Community Multimedia Centres

How to Get Started and Keep Going

A GUIDE

How To Get Started
And Keep Going

A Guide to
Community Multimedia Centres

Edited by
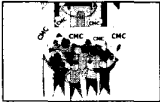**Stella Hughes**
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Contents

CMC

CMC

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We are grateful to all those who kindly provided the photographs which are included in this book.

Finally our thanks go to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) for its vision and steadfast support to the CMC programme.

Preface

When UNESCO launched its programme for Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs) at a seminar in Kothmale, Sri Lanka in January 2001, Kothmale Community Radio was a unique prototype: the only existing example of a CMC. Two years earlier, this rural radio station had added a small walk-in telecentre where local people could use the Internet and get computer training. Daily "radio browsing" programmes brought on-line information directly into people's homes in their own languages. This ensured that the whole community became familiar with cyberspace and aware of the usefulness of ICT.

Today, over twenty pilot CMCs are operating in 15 countries of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. UNESCO is now envisaging scale-up. The Kothmale model has been successfully adapted to a variety of different environments and contexts. The basic premise has withstood the test of time: the *combination* of local radio and ICT access offers an effective gateway to the Information Society for marginalised communities. For many years to come, radio will undoubtedly remain the primary – and all too often, the only – source of information for the poor in developing countries. Community radio coupled with a small telecentre exponentially increases the outreach and impact of the computer equipment and digital resources available to a given community.

The key to the success of a community multimedia centre is its capacity to deliver the services that its community needs. This is first and foremost a matter of content. Access to the World Wide Web is likely to be of little use to a subsistence farmer or a rural trader with no knowledge of the international languages most often used on the Internet. What content is needed? Content generated locally, content of local relevance, content in local languages, educational content, content in different forms – audio, digital, print, video or visual materials such as posters...the list is long. A whole range of skills and organisational capacity are required to build up such contents, to identify the needs of target groups, to link available contents to activities that mobilise and involve all the potential users, to develop appropriate software applications.

Every day, CMC staff have to tackle not only these challenging tasks, but also the administration of the centre, technical maintenance of the equipment, relations with the public. The defining feature of community multimedia centres is their many-facetted novelty: they fill new roles in the community, attract new types of candidates to new job profiles, require new training inputs, associate new sets of skills, identify new target audiences, offer new services to and take on new responsibilities towards the community. A consequence of this far-reaching innovation is that the greatest challenge and the greatest investment for CMC development is not equipment or connectivity, but comprehensive implementation support. New projects have to be accompanied for extended periods with a wide range of inputs that mobilise significant financial and human resources. The only way to meet this challenge is through local capacity building.

UNESCO is leading a group of stakeholders in preparing a comprehensive suite of workshop-ready, open-access training materials called the Multimedia Training Kit. The first modules and the curriculum of this kit are available on www.itrainonline.org. As the kit continues to grow, this handbook is designed to be a complementary tool – giving an overview of all the different aspects of setting up and operating a CMC. Many of the same partners who are involved in the Multimedia Training Kit have also authored chapters in this book. Indeed, the

list of authors and the organizations they represent epitomises the multi-stakeholder nature of CMC development. The multi-stakeholder partnership acts as a crucible in which all the different strands of experience and expertise needed in this innovative field come together. I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this book, all the partner organizations and the outstanding individuals who have helped the community multimedia centre concept and programme become what it is today.

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Introduction

Who is this book for?

There are growing numbers of grass-root communication and information service providers in the developing countries today. They are operating community radio stations, multipurpose telecentres, information centres, community learning centres and – in a few cases – community multimedia centres (CMCs) that already combine both radio and telecentre facilities. This book (available initially in English with other language versions planned) is intended to be of use to all those wanting to become involved or already involved in such initiatives – staff and managers, community groups, NGOs working for community empowerment, communication planners supporting development activities, trainers and project partners. It will obviously be of particular interest to those operating or considering starting a CMC as it covers the full range of topics linked to community broadcasting and to telecentre operations. But for those working in a more limited structure, some chapters will be of direct relevance while others can be useful to help situate one's own activity within a broader perspective.

Not a narrow blueprint

As the following chapter on "Types of Community Multimedia Centre" shows, the CMC concept is not a narrow blueprint. A great variety of structures, institutional arrangements and facilities can be found within the CMC model. UNESCO has developed a programme based on this particular model – radio and telecentre combined - because it is proving to be a highly effective way of achieving community empowerment through the harnessing of communication and information for development. Radio acts as a bridge across the Digital Divide, providing indirect, mass access to digital resources. But at the same time as it operates its flagship CMC programme, UNESCO also continues to support other types of grass-roots projects such as community media or stand-alone telecentres. In the same way, many other development organizations and communities across the developing world continue to explore and implement many different forms of community-operated communication and information service provision. In the effort to ensure the active participation of all in the Information Society, it is worth exploring each promising avenue.

Getting the right balance

This area constitutes an immense learning zone for all concerned and there are valuable lessons to be drawn from differing approaches. Aware of this, the authors of this book have tried to avoid being prescriptive while giving as much practical guidance as possible. It is hard to strike a balance in this type of practical manual, between being too general and too specific. Circumstances vary hugely not only between continents but within continents and even within countries. For that reason, this publication has been designed with a fairly general introductory text in each chapter and a set of more concrete case studies and practical annexes.

Publication or process?

Ideally, this initial publication is just a starting point and practitioners will contribute a growing number of case studies, links and references, using the UNESCO CMC website as a contact

point or through networks. At the back of the book, a pouch inside the cover can hold a set of further texts and references. A future CD Rom version will also add updates and enrich the guide with further practical examples. Information and knowledge about all the various aspects of community multimedia centres is scattered widely across the world. Rather than being based on a central corpus of theoretical knowledge that is applied in different localities, the CMC experience has local roots, finds local solutions to local challenges and in any case *adapts* locally the inputs that come from outside and that are based on tried and tested experience and expert knowledge. This publication has therefore been a gathering process – bringing the stands together to build up the first comprehensive reference work on community multimedia centres. We hope that this gathering process will continue, benefiting from the dynamic and highly interactive networking which fortunately CMC practitioners tend to engage in quite readily.

A shared foundation

What picture emerges from this gathering process? For all the variety of situations and contexts, a read through the chapters that follow will show that there are a certain number of constant elements and features that build up the common, shared foundation of all CMCs. Perhaps the most significant one can best be expressed as the *ethical* role of the CMC. A community multimedia centre is a tool whose power should not be underestimated. As the saying goes, "information is power" and in the CMC we have an entire communication and information platform – powerful indeed! The CMC has a duty to serve the interests of the whole community and to withstand any undue influence of particular interest groups. It has a duty to ensure that the benefits of this communication and information platform are accessible to all and monopolised by none. It has a duty to seek to make available information that is both valid (balanced and diversified, up-to-date and accurate) and relevant to the community's needs. These are ambitious goals, especially when set against the more mundane reality of the CMC's daily struggle for survival – and it often is a struggle for a CMC to keep going once the project support phase is over. Ultimately, all of the guidance, advice, tips and ideas in this book seek to help the CMC fulfil this ethical role as best it can.

Seeking solutions

Finally, a word of caution. This guide can offer few "quick fixes" or instant trouble-shooting solutions to the numerous questions and dilemmas facing the CMC, either in its daily operations or in choosing its long-term strategies and options. This is because there is often no "right" answer and seldom any simple answer in the area in which CMCs function. Solutions are often a matter of performing a delicate balancing act between different contingencies. So, often the reader will have to take one of the examples cited in the book that is closest to local realities and then adapt it to make it fit. But readers at least have the comfort of knowing that their own solutions are likely to be as good as anyone else's. Take the question of managing volunteer staff and the difficult issues of how to keep them and how to reward them. On this subject, as on many others, there is no right answer, or rather, no answer that is right for longer than the duration of the set of circumstances in which the answer appears to be working well.

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Types of Community Multimedia Centres

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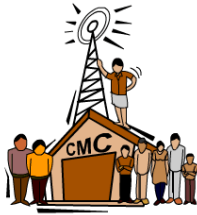
In this chapter

- **How do we define a community multimedia centre?**

- **Types of CMCs**

- **Ownership of CMCs**

- **Start with what's already there**

Types of Community Multimedia Centres

How do we define a community multimedia centre?

Let's begin with the most general definition: a community multimedia centre (CMC) combines some form of local radio with telecentre facilities, under some form of community ownership with the aim to serve as a communication and information platform for the community's development needs.

The basic idea behind this model is to make maximum use of the synergies between the radio and telecentre components. The community harnesses radio's great reach and its potential for enabling local people to relay local content in locally-used languages; it then links these characteristics to the provision of computer training, access to internet and other digital resources. Radio becomes a very effective bridge between people especially those with low literacy levels and in rural, remote or deprived urban areas and the services offered by the telecentre.

Within this basic framework, CMCs can be of several different types, often determined by factors in the local, national or regional context. If, for example, national broadcasting legislation does not yet allow community radio to have access to the airwaves but allows unrestricted access to Internet or cable networks, then the radio component can be Internet or cable based. In another important area, that of community ownership, this principle which is common to all CMCs can be translated into a variety of practical arrangements.

It is useful to know about the different types of CMCs; this may help you to select an appropriate model for your community and also, each model has its own strengths and can offer examples of best practice, which may be taken up and tried within a different model.

A community multimedia centre (CMC) combines some form of local radio with telecentre facilities, under some form of community ownership with the aim to serve as a communication and information platform for the community's development needs.

Independent community radio and telecentre

The most widely practiced type of CMC has a community radio station sharing premises and all management and other structural arrangements with a telecentre. The radio usually broadcasts in FM between 8-18 hours a day within a radius of 10-50 kilometres. It is staffed mostly by volunteers and one or two permanent staff. It earns some income from announcements, messages and programmes paid for by individuals and organizations. The telecentre may have between 3-12 computers for public use with morning and late afternoon opening hours. It charges for Internet access, for scanning and photocopying, as well as for training courses. It also offers some services free or at discretionary rates to particular groups within the community, according to community needs and development priorities.

This type of CMC functions in many ways as a cooperative, earning revenue and seeking to achieve financial sustainability by balancing for-profit and not-for-profit activities. It usually has a high level of community involvement in its decision-making processes, through a steering committee, board of governors, core users' groups, local citizens' associations and so forth.

Another characteristic of this type of CMC is a high degree of self-reliance. The context is usually one of very little public support except at the municipal level. At one level, this can be a great advantage. It may mean that the community is truly in charge and empowered by having full ownership of its CMC.

On the down side, the resources of the CMC are often so stretched that it cannot deliver all the services it would like and, in particular, its radio contents are thin – with a lot of recorded music being played and few real radio productions. This means the radio is a less effective bridge to ICT for the community.

Daily *radio browsing* programmes offer a wonderful opportunity for mass, indirect access to the Internet. But it takes time and training, as well as good quality and affordable connectivity, for the radio presenters to be able to browse the Internet and produce a carefully researched and well-constructed radio-browsing programme on behalf of listeners.

Public service broadcaster

CMCs can play the part of a public service broadcaster as part of the national broadcast system, usually at the local or perhaps regional level. This is the case of Kothmale in Sri Lanka, UNESCO's pilot CMC from which other CMC models have developed.

Kothmale in Sri Lanka is the first CMC to introduce radio browsing.

At the outset these CMCs do not charge users for access to the computers, Internet or radio services. As with any media or ICT applications for development, the participation of local communities is essential in their capacity as listeners, users, facilitators, volunteers and peer trainers. In the case of Sri Lanka, listeners and ICT users are organized into local groups called knowledge societies with CMCs at their centre.

As a public service, this type of CMC does not offer commercial services such as fax, document binding, scanning and photocopying which is one of the mainstays of independent CMCs. The sustainability of the public service depends upon government support and a stable, long-term framework within which the CMC can develop. However, the introduction of public subsidies for Internet access is not common from one government to the next.

In terms of community ownership, the Kothmale example shows a form of ownership that is governmental in structure but community-based in practice, with a high level of community involvement alongside professionals who are public employees.

Cable and Internet based CMC

The next type of CMC we are going to look at is the CMC in countries where national legislation does not permit community radio to have access to the airwaves. These CMCs have to find alternatives to broadcasting; often with the ultimate aim of being able to switch to broadcast radio once there is a change in legislation, as radio has by far the greatest reach.

Internet radio is one possibility in these circumstances. Its major disadvantage is that access is limited to computer users. Its advantage is that users may often be able to access programmes at the time of their choosing, not only at the time of transmission. Internet radio encourages interactivity by giving the listener opportunities to respond to programmes, ask questions, vote in polls and so on, creating an added volume to the online component.

Cable based radio stations have been successful with the Namma Dhwani community radio in Budhikote, India. This cable-based CMC functions through a local operator to **cablecast**

community radio programmes to 400 subscribing households. Namma Dhwani is equipped with a simple radio studio, 2 computers, a small telecentre and an Internet connection with multimedia tools and is managed by a women's self-help group. The CMC is also connected to the local development resource centre, where daily community radio programmes address local information and communication needs, by drawing on a variety of multimedia resources.

The combined approach

Some CMCs have started to combine video, local cable network and print media with ICTs and radio while others combine several radio stations with one telecentre. This type of CMC is found in Mali, where up to three community and private FM radio stations are serving 50,000 - 250,000 people.

Building on existing resources and infrastructure, the CMC model in Mali introduces a telecentre within the premises of one radio station and arranges memoranda of understanding (MOUs) for organisational arrangements to ensure that all the radio stations are partners and beneficiaries of the telecentre facilities. It is important to make sure that this is really the case in practice.

The advantage of this model is that it is highly cost-effective in the way it maximises the use of resources and the potential impact of ICT within the community where the population could certainly not sustain four or five CMCs. This approach also helps to federate the existing radio stations and encourages them to unite their forces around important development goals.

Community cultural centre

Yet another type of CMC is beginning to emerge within community cultural centres. These grassroots facilities are established through the UNESCO programme *Culture in the Neighbourhood* and offer an excellent base for the addition of a CMC. The community mobilisation and ownership process that went into setting up the cultural centre offers a good framework for the CMC.

A CMC within a cultural centre also benefits from the cultural approach to development, which organizes development activities around events – shows, gatherings, exhibitions and competitions. These draw on the traditional arts, crafts and creative skills of the community and are participation-centred. Such practices transfer very easily to radio and with sufficient resources and training, can also transfer to digital media.

Many other types of CMCs can be developed on the framework of community development structures such as community health information centres, farming and agricultural networks, youth clubs, environmental conservation initiatives or networks working for people with disabilities. Educational institutions especially offer good prospects for long-term sustainability.

Ownership of CMCs

When can a privately owned facility be considered a CMC? In theory, "community ownership" may be taken to exclude private ownership. In practice, there are cases where a private FM station, telecentre or CMC is fulfilling a community role, meeting community development needs and involving community members.

There are interesting examples of good practice in the private model that can be transferred to the community-owned CMC. In South Eastern Europe, for example, community radio is virtually non-existent, but private FM stations have flourished in the post-conflict period and often filled important community functions, such as helping to link or network refugees and displaced communities. FM stations are now opening telecentres with broader goals than those of the cyber café model formed by most telecentres. These new telecentres organize computer training with a strong focus on improving people's employment opportunities and they make a serious effort to obtain official recognition by delivering certified qualifications.

In all regions of the world, there is a strong demand for CMCs to deliver recognised qualifications that improve people's job prospects. As all CMCs offer basic computer training, one possibility would be for them to deliver recognised courses such as the "computer drivers' license". In an ideal situation, as soon as a CMC attains facilities, services, and staff competency, it should be able to deliver recognised educational and training courses.

CMC network

The last type of CMC we will look at in this chapter (but undoubtedly not the last type that is beginning to emerge) is the CMC network. Obviously, any type of CMC can network and networking is strongly encouraged as a valuable support system of mutual benefit to all members for many activities, ranging from sharing and exchange of contents, to pooling resources for maintenance, joint training activities and exchange of experience and best practice.

In this example, a pre-existing network actually enabled the CMC development to be planned and implemented from the outset in all the details of its network dimension. A number of community radio stations in the Caribbean began networking, a few years ago, with the aim of establishing a radio programme exchange system. This type of network can make invaluable contributions as each radio station evolves into CMC.

The initial stations to add a telecentre from this network are in Jamaica, Cuba, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. Others in other countries will follow.

Building a network from the outset satisfies many of the required inputs and support systems that cannot be supported by one CMC alone. Training is one of the most costly requirements and in the Caribbean network; Radio Toco CMC in Trinidad is being groomed to become the training hub. Radio Cocodrilo, Cuba, together with Radio Toco, Roots FM in Jamaica and Radio GED in Barbados are now starting to use a Multimedia for Caribbean Communities, (MCC) an interactive electronic network. In addition to the normal telecentre services, the MCC network will provide interactive training, e-forum networking, local content exchanges, e-learning interaction, as well as a number of creative and for-profit activities. See www.unescocaribbean.org/mcc for further information.

Narrowcasting

A good first step in community radio broadcasting

Community radio is the process of broadcasting at the micro level to a well-defined community in a small geographical area. "Narrowcasting" (as against "broadcasting") takes this concept to a further more micro level.

What is narrowcasting?

Narrowcasting can be done in several ways: a. A group of villagers sitting together and listening to a programme. But this time, the programme is not broadcast through a transmitter from a radio station, but played back from a tape in a cassette player. An audio programme which is played through loudspeakers set up at places where the community people gather e.g. village markets and exhibitions, public offices, meetings.

This has several advantages.

– You don't need a transmitter since you are not broadcasting.

– If you have not got a licence to broadcast, you can avoid any legal problems with the authorities by using narrowcasting.

– The people don't need radio receivers to listen to the programmes.

– In the case of audio cassette listening groups, since the group has come together voluntarily to listen to the programme, they are more motivated and focussed.

Adapted from Community Radio : The Voice of the People
Author Abdul Rahman Pasha; published by Voices
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Start with what's already there

The opening question of this chapter was: How do we define a community multimedia centre? Answers to that question will really emerge from the chapters that follow.

All of the examples above attempt to show that the CMC concept is flexible and adaptable. The reason for that adaptability is not only because it is necessary to adapt to the local context, but also because it is *better* to use existing community structures as a starting point. There can be as many types of CMC as there are types of active and thriving community development organisations.

Stella Hughes

A Day in the Life of a CMC

Take a look at what goes on from morning to evening during a typical day at Koutiala CMC in Mali and Namma Dhwani CMC in India.

Koutiala CMC in Mali

The week starts at **7.30 a.m.** on Monday morning for the manager of the CMC in Koutiala, Mali. This CMC was created by adding a small telecentre to the premises of one of the town's local radio stations. The other radio stations of the town are also partners in the CMC. When the manager arrives the caretaker has already swept and dusted the premises.

The first radio presenter also begins her day at 7.30. She gets the manager's approval for the running order of her programme and goes on air.

