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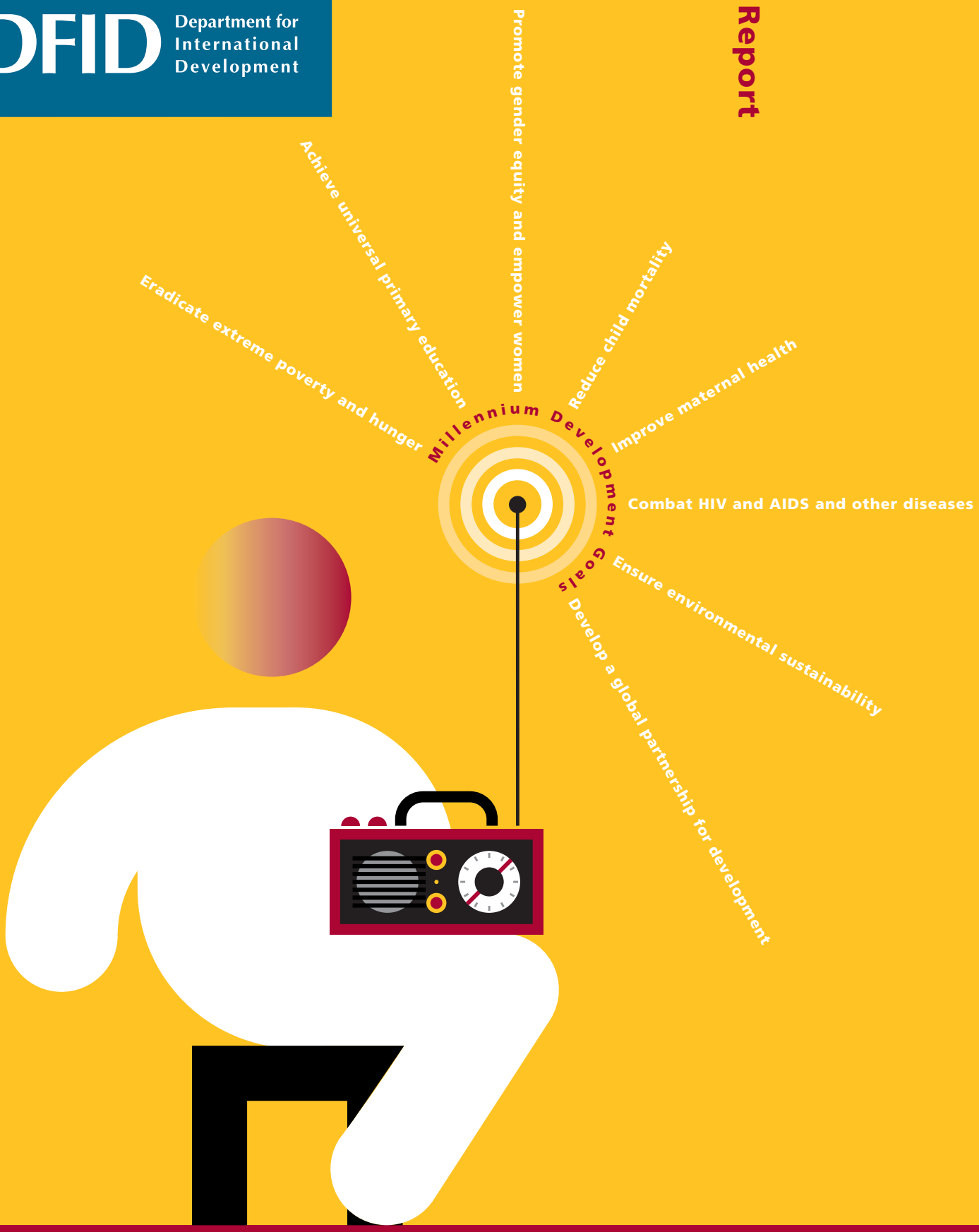
Report




# Voices of Change: Strategic radio support for achieving the Millennium Development Goals

January 2006

icd Information and Communication for Development

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## Acknowledgements

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Designed by Grundy & Northedge

## Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **AIDS** | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| **AMARC** | World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters |
| **BBC** | British Broadcasting Corporation |
| **BBC AEP** | BBC Afghan Education Projects |
| **BBC WST** | BBC World Service Trust |
| **DFID** | Department for International Development |
| **DOTS** | Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (TB) |
| **FAO** | Food and Agriculture Organisation |
| **FM** | Frequency Modulation |
| **HIV** | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| **ICD** | Information and Communication for Development |
| **ICT** | information Communication Technologies |
| **IFAD** | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| **M&E** | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| **MDG** | Millennium Development Goal |
| **NGO** | Non-government Organisation |
| **TB** | Tuberculosis |
| **UDHR** | Universal Declaration of Human rights |
| **UN** | United Nations |
| **UNAIDS** | Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS |
| **UNDP** | UN Development Programme |
| **UNESCO** | UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| **WHO** | World Health Organisation |

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## Executive Summary

This paper provides a summary of the scope of radio's involvement in underpinning sustainable livelihoods, realising rights, human development and the broader goals and targets of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. It challenges DFID and other donors to increase support to the radio sector, which for many poor men, women and children in the developing world continues to provide *the* essential information lifeline. The paper highlights the relevance of radio in poor communities, its broad applicability to a range of sectoral activities such as health, rights, education, livelihoods, and conflict prevention, and identifies the need to deepen the capacity of radio broadcasters at all levels to conduct effective monitoring and evaluation, so as to begin the process of developing a rigorous information and communication for development evidence base which highlights radio's - and other communications mediums – strategic contribution to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals. The table below summarises the thematic sections of this paper and sets out what DFID can actively do in support of enhancing radio's role in human development.

### What can DFID do to stimulate a vibrant media environment?

Support civil society and non-government organisations to advocate for media deregulation and plurality at community and national level.

Support civil society and non-government organisations to make community radio licence applications.

Continue support for building media environments in which there is a clear separation of state and national media and which is based on regulatory frameworks that emphasize the rights as well as the responsibilities of journalists and broadcasters.

### What can DFID do to increase equality of access to radio and support the realisation of rights?

Enhance the ability of poor people to own or access radio technology and invest in cheap and sustainable renewable energy sources (i.e. solar) to provide power.

Strengthen investigative journalism and radio-based advocacy work within community and national broadcasters.

Support radio initiatives that improve women's access to radio, such as listening groups, and training for women broadcasters.

### What can DFID do to strengthen radio's health and educational content?

Deepen the content relevant to human development issues through direct training for public radio staff in pro-poor content creation and through support to NGOs who are developing content independently of the sector.

Strengthen and deepen the development of radio-based educational opportunities for children currently excluded from a formal learning experience.

Strengthen and deepen the development of radio (advocacy, prevention and control) content relating to child mortality, maternal health and communicable disease.

### What can DFID do to support radio's role in promoting sustainable livelihoods?

Increase support to modernise and strengthen national broadcasters' approach to farm broadcasting.

Strengthen and deepen the development of radio content for sustainable environmental management, hygiene and sanitation.

