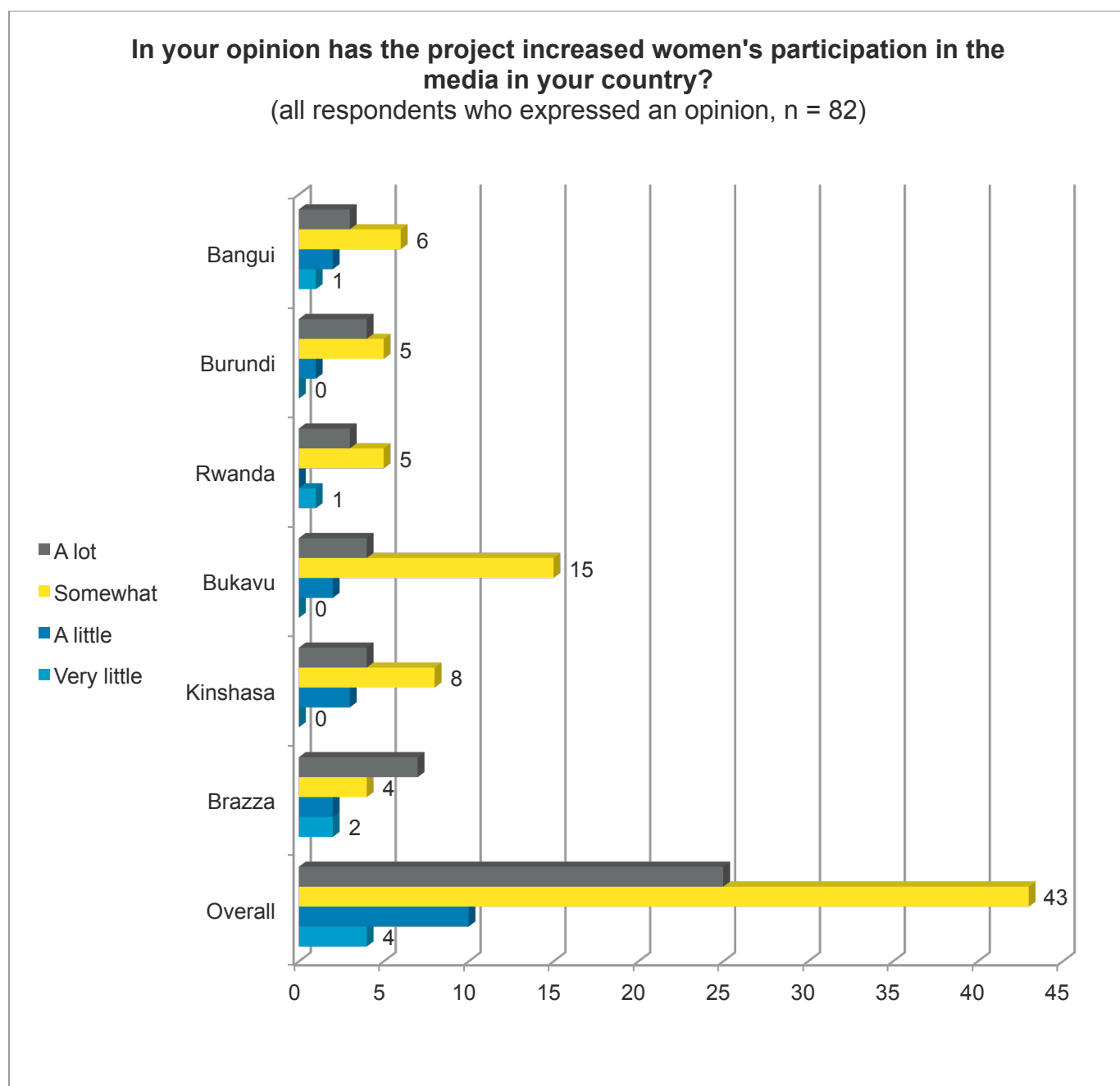
because there was an adequate size sample and a mix of districts and provinces, but there is no precise information given in the baseline study about how the sample was determined and whether or not it was randomized.

Table 2 Results

Result	Indicator	Target	Achieved
Objective 1: Increase the diversity of the media sector in the Great Lakes Region, and particularly the reinforcement of women's involvement in journalism	Association member lists Disaggregated by role, kind of media, location	15% increase Rwanda: 30 Burundi: 70 RoC: 53 CAR: 45 DRC: 250	Yes - ARFEM (Rwanda) 45 members now - AFJO (Burundi) 110 members - GJP (RoC) 100 members now - AFPC (CAR) 52 members now - UCOFEM (DRC) 300 members and provincial offices increased from 5 to 8
<u>Outcome 1.1.: National Associations of women journalists have enhanced capacity to support the development of female journalists</u>	% of capacity-building benchmarks attained by the end of the project	80% of benchmarks	Yes All 15 planned capacity-strengthening activities conducted in targeted countries. Majority of trainees and workshop participants reported that they received good-quality training.
<u>Outcome 1.2.: Increased connections are developed between women journalists at a regional level</u>	# of new actions emanating from regional exchanges, action plans	12 initiatives launched	Yes This relates to activities by the five MWA planned under the regional network (RFMGL) bi-annual action plans. The target of 12 initiatives was achieved (see section 2.3 below for details)
Objective 2: Increase the quality and availability of gender-sensitive media programming throughout the regional media outlets	% change in gender attitudes among listeners in areas targeted under this project	50% reduction in gender-hostile attitudes	Not evaluable (see above)
<u>Outcome 2.1: Improved capacity to produce and broadcast gender-sensitive programs on women's rights issues</u>	% of priority obstacles identified showing 'significant progress' by end of project 'to be identified through participatory analyses of barriers, to be done in Rwanda, Burundi and DRC, disaggregated by country'	60% of obstacles showing progress	Yes (For more details see below (section 2.3))
<u>Outcome 2.2.: Increased availability of women's voices on the regional, national and local level, conjointly produced with women's journalists associations</u>	# of people reached through programming supported through this project	5.6 million	Target was probably reached We did not do an audience survey but there is a large potential radio audience in the region (potentially over 40 million) and many of the project's programmes were carried by stations with a big reach (e.g. RTNC in DRC). This is a fairly conservative target, so it is reasonable to assume that at least 5.6 million people will have listened to at least one of the radio programmes produced in the context of the project. (See more on reach in 2.3 below)

We asked all interviewees to give us their judgment on the extent to which the project had met the project's overall objectives: a) increased the participation (involvement) of women in their country's media and b) increased the general public's access to good quality media productions that were sensitive to gender issues and women's rights⁶. The charts below show the results of our survey of 82 interviewees who expressed an opinion⁷ who were almost evenly split between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the project. Numbers of respondents who expressed an opinion per site were: Bangui total: 12; Burundi total: 10, Rwanda total: 9, Bukavu total: 21, Kinshasa total: 15, Brazzaville total: 15.

Figure 1: Whether the project increased women's participation in the media in the Great Lakes region



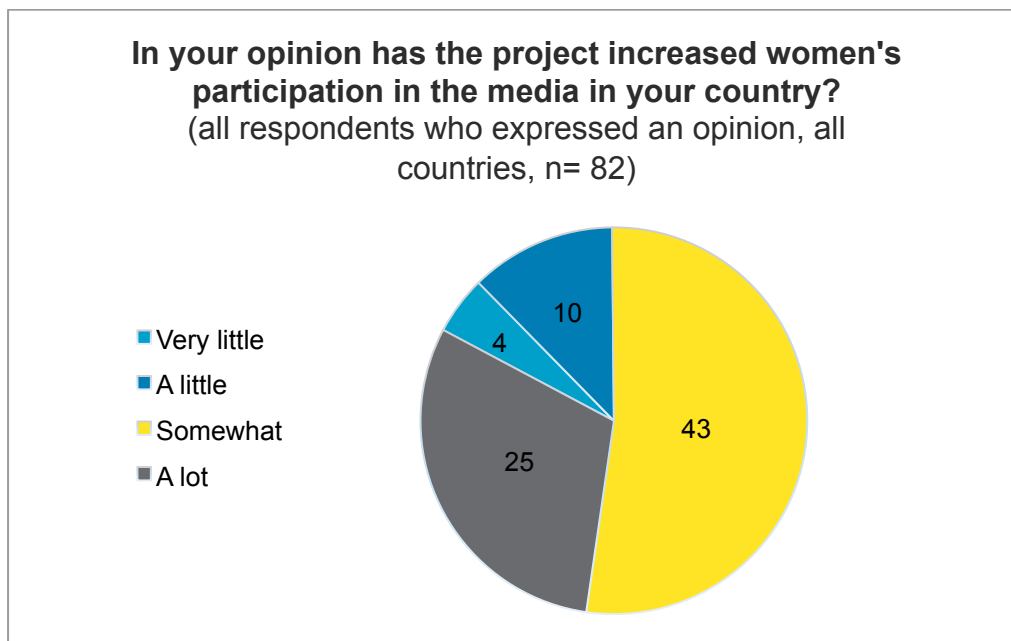
⁶ The questions were asked in French: *Selon vous à quel point est-ce que le projet a pu augmenter la participation des femmes dans les médias de votre pays?* 1= *très peu* (very little) 2= *un peu* (a little) 3= *pas mal/moyennement* (somewhat) 4= *beaucoup* (a lot)

⁷ The interviewees who said 'don't know' are not counted.

The above chart shows that the majority of our respondents were of the opinion that the project had increased women's participation in the media in their country to some extent, i.e. either 'somewhat' or 'a lot' (the above chart shows breakdown per research site with the opinions of the total sample at the bottom).

To show this another way, the following pie chart shows that the majority of respondents (83% overall) were of the opinion that the project had increased women's participation in the media in their country, with **52% saying that the project had increased it 'somewhat', and 31% saying 'a lot'**. Interestingly, when we ran the numbers again and divided those respondents who were beneficiaries of the project from non-beneficiaries, the proportions remained almost exactly the same. Usually one finds that opinions about a project tend to be more positive among beneficiaries and less positive among outside observers, but in this case both groups shared the same opinions, which gives more confidence to the findings.

Figure 2: Pie Chart showing all respondents' responses to the question: "In your opinion has the project increased women's participation in the media in your country?"



However, many respondents talked about the challenges for women in the media profession in the region. Women journalists are still a minority in most media houses, public attitudes towards them are often negative and many lack the self-confidence to push themselves forward to gain promotions and to take on the 'serious' beats of news, politics, economics or development.

"It's still a little too early to see real changes in the media here [Rwanda]. There are a few women senior managers at Radio Rwanda for example but it's a long-term thing" – Emma Claudine, Girl Hub, Rwanda, beneficiary of a radio grant.

"Our role is to defend the rights of freedom of expression for women and girls... but we must go beyond that: giving women a voice is good but Burundi culture is conservative. It requires time. We can't say we have been able to reach all levels of society with our programme [in partnership with SFCG]" – Vincent Nkeshimana, Director of Radio Isanganiro, Burundi, a project partner.

