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FROM THE MEDIA PROJECT

The monthly newsletter from the UNESCO/UNDP project:

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

Community Radio stimulates local culture and self esteem

The Media Project has carried out a second assessment on the impact of its eight partner Community Radio stations on the lives of the beneficiary communities, this time covering Voz Coop, in the "green belts" of Maputo, Dondo, in Sofala, Macequece in Manica and Cuamba in Niassa Province. A total of 493 people have been interviewed (258 men and 237 women), answering to key question such as:

Communities sense and level of ownership; relevance of the radios for the communities lives; relevance of the radios from the public institutions point of view.

Main findings on impact include:

- Almost 100% of the interviewees said they listen to local community radio;
- From 60% to 90% said the radio belongs to the community basically because it provides local information; it gives opportunity for people to express their opinions and concerns; because the radio promotes local culture.
- Generally, all the interviewees stress the role of community radio in facilitating communication on local events and people's day to day questions;
- They all say the radio is helping people to save money for transport to communicate with relatives in separate and remote villages.
- Public administration institutions have been improving provision of quality public services because the civil servants fear criticism from the radio;
- The radio has created great opportunities for young people to learn journalism and use their free time for useful purposes;
- Traditional leaders say the radio increases people's self-esteem, as they can listen to their voices and their music and day-to-day life stories.

Most popular radio programs

The interviewees said that their interest in terms of programs focus on the following, in decreasing order of importance:

- Local news services; programs on health and agriculture; radio drama;
- Entertainment programs, especially youth and children's programs.

All interviewees were able to name one program that they have listened to the week before, a clear confirmation of the station's popularity within each one's community. Community ownership has also been recognized by the interviewees, who said the programs focus on people's daily life concerns and the promotion of local culture and local languages.

Positive technical status of CRs

A general assessment on the technical status of the eight UNESCO partner radios carried out during the month of March brought about a very positive picture of the level of preventive and repair capacity that the stations have already reached. The assessment found that up to 95% of all equipment is functioning well, including: production and "on air" studios; transmissions centres and external sound amplifier systems. The assessment confirmed the reports previously received from the partner CR and CMCs informing on the *generalized obsolescence* of the (five-year) old Marantz field tape recorders and studio CD and Cassette player. Based on this information, a set of new tape recorders (three for each radio) has just been purchased and sent to all eight partner radios.

A team composed by the Chimoio-based GESOM technicians carried out the assessment, which terms of reference included:

- Registration of existing equipment and functioning status; main technical critical aspects and existing preventive /maintenance capacity; urgent repair and further training needs, including on the use of ICT.

Media Pluralism Landscape Study

The KPMG auditing and consultancy company is the winner of the public bidding process announced by UNESCO to carry out a major Media Pluralism Landscape Study 2006. A joint UNESCO/UNDP Selection Team composed of four members, has

undertaken the task of evaluating the twelve technical proposals received from different consultancy companies and, through established, objective point system selection criteria, has unanimously selected KPMG to carry out the study.

The study is expected to map-up the country's media panorama, in order to produce a comprehensive report that will update the first one, produced at the launching of the Media Project, in 1998.

Preparing the web for Community Radios

The process for the creation of a community-based media website that started in February 2006 has been progressing significantly, with regards to content development activities.

Activities so far carried out include: ICT knowledge assessment among community radio mobilizers and volunteers, targeting 24 people from all eight UNESCO partner CRs. This was done to better inform on the training programmes foreseen to be carried out for the development of ICT environment in the CR;

Collection of relevant documentation and contact people covering national public institutions, on issues such as: legislation; national development strategies and government five-year programme; Sectorial Strategic Plans; Manuals on relevant political and development issues as well as important web sites.

Altogether more than 50 important documents and dossiers on specific subjects such as HIV and AIDS, National Food Security Strategy as well as a large number of important web sites have been identified and listed up.