Children on air at the radio station at Koutiala CMC, Mali

At 8 a.m., the telecentre officer arrives and goes through the week's schedule of activities with the manager. He then carries out basic preventive maintenance of the equipment in the telecentre room, blowing dust out of the keyboards, deleting unnecessary files and goes on to check the data tracked on computer (figures on users with a break-down by user profile, on break-downs and repairs, on participants in training courses etc.).

At 9 a.m., the receptionist and the first customers arrive to use the telecentre. An hour later, the first training session of the week begins. It is an introductory course of the use of search engines, given by the telecentre officer and organized for a women's group.

At 1 p.m., the regular monthly meeting of the steering committee is held. Among the committee members are representatives of the other radio stations. On the agenda are issues concerning the management of the volunteers and the monthly review of activities.

Throughout the day, local people come to the CMC to phone, fax, make photocopies, scan documents or send emails. The radio station regularly makes on air announcements advertising the telecentre's services and plays "vox pops" in which users are recorded giving their opinions of the services and explaining what use they have made of the centre.

At 4 o'clock in the afternoon, staff from the town's radio stations have priority access to the telecentre to carry out web searches and to prepare their programmes using online information.

The last training session of the day, a basic computer training course, is at **6 p.m.**

Before closing the centre, the manager and telecentre officer rearrange the computers for the next day. It is the end of the month and a local firm has booked a computer for the whole of Tuesday to do the monthly accounts, write up all the business correspondence, fill out electronic order forms and update the stock-keeping.

Stella Hughes

Namma Dhwani CMC at Budhikote, India

It's **6 a.m.** in the morning. The two studio managers and volunteers get together and chart out the day's course, referring to the weekly programming schedule.

No script in hand, only some scribbled notes...they discuss Unemployment - a concern of every young and middle-aged person in their village. Within the next hour, the programme will be narrowcast over the cable radio channel.

It's the start of another busy day at Namma Dhwani

- Bindu, studio technician and presenter, who works as a volunteer and hopes to be a station manager one day, goes through a checklist and tests the studio equipment and the recorders and microphones to be used for field recordings.

- Next, she phones the agricultural marketing cooperative for the day's market prices and prepares to announce them in the morning broadcast.

- The volunteers set about their job of cueing the tapes for the day's morning and evening broadcasts.

- One of the studio managers sets out to record programmes on location.

Child volunteers at Namma Dhwani community radio, India

Photo courtesy: Voices

6.30 a.m.

Songs, market prices, health-related information (see annex at the back for Namma Dhwani Community Radio weekly Programming Schedule) fill the air for an hour from 6.30 a.m.

As the day passes on, Namma Dhwani CMC becomes a hub of different kinds of activities.

- A radio training workshop of community girls and women is being conducted

- Batches of trainees come and go after computer training classes

- In the studio, radio programme ideas are being discussed and decided by the studio managers and volunteers

6.00 p.m.

It's time to go on the air again.

- Quizzes, songs and other programmes are narrowcast through the local cable network

- At the other side of the centre, a student volunteer enters the data on community resources into the database created by one of their trained volunteers, using the newly-developed enRich software (see box in Technology chapter).

A committee meeting in progress at Namma Dhwani, India

Not without hurdles

Of course, event-filled days are not without hurdles. The biggest problem that the area faces is power shortage. The authorities arbitrarily turn the electricity on and off – sometimes there is no power for 10 hours at a stretch. The programmes, which have been prepared for the day, will have to be rescheduled.

It is no wonder then that Namma Dhwani staff and volunteers are eagerly waiting for the day when they can get their own generator. They can then plan exactly when they can air the programmes and schedule the trainings, without having to change their plans at the last moment because there is a power shutdown.

Delay in volunteers arriving is another problem. And so are novices who sometimes have trouble with the technicalities.

But this does not deter the spirit of Namma Dhwani. The sheer power of the radio medium and the overwhelming response of the community at Budhikote to the introduction of ICTs have made the centre what it is today – a window to the world and a beacon of hope to the people.

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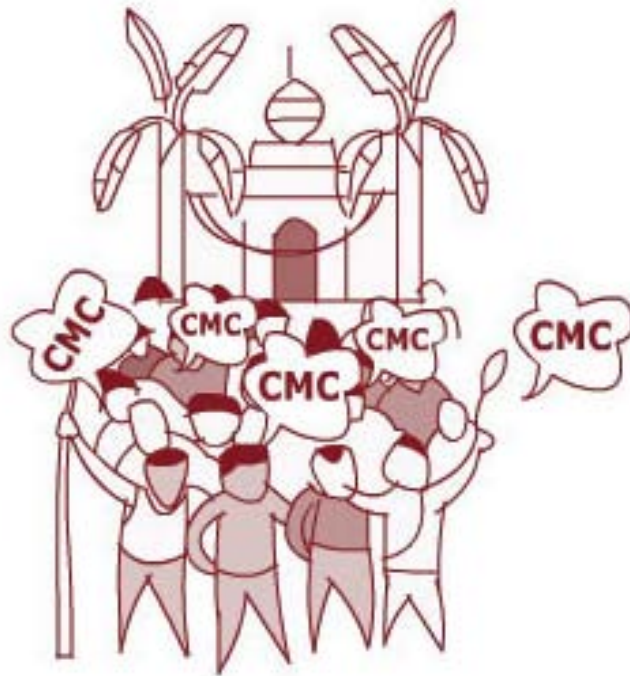
Getting Started

Nick Ishmael-Perkins

In this chapter

- **Needs assessment**

- **Developing your mission statement**

- **The business plan**

Getting Started

There are a number of preliminary steps you will need to complete in order to establish a responsive and effective CMC. The steps described in this chapter provide an overview to support your management, technical, and business plan considerations with an emphasis on a baseline approach rather than a detailed description of the entire process. The detailed descriptions that are relevant to the starting up process are provided in the other chapters, as you shall find indicated.

The overview here should demonstrate that the more responsive you are to the community, the better the chances are of sustaining the centre, as the community and other stakeholders will be more committed to supporting it.

Some of the steps, outlined below, may not seem relevant for those of you who are already operating community radio stations but it may be worthwhile repeating them if you are planning to add a telecentre facility.

- **Needs assessment**

    This should help you deepen your understanding of the community and help you promote the CMC to the community. In addition, a needs assessment can help you establish the information and communication needs of your community as discussed in the chapter on participation. A needs assessment is especially important for obtaining a licence for community broadcasting if you need one.

- **Develop a mission statement**

    This sets the goals of your CMC. It is crucial that you can clearly demonstrate the objectives of the centre and how they respond to the context of your community. This will increase your chances of making the centre successful.

- **Devise a structure for your centre**

    It is quite important to have an idea of how the CMC will work. This will help you to decide on a wide range of issues – from the sort of space you will use, to the number of staff you will have. Refer to details in the organizational structure and human resources chapters respectively.

- **Develop a constitution for the centre**

    Make sure that any associations involved in the running of the centre are registered and known by legal authorities – this may be important for securing a broadcasting licence. Details are found in the organizational structure chapter and the annexes.

- **Business plan**

    This is related to the structure of your CMC, e.g., planning income and expenditure, linking decisions about energy supply to costs and linking those to planned opening hours. Refer also, to the chapter on sustainability and the annexes.

The Steps

– *Needs assessment*

– *Develop a mission statement*

– *Devise a structure for the centre*

– *Develop a constitution for the centre*

– *Business plan*

Needs assessment

Mapping your community

The community is the primary stakeholder in the CMC; it is for them that the centre exists. It is crucial that you understand the needs, interests and constraints of the community. However, communities can be complicated, dynamic and made up of several groups. Mapping your community will allow you to visualise your connections and help you to formulate the best way to get your information across to your audience. Exercise 1 helps you to establish more precisely who constitutes your community so that you can develop a suitable approach for your planning and research.

Of course, you can identify many other factors relating to the important groups, which make up your community. All of the groups should contribute to your planning process, which ensures that you are building community ownership from the start and minimising the risk of any resentment and feelings of isolation. In fact, when in doubt about anything, ask the community – start with the logo of the centre. The more they contribute, the better they feel, and the more they will support the centre.

Second, you may find it useful to have additional space that could be used to support your income, e.g., office space for a business or organization in exchange for some resources.

Questions for you and the community to think about

Where should the centre be located?

You will need a suitable site for the location of your CMC. Remember it should be easy for most people to get to the centre so they can participate in running and using it. Try to find a place that will allow you to expand at a minimum cost in the future. Also, keep in mind that additional office space may generate your CMC additional resources from an interested organization or business. The site should not be exposed to the dangers of natural physical disasters or adverse conditions, such as flooding or earth slides.

Name of the centre?

Using a name that was suggested by the community makes their participation clear to see. It also gives the community a sense of pride and value.

What issues does the community want to see the centre address?

Remember, the development of the community is your primary objective. It is important to consult your community to determine the types of services your centre will offer.

How does the community think your centre should be managed?

Instil a sense of ownership amongst the community by building on existing resources. Distinguish your services from anything else that might be available.

Exercise 1: Mapping your community

Draw a map of your community; on this map include all the types of groups in the community. There are many aspects that make people different, here are some of the things that you should think of when you are drawing your map:

Age group

Gender

Language group

Religious group (Protestant, Catholic, other churches, Muslim, Hindu or others)

Ethnic group

Activity (Farmers, traders, students, craftspeople…)

Special needs (No/very low income, disabilities, illiterate…)

Location (Does the group live in big or small families, individual, extended or nuclear families? What is the distance between the group and the CMC? What mode of transport is available?)

Who should work at the centre?

Make your service different from other services by involving the community in providing the services.

When in doubt about anything, ask the community — even for a logo for the centre. The more they contribute, the better they feel, and the more they will support the centre.

Next, let's take a look at ways of gathering basic information from your community.

Getting to know your community

It is important to know concretely how your CMC is responding to the expectations of the community. How many people use the services at the centre? Who uses the centre and who does not? Does it contribute to the development of the community?

Baseline research is the answer to all these and many other questions about your constituency. It is best to conduct your research *before* starting the CMC so you can plan successfully. There are many types of research methods and the ones discussed below are different from the unique approach discussed in the research and evaluation chapter.

Some research hints

Plan to meet with different interest groups including civic and youth organisations, women's groups, religious groups and traditional leaders. Conduct informal, face-to-face discussions with community members.

The purpose of the meetings is to **find out** how the community perceives its own needs; whether the community thinks these needs can be served by a CMC; whether the community will support and participate in a CMC initiative; what the community expects from the management of a CMC.

There are a number of workshop approaches and participatory research techniques that you could use to elicit this sort of information. These include developing a situation analysis and creating a problem tree, conducting a quantitative survey, and working with researchers — all of which are presented in the preceding sections.

User research for CMCs

There are many different types of research but you may be particularly interested in *user research*, which involves your target population and represents their views and needs in running the CMC. The results obtained through this research method can be used in many ways to benefit your centre and to improve the role of the CMC. *User research* can also help you to:

- understand and document the problems that the centre should expect to tackle.

- document your findings to demonstrate your effort and success and especially to prepare you for future evaluation and monitoring exercises.

Other considerations in mapping your community

- Infrastructure – connectivity, telephone lines, electricity supplies, possible sources of power, e.g. purchasing excess power from local hospital; roads, transport

- Resources – existing access to computers, radio stations etc.

- Institutions – is there a health clinic, a school, local government offices, and agricultural outreach service? These should be involved and their needs identified as they will be important partners and clients of the CMC

- Associations and NGOs – women's groups, farmers' cooperatives, small traders associations, religious communities etc.

- Local businesses – could be key clients

See also Technical Considerations later in this chapter.

- respond to the needs and aspirations of the community and secure community support and patronage by developing the required services.

- use your research information to seek support from stakeholders such as the government and donors.

- create a demand for your CMC; attract co-operation and general support by providing quality and useful information to a broad range of development stakeholders. In this way, you can strengthen your centre and develop sustainable partnerships at the same time.

Situation analysis/ Problem tree

This is a process that can be used with focus group discussions. To conduct a focus group discussion you require:
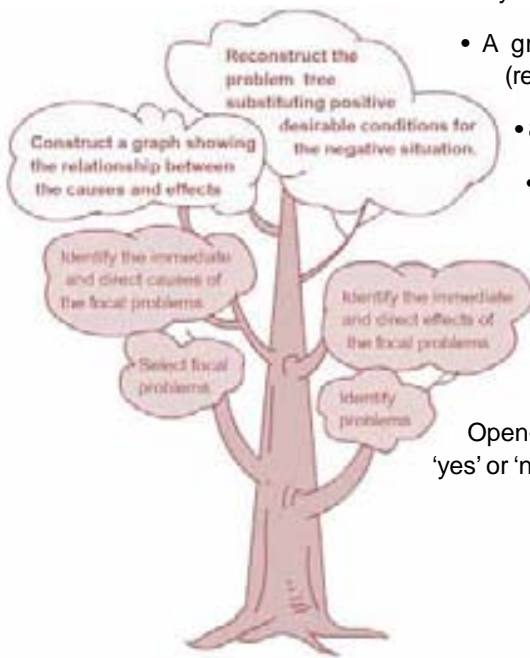
- A group of 8-12 participants of similar background and experience (refer to Exercise 1).

- 8-10 carefully thought through and sequenced 'open-ended' questions.

- A moderator with facilitation skills and knowledge of group dynamics.

- An assistant moderator to take notes.

- A comfortable place where everyone can sit facing each other.

The participants may present their questions from different perspectives even though they come from similar backgrounds.

Open-ended questions are those that cannot be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no' but express people's opinion and/or experience.
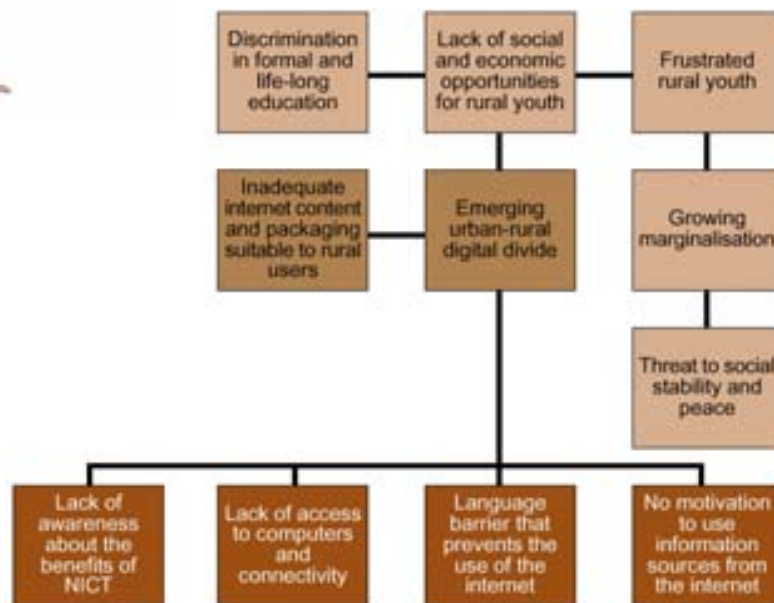
An example of the Problem Tree made by the community at Kothmale, Sri Lanka,which shows their local conditions and problems. Your community groups would identify different problems and issues.

Quantitative survey

This involves the use of a short, simple questionnaire to be filled in by community members. The questionnaires are usually completed with the help of staff or volunteers. It is important to try to get a cross-section of people to respond to the interviews even though they are likely to be held on a one-to-one basis.

The responses are then collectively evaluated to determine a common opinion. The conclusion of the survey can be put forward as the basis of planning and management decisions.

In the questionnaire

- ask people some basic information about themselves – such as their age, gender, where they live and any information that you think is important in order to understand who your users are.
- ask people about **each** of the centre's services:
  - what would they use them for or why not?
  - when they would be most likely to use the services and with whom?
  - what contribution they would like to make to the centre
  - ask them for indicators that would prove that the centre is a success for the community.
- in general, ask people for any suggestions they can offer to improve the centre and its services.

Working with researchers

The methodologies above avoid too much scientific rigour but instead try to focus on the kinds of questions that you might need to ask. There are, however, a number of ways that you might be able to work with experienced researchers. This is important for larger research projects, or for achieving greater quality control in your findings.

You may also want to familiarise yourself with the terminology that is used in research work. Below are a few examples:

- **commissioning user research**: the centre can employ professional researchers from a commercial research agency, an educational institution, or an NGO to do a particular type of research, in this case user research. The CMC will need to be actively involved in setting the objectives of the research so that the results are completely in line with the needs of the centre but the professionals you hire or commission will conduct the actual research.

- **establishing a research partnership:** the CMC participates both in setting the objectives and in conducting part of the research in collaboration with another organisation or research agency. The advantage of this sort of partnership is that your staff can learn research skills.

- **participatory research**: here, the CMC involves the participation of the community in doing its own research but in partnership with a research organisation. This option requires specialised training, great effort and commitment from the centre, as well as a lot of support from a research organisation during the early stages of the partnership. This option, however, allows the centre to take control of its research so that there is a constant flow of information at a relatively low cost, over a sustained period of time. (Refer also to the participation chapter)

Who does the research?

As far as possible, try to ensure that the researchers come from your community and that the team has a balanced representation of men, women and youth who speak the local languages. This makes it easier for an open interaction with the community. At the same time, be careful that the researchers do not offer their own opinions instead of listening to those being interviewed.

- **ethnographic action research:** this method allows the researcher to look at the whole social setting and all social relationships of a community including any patterns that describe local relationships, understandings and meanings in order to make sense of the complete range of social relationships and processes within which a project is working. It involves a long-term engagement by an experienced researcher who will document cultural observations on a daily basis. (Refer also to the research and evaluation chapter).

Developing the mission statement

A mission statement helps you to articulate the vision of your CMC and allows everyone to quickly understand your overall objectives. It is also a useful guide that can be used by the CMC management in decision-making and reflects the interests, needs, and values of your community and stakeholders.

Your mission statement explains the vision of the centre.

Visioning exercise

Much of the work for this exercise can be done in groups but the facilitator will have to be mindful that everyone is given space to contribute. It might even mean regrouping participants according to their background and social status so they can relax and open up during discussions. The exercise could take place in various situations, for example, in a meeting that reviews the problem tree emerging from the situation analysis.

It is important to include 20-30 community representatives in the meeting and to involve community leaders, opinion makers and other persons of influence. Make sure that all the groups represented in Exercise 1 are included; this will sometimes mean deliberately stepping outside of the status quo to invite those who are often voiceless.

Where visioning fits in

Step A: Describe where you are now – if possible start by reflecting on the problem tree and situation analysis exercises that were conducted in the focus group discussions. If not, participants should think through the current situation by identifying one or two priority or problem areas and the causes.

Step B: Describe where you want to be. Participants should engage in the discussion as though they have the authority and power to make all the changes that are necessary to achieve the vision.

Step C: Participants should then consider what the vision means for each demographic group in the community. This can be expressed in simple statements. For example, farmers will produce more and be paid better.