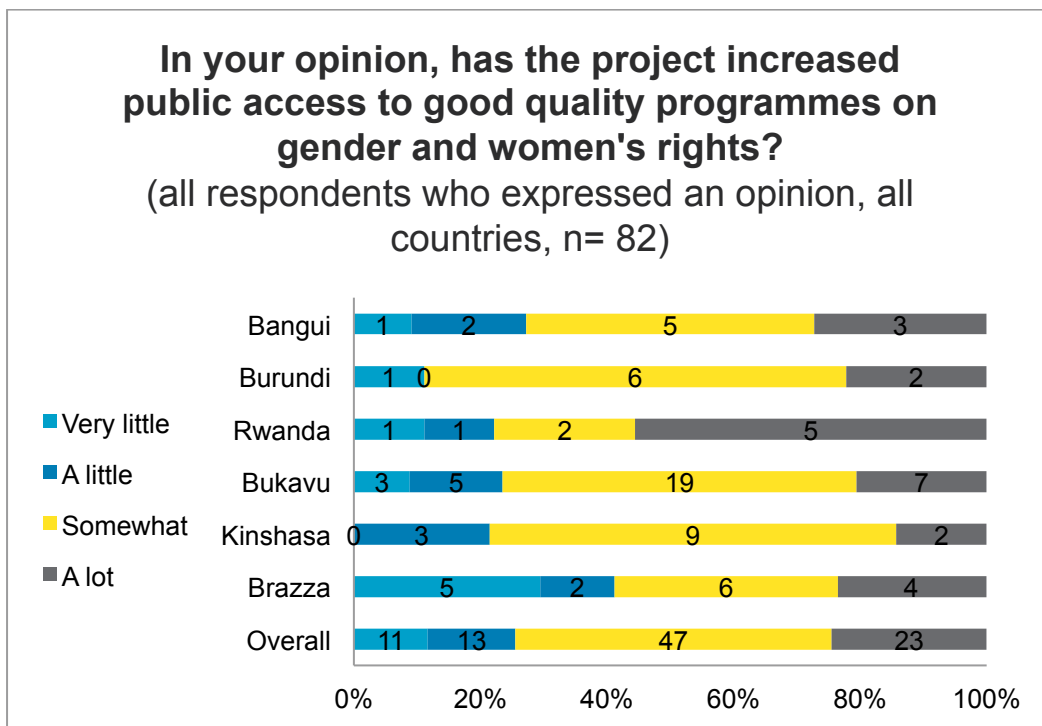
"Women journalists already suffer within the workplace. They are not given enough freedom to talk about themselves or their rights. They are limited in terms of opportunities to develop. They are often victims of

gender-based violence and of sexual harassment. Even the public is liable to stereotype women journalists, even though it is the public that are being served.” – Pascaline Zamuda, Coordinatrice CREEIJ (Cadre de Récupération), Kinshasa, DRC.

“Women don’t have enough intellectual capacity or analytical faculties [to be journalists]. They are scared of politics because they are at risk of threats or even imprisonment.” – Ndarisabamungu Clement, volunteer journalist, Radio Isingiro, Rwanda

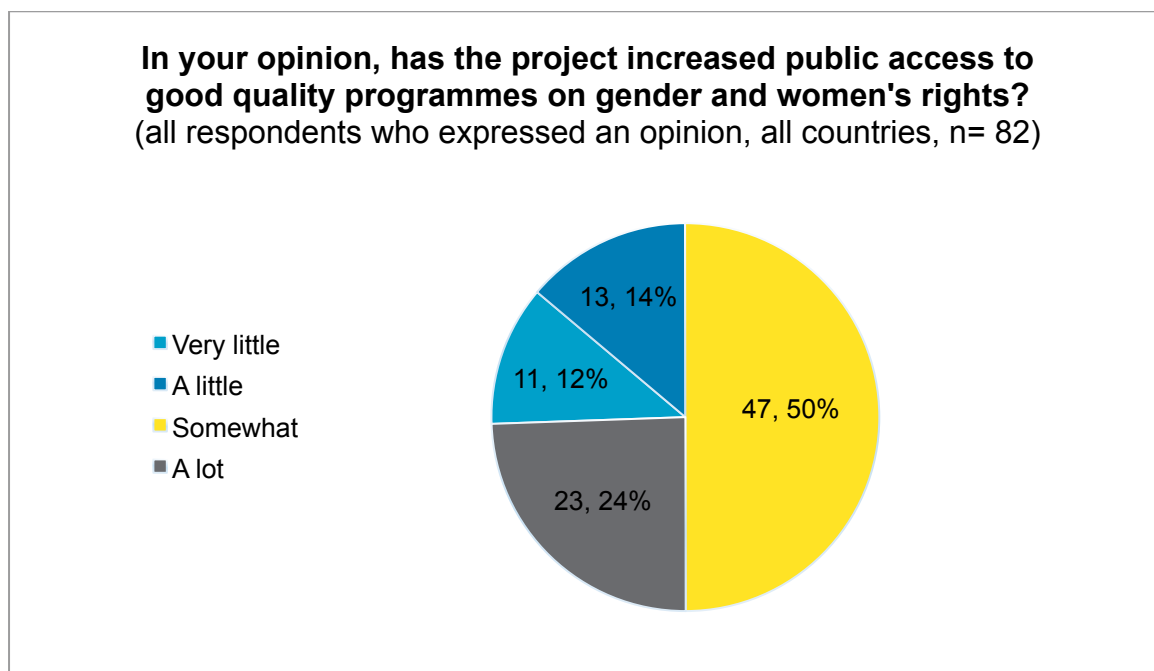
On the second project objective (i.e. to increase the general public’s access to high quality, gender-sensitive media programming, particularly on issues of women’s rights) the following chart shows that the majority of our respondents were of the opinion that the project had increased public access to good quality programmes on gender and women's rights in their country. The chart below shows the breakdown per research site i.e. Bangui, Bukavu, Kinshasa and Brazzaville are labelled as distinct research sites, Rwanda and Burundi denote multiple research sites within each country (both urban and rural areas). The opinions of the overall sample are at the bottom).

Figure 3: Whether the project increased public access to quality gender programming



Again, if we look at it another way, showing the overall figure from the above chart as a pie-chart (below) we can see that the majority of respondents (74% overall) were positive, with 50% saying that the project had increased the public’s access to women’s issues on the media ‘somewhat’ and 24% saying that the project had increased access ‘a lot’.

Figure 4: Pie Chart showing all respondents responses to question about public access to gender programmes



While graphs and charts tell one kind of story, the words of beneficiaries can be even more eloquent. The following is an inspiring success story from Rwanda from Anne-Marie Niwemwiza, KT Radio, Kigali:

"I studied journalism but people saw journalism for women as a low status job, with low pay, where you have to get up early in the morning and you get abused. But because of ARFEM I've realised it's a career like any other. Faith [chairperson of ARFEM] encouraged me, saying I had a good voice for radio. At the time, KT Radio was small and just a website but I convinced them to do radio and I worked very hard. People thought I never slept! They gave me the news to do which was unusual for a woman – I was one woman among 8 men. I asked myself if I could do it but people encouraged me. Now I'm based in the newsroom and I've also got a traditional music programme and now I can say to myself 'Wow I am really someone'. My younger sister also went to university and decided to become a journalist like me and now she's got a job at Isango Star."

However, about a quarter of respondents were more negative, and did not feel that the project had contributed significantly. Generally most people were of the opinion that there was still a long way to go before women's issues were treated widely and seriously in the media in the Great Lakes region.

There are challenges that are common across all the five Great Lakes countries, which include:

- Deep-seated patriarchal attitudes which still see women's issues as a 'minority' interest and negative gender practices (e.g. GBV, neglect of girls' education) as the norm and which disadvantage women in the workplace.
- Few women journalists push themselves forward and/or are given promotions within media houses because the 'harder' topics such as politics, corruption, security issues, economics and development have a higher status and are traditionally regarded as the domain of male journalists.
- The fact that women across the region have less access to media and mobile phones, less time to listen to radio or watch TV and have higher rates of illiteracy – their voices as audience-members are therefore automatically less well represented on the airwaves or in the press as men's.

- The general impoverished state of the media across all countries which encourages corruption (brown-envelope journalism) and also limits good quality reporting that gets out of the studio and records stories about the real lives of poor or minority women, particularly in rural areas.
- The perception among media managers that women's rights and problems are both taboo (women don't easily come forward to talk about them openly) and of little interest to the audience: this is borne out, for instance, by the chair of the women's media association in Rwanda (ARFEM) who said: *"Gender issues are still very under-covered. Managers see women's stories don't make any money... there are so many important stories and journalists have problems getting women to tell them, for example about gender-based violence and girls who get pregnant and are not allowed to carry on in school"* – Faith Mbazazi.

Then, in each country there are specific challenges:

In **Rwanda** there is still a lot left to achieve. The main hurdles are the repressive climate for all journalists, both men and women, and the fact that associations of all kinds can be viewed with suspicion – they are often highly partisan and tainted by family or political loyalties. ARFEM has very low visibility in Rwanda and all the women journalists we met who were not direct beneficiaries of ARFEM had either not heard of ARFEM at all or had heard about it vaguely but did not seem interested to join. Despite the recent explosion of commercial media outlets in Kigali, with a concomitant rise in the number of opportunities for journalism graduates (both men and women). Journalism is viewed by many in Rwanda as a challenging profession, and one not necessarily attractive to women. The freedom of the press in Rwanda has been criticized by some external groups, while others maintain that the challenge is in reporting accurately and fairly to a population that is still recovering from the effects of a violent and difficult shared history.

There is also the very un-generous maternity provision in Rwandan law which puts off a lot of women continuing in journalism if they start a family (only 6 weeks on full salary); several women journalists complained about this to us.

In **Burundi** the press is much more free and is generally regarded as vibrant, with a relatively good context in which women can develop as journalists. Almost half of all journalism students are women, according to a 2013 study⁸, so the profession has the potential to become more and more 'feminised'. However, as AFJO reported in 2011, questions of equal rights and gender issues make up only a tiny percentage (2%) of subjects treated on all media. Whereas there are some very good women journalists in Bujumbura and there has been a lot of progress in the last 10 years, the whole of Burundi's media is very capital-centric and the daily realities of the vast majority, who are rural women, very rarely feature in the media. There are also some dark clouds of increasing political repression of the press on the horizon.

In the **DRC** there is favourable legislation on gender but when it comes to the media, the challenges are primarily related to the level of training of journalists and the lack of resources within almost all the media outlets. The country's size also limits the visibility of media interventions and structures such as UCOFEM which are doing a good job. So what is needed is support to the existing provincial structures for women journalists and/or to help UCOFEM extend its own provincial offices and make them operational.

In the **RoC** the debate on gender in the Congolese media is new and the needs are enormous, with the highest priority remaining the training of journalists; support for the establishment and structuring of a genuine association of women journalists (SFCG had to partner with the GJP which is not specifically a women media association because associations are generally very undeveloped in RoC); awareness-raising among media managers and advocacy at the government level to speed the up the process of improving and applying legal instruments for the promotion of women and of

⁸ NINDORERA Willy, CAPITANT Sylvie et NDARUGIRIRE Tharcisse, *Audit des médias par les médias*, Bujumbura, 2013,

gender issues. Community radios in the RoC should also be taken into account in order to help improve their programming and take advantage of their closeness to local communities.

In the **CAR** context the focus is inevitably on peace and social cohesion; obviously the security and humanitarian issues are the main challenges at present. So the priority is emphasizing, for example, the roles of women alongside men in the management and transformation of conflict, productions featuring portraits of women who have contributed positively to the resolution of conflicts in families and in communities, and programmes focused on youth about gender and peace.

2. Efficiency

2.1. Has the project given a voice to women on key societal issues in the media?

From our observations and the result of our survey, it is clear that the project has helped to give a voice to women on key societal issues in the media. But *helped* is the operative word, here. The point is to understand the extent of the project's contribution. Many of our respondents pointed out not only that there is still a long way to go but also that there are *other* efforts that are being made by other NGOs and by media houses outside the project⁹. For instance, the project helped most of the women journalists involved in the project to continue to do what they were already doing: many were already covering women's issues to some extent in their everyday journalistic practice and all the radio stations we visited already had slots on women's issues in some way; other work by AFEM (Association des Femmes des Médias) in South Kivu is also doing a lot to promote women in local media houses.

