



Highlights of the debate April 5, 2014

Off-air income generation

Sofie Jannusch, Coordinator of media development in CAMECO presents an experience to be found in Radio Pa'i Puku in Paraguay. Radio Pa'i Puku has managed to diversify its income and generates one third of the annual income from a raffle and two farmer festivals. Pa'i Puku states that: "People's participation in both the raffle and the festival has constantly grown through the years and they became one of the most popular attractions of the Paraguayan Chaco. Last year, close to 500 volunteering men and women sold 38,000 raffle tickets." Among the attractions of the festival is a bullfight. The animals are borrowed from farmers and given back without any harm in this specific Paraguayan form of a corrida...

See: http://www.cameco.org/files/radio_pai_puku_engl.pdf

Radio Santa Clara, Paraguay, mentions their positive experiences with running campaigns. It would be interesting to get more details!

Enabling framework for community radio stations

A discussion about the importance of **a fair radio legislation** which does not limit access of CR to advertising was highlighted by Francisco Godinez Galay from Argentina and Juan Ortega from Chile in the Spanish discussion forum. For instance in Chile community radios can only mention that they are supported by local enterprises (but cannot pass commercials), and these enterprises must be located in the community, which the radio serves.

Can a community radio station get and operate with a commercial license?

Several examples were provided where they do: Radio ViVa in Paraguay, Radio Santa Clara in Costa Rica, Misión FM in Paraguay - with positive experiences

Some participants mentioned the fear that a commercial license would affect the "community identity" - but this depends also a lot on how the station operates

In some legal environments, community radios can hardly fulfil the technical and tax requirements of a commercial license (or such a license is simply not affordable - case of Chile)

The common aim was stressed not to make profit - but use the possibilities of a commercial license (especially when it comes to advertisement) for generating income and do so in an efficient and transparent way

The role of state funding: Francisco Godinez Galay from Argentina reports that the new media legislation in Argentina includes a community radio fund. However: the fund is only available for radio stations with a licence - and only few have one, as the state currently does not launch tenders for licences. Alymana Bathily, AMARC & Consultant based in Senegal, tells that in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Benin and other West African countries, the state provides an annual "structural grant" of which a part is dedicated to radios. In Senegal this provides each community radio with about USD 1,000 per year.

MDDA in South Africa (Media Development and Diversity Agency -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/mddamembers/?fref=ts>) was brought up by Mary Myers, Freelance Consultant specialising in Radio in Africa. MDDA is a public entity providing funding from community radio: "a potentially wonderful model for helping to fund CRs" as long as it remains transparent, publishing who is supported. The task is not - as mentioned by Mary - only for community broadcasters but also commercial and other not-for-profit media. Sofie Jannusch, CAMECO, adds that MDDA is a public entity, set up by legislation as a public private partnership to provide support for not-for-profit and small commercial media to "assist in building an environment where a diverse, vibrant and creative media flourishes and reflects the needs of all South Africans" (mission statement of MDDA). Links to article on MDDA by former CEO Libby Lloyd in "Money Matters". http://www.cameco.org/files/money_matters_documentation_colour_1.pdf



describing the history, mandate, funding mechanism, etc.

Christoph Dietz, CAMECO, adds two experiences from Latin America: The Colombian Culture Ministry had also funds for community radios, but they were tied to specific projects for a limited time. And Francisco Godinez from the Spanish discussion group reports that the new media legislation in Argentina includes a community radio fund. The fund is only available for radio stations with a license - and only few have a license, as the state currently does not launch tenders for licenses.

Generating Income via a community radio network

Jimmy Okello from Uganda tells that they have a small network COMNETU/Uganda, where they have discussed the idea of turning the network into some sort of marketing agency to look for advertising and radio sponsorships for the members. The challenge is that the Network secretariat is not strong enough to afford a functional sales and marketing department (media buying agency). Jimmy has the impression that members focus on own income generation, "for such an idea to succeed needs time and skills and access to finances, to compete with businesses or professional media advertising and media buying agencies with huge investments" Jimmy stresses the success of COMNETU in getting donor sponsorship for common goals of its members such as capacity building, equipping and advocacy and content areas.