Step D: Identify all the positive things that might be achieved through communication, information or education at a community level. For example, farmers will learn about soil conservation to reduce their vulnerability to natural disasters.

You can then develop your mission statement describing how your centre will help the community to achieve the identified needs.

How to operationalize the vision

Step One - Go to your map in Exercise 1 and visit the groups you have established.

Set up some focus group discussions then ask some questions that will clarify their position. Find out what would be of interest to them. Try to understand what might stop them from getting involved.

Step Two – Draw up the following table based on your focus group discussions.

Interests	Groups	Activity	Constraints	Solution
	(E.g. Young women)			
	(E.g. Older women)			

Interests – what they might want or need to do
Activity – the activity in the centre that would best meet those interests
Constraints – what might stop them from becoming involved?
Solution – how you could get around these constraints.

Structuring your CMC

As discussed in the organizational structure, technology and human resources chapters, the structure of your organization is composed not only of your assets, fittings and infrastructure, but also of elements that make it possible to manage programme content, staff, and finance. The overall structure of your CMC is therefore determined by the results of the needs assessment and baseline research, the skills and human resources incorporated in your CMC, the way you tackle the challenges and obstacles faced, and the relative advantage that your CMC has over other commercial radio stations.

It will be useful to consider creative ways of responding to your community's needs to popularise your CMC, e.g., considering child-care services for mothers who are interested in using Internet services.

Practical and technical considerations for the premises of your CMC

(See also the chapter on Technology)

Internet connections

Make sure you have a telephone line or satellite uplink so that computers can connect with the Internet. Talk to the service providers in your country to discover your options.

Power

You may need to establish one or preferably two links with a reliable source of electricity to avoid any power interruptions. Many community radio stations have a regular electricity supply and a generator and some explore alternative sources of energy such as solar power. Keep in mind the additional power you may need for future expansion plans.

Mission statement of Radio Zibonele

"We are a group of volunteers with diverse skills, who have formed a Community Radio Station owned, managed and programmed by the community of Khayelitsha. Our concern is to enhance the quality of life by improving the health standards of our people. All those we serve are affected by poor health and poor environmental conditions. Radio Zibonele is committed to sharing skills and information through honest process, in this way empowering the community of Khayelitsha to have a better life."

Radio Zibonele serves a community outside of Cape Town in South Africa and concentrates on health as a priority for the community.

Size

You will need sufficient space for your computers, the radio studio, and to accommodate visitors from the community, who must feel welcome at the CMC.

Insurance

It is important that you think of insuring your equipment. This way there is a better chance of recovering your equipment in the event of an accident. Talk to different insurance agencies to find out the best option and understand the conditions for replacing damaged equipment.

Developing a constitution

The constitution explains the legal nature of the CMC, its objectives and the way that it is to be managed. If you already have a constitution for your existing facility then it is important to amend it so that the full CMC is included or considered under each heading. (Refer also to the organizational structure chapter and annexes).

Something to think about

List each of the headings of the constitution and think of what you could do in each section to serve the interests of the community and the CMC. Remember, these interests must reflect the values and needs mentioned in your mission statement.

Business plan

The primary purpose of a business plan is to plan for a sustainable, viable, well managed entity. A solid business plan will attract financial support from donors and community members. It is important to present the business plan using clear objectives and forecasting community involvement, turnover of staff, and profit in a measurable way using milestones and indicators. It explains your vision, proves that you are serious and shows that you are working on a plan that will sustain the future of your CMC. The chapter on sustainability will guide you through the key steps in developing a business plan. (Also refer to annexes).

References

UNESCO Community Radio Handbook, UNESCO, 2001

Telecentre Cookbook, UNESCO, 2002

Mind Mapping No. 2: Memories and Marvels, UNESCO Bangkok, Thailand, 2002

The African Community Radio Manager's Handbook: A Guide to Sustainable Radio, AMARC Africa, 1998

Tools for Development: A handbook for those engaged in development activity, DFID, 2003

Ethnographic Action Research, UNESCO, 2003

The Business Plan (see annex at the back)

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Practical hint

From the outset, consider planning simple measures to improve the CMC site, e.g. the type of roof covering makes a big difference to room temperature and may result in added costs for air conditioning; dust reduces the life of equipment but can be controlled by planting flowers and bushes around the CMC.

Choosing Appropriate Equipment and Technology

Peter Schioler and Steve Buckley

In this chapter

- **Building and physical infrastructure**

- **Setting up your community radio**

- **Computers, software, networking**

- **Equipment and software maintenance**

Community Multimedia Centre Technologies

Until recently, communication technologies could be broadly divided into broadcasting and telecommunications. Broadcasting was understood to be a one-to-many technology. A central broadcast station transmits a communications signal to many listeners. Telecommunications, on the other hand, was seen as a one-to-one technology, best characterised by the telephone, a device for long distance personal communication.

Now, however, these previously distinct technologies are converging. By combining the characteristics of broadcasting with telecommunications systems, the Community Multimedia Centre (CMC) creates new possibilities for many-to-many communications. The broadcast listener can more easily become a producer of news and information while the Internet provides new tools for group telecommunications.

The CMC incorporates the features of community broadcasting with those of community telecentres. Radio (or TV) studios and facilities for production and broadcast are combined with access to telephone, Internet, email, fax and printing. This is not simply a case of putting different technologies under one roof: the CMC aims to be an integrated broadcast and communications platform.

CMCs come in many shapes and sizes

Choosing the appropriate technology solutions for your CMC will be crucial for its sustainability and relevance to the community. Focussing too much on high technology solutions will require substantial financial and human resource investments, while ignoring modern ICTs will bar your community from taking full advantage of the last decade's striking developments in ICT-based services.

Since CMCs come in many shapes and forms, it is not possible to give 'one fits all' advice on how a CMC should be equipped. In addition, local factors such as availability, quality and cost of electrical power, telephone connection, Internet access, computer hardware and consumables etc., will be key to designing a realistic CMC set up for your community.

In this chapter we give you general advice on how a CMC could be equipped, based on experience from community multimedia centres and telecentres around the world. Weigh this carefully against the actual situation in your community, as discussed below, and then plan for the right mix for your CMC.

While planning your equipment and facilities look for:

- *convenient and accessible location*

- *support for training in media and technology skills*

- *access to Internet, email, telephone and fax*

- *radio (and/or television) production facilities*

- *access to broadcast and distribution systems*

- *costs.*

Choosing your equipment

The choice of equipment and the technical design must draw first on the purpose and the functions of the CMC. In aiming to serve the communication needs of the community you must take account of what is currently available and identify potential barriers to participation such as location and accessibility, literacy and computing skills.

Start small, grow with your abilities and demand

A general rule of thumb that has proved useful is to **start small**. Give your staff and users time to become familiar with the technology and the relevant services it can offer, and then grow according to the demands of the community. You should also remember that community demands are likely to change so the CMC should be prepared to continuously adapt its profile accordingly.

All ICT equipment should figure in the CMC's business plans and an item should preferably be purchased if there are clear indications that it can generate at least a cost-recovery income for the CMC.

A technical set up for a small CMC	Computer network for a medium size CMC
• A FM community radio station (transmission and mixing capabilities) *See separate section on community radio*	• 2 admin PCs
• 1 computer (with CD-writer) for management of the CMC	• 4 internet access/production PCs
• 1-2 computers for public access	• 1 server with storage and back-up system
• 1 printer	• 1 printer/copier
• 1 photocopy machine	• 1 scanner
. 1 telephone	• 1 CD writer
. 1 fax machine	• 1 cabling and routing

In addition to selecting purely technical equipment, remember that the machines will require a controlled environment sheltered from too much dust, humidity and heat.

Talk with your peers before deciding on technologies

Try finding out about other CMCs, telecentres or schools with computers and Internet access and talk to them about their experience: What works and what doesn't work in their local environment? What are the local computer standards? What is the availability of spare parts and after sales service?

A new CMC will benefit from identifying a "mentor" in a well established centre. By drawing on the mentor's experience and through visits and staff exchanges, CMC staff can become familiar with ICT equipment and procedures before purchasing equipment.

Building and physical infrastructure

Construction and installation of a new CMC should be based on careful technical design and equipment specification to ensure that facilities are suited to their purpose and achieve the best value within the available budget.

The technical design and equipment specification should be prepared before inviting tenders for supplies or building and installation works. This provides better control of costs and allows for comparison between different contract proposals.

Media production facilities, computer networks and communication systems all require specialist technical expertise, which is not necessarily found in one person or company. In addition, building works may need to be adapted to an existing building. A project manager should be appointed to carry out and coordinate, on time, the works within the budget.

On completion of the works, installation of equipment and software, the centre should be thoroughly tested to identify any faults and to agree on how these will be corrected and who will be responsible. Particular attention should be paid to any potential hazards to health and safety such as faulty electrical wiring.

Setting up your community radio station

The sound studio in a CMC is used for radio production, training and broadcast. One studio can perform all three functions but not at the same time. Therefore, many community radio stations have two or more studios. The main studio is used for live broadcasting. The second studio is for training and production but can also be used for live broadcast during routine or emergency maintenance of the main studio.

Should you choose AM or FM?

For broadcast radio a choice has to be made between FM (Frequency Modulation) and AM (Amplitude Modulation). Most radio receivers are capable of receiving both but there are significant differences in their transmission characteristics.
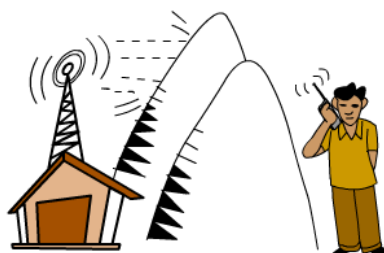
FM radio has a line-of-sight coverage from the transmission aerial to the receiver. Over short distances it provides a clearer and better quality signal than AM, but it breaks up in hilly or mountainous terrain. AM provides more uniform coverage over a wide area but it can suffer night-time interference from distant stations and it is more expensive to install.

At the heart of the sound studio is the mixing desk. This combines the inputs from various sources — presenter microphones, CD players, cassette players, mini-disk players, telephone, etc., and sends a programme output for recording or broadcast. Some studios are self-operational ("self-op") where the presenter speaks and operates the mixing desk and programme inputs. Others have a technical operator to run the mixing desk, while one or more presenters speak to the microphone. Many studios have a separate "talks room" with several microphones feeding to the main studio.

"Self-op" radio studio at Sengerema CMC, Tanzania

Going digital. Radio studios are increasingly incorporating digital technologies and may also have one or more computers for recording, editing, storage and playback. Computer are also used to display scripts and programme running orders for the presenters and can run automated programming at times when the station is not broadcasting live. Studio-based computers should be fully integrated into the CMC network so that digital production and programme preparation can take place outside the main studio.

Location recording. In addition to studio facilities, it is important for a community radio to have portable recording equipment for conducting interviews or reports in the field and for recording music and other cultural activities. A basic field reporting kit consists of a mini-disk recorder, a microphone, a set of headphones, some blank mini-disks and batteries. For more complex location recording, such as a panel discussion or cultural event, a small mixing unit and some additional microphones and microphone stands will be needed.

Suitcase Radio

The Suitcase Radio, a complete broadcast station in a single case and complete with a high gain antenna, is a product of Wantok Enterprises in Canada. The station is fully portable or may be used as a permanent FM community broadcast station. The console portion of the system is ideal for community access to existing networks and is often used by CMCs because of its low-cost, easy-to-use and robust advantage. This radio comes in 30 watt, 50 watt and 100 watt versions. For more information see http://www.wantokent.com

Woman technician doing maintenance of Suitcase Radio in the Niger

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Video equipment

Community television is much less widespread than community radio and many more people have access to radio receivers than to television sets. Video is nevertheless a valuable communications tool which can be used to record events, to produce news reports and documentaries, and to assist in educational and cultural work.

The cost of video recording equipment has decreased considerably with the mass production of the digital camcorder and computers can be easily adapted to provide video editing facilities. These developments are bringing video production within the range of facilities which can be realistically included in a CMC.

The basic requirements for video recording are a camera, tripod and microphones. For editing and production, a computer and two large monitor screens are required, together with a high quality video card, plus video editing and production software. Additional software can be obtained to produce titling, sub-titles and effects.

Electrical power sources

Critical to the operation of your CMC is a reliable supply of electricity during the hours when your centre plans to operate, which again should be based on the convenience of the targeted users. When the electricity supply fails, the studios, computer network and most other facilities will come to a standstill. Therefore, plan not only for the main source of electricity supply, but also for back-up systems in the event of a failure.

Power Grid. Where available, a public electricity supply is generally the least expensive option, but not necessarily the most reliable. Note that equipment such as computers and communication gear is very sensitive to power surges; therefore, you should get local advice on the quality of the electrical power provided, how to protect sensitive equipment and maintain steady and uninterrupted power supply.

Alternative power sources. If the power from a public grid is not available or not accessible, you can try to buy surplus power from local schools, hospitals and others.

Other alternatives include installing an oil or gas generator, and solar, wind or water power. Oil or gas generation is cheap to install but expensive to operate and subject to fluctuations in price and supply. Solar electricity requires solar panels which are more expensive to purchase but have very low running costs. Wind or water power are alternatives to consider in locations with high wind or water energy. A back-up generator will ensure continued operation in the event of main power supply failure.

When using alternative sources of power, try to minimise the power requirements of the equipment. For example, a laptop consumes much less power than a desktop PC – while these are more expensive, a solar power set up can usually provide power for twice as many laptops compared to desktop PCs.

Lufo Radio Lamp

Photo courtesy: Serras Technologies

The Lufo Lamp combines an FM radio receiver with a lamp

UNESCO has piloted the use of a novel FM receiver using thermo-electricity made by Serras Technologies in France. Built into the base of a standard oil lamp, the AM/FM receiver is powered by the heat of the flame. A new generation of the Lufo Lamp contains a socket for charging a mobile phone or powering a WorldSpace Satellite receiver. This FM receiver is distributed in wholesale.

The Freeplay wind-up radio with solar panel is robust and requires no batteries. It maybe useful to examine the possibility of funding a distribution of radio receivers such as these to the poorest members of the community for group listening.

For more information see http://www.serras.net/vo/applications/lufo1.asp

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Computer types and usages

Computers are a multi-purpose tool. They are required for office administration functions such as report writing, accounts and database management; they may be used as part of a training facility in ICT skills; they may be available on a free or paying basis for public access to the Internet and email; they may also be used to assist media production including programme research, script writing and sound editing. You need to pay attention to ensure that the number of computers you get and their distribution matches your operational needs.

The computer network should be capable of providing access to the Internet, basic office tools such as word processing, spreadsheets and databases, and appropriate multimedia applications such as digital sound editing, graphic design tools and web authoring tools. In a digital CMC, the computer workstation can act as a media production unit in its own right.

A CMC will often have at least a couple of computers for CMC administration, radio programme production and management, and to provide access to users. There are two main types of computers relevant for a CMC: Intel-compatible Personal Computers (PCs) usually running a MS Windows or Linux based operating system, and Apple machines often running MacOS.

The two types of computers are similar but NOT compatible and will require different software, different training and usually, service by different technicians. You should choose either Apple or PC according to what is the most common type of computer in the local area and among your partners. Your choice of computer type will influence the price and availability of software and spare parts as well as the possibility for exchanging local ICT-based material with schools and other CMCs.

The second choice with regard to computers is whether to get new or recycled computers. When starting up a CMC, one possibility could be to begin with a couple of recycled computers for basic functioning and training, and later to include additional computers, e.g. a new multimedia PC with audio and video editing capabilities, as required.

Plan for special needs of your users

Access for all is a good motto for a CMC and this requires that you pay special attention to the needs of people who face particular barriers to access.

People with physical disability, especially wheelchair users, can find themselves physically excluded by obstacles such as stairs, narrow doorways or low desktops. Take account of accessibility needs during the building design stages.

People who are blind or partially sighted have difficulty using computer screens without assistance. Specialist text narration software, which reads text and converts it into spoken word is available. Speech recognition software can enable simple commands without typing into a keyboard. Braille print can be used to identify channels on a mixing desk.

Language and literacy is a barrier to the participation of many people, especially women. Traditional cultural barriers also often prevent women from coming forward to participate and make use of the CMC services. Discuss with your community and plan how you can encourage all members of the community to benefit from the CMC. You could train a person who knows sign language to give basic computer training to deaf members of the community.

Training materials should be easy-to-read or made available in audio form in the user languages. Trainers and support staff should be able to communicate with users and to provide support to those whose reading and writing skills are a barrier in the use of computers and the Internet.

New or recycled?

'Recycled' computers are normally second hand computers that become obsolete in certain businesses (for instance banks or software companies) and therefore are sold off at a low price. Recycled computers often continue to perform basic functions such as text editing and Internet browsing, but may be unable to run the latest multimedia software packages and will also have a shorter lifespan than new computers. In the CMC, they can be used for basic training courses while newer computers are reserved for Internet access.

Software programmes, licensing and open source

The software needed for your CMC will depend on the type of computers selected (Apple or PC) and the services offered by the centre.
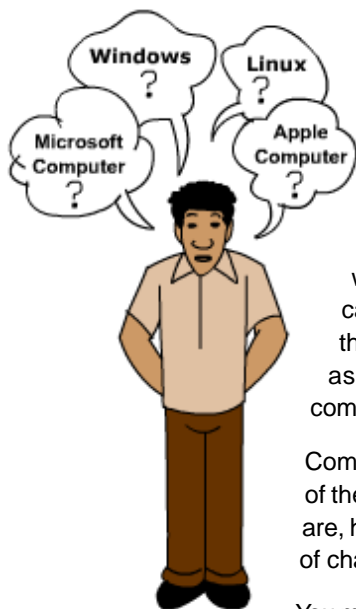
All computers will need an Operating System (OS) and virus protection software. Standard software is now available for text and spreadsheet editing as well as Internet browsing, even if you are not connected.

Proprietary software solutions are expensive and also require regular purchase of upgrades. Free software solutions exist for most requirements but they are not as well known as the leading proprietary software systems. With careful planning and design, free software can meet many of the essential needs. You may need to consult a specialist to assess and install appropriate software solutions on your computers.

Commercial software licenses often represent a substantive part of the CMC's ICT budget. Independent networks of programmers are, however, increasingly making their applications available free of charge in the spirit of sharing and cooperation.

You may like to explore whether commercial packages like Microsoft Office can be replaced by Freeware or Open Source Software (FOSS) applications, but should also be aware that using these packages will often require additional technical skills. You can find more information about Freeware on UNESCO's free software portal www.unesco.org/webworld/portal_freesoft.

A computer network requires specialist assistance for technical design and set up. One computer can act as the gateway to the Internet for a small network of up to 6 PCs. It is better to have a central server for a larger network administration, which includes data storage, back-up system and Internet gateway.

In addition to the desktop computers and a central server, the computer network will need cables, routers and other hardware. You may have some ancillary service equipment such as printers, photocopier, scanner and CD writer. Software will be required for the operating systems and applications on the desktop computers and the central server, including effective anti-virus protection and network firewall.