Several non-beneficiary radio stations also feature women's voices and issues on a regular basis, for example there is a women's radio station in Giheta, in Burundi, called 'Voice of Women' which is mainly supported by other NGOs (International Alert, Panos, UNESCO), and its staff told us they were not aware of AFJO or the competition for women's programming launched under this project. So this project was a useful contribution complementing other existing initiatives tackling the big lack of women's voices in the media in the Great Lakes region.

Furthermore, it is important to ask: the voices of what kinds of women were being promoted via this project? Our content analysis (see the table in Annex 2) found that many of the radio programmes that were produced by the winners of the production grants lacked the voices of ordinary, poor, rural and/or marginalised women, and concentrated on urban, educated elite women. In our content analysis exercise less than half (only 11 out of the 27) of the programmes we sampled scored 'good' or 'very good' on the inclusion of the voices of 'ordinary' (rural, poor and/or marginalised, non-expert) women. Of course the target audiences of the project programmes varied and depended on the type of programme being made – some focusing on radio debates with women leaders and others focusing on rural women's issues. It is certainly worthwhile to raise the voice of women experts and, clearly, the project enhanced their contributions on key political, social and economic issues. But it is always less expensive and less time-consuming to stay in the studio in the capital and not to get out and record the experiences of real people and so making sure that radio programmes/newspaper articles were not 'capital-centric' was clearly a challenge. Unfortunately limited funding was available so this necessarily limited the amount of travel by journalist/producers that was possible outside the capitals.

⁹ We cannot list all the other women/gender media initiatives that are currently being taken in the region but there are many. For example, journalists we met in Rwanda had had gender training from CARE, IWPR, International Alert etc. There is also Benevolencija, Panos Grand Lacs, Girl Hub, and several other NGOs who emphasis gender issues in the media and via the media. NB. SFCG is collaborating with some of these.

"There is definitely an improvement in terms of quality, when it comes to programmes produced as part of the project but an effort is still needed to reach the 'voiceless' women, women who live in the most remote areas and whose voices are not heard by any media." - Jolly Bange, Consultant trainer and member of AFEM, South Kivu and former programme manager with Media: Voice for All/SFCG.

We also talked to many women journalists in Bukavu and rural areas of Rwanda and Burundi who were not members of the media women's association (MWA) in their country and who were unaware of what their MWA could do for them, so there is also a question-mark over how representative the MWAs are of *all* women journalists – particularly those who are volunteers or on temporary contracts and working in the provinces. These women tend to be the ones facing the most challenges in the media profession. For example simple things like a lack of a vehicle at a radio station limits how much women journalists can do; for instance at the 'Voix de la Femme' radio in Giheta, Burundi, we were told *"Elles (les femmes journalistes/animatrices) peuvent aller dehors faire les reportages si on reçoit de l'argent pour payer le transport (en commun) et si leurs maris acceptant, mais nos animatrices ne peuvent pas rentrer a pied le soir quand il fait noir comme on n'a pas de véhicules"*. Although this project was limited by a relatively small budget in what it could do in relation to providing vehicles or covering transport costs, there are clear transport needs among women journalists throughout the region and it is therefore something that donors, media managers and the MWAs need to tackle (see recommendations), .

2.2. Has the project strengthened MWA partners' organizational structures and visibility, and/or enabled them to innovate in their activities to promote women's voice in the media?

There is no doubt that the project has strengthened all the five women's media associations with which it worked. All of them are stronger organisationally and are more visible; they have all received a much-needed boost. But the level of maturity and stability of each organisation varies greatly, with probably AFJO from Burundi being the strongest, and GJP and the AFPC being the weakest because they have no other support – or very little - from any other international donors. Leadership is always very important and the personality and professional position of the chair of each association is key – a change to a more consultative and collegiate type of leadership could, for example, strengthen ARFEM.

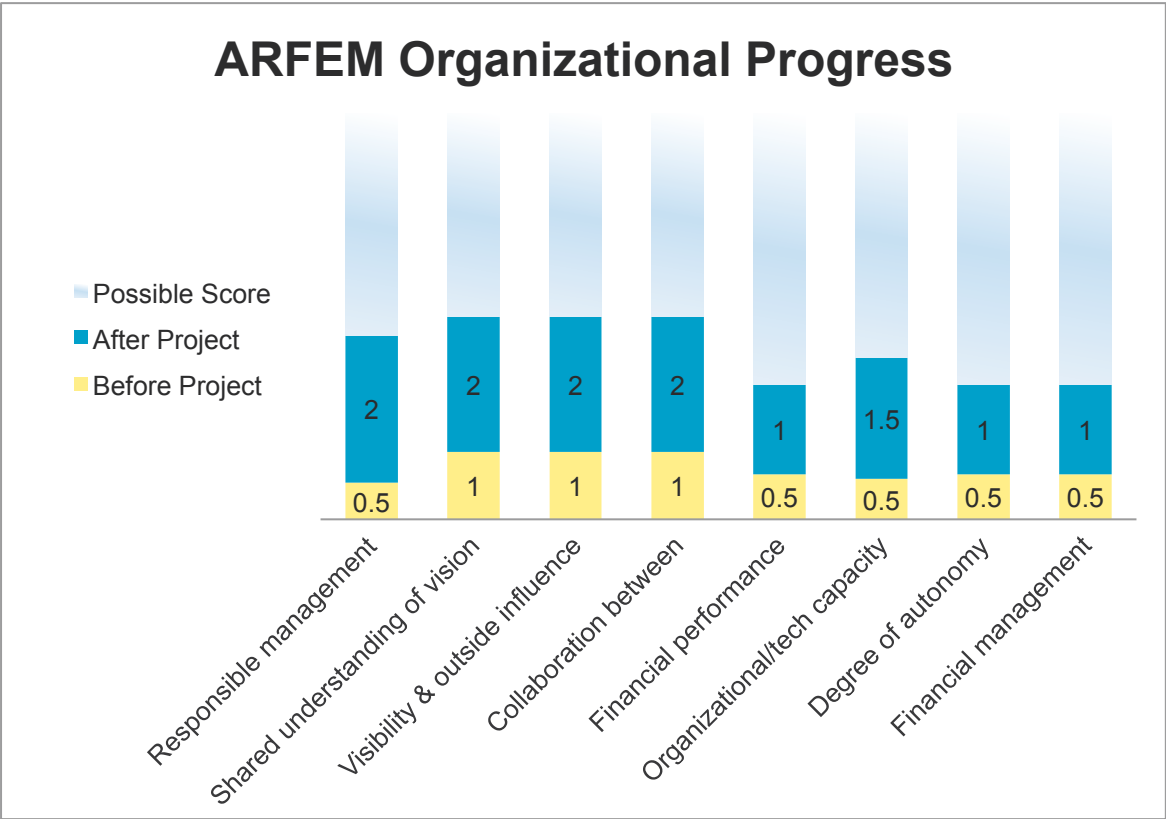
We conducted exercises called 'Spider-web' diagramming to understand more about the degree of organizational strength of each organisation: we did this with the executive committees of each association as well as with outside observers who knew each association well (such as SFCG personnel, media NGOs etc.) in order to triangulate and to get more than one perspective on each association.

The charts taken from the 'Spider-web' diagramming are presented on the following pages for each association and each one is an amalgamation of several different points of view about the same association. They show averaged respondents' opinions about the degree to which each association has progressed organisationally on a number of different counts since the beginning of the project, comparing the before and after project positions (0=non-existent, 1= weak 2= good progress 3= very good). The 'before' and 'after' markers show the degree of progress on the path towards the goal, for example sound financial management, shared vision, economic performance, degree of autonomy, external links and influence, etc. All of the charts below show that each association has made progress over the two years of the project on almost all counts. But when one compares, for example ARFEM (Rwanda) with AFJO

(Burundi) the starting position for ARFEM was much lower and the final position is better, so, despite there being a lot still to improve, in a way the effort and achievement can be said to be greater.

ARFEM Rwanda:

The graph below shows progress has been made especially in terms of better management and better organisation. For example 'responsible management' has jumped from a score of just 0.5 before the project to a score of 2 out of a possible 3 after two years of the project, but financial performance (i.e. ability to raise funds) is still weak (score of 1), as is the association's degree of autonomy and financial management (both also scoring 1). Weak levels of financial management are a worry. ARFEM's visibility and outside influence appears to be relatively strong, however, and it is clear that the project has rejuvenated Rwanda ARFEM which was described as more or less moribund before the project started.

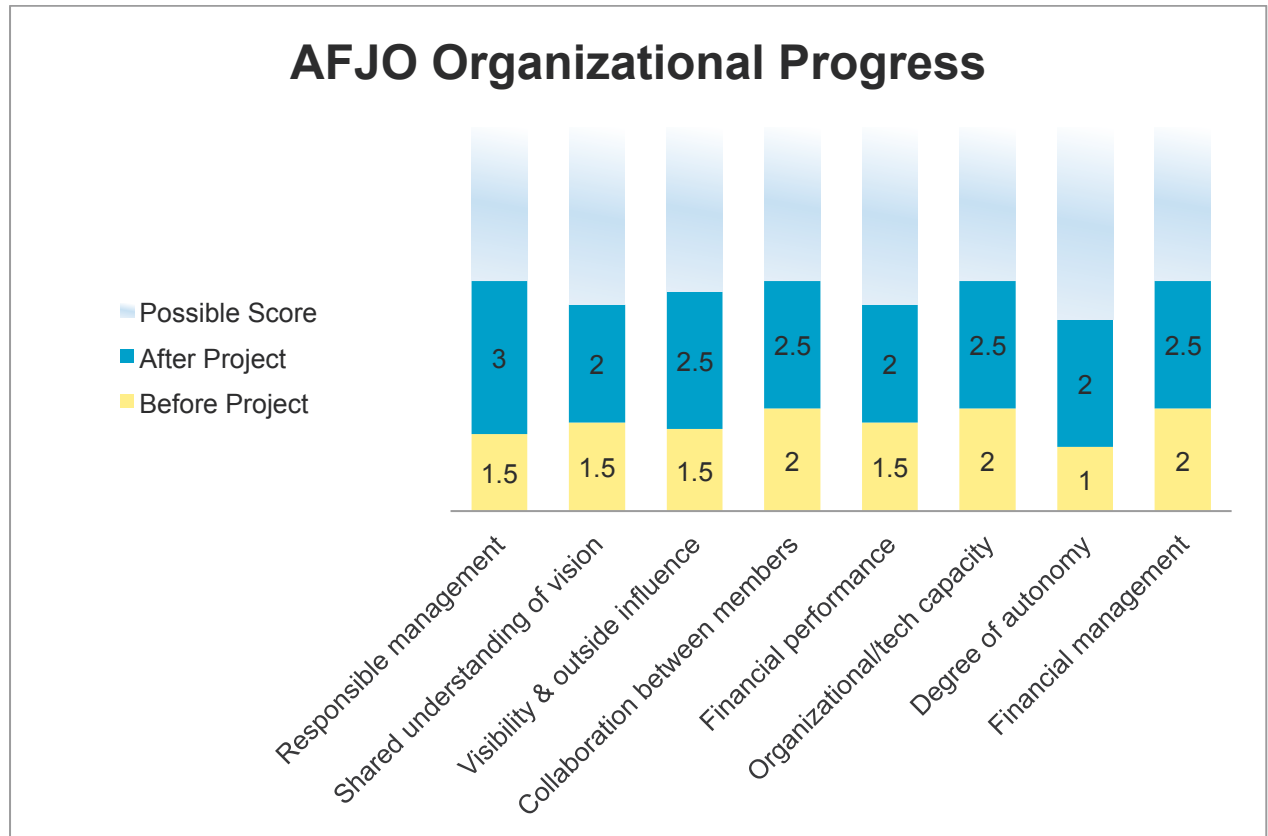


AFJO Burundi:

The diagram below shows that AFJO is a much more mature association than ARFEM, with all the 'after project' scores showing 2 out of 3 or above, with good overall management (including financial) (score 3 out of 3), a high degree of collaboration between members (score nearly 3 out of 3) and a good level of technical capacity (score nearly 3 out of 3). It is no coincidence that the AFJO vice-chair, Agatonique Barakukuza, was elected president of the Great Lakes regional network, RFMGL. AFJO has a permanent executive secretary (a man named Désiré Ndaniziza) and an accountant – their salaries are partly covered by Action Aid as well, and other AFJO funders include Panos Institute and Trademark. The Executive Committee meets regularly and AFJO no longer needs to pay rent as it has bought a shipping container and converted it into a (rather hot) office within the precincts of the Maison de la Presse in Bujumbura.

