

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

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Local radio – how communities can participate

The emergence and upsurge of community radio is an example of how mass media can change. The significance of community radio thus goes far beyond the world of broadcasting. It may change the ways we have been taught to look at and deal with media. And what has happened to radio will affect, and may indeed happen to, other media – the sooner, the better. It is in this sense that Robert A. White, writing in this issue of *Media Development*, says, 'Community radio is one of the truly new ideas in public communication since the printing press ushered in the era of mass media nearly 500 years ago'.

The era of mass communication has so far been characterised by the few who speak and the many who listen; the few whose books or articles appear in print and the many who read and *must* read them, lest the industry collapse. 'Over 50 years' experience of the mass media – press, film, radio, television – has conditioned us, both at the national and international levels, to a single kind of information flow which we have come to accept as normal and indeed as the only possible kind: a vertical, one-way flow from the top downwards of non-diversified, anonymous messages, produced by a few and addressed to all. This is not communication. Confronted by this problem, however, our "mass media mentality" reacts only by stepping up the vertical flow, increasing everywhere the number of newspapers, radio and television receivers and cinemas, especially in the developing countries, without recognising that it is this vertical nature of the flow which is at issue' (Jean d'Arcy, quoted in the MacBride



Report, *Many Voices One World*.

Community radio should not be confused with local radio. Even the smallest and simplest radio station serving a community with a five-mile radius can be as vertically one-way orientated as a national network. The key to genuine community radio is participation, or at least the real possibility thereof. The least which community radio demands is that both listeners and producers (whether employees or volunteers) have a say in the running of the station and in the content and format of programmes. Direct participation by listeners in programmes is the next step. How this can be done is described in the following articles.

Community radio is a question of basic attitudes and convictions. Those who are not committed to the ideals of democracy, i.e. participation, will find no use or meaning in this kind of broadcasting, but will consider it a threat. Furthermore, those who believe that the educated élite should teach the non-educated by means of media will consider community radio a waste of time. And those who think that 'culture' is the prerogative of a certain class, which should spread it among the common people, will look down on community radio as unprofessional if not 'barbaric'.

This is not to say that community radio should not be of high quality or should not educate or provide fine entertainment. On

This cartoon (and the one on page 16) is by Oliver Duke.

the contrary. Community radio is perhaps the only way in which 'education through the media' can take place, where culture can be lifted out of its consumer context, where people can learn once more to speak to each other and to do so publicly.

The very fact that community radio, by definition, is limited geographically indicates that its meaning and purpose are not to replace national broadcasting but to supplement it. There might, in years to come, even be a shift in emphasis. People do not live primarily as members of a nation-state but as members of local communities. The mass society which media have so vigorously and for so long helped to create might give way to a more community-orientated society. Veteran French broadcaster Jean d'Arcy reminded us recently that the nation-state had become too big for the small problems of life and too small for the big ones. The society of the future, he suggested, must therefore be made up of micro-societies or communities which, at the same time, are world conscious. 'It is this path, leading away from the concept of the wired global village towards the re-establishment of small communities, full of life, that we should continue to explore'

(continued on page 2)

MULTIMEDIA
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Radio strategies for community development: a critical analysis

In the past few years, much attention has been given to the problems of adult education in rural areas, and to experiments which have proved on several occasions that radio broadcasting, when skilfully used, can be a most effective medium of communication and education in such areas.¹

The part which radio plays in the transmission of information and culture is generally beyond question. But its role in the field of education is not, on the face of it, quite evident. Talking about educational broadcasting seems quite paradoxical, because 'education' by its very nature implies exchange of ideas and dialogue, while broadcasting usually involves a monologue. Broadcasting is addressed to a very wide, heterogeneous and dispersed public, generally unknown or very little known. However, this characteristic of radio broadcasting implies that, in order to make it educational, conditions must be created which will enable it to become a means of dialogue. It must therefore be 'changed' from a mere information medium to an educational medium in order to make it an effective instrument in the task of rural education.

Radio's effectiveness depends, however, not only on its intrinsic qualities but more importantly on how it is used and for what purposes. Any use of radio as an educational medium should be based on the effect which radio is expected to have on the listening audiences, on the structure of reception possible and on the amount of learning and social change that is likely to result. The success of radio as a medium will therefore depend upon trying to clarify these assumptions of the various utilisation strategies so that a country's needs are fitted to appropriate uses of radio.