Strengthen and deepen the development of radio content supportive of small enterprise and transition economies.

### What can DFID do to support radio's role in conflict and disaster prevention and mitigation?

Strengthen the impartiality of public, commercial and community broadcasters through the provision of training in conflict prevention, mitigation and inter-ethnic dialogue and reporting.

Support the strengthening of humanitarian information through the provision of funds to establish emergency broadcasting interventions and the distribution of radios to the vulnerable and displaced.

Support the development of disaster preparedness and mitigation broadcasting in vulnerable contexts.

### What can DFID do to enhance our knowledge of radio's role in the realisation of the MDGs?

Strengthen work on M&E in regional, national or sectoral ICD initiatives through the development of simple M&E resource tools and guides.

Develop guidelines for formative research to inform ICD initiatives at all levels, but especially simple to use social research tools for community radio practitioners.

Assist partner governments (national public media) and the independent ICD sector in developing formative research and impact evaluation strategies.

# 1 Information and communication for development (ICD) and the Millennium Development Goals

**1.1** This paper asserts that information and communication are located at the very core of poverty alleviation processes, from processes of community particpation and empowerment, to raising broad awareness of public health issues, to providing humanitarian information during times of conflict, to promoting good governance and accountability, to complex debt relief processes or the promotion of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is reflected in the specific rights afforded to individuals in regard to information, communication and association. For example, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] states that:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
>
> (Article 19 UDHR 1948)

**1.2** Upholding the rights of poor people to receive and impart information lies at the core of poverty reduction efforts. Information and communication for development (ICD) initiatives therefore can play a strategic role in connecting sectoral and multi-sectoral development processes to the poor, by allowing poor men, women and children to be heard and stake a claim in policy development, planning and implementation.

**1.3** Taking just one ICD sector as an example, this paper examines the strategic communications support that radio broadcasting affords to processes of human development. It is conceptualised within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals and Targets (MDGs) and global efforts to reduce poverty and inequality (see Appendix 1).[2] In line with the breadth of the MDGs a multi-sectoral approach is taken within this paper that highlights important examples of radio-based initiatives in health, education, natural resource management, conflict prevention, reduction and disaster mitigation, small enterprise development, better governance, transparency and accountability.

**1.4** Central to the spirit of the MDGs is recognition of the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and fundamental interconnection of key facets of human development, combined with the urgent need to prioritise those countries experiencing rapid declines in their Human Development Index (UNDP 2003: 51-58). This sense of interconnection is well-captured by sustainable livelihoods frameworks[3] and the recent UNDP Human Development Report (2003), which in focusing upon the MDGs shows how simple interventions may yield development outcomes in related areas. For example, a simple radio-based intervention working towards a reduction in water-borne diseases may yield benefits in better hygiene practice and health services up take, as well as in educational outcomes.[4]

Figure 1 **Interlocking human development outcomes**

(Adapted from UNDP 2003: 85)

SIERRA LEONE
Kids listening to the radio.
© Clive Shirley

## What are ICD initiatives?

**1.5** To date, few explicit links have been drawn between ICD initiatives and the achievement of the MDGs. The principal focus has been upon: (i) communicating the content and spirit of the MDGs in the shape of advocacy (see UN Communications Group[5]) to build national and community ownership of the goals; and (ii) extending technical infrastructure and knowledge of ICT needs and constraints (see the DFID supported sites Infrastructure Connect and i-connect).[6] However, applied ICD initiatives have broad diversity and cut across numerous communication technologies and techniques, which are utilised in numerous development sectors. This diversity includes:

- Face to face or interpersonal communication such as counselling
- Community-level communications such as theatre, role-playing, workshops
- Mass mediated communication through media such as television, radio, film or video
- Computer based modes of information retrieval and exchange based on Internet and e-mail
- Telecommunications via terrestrial (land line) or mobile channels

**1.6** Furthermore, electronically mediated communication is increasingly experiencing convergence. This term is associated with the merging of previously discrete media and media-based services. For example:

- Radio stations are now widely available on-line through the Internet
- Television coverage is also available through Internet
- Real time audio conversations and video-conferencing can now occur through Internet
- Mobile phone owners can now access the Internet and send and receive e-mails/SMS
- Music and film can be downloaded from Internet sites to both computers and mobile phones

**1.7** The impact of convergence has been significant for all developing countries and has resulted in the emergence of new ways and means of conducting business and providing services. For example:

- Online business advice services, access to tenders and e-commerce
- Internet based health information resources that contain text, as well as downloadable audio files targeted at radio stations in the South
- Health informatics such as Internet based disease surveillance reporting mechanisms
- Internet based chat and discussion sites that offer support, advice and information for carers and patients

## Why is radio so important in the South?

**1.8** Given the huge diversity of ICD initiatives why focus explicitly upon radio? Isn't this yesterday's technology, one that has been criticised for being capable only of speaking to people and not listening to them? The reason for choosing radio as a key example of the crosscutting and multi-sectoral relevance of ICD initiatives to the MDGs is clear-cut. Though a technology that is perhaps unfashionable in policy and research circles, it nonetheless constitutes a communications mainstay for millions of poor people in the South.

**1.9** The data presented in Box 1 highlight significant levels of access to radio within poor households and subsequently why radio should be situated at the forefront of ICD efforts to promote better health, human rights, better governance and accountability, conflict reduction and disaster mitigation, sustainable environments and livelihoods and small enterprise development initiatives. Simply put, radio has the ability to reach more poor people simultaneously - and at relatively low cost to both producer and consumer - than any other communication technology currently available.

## Differentiating the radio sector

**1.10** Radio as a sector reaches a wide range of audiences with a diverse range of programming. Radio broadcasters include: (i) community broadcasters; (ii) commercial broadcasters (iii) national or public

## Box 1 Rural commodity ownership and ICT access for the poor in South Africa

DFID social science research highlights the extent to which radio as a household commodity dominates above all other communications technologies. In a sample of 50 poor rural households in the Mount Frere district of Eastern Cape data highlights that 68% of households own a radio. Computer and television ownership by comparison is marginal, with no households owning computers and just 2% owning televisions. These figures are confirmed by the 2001 South African National Census, which surveyed 86,710 people (in both rural and urban areas) in the Mount Frere and found that only 0.29% of the local population owned computers and only 18% owned televisions. These data highlight a stark rural-urban divide in terms of ownership of ICTs. However, it should be noted that through communal television viewing and phone borrowing, access statistics might be considerably higher.

| | |
|---|---|
| Average household size | 7.4 |
| Television | 2% |
| Radio | 68% |
| Telephone (fixed line) | 0% |
| Cell phone | 28% |

(Skuse & Cousins 2005)

## Box 2 The radio sector

### Community radio

Support to the community radio sector across the developing world has been burgeoning in recent years. The role that community radio plays in giving voice to local needs and concerns is recognised by donors and funding has been made available for its support. DFID's Building Digital Opportunities programme, for example, is working with AMARC[8] (World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters) who are: (i) advocating for the liberalisation of the airwaves in countries in Africa where no significant community radio sector currently exists; (ii) working to strengthen the community radio sector where it has a foothold through the provision of advice and networking facilities, as well as the provision of training for skills development and equipment.