John Goslino/INTERNEWS mentions that in Australia there is the Community Broadcasting Foundation that obtains and distributes grants (via competitive application) to community media for development purposes.

Peter Erichs/Consultant, Sida, brings in the RCDF, Uganda's Rural Communication Fund, from telecom operators. But does not know whether local and community radios can approach the fund for contributions.

Alymana Bathily, AMARC & Consultant informs that the Tunisian community radio stakeholders are envisaging to organize around their national network the Syndicat Tunisien des Radios Libres (STRL) and constitute a marketing company – preliminary stage of the young community sector established only after Jasmine Revolution. Seems best way to compete in commercial environment. Need "to build a common community radio brand, to syndicate programming, to ensure that all radios respect programme schedules and produce good quality contents." Fears risk that marketing alters the social content of programmes.

Alymana Bathily, AMARC & Consultant tells that the Senegalese national community radio network is also supporting through an agreement with one of the telephone companies, through which the stations get a share of the income generated when listeners call the station.

General discussion on Income generation and sustainability

Ways to raise income... à la: everything is allowed what would not affect the editorial profile and operations of the community radio

- UNESCO radios in Mocambique: run a multimedia centre (Internet café, photocopying services etc.
but: what is possible in a poor community with hardly any economic potential?

Radio Santa Clara, Costa Rica, does not rent airspace, but discusses with possible partners their programme concept, and if the proposal fits in the overall programming of the station, the partner gets the airspace free of charge, but part of his advertising income goes to the station)

Alymana Bathily, AMARC & Consultant based in Senegal stresses that based on all the funding sources debated in this forum it is up to the individual stations or national network to identify and use the funding sources available. In Senegal, for instance, it is not possible to have commercial advertising. They therefore resort to get community sponsorship when the community advertises social events, deaths, lost animals etc. Even more important is the 'social marketing' and partnerships paid for my NGOs, paying for air time. A



different source in Senegal is the funding received by people who migrate from the small, poor communities to work in the big cities : they are often the ones contributing most importantly to the income of the station. This is for instance the case with Radio Tewdu FM in the south east, which is the poorest region of the country.

What it takes to have a sustainable community radio

Ana Miriam Torres from El Salvador raises the issue of permanent training to reach "integral sustainability" (consisting of institutional, social and financial sustainability). The four radio stations in El Salvador which have reached a certain level of sustainability, have a clear vision of what they want. Many radios need short, midterm and long-term support to reach sustainability, but many communities are poor in political, organisational and financial terms.

Social, institutional and financial sustainability are closely linked with one another > and this includes an institutional "credibility" as key for attracting listeners, so that they trust and can identify with the stations. The station must have an impact on them! If that's the case, they will also be more ready to support it - including financially.

The close relationship between an attractive, high quality programme and financial sustainability

- and the need of qualified personnel in charge of programming but also a second team dedicated to marketing and fundraising. Attention need to be paid to both dimensions.

For strengthening programme quality, we need to foster talents – and secure fair salaries - as the fast turn-over of personnel is one of the biggest limitations of community radios.

Further from other Spanish streams: The radio must be relevant for its audience to get recognised and receive support. It must have an impact on the people's lives, move and accompany them. They must feel that they share the same vision (or "proyecto comunicacional" - see ALER's process over the past years) as the radio. Thus social sustainability is, again, considered as the basis for financial sustainability.

Alexandre Guieswendé Sawadogo, Coordinator of NAK at Nuits Atypiques de Koudougou shares the experience that in Burkina Faso, very few community radios have been started and financed by external forces only, but most do have an important amount of funding from donors. Still, the success of the radio depends on issues not related to financing: bad management, scarce human resources both in terms of quantity and quality, lack of knowledge of the target audiences/listeners and not the programmes that the community wants. These are the issues required to change the situation.