Radio strategies

Five strategies of utilisation of radio in rural education have been identified.² One or the other of these strategies, or a combination of them, has been used in different parts of the world, more especially in the developing countries.

Open Broadcasting. This is the strategy in which broadcast is directed to an unorganised audience. It is based on the assumption that a 'good' message is capable of being accepted by the individual on his/her own. It is a strategy in which, in addition to other programmes such as Talks, Features and Music, a small core of educational programmes (usually in local languages) on Health, Agriculture, Family Life, Sanitation and Child-Care, among others, are broadcast. Because of the

unorganised nature of the audience, there is always doubt as to whether the people are listening and, if they are, whether they are benefiting from the programmes.

In Mexico³ and in the Philippines⁴ in 1971, it was found that even though the radio stations carried information relevant to literacy, civic responsibilities, farming and health, the surveyed audience knew very little about these things. They preferred listening to news, drama and music. In Nigeria, there is no strong reason to believe that the situation is different. One of the findings of the survey, in rural Lagos, of the audience of programmes relevant to rural improvement, is that more than 70% of the listeners are literate young men and women, brought up away from their rural homelands, who see the programmes as 'good education in reverse', that is, learning later in life what they should have learnt as children had they been brought up in their native villages.⁵

Open Broadcast strategy is bedevilled by all the problems that affect the use of radio for the education of the rural population. First, there is no interaction between producers and consumers before programmes are planned, produced and broadcast. Production is usually based on the vague notion that the people should want the studio-decided materials. Secondly, these programmes are thought up in the studio with very little or no consultation with specialist agencies, and virtually no co-ordination between them and the communication specialists. The result is that such programmes are generally based on perceived or assumed knowledge both of the subject matter and of the environmental conditions of the audience. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, is the fact that there is no guidance at the reception end.

It is perhaps in the Open Broadcast strategy that the 'shot-in-the-dark' approach to programming is most pronounced. This approach leaves the target audience 'forgotten' while programmes are being planned; 'remembered' just before the programmes go on the air; and 'forgotten' again as soon as the programmes have been broadcast. With no consultation and co-ordination between broadcasters and educational and development agencies, and with no interaction between producers and consumers of programmes, the best one can expect from the Open Broadcast strategy is 'chance success'. This, of course, is not an expectation on which a true rural emancipation programme should be based.

This strategy is, however, the one being used by Nigeria's broadcasting houses in their limited attempts to educate the rural



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communities through radio. No wonder their efforts have had very little or no effect. Weekly magazine programmes, farming hints, health talks and cultural programmes are planned and produced by producers as they see fit, sometimes with the help of some urban-oriented members of the public whose experience and understanding of the rural situation are quite different from those of the rural population for whom these programmes are meant. And the rural public is left on its own to listen and react favourably or unfavourably to the programmes. Unfortunately, the general reaction has been apathetic.

To some extent, programmes that emanate from the universities take into account the necessity for consultation not only with the broadcasting experts, but also with educational and development agencies. And because of the legitimacy which the university is believed to have as the seat of learning, requests to the public to send in information on what their needs are usually trickle in to the planning officers. This has meant that university-planned and produced programmes have tended to be more relevant to the needs of the rural population. If therefore there were more funds and personnel to organise listening groups in the rural areas, these programmes would have been more effective than they are at present.

Instructional Radio. This is the second strategy for using radio broadcasting for social change and development. Instructional radio is directed at an organised

learning group with someone able to supervise and direct, and give feedback. This is the strategy used in Tanzania⁶ to teach practical skills, co-operative and civic responsibility to rural communities. It is known as Radio Study Group in that country. This strategy is what we call, more narrowly, Schools Broadcast in Nigeria. Using the strategy requires much more than mere broadcasting. It requires a structure for organising listening and learning practices, support materials, monitors or teachers and some kind of assessment. One very important aspect of the strategy is that reception infrastructure is an integral part of the process.

Instructional Radio also operates on the principle of co-operation and guided listening. There is usually co-operation between broadcasters and educationists. For example, most educational programmes in Nigeria are written by teachers in the field. Although what one would have preferred to see is co-operation between broadcasting authorities and educational agencies, rather than educationists, even this limited co-operative action is far better than nothing. Because of the demand for guided listening, some audience is assured, and if the programmes are sufficiently appealing, one can expect favourable reaction. If audience reaction is recorded (as is the case with the Tanzanian project) such reactions may well serve as signposts to guide future programming.