### Commercial radio

Commercial radio has developed rapidly in certain contexts, especially in West and Southern Africa, as well as in Central and Latin America. Though ostensibly geared towards income generation through advertising, the popularity of such stations and their youth appeal make them especially relevant for channelling important content connected to areas such as HIV and AIDS[9], STIs and sexual behaviour. The popularity of commercial radio personalities is such that they can also become important advocates for social change through the context of radio 'phone ins' or 'agony aunt' shows. Increasingly, such commercial stations are being drawn in to support campaigns in areas such as health, environmental sustainability and enterprise.

### Public radio

Public radio, broadcasting at national level, has historically not attracted sectoral support from donors. This is because many such stations are government controlled and many have overt political agendas that are either undemocratic or antithetical to the realisation of human rights and human development. More typically, donor involvement with state radio is geared around specific programme interventions, such as development oriented magazine programmes and radio soap operas. Often these are part of wider campaigns that address specific health issues, such as with the BBC World Service Trust's work on Leprosy in India[10] that resulted in a complex, but very effective, collaboration with both state television and radio.

### International radio

International radio broadcasting is typically supported by governments and tends to fulfil a clear foreign policy role in support of often-narrow political agendas. Where state and state media have a meaningful and strictly enforced separation, international broadcasting can be highly relevant to poor people and highlight issues and agendas that home broadcasting may not be disposed to broadcasting, i.e. on issues such as family planning, rights to services, or human rights more broadly. International broadcasters such as the BBC World Service, Radio Netherlands[11] and Voice of America are also working at national level with partner media organisations to build technical capacity in journalism and management.

broadcasters; and (iii) international broadcasters.[7] Community-based stations typically have limited technical and human resource capacity and a limited geographical reach, due to the low power FM transmitters that are typically used at this level of radio broadcasting.

## Measuring impact

**1.11** The relevance of radio to the achievement of the MDGs is emerging in the impact data of specific ICD initiatives in a broad array of contexts.[12] While these data are most often produced by well-funded international or national level health or conflict reduction focused radio initiatives, the summary impact table below highlights clearly the potential that radio has for influencing areas such as health awareness, health seeking behaviour, agricultural practice, conflict prevention, reduction and disaster mitigation, informal education and the promotion of rights. A key challenge for donors and ICD implementers alike is to deepen the ICD evidence base without imposing heavy transaction costs for broadcasters, especially those working in the resource-poor community radio sector. DFID supports the strengthening of formative and summative

Box 3 **Summary impact table for selected radio-based ICD initiatives**

| Where | ICD Initiative | Themes | Impact |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Afghanistan** | BBC AEP New Home, New Life radio soap opera | • Humanitarian information<br>• Health<br>• Informal education<br>• Agriculture<br>• Enterprise<br>• Conflict reduction | • Between 1995 and 1997 awareness of landmines rose by 57% amongst women<br>• Over the same period awareness of the importance of vaccination rose by 55% amongst men |
| **Mali** | Daande Duwansa FM community radio, Near East Foundation | • Desertification<br>• Reforestation<br>• Environmental management | • Though a limited survey, a jump in knowledge from 24% to 80% relating to the correct spacing for planting trees was recorded following the broadcast of messages |
| **Tanzania** | Tanzanian Family Planning Project, Zinduka radio based messages as part of a multimedia campaign | • Family planning promotion<br>• Health seeking behaviour | • Radio reached 48.9% of those surveyed<br>• 23.4% of those surveyed recalled radio message<br>• Women who recalled radio messages 1.9 times more likely to adopt family planning |
| **South Africa** | Soul City, multi-media campaigns | • HIV and AIDS<br>• Violence against women<br>• High blood pressure<br>• Stigma | Before series 3 of Soul City was broadcast 43% of people surveyed disagreed with the statement that people with HIV and AIDS should be kept away from other people to prevent the spread of the disease. After broadcast the figure had increased to 63% |

(Myers 1998; www.comminit.com; www.bbc.co.uk; www.soulcity.org.za)

evaluation capacity in community, commercial and public broadcasters and is committed to producing simple and useable methodological tools that can be used to help develop 'pro-poor' radio broadcasting.

**1.12** The sections that follow are designed to reveal the diversity of radio support to processes of human development, which, for the sake of simplicity; have been broadly defined in terms of:

- Promoting the MDGs and creating an enabling ICD environment
- Realising human rights and equality
- Realising human development
- Realising sustainable livelihoods
- Radio's role in preventing or mitigating conflict and natural disasters

These sections are followed by a discussion that highlights the urgent need to develop a greater emphasis on developing a clear evidence base for ICD interventions that makes a direct correlation with the achievement of the MDGs. With a few exceptions (see above), rigorous social impact data is significantly lacking at the national public and community levels of radio broadcasting.

## Footnotes

**1** See http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html.
**2** See http://www.undp.org/mdg/to view the 2003 UNDP Human Development Report in pdf format.
**3** See http://www.livelihoods.org/info/guidance_sheets_pdfs/section1.pdf
**4** See http://www.comminit.com/experiences/pdskdv102003/experiences-915.html
**5** See http://ceb.unsystem.org/hlcp/documents/UNCG-reports-misc/UNCG-final-report-2002.pdf
**6** See http://www.infrastructureconnect.info/ict.asp and http://www.iconnect-online.org/home
**7** See Wilby, P. and Conroy, A. 1994. The Radio Handbook. Routledge, London, UK for a thorough overview of the radio sector, its technical requirements, as well as its human resources needs and genres of broadcasting.
**8** See http://www.amarc.org/site.php?lang=EN
**9** See http://www.unfpa.org/upload/lib_pub_file/157_filename_commmunityradio.pdf
**10** See http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/news/story/2003/09/010509_leprosy.shtml
**11** See http://www2.rnw.nl/rnw/en/features/development/childhoodindex.html
**12** See http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/Summary%20record-FINAL.doc

# 2 | Promoting the MDGs and creating an enabling environment for ICD initiatives

**2.1** Raising public awareness and support for the MDGs is critical to their achievement. Increasing knowledge of the goals and the specific commitments contained within the United Nations Millennium Declaration impacts upon poverty in a number of discrete ways. It helps to build awareness and expectations of the standards of public service delivery to which poor people have a right. Further, such awareness can help to increase accountability and transparency within those public service providers and within government at all levels. It can reveal the nature and extent of poverty within specific countries and this too can build momentum for the development of pro-poor policy and support for the very poorest, such as through the establishment of specific social safety nets, such as that established through the Social Welfare System in South Africa. The development of national information and promotional campaigns has gone hand in hand with the national adoption of the MDGs and targets. Radio constitutes just one media channel, albeit a very important one, through which public awareness of the MDGs and radio-based advocacy initiatives for good governance have been disseminated (see Australian Broadcasting Corporation 'Time to Talk' series for the Pacific[1]).

