



## **DEBATE SUMMARY 04. APRIL - Highlights from the last 24 hours.**

Again it was really empowering to go through the many entries from all of you, who like the CAMECO team and myself are passionate about making these development and change platforms that community radios are, effectively sustained!

Some of the newer debates will be highlighted here, but I can also recommend you to flip through the summaries and highlights from the earlier days of our debate!

### **Mobilising the community for income generation**

Off air income generation has been discussed in some of the thematic streams during the past 24 hours – and before. To get better ‘under the skin’ of what it is that really works in terms of off air income generation, and which are the very concrete and practical experiences, we have launched this issue on LinkedIn this morning.

One aspect, listener clubs, ‘friends of the radio’ and community memberships were already described by Jane Møller Larsen from IMS. She shared an example from a well-organised (religious) community radio, in Bangui, Central African Republic. Jane writes: “One of their most important revenue-streams was from “friends of the radio” - individuals/listeners who had all received a “friend of the radio - card” with picture, name and date of the established friendship. These friends pay a small monthly amount to the radio. The friends were invited to the radio to form part of meetings, could suggest debates to be aired, could themselves participate in these if the radio found this relevant etc. The ownership created by this symbolic gesture (the card cannot be under-estimated in the longer-term sustainability of the radio.”

Carole Sambale-Tannert/Fokus has been working in Chad and describes how poor these stations are. In her work in Gounou Gaya, two stations needed urgently support for payment of the running costs of the generators. So the steering committee visited all the village chiefs of the listening area (50 km radius), asking them to mobilize the population for their radio. A minimal fee per family was asked for which they could ask the radio to bring messages and dedications. It worked, but it is very time consuming to get such a scheme to work. It will be important to have a group of community volunteers doing this. Together with support through partnerships,

FAO has worked a lot with women’s listener clubs in West Africa in the Dimitra programme:  
<http://www.fao.org/in-action/community-listeners-clubs-empower-rural-women-and-men/en/>

### **Emerging consensus in our debate on basis for financial sustainability in a community radio:**

In our discussions on the online platform, we have over the past days come to a consensus that to become sustainable, a community radio station needs:

- A strong community ownership, growing out of community participation and engagement in the radio; content that is relevant and addresses issues of importance to the lives of people; involvement of listeners through clubs, programme drives etc; transparency and



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decency in the station management; a clear vision and values/ethics; language of voices of our community; and on and on. At the core. ALL believe and know this from experience.

- a healthy mix of income sources to be less vulnerable
- that the composition of these depend on the reality of each radio
- capacity to manage these resources well
- that knowing your audience is important and helpful – to sell advertisement (and to adjust programming etc – but here we talk income generation)
- that documentation community radio impact generating development and change are powerful tools for generating (funding) partnerships

### Which kind of income is acceptable?

A discussion has been ongoing the past days as to whether income generation is important at any price (Director Radio Wa, Uganda)?

In Radio Viva in Paraguay, Arturo, the director tells about 'MANGO Production and Events' (discussion in the Spanish stream: "Participación e ingresos para las radios Comunitarias un desafío..."), which they have created. The past three years they have won bids to run 50 events. In this way they generate 58% of the required income to their station. The secret is to deliver quality and to be just a little bit cheaper than the others in the market. It requires good management and people dedicated particularly to do this, but it works.

Loli Martinez/Media Specialist Community Radio, IREX from Mozambique asks whether this is really what the radio wants? Aren't we/the community radios losing their identity in this way? She also mentions that in Mozambique many community radios and CMCs manage by selling simple office services like using a computer or writing a letter for a community member, and especially through sale of photocopies. This works until the photocopier gives up – unless there are good preventive maintenance schemes in place (management) and savings for replacement eventually.

**An emerging question from the debate is where the borderline between community/not for profit radio, a cooperative radio and a commercial radio is? What can we accept?**

### Using community radio networks to raise income - what are your experiences?

Yesterday we launched the challenge to hear the debaters out on experiences with using community radio networks - or other collective fora - in securing a healthy multi-faceted income mix?

In the past days' discussion this has been touched upon by several of you already: Venu Arora from Ideosync in India questions whether it is desirable for small Community Stations in poor communities to constantly worry about basic financing – could a regional/national community radio network or forum play a role here?



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John Goslino/Internews shares the not so positive experience from Australia, where group buying of advertising / selling of air-time by a collective or network of community radios has been explored and trialled but with limited success.

In Mozambique Birgitte Jallof/CAMECO facilitator could share that for quite a number of community radio stations, the funds raised by the national community radio network FORCOM, represent important shares of the total income needed by the members.

Petra Stammen/Africa Desk, CAMECO shared the experience of an (unfortunately failed) initiative of radio stations sharing a joint marketing office in the capital in Uganda: Catholic radio stations in Uganda used to have a joint marketing office in Kampala, but in the end Radio Wa (located in Lira, Northern Uganda) and Radio Pacis (located in Arua, Northern Uganda) decided to step out of the arrangement due to the fact that not all radio stations were committed when it came to timely payments, respect of common rules, etc. Radio Wa still shares a space (marketing office) with Radio Pacis in the capital city Kampala and payments are done jointly and timely.

Alberto Eisman/Director, Radio Wa 89.8 FM shared that the challenge had been unequal commitment to a common structure and therefore resources would not be put in place at the right time. Unfortunately Alberto is no longer so optimistic with getting collaboration in fora and networks to work well also more general radio networks have failed in Uganda.

Sofie Jannusch/Coordinator Media Development at CAMECO shared the experience in the Peruvian CNR (Coordinadora Nacional de Radio), an association of educational radio stations and production centres in Peru, which established a joint advertising agency. Even when the CNR works differently now, she still finds it inspiring that the CNR had - practically - to "create" a market first, through

- audience research – audience figures were not available before from rural areas, and
- a lifestyle concept – analysis of daily context, beliefs and behaviours of audience helped radios to know their listeners better but also to meet the advertisers' interests more specifically.
- strategic partnerships with radios outside their network (to gain national coverage)
- comparative advantage – close relationship between radios and audiences, clear transparent practices of the agency, and billing in national currency.

Sofie asks: Gives CNR a best practice example of how national associations of CRs can support the members financially? Is it too specific or could it be a model for other countries/regions?

(The article is part of the publication "Money Matters" at:

[http://www.cameco.org/files/money\\_matters\\_documentation\\_colour\\_1.pdf](http://www.cameco.org/files/money_matters_documentation_colour_1.pdf) pp. 67-71.)

### **Barter and in-kind support to radios – an example from Pakistan**

Najib Ahmad/CEO at The Communicators pvt.ltd in Pakistan mentions that in Pakistan for the community radios free barter to cash strategy works wonderfully we did experience it in many cases: A restaurant near the station was offered to place ads on the radio for free to see the



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value. He liked it and gave food to the people at the station in exchange. Later the restaurant happily provided food AND paid for adverts.

This could be the beginning of a discussion next week.

All for now!