The extent to which this strategy can be used in Nigeria for rural community education, gainfully and on a wide scale, is doubtful. The size of the country is the chief militating factor which affects other factors like finance, transport and personnel. Tanzania has been able to operate the strategy fairly successfully because, first, it is a relatively small country, and secondly and more importantly, the government places a very high priority on rural community education. Nigeria's experience in using this strategy for formal education (Schools Broadcast) has not been encouraging. For example, in a study of the use of the strategy in Lagos, it was found that 'an overwhelming majority of teachers (92%) do not use the broadcasts; 53% of the students do not listen to them; and of those who do listen, less than 30% classified the broadcasts as helpful'.⁷ If the situation is as bad as this in Lagos schools, then it cannot be any better in schools in rural areas where signal distortions do not encourage listening. And if the effect of the strategy can be so minimal in formal education, it is doubtful that it can be any greater in nonformal learning situations.

Instructional Radio has mainly been used (except in Tanzania) for formal learning. There appears, therefore, to be a tacit understanding that it is not very appropriate for the nonformal 'soft hammer blow' type of education required for rural communities.

Radio Rural Forum. This is the strategy for using radio with discussion and decision for rural groups. The strategy is the presentation of a regular weekly fifteen to thirty

minutes radio programme of a mixed-grill nature to rural audiences formed into listening groups. It usually comprises of rural news, answers to listeners' questions, family advice, a talk and discussion. The groups listen and discuss under the guidance of a group leader, and take decisions on the points of discussion. The strategy makes extensive use of audience reaction, where available, for subsequent programmes. Because of this, there is usually the temptation for broadcasters to work on their own without co-operation with other change agents around in the rural areas. However, the sense of involvement which this strategy engenders in the rural man as a result of its demand for some action-decision by the group after discussions is a great asset in development efforts.

The Forum strategy has a number of advantages. First, the follow-up of a radio message with localised discussion and decision ensures commitment to action and subsequently to social change. As McAnany has noted: 'The combination of a message carried to many groups by a mass medium like radio, then localised by discussion in small groups and guided to a group decision conforms closely to existing theories of communication and social change.'⁸

Secondly, membership in the groups makes the participants exposed to information important to the rural communities, and this turns such individuals into opinion leaders whose views would tend to be respected in the community. This is one aspect of the *Radiation Effect*⁹ of Rural Radio Forums. The other is that those who are non-participants could still listen to the radio messages, and probably be affected by them.

Thirdly, forums do send back reports and messages, thus providing the vital feedback which is often missing in mass media activities. And finally, the forum strategy is based on the conviction that rural development must essentially come from rural people themselves and not be dropped from above. The in-built localised discussions and decisions ensure that they are put in a position to be able to do this.

However, there are certain obstacles in the way of successful use of this strategy. First, there is very strong need for a network of supervisors so that forums can be in contact with project leadership and do not have to depend entirely on written reports for asking questions and getting help. Unfortunately, this does not often obtain, but as Rogers and his colleagues, in their study of innovations using radio, have noted, 'change agents are the single most important factor in adoption of innovations'.¹⁰ Secondly, production centres are usually far away from most of the village groups, and so cannot benefit from contact with forums to get the feedback which is a vital factor in programme improvement.

Summing up his observations of the Indian Radio Rural Forum, Schramm said: 'Forums may have been made up of people in villages who were least likely to need them (i.e. the local elite); programmes needed more localness (decentralising the

programming/broadcasting); adequate materials to follow up on innovations were often lacking to villagers; more involvement by the development officers with the field experience was called for (network of supervisors to keep personal contact).'¹¹

These missing links have greatly affected the successful utilisation of Radio Rural Forums. In other words, this strategy will be very successful if all rural people, not just the local elite, are involved; if radio stations are near enough to the community and programme contents are relevant and localised; if adequate and prompt actions are taken to provide materials to implement new projects and follow up innovations; and if there are sufficient development agents around to supply the intimacy and encouragement of personal contact.

Rural education in Latin America

Radio Schools. This is the most widespread strategy for using radio for rural community education in Latin America. It originated from Sutatenza, Colombia, where it has now permeated the life of the rural population of the country. The 'Schools' are small organised listening/learning groups meeting in houses or in churches under a guide. Its audience is primarily illiterate rural adults. The basic aim of this strategy is to offer fundamental, integral education which goes beyond mere reading, writing and cognitive skills and tries to change the passive and dependent attitude of the rural man, creating a deepening of his 'sense of dignity and self-worth', and turning him into a 'new man'.