## 2.2 Media plurality and advocacy

The *Human Development Report* (UNDP 2003) stresses the broad need for community mobilisation and increased accountability mechanisms. It argues that decentralisation and community empowerment go hand in hand and a clear emphasis is placed upon the role of communication:

> For local authorities to be responsive to people's needs, the two groups must be in constant communication. A well-developed, well-informed civil society, able to collect and articulate the views of the community, is thus indispensable.
>
> (UNDP 2003: 139)

Box 4 **UN Moldova MDG campaign and advocacy**

The UN Moldova MDG campaign covers a wide range of media outputs, as well as a number of advocacy and training processes. The campaign has sought to link the promotion of the MDGs to national poverty reduction strategies and has advocated for the adjustment of these strategies in line with the specific Millennium Development Goals and targets. A key objective of the campaign is to 'enhance national ownership over the MDG process' and increase awareness of the varying UN agencies in Moldova and their specific work towards the achievement of the goals. Radio is both used and targeted in specific ways. First, radio programmes have been developed which focus on each of the MDGs and their relevance to the Moldova poverty reduction process. Second, radio journalists are targeted with training on how to address the MDGs and poverty issues through investigative journalism and through what are described as 'human touch stories', which are designed to reveal the human suffering associated with poverty. Third, journalists are targeted with MDG information resource kits in an attempt to raise awareness and increase MDG related radio outputs such as news items or features.

http://www.undp.md/

Target 18, Goal 8 of the MDGs stresses the need to make available the benefits of new technologies, especially ICTs to civil society so that information sharing and advocacy networks can be formed. Though critical to networking efforts, the role that older ICTs such as radio play, especially at community and national levels, should not be underestimated. Indeed, radio deregulation and liberalisation is now recognised as a key priority for building vibrant and plural media environments. The concentration of media monopolies in the state or commercial sector is antithetical to community particpation in and empowerment through mass media. Liberalisation of media regulatory frameworks constitutes a critical step in realising a community voice, understood here as the right to speak and be heard (see World Bank Institute on mass media

MALI
Maintaining the solar panels which power Radio Douentza. This radio station was opened in 1993 and broadcasts in local languages.
Photographer © Crispin Hughes

deregulation[2]). With a voice, social accountability and justice have more chances to be realised for poor communities. When communities are empowered and able to speak out against corruption, poor governance, and inefficient or discriminatory public services, transparency and accountability can be enhanced.

Box 6 **Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR), India**

Though not a broadcaster itself, CFAR and other organisations like it across the developing world, play a fundamental role in monitoring existing media and advocating for media plurality and deregulation. CFAR have set up a number of media forums across India and have produced training modules for civil society and community organisations that focus on television images and policy, advertising, media laws and technology. The organisation is actively engaged in media research and use the findings in their advocacy work with commercial and state media producers, as well as with key government media regulatory bodies.

http://www.womenaction.org/women_media/eng/2/advocacy.html

**What can DFID do to stimulate a vibrant media environment?**

**1.** Support civil society and non-government organisations to advocate for media deregulation and plurality at community and national level.

**2.** Support civil society and non-government organisations to make community radio licence applications.

**3.** Continue support for building media environments in which there is a clear separation of state and national media and which is based on regulatory frameworks that emphasize the rights as well as the responsibilities of journalists and broadcasters.

## Footnotes:

**1** See http://abc.net.au/timetotalk/english/radio/default.htm

**2** See http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/righttotelloverview.html

# 3 Realising human rights and equality: claiming a voice and getting heard

**3.1** Radio and its relation to human rights are most often discussed in the negative context of hate radio and the violence that it is capable of stirring. However, an example such as Radio Mille Collines, which was heavily implicated in the Rwandan genocide of 1994, belies the extent to which radio at all levels – community, commercial, public and international – supports and encourages the realisation of human rights. The MDGs place a critical emphasis on human rights and equality and this is reflected in Goal 2, which advocates universal primary education for both girls and boys, as well as in Goal 3, which calls for the promotion of gender equality. Also implicit in the MDGs are issues relating to equality of access to services and non-discrimination.

## Rights to information and a voice

**3.2** For many poor people the state is a remote entity that is difficult to reach and even more difficult to interact with. Basic information concerning the availability of services and their cost is often lacking, especially in rural areas. Equally, the poor are not being heard in their own communities and face fundamental and widening inequalities in terms of their ownership and access to ICTs. From this perspective enhancing, strengthening and extending the community radio sector, building the skills of broadcasters and extending ownership or access to radio, especially at community level and in rural areas, constitutes a critical human rights priority.

**3.3** Information deficits and inequalities are a central facet of the lives of poor people. Radio is the cheapest and most widely available ICT that lies within the grasp of the poor, yet stark inequalities still exist in terms of ownership and access to this most basic and deeply naturalised (and therefore ignored) of commodities. The most basic question that donors and NGOs need to ask in the context of electronic communication and information sharing is whether poor people have any access to an information providing technology? If the answer is no, then radio constitutes the obvious place to start in terms of building basic inclusion in community, national and global information flows. Increasing ownership and access to radio will reduce information exclusion – defined in its broadest and most basic technological sense.

**3.4** Radio can also play a key role in reaching policy and lawmakers with broadcasts designed to highlight the issues and constraints that poor people face. A strengthened community radio sector and community voice, as well as enhanced investigative journalism skills can go some way to exposing discrimination and injustice within any given society (see UNDP/Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism[1]). However, journalism is constrained by censorship and state intimidation of journalists. Nonetheless, exposing issues such as corruption and human rights violations is absolutely critical to shifting the balance of political and economic power away from the few and towards the many.

## Radio and employment rights

**3.5** The role that radio broadcasting can play in helping poor people to become aware of their rights is significant and cuts across all radio sectors. For example, realising workers' rights such as collective bargaining, freedom of association, the elimination of all forms of discrimination and forced labour, is important to reducing exploitation and to making livelihoods more sustainable and dignified. A number of radio series have been broadcast on a network of community radio in South Africa. There, the Department of Labour funded the production of a 13 part radio series called Working Together[2] that addressed new labour laws.

## Gender, radio and equality

**3.6** Goal 3 of the MDGs cites the broad promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Taking ICT ownership and access as an example, it is clear that technology use is often highly gendered in the South. Women may be excluded[3] from using new technologies such as computers, though this also applies to older technologies such as television and radio. Reasons for this

exclusion may include cultural norms, women's lower economic power, and perceived lower educational status. Programme listening may also be gendered and structured around engagement with broadcasts that are deemed to be for men (i.e. news and political affairs) or for women (domestic issues and melodrama). Such constructions reflect deep-seated socially held gender stereotypes and these are often replicated, rather than challenged through broadcasting. For example, rural women face practical gender problems that they often find are not adequately addressed on radio (Myers, 2004). Increasingly, funding is being provided to support communication interventions and initiatives that seek to tackle gender inequity in broadcasting. Groups such as the Internet-based African Women's Media Centre[4], the Women's Media Centre in Cambodia and Feminist International Radio Endeavour (see below) are playing active roles in advocating for a more equitable media environment, one in which the voices and issues of poor women are heard.