“Now our structure is much better”, says Désiré Ndaniziza, Executive Secretary of AFJO, “before [the project], members were reticent to get involved, now we have 110 members who meet every 6 months and we use Frontline SMS to

mobilise them. Another change is that when I write a concept note to submit to donors, I get good feedback from members who have followed the fund-raising training...we also have three new teams who are ready and have the tools to do lobbying, project formulation and support for making programmes about gender-based violence...but we still have some way to go to reach community radios, TV and newspapers, since we have concentrated on radio so far."



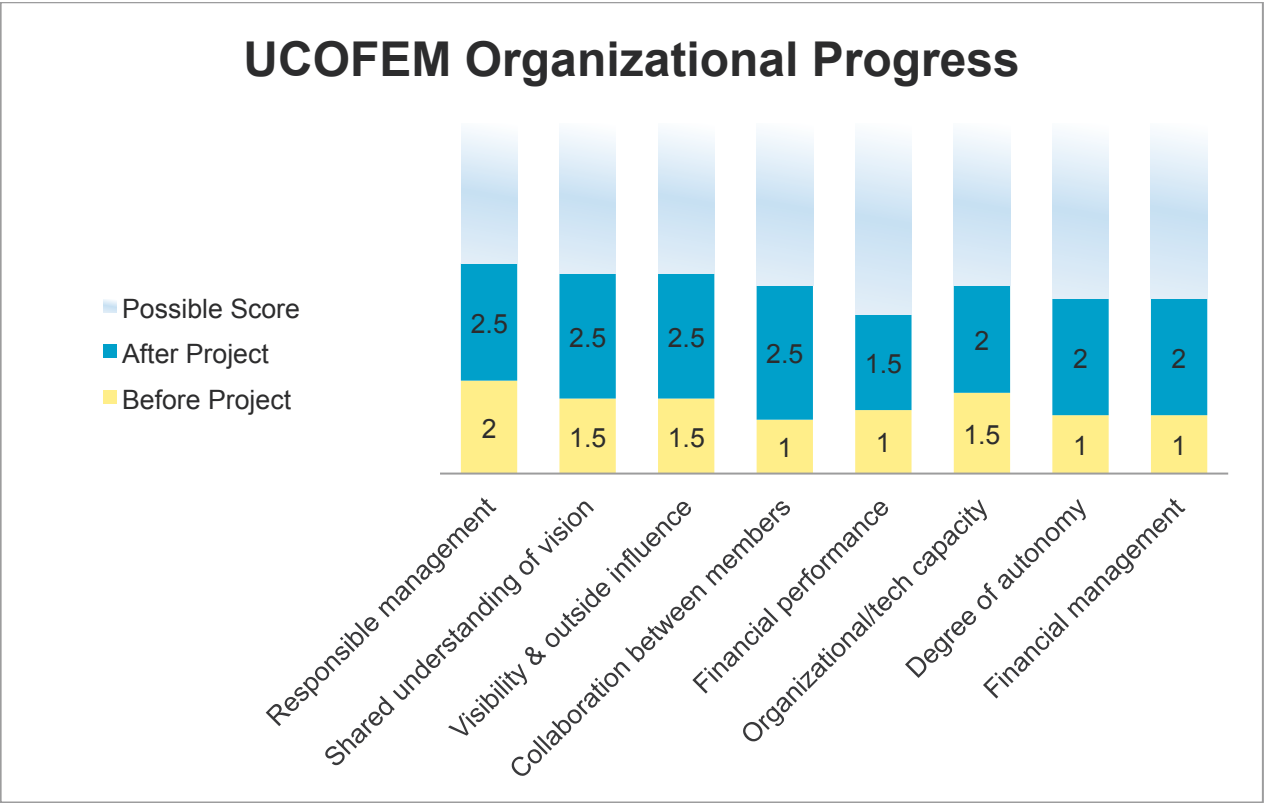
UCOFEM, DRC:

As with all the women's media associations in the project, UCOFEM is still not on a stable financial footing and is very donor-dependent. However, it is making progress, has a strong shared vision, quite good management (although *financial* management is still weak) and it enjoys the confidence of its funders and partners. It has eight provincial offices ('antennes') which is a real achievement and represents a solid attempt at covering the vast size of the country. It has fund-raising skills among its members, a relatively good range of other funders and a diverse range of activities, including a website since January 2013 which is kept up to date (<http://www.ucofem.org/>). The gender media monitoring it has done, the directory of women spokespeople it has produced, and other publications are tangible and useful achievements.

According to members of the UCOFEM, the value-added of SFCG’s support consisted of:

- Improving the day-to-day functioning of the UCOFEM office with a team of 5 people including two supported by the SFCG project, the opening of new offices in the provinces and the establishment of improved internal communications through the "FrontlineSMS" communication system.
- Involving more members of UCOFEM to participate more fully in the implementation of project activities.
- On a professional level, the project has strengthened the skills of UCOFEM members in terms of openness to new ideas and experiences, strengthening of self-confidence and better public-speaking skills.
- The project has enabled the UCOFEM to strengthen ties with industry partners such as the collaboration with the state-broadcaster, the RTNC, through the broadcasts produced by Catherine Lisongo called ‘Questions de Genre’ and with the academic faculty at IFASIC, via a conference on gender for students.

The following diagram is *not* an objective assessment of UCOFEM because it was only conducted with members (in a group session involving 10 UCOFEM members on 1st of October 2014) unlike most of the other charts from this exercise which are more objective because they are an amalgamation of more than one point of view; not just the point of view of insiders within the organisations, but outsiders too. However, it gives a sense of where the association sees itself to be situated organisationally. The diagram shows that members believe progress has been made on all fronts, especially in terms of better collaboration between members whose score has jumped from a score of just 1 before the project to a score of 2.5 (out of a possible 3) after two years of the project.

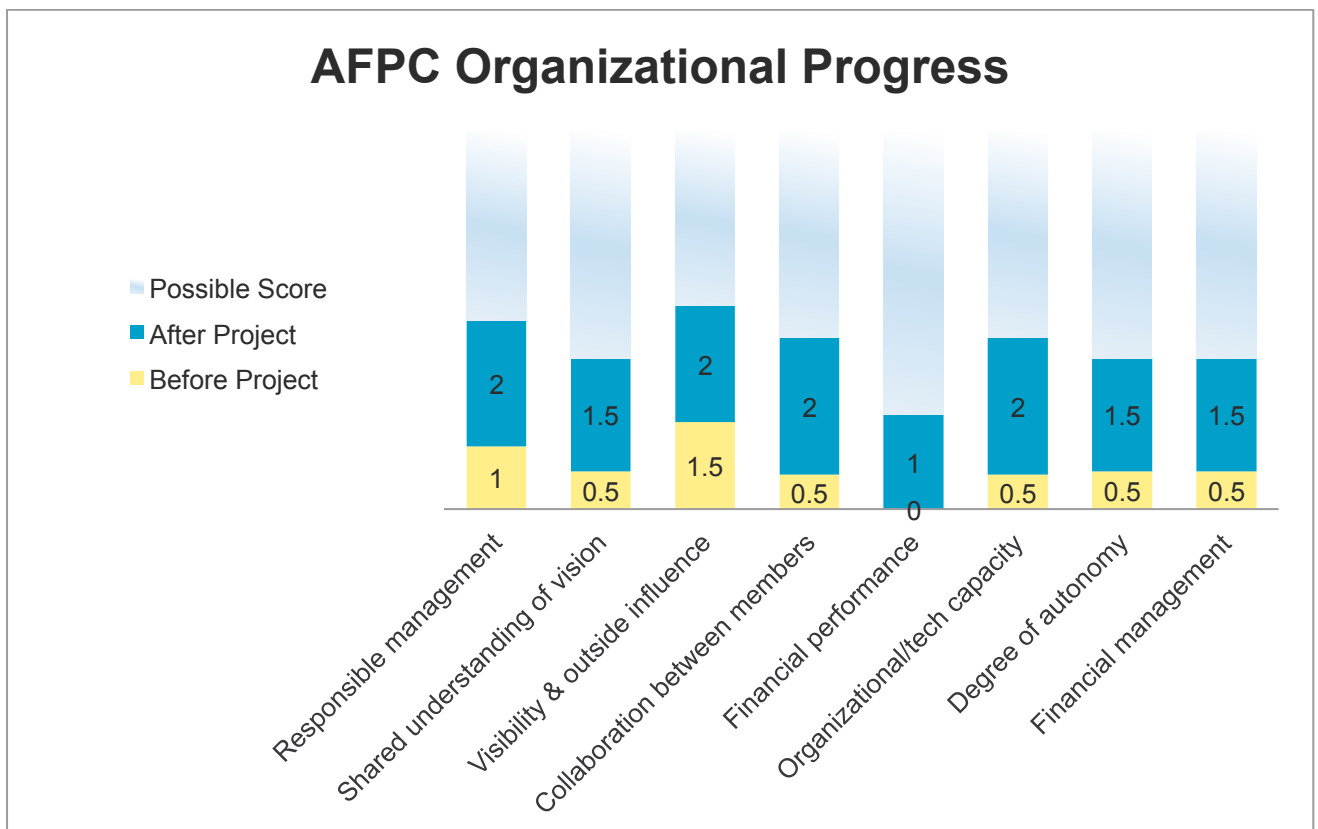


Association des Femmes Professionnelles de la Communication (AFPC), CAR:

Despite the crisis in the CAR, the project was able to revive the AFPC which was almost completely inactive at the start of the project in 2012, after outside support from Institut Panos Paris came to an end in 2011. The project enabled coordination bodies to be put back in place, notably the board of directors chaired by Chantal Pani and a full-time worker paid for by SFCG, Prudence Yamete.

The level of cooperation and solidarity among members has improved markedly due to members taking part in activities organised as part of this project – as can be seen from the web-diagram below (see the score for 'collaboration between members' and the score for technical/organisation capacity has both risen from 0.5 (very weak) before the project, to over 2 (good progress)). These activities included exchange visits and various training opportunities. Members of AFPC we talked to said that these were very appropriate ways of tackling the new challenges in journalism in the context of the ongoing crisis. This was why, contrary to the project's initial plans in the CAR, the activities revolved around peace and reconciliation and not just gender issues. So the project breathed some life back into the AFPC but the association sees their progress towards organisational strength as very fragile: they were only able to implement the activities financed by SFCG, despite having drawn up an action plan involving several other activities, which, in the end could not be implemented. As the web shows (i.e. economic performance/financing) their biggest worry is being able to mobilise other funds in future to maintain the permanent staff and to do activities which will keep their members active and involved.