An organisation mostly associated with this strategy is Colombia's *Acción Cultural Popular* (ACPO) – a private organisation which at present has the most powerful radio transmitter in that country. ACPO also has stations all over the country, including some one-kilowatt transmitter stations in some areas. Although radio is the most important medium used, it is by no means the only one. The approach is basically multi-media, employing at least radio and printed booklets almost everywhere, but also frequently adding newspapers, charts, other booklets for reading, film strips, and actual teaching/learning methods. The 'schools' are based on the principle of homophily, so that group members do not only know each other, but largely have identical perceptions of the world and their own environment. Field organisation usually exists in the form of a supervisor who tries to co-ordinate activities, distribute materials, and visit groups from time to time in order to encourage them.

Like the Forum strategy, Radio School has its strengths and weaknesses. As typified by ACPO, this strategy has been successful in arousing the rural people to action. This is precisely because its orientation and identity is with the rural population and its problems. The 'schools' foster greater knowledge of the real needs of rural areas by having a significant number of rural leaders in the organisation of its activities, ensuring real contact of policy

makers with rural people and their problems, and enabling functional feedback to flow from the audiences.

Secondly, the radio schools are basically listening/learning groups. This means that the advantages of group listening and local monitors and supervisors also accrue to this strategy. The solidarity of the group encourages perseverance in pursuing group goals, while visits from supervisors create a sense of identity. Perhaps the one peculiar aspect of this strategy as operated by ACPO is the fact that the activities are a continuing process – a factor which makes radio and the 'schools' part of the everyday life of the people.

There are certain weaknesses, however, ACPO's efforts are almost entirely directed to literacy and basic education, in spite of the professed 'integral education' ideal of the strategy. This leaves out almost completely the political, social and developmental aspects of rural problems. Because of this cautious stand of the radio schools to engage in mobilising the people towards community action, merely because it is political, there is no collaboration between them and rural change programmes of a more developmental nature. This is action in isolation which does not foster concerted efforts towards 'total' development.

Radio and Animation. This strategy, which is also known as the Radio Participating Group, aims at promoting among local communities a trained cadre of decision leaders. It is used to 'train' leaders whose role is to promote, in a non-directive way, a dialogue in which community members participate in defining their development problems, putting them in a larger social context and working out ways of mobilising their people to take a common action to overcome these problems. The strategy places emphasis on radio *defining*, and not *suggesting*, solutions to the people's problems. Programmes are made from recorded views and responses about a definite problem given by some members of the listening public. The participating groups then listen to these responses and views, discuss the problem further, thus creating avenues for further responses from the public, and subsequently eliciting some decisions.

The assumptions of this strategy can be put into five statements:

- (i) that there are no solutions to problems that are imposed on local communities from the outside; that local communities must first arrive at the problem definition and then its solution on their own;
- (ii) that the social animator is to be as closely identified with the local community as possible;
- (iii) that he is to be non-directive in his approach;
- (iv) that information's chief role in this approach is to help define the problem and not give the solutions; and
- (v) that community participation and social action is the goal, and therefore feedback from the community is an essential means.

The strategy which developed from the French government's action towards rural development in its West African territories has been used in Senegal, Dahomey, Togo and Niger. It started in Niger in 1963. Here, the primary objective of the radio broadcasts and discussions was to foster awareness of national development plans in terms of local problems, and not to provide information on a problem defined by the experts. Of particular importance in the Niger attempt was that feedback was not an 'extra' but an essential ingredient of the broadcasts. The opinions of the people formed the content of the programmes.

The Animation strategy, like the other strategies, has its weakness. First, to place the burden of taking initiative on the local people assumes that local control and local leadership will be forthcoming. This, however, has not easily happened in the many places where the strategy has been used. Many communities are slow to get themselves organised, and many more are not even able to organise at all. There is therefore the temptation, if something has got to be done, to try to organise them from the outside.

Secondly, the idea behind this strategy's local participation principle is that people will feel that they are the ones developing themselves. But localising development effort is not controlling that effort. There is the danger that the people may be manipulated in their sense of participating in the development of rural areas, and just given the opportunity to criticise and complain, as a safety valve to forestall rural unrest, while no real policy changes may result from the local participation. The fact that this strategy has not been able to produce significant results in countries in Africa where it has been used confirms this fear.