Box 6 **Feminist International Radio Endeavour (FIRE)**

FIRE is an organisation dedicated to building gender equality in radio broadcasting. They are active in advocating for increased funding to open up the airwaves to women and the issues that they are constrained from airing due to male bias within broadcasting sectors at all levels. For example, they have contributed to the UN World Summit on the Information Society (2003) and argue for increased public radio content and media plurality, the observation of rights to information and communication and increased access for women to ICTs of all kinds. They have worked towards developing gender equity indicators for radio broadcasting which include whether: (i) broadcasting transcends stereotypes; (ii) women's voices are heard in equal measure to those of men's; (iii) broadcasting supports the experiences of women and the range of specific issues that they face.

http://www.fire.or.cr/indexeng.htm

**What can DFID do to increase equality of access to radio and support the realisation of rights?**

**1.** Enhance the ability of poor people to own or access radio technology and invest in cheap and sustainable renewable energy sources (i.e. solar) to provide power.

**2.** Strengthen investigative journalism and radio-based advocacy work within community and national broadcasters.

**3.** Support radio initiatives that improve women's access to radio, such as listening groups, and training for women broadcasters.

## Footnotes

1 See http://www.undp.org.ph/env_investigative.htm
2 See http://www.comminit.com/experiences/pds42004/experiences-1926.html
3 See http://learnlink.aed.org/Publications/Gender_Book/pdf/Exec_Sum_Nophotos.pdf
4 See http://www.awmc.com/

CHAD
Community radio: interviewing subsistence farmers.
© Giacomo Pirozzi

# 4 | Realising human development: radio support for better health and education

**4.1** Health and education constitute the core of the MDGs. Goals 2, 4, 5 and 6 directly stress the need to address the health and education inequalities that the poorest routinely face. Whilst the human development goals of achieving better health and education for poor people are ambitious, they are also fundamental to reducing poverty and improving wellbeing. Radio has a strong historical legacy within health and education programmes throughout the developing world. From early didactic and top-down communication approaches to contemporary edutainment-based radio soap operas, a diverse range of radio formats has been applied to an equally diverse range of health and education issues.[2]

Box 7 **Famili Blong Serah (Sarah's Family), Vanuatu**

Produced by the Wan Smalbag theatre company in Vanuatu this entertaining radio drama focuses on the lives of a single family. The main character is Sarah who works in a reproductive health centre. In the course of her everyday work there she is heard addressing issues relating to HIV and AIDS and condom promotion. Her husband Edwin runs a bar and has to deal with issues of corruption, prostitution and violence, whilst the couple's adolescent son faces issues of contraception, HIV and AIDS awareness and teen pregnancy. Impact evaluation from sentinel family planning clinics highlights an increased interest in family planning and condom use among the audience.

http://www.comminit.com/pdsradiodrama/sld-9392.html

**4.2** Reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria requires the definition of supportive policy environments, the physical extension or improvement of services, social mobilisation to use the services and public pressure to ensure services remain accountable. Information and communication plays a critical role in the realisation of environments in which disease control can become a reality. However, many poor people still lack access to basic information about health services, safe birthing practices, neo-natal care and communicable disease.

**4.3** The poor are disadvantaged in terms of their access to health services and health information. They may be excluded by virtue of a lack of information technologies (radio, television), a lack of educational attainment, their inability to purchase services (if a charge is levied), their inability to purchase transport services to seek free advice or treatment; as well as restrictions placed on their social mobility (i.e. the disabled or women living in *purdah*). Such constraints create information gaps in which information inequality is accentuated.

## Radio and health

**4.4** Goal 6 of the MDGs addresses HIV and AIDS, Malaria and other significant communicable diseases. Here, the specific target of halting and reversing the spread of HIV and AIDS, Malaria and TB by 2015 is profiled. Halting and reversing the spread of any transmittable disease places a critical emphasis upon the role of formal and informal education (often through radio), on stimulating policy debate and political commitment, on reducing inequalities in access to services and on destigmatisation.

**4.5** For example, containing TB relies upon increased case finding yet many people who suffer from chronic coughs may be unaware that they have the disease. Here, radio-based awareness raising efforts can play a crucial role in increasing screening for TB and making free treatment (under the WHO DOTS programme) more widely available. Within health promotion campaigns radio often plays a central role in reaching 'at risk' populations such as ethnic minorities, remote and rural populations, prisoners, soldiers, young children, the old and the already sick.

## Radio and education

**4.6** Radio has constituted a distance education mainstay for many millions of people across the developed and developing world for many years. Radio plays a strategic role in both formal and non-formal education where it both supports national curricula, and provides a learning experience in the absence

**Box 8 Radio Education for Afghan Children (REACH)**

REACH is an education initiative of the BBC's Afghan Education Projects unit based in Kabul, Afghanistan. In the wake of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 the country was drawn into a long and protracted civil war that left much of the nation's infrastructure destroyed, educational establishments included. This combined with the flight of many teachers from Afghanistan as refugees and more recent Taliban restrictions on education, which disallowed education for girls and outlawed employment for women (many of whom were teachers), resulted in the complete breakdown of the educational system by the year 2001. In the absence of formal education, REACH targets 6-16 year old boys and girls with a range of interesting and informative broadcasts, that whilst not a replacement for the rigours of a formal educational curriculum, maintains an all-important contact for young people with learning and curiosity. Broadcasts such as *Stories for Living* (aimed at stimulating the young imagination) and *Curtain of Secrets* (concerning the natural world) link strongly to Afghan culture and tradition, whilst advocating education for all.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/projectsindepth/story/2003/09/030904_reach.shtml

of a functioning education system (i.e. in countries experiencing conflict). Organisations such as the Commonwealth of Learning[3] have been at the forefront of the promotion of radio as a technology and educational medium.

**4.7** Radio, despite often being criticised as a one-way medium, provides many opportunities for interactive engagement with young and older audiences alike (Crisell 1986). For example, in Guinea, West Africa, USAID[4] is supporting interactive schools radio for student learning and teacher training. The broadcast, 'Under the Kapok Tree', inspires children to learn through play and has been identified as increasing student motivation to attend school.

**4.8** Thomas (2001) identifies a number of roles that radio plays in distance education. He suggests that radio can be used to: (i) deliver course news and information about study options; (ii) motivate and mobilise students towards completion of specific study goals; (iii) provide tutorial support and resource material for students by providing relevant examples; (iv) provide direct teaching, i.e. a series of lectures or lessons that are of particular use to students with low literacy. Typically distance education occurs in tandem with occasional in-person tuition and the provision of print material, for which radio is construed as a supporting medium alongside television. Radio can also play a very important role in providing a cheap and easy to access medium for teacher training activities. This is especially relevant for teachers working in rural areas where their opportunities for on-the-job training are limited.