UPS protects your computers

Computers are particularly sensitive to fluctuations in power levels and should be protected by an "uninterruptible power supply" (UPS).

The UPS is a storage device to smooth fluctuations and ensure a steady supply of power. It also provides short-term back-up in the event of power failure, allowing enough time for data to be saved and for computers to be switched off.

Also consider voltage stabilisers to protect the equipment from fluctuations in the power supply.

Networking computers and peripheral equipment

As soon as your CMC plans to have more than one computer, you should consider establishing Local Area Network (LAN). A LAN will enable the users to easily exchange files between computers, share resources such as printers and Internet access and simplify regular backup files. You can find more information on computer networking on the ITrainOnline website.

Wireless networks. Traditional LAN systems established by 'wiring up' computers are being replace by wireless LAN or WiFi technology which is becoming increasingly popular due to its flexibility and ability to network laptop users at a distance. Wireless technology is still more expensive than traditional solutions and can be sensitive to electro-magnetic interference. It has comparative advantages in situations where computers are distributed over a wider geographical area or if the CMC needs to accommodate users with their own laptops.

Introduction to the Internet

The Internet started as a loosely connected research network between large computer centres, but has grown in the last 10 years into a global network connecting every country and exchanging data using a common standard. The Internet provides several services which are relevant for a CMC such as electronic mail (email), the World Wide Web (WWW), file transfer protocol (FTP) and Audio Visual (AV) broadcasting.

The Internet has today become the main resource for information sharing and networking. You can, for instance, find advice on specific CMC or telecentre topics by posting a question on the Telecentre-L discussion list (http://www.idrc.ca/pan/telelib.html) to identify and connect with peers in other countries or research topics relevant for your community in making use of Internet search engines such as Google (www.google.com). The Telecentre-L discussion list is hosted by the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Types of Internet connectivity

Where telephone lines are available these are generally the cheapest and most reliable means of providing Internet connectivity as well as telephone and fax connections. In some areas digital telephone exchanges allow for a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) which is a faster, permanent connection to the Internet. For areas without landline telephones, and for distances up to 200 km, terrestrial wireless systems can provide a means of connection to the nearest Internet point-of-presence (POP).

For more remote locations, satellite is the alternative. Satellites can be mobile or fixed. Fixed satellite for interactive or receive-only communications is known as VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal). It is increasingly the system of choice for remote access; however, licensing arrangements remain a barrier in many countries. Mobile satellite systems such as Iridium and Inmarsat are more expensive solutions.

Internet access will often be a crucial factor for your CMC's telecentre component. The various technological solutions for connecting to the Internet follow a similar pattern — the CMC connects to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) that has a high-speed connection to the Internet. See the diagram on connecting the CMC to the Internet.

Internet for the CMC

Internet connection is increasingly important for running a FM community radio as well as for sharing audio files and obtaining information and programming from a wide variety of sources.

You can use the Internet for sharing experience within and outside the community and for obtaining relevant training programmes.

Many CMCs have a policy on use of the Internet that bans users from accessing pornography on-line. This is because it exposes children who may be using the centre and discourages women from using the CMC.

Main methods of connecting your CMC to the Internet
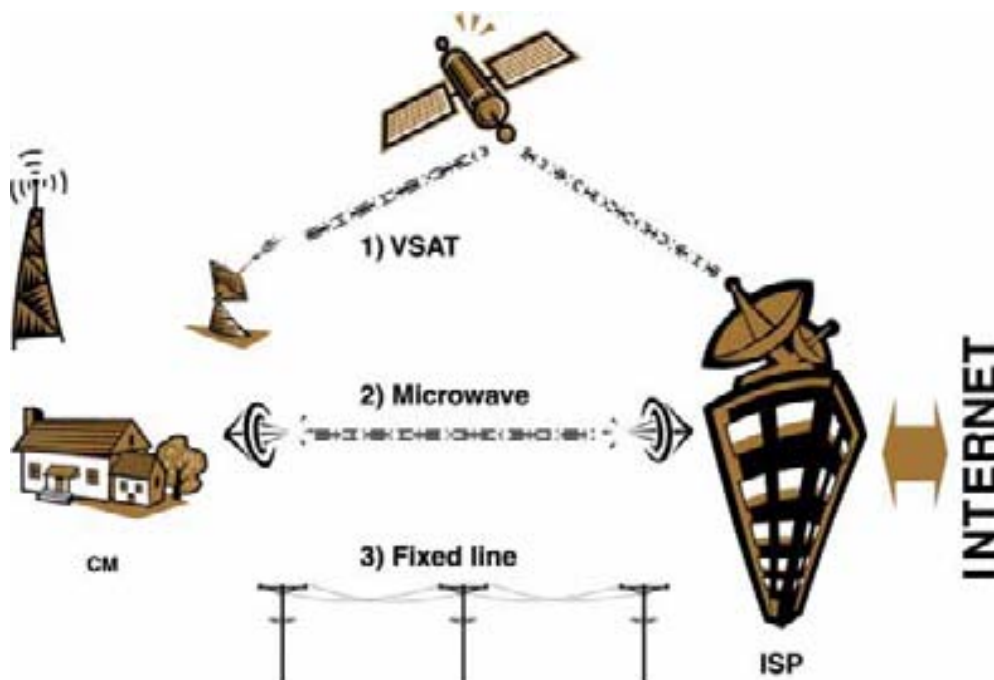
Fixed line connection. Obtaining a dial-up connection to a local Internet Service Provider will often be a first step if your local area has a well-functioning telephone system and a 56 KB/Sec (Kilo Bit per Second) telephone modem. This will get your centre 'connected' and will allow you to network with other CMCs and exchange advice and experience.

Email, web browsing and access to online distance education programmes can be accessed through the Internet. In a growing number of urban areas, it is possible to upgrade a telephone modem connection to an ISDN, wireless, or DSL /ADSL, connection that offers high speed access allowing video/audio streaming and browsing for many more users (see below).

	Telephone modem	ADSL/DSL
Data transfer rate	33-56 Kilo Bit/Sec	Scalable from 256 Kilo Bit/Sec to 1.5 Mega Bit/Sec
Scenario 1: email	3-4 users can browse and check emails	20 users can browse and check mail
Scenario 2: multimedia	1 user can access multimedia content	6 users can access multimedia content (with a 512 KB connection)
Scenario 3: audio streaming	Not possible	Audio streaming (broadcasting over the Internet)

Internet connection via satellite (VSAT). A VSAT is often the only alternative where no fixed telephone line access is available,. There are various satellites and services ranging from a limited email exchange (e.g. VITASAT) to commercial broadband upstreaming and downstreaming.

As satellite bandwidth is often more expensive than terrestrial bandwidth, this option is usually only viable when there is a large centre and there is no other means of connection. Satellite links may also incur licence fees. In some countries usage of VSAT is only permitted by licenced telecom operators.

Microwave and WiFi links. CMCs can establish a microwave or WiFi link to a local Internet Service Provider or partner connected to the Internet. These links are, however, dependent on the local landscape, as they require a clear line of sight between the two points of communication. Maximum distance for a microwave link in optimal conditions is 50 kilometres, while a WiFi link is limited to 25 kilometres. Like satellite links, microwave links may also incur a licence fee if they are permitted.

Equipment maintenance

The profile and specifications of new equipment should be recorded as soon as installed. This includes equipment type, serial number, purpose/expected usage, computer set up, and the names and versions of software packages installed.

Maintenance procedures are necessary to assure that the equipment continues to work optimally and to reduce equipment downtime to a minimum. ICT equipment should be checked regularly – e.g. once a month – to verify that it is functioning correctly. The result of the maintenance test should be added to the specific equipment's profile.

Problems in ICT equipment are often recurrent so it will be a good idea to store the equipment profile in a spreadsheet or database format. The history of each piece of equipment should be recorded on a continuous basis, including faults that have occurred and how these were resolved.

Basic maintenance checklist for a public computer

Before switching on the computer

- *Are all the computer parts present and correctly connected? (CPU, monitor, keyboard, mouse, speakers etc)*
- *Does the computer look clean and inviting?*
- *Is the working environment around the computer clean and functional?*

After switching on

- *Does the computer start up correctly?*
- *Are any errors or warnings reported at start-up?*
- *Is the monitor functioning correctly?*
- *Is the keyboard usable?*

- *Does the mouse work smoothly and correctly?*
- *Print a test page of text to test the printer*
- *Do the main software applications on the computer start up correctly?*
- *Is there any new unauthorised software installed on the computer?*
- *Are the computer virus definition files current?*
- *Scan the computer for computer viruses and note result*

Switch off the computer

- *Verify that the computer closes down correctly.*

Safeguard electronic assets and perform regular safety backups

You will be able to process and store information such as the users database, training materials and the centre's accounting in electronic format when using computers to manage the CMC and ICT based services.

The electronic format offers many advantages with regard to access, sharing and processing but also has the disadvantage of being deleted by mistake or lost because hardware of failure, or theft. It is therefore crucial to take appropriate precautions to avoid losing important and irreplaceable data.

Photo courtesy: Habby Bugalama

Sengerema Telecentre Manager services a PC at the centre

Support and maintenance

The technical facilities of a CMC require people with technical skills to provide maintenance and troubleshooting. The computer networks, hardware and software require network administration skills. Electronics know-how is needed for media studios. Broadcast systems require knowledge of radio frequency engineering.

It is not always easy to find an individual technician with all of these skills. Training may be a solution. Alternatively, some or all of the technical support may be provided by an engineer on-call. For some critical equipment, such as the radio transmitter, a back-up system is necessary for emergency or routine maintenance.

Safety Backups. All important files such as the CMC user database, inventory, or correspondence should be backed up regularly, at least weekly, on a removable device e.g. a rewriteable CD Rom. The backup should then be stored in a safe place, or in a different location.

If a key file is deleted or corrupted, it can then be restored from the latest backup copy.

Safety copies of original CD Roms. Commercial licensed software often represents a considerable investment by the CMC. Make a copy of original CD Roms and keep the originals in a safe. Use only the copies in the centre so that your original CD Roms are protected against wear and tear as well as misplacement and theft.

ICT troubleshooting at the CMC

There are some simple steps you can take before calling a technician in case of malfunctioning equipment in the CMC. Structured troubleshooting will often save the expense of a technician and will avoid lengthy periods of downtime.

Weekly safety backup procedure

- Prepare 5 rewriteable CD Roms and name them 'Backup Week 1', 'Backup Week 2, etc.

- Store all critical and regularly updated files on the same computer and in an organized structure in subfolders under a main CMC data folder.

- At the end of each week, copy the CMC data folder and subfolders to the corresponding CD Rom: In the first week of the month copy the data to the CD Rom named 'Backup Week 1', in the second week copy data to 'Backup Week 2' so that all the CD Roms are used once every month on a rotating basis. Depending on the amount of backup data, you may choose either to clean the CD Rom before its next usage or store old backups from the previous months.

- After performing the weekly safety backup, place the 5 backup CD Roms in the CMC safe.

- Once every month the designated person should copy the latest weekly backup e.g. 'Backup Week 4' to a normal CD Rom and store this disk outside the centre – e.g. at the home of the manager. This will assure that your CMC's data is completely safe from fire or looting.

3 basic steps for troubleshooting	
When a technical problem is observed by staff or reported by users, then	

Step 1	• Identify the nature of the problem
	  • Can the problem be tracked to a single piece of equipment?
	  • Is it hardware or software related?

Step 2	• Check the maintenance file and see if the problem occurred before.
	  • What solution was used the first time the problem occurred?
	  • Can CMC staff correct the problem?
	  • If the problem is hardware related, check all the power and network/cable connections.)

Step 3	• Contact the service technicians and ask for advice if the problem can't be solved by the CMC. • Note down in the maintenance report the advice and action taken.

There is much advice to be found on the Internet on all kinds of technical problems. However, the advice on the Internet comes without guarantees and you should NOT apply any radical solutions without having first consulted a local IT technician.

Protecting your system from computer viruses

Computer viruses have become a daily hurdle to all computer users. A computer virus is a software programme that propagates itself from computer to computer via networks or on shared media such as CD Roms or floppy diskettes. A computer virus can, when activated, take control of the host computer, delete personal or system files, send information about your system to intruders on the Internet and cause hardware breakdowns. New viruses are being developed daily at an increasing rate.

WorldSpace

The WorldSpace satellite system provides digital broadcast of audio and multimedia content to Africa, the Middle East and Asia. This system is particularly interesting for CMCs; you can receive more than 30 audio channels of digital quality, music, news and education programmes with just a digital radio receiver and a multimedia adapter. With authorisation, the programmes can be rebroadcast in FM by the community radio station and multimedia content such as teacher training materials can be accessed from your CMC's computers.

Some centres have established a local Internet-like service where their users can access multimedia-based news, training materials etc., provided via the WorldSpace multimedia service.

Computer virus attacks can often be prevented by:

1) installing and frequently updating anti-virus software on all computers

2) encouraging computer users to be vigilant when introducing new files on a CMC computer, either through opening email attachments or other channels

3) discouraging the use of floppy diskettes except on machines with the latest virus checking software

4) choosing an ISP which blocks viruses on the server.

See the *How Stuff Works* website http://computer.howstuffworks.com/virus.htm for further information on computer viruses.

Anti-virus software components

Anti-virus software provides protection against viruses.

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Some tips

- Administrative systems should be in place for logging technical faults as soon as they are reported.

- Faults arising from misuse can be reduced by monitoring access to equipment.

- Ensure that users have proper training before using equipment.

- Central servers and transmission systems require access by specialist staff only.

- Public access computers should be regularly cleaned of data and have their software reinstalled.

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A typical virus protection system for a user computer consists of two parts:

1. A main programme consisting of a virus search engine that can identify and remove computer viruses

2. Virus definition files containing virus characteristics and removal methods.

As new computer viruses continue to appear the virus definition files will have to be updated frequently to assure that your CMC's computers remain protected.

Training of staff and identification of training materials

Staff training is important for successfully applying new ICTs at any CMC. The staff and volunteers need to have confidence in applying the new equipment in their daily work, e.g. radio programme editing. Staff must also be able to introduce the community to ICTs. Therefore, good training and reference materials are very important. Training materials and training courses are increasingly available on the Internet. A good place to start is the ITrain Online website where international NGOs and UN agencies are making quality training materials available free of charge.

See References at the end of this chapter for details.

See also the chapter on Training in this Handbook.

Look before you leap!

This chapter provides a general guide to technology issues for CMCs. There is no one-solution-fits-all model and you will need to make technical choices according to your particular circumstances. Take the advice from a specialist before taking the final decision to invest. Advice can often be found at a neighbouring radio station or nearby telecentre, or use the Internet to contact an established CMC.

References

www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/english/networking.shtml

*Wireless Fidelity, using the unlicensed radio spectrum in the 2.4Ghz and 5.8Ghz wavebands. More information on WiFi is available on **http://www.wlan.org.uk** or **www.sown.org.uk** or **www.wlug.org.nz***

*Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA) is an international NGO with over 40 years experience responding to the information needs **www.vita.org/leo**)*

'Upstreaming' refers to data transfer from the Centre to the satellite and 'downstreaming' to data transfer from the satellite to the Centre. See, for example, **www.swan-informatique.com** or **www.iwayafrica.com; www.geolink.com; www.worldspace.com**

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Human Resources
People-oriented and people-driven CMCs

Ian Pringle

In this chapter

- **Types of human resources**

- **Planning human resources for your CMC**

- **Building skills and capacity**

Human Resources

Your CMC is a *community* as well as a *multimedia* centre. As a result, people – your community's human resources – should be at the centre of your CMC planning process.

CMCs must be *people-centred* to survive. On a day-to-day basis, it is the commitment and ongoing contributions from your community, e.g. a donated building, a yearly membership fee, or a weekly volunteer slot, that allow community facilities like your CMC to operate on a self-reliant, low-cost AND sustainable basis.

CMCs are different from commercial radio and Internet kiosks, just as they are different from schools or local government offices. As with other community media, you need to think about ways of organising and operating differently from businesses and official institutions.

The need for **alternative ideas** and **innovation,** therefore, is as important, in dealing with the human resources of your CMC, as it is for technical, financial or other resources.

Managing the human resources of your CMC is a slow process – it means building a working relationship with your community on how to use information and communication tools.

Ultimately, putting local people at the centre of the CMC process is probably the most important and long-lasting thing you can do – and it is an ongoing and *organic* process.

The process of building community "ownership" involves:

* Building awareness of the importance of information and communication: What do these words mean? How do they fit into people's day-to-day lives in your community?

* Facilitating people's involvement in *both* planning and using local media as tools for the development of the community

Types of human resources

It takes a lot of people to run a community multimedia centre. There are the people on the inside who keep your centre running, keep the radio on-air and keep the computers connected. Then there are all the people on the outside, listeners and information users, community groups and individual members. Of course, one of the things that make community multimedia so interesting is the constant crossover amongst these roles.

Your CMC needs to have

* an official image

* a core team of dedicated people

* enough hands to get the work done

* flexible systems to involve and train people, and to organise and support your whole network.

The best sorts of human resources for your CMC are those that seem naturally and intuitively attracted to the idea. A CMC staff member characterised her station and her involvement as being: *"Less a radio station… more a way of life."*

The degree of your community's involvement and the resulting level of activity will expand and contract depending upon the needs, capacity and availability of your community as it responds to trends, cycles and outside forces. Involvement is never constant and your CMC will invariably go through cycles, changes and crises relevant to its human resources.

Key considerations

Your CMC needs to find a human resource solution that is suitable to your own local circumstances. There are a number of key points that we can consider here:

- The importance of **employment** and **paid staff**, certainly the institutionalised type, should not be reinforced. This is not to say that you should not have staff but to keep in mind the need for alternatives.

- For many CMCs community **volunteers** are an important part of how they operate on limited income and excel at meeting local needs at the same time. Emphasise participation and the non-financial benefits of working at your CMC, for example, new skills, practical experience and social capital.

- Because we need to develop alternatives, your CMC should encourage **innovation** and creative solutions – what we sometimes call *thinking outside the box*. In order to do this, you and your CMC must also think outside your own boxes. Be creative and try new ideas!

A user-friendly and **enabling environment** is essential for attracting people and keeping them involved, especially marginalised groups. Your CMC should be an empowering space for anyone within the community to participate, a space open to innovation and creativity: physically and in terms of prevailing attitudes and behaviours.

Now let's explore some of the different types of human resources you should be thinking about.

• Paid staff

How you staff your CMC is heavily influenced by your local environment and specific circumstances. You need to ask yourself a few questions when it comes to staffing:

- why do we need paid staff and for which specific tasks?

- is there another way to accomplish any of these tasks?

- what roles do paid staff play in relation to other human resources?

Dedicated, paid staff will obviously be of enormous advantage to your CMC. However, paid workers can also complicate the overall human resource strategy because their payment has have the potential of undermining or even discouraging other types of involvement, especially unpaid work and volunteerism.