The chart below represents an amalgamation of views, incorporating those of SFCG (represented by CAR focal point, Pauline Zanetti) and of a group of AFPC members themselves.

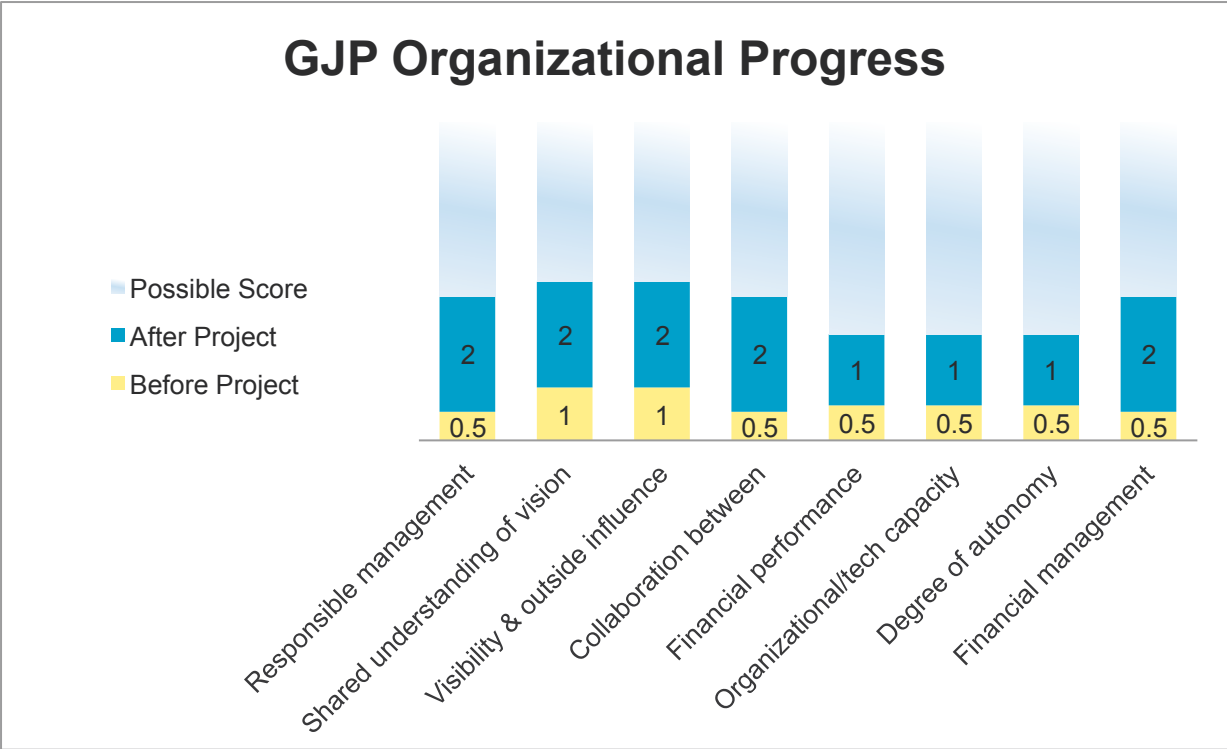


Groupe des Journalistes pour la Paix (GJP), Congo Brazzaville:

The GJP contributed substantially to the success of the project in Congo Brazzaville where SFCG does not have an office. However, the legitimacy of GJP as an organization of women journalists seems problematic and confusing. The mandate of GJP is different from the other MWAs involved in the project. Moreover, despite the support of the SFCG, GJP remains a fragile structure both organisationally and operationally. Apart from the few members of GJP that we interviewed, few of the other journalists we met in Brazzaville feel the association speaks for them, and they are not members. One of the reasons for this is that the culture of payment for information and transport costs has penetrated deep into the journalistic profession which means that the GJP cannot attract members without paying them to attend meetings – this is obviously contrary to the whole ethic and vision of an association – furthermore, its organisational and managerial weaknesses have also put members off.

However, it is still important that SFCG continues its support to the GJP and helps it to realise its mission of promoting peace through the media and helping to create a true association of women journalists in the Congo Brazzaville. According to information gathered in the field, there were earlier unsuccessful attempts to set up an association of women journalists of the Congo before the start of the present project. It might be strategic to make more efforts in engaging other GJP members from the provinces, not always the same Brazzaville-based heads of the association and for SFCG to consider a potential partnership with the community radios such as Radio MUCODEC which has a chain of radio stations in Brazzaville and in Dolisie, and looks set to expand to other provinces.

The following chart is *not* an objective assessment of GJP because it was done only by members of the association (in a group session involving 3 GJP members), however, it gives a sense of where the association sees itself to be situated organisationally, with progress perceived to have taken place on all fronts with the biggest improvements in collaboration between members (jumped from a score of 0.5 to 2 out of 3) and in financial management (also jumped from a score of 0.5 to 2 out of 3).



2.2.1. Issues relating to MWA's activities

On the whole the relationship between SFCG and the five MWAs was very good and all the chairs and other officials of each MWA we spoke to were very appreciative of their partnership with SFCG.

We would like to raise the following points that arose during our evaluation:

2.2.1.a. In terms of optimising partnerships in the DRC, it was a pity that the project did not have sufficient funds to support more than one MWA in the DRC, so SFCG could not forge a formal partnership with AFEM South-Kivu, despite the fact that they are the obvious and pre-eminent women's media organisation in Eastern DRC. Recognizing that UCOFEM does not cover the whole of the DRC and the reputation and expertise of AFEM / SK and its strategy of working with women's groups and radios at the grassroots, there would have been much to gain if SFCG had established a partnership with AFEM / SK. Such a partnership could even have had a positive impact on the sub-regional level since as early as 2006, with the support of the Institut Panos Paris, AFEM / SK already put plans together for a network for women journalists in the Great Lakes region along with AFJO (Burundi) and ARFEM (Rwanda) although unfortunately it did not lead anywhere, so the RFMGL was started under SFCG's project. However, in Bukavu, despite the absence of a partnership between SFCG and AFEM / SK, there was a good synergy between them. Some of our interviewees did not see any distinction between 'Media Voix pour Tous' and the work of AFEM / SK. Furaha Citera, the journalist who hosted the show at Radio Maendeleo, and who is not a member of the AFEM / SK, acknowledged the contribution of the AFEM / SK. She said *"AFEM has contributed to the success of my programmes by giving me resource people helping me choose subjects for my programmes."* She added saying *"the SFCG project has contributed to the popularization of the Charter for gender in media produced by AFEM / SK."*

2.2.1.b. In some cases, it must be noted that SFCG had trouble monitoring sub-grantees' radio activities. For example ARFEM in Rwanda experienced difficulties reporting on the broadcasts that the competition-winners had completed, for example they did not give any feedback detailing basic things like the title, names of invitees, format, date of production, date and time of broadcast, dates of any repeats, estimated audience reach etc. While monitoring was a particular challenge in Rwanda, we found that some SFCG focal points and the SFCG DM&E officers could not point us to any system or set of reports which captured anything beyond the basic statistics about a radio programme produced by a sub-grantee (i.e. name, theme, length and date of broadcast). For example, we found that in CAR (and to some extent also in Bukavu and Brazzaville) little was known by SFCG staff about the detailed content, the tone and the possible biases of the programmes produced by sub-grantees, nor about the audience reaction to the programmes (e.g. phone or SMS feedback), how many people might have been reached by the programmes, or whether or not grant-winning journalists had had any feedback about the programmes from colleagues from within their own radio stations. SFCG should have insisted on sub-grantees using the detailed 'fiches de suivi' provided at the outset of their grants to record information about each programme or article. This would have ensured that the information collected goes beyond just the basic title, theme and time/date of broadcast of the programme. In this way, SFCG staff's job of accompanying the sub-grantees to build their capacity would have been more effective.

2.2.1.c. There were difficulties with other partnerships: for example, with Radio Maendeleo, Jolly Kamuntu, Director, complained about the small size of the budget available and various other contractual problems: *"We have had too many difficulties over fund transfers, over the terms of the contract and too many demands made on us. We don't feel the partnership is sincere, there are too many things that are vague and ill-defined. Partners should not have to make do with just crumbs ... It was a very good project but too short and too limited in terms of budget."* Indeed, it was not always clear to radio stations and journalists who were involved in competitions for innovation grants whether the funding relationship was directly with SFCG or via their country's MWA.

ARFEM in Rwanda was made an exception and allowed to receive grants directly for its members rather than through radio stations/media houses, this created problems compared with other countries and also meant that individual

journalists had trouble airing the programmes they produced, even on their own radio stations, in some cases – due to the fact that the SFCG grants were too small to include separate funds for airtime. This might have contributed to the programmes being broadcast in non-prime-time slots because the host radio stations did not see any direct financial benefit from the partnership.

In RoC, it was also difficult because SFCG does not have an office there. In one case we heard about, Léon Moukouri, a journalist who won a grant as part of the project to do a series of programmes about gender issues called *Tout Azimut*, found it difficult to approach his superiors for support and advice at his own radio station, Radio Congo. This was because the managers at Radio Congo had not been part of his financial contract with SFCG and GJP and he feared that the commercial desk at Radio Congo could object to him having a financial relationship with funders which bypassed the radio station and did not cover airtime fees. Any future support to the MWAs needs to have a consistent approach to the way grants are disbursed, and consideration could be given to increasing the size of grants to allow coverage of prime-time broadcasting costs at radio stations.

2.3. Has the project reached its expected results in each of the five targeted countries?

Table 2 'Results' (above, section 1) summarises the headline logical-framework outcome indicators and shows that they have all been reached in terms of numbers of outputs. The following section gives a little more detail on some of the points.

Outcome 1.2: Increased connections are developed and 'Number of new actions emanating from regional exchanges, action plans':

This relates to activities by the five MWAs planned under the regional network (RFMGL) bi-annual action plans. We are satisfied that the target was achieved, and even slightly exceeded, here. SFCG¹⁰ reports as follows.