**Box 9 Let's speak English, Namibia**

In the early 1990s the Ministry of Education and Culture and Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) combined their efforts to launch a 32 part radio series called 'Let's Speak English'. The series, with each episode lasting 30 minutes, targeted teachers in primary schools and used a magazine format, one that mixed a short drama with instructional content that provides an opportunity for teachers to listen and practice their English. The series was supported by a course book and with workgroups in which teachers would come together to practice their English. The series was initially aimed at 8,000 primary school teachers and has remained popular throughout the 1990s.

(Thomas 2001)

**What can DFID do to strengthen radio's health and educational content?**

1. Deepen the content relevant to human development issues through direct training for public radio staff in pro-poor content creation and through support to NGOs who are developing content independently of the sector.
2. Strengthen and deepen the development of radio-based educational opportunities for children currently excluded from a formal learning experience.
3. Strengthen and deepen the development of radio (advocacy, prevention and control) content relating to child mortality, maternal health and communicable disease.

## Footnotes

1. See http://www.comminit.com/pdf/InstitutionalReviewofRadioDramas.pdf
2. The issue of radio broadcasting and health is dealt with in greater detail in the issues paper – Radio broadcasting for Health: a decision maker's guide (see http://www.comminit.com/pdf/RadioBroadcastingForHealth.pdf), 2004, UK Department for International Development.
3. See http://www.col.org/
4. http://www.usaid.gov/gn/education/news/010701_interactiveradio/

# 5 | Realising sustainable livelihoods: radio support for agriculture and enterprise

**5.1** Goal 1 of the MDGs, to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, is substantially dependent on some or all of the other 7 goals being achieved, but also upon strengthening and making sustainable, the rural and urban livelihoods of poor people. Agriculture and small enterprise are fundamental livelihood strategies for the poor that are supported by radio interventions in numerous contexts.

## Agriculture, market information and extension

**5.2** Agricultural extension services have been the mainstay of information provision in developing countries for many years and radio has for many decades played a supporting role in disseminating new agricultural ideas and techniques. Farmers have traditionally been supported with information timed to coincide with various seasonal activities, such as pest control, sowing and harvesting. In addition, information about multi-cropping, new seed varieties, soil fertility, diversification into other economic sectors, business advice and marketing are but a few of the issues covered in such broadcasting.

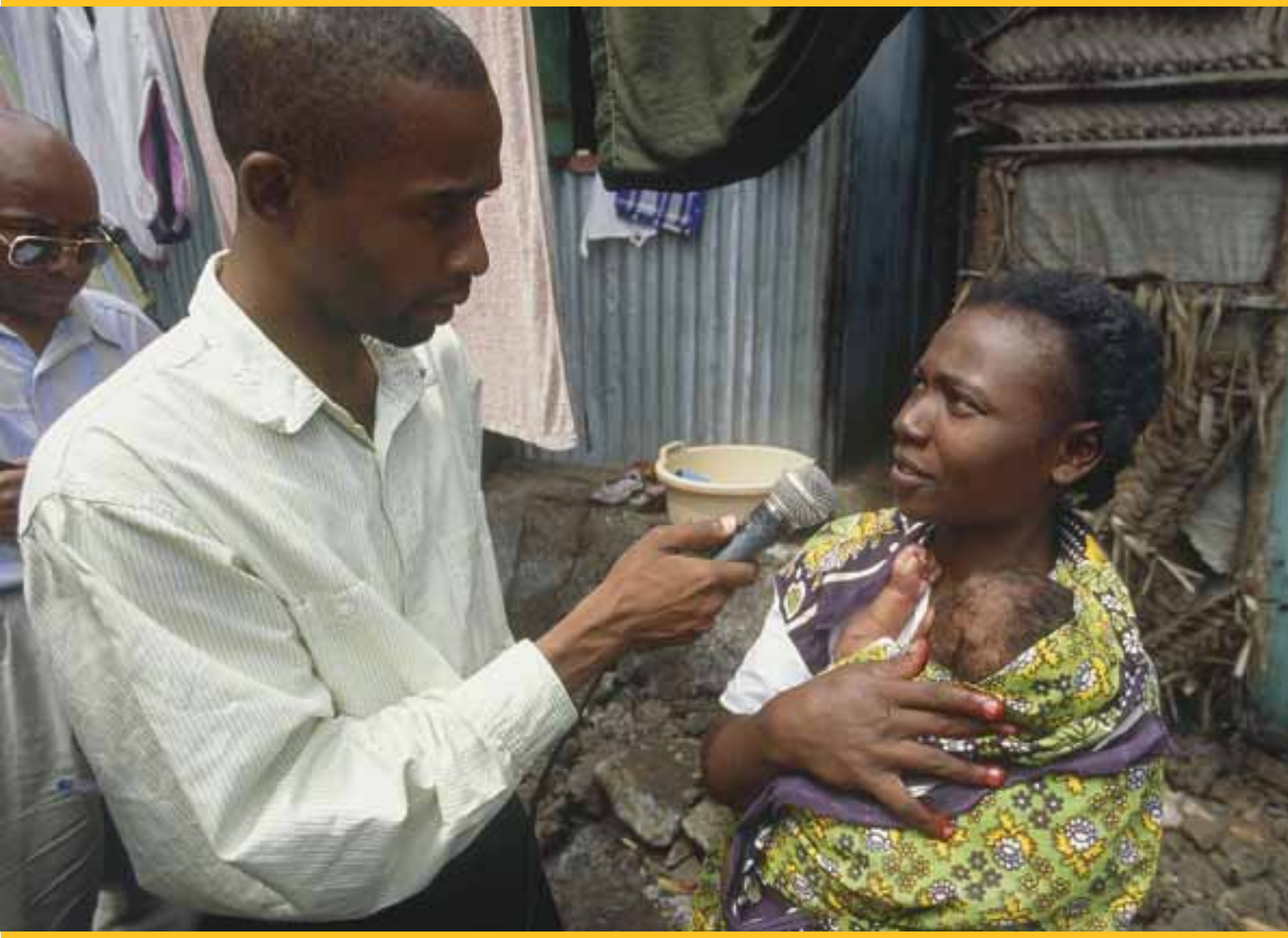
**5.3** Though a significant sector, farmers have not always been well served by farm broadcasting[1], much of which is overly didactic, expert-led, often gender-biased, and geographically removed from the farmers themselves. However, increasingly the trend is towards broadcasts that move out of the recording studio and into the fields, to interview farmers and allow them to air their main concerns and constraints. This, combined with a more popular approach that mixes information with interviews, songs and competitions has made farm broadcasting more engaging for listeners. The importance of improving farm broadcasting cannot be overstated. The MDGs place a critical emphasis on reducing hunger, and therefore marginal or subsistence producers who can be actively supported to increase their yields can in the process take a step towards reducing hunger, increasing nutritional status or increasing income.

**5.4** For example, in countries with developed rural economies, access to market information may mean the difference between sustainable or unsustainable livelihoods for poor farmers. The provision of accurate market price information may be considered as fundamental to livelihoods as information relating to increasing productivity. Similarly, providing information on how local producers can form co-operatives, where more effective bargaining can be realised, can play an important role in empowering farmers to interact more efficiently and effectively with previously exploitative middlemen and brokers.