A final problem facing Radio and Animation, just as other strategies, is the conflict between mass message and local peculiarities. Localities in the rural areas are not homogeneous; each local area has its specific problem which can be solved better when viewed with its social, economic and political environments in context. It is therefore not possible to satisfy every locality from a central point. This is the problem of relevance and appropriateness which local radio systems can help to ameliorate.

The appropriate strategy

All five strategies discussed above have been tried with some measure of success in different parts of the world. In Nigeria, two strategies – Open Broadcast and Instructional Radio – are being used. The former is being used for rural information and education, and the latter for formal education.

The Nigerian Languages Section of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation uses the Open Broadcast strategy for its non-formal educational activities. But the strategy is too unorganised for any purposeful and mass education of the rural population. Programmes are planned and produced in the broadcasting houses with very little or no consultation with other development

agencies, and without research to find out the best way to get to the heart of the problems of rural communities. There is no interaction between the people and the broadcasting houses because these broadcasting houses are generally too far away from the people. At the reception end, there is no direction as to how to make good use of the programmes being broadcast. The community spirit of the Nigerian rural inhabitants is not brought into play, despite the fact that it is realised all over the country that individual action, especially where long entrenched values and behaviours are concerned, is very hard to come by in the rural areas. The result is that few rural people listen to these programmes, and even these do so without any intention of accepting the message content.

The other strategy used in Nigeria – Instructional Radio – is too formalised along the lines of teaching/learning process to be of much use in community education. The rural adult does not want to be a receptacle for the knowledge of 'strangers' who have failed to recognise his own type of knowledge. He needs to be taken into confidence before he can grant his attention. Furthermore, if Instructional Radio, that is, Schools Broadcast in Nigeria, has not proved appreciably effective in formal education, as has already been pointed out, to think that it can succeed in the persuasive content in which rural community education should be carried out, would amount to wishful thinking.

The other three strategies appear to approach what one may propose as the ideal strategy. But each, as now used, has some unnecessary self-imposed limitations. The Rural Radio Forum strategy concentrates almost entirely on the identification of, and discussions and decisions on, local problems. As a result, it tends to attract those who least need arousal and development consciousness, that is, the local élite. Change agents are known to be mostly associated with such local élite, leaving out those for whom rural education is of the greatest importance, that is, the uninformed and the apathetic. It is true that rural forums can help in rural transformation, but unless the marginal rural people are brought in to play an active role, the transformation will benefit only those who are already better than the majority.

The Radio Schools strategy focuses primarily on illiterate rural adults, and almost all effort is directed to literacy and basic education, in spite of the professed aim of providing fundamental, integral education. To do only this, is to tackle only one aspect of the problems of rural development. Even though the marginal illiterate is the most affected by rural underdevelopment, others within the rural social milieu are also affected. In addition, education to create a 'new man' that does not lead to actions of a physical developmental nature is not likely to bring about change or even to create the new man. It is noteworthy that ACPO, the main user of this strategy, has come to realise this fact and now has programmes designed to stimulate action

towards self and community help.

The Radio and Animation strategy places an almost exclusive emphasis on local initiative in identifying problems and finding solutions to them. This approach assumes a strong latent capacity within the rural population which only needs to be tickled in order to go into action. But it is only in very few self-conscious communities that this capacity and willingness obtain. Most others have to be motivated from outside, and continuously reinforced if any improvements are to occur. The emphasis on voluntarism may mean that many communities will, if not given direction, remain where they are. Such communities need more than sermonising on local initiative.

Ideal strategy

The ideal strategy, one may venture to suggest, should be one which combines the involvement (consequent upon local group discussion and decision) of the Radio Rural Forum, the literacy/basic education of the Radio Schools, and the local initiative of the Radio and Animation method. This is because rural community education spans the whole range of the specific areas treated in isolation by each of these strategies. The people have to be motivated to identify their problems; they have to be led to discuss these problems and to take action-decisions on them; and they have to be taught how to read and write.

This strategy – whatever name it may be given – should aim at improving the lot of the rural man in his totality – make him literate, widen his horizon, raise his aspirations, point to his problems, create in him the willingness to find solutions to these problems, and imbue him with a sense of 'dignity and self-worth'.