That is why paid staff should never be relied on exclusively to answer your human resource demands. They are never a solution on their own. You need to take a holistic approach and consider all types of human resources.

While it is important to consider and value appropriate skills, it is equally important to consider the right aptitude and a solid understanding of CMC principles, commitment and goals. Though you might hire them because of their skills as broadcasters or technicians, your CMC workers

will nevertheless act as "social workers". The staff should think of their role **as facilitators** rather than simply as **paid employees**. Though inevitably they end up with plenty to do, staff members should not focus on *doing things*, but rather on facilitating others *to do things*. In other words, volunteer coordination should be part of every staff member's job.

The major areas of paid staff responsibilities are:

- administration
- technical maintenance
- programming
- coordination

In many cases all these responsibilities are more or less rolled into one post. Perhaps the most strategic task that needs to be incorporated into any position is that of **volunteer coordination.**

• Casual staff

Many CMCs provide incentives to their casual workers in the form of tea money, bus fares, or an occasional free meal. Occasionally a token salary or honorarium is paid for a programme or part-time work.

Casual staff are somewhere in-between paid staff and unpaid volunteers. Your ability to pay casual staff may vary from one season to another; it may also depend on your funding and the projects that you undertake.

For example, your CMC might get a small contract from a local NGO to develop online content or a new radio programme. For a few months it might be necessary to have some additional people to fulfil these commitments.

> **Wages and remuneration**
>
> CMC staff salaries should reflect local realities in terms of their experience.
>
> It is worthwhile researching how much other local workers are paid; ask some questions:
>
> - what are the salaries of local teachers and shopkeepers?
> - what are the local costs of living?
> - how will paid staff be viewed within the community-at-large?
>
> If you have more than one paid staff member, it is worthwhile for your committee to consider formalising pay scales. It may not be possible to pay everyone the same amount, but you should consider the impact that your salary scale will create at your CMC and among your community.
>
> Keep things simple and remember, money is NOT the best way to value a person's contributions.

The great advantage for these workers is that they get some compensation for their efforts. This encourages them to dedicate more time to the CMC.

Casual staff often exist in a *grey area* – between the CMC's need for people to run the daily activities of the centre and the lack of funds available for a full-time, paid staff or team.

Casual staff can be an important part of a CMC's human resource strategy but CMCs must be careful neither to exploit them, nor to create false expectations. It is also important that neither core staff nor casual workers intentionally or inadvertently limit opportunities for volunteers and the involvement of the community.

Understanding roles, rights and responsibilities

At one CMC, a problem developed between casual staff and the CMC management. Casual staff, being paid per-programme, outnumbered permanent staff at a ration of 3:1. The casual staff made a major contribution to the day-to-day operations of the CMC but some misunderstanding arose about their role causing considerable resentment and tension, over a period of time. Some casual staff felt they should be granted permanent employment or at least that they should have the opportunity to move "up the ladder." Others felt that the casual staff occupied too much space and prevented opportunities for volunteer involvement.

It is important to make sure that the roles, rights and responsibilities of all your human resources are clearly understood and accepted.

• **Volunteers**

If volunteers are part of your overall strategy, your staff should focus on

- identifying the skills and interests of potential volunteers

- facilitating their training and work contributions

- maintaining systems

The benefits of volunteerism can be significant for your CMC. It all depends on the human resources that already exist and, more importantly, on those that can be built up in your community.

Are there people with free time in your community; both young and old? For many people in the community, your CMC may represent a unique opportunity to do something. Often people, especially youth, are frustrated with the sheer lack of opportunities to do worthwhile things.

Volunteerism is a special consideration for any type of community undertaking. Your CMC's success can be measured by the degree of community involvement in your centre. *Volunteerism is about building relationships with people and therefore with the community* rather than having people to work for free.

Volunteers can feed into all areas of CMC operations – from answering phones to running programmes, from technical maintenance to fundraising. But it can also be a major challenge in resource-poor communities where free time, especially amongst women and girls, is a luxury that many cannot afford. For many people, volunteerism is a new and sometimes difficult concept.

The strength of volunteers is in their commitment and numbers. CMCs are run on the power, not of large service by a small number of people, but on small service by a large number of people.
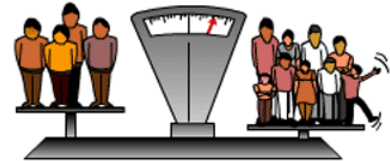
You may think that working with volunteers is risky compared to running media with a staff force. In fact, the two simply cannot be compared. Community media are on a fundamentally different path than other types of media. One essential characteristic that sets CMCs apart is the focus on people's participation, both as a productive input as well as a constructive output.

CMCs that can afford paid staff make little or limited use of volunteers due to issues of trust and management. Other CMCs rely almost exclusively on volunteers to run their operations. Many find themselves somewhere in-between.

Running a CMC with volunteers requires **investment**: to train people, to supervise them, to be patient while they learn and make mistakes; even to watch them walk away. However, volunteers can create a resource multiplier-effect along the lines of 'train-the-trainer': invest in five volunteers, training and supporting their interests, and see a return of perhaps three dedicated workers as well as a stronger link with your local community.

Working with volunteers requires **flexibility** and systems that are designed to accommodate volunteers. You need to be volunteer-centric to capitalise on the great potential of volunteerism. Planning for volunteers' involvement needs to be flexible: sometimes they will be there intensively, but at other times volunteers won't be there at all. You have to be ready for it. You need to adapt your human resource plan according to the abilities and availability of your volunteers and the needs of your CMC.

Avoid allowing false hopes to build amongst volunteers or casual staff that their involvement will at some point lead to a job.

> The CMC in Koutiala, Mali, has no fewer than four categories of volunteers: external collaborators, resource persons, volunteers and interns.
>
> An "external collaborator" has a paid job elsewhere and helps the CMC on a regular basis and at fixed times. Some have been doing this for over 10 years. A "resource person" is a local expert who can be called upon to identify, explain or comment on particular information, for example by taking part in a radio programme on health, agriculture etc. A "volunteer" is a young person or student who helps out with certain tasks according to their availability. An "intern" comes from a local, national or international training or educational institution in order to acquire practical experience.
>
> In Koutiala, the "external collaborators" are the most committed and involved, while the "volunteers" are the least involved or subjected to constraints.

Recognise and encourage all staff and volunteers

Recognition of CMC workers should not be based on money. Unfortunately, the amount of money paid is often seen as an indication of how the CMC (and therefore the community) values the contribution of staff. **It is essential for CMCs to motivate and encourage staff and volunteers in alternative, non-financial ways.** Read more in the section on Volunteers.

Many contributors, big and small, come to the CMC in response to a need: a need to use their time and energy to make a difference to others. It is essential for you to identify and institutionalise your CMC's needs to match with people's need for participation and involvement.

Planning

You won't find any easy answers to the challenges of operating a CMC. Advertising and paid staff is not the answer, nor is it safe to say your CMC will run itself once the equipment arrives.

Plan your human resource needs before you plan the use of your staff budget and equipment.

People need to drive the vehicles of their own development, not just be along for the ride. In other words, people need to be involved every step of the way. A key theme for all CMCs is **participation.** This is true across all areas of operation, but most importantly for how you think about and manage your human resources.

- Give special consideration to **youth** and **women** to maximise impact.

- Youth have a mutually advantageous relationship to CMCs: they bring with them sharp learning abilities, open minds and free time; they take away a variety of new skills, increased social capital and wider perspectives.

- Being at the centre of community development, women must be involved at all levels of your CMC and their needs must be a priority.

Try to make sure that human resource considerations are part of your constitution. It helps to put people squarely in the driver's seat and have **guidelines** or **policies** that reflect your goals and priorities.

Tips on rewarding volunteers

- *Contracts or agreements for volunteers that outline rights and responsibilities*

- *Official volunteer positions and/or categories such as radio producers, show hosts, technical operators, telecentre supervisors, computer trainers, etc.*

- *Acknowledge your volunteers in public: on the radio, at the centre, in publications*

- *Provide rewards and incentives such as discounts at the telecentre and at supportive local businesses or institutions*

- *Identity cards for volunteers*

- *Other types of compensation: tea, transport, meals.*

• Members

It is worth beginning our exploration of human resources with the basic building block of your CMC: your community members.

Whether officially, through a cooperative or other form of organisation, or simply through their involvement as volunteers, listeners and users, your goal should be to make '*members* of the community' also *'members* of the CMC'.

Ideally a broad community membership will form the basis of your CMC's local ownership, a key ingredient for the success and sustainability of any CMC.

• Community participation

By now it should be obvious that your CMC's greatest resource is your community itself. Of course, 'the community' includes your listeners and users, but also all the individuals, organisations and groups that work on ICTs and local media – among others extension workers, teachers, health workers, community leaders and local government officials, among others.

You should consider inviting individuals and groups that are specialised in a particular area to partner and innovate: Internet cafes, for example, can share their experience in running a sustainable operation and may provide technical assistance. NGOs and various development programmes may have parallel objectives to your own. You may share mutual interests with other community outfits, such as user groups or microcredit networks. See what sort of linkages you can make. You might consider inviting representatives of other groups to sit on one of your committees or form an advisory group.

• Core groups

At the centre of your CMC are the people who make it all possible – people who instinctively and intuitively understand your mission and means. Often, a core group of committed people will emerge.

Tips on involving women and girls

Consider and plan separate recruitment for girls and women

- be sure to have women represented on committees and staff, not as token members, but as full participants

- Involve women and girls in planning all aspects of the CMC from programming to the physical layout of facilities

- be sure to have women's programmes as well as sections for women-oriented digital resources

- Have "women-only" times at the CMC for both media programming and computer usage

- Make sure women are involved as recruiters, trainers and supervisors… basically in all of your CMC's areas of operations

In fact, these rules go for ensuring the participation of any group, be it youth or people with disabilities.

The most important thing is to get people involved!

1 pm to 3 pm Women Only

Whether they are made up of staff, volunteers or both, core groups provide a degree of continuity, allowing for turnover among short-term contributors and flexibility around seasonal demands.

Your core group might take on the practical responsibilities that are nominally covered by your committee; for instance charting a course for fundraising. In low budget operations, volunteer members of a core group might even take on the role of paid staff. In all likelihood, your core group will help your CMC to be flexible and manage day-to-day operations.

It depends of course on your own particular situation, but one factor that CMCs have in common is that they attract people. Be ready for them and, in positive ways, be sure to take advantage of their energy and skills.

What makes up a CMC core group?

The individuals that are part of it and the way they relate to one another as a group will be a distinctive reflection of your local community and CMC:

- your core group may include founders of the centre or representatives of your parent organisation or members of its governing board

- it will almost certainly include your staff

- it may involve local community leaders, teachers, extension or development workers

- the core group could also involve advisors or contributors from outside the community who are committed in some way to community media

- For many CMCs there will also be people who, for one reason or another, get hooked on CMC — volunteers who can't seem to get enough of operating the studio, doing interviews or creating new programmes on the computer.

Building skills and capacity

One of the most important things your CMC will do is to build the capacity of your community to respond to local needs, for example, generating income, improved education, good governance or health.

You will also need to think about building the skills and the capacity of your own staff and volunteers to effectively plan and run a CMC.

This is true for people working on radio and TV broadcasting as on new ICTs. Your training should cover a wide range of skills that have been jointly identified and discussed. You might do training on interviewing or editing, or on how to generate and format content for the Internet.

Young volunteers at Baraka Telecentre, Senegal

Photo courtesy: Laurent Elder

• Careers and skills

While formal training is important, it is also essential for you to foster a culture of mentoring and peer training. Cooperation and peer encouragement often result in an organic growth of skills, interest and capacity amongst not just one or two members, but amongst many, perhaps spreading out to touch the whole of your CMC network.

Becoming part of the CMC may contribute in many ways to an individual's *marketability;* however, you should be careful not to encourage people to consider the CMC as a career move in itself. It is also a bit dangerous to promote the idea that computer or other types of training will result in employment.

CMC staff is often young, with limited education language skills and knowledge of the world. However, these young people bring an endless stream of energy and creativity to whatever they do.

Training: a valuable investment

Staff and volunteers that start working without basic ICT skills must be trained to handle various duties that include CD Rom usage, software maintenance and management skills of the CMC.

On the job training is ideal but has to be properly structured and focused and requires additional tools in the form of manuals, tutorials, online advice, discussion groups, etc.

Problems of high turnover

Retaining staff and volunteers is no doubt a challenge as there is usually a high turnover due to the following factors:

- brain drain as people move on to higher aspirations, further studies, and the city
- trained staff get poached by organisations that provide better offers
- energetic young people get older, get married, take on new responsibilities that increase their financial needs and limit their spare time
- Young managers/coordinators cannot always cope with the high level of responsibility in handling money, people and administration
- it can be difficult to harmonise the roles and responsibilities of paid versus unpaid staff
- poor interpersonal relations, unreliability, no progress despite training
- disparities in wage levels within and among CMCs, e.g. project salaries, state salary levels, salaries paid out of local revenue.

Suggested solutions include

- ongoing and decentralized retraining
- consolidated and expanded pool of activists, volunteers and committee members
- involve activists and local committee members in management and other training
- thoughtful, treatment of activists, and the introduction of incentives for their dedication, e.g. recognition, free training or Internet access, t-shirts, tea.
- comparative salaries and wages

It is critical to ensure a good and welcoming work environment for the community and the workers so that people can feel proud to be working at your CMC.

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One of the great advantages of CMCs over computer and media institutes is that CMCs not only help develop skills, but also put them to use. You need to promote your CMC as a place in which people can apply their skills, be innovate and creative on behalf of the whole community.

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Developing Skills and Training

*Polly Gaster, Bianca Miglioretto
and Atieno Aluoch*

In this chapter

- **Skills required in a CMC**

- **What kind of training?**

- **Things to think about**

- **Case study: Telecentre training in Uganda**

Developing Skills and Training

When you are setting up your CMC, you will need to think very carefully about the kind of people that are needed to run it and the skills that might be available locally. In the case of Mozambique, for example, very few rural districts can provide full secondary education, consequently there is an inevitable move by young people to the cities in search of more schooling. The job market is also limited by the size of the local economy.

Begin by identifying available human resources before attempting to design an elaborate structure with departments, workgroups, technicians and university graduates, especially when you know that there aren't many people who went to university in your community.

Let's take the example of radio. The strong separation of tasks that is found in mainstream radio is marked by the presence of a technician, an anchorperson, and a news writer. This clear-cut assignment is missing in community radio where each team member is expected to be multi-skilled and able to perform all of the tasks and gradually focus on his or her preferences. But they can truly select their 'specialisation' only after they have a chance to get to know every aspect of running a radio station.

With training, most people can learn how to broadcast, become multi-skilled and make programmes that are effective in bringing in more listeners and participation. The challenge of community radio is to open up the airwaves to everyone – not just giving interviews, but sitting behind the mixer and conducting interviews.

The basic rule is that skills <u>can</u> be learned, so long as people want to learn them and someone is there to teach.

Skills required in a CMC

Imagine that in your setting you have basic equipment that includes a network of computers linked to a printer, with access to email and the Internet, a suitcase radio, a photocopier, a fax machine, and a telephone… now, what skills do you need to run the centre?

To start with:

- **Technical skills**
  - Ability to use computers – basic word processing, spreadsheet, organisation and management of files and information, safety procedures such as how to switch on and off correctly, do backups

  - Ability to use email and the Internet – for communications and for searching out information and saving it

  - Ability to operate radio equipment – the studio, broadcasting, taping, interviewing, editing and making programmes, safety procedures

  - Maintenance – first line computer maintenance, installing programmes, using anti-virus, keeping the radio equipment clean and in good order.

- **Organisational skills**
  - Management – how to keep everything going, plan activities, pay bills, do the accounts, organise meetings, make sure agreed work methods are followed, supporting volunteers, preparing reports

  - Radio operations – organising programme schedules, volunteer timetables, coordination.

- **Creative skills**
  - Ability to teach computer courses, train volunteers for the radio station

  - Creativity and journalism – radio programme production, web production, producing a local newspaper, willingness to experiment with new ideas.

- **Communication and animation skills**
  - Mobilisation – working with the community to ensure full involvement, liaison with community resource people and informants, maintaining contacts with local authorities and organisations, looking for support and sponsorships, ways of bringing in more clients for paid services, fundraising

  - Communicating with community members about CMC activities

  - Respect for fittings and equipment and understanding of ownership.

Even in areas where the CMC is breaking new ground, it is often possible to find people who already have useful skills, or have had experience elsewhere. For example, among the volunteers there may be someone who has worked with a community radio elsewhere, or has a relative who does; school students who have produced the school wall newspaper; a budding electrician; or a retired teacher or health worker with some spare time.

The most difficult jobs to fill are often the management, organisation and financial ones on the one hand, and the creative areas on the other, but training can resolve most problems.

What kind of training

Get people hands-on

On the job training works well if it is properly structured and focused. The best results are usually generated by training people at the CMC itself, using the equipment that is provided for daily CMC activities. There are examples of people going for radio or computer training courses elsewhere, then coming back and finding that they cannot use their training because their own equipment is significantly different! This should obviously be avoided.

Your training should consist of a lot of practical exercises. Keep the theoretical inputs short and let the participants immediately apply what they have learned. After learning about how to conduct an interview let them go out to the field, do an interview, listen to it and critically analyse it.
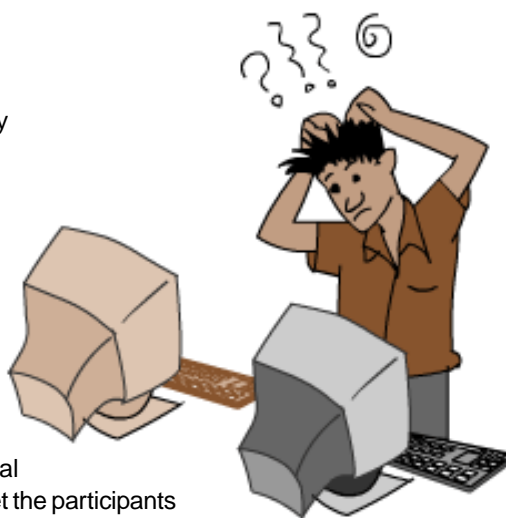
Getting hands-on in the studio is usually the part of the training people like most. An important task of the trainer is to encourage the trainees to venture to produce their own radio programme. It is very empowering for the participants to produce their first radio production during the training itself.

Developing creativity

The biggest challenge of the training is to develop people's creativity. Many people tend to copy the style of programme they know from commercial or state radio. But radio is a sensitive, colourful and diverse medium and there are many ways of presenting a story. Community radio allows us to elaborate and experiment with different ways.

It is advisable to start with a simple introductory training of 3-5 days during which all aspects of radio production are taught (see sample training schedule in annex). Then the trainees can gain some experience in the field. At the next stage, they get in-depth training in different aspects of community radio.

Train trainers

Select the best people among your staff for a course in basic computer and radio operations at the nearest professional facility – a computer school, a radio training centre, a well-established radio station, or wherever is most appropriate. These people will come back ready to train radio volunteers and to give computer courses at the CMC.