Box 10 **IFAD Micro-finance and marketing project (PROMIC), Benin**

The Micro-finance and marketing project (PROMIC) is a joint venture between the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Government of Benin. The project aims to gather information on market prices and work with a group of community and commercial radio stations throughout Benin to broadcast market prices for agricultural staples. The IFAD identified that in the complex of interactions between merchants, producers and consumers within Benin rural markets agricultural producers were the least organised and least dynamic. This left them open to exploitation, especially by better informed merchants, who were capable of forcing commodity prices lower by encouraging competition between producers. Under PROMIC the broadcasting of market prices and details of when rural markets are held empowers poor agricultural producers with information as to when to sell, where to sell and at what price. Qualitative evaluation found that producers felt significantly empowered by the broadcast of this critical market information.

http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/x6721e/x6721e11.htm



COMOROS
A community radio reporter interviewing a young mother.
© Giacomo Pirozzi

## Sustainability and natural resource management, i.e. water management

**5.5** Accessing safe drinking water and the safe disposal of human waste represents a principal challenge of developing better service delivery within the MDG framework. Goal 7 of the MDGs focuses attention on sustainable environments, and whilst great strides are being made in certain contexts, contaminated water and the water-borne diseases that result from its use remain key drivers of under-five child mortality throughout the developing world (see Goal 4). This is further compounded by rapidly increasing urban populations, many of whom are forced to live in poor and overcrowded conditions within slums. High concentrations of people, combined with poor water and sanitation infrastructure tends to result in ongoing public health crises. Radio has been used extensively to address hygiene and sanitation behaviour in numerous countries, and also has the potential to address a far broader range of issues relating to the maintenance of sustainable environments. These include industrial pollution and hazardous waste, indoor pollution from wood or coal burning fires that are poorly ventilated, smoking and traffic related lead poisoning.

Box 11 **Kiritimati Radio, Republic of Kiribati, Pacific Ocean**

In 1998 Kiritimati Radio, Kiribati's first radio station, was established as part of the wider Kiribati Water Supply & Sanitation Project (KWASP), funded by AusAid. The wider project, which aimed to deliver improved water and sanitation services to the 4,000 inhabitants of Kiribati, saw an opportunity for a low-cost community-style radio station to deliver important messages relating to treatment of water, hygiene and sanitation that would act as a strategic support to the overall project goals. The station provided the first locally produced mass mediated health messages ever heard in Kiribati, and this combined with the availability of stool testing and water well testing, was deemed by programme staff to have a beneficial impact on the public health environment of Kiribati.

http://www.comminit.com/pdsMakingWaves/sld-6558.html

## Small, medium and micro-enterprise (SMME) and livelihoods

**5.6** Small enterprise development has become a watchword for economic development in recent years. Throughout the developing world, where underemployment is a significant problem, many people are actively involved in survivalist enterprises, but also emerging SMMEs. Conventionally, attention has been paid to enhancing this key economic sector in both urban and rural areas through skills development such as tendering and business planning, and through expanding access to small business start-up grants and loans. In many developing world contexts, access to business advice services and mentoring may be extremely constrained by the historical underdevelopment of such services and radio is actively fulfilling a supporting role. Similarly, in transition economies, those emerging from a planned or command economic system, significant knowledge gaps still exist regarding how a capitalist economy functions and here radio is helping to building business skills.

Box 12 **Nekolera Gyange (I run my own business), Uganda**

In 1999, as part of the International Labour Organisation's programme for Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise (SEED) an interactive field-based radio initiative was established in Uganda to support emerging and small enterprises. With a media density of 125 radios per 1,000 people in Uganda, compared to only 16 televisions per 1,000, radio appealed as the 'obvious medium' through which entrepreneurs could be reached. In Uganda 88% of businesses fall in to the small enterprise category, despite this, issues relating to small enterprise development have been slow to gain media coverage. With the development of Nekolera Gyange the voices of entrepreneurs were aired for the first time on Central Broadcast Services (CBS) commercial radio. The radio format used is designed to take small enterprise issues directly to entrepreneurs in the community, where their frank discussion on the constraints that they face has directly challenged business development services and government alike to address their specific concerns. *Nekolera Gyange* has addressed issues relating to taxation, the sanitary condition of local markets, town council tendering process and a ban on the sale of milk through informal traders. Each of these issues was taken up in the field with entrepreneurs and resulted in significant policy shifts. For example, latrines were installed in markets, double taxation was removed from motorcycle taxis and the milk-vending ban was rescinded. This evidence points to the advocacy role that this type of interactive radio can play.

McVay (2002)

**What can DFID do to support radio's role in promoting sustainable livelihoods?**

1. Increase support to modernise and strengthen national broadcasters' approach to farm broadcasting.

2. Strengthen and deepen the development of radio content for sustainable environmental management, hygiene and sanitation.

3. Strengthen and deepen the development of radio content supportive of small enterprise and transition economies.

## Footnotes

1. http://www.farmradio.org/english/program.html

# 6 Radio's role in preventing or mitigating conflict and natural disaster

**6.1** Radio has historically played a critical role for many poor people in preventing or mitigating against the impact of conflict and natural disasters. It has been used at local, national and international levels as a critical component of humanitarian responses to conflict and non-conflict emergencies.[1] The social dislocation and displacement caused by emergencies such as chronic food shortages and armed conflicts has a direct and well-documented impact upon public health. Therefore, a significant proportion of radio-based interventions within this field aim to reduce the negative health impacts associated with life in refugee camps.

Box 13 **Radio Kwizera, Tanzania**

Radio Kwizera was set up in Eastern Tanzania in 1995 with funding from UNHCR and the Jesuit Refugee Service and was initially designed to counter hate broadcasting in the region and the growing refugee crisises resulting from conflict first in Rwanda and then Burundi. The station has a broadcast radius of 300 kilometres and serves the large refugee population by addressing issues relevant to mental and physical health. The station broadcasts for 91 hours each week and their content includes broadcasts that address mother and child health (MCH), AIDS, water and sanitation - to reduce incidence of waterborne disease in overcrowded camps - and immunisation.

(http://www.comminit.com/)

**6.2** Examples of radio-based interventions in humanitarian emergencies are many and varied. From seeking to avert conflict by building tolerance and consensus, or dealing with the aftermath of conflict through the promotion of reconciliation and inter-ethnic dialogue, radio has been widely recognised as a critical tool of humanitarian information provision (see Radio and peace-building in the Democratic Republic of Congo[2]). The establishment of discrete broadcast entities in crisis zones, often under the auspices of the United Nations, is increasingly commonplace, as is the strengthening of local broadcasters to respond, in a measured and impartial manner to conflict. Accompanying the establishment of humanitarian information sources is the physical distribution of radios to displaced people, a strategy that aims to ensure that these very vulnerable people are provided access to such information lifelines.

**6.3** Mitigating against and preparing for natural disasters such as flood enables poor people to sustain livelihoods or reduce the risks and vulnerability associated with such shocks. In contexts such as Bangladesh where flooding is a seasonal burden, early warning messages broadcast on radio are helping to warn fishermen and farmers of the threat of severe weather (see the European Union's response to the issue of disaster preparedness[3]).

