

FROM THE MEDIA PROJECT

The monthly newsletter from the UNESCO/UNDP project:

"Strengthening Democracy and Governance through Development of the Media in Mozambique"

Community Radios sign "Chimoio commitment"

Ensuring impact and long-term sustainability of partner Community Radios/Multimedia Centres (CR/CMC) is the main objective defined for present final Phase III of the Media Project. One particular aspect that is relevant for the achievement of this strategic objective is the strengthening of the communities' sense of ownership over the CR/CMCs, through their legally established civic associations.

As part of this process, the Media Project recently organized a one-week seminar on the strengthening of the CR/CMC civic associations in line with preparatory activities in the eve of project's final closure, due in four months period – in September 2006.

The seminar culminated with the signing of a "Chimoio Commitment", in which the civic associations have reiterated their commitment in ensuring the development of community radios that are socially responsible. The eight UNESCO partner radios have also decided to keep united through an informal network, named "Associated Community Radios Club".

The seminar was mainly aimed to, once again, sensitize the communities, through their legally established civic associations, on the finalization period of the Media Project activities, with the view to help them ensuring effective ownership of the CR/CMCs from the next coming months. In line with this, a practical work plan has been established, defining a set of activities that the radios should undertake immediately, in order to consolidate all legal, political and social measures in preparation of final hand-over of the stations in September.

Key issues discussed among the 23 participants included: general status of the CR/CMC as perceived by the civic associations and the internal dynamics of the associations on the one hand; and general status with regards to legal and political environment at local level (communities and local political and administrative authorities).

All eight UNESCO partner civic associations are legally registered organizations, and hold status that clearly describes their social mission as humanitarian, not-for-profit organizations. No conflicts with regard to conformity with the established legal framework have been registered with any of the radio stations, since their started some five years ago. Likewise, no major political problems have been registered, especially concerning their relationship with local political and administrative authorities (District Administrators and/or Municipal Mayors).

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“Compromisso de Chimoio”

This is the name of the document the civic associations have produced during the seminar, indicating their readiness to start a new period of total autonomy from the Media Project, as from September 2006. With the “*Compromisso*”, the civic associations legally owning UNESCO initiated CR/CMC intended to reiterate their determination in ensuring that the stations will continue as being communication instruments of the community, who own and manage them, after project’s final closure.

A Plan of Action has also been approved, indicating the main activities and timeframe that the associations have agreed to carry out preparing themselves for the final reception of the radios. Main points of the Action Plan include:

- Information dissemination to the communities on the upcoming process, through the organization and holding of General Assemblies;
- Information dissemination to local political and administrative authorities, including Government and Municipal authorities;
- Ensure that Associations are the legal proprietors the CR/CMC houses;
- Immediately send their legal statutes to UNESCO for printing of more copies.

Upgrading CR/CMCs equipment

On the technical side, Media Project final activities consist in the provision of new equipment that includes tape recorders, cassettes, and powerful

computers for the CMCs, photocopiers and scanners. The following is the list:

- *Computers*: a total of 14 (fourteen) SAMSUNG KSC 4440 SAMSUNG computers and respective accessories have been purchased and sent to partner Community Radios. The computers have been installed in connection with the process for creation of ICT environment with the establishment of mini- CMCs also in Milange, Macequece and Chimoio.
- *Tape recorders*: a total of 32 (thirty two) SONY tape recorders and 200 (two hundred) recording cassettes have also been purchased. Each CR/CMC will receive 3 tape recorders and 25 recording cassettes.
- *Photocopiers*: The project has also purchased a total of 8 (eight) photocopy machines, including two powerful and steady ones for the CMCs in Dondo and Cuamba, and other normal ones for the rest of the radios.

Rehabilitation and enlargement of CR and CMCs: With the view to ensure that all supported communities are left with adequate physical space for the functioning of CR and CMCs, a series of buildings renovation works has been underway in all but three CR and CMCs:

Dondo, Milange, Cuamba and Homoine: Renovation works vary from simply rehabilitating walls and roofs in Homoine to space enlargement, especially in Cuamba and Dondo, where bigger CMCs are being developed.