They should be chosen for their suitability from all points of view: they may not have any previous technical skills, but they must have enough basic education to be able to assimilate the training and transmit what they have learned to others.

Choose people who are likely to be with the CMC for some time, who are steady and reliable and get on well with others. Always send at least two people, or three if you have the funds and they have the time. This allows some people to do better than others in a certain skill and also reduces the risk of losing the skills when people move on.

Don't forget that your trainers should bring back the manuals and programmes they have used in the training, so that they can be adapted or reproduced (with permission).

Formal basic training at the CMC

Include a line item in your budget to provide a formal course on basic computer skills that will motivate your staff. Members of your management committee or community advisory group should also be offered these courses, as a way of bonding them more closely with the CMC.

The courses can be given by your own trainer/s, and should cover at least the basic skills. By the end of the course everyone should be able to write and print out texts, do basic layout for newspapers and publicity leaflets and the like, and be able to search the Internet and select and organise information from it.

Depending on the equipment you have, the teams also need to know how to use CD Roms to search for information, or to copy material or music onto them for use by the radio. If you do not have digital editing studio equipment in your CMC, the radio team can download interviews with a digital tape recorder into a computer, edit them there and transfer them to CD Rom for radio transmission.

The CMC should have its own course programmes and manuals and do final tests to give a certificate at the end of the course. This should be done for courses for the paying public as well as courses for volunteers and staff.

Specialised courses

The most practical way to get specialised training is to make contacts with other organisations in the country that are working in the same areas and join together with their training activities, following the same principles as for training of trainers.

This can also have the advantage of getting to meet people from other parts of the country who are working in radio or telecentres or CMC projects, and learning from their experiences.

However, if you want to train a larger number of people (say a minimum of six), it may be cheaper and more productive to contract a trainer to come to the CMC and stay for a week rather than sending the trainees to another location.

Specialised courses could include:

- Financial management
- Web design
- Radio programme production
- News gathering
- Advanced maintenance.
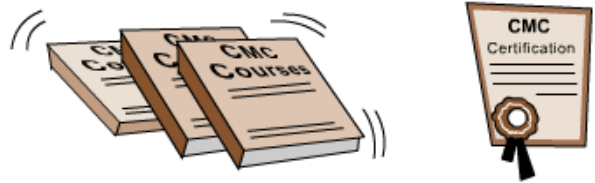
Workshops

A good way of mobilising larger numbers of people is to organise a half-day workshop. The objective could be a general introduction to radio, or to teach a new skill, or bring in a specific group from the community. Try to bring in different kinds of people – some of your best long-term volunteers might come out of this kind of contact.

For a successful training workshop

- Decide your topic
- Decide who is the priority target group for the topic
- Fix a time, date and place that is most convenient to that target group
- Fix a clear agenda, including showing starting and ending times
- Organise your presenters or facilitators and any materials you will need
- Publicise the event, particularly aiming at your target group, with invitations and individual contacts as necessary
- If you have the budget, serve some refreshments (for example soft drinks and biscuits) during or after the session.

Study visits and networking

One of the best ways of learning is to see for yourself how other people are dealing with the same kind of issues. Sending a group to visit another CMC, radio station or telecentre is always an excellent experience – people come back full of enthusiasm and ideas about new things to do or what not to do. Managers, in particular, can gain a lot from spending a day or two working with managers at a longer-established CMC.

Depending on your location and the size of your country, this can be quite an expensive exercise, but perhaps no more than sending people to a formal course in the capital city, for example, and at

least as useful. And then, of course, you must invite people back so that they can learn from your experience and maybe give some practical tips.

A big advantage of both study visits and attending other organisations' courses is that you make friends and establish permanent working relations with other groups. You will find that this results in an informal mutual help network. For example, the CMCs can consult each other by phone or email if they have problems; perhaps one place has a really good technician who can be invited over to give a short course or run a workshop; another CMC nearby may be able to lend you a tape or some printer ink if you run out, and so on.

Good networking can really help your own long-term consolidation and sustainability.

Handholding

It is useful to have a back-up resource available for your CMC through "handholding" or mentoring. The idea is to have a permanent contact – or contract – with experienced professionals who agree to give you support in a certain area of activity. Usually this will include "online" support by phone or email and regular visits (perhaps once a month or once every three months) for a given period.

Things to think about

Who are you training?

Almost anyone can learn technical skills. However, we need to remember that they will only learn if they get the opportunity.

Throughout the world cultural myths prevent women and girls from being included in technically oriented training. Often, girls will find it difficult to present their views in a room full of men because of different cultural orientations. The same can be true for young people with a limited education background, people with disabilities, or farming communities who are more comfortable in their fields rather than behind a desk. You must make a conscious effort to select a balanced group of trainees in order to create the right type of atmosphere where everyone can be at ease with each other and you, the trainer, can give equal attention to all.

You may also want to think about organising special courses for different groups. Women may find it preferable to attend a training session with other women. A woman trainer can serve as a role model. Young members of a session will tend to

learn faster and can sometimes assist in teaching the older trainees. Although it may not be good to separate groups permanently by sex, origin, language etc., it can help build confidence when starting up.

Local correspondents at the village level will need special training in using equipment (such as a tape recorder) and preparing news items; local professionals can be encouraged to produce radio programmes about their areas of expertise.

Involving less educated and disabled people

Illiteracy or disability should not prevent members of the community from participating fully in the CMC. People do not need to know how to read and write to produce a radio programme. Deaf and dumb people can find a whole new world of communication working on the CMC website or moderating email discussion groups. Blind people can operate a radio studio if there are blind language stickers on all the controls.

Training materials

If possible, all trainees in formal courses should receive manuals. If that is not possible, then the CMC should have a permanent library of manuals and handouts for use by trainees and reference by others.

Creating your own material

English-speaking countries have the least difficulty in getting training materials, locally or off the Internet. If your local language is not English, you may need to translate or adapt material to your local languages. You can, of course create manuals in your own language if this is more cost effective. Keep in mind that language translation alone will not resolve problems encountered in teaching new concepts.

Learning by doing

Once people have acquired skills, they must be able to practise them immediately. Training should only start after the equipment has arrived and been installed. After training, people continue to learn by doing – and can also pass on their skills to others.

Keeping things going

As with projects that only plan for funding the initial equipment and don't have a budget for spare parts and maintenance, some projects plan only the initial training courses without including follow ups. This can prove harmful for the sustainability of CMCs. Ongoing training must be planned and budgeted from the beginning, so that your pool of human resources can be consolidated and expanded. Always plan for continuous training, plus support through manuals, training software, tutorials, online advice and handholding, discussion groups.

Don't forget that the skills learned in your CMC aren't lost when a staff member or volunteer moves on – they are used somewhere else, as part of an individual's lifelong experience and contribution. However, they are lost to you! That is why you must always be sure not to depend on just one or two people. Make sure trained staff share their skills and keep working on new mobilisation.

Multimedia Training Kit (MMTK): An adaptable training resource

UNESCO launched in 2002 the creation of a Multimedia Training Kit (MMTK) to provide trainers in telecentres, CMCs, community media organisations and the development sector with a structured set of materials to help bridge the gap between new and traditional media.

The MMTK materials, built up by a group of partner organizations, cover a range of areas. Modules and units from modules can be used as building blocks, which trainers select to build up a workshop programme. For example, for a workshop on IT skills for a women's organisation, a trainer could choose units from "Searching the Internet" and "Violence Against Women", and combine them into a single workshop course.

Topics available include Searching the Internet, Digital Audio Production, Producing Content for Radio, Writing for the Web, Cooperative Problem Solving, Using Open Source Software and Reporting on HIV/AIDS. The materials released so far are just the first step towards the comprehensive collection, which is still under development.

All materials are released under a Creative Commons licence which allows their free use and distribution for non-commercial use.

Materials are distributed on CD by UNESCO and can be downloaded from http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/mmtk/

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Introduction to computers training at Sengerema Telecentre, Tanzania

Photo courtesy: Habby Bugalama

Telecentre Training at Nakaseke CMC in Uganda

Skills assessment

The three-month training programme at the Nakaseke CMC started with an assessment asking what type of ICT skills the local community was interested in learning. Primary schoolteacher trainees, high school students, unemployed youth and women, farmers, entrepreneurs, other local community members and the CMC staff responded to the questionnaires and showed that:

• The teachers were interested in word-processing, using CD Roms, email and learning how to surf the Internet

• The centre staff was interested in learning HTML and basic hardware and software troubleshooting skills

• Farmers and entrepreneurs were interested in Internet classes as well as using CD Roms for research purposes

• The youth were mainly interested in the Internet and email.

Based on the above responses, a free ICT workshop was organized on the following topics: introduction to computers, typing, basic HTML and web design, Internet surfing and email.

At the end of the training, the trainees filled out a skills assessment form (see annex) to evaluate the skills they had acquired. The trainees were then counselled on what particular areas they could further focus on.

Scheduling the classes

In order to accommodate people's work schedules, learning curves and interests, plus the fact that there were only five computers, the classes were divided into three sessions:

• Morning 9 a.m. to 12 noon

• Lunchtime 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

• Afternoon 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The CMC was open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, thus providing the students with ample opportunity to complete their homework and practise before or after class.

Typing and word processing

Typing and word processing became a major part of the course as the participants discovered that these skills would help them to generate some income.

Literacy and language

The basic requirement for all the participants was the ability to read, write and understand English as this was the common language with the trainers and also the language used for instruction in most local schools.

However, there was always a staff member to assist in explaining in Luganda to the group, whenever necessary. While explaining, the staff used scenarios the participants were able to relate to; they also helped in breaking the ice for the outside trainers. Throughout the course we drew upon these examples to further illustrate difficult concepts like sending email, folder structures, saving files etc.

They also learned how to use a scanning machine and make cards with photographs. They designed certificates and used the printer and photocopying machine to make copies of their completed work.

Email and Internet

It was planned that the phone lines would be connected and working towards the end of the course but, unfortunately, this did not occur. It was a challenge to explain the functionality of email and the Internet theoretically by drawing parallels with normal mail and explaining the instant delivery or receipt of messages through this new technology.

During the frequent power outages at the centre a series of quizzes were given on the content covered and this served to occupy the time till the power was reconnected. When prior notice was given that the power would be off the whole day, a generator would be hired and the class would continue with no interruptions.

Training resources

The typing tutorials available on floppy disks and CD Rom became a great supplement to teaching as they afford the students the opportunity to practise in their free time and at their own pace.

Additional teaching resources are found on interactive CD Roms on wide ranging subjects — from agriculture and medicine to cattle farming and appropriate technology. Tutorials are available on diskettes and are useful for CMCs that are using old model computers.

Peer to peer training

One of the advantages of offering the courses at different times during the day is that it manages to group the students into categories with similar interests, as they are usually available at the same time. This affords them the opportunity for collaboration on homework assignments at times convenient to most of them as well as providing opportunities for sharing and exchanging ideas.

Certification

At the end of the workshop a test was conducted and students were awarded a certificate of completion. There was a sense of pride and achievement at the award ceremony as the certificates were handed out. The certificates stated the trainees had participated in an *Introduction to ICT* course and a list of the course content was attached.

The students were concerned about the recognition of the certificates by other computer training institutions. This is a challenge facing many of the ICT training courses.

It is worth exploring the possibility of developing a standardised test that could be taken at any CMC globally and which would be recognised at other learning institutions as well.

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http://www.school.za/edict/edict/appl.htm

http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/english/trainers.shtml

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Organisational Structures and Strategies

Ian Pringle and Polly Gaster

In this chapter

- **People-oriented organising strategies**

- **Organisational structure and organisational development**

- **Consultation and feedback**

Organisational Structures and Strategies

The challenge of community multimedia often has less to do with technology than it does with organising. Organisational management is at the heart of *any* enterprise and how you organise is *essential* to any multimedia strategy you might have for your community's development using multimedia tools.

Organisational considerations are greatly influenced by your local situation and there are no *off-the-shelf* solutions. There are some basic principles to be followed and fundamental roles and responsibilities to be filled.

Details of organisation will be varied in accordance with the type of CMC — the scale, the location, the prevailing culture, national legislation and many other factors. It is up to you to decide what meets your needs, and there are lots of different models for you to look at and choose from or adapt.

You might want to borrow ideas from other organisations in the area, from other CMCs, telecentres, or community radio stations in or outside your country. You can also get samples of statutes or codes of conduct from manuals on the Internet.

All aspects of running a CMC are interrelated. In terms of organisation, you need to think carefully about many things, including the cost and scale of facilities, strategies for human resources, programming, and content. Your CMC must make organisational capacity development a priority in addition to other priorities such as building technical and production capacity and providing good programmes and reliable services.

People-oriented organising

The basic building blocks of your organisation are people. They need to be represented and included in both the conceptual and operational parts of how your CMC is organised.

Networks

Organisation starts at the grassroots level – in and amongst the social **networks** that already exist in your community. Ideally the CMC is a hub within a broader network that includes both social movements and local information and communications channels. Existing in a mutually beneficial relationship, the CMC simultaneously relies on and strengthens local networks of groups and individuals.

The communities of some CMCs have strong pre-existing networks; other CMC initiatives focus on developing networks as part of their strategy. Media and ICTs have an influential role to play in networking of any kind.

Partnerships

Local networks also extend to partnerships in a broader sense and in a wide variety of arrangements and relationships.

Some CMCs are coalitions of different local media and social organisations that sometimes include government or local businesses. Although partnerships, especially coalitions, are hard to manage, they have rewarding benefits.

General guidelines for CMC organisation

- *Be democratic*

- *Be accountable*

- *Ensure the participation of all CMC workers – staff, volunteers, collaborators*

- *Ensure representation of all sections of the community and provide them the space to defend their interests*

- *Don't be aligned with any one section or interest group to the detriment of others*

- *Be flexible and practical.*

Your CMC should be open to both associations as well as practical arrangements where two or more organizations work together to mutually benefit from one another.

Associations

The enormous power of association and strength in numbers gives CMCs an opportunity to link across other borders and barriers: the well-known international NGO *Reporters without Borders* is an apt example. These types of associations are uniquely important in crisis situations. Membership in well-reputed organisations can reinforce the credibility of your CMC and facilitates the adoption of international codes and standards in your organisation.

Your CMC should strongly consider joining associations, working in cooperative forums, and actively participating in networks supported by your own time and funds.

Using email and the Internet are good ways to network. There are useful online discussion groups, email lists and other informative and interactive resources available on the Internet. Where possible, it may also be worthwhile to participate in national, regional or even international meetings, especially if the meetings are action and/or network oriented.

Organisational structures

Assemblies and constitutions

Your CMC is based on certain principles and guidelines and operates through an authority that should be responsible to your main stakeholders. An official structure, a constitution, and a regular gathering of stakeholders should be at the **heart** of your community's CMC makeup.

Codes of conduct

Editorial policies and journalistic ethics are important issues that need to be thoroughly discussed and agreed. Many countries already have press organisations that have codes of conduct and/or national legislation that define freedom of expression, right of reply, access to sources and the need for balanced reporting.

These models can be adopted, or incorporated into your CMC's own editorial policy, which should also reflect local concerns and needs.

Local pressures on a radio station are always strong from many different quarters, so you will find that the existence of a well-publicised editorial policy and guarantees of support from the committee that represents the community are important tools to defend the radio journalists.

In some regions, networks of community radios have formed a coordinating group and follow an agreed list of principles with regard to the coverage of elections. The community radios will only broadcast civic education and news items, and not party political propaganda - except in the form of short paid-for commercials.

Stakeholders need to be represented in decision-making with accountability to the people at the grassroots level. Elections greatly enhance a CMC's claim to represent the local community and set a progressive example. This is true only if elections are fair, free of outside influence and any form of overt political pressure.

Although procedures vary from place to place, CMCs are generally rooted in some type of association or group. The authority that formulates policy and elects or appoint representatives is the **assembly** of stakeholders, shareholders or members.

Alongside its legal registrations, a constitution or similar document is the written basis of an organization, usually explaining its origin and purpose in addition to its mode of operation. Policies, rules and regulations are rooted here, even if they exist in more detail in other documents. (See annex on Developing a constitution).

The constitution and other documents developed from it are what define an organization, both in

principle and in practice. There are numerous models of organization and usually there are different local options for a CMC to choose from. For example, a CMC might be a society, a cooperative, a non-profit corporation, or an association. In some situations, a CMC might even officially be a business or government department. (See example of a constitution in annex).

The type of CMC organization you opt for is very much related to your own unique environment — legally, culturally and practically — in terms of both organizational structure and governance of the media and technologies.

All that is written and intended must also be implemented. The organization itself is the follow through. A CMC can be truly community oriented by simultaneously adopting an independent, collective, and cooperative nature.

Media organisations should always adhere to a principle of independence. CMCs should be autonomously organised with rights and mechanisms for self-determination.

Especially in the context of changing media environments, CMCs and other community media often come about through the efforts of like-minded social organisations and advocacy groups, in which groups sponsor new local media channels.

The notion and practice of independence is at the heart of the credibility of any media channel as well as its sustainability.

Membership

Whatever the topic, it is worth beginning with the basic building block of your CMC: your community members.

Whether officially, through a cooperative or other form of organisation, or simply through their involvement as volunteers, listeners and users, your goal should be to make 'members of the community' also 'members of the CMC'.

Ideally a broad community membership will form the basis of your CMC's local ownership, a key ingredient of the success of any CMC, especially your sustainability.

Boards and Committees

Whether they are called "boards" or "working groups," "steering committees" or whether they go by another name, you need to have an official body that literally or symbolically represents your local community's ownership of the CMC.

As with all aspects of your operations, it is best if this group is truly active and not just a nominal body; however, in practice, many CMCs have official faces that are separate to some degree from the working parts. Regardless of the exact shape that a CMC's structure takes, the important things are that your CMC's operations are **well managed**, that **decision-making** is **transparent** and **accountable.**

Official bodies are particularly important for decision-making, dealing with official policies and documents, and for handling other groups – from government to local community organisations. Your committee must ensure that your whole CMC operation reflects the character of your community and that it is open to all its members.

Especially for CMCs that operate with little or no staffing, committees can be very useful in ensuring that essential responsibilities are covered.

Creating working groups

The best way to ensure participation is to create a number of working groups according to topics or areas of activity. Depending on your priorities, you can create working groups for:

- Cultural programmes for radio
- Women's programmes
- Training
- Health education
- Local newspaper

In this way different kinds of people can be brought into CMC activity - ranging from school students who want to present music programmes on the radio to local health workers who can advise on the content of an AIDS prevention campaign.

Division of tasks and responsibilities

The relationship between the governing bodies (usually voluntary), paid staff and volunteers is often complex. Usually, the paid staffs do a large part of the day-to-day work and ensure the management and implementation of all the planned activities.

Volunteers will be particularly useful for the radio, for mobilisation activities, for producing information and other initiatives.