"We have counted them based on the realizations by MWAs of activities planned under the RFMGL bi-annual action plans. We have achieved the target of 12 initiatives:

- 1. Legal registration of the RFMGL in Burundi (agreement to be received by the end of 2014)*
- 2. Internal rules and regulations for the RFMGL were developed and adopted.*
- 3. RFMGL was presented to relevant government authorities in Burundi, RoC and the DRC, as well as to the Africa Union by ARFEM and meeting requested with the ICGLR (International Conference on the Great Lakes Region). This counts as more than one initiative, four initiatives in total.*
- 4. AFJO received a letter of support to the RFMGL from the Minister of Telecommunications, Information, Communication and Parliamentary Relations.*
- 5. AFJO in Burundi presented the RFMGL to the different media houses in Burundi, and as a result several media (at least three: Iwacu, Le Renouveau, Isanganiro) have talked about the network.*
- 6. Frontline SMS technology was successfully established and used by AFJO in Burundi and UCO-FEM in the DRC (+ starting within GJP in Brazzaville).*
- 7. UCOFEM developed a directory of women experts in diverse fields who can intervene as resource persons in the media.*
- 8. AFPC developed a brochure presenting the RFMGL, for distribution to stakeholder.*

¹⁰ Gabrielle Solanet, Regional Project Coordinator, Search for Common Ground, by email, 22nd October 2014

9. *Exchanges between women media professionals and young aspiring journalists organized by GJP in Brazzaville, UCOFEM in the DRC and ARFEM in Rwanda.*
10. *Exchange visits were held between members of the RFMGL and other Associations in the Tanzania (TAMWA) and Kenya (AMWIK), resulting in a growing interest of these associations to join the regional network, which materialized in their participation in the last regional conference / first general assembly of the RFMGL in September in Brazzaville."*

Outcome 2.1.: Increased capacity of media outlets to produce and broadcast gender-sensitive programs on social and political issues

According to the project log-frame this outcome was meant to be assessed partly by measuring the 'percent of priority obstacles identified showing 'significant progress' by end of project' and the target was '60% of obstacles showing significant progress.' In fact, as far as we understand it, the 'priority obstacles' were not enumerated at the outset because they were developed through participatory analyses (entitled 'Barrier Analyses') of impediments with associations and other stakeholders as the project progressed. Therefore they were not systematically tracked from the outset. Three 'Barrier Analyses for DRC, Burundi and Rwanda'¹¹ were eventually produced quite a bit later than within the first 3 months of the project, as was the target stated in the log-frame. (This was *Output 2.1.1: 'Country-level "barrier analyses" produced of impediments to increased women's voices on airwaves (including discrimination, capacity, security, etc)'*)

Without detailing all the content of the three reports, a 'for-instance' from the Rwanda report detailed that the main barriers to women's voices and participation in the Rwandan media were: cultural gender stereotypes, low self-confidence among women, negative images of women journalists, and challenging working conditions for women media professionals. The results of all these studies were fed back to large gatherings of stakeholders in each country and were well-covered in the local and international press. Following the completion of the Gender Barrier Analyses' reports and based on their key findings and recommendations, SFCG's MWA partners developed Training Plans for their members. We can conclude that at least 60% of the priority obstacles were tackled positively and showed signs of progress because most of our respondents were of the opinion that the project had increased women's participation in the media in their country, furthermore the majority of respondents (74% overall) were positive, with 50% saying that the project had increased the public's access to women's issues on the media 'somewhat' and 24% saying that the project had increased access 'a lot' (see above, section 1).

Outcome 2.2 Increased availability of women's voices on the regional, national and local level, conjointly produced with women's journalists associations

Audience reach: The target across the whole project was to reach an audience of at least 5.6 million people. We believe it is likely that that target was reached, especially if the target means that, to be counted, one person needs to be reached just once by one of the programmes produced either by SFCG¹² or by its grantees during the two years of

¹¹ See: "Media: a Voice for All" *Understanding Barriers to Gender Equality in the Rwandan Media Gender Barrier Analysis Report*, by Theogene Mugisha and Whitney Skippings, September 2013; *Analyse des barrières à l'inclusion de la femme dans les médias au Burundi*, Godefroid BIGIRIMANA avec Diego MURANGAMIZWA, SFCG Septembre 2013; and *Analyse des barrières à l'inclusion de la femme dans les Médias en RD Congo*, IRANGA SHOMBO Ella et Dieudonné Kambale Syauswa, SFCG Septembre 2013.

¹² There is a distinction between SFCG-produced regular programming like *Arbre a Palabre* and *Ni-Nyampinga* which were part-funded under this project as opposed to the productions done through the MWAs and with radio stations like Radio Maendeleo who won the production grants under this project. However, in the audience-reach target, SFCG does not make a distinction, so we have counted them all together as 'project productions'.

the project, and does not necessarily have to listen to it regularly. Reliable audience research is very scarce in the region so it is very difficult to estimate audience numbers. Nevertheless we believe the 5.6 million figure was conservative because many of the project's partner radio stations have a high reach. For example Radio Isingiro – a seemingly small radio station in northern Rwanda has an estimated listenership of 4 million people, so just one of the outputs under the project 'Ni-Nyampinga', which goes out on this station at prime time 18.30 on Saturdays (also with repeats) could, conservatively be reaching 2 million listeners in northern Rwanda alone; furthermore Radio Isango Star has an estimated total audience of 65% of the Rwandan population which is between 6 and 8 million people – staff at this radio station estimate that Ni-Nyampinga must be reaching 'not less than 2.5m every week'.

However, it emerged that a few of the programmes that were produced and aired by grantee partners were broadcast in low-audience slots, such as at 9pm on weekday evenings. For example, in Burundi, one of the partner-radio programmes, 'Mukenyezi Seruka' on Radio Isanganiro was broadcast at 9pm on Wednesday evenings: when we asked rural focus groups about their listening habits almost all the women and some of the men said that a 9pm slot was too late for them because they go to bed around 8.30pm. Another example is Christine Uwizeye's programmes on Radio Rwanda, 'Umugore mu iterambere' which airs on Monday evenings from 8.15 to 8.45pm. Although we did not gather data systematically, where we went in rural areas of Burundi, it was difficult for us to find respondents among the rural population who recognised the project's programmes. In general, and not just in Burundi, we believe that sometimes the time slots and the fact that they were a scattered number of programmes, broadcast for half an hour on a weekly basis with few repeats or trailers, made them get a little lost among the relatively wide choice that most listeners have.

The partnership between SFCG and Radio Maendeleo in Bukavu during this project, was probably the most fruitful partnership of them all from the point of reaching listeners; Radio Maendeleo is headed by a woman (Jolly Kamuntu) who is obviously already sympathetic to the aims of the project and the programmes had a wide reach because Radio Maendeleo is already the most popular radio in South Kivu¹³ (a province of DRC bigger than Rwanda and Burundi put together with Bukavu alone having a 2m population) and Kamuntu decided to rebroadcast the project's gender programmes through three further radio stations (Radio Edjwi lino, Radio Mulangane and Neno la Uzima) to increase audience reach even further. Radio Maendeleo added their own funds to this \$6,000 USD grant to help cover this extra airing. Thus the 47 programmes (4 programmes per month) produced by Furaha Citera for Maendeleo through the project probably reached several million listeners.

Content analysis

There were hundreds of radio programmes (and some print articles) produced as part of this project and we did a content analysis exercise on a random sample of 27 of these programmes in Rwanda, Burundi, RoC, CAR and DRC. We established a list of 15 standard criteria on which to judge each programme to see how gender-sensitive it was. Programmes were scored on elements such as: whether the presenter gave the sense that s/he understood gender issues; whether women were encouraged to speak in an equal way to men; whether the content was interesting/appropriate to women listeners, etc. (see Annex 5 for the coding sheet, showing the exact criteria we used to score the programmes)

The following table presents the results of our scoring on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'very weak' and 5 is 'very good'. The left side (in green) of the table shows average scorings of 10 radio programmes that were produced either before the project or by non-project radio stations and the right side (in blue), shows average scores of 14 radio programmes that were produced during the project, both by SFCG itself (programmes such as *Ni-Nyampinga*) or by radio partners.

¹³ TARGET audience research, 2013, referenced in Frère, Nindorere and Fiedler, 2014, *Promouvoir des Médias Professionnels et Responsables Contribuant au Processus Démocratique dans les Grands Lacs, Projet de Coopération Suisse, Etude de Faisabilité*, PGL et ReSIC.

We tried to sample of a cross-section of programmes, including programmes produced both in studio and in the field, and covering a cross section of themes, which included unwanted pregnancy, bigamy, cooperatives and women, Batwa ('pygmy') women, farming for self-sufficiency, celebration of African Women's Day, 'what is gender' and domestic servants. For more detail about the content analysis we carried out and a full table of programmes and their scores see Annex 2.

Table 3: Results of content analysis scoring exercise showing scores (N.B. featuring only sampled programmes)

Key to scoring 1 is 'very weak' and 5 is 'very good'

	Average Scores BEFORE Programmes produced Before or outside the project (number of programmes analysed in brackets) 1 is 'very weak' and 5 is 'very good'		Average scores DURING Programmes produced During the project (number of programmes analysed in brackets) 1 is 'very weak' and 5 is 'very good'	
	Produced by SFCG	Produced by Grantees	Produced by SFCG	Produced by Grantees
Rwanda		3.78 (5)	4.84 (1)	4.32 (3)
Burundi		3.94 (3)	4.62 (1)	3.72 (3)
DRC	2.12 (1)	4.25 (1)	4.12 (1)	3.64 (3)
Congo- Brazza				3.50 (2)
CAR				3.46 (3)
TOTAL number of programmes analysed = 27	(1)	(9)	(3)	(14)

As can be seen, gender-sensitivity of radio programmes is pretty good overall (average score is 3.74 or (rounded up to 4) = 'good') but there is not a great deal of difference between the average scores of grantees before (or of producers outside) the project and during the project. This suggests that the project enabled greater presence of gender-sensitive programming, but not a great deal of improvement of the quality of such programming given there were already quite some produced before the project. It also suggests that the partner radio stations and journalists were already fairly good at making gender-sensitive programmes so they were the right choice of partner for the project. Another positive aspect to consider (that is not captured in a content analysis exercise like this, of course) is that *more* programmes about gender issues were aired in the Great Lakes region during the two-years of the project than would probably otherwise have been the case.

3. Relevance

3.1. Has the project improved MWA partners and media managers' knowledge of the obstacles that prevent women's participation in the media?

The project – its Gender Barrier Analyzes in particular – has certainly helped raise awareness among the five MWAs, and media houses who partnered with the project, about the problems women journalists still face, even though the general trend is for more and more women journalists to emerge in the region. Many are inspired by trail-blazers and veteran journalists like Christine Nyembo in DRC and Judith Basutama and Domitille Kiramvu in Burundi. Faith Mabazi, ex head of department at the national broadcaster in Rwanda is role-model in herself, and now Chair of ARFEM; another key figure in this project is Jolly Kamuntu, Director of Radio Maendeleo and an active member of UCOFEM.

The following quotes from two radio station managers testify to the positive effect of the project on their stations:

“On Radio Maendeleo’s side they have done a concerted campaign internally to welcome women journalists and interns. I have noticed a real change in awareness. Our chief editor has started to say that it is necessary to have lots of women as interns to see if the question of gender can be promoted more.” - Furaha Citera, producer at Radio Maendeleo, Bukavu

“The project has enabled our collective professional conscience to be awakened and we have even found some hidden stars [among the women staff]” - Bernard Guioua, Director of Radio Rurale, Bangui, CAR

However, there are still difficulties, even at media houses which have nominally positive gender policies. Issues such as women not being promoted because they refused to go out to report on stories when their children were ill or when they were pregnant came up a few times.

The legal situation in relation to women's maternity rights and other medical and child benefits is also a challenge: this quote from Isaac Bashombe Cishibanji, the Director of Radio Neno neno la Uzima in South Kivu is an illustration: *“Here at our radio station there is no discrimination: it’s a matter of same diploma, same salary. But women are a bit disadvantaged when it comes to family welfare benefits because the children of married women don’t receive health cover because it is their husbands who have to take care of that. By the way, this is a legal requirement which is in the labour laws of the D R Congo. For everything else, we give equal opportunities to everyone – women and men. The SFCG project has reinforced what we were already doing here at Radio Neno la Uzima”*

And in Rwanda several women journalists told us *“At commercial radio stations it’s very hard to get a permanent contract which means if you take time off to have a baby you can come back to find you’ve just been replaced by someone else and your job has gone”* (Brenda Umutoni, Cecile, Uwamariya and Emma-Claudine Ntirenganya)

3.2. Has the project enabled the identification of technical challenges and barriers to women's participation in the media, and contributed to overcoming these obstacles?