**What can DFID do support radio's role in conflict and disaster prevention and mitigation?**

1. Strengthen the impartiality of public, commercial and community broadcasters through the provision of training in conflict prevention, mitigation and inter-ethnic dialogue and reporting.

2. Support the strengthening of humanitarian information through the provision of funds to establish emergency broadcasting interventions and the distribution of radios to the vulnerable and displaced.

3. Support the development of disaster preparedness and mitigation broadcasting in vulnerable contexts.

## Footnotes

1 The issue of broadcasting and conflict is dealt with in greater detail in the issues paper – Working with the Media in Conflict and Other Emergencies (see http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/chad-media.pdf), 2000, UK Department for International Development.

2 See http://www.mediasupport.org/drcreport.htm

3 See http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/pdf_files/leaflets/dipecho_en.pdf

# 7 Where next? Defining the need for an ICD evidence base and increased donor support to the radio sector

**7.1** The previous sections highlight the broad range of radio-based sectoral activity undertaken in support of the development objectives enshrined within the MDGs. In the main, ICD impact studies do not posit a direct link between their own specific goals and the MDGs. With a few notable exceptions, the radio sector does not have sufficient research and evaluation capacity to effectively measure the impact of its own broadcasting.[1] Given this lack of capacity, how should DFID support future ICD initiatives and the building of a rigorous evidence base of impact data?

## Formative research and evaluation

**7.2** Formative quantitative and qualitative evaluation allows for the development of context specific and community relevant material, for the identification of vulnerable groups and those at risk from exploitation, ill health or food stress. It enables ICD implementers to identify media uses and format preferences, allowing for the best fit of broadcast outputs to community, public and international radio audiences to occur.[2] Increasingly radio at all broadcast levels is recognising the need to connect with audiences through formative research and summative evaluation. From this perspective radio is now capable of both broadcasting to audiences, as well as listening to them.

**7.3** Equally important is the role of formal impact evaluation, and here a more specific link can be drawn to the need to develop an evidence base for ICD interventions. However, formal impact evaluation places significant transaction costs on ICD practitioners, especially at community level where financial and technical resources are few.The embedded nature of community radio broadcasters within the communities that they serve means that the social and cultural distance between themselves and their audience may be small, yet skills deficits in evaluation mean that little by way of impact evaluation is derived from this sector.

**7.4** Impact evaluation capacity may be stronger within broadcasting institutions at national level, but here evaluation is still principally geared towards measuring audience shares rather than establishing impacts. Understanding the behavioural impact of broadcasting is notoriously difficult and can only occur over the long term. However, there is scope to set interim behaviour change indicators within ICD programmes that can and should be evaluated.[3] So whilst it may be difficult in the long term to establish a causal link between, for example, radio messages and TB cure rates, increased attendance at TB clinics resulting from radio campaigns serves as a useful proxy or interim indicator of impact. Through capacity building in the radio sector formative research and summative evaluation regimes can help to close the social distance between radio producers and their audience (Mytton 1999).

**What can DFID do to enhance our knowledge of radio's role in the realisation of the MDGs?**

1. Strengthen work on M&E in regional, national or sectoral ICD initiatives through the development of simple M&E resource tools and guides.
2. Develop guidelines for formative research to inform ICD initiatives at all levels, but especially simple to use social research tools for community radio practitioners.
3. Assist partner governments (national public media) and the independent ICD sector in developing formative research and impact evaluation strategies.

## Building radio capacity: a model for increased donor support

**7.5** If research and evaluation brings audiences to the heart of broadcasting, then likewise, ICD initiatives have been taken to the very heart of poor communities. Community radio provides a useful example of how poor communities, when empowered with technology and training can

produce radio broadcasting that resonates to the issues of the communities in which they themselves are a part (Dagron 2001). However, public (national) and international radio has a supporting and enhancing role to play in empowering communities with information relevant to livelihoods, health and human rights.

**7.7** The dual strategy of developing informed and evidence based ICD initiatives, combined with community-focused ICT empowerment provides a framework for better understanding how ICD initiatives can contribute to the realisation of the MDGs and targets. Whilst evaluating ICD impact is typically complex and often costly, the challenge for donors is to make evaluation neither complex nor costly, and support the development of easy to apply tools that will allow broadcasters to quickly and easily assess the impact of their outputs. Further, technological and informational empowerment underpins the ability of poor communities to realise their own voice. Therefore, access to radio and support for the development of useful and useable content remains critical. When combined, these two capacity building thrusts can help poor people to realise a voice, and realising a voice has long-been identified as fundamental to effective community particpation in development.

## Footnotes

1 Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the Targets that accompany them requires that a critical emphasis be placed on building research and statistical capacity in priority countries (UNDP 2003: 35).

2 See UNAIDS (http://www.unaids.org/en/in+focus/topic+areas/communications+programming.asp?StartRow=0) for communications publications and specifically the 1999 *Communications Framework for HIV/AIDS: a new direction*.

3 See the DFID *Radio broadcasting for Health: a decision maker's guide* for a discussion of indicators and evaluation (http://www.comminit.com/pdf/RadioBroadcastingForHealth.pdf).

Appendix 1

# The Millennium Development Goals and Targets

| | |
|---|---|
| **Goal 1**<br>Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger | **Target 1:** Halve the proportion of people whose income is less than a dollar a day by 2015<br>**Target 2:** Halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015 |
| **Goal 2**<br>Achieve universal primary education | **Target 3:** Ensure that boys and girls are able to complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015 |
| **Goal 3**<br>Promote gender equity and empower women | **Target 4:** Remove gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and at all levels of education by 2015 |
| **Goal 4**<br>Reduce child mortality | **Target 5:** Reduce the under-five mortality rate by two thirds by 2015 |
| **Goal 5**<br>Improve maternal health | **Target 6:** Reduce the maternal mortality rate by three quarters by 2015 |
| **Goal 6**<br>Combat HIV and AIDS and other diseases | **Target 7:** Halt and reverse the spread of HIV and AIDS by 2015<br>**Target 8:** Halt and reverse the incidence of Malaria, TB and other diseases by 2015 |
| **Goal 7**<br>Ensure environmental sustainability | **Target 9:** Reverse the loss of environmental resources and integrate sustainable development principles into country policies<br>**Target 10:** Halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation by 2015<br>**Target 11:** Improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020 |
| **Goal 8**<br>Develop a global partnership for development | **Target 12:** Develop an open, predictable and non-discriminatory trading and financial system<br>**Target 13:** Address the special needs of the least developed countries, including enhanced debt relief, access to markets, cancellation of official bilateral debt and more generous ODA<br>**Target 14:** Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states<br>**Target 15:** Deal with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term<br>**Target 16:** Develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth in cooperation with developing countries<br>**Target 17:** Provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries in cooperation with pharmaceutical companies<br>**Target 18:** Make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications, in cooperation with the private sector |

(UNDP 2003: 1-3)

Appendix 2

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