The governing body supervise the staff, keep an eye on the accounts, and guarantee good relations with the community and external bodies.

Certain areas of operations should be taken very seriously and built into a structure for which your committee or other official body takes responsibility. You might break it down as follows:

- Administration: finances, registrations
- Coordination: volunteers, training, fundraising
- Technical: facilities, equipment maintenance
- Programme/content: local relevance, authenticity.

Operational systems

Your CMC's operations are facilitated by structures and systems that allow for sustainable organisational management, collective decision-making, and continuity of experience and institutionalisation of knowledge.

The structures include mechanisms for producing programme content, operating and maintaining facilities, and managing financial and logistical administration.

These activities are coordinated by the CMC's human resources — your core team, staff and volunteers. The way you organise your CMC should be as inclusive as possible, guided by the same principles of equity and social justice as your programmes and content.

Consultative, consensual and collective decision-making is a demanding approach, however it is essential and ultimately rewarding. Working in teams and through systems, and valuing local leadership and role models ultimately leads away from excessive dependence on strong personalities toward a more collective way of organising.

When we start to think of CMCs as community centres, it is important to recognise their role as spaces for innovation and experimentation. This is where your community members' expressive and creative potentials can be fully realised, instinctively responding to the community's local needs.

Organisational development

Meetings

Your core team of staff, committed volunteers, and active committee members should meet regularly and discuss areas of common concern and individual responsibility.

The idea is to have a system for coordinating activities and managing your CMC as a team. Use meetings to update the core CMC team on all the major areas of operation. In addition to bulletin boards and emails, meetings are an essential means of communication.

Tips on meetings

Remember that meetings are a means to an end. They should be governed by an appropriate set of guidelines.

- Meetings should always have a chairperson. An independent chairperson should not be a participant, but is responsible to **facilitate** the process and discussion of an agreed-upon agenda.

- Agendas should follow an established format that includes
  – approval of previous minutes
  – review of CMC operations
  – follow-up on assignments
  – new items
  – correspondence and visitors

- Meetings should be flexible and human, but must also stick to agendas and set time limits for discussion. The chairperson should manage the meeting fairly and effectively.

- Be action oriented: assign responsibilities, document and circulate them and always follow-up at the next meeting.

- Meetings should be inclusive and allow all participants the opportunity to voice their opinions.

- Be transparent and accountable to your CMC stakeholders: post agendas, keep minutes and make them accessible.

- Hold meetings at regular times; there can be short daily meetings or more comprehensive weekly or monthly meetings.

Policy development

Roles of staff and committees should be clearly defined and written down. Staff members should have written job descriptions and committees should have a clear terms of reference. Accessible documentation makes roles and responsibilities clear to everyone.

Without going overboard, your CMC's organization should give time to developing systems and policies that govern the way the organization functions and document the process.

Strategic planning and organisational development

CMCs should engage in an organizational development process that includes research and analysis and leads to plans and strategies that address local needs with local resources.

Does your CMC have these policies?

- *Fundraising*
  - *Advertising*
  - *Financial accounting*

- *Human Resources*
  - *Hiring*
  - *Evaluation*
  - *Equity*

- *Programming*
  - *Freedom of expression*
  - *Prohibitions on promotion of hatred, obscenity*
  - *Guidelines for elections*

Examples of outputs from these processes are new policies, as well as specialised strategies like business plans, marketing, membership or fundraising campaigns.

Consultation and feedback

You will find it very helpful to keep a record of all visitors to the CMC, at least in terms of sex, age group, and the reason for the visit.

This will help build up a picture of trends over time, and see which services are most used and which are least popular. You can then build on that with periodic surveys to ask users why they use or don't use this or that service.

Regular research will help you to keep track of the CMC users and participants, who they are and what they want.

Local correspondents at village level can also help to check on how the radio programmes are being received in terms of technical quality, language comprehensibility, and relevance of content. They might want to hold meetings and invite questions, suggestions, and feedback.

Sengerema Telecentre (Tanzania) Manager explains the role of the centre to the community

Some places create listener groups followed by discussion and others offer associate membership to anyone who wants to join. Joining implies paying a small regular contribution to support the CMC and also being able to participate in assemblies to give opinions about how the CMC is being run and what it should be doing.

The structures mentioned above will guarantee solid links with the most important people of all your radio listeners and information technology users. Your organisational structures will change as your CMC grows. What matters is that the leadership, rules, and channels of communication are clear and publicly known.

Ian Pringle and Polly Gaster

Participation of Communities, Stakeholders and Users

Anriette Esterhuysen

In this chapter

- **What is a community?**

- **Understanding communities and their needs**

- **What role can the CMC play in dealing with community issues?**

- **Community participation in the CMC**

- **Working with others**

Participation of Communities, Stakeholders and Users

What is a community?

'Community' is a concept, which is not always easy to define. Unless reference is made to a specific, known community, its use can be quite vague. At the same time it is central to development and social justice work. 'Community' adds a human dimension. When discussing 'community development' and 'community empowerment' keep in mind that the goal is to benefit actual people by improving access to resources and increasing participation in decisions that impact day-to-day lives.

In general 'a community' refers to a group of people who are bound together in some way – by living in close proximity to one another, sharing or having common needs, interests, life experiences, cultural or religious characteristics, common values or common activities.

It is useful to think of community along with the words 'common' and 'commune'.

– 'Common' points to the **characteristics that people in the community have in common** and that define the group as a community.

– 'Commune' highlights the element of **communication** and interaction that shapes and sustains communities.

Mapping your community to understand its composition is discussed in the Starting Up Chapter. Here we shall use the same approach to identify community information needs.

As a starting point, Example 1 below demonstrates types of communities and the common characteristics that draw a group of people into a 'community'. As a short exercise, fill in the right-hand column with what you think would be the information needs of each of these communities.

Example 1

Members of the community	Type of community	Common characteristics	Information needs
residents of a village or neighbourhood	geographic/ residential	location and local conditions, local government, leaders, service providers	
community radio broadcasters in Zambia	professional/ activity	similar work experience, skills, regulatory environment	
child victims of sexual abuse	support group	similar experiences of trauma and recovery	
catholic relief workers	religious/activity	faith, religious values, and work experience	
people living with HIV/AIDS	support group activist group advocacy group	experience, advocacy goals, needs for medication and health services etc.	

Make the most of overlapping community members

For example, in the context of a CMC, a woman farmer who has a disability could be an active member of the women farmer community as well as the community of people with disabilities. If your CMC reaches out successfully to women farmers, you could work with this particular woman to develop relationship with people living with disabilities in your area.

Users and stakeholders

In the case of a CMC your users and stakeholders will be part of your target community. 'Users' generally refers to people who make use of the CMC services, and 'stakeholders' are those people or groups of people who have a 'stake' or interest in the CMC, its purpose and services. Sometimes you might have users from outside your target community e.g., other CMCs or organisations based in other regions. Stakeholders are more than 'users'. They need to be included in the process that leads toward the establishment of a CMC, defining its strategic direction and giving feedback on its impact.

In this chapter stakeholders are not dealt with separately as we assume that your target community or communities are your CMC's users as well as your key stakeholders.

> Define the users and stakeholders to be included in the starting up process by discussing with your CMC staff, volunteers, partners or donors the types of communities, sub-communities, and interest groups you want to reach in priority order; the 'stakes' or interests of these groupings, and identify the community you and your team belong to.

What community do you want to reach?

Whom do you aim to serve? People in a particular neighbourhood, a province or region? Or does your CMC want to work with a particular thematic community, for example, women involved in a micro-credit scheme, or cotton farmers?

You will need a clear vision of whom you want to reach in order to:

– plan your CMC's activities and services

– choose a location for the CMC

– apply for a grant or loan

– sell advertising space, if you have a newsletter or a radio station in your CMC

Your vision will also influence how you choose CMC workers, what language or languages you operate in, and what material you collect and provide.

Is there more than one distinct community?

Sometimes you might want to reach more than one community. For example, a CMC in a residential area on the outskirts of Johannesburg in South Africa might want to reach the people who have been living there for the last decade as well as a new community of migrant workers from Mozambique who live in informal settlements on the outskirts of the neighbourhood.

These two communities are different, speak different languages, and have information needs that might overlap in some areas, but be very different in other areas. For example, the migrant workers would need to know about the rights of both legal and illegal immigrants.

Women's access and participation in your CMC

It is often a mistaken assumption that information technology is gender neutral. This notion has often resulted in the exclusion of women and girls. Women are interested in using information communication technologies and community radio and it is essential that CMCs address women's concerns and needs by providing an enabling environment for women's participation at all levels.

Many community radio stations and telecentres often do not take into consideration the cultural, traditional, social, economic and time constraints that women in their community face and, therefore, they fail in reaching out to the women and girls.

Nancy J. Hafkin and Sonia Jorge describe some preconditions for women's full participation. Key to your approach is to involve gender-aware persons from the beginning of your project design rather than on hindsight or during your mid-term review.

Janice Brodman outlines the following requirements to ensure that women have access to information and communication technologies:

- **Conduct an active outreach:** Many outreach methods such as leaflets or meetings do not easily reach women because of illiteracy and no time to attend meetings. In the family, the men generally frequent public places and take upon themselves the duty of public activities.

- **Ensure financial accessibility:** As women are often responsible for the household needs of the family, they will first buy food and other essential goods before they can spend on Internet access.

- **Ensure physical accessibility:** If the CMC is in a remote place it might be hard for women to come home from the centre at night or it might be in a place where women traditionally do not go on their own.

- **Provide training:** Training needs for women and men might be different; while women need training in computer use, most men need training in customer services. Because of disparate language (knowledge of English) and literacy levels, different training modules might be necessary.

- **Ensure relevance:** Because women have tight schedules and large workloads they need to be convinced of the relevance of CMC activities. They need to see immediate and useful results emanating from their participation.

- **Build confidence:** As young girls, women have been told that there are a number of activities, especially technical and community work, that are not for them. They are therefore inclined to focus their skills on other fields. We need to build their confidence in performing successfully and they will enjoy it.

- **Enable participation:** It is easy to say women are invited to participate but when they come, they are intimidated to find they have to fulfil a number of preconditions or there is no airtime, no computer available etc.

In order to avoid all the common obstacles, we have to engender our CMC from the very first stage of planning. 'Engender' does not only mean to raise women's consciousness, but also to raise men's consciousness so that they support women's participation by taking more responsibility in the household, on the farm etc. Women of the community carry a huge potential in contributing to the success of the CMC and the community; it is our responsibility to unfold this potential.

Bianca Miglioretto

Further information on the topic

- "Women and Communication", Women in Action 2/2002 by Isis International Manila. http://www.isiswomen.org

- Sonja Jorge, Gender Perspecives on Telecenteres, ITU-Telecom Americas 2000 and "Gender-Sensitive ICT Projects: A Policy Framework", prepared for Gender Evaluation methodology Workshop, APC-WNSP, May 2002

- GEM – Gender Evaluation Methodology: Learning for Change, The APC WNSP Evaluation Model: http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/learning4change/
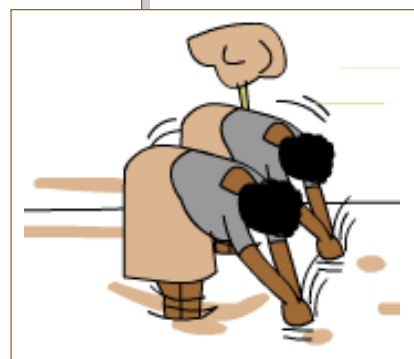
Does this community contain smaller 'sub-communities' or stakeholder groups?

Once you have identified the main community that you want to reach, it is helpful to consider if it contains smaller sub-communities or specific stakeholder groups that you need to consult and consider. For example, if the residents of a large rural village are your primary community, you might find that within this community there are religious groups that are quite distinct within the larger community.

The Tana Village CMC's target communities

Diagram 1
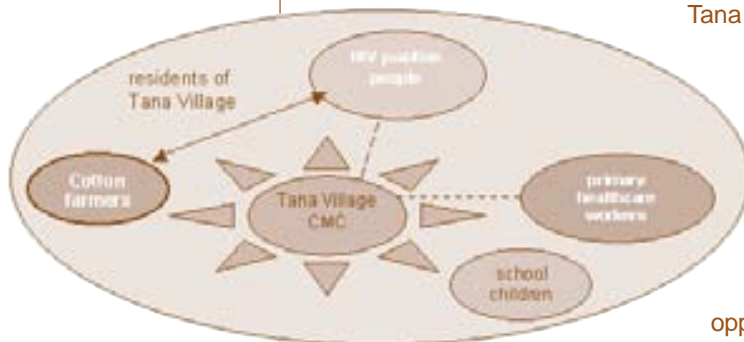
Tana Village is a small town in South Africa where most people survive either through income from family members who are migrant workers or through small-scale cotton farming. There is a high rate of HIV infection, but also a well-organised primary health care facility with a mobile clinic.

The CMC's primary goals are to provide opportunities for cotton farmers to learn new skills, find new ways of generating income, and to provide information and communication services to support the prevention and treatment of HIV infection.

The priority group is cotton farmers, many of who are HIV positive.

The CMC is also actively reaching out to school-going children by providing a walk-in library and a computer-training centre.

In Diagram 1 above, the arrow between the CMC and the HIV positive community indicates that there is a staff member in the CMC who is actively working within this community in advocating for free retroviral treatment. The dotted line to the primary health care community indicates that the wife of the computer trainer at the CMC is a doctor who supports a mobile clinic.

Why it is important to understand the communities you work with?

There are many reasons including:

– the community or communities you work with form the CMC's 'market', i.e. target users, audience, users, and listeners. Understanding who they are and what their needs are is the only way in which you will be able to provide meaningful content and services. Some people call this process **'market definition and analysis'**.

– the legitimacy and long term sustainability of the CMC depends on community involvement, support, ownership and relevance of CMC services to their needs. You could think of this as **'community participation and ownership'**.

– *strengthening the community* is likely to form part of your core goal — capacity building, provision of resources and support, facilitating public participation in local or national

government processes, or providing a space for meetings and experience sharing. All of these contribute to **'community empowerment and development'**.

Analysing needs, concerns and relationships in your locality

There are many ways of understanding community needs and dynamics better such as doing some background reading and gathering your own information.

Background reading

Learn about your community's history and current social and economic situation by asking some of the sample questions listed below. Some of the answers will depend on how much has been documented about the community. Remember that knowledge largely lies with the people form of memory and stories.

Questions about the community's history

- How long has the community been in existence?

- Were there specific reasons for the formation of the community? What were these reasons?

- How does the history of this community fit into the history of the country or region as a whole?

- How has the community changed over time?

Questions about social, cultural and economic factors

- What are the main sources of income?

- What is the social structure, ethnic makeup, language, and religious practice?

- Are there specific conflicts in the community, e.g. among different religious groups, or over land allocation, or trading rights?

- What do people do for recreation and how do they express themselves culturally? What is the status of women, children, elderly people, people with disabilities in the community?

Try tapping the following sources of information:

- National census statistics, which should be available from your government's statistics department.

- Local government officials

- Elders with a reputable memory and a reputation for reciting stories

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Questions about how the community is organised

- Is the community formally organised, with some form of leadership or accountability structure?

- How are leaders selected or identified? By age, religious status, inheritance, elections, rotation?

- What areas does the leadership have control over? Allocation of land, negotiating with local government, providing services etc.

Anticipate change

As you continue with the work of the CMC it is necessary to revisit your initial analysis of these communities and their needs. You should also assess whether there are new communities emerging.

For example, a drought, or conflict situation could cause a new group of people to migrate into your neighbourhood with new and diverse language and information needs, or your existing user communities might change due to certain influences, e.g., workers becoming redundant due to the closure of a factory may also cause an increase in the number of people working as informal street traders in your community.

The questions are useful for tracing changes that took place over a period of time in the community. Draw a chronological timeline for the community to help map some of these changes.

Example

Timeline for Seavale Informal Settlement
(An imaginary community in Durban, South Africa)

1980 – First families arrive after forced removal from Lamontville

1982 – Formation of the Seavale Community Action Committee

1986 – Arrest of the Seavale Six and death in detention of Mathew Mpungose

1987 – Seavale community centre (called after Mathew Mpungose) is built with funding from Scandinavian churches

1987 – Population of Seavale triples in size as a result of new people moving into
- 1990 the area after lifting of influx control legislation in South Africa

1992 – Seavale Women Action is formed and establish small business support network for trader and sowing groups

1994 – New post-apartheid government comes to power in South Africa

1995 – Large taxi rank built in Seavale and the beginning of taxi violence

1997 – Seavale Community Action is resurrected and submits a land claim for the land from which the original community was removed in 1980

2000 – First awareness that many people are dying from AIDS and AIDS/HIV NGOs begin to work in Seavale.

2001 – Government starts a housing development scheme in Seavale, 10,000 houses are built in 2 years.

2002 – Influx of a group of illegal immigrants from Mozambique

2003 – Vusi Musa, a soccer player born in Seavale, is selected for the national team, Bafana Bafana, and scores a winning goal in a match against Senegal. Residents celebrate in the street outside his mother's home.

… and so on.

Exercise

It is 2004 and you are part of a team that is setting up a CMC in Seavale. Looking at the above timeline, what information do you think would be particularly important for you to consider in your planning?

Gathering your own information

This can be done by:

– mapping resources and initiatives in the locality, e.g. newspapers, radio stations, organisations, businesses, self-help groups

– attending meetings and events

– talking to people who work in the community, for example other organisations or service providers

– speaking to members of the community or communities directly, formally and informally.

Attending meetings and events

Find out what is happening by attending meetings and events and make sure that someone from your CMC attends. You could learn about issues that are important to your community by attending local government meetings e.g., with street traders. The work of the CMC is very similar to the work of journalists.

Talking to people who work in the community

Through the mapping exercise you will have identified organisations and service providers in the community. Take an appointment with them to discuss community information needs, concerns and challenges. Develop a short list of questions to guide you through your interview. Ask them about their work and their organisational needs, their use of and access to information and communications technologies such as the telephone and the Internet. What radio stations do they enjoy listening to? Is radio sufficient to meet their information needs?

Speak to members of the community directly

You can do this formally by administering a survey and informally by talking to people on the bus, in the taxi and even in the supermarket queue.

Refer to the UNESCO Telecentre Cookbook for practical material on how to go about gathering information and understanding your community's needs. You can access this book on the Internet *http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001230/123004e.pdf* or write to UNESCO to request a copy.

What role can the CMC play in dealing with community issues?

You need think about how your CMC can respond to issues once you have mapped the community and identified specific areas of concern.

Information and communication needs analysis

First, think of the information and communication needs that relate to the issues. E.g., let us take the case of a community with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS – is information about home-based care available for AIDS patients and their families; is any information available about prevention and treatment? Do school children have access to the information that could make them aware and help them respond to the issues? Do health care workers in the community have information that can help them perform better? Is there a need to mobilise funding to support the prevention of HIV transmission? Do mothers understand all the issues around the transmission of HIV to babies? (Refer also to community needs analysis above.)