While the Gender Barrier Analyzes helped identifying key obstacles to women's participation in the media, project activities certainly made a contribution as regards to tackling some of these challenges, for instance by improving technical skills of women media professionals and the quality of their programming. For example, Faith Mbabazi, chairperson of the ARFEM said:

"I've seen people grow [due to the project trainings and grants], for example Cecile Nyira [member of ARFEM and winner of grant to produce programmes on Umucyo FM in Kigali] couldn't produce programmes and couldn't even do soundbites before the project but today her programme is so good that advertisers want to get onto her programme – it's one of the best"

Furaha Citera, producer at Radio Maendeleo, Bukavu said *"the project has made me able to improve the way I produce programmes, from the choice of guests, to the way I balance the debate, and the way I research and collect information."*

Yongoro Marie José Christine, journalist at Radio Centrafrique and project beneficiary drew attention to the beneficial training she'd received, saying: *"Before the project we would just make programmes without caring about the quality of what we were doing"*

Also in the CAR Marie Claire Voyemakoa, project beneficiary and producer at Radio Rurale said: *"Because of this project I've had the satisfaction of a job well-done. Although I have been with the Radio Rurale for 15 years, it's the first time I have had such encouragement, and that the audience has congratulated me, as well as my peers and my superiors."*

In Brazzaville (RoC), one of the journalists who benefitted from a radio grant, (a male journalist called Leon Moukouri) said that he felt more comfortable compared to his colleagues who are often forced to make programmes with no guests and no actuality from the field because they are so constrained by lack of resources.

However, our content analysis showed there is still a lot of improvement still needed both in terms of the technical quality and the content of radio programmes produced by some of the grantees during this project. (Of course, quality issues arise in much the same way for *male* producers as female ones!). Many of the programmes we analysed scored low on criteria like clarity of introduction, helping listener understanding, avoiding bias and using appropriate music and actuality.

As we have already noted, very few of the 27 programmes we sampled scored highly on the inclusion of the voices of ordinary women and many programmes featured quite long monologues by experts such as women in local government and academia. While this did this have a positive side in that women experts were more featured and their voice heard on important issues in their respective countries, it was clear that many, if not all, of the grantees (both individuals and radio stations as a whole) could have benefitted from more training and continuous guidance and 'accompaniment' from SFCG personnel to improve the quality of programmes produced. For example, more could have been done to mentor sub-grantee journalists and encourage them to interrupt, to question and illustrate the issues at hand through vox-pops from ordinary people. For example, when definitions of abstract concepts such as 'gender' are explained at length on-air, it can be quite of-putting, even to the educated listener. Further, when a representative of

the government is allowed to promote their policies on gender on-air, it is important that he or she is questioned by both the presenter and, if possible, by listeners through phone-ins, but this was not always the case in the sample of programmes that we analysed.

4. Sustainability

4.1. Has the project allowed for a greater participation of women in the media, as journalists and as guests/interveners?

There are several success stories that show greater participation of women in the media due to this project. Rwanda is a case in point – for example, Brenda Umutoni was one of the project's grantees: she was working for City Radio in Kigali but was made redundant because of general cutbacks at the station due to budget constraints but because she was the winner of the ARFEM/SFCG competition and City Radio broadcast her programmes, she got her job back and she now has a permanent contract producing a regular children's show. Another ARFEM star is Peace Batamuriza who has launched her own news and advocacy website focused on gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS. Then there are other examples of members launching their own newspapers, such as Emma-Claudine Ntirenganya who started a newspaper called 'Muyango' ('Family').

But the Rwanda case also has some lessons on sustainability, which can be generalised to the whole Great Lakes region. Successes are difficult to sustain. For example, Emma Claudine's newspaper 'Muyango' published one issue and then folded and she has stepped sideways out of journalism to a job with an NGO: she says: "I tried to start a newspaper/magazine and we even distributed 2,000 copies, but I wasn't able to continue: there was only enough money in the [SFCG] grant for one issue. The project did not have much money for radios either: radio stations need to see a benefit (i.e. money for airtime) otherwise they won't broadcast grantees' programmes."

There were also some inspiring sessions with students, for example, in the first quarter of 2014, Nadia Uwamariya organised **3** exchanges at the universities in Rwanda (on the theme "*Rwandan women, better journalists of tomorrow*") with **650** students and **8** experienced women media professionals. There is a great potential for this sort of impetus to be sustained because the students were very enthusiastic and issued key recommendations that ARFEM should, for example, pay more frequent visits to journalism students; help them to get internships within media houses, and open its membership to journalism students. ARFEM even established a mailing list of the participating female students and mentors for the purpose of networking. But unless ARFEM continues as a strong and well-organised entity and is able to raise funds from other donors, these initiatives will not be sustained and the impetus will be dissipated. According to Faith Mbabazi, Chair of ARFEM, there are some hopeful signs of future support, even from Rwanda's First Lady who has expressed an interest in backing ARFEM to do mentoring of girls who want to be journalists in secondary schools, as well as from the Panos Institute and other conventional donors like UNDP. However, Mbabazi says 'We still need guidance...I hate that the project's ending.'

4.2. Has the project created effective and sustainable networking opportunities for women's media association partners?

By helping to sustain the five women's media associations (MWAs) in the different countries for two years, SFCG has enabled all of them to expand their networks and increase their membership. The web diagrams

(in section 2.2 above) show a strong increase in the perceived improved collaboration within each association thanks to the project. Also the project has injected funds and thereby injected energy into all five associations. However, all the MWA are still very donor-dependent.

It was particularly difficult for SFCG to manage the programming challenges which arose when it became necessary to add the final two countries (CAR and RoC) to the existing programme and budget. This meant that the latter countries were somewhat 'tacked on the end' during the project's second year, and so they did not implement the same number of activities.

ARFEM Rwanda: Sustainability is a big challenge here, and even ARFEM's Chair, Faith Mbabazi is pessimistic. However, other outside observers, are more positive: *"ARFEM – yes it is sustainable. They have other opportunities [of funding]. They have the support of women parliamentarians. They won't fall down after the end of the project because they have been well known for a long time in this country."* – Steven Matangana, Panos GL, Kigali. What ARFEM clearly needs is permanent paid personnel¹⁴, such as in Burundi, where there is a full-time executive secretary, a accountant/financial manager and a proper website: although the Panos Institute is at least paying the salary of one full-time worker within ARFEM on their 'Community Debates' project, and ARFEM does now have some office space in the relatively new Rwanda Media Council building in Kigali. Even the simple fact that members have been able to physically meet and network amongst themselves is a positive achievement of the project.

GJP Congo-Brazza: It is clear that the project has contributed to strengthening the debate on gender in the media in Congo-Brazzaville. All interviewees showed that GJP's work has gone some way to launch the gender debate in the media because of its networks, despite the fact that it was difficult for SFCG to verify the strength and extent of this debate because of a lack of SFCG presence in RoC. The lack of involvement of directors of media houses was also a limiting factor for monitoring the impact of programmes supported by GJP on the public. The journalists who produced programmes, Leon Moukuri Radio Congo (SFCG contest winner) and Nathalie Foundou for Tele Congo (GJP Chair, who took her own initiative to produce programmes) worked as they pleased without any involvement from their superiors.

AFPC – Central African Republic: SFCG's support to the AFPC has enabled it to have an action plan which has in turn enabled it to mobilise its existing members and to increase overall membership. However, some other activities, beyond those supported by SFCG, were part of its wider action plan but were not realised partly because of the security situation in Bangui and partly because of lack of financial resources. Mobilizing the members of the AFPC and giving it a new dynamism is also, clearly, the result of the personal involvement of SFCG's Focal Point in Bangui, Pauline Zanetti, who has developed very close relationship of support to help to AFPC to get back on its feet. SFCG will need to ensure that the departure of Pauline from Bangui in early October 2014 does not weaken its relationship.

In terms of other synergies around the activities of AFPC, it should be noted that SFCG enhanced its visibility with other partners who have offered small amounts of ad hoc support. For example, International Media Support (IMS) supported training on conflict sensitive journalism in April 2014, and FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organisation) and MINUSCA (UN peace-keeping mission in CAR) asked AFPC to lead education sessions in the IDP camps.

Although the project's exchange visits helped the AFPC to benefit from the experiences and encouragement of other MWAs it caused frustration for some members internally who did not have the chance to participate in

¹⁴ We understand that SFCG included a salary for an ARFEM project focal point but this person stopped working halfway through the project, and was not replaced, so SFCG understandably could not keep on paying a salary for a non-occupied position.

the exchange trips. Thus, a small group of unsatisfied members conducted a propaganda campaign aimed at destabilizing the new management team and boycotted some activities. However, this incident should not overshadow the fact that the AFPC has been revitalized by this project. Nevertheless, AFPC is still very fragile financially and has not been able to raise additional funds to continue supporting any permanent staff, therefore its sustainability is under threat. We hope SFCG will be able to support the AFPC in the context of other projects, once 'Medias Voix pour Tous' is over, perhaps as part of its support to Central African civil society and the peace process.

UCOFEM DRC- It is a good sign that the DRC national broadcaster, the RTNC have been sensitive to the results of the project and wish to see their journalists more involved in making programmes about and for women and on gender issues. They want the programmes to continue beyond the end of the project and even expand to TV. UCOFEM could try to negotiate a permanent slot for itself in the RTNC schedule, dedicated to women's issues, which UCOFEM could fill with gender-positive content in the future, on a regular basis. This positive partnership was made possible thanks to the technical and financial support of SFCG to UCOFEM. The Chair of UCOFEM, Anna Mayimona, told us: *"According to the feedback we have received our project with SFCG has enabled the public to better understand the strengths of UCOFEM and to have more and more confidence in us. For example, the project has enabled us to position UCOFEM as an organisation that 'accompanies' other structures – this is a new type of undertaking for UCOFEM. This is the case with the support we gave to the national broadcaster (the RTNC), to help it integrate and improve its coverage of gender issues in its programmes."*

AFJO: Burundi – The web diagram above for AFJO shows that collaboration between members was already high but the project has helped to improve this even more. The AFJO secretariat has started to use Frontline SMS effectively to communicate with members and to maintain its network: Désiré Ndanizira, Executive Secretary, AFJO said *"We're now using Frontline SMS to mobilise our members. It helps us a lot. I use it every week to convene the Thursday committee meeting. It's better than email or communicating through the radio stations"*. The Vice-President of AFJO, Agatonique Barakukuza, said *"Search helped us to solder our members together – we are more linked now because of our meetings, seminars and trainings. We have also had good exchanges through the regional network (RFMGL) and we're in touch with the [MWAs of] Tanzania and Kenya – there are language barriers but we have had good exchanges. We have lots of plans for the future but our priority is getting more members from outside Bujumbura – at the moment 80 per cent of our members are from the capital"*.

Regional Network: RFMGL (Reseau des Femmes des Medias des Grands Lacs) - The idea of this regional network was generally welcomed by our respondents. Many echoed the sentiments of the members of ARFEM in Rwanda who said: *"Yes, we know of the RFMGL network, it could be useful for us, we could benefit from trainings, exchanges etc. We think it's promising"*. In the CAR: Francine Evodie NDEMADE, a journalist who benefited through a grant from the project, underlined the importance of RFMGL by saying: *"Meetings with other women in the region will help us to promote solidarity within our own association"*. The Vice-President of AFJO, Agatonique Barakukuza, said: *"I am the elected Chair of RFMGL so this [regional network] is something I really believe in, on a personal level"*.

Faith Mbabazi, Chairperson, ARFEM said: *"The project's helped us do visits and exchanges and we're reviewing our statutes and strategy due to the Nairobi and Bujumbura [regional] meetings. We got inspiration from other MWA structures...Those regional exchange visits: wow I loved it!"*

Nathalie Foundou, chair of the GJP in RoC said *"The RFMGL regional network is soon going to be officially registered in Burundi and after that in each country. There will be a national plan and advocacy work to try to*

raise funds. The network will rely on Frontline [SMS] to communicate internally. The alert system covering the 5 countries is a plus. For the GJP, our media and gender work will be a permanent set of activities which we will do even without SFCG. There is a lot to do on the subject."