The point about literacy is particularly important. Radio alone cannot completely handle the task of changing the rural man into a development resource, and rural communities into substantially productive components of the nation. In order to ensure some good measure of success, and a long-term effect, there must be some accompanying written materials – something to 'drive home' the points made on radio, and something to refer back to from time to time. The use of such Study/Follow-up materials would require the employment of interpreters, unless the people have learnt how to read and write. However, literacy should not be the pre-requisite for rural community education. It should, instead, be the outcome of increased awareness and the thirst for more knowledge that are bound to follow effective rural educational campaigns.

The ideal strategy should combine the qualities of Rural Radio Forum, the Radio School and the Radio and Animation strategies, utilising their inherent and operational advantages and strengthening its position by making good their detected deficiencies. Two of the most conspicuous among these deficiencies are the spatial gap between production centres and the consuming rural audiences, and the general nature of programme contents which leaves

the issues concerned with many areas marginally treated.

If, therefore, the new strategy is to have a better chance of success, there is a strong need for proximity of radio stations to the rural audiences, and for localisation of programme materials. This is saying, in effect, that the new strategy should be based on a local broadcasting system, and this means decentralisation of broadcasting equipment, and delegation of powers concerned with programming and content materials to the local station working in close collaboration with the rural community.

*The author has developed the ideas presented in this article in his book **Local Radio: Community Education for Development**, Ahmadu Bello University Press, Nigeria, 1981, ISBN 978 125 016.*

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- 5 Moemeka, A.: NBC Igbo Language Programmes: Audience, Preferences, Involvement and Benefits in Lagos, Unpublished BA degree project, University of Lagos, 1972, p. iv.
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- 8 McAnany, E.: *Radio's Role in Development: Five Strategies of Use*, p. 10.
- 9 Radiation Effect is the effect which Rural Radio Forums have on non-participants – an effect which leads to changes in attitudes, behaviours and practices. This effect comes from listening to the broadcasts and/or from discussions with friends, relatives and leaders who are participants.
- 10 Rogers, E., et al.: *Diffusion of Innovation in Brazil, Nigeria and India*, Michigan State University, 1970.
- 11 Schramm, W.: 'Ten Years of the Radio Forum in India', in *New Educational Media in Action: Case Studies for Planners*, Vol. 1, Unesco, Paris, 1967.

In the next issue

New technologies in communication from a Third World perspective will be the theme of the 4/83 issue of *Media Development*.

An introductory article by Juan Rada will identify the main concerns of developing nations with regard to information technology. A second introductory article by Ron Brown will discuss the new technologies, what they are and what they do. There will also be articles by Herbert I. Schiller, Jörg Becker, Binod Agrawal, Gabriel Rodriguez and others.

Rural radio in Kenya

At the beginning of May 1982 the Homa Bay Community Broadcasting Station in Kenya's Nyanza province started regular transmission in the local language, *Luo*. Manned by a producer from the national Voice of Kenya (VOK) network and three assistants, the station puts out one-hour daily programmes covering local news, problems of health and family planning, as well as news in Kiswahili relayed from VOK.

Most of the programme materials are gathered through interviews in the marketplace, on farms, in schools and with organised groups like the local women's organisation.

Homa Bay is a town of some 10,000 people, situated on the shores of Lake Victoria about 450 kilometres by road west of Nairobi. The main occupations of the people are farming, cattle rearing, and fishing. The town was chosen as the site for a Unesco community broadcasting project, the aims of which were to establish in an African country a low-cost rural broadcasting station with equipment designed and built with the full participation of staff from the host country. The system was to provide an alternative to the usually expensive imported equipment.

The Unesco project was designed to take account of a situation in which sound broadcasting faces many problems. In terms of coverage and utilisation, the medium is more important than television in African countries, but even so the continent has only about 3% of the world's transmitters, and on average only about 7% of the population has access to broadcasts from these transmitters, which are generally located in or near to towns and cities. Very few transmitters cater specifically for the rural areas where most of the population lives and where the need for the benefits of communication infrastructure is greatest. The principal concern of the Unesco project was the provision of nationwide coverage at least cost to the economy.

The extension of sound broadcasting to rural communities can be achieved by equipping the centralised national network with more powerful transmitters. However, this is not the most satisfying solution because the output is seldom related to the needs of the rural community it purports to serve. Programmes originating from the towns and cities and beamed to the rural dweller have thus often failed to achieve their objective.

*From 'Community Radio in Kenya' by Jack Mills and James Kangwana, in **Combroad**, June 1983.*