Marie-Chantal Pani, chairperson of the AFPC in CAR says: *"I participated in almost all the exchange visits that led to the creation of RFMGL. I was touched by the dynamism of the other MWAs that we met. It was particularly important for those of us who came from the CAR and from a context of war, and our association does not have much funding, to have the opportunity to develop the activities of our programs. By meeting others and sharing our experiences, we enriched each other."*

But there will clearly be problems over sustaining the RFMGL, as Sylvie Bora (SFCG Bukavu) said: *"The network is very important for the region. It could really help women journalists to develop but there are problems regarding the sustainability of the network"* We understand that SFCG believes that now the RFMGL has been set up, it needs to prove its willingness to sustain itself without SFCG support for a short while (perhaps 6 months to a year) before SFCG again considers funding it again. However, there is of course the danger that it will just die and will be difficult to revive if funding is interrupted. In the words of Agatonique Barakukuza, RFMGL's elected chair and vice-president of AFJO, *"the RFMGL is like a baby at the moment – it needs nurturing, and if SFCG abandons it now it will not survive"*.

4.3. Has the project helped to transform populations' attitudes towards women's participation and inclusion in the media, as journalists and as guests/spokes-people?

Our content analysis showed that most of the radio programmes produced during 'Media: Voix pour Tous' projected a positive image of women journalists and they scored high on gender sensitivity. The innovation grants such as those that enabled several large gatherings of students, in places like IFASIC in Kinshasa and the University of Lake Tanganyika in Bujumbura, to hear inspirational speeches from leading women journalists were very valuable activities and deserve to be scaled up. The other grants that enabled competition winners to produce series of radio programmes (and in some cases newspaper features) enabled the beneficiaries to work with much more freedom and creativity than is normally the case, because of lack of resources. Again, they deserve to be scaled up. For example, at the RTNC (state radio/TV) in Kinshasa, Cathy Lisongo (one of the innovation grant winners) expressed her satisfaction as follows: *"The project has been so successful which has meant that the RTNC management have already asked me to continue in the same vein, even though the project funding has come to an end. They are also asking me to adapt the same gender programmes for TV. The programme has whetted people's appetites, not only among listeners who let us have their appreciation but also my journalist colleagues who found the programmes I did were well researched. This was possible because I received funding for it. But I'm not sure whether my radio station (the RTNC) will give me the funds to enable me to keep it up."*

Another quote from the CAR, is testament to how successful the innovation grants were. The director of Radio Notre Dame, l'Abbé Jésus Martial Demele was very positive: *"This project confirmed the positive feelings we already have about the women journalists who work for us. This project enabled them to gain our trust even more. We can count on them...we were struck by the enthusiasm of the people who took part in the broadcasts and the warmth of the discussions."*

But the long-term impact is still a challenge. It was not that the innovation grants and the productions they enabled were not a success in themselves; the problem is more that to have a deep impact and transform attitudes, a large and sustained campaign is needed over the long-term. Initiatives like *Ni-Nyampinga* and long-running dramas with embedded social message are more effective in this regard than scattered one-off debates and reports about women's

problems and rights, such as were (mostly) produced under this project. One quote from one of our focus groups in Rwanda confirmed to us how inspirational *Ni-Nyampinga* can be: *"Personally I was in the same situation as some of the high-school dropouts that were on the show [Ni-Nyampinga]. My parents couldn't pay for 3 years of higher education for me so I grew cabbages and got 200,000 Rwandan Francs together so I was able to pay my school fees... I was inspired by the show"* – young woman, focus group member, Byumba, Rwanda, September 2014.

As Search for Common Ground has found in its excellent media productions over the years, careful attention to optimum timing for radio programmes (i.e. securing prime-time slots), engaging formats such as sketches and soaps that attract women listeners, content based on well-researched real everyday issues, solutions-oriented content, and the voices and testimonies of poor rural people that are truly inspiring, are the ingredients of really transformative programming. Unfortunately, much of the content produced by the members of the MWAs did not manage to meet SFCG's usual high standards.

It is important to emphasise that the project was a short (two year) project with a relatively small budget (\$800,000 USD total) that had to stretch across five countries – with the CAR and the RoC receiving less funds and implementing fewer activities than DRC, Burundi and Rwanda which were the core countries of the project. Although there were hundreds of broadcasts and articles produced, and many journalists trained, this is a small drop in a vast region with a noisy and fragmented media-space with many radio stations (and increasingly TV in urban areas) jostling for audience's attention. For example, Désiré Ndandiza, Executive Secretary of AFJO, Burundi, points to one of the small innovation grants that AFJO gave to a press journalist in Bujumbura to do four pen portraits of influential women, he says *"These were very nice pieces but there were only four of them – it would have been better to sign a long contract for maybe a year of portraits of women in that newspaper – but only four can escape people's notice"*.

Changes in a country's media system happen for many reasons, mostly relating to large political trends – such as the liberalisation of the whole media system in Rwanda in 2004/2005. These changes probably did more to promote women in the media than any donor-funded project by the sheer fact of introducing competition and commercialisation into the system and thereby opening up more media jobs in general, including for women. Therefore we must not expect a huge transformative effect on the population from a relatively small project, such as 'Media- a Voice for All'.

Conclusions and recommendations for future action

In conclusion, we find that 'Media: A Voice for All' was a very relevant project overall with a number of good outcomes. The project's effectiveness was somewhat limited due to budget constraints and the need to cover five very challenging countries. As regards sustainability, many of its activities were excellent and deserve to be scaled-up but the project partners (the five MWAs and the media house) face sustainability challenges. We detail 16 recommendations for the future in order to scale up the successful elements of the project, and we hope that further funding will be available for a second phase.

In terms of the number of outputs it aimed to achieve, the tally is good. Furthermore, in terms of impact, the majority of our respondents were of the opinion that the project had increased women's participation in the media in their country to some extent, with 31% saying that the project had increased it 'very much'; and the majority of respondents saying that the project had increased the public's access to women's issues on the media, with 24% saying that the

project had increased access 'very much'. These are results that SFCG should be proud of, and is a testament to the hard work that was obviously put into this project by SFCG staff and partners.

Nevertheless, giving a voice to women on key societal issues in the media in the Great Lakes is a large task and requires changing very entrenched attitudes and some quite major legal hurdles relating to things like maternity rights, for example, so there is still a long way to go. It is also necessary to recognise that there are *other* efforts that are being made by other NGOs and by media houses, in the region, outside the project. There is still a big challenge to ensure that voices of ordinary, poor, rural and/or marginalised women are heard or seen on the region's media.

There is no doubt that the project has strengthened all the five women's media associations with which it worked. This is what SFCG was probably most effective in overall. All of them are stronger organisationally and are more visible; they have all received a much-needed boost. However, all of them, even the strongest (namely AFJO in Burundi) still have elements of fragility, tend to benefit only urban-based and more 'elite' women journalists, and are all very donor-dependent. It was clear that many, if not all, of the grantees (both individuals and radio stations as a whole) could have benefitted from more training and continuous guidance and accompaniment from SFCG personnel to improve the quality of programmes produced.

Finally, we are worried about the sustainability of all the five women's media associations with which the project worked and we are especially sceptical that the regional network (the RFMGL) will be able to sustain itself without continuing support from SFCG. We hope that SFCG will be able to secure further funding for 'Media: A Voice for All' to sustain the good work that has been started.

Recommendations to SFCG

Future initiatives: general approach and project design

1. We recommend a second phase of this project, in order to build on the energy that has been generated. If this is the case we would recommend a larger budget and a longer time-frame; if not then there should be a less ambitious programme of activities and/or the project should cover fewer countries.
2. Partnering with the MWAs was a good initiative. Now that there is better capacity within these bodies (particularly AFJO and UCOFEM) there may now be a case for targeting some specific **legal issues** at national level such as the lack of maternity provision and lack of permanent contracts for women journalists as a focus for lobbying. Scaling up the **educational work** with female students in journalism schools could also build on the energy already created in Rwanda, Burundi and DRC. A focus on **better transport** for women journalists and other practical measures are a challenge throughout the region and something that a second phase of the project could tackle specifically.
3. The **innovation grants** were small-scale initiatives that deserve scaling up – for example, all the radio programmes and the press articles featuring women role models could be substantially expanded.
4. We recommend more sensitisation of heads of media houses about the advantages of employing women and how good quality women's programmes can attract advertising and the female audience.
5. Future projects need better thought-through baselines and more systematic ongoing monitoring systems on all aspects of the project, from partner-relations, financial matters and quality control of programme outputs. For this to happen we recommend more synergies between SFCG staff who are designated project 'focal points' and their DM&E (design, monitoring and evaluation) colleagues.
6. Ensuring that more media programming is produced by and for women is a good overall aim (and this should be maintained if there is a second phase) but the concept of 'women's voices' needs to be

better defined; in future the voices of educated elite women from the capital must be given less priority than those of poor rural and marginalised women.

MWA capacity-building

7. Transforming the MWAs into viable, autonomous, mature organisations will take a long time and will probably need sustained support from SFCG in the form of paid personnel. We recommend more training on financial management and fund-raising (including helping MWAs to identify other donors).
8. More could be done to enhance the visibility of all MWAs and encourage women journalists in remote rural areas to join these MWAs.
9. If there were a second phase we would recommend enlarging the partnership to include the MWA in South Kivu, DRC: AFEM / SK because it is the most active MWA in the East of DRC with strong leadership and growing membership.

Media programming

10. Any future support to sub-grantees for the creation of media content (i.e. grants for gender sensitive radio programming through competition) needs to have a clear and consistent approach to the way competitions are run and grants allocated. Firstly, SFCG needs to be consistent in terms of who's eligible for the grants, i.e. all media professionals or MWA members only (we recommend that it would be most productive to open such competitions to all media professionals, including those outside partner MWAs). Secondly, SFCG should be consistent in the way it allocates funding to the winners, i.e. either directly or via the MWAs. There is a need to focus partnerships on organisations (radio stations, MWAs) and not on individuals (journalists) in the case of sub-grants. This would enable media managers (station directors) to be more involved in helping to monitor the work of their journalists and would contribute to organisational strengthening of media houses across the region.
11. SFCG needs to do more quality-mentoring of content or coaching with partners (i.e. with MWAs, individual beneficiary journalists and with radio stations who win grants) and could consider a more concerted training programme for grantees to ensure they produce noticeably better quality and more gender sensitive media programmes, should there be a second phase.
12. More thought needs to be given to ensuring good time-slots for broadcasts so as to reach more listeners and, in particular, more women-listeners.

Regional networking

13. The creation of the regional network for women journalists, the RFMGL is one of the project's key achievements but it is unlikely that it will be able to sustain itself without SFCG (or another organisation) supporting it. We recommend that SFCG allows a gap in support for RFMGL of no more than 6 months from now, otherwise it is likely to die and SFCG will have difficulty reviving the momentum that has been generated during the project.

Recommendations to MWA Partners

14. Develop more sustainable partnerships with radio stations and/or negotiate permanent slots that the MWA will manage itself, at least with one radio station each.
15. Become more involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the project, if it has a second phase.

Annexes, which include detailed research instruments, list of interviewees, terms of references and biography of evaluator(s)

See separate documents:

Annex 1: Full list of interviewees

Annex 2: Content analysis table

Annex 3: Brief biographies of evaluators

Annex 4: Terms of Reference for the evaluators

Annex 5: Research instruments (questionnaires etc.)