Existing sources of information

Next, try to understand how people are already sharing information in the community. Analyse the information from your community mapping process to help you identify the important information hubs.

Whenever possible, assess to what extent the existing services meet the needs you defined earlier. Are there any gaps? Do people know about the type of support they can get from the local clinic? Often information services are under-utilised because people don't know about them. The CMC can play an important role in breaching this gap.

CMC responses: information and communication services

Then look at the services that the CMC can provide in response to key community issues and challenges.

Photo courtesy: Habby Bugalama

A Bantu drama group from Sengerema Telecentre demonstrates the use of the telephone at a community cultural event

Examples of information and communication services include:

- written materials that people can use in the CMC, or borrow from the CMC, e.g., books, magazines, brochures

- material that people can pick up at the CMC and take home to read, e.g., pamphlets

- visual material, e.g., posters, comic strips and cartoons

- a list of information services

- radio broadcast programmes, e.g., talk shows, features, interviews

- public meetings and discussions, e.g., with invited speakers, or community members sharing their experience.

Place your views in a table once you organise your ideas and information and share with your colleagues and community members.

Measuring impact

Think about how you can measure the impact your CMC makes on the main areas of concern in the community.

Keep a record of how the CMC facilities are used and the level of community participation that is taking place. Simple numbers that show how many people (with a breakdown of their age, sex, and occupation) use the CMC during the year can be very useful in future planning.

Also try to gather information about the people that listen to your radio programmes.

Community participation in the CMC

The success and sustainability of the CMC depends on community participation. The more the community participates in the CMC, the greater awareness it shall have about CMC services.

Plan and facilitate community participation through different aspects of your work and throughout the life cycle of the CMC. This starts from planning all the way to periodic evaluation and impact assessment.

CMC 'governance'

There are many definitions of 'governance'. Put simply, it is the process of ensuring that there is accountability in the way your CMC is managed and operated. It is crucial to establish a governing or advisory body for your CMC and to make sure that the community is well represented on this body.

Community participation checklist

Consider the following processes and make sure that community participation is taken into account in every step.

Process	How is the community participating?
CMC planning (at the very beginning)	
CMC start up phase	
Understanding community needs	
Community resource mapping	
Governance	
Fundraising	
Planning new services	
Evaluation and impact assessment	
Others	

Working with others

Your CMC forms only part of the overall fabric of initiatives and service providers in your area. Understanding how you fit into the overall picture is essential.

Think about building coalitions, partnerships, and collaborations with other service providers — institutions, government, the private sector, civil society — at local, regional and international levels. Also consider establishing relations in a thematic context, e.g., content, training, etc. Some partnerships may turn out to be broad and open-ended offering little more than information exchange but other partnerships can be concrete and may involve joint project implementation.

Civil society is increasingly working in networks. Close partners can turn out to be organisations that are based in a different part of the world with whom face-to-face meetings are rare. Most people who have email access belong to at least one mailing list, or an online discussion forum, and most community initiatives are part of a local, national or international network.

It is common that individual CMC members forget to record who they are networking with due to a busy schedule. Always make sure that you keep track of who your partners are and which networks you participate in.

Partnerships and networking in the community

In building partnerships start with the information you gathered during the community mapping exercise. Use this list as a starting point for identifying potential partners. Make sure you cover at least — civil society organisations and NGOs, self-organised community based initiatives, business initiatives, government initiatives, media, development agencies, and donors.

Partnerships and networking with other CMCs and similar initiatives

Contact other CMCs and community media in your region. There might also be telecentres, multi-purpose community centres and other community information resource centres that you could usefully network with.

International networking and partnerships – a few examples

Contact international organisations such as

AMARC (World Association for Community Radio) http://www.amarc.org

UNESCO http://portal.unesco.org/

APC (Association for Progressive Communications) http://www.apc.org.

Allocate time and space for networking and partnerships in:

- *strategic planning*

- *staff meetings*

- *governing body meetings*

- *progress reports and project reports*

- *annual reports*

Keep a running list of which mailing lists CMC staff are subscribed to and share the task of updating these with one another.

There might also be networks that focus on some of the issues you prioritise in your CMC, for example, if you focus on HIV/AIDS look out for networks that can add value to your work.

Important considerations in networking

Networking is time consuming. Make sure that:

– networking adds value to your work

– you define goals and outcomes for networking and participation in networks

– you plan in terms of person time and financial resources (e.g. attending meetings)

Important considerations in partnership

Be strategic. Understand the value of partnerships and set your goals accordingly. If you are entering a partnership with another institution make sure that you know:

– what kind of partnership it is (formal, informal, project oriented)

– what the goal of the partnership is

– who is responsible for managing the partnership

If the partnership involves collaborating on a project, it is *very* important that:

– roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, ideally in the form of a detailed work plan and memorandum of agreement (MOU)

– financial accounting is done carefully and transparently

– you have a management committee responsible for the project with all partners represented

– everyone understands the purpose of the project and the partnership

– you share information and reach agreements on how to execute so that all partners receive recognition

Partnership and networking take up a large amount of time but as long as this is strategically planned, your CMC team will benefit enormously from the many opportunities of networking. Networks can help us learn new things, meet new people, generate new ideas and access support when we need it most.

Remember that even if we work at the local level we are part of a worldwide movement of people who are working for sustainable development and social justice.

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Sourcing Information and Media Content

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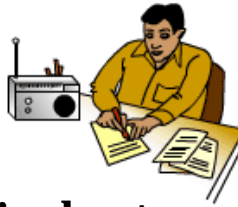
In this chapter

- **Different forms and sources of information and content**

- **Copyright issues**

- **Media convergence**

- **Gathering and sharing your own information**

Sourcing Information and Media Content

Once the information needs of your community have been identified through your needs assessment you will find there is a demand for wide ranging topics, which could be anything from living with a healthy diet to improving the local crop, or mother and child health to children's educational future.

Your CMC will need to prioritise the needs, then tap various sources of information to respond to community demands. The first step is to be aware of how to access reliable sources of information.

Information sources are varied in their form – printed word via email, Internet, radio and TV; traditional word via word-of-mouth, telephone or face-to-face communication. Each medium has its own strengths and limitations and you will be able to use each medium to your advantage.

Print, radio, TV, audio, and video information sources are so vast and varied that a whole book could be written on that subject alone. This chapter attempts to prepare you in categorizing sources of information that you can later explore for specific topics of interest to your CMC. The following sections will also help you visualize how to get the source and wherever possible, how to get the source for free.

Information available in print

Print information is very wide ranging and appears in many forms, e.g., books, newspapers, journals, manuscripts, maps, manuals, letters, and more. Printed material offers a wealth of information and provides readers with the potential to learn, understand, explore and investigate topics that are of concern to them. CMCs depend on printed material as an information-sharing tool and as a source that enriches radio broadcast.

> You can add a service at very little cost to your CMC by putting out on display a local newspaper or two for public reading (some centres pin them up on the wall so that they can be shared). Some CMCs host a community newspaper, produced by a local journalist using the CMC facilities.

How can you get it?

It all depends on your needs and the services you have access to. If there is a **local or district library**, the librarian will be able to tell you about relevant books and journals and may even conduct an Internet search for specific material that is found in institutions and universities around the world.

You can ask a **bookseller** to send you a catalogue from which to place an order. You can also **subscribe to a publisher.**

Most organizations publish **newsletters** that contain useful and relevant information. You can request different organizations to include you in their distribution mailing list and receive copies at no cost.

It is worthwhile exploring sources of printed information from within your community. **Documents, letters**, and **manuscripts** related to the development of your community or interest group may be a valuable resource to your CMC.

What you have to pay for?

Any order you place with a publisher or bookseller has to be paid for. Plan to budget for subscriptions and book orders.

Available free

Books and journals are expensive but sometimes you can find them for free on the Internet or by contacting the publishers directly. Some publishers provide a free 'reference' publication to non-profit organizations. Do not hesitate to ask for free publications — if you don't ask you will never know!

Printatable information via email & the Internet

Finding the *Web gateways, documents*, *pages* or *sites* you want on the Internet can be easy or seem impossibly difficult. This is in part due to the sheer size of the World Wide Web (WWW), currently estimated to contain 3 billion documents. It is also because the WWW is not indexed in any standard vocabulary. Unlike a library's catalogues, in which you can use standardized subject headings to find books, you are always guessing what words will be in the *pages* when searching for information on the Internet.

Internet websites will often provide a *link* or *portal* that will lead you to a website that contains additional or related information. Search engines make it easy to identify websites that contain the type of information you are looking for, e.g. Google, Yahoo, Lycos.

Printed material via the Internet	Printed information that can be found using the Internet	Available for you to use in radio shows and as a reference at the CMC
e-Books	Books are available over the Internet for downloading. Some free and some at a cost	Can download/print out
Journals	Journals are available over the Internet for downloading. Some free and some at a cost	Can download/print out
Newspapers	Newspapers from around the world	Available for reading online (mostly free), printing out, and searching archives (often at a cost)

How can you get it?

It is often difficult to know where to go to get these resources. A good first step is to consult portals – that gather information about websites and information – one of the best for development communications is Communications Initiative www.comminit.org, and there are also good sites that list newspapers around the world. Other portals include the World Bank's global gateway and UN sites.

Portals can give you a searchable database of organisations' websites, e.g., One World's www.oneworld.net is an important source of information and links to over 2000 non-governmental organizations around the world. It is classified by 80 development and human rights topics, as well as by country and language.

Books and journals that are online – and available for either reading online or downloading – are a growing phenomenon, but not always easy to find out about. Communications Initiative has some links to publications.

Once you have found the website that gives you the information that you are looking for you can print pages from it, or save the pages to your computer.

Electronic mail lists are another powerful tool for sharing information – for both receiving and sending out what you have to say. You can easily open a free email account to receive and send information from your CMC, e.g., Yahoo, Hotmail.

Text content delivered to you by email	Printable information that comes directly to your email inbox	Available for you to use in radio shows and as a reference at the CMC
Newsletters	Various information sheets	Subscribe, print out
Newswire	Bulletins that can be read out on radio, and can be kept for reference	Subscribe, print out
Newsgroups & list servers	Email groups that you can join and contribute emails to	Subscribe

The types of printable information above can then be downloaded to your computer or printed from your email account. You will also be able to contribute to online discussions by using email.

How can you get it?

First open an email account. Then conduct a search using the search engines and the portals to find the appropriate material you can subscribe to. Also, make a request for your name to be included in a list server that distributes material that is relevant to your CMC.

The newswires are tailored for broadcasters and give news updates on specific issues that can be read on air. AMARC has begun a news agency service and there are many newswires produced on topics such as the environment. Contact organisations that you have an interest in to see if they have a newswire service.

Once you have found a newsletter, newswire or newsgroup that you want to receive regularly, you can subscribe – usually at no cost. Just follow the instructions that will appear on the screen; often it simply means sending them an email with 'subscribe' in the subject line.

Available free

Most newsletters are free and nearly every email list and newsgroup is as well. Check to see if there is a cost attached to the newswire services because this is a product that you will be using on the radio.

Radio, TV, audio and video material

Audio & visual	Radio/audio and TV/video material that you can listen to or view	Available for listening, and sometimes for re-broadcasting
Radio & TV listings	List of radio stations broadcasting in that week/month.	Printed in newspapers and also available online.
Radio & TV broadcasts	Traditional on-air broadcasts in your area – FM, MW, AM and satellite.	Requires a radio with a tape deck or TV with VCR to record broadcasts. Check issues of copyright before you re-broadcast.
Radio, audio cassette CD, video or DVD programmes	Often from NGOs or international broadcasters; sometimes with accompanying printed scripts.	Order or subscribe to receive by post. Check copyright clearance for re-broadcasting.

How can you get it?

Depending on your local context, you may find that ordering copies of broadcast programmes is not as easy as ordering print material. If you want a copy of a programme that was broadcast on radio or TV, you should make a note of when it was aired and then formally contact the broadcaster requesting a copy to be sent to you. This will often entail a cost. The same procedure may apply to pre-produced programmes. In receiving the material, you may be asked to cover postal charges — yet another consideration for your budget.

Available free

Often international broadcasters and international organisations will welcome your request for free sources because it is in their interest to distribute their programmes as widely as possible. Find out about the content produced by national or local producers, such as NGOs in your country, and then contact them directly.

Getting and sharing information through CD

The CD is capable of carrying a huge amount of information. For many organisations – both commercial and non-profit – this is a cost-effective way of getting information to you.

The advantage of a CD is that you can look up the information swiftly and efficiently at your convenience. It allows both text and pictures to be shown in a wide variety of ways and gives you several innovative and interactive features. Creating CDs is beyond the point of this book, however further reference can be made to publications such as Mind Mapping (UNESCO, 2002) or the Multi Media Training Kit (www.ItrainOnline.org).

Interactive text and visuals available on CD	Where to find them
A whole library of reference books can be available on a CD	Request from publisher
Information on development themes	Request from organisation
Training material and self-learning courses	Request from training organisation

A lot of material, especially on health, education and development issues are available free from the producers.

How to get and share information through CDs

Greenstone is a suite of software for building and distributing digital library collections that aim to 'empower' users to build their own digital libraries. It provides a powerful way of organising text and images in electronic format for publishing on CD-Rom or the Internet. The major advantages over the traditional Web based format are compression of information and both full text and library catalogue type searching.

Greenstone is produced by the New Zealand Digital Library Project at the University of Waikato, and developed and distributed in cooperation with UNESCO and the Human Info NGO.

It is an open-source, multilingual software issued under the terms of the GNU General Public License. (See http://www.greenstone.org/english/home.html).

Teaching literacy through CDs

In India, the Tata Consultancy Services software group has created a CD to teach adult illiterates how to read and write with basic skills, even in the absence of a skilled teacher.

The CD uses animated graphics and a voice-over to explain how individual alphabets combine to give structure and meaning to various words, using puppets as the motif in the teaching process.

Lessons are tailored to fit different languages and even dialects. They focus on reading, and are based on the theories of cognition, language and communication.

Accompanying voiceover reinforces the learner's ability to grasp the lessons easily, and repetition strengthens what is learned.

The multimedia format ensures that the pronunciation of the words/letters is taught accurately through the system, rather than being left to individual teachers. This is particularly useful for languages (like Tamil in South India) where the same letter can be pronounced differently, based on the context. http://www.tataliteracy.com/how_it_works.htm

Accessing audio and video online

The Internet also gives you access to audio and video from around the world. You can use audio online as an instructive example of how other people have tackled a subject. Having access to radio scripts is also very useful as you can reuse these in your own context, adapting them to what makes sense for your own community.

Audio & video online	Audio programmes, interviews, public service announcements, other formats	Available to listen to (and adapt the ideas); also often to download and re-broadcast
Portals for audio	'Gateways' that direct you to available audio online.	Free online
Online databases	Libraries of audio pieces that are available online	Mostly free online for listening, some charge for downloading.
Internet radio listings	Websites that list online radio stations so you can find them.	Free online
Internet radio stations	Broadcasts from radio stations around the world, live-streaming, i.e. not archived but like an ordinary broadcast	Free online
Scripts	Scripts that accompany audio online, in various languages.	Free to read and print out.
Online video	Video clips and productions that can be viewed online.	Requires a high speed Internet connection, as this is streaming media.

How can you get it?

There are many portals that can direct you to databases of online broadcasters who wish to share content and exchange information and programmes that you can download and re-broadcast, assuming you already have the required software to do this.

Many larger broadcasters have their own online audio databases. Some allow you to download the programmes while others are only for listening. The BBC site is a rich source of content on a range of issues.

For online radio stations – and there are many – the best route is to search either by name of the station, or search for sites that list online radio stations around the world.

For online video there is the challenge of connectivity, because viewing the material requires a high speed Internet connection. But if you have that, there is a wealth of video content that is available – either as entire programmes or clips. Often you may be able to order a copy of the video from the site where you viewed it. Some sites give you access to a mosaic of video clips from organisations and independent producers according to development themes, as well as alternative perspectives on mainstream news.

Available free

Listening or viewing multimedia content online is generally free. Downloading is free from most non-government organisations, but may carry a cost if coming from international broadcasters.

> **Ready to broadcast material**
>
> The farmradio.org website offers information that would be of interest to rural audiences, in an easily translatable radio format.
>
> It does so by sharing well-researched information in the form of 'radio scripts'. These are available for broadcast free-to-air in developing countries in the language that the broadcaster chooses.
>
> Scripts are regularly available via the Internet at http://www.farmradio.org/english/published_scripts.html

Using the telephone

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are not only the Internet, but also include all the services of the traditional fixed landline phone and the mobile phone. Mobile phones have given users the opportunity to send and receive text messages, which is a developing medium for the exchange of all sorts of information – from market prices to sports results and job listings. The traditional telephone is also a very essential medium for exchange of information. It is often the most powerful way that you can link with other people and share information.

Telephone: fixed land line or mobile	Information from people with whom you are in direct contact via mobile or landline telephones	Information that is current and can be used in radio broadcasts or at the CMC
Mobile texts, formal	SMS messages on specific topics	Subscribe to text service
Mobile texts, informal	SMS messages from contacts or local reporters in the field	Requires only mobile phones
Telephone interviews	Interviews with local or national/international persons on a specific topic.	Live or pre-recorded for radio broadcasts
Basic telephone calls	Informative telephone calls	For basic information or can feature in a phone-in show, live or pre-recorded

How do you get it?

For specific mobile text services you need to subscribe by contacting the mobile service provider or organisation that is providing the service. There are increasing numbers of business and non-profit services that are being developed; keep an eye out for what may be available in your area.

Getting information from individuals is another matter, and often you need only share mobile phone numbers. This is a good way of gathering information from rural areas, or from associates in other cities or countries.

Traditional telephone interviews are well established within broadcasting.

Available free

You will have to pay for all telephone connections. Commercial mobile <u>text</u> services generally cost, but the non-profit ones are generally free.

Word of mouth information

Often the information you require is there in your community already – all it requires from you is face-to-face information gathering.

Mode of info collection	Methods used	Form of info collected
Recording interviews	Credited interviews with specific persons – community leaders and ordinary people, politicians, doctors, experts, others	Can be in the radio studio, live or pre-recorded; or could be in the field using recording equipment
Conducting questionnaires	Gathering information from people in the community using set questions, which you can then analyse and compare	Questionnaires or keeping notes
Vox pops *(Latin phrase for voice of the people)*	Unaccredited comment from the public	Audio or video recording for use in broadcasts
Focus groups and meetings	Gathering a group of people together to ask them about an issue/topic	Record or take notes of responses

Gathering and sharing your own content

Local content is as diverse as your community – it could be knowledge about traditional medicine and agriculture, or community views on social, economic and political issues.

Your CMC, as a centre of local and international knowledge sharing, is the ideal place to focus on local content. There are a number of innovative projects that are focusing on this area and looking at how ICTs can support the gathering and sharing of local content.

Take a look at some of the developing work on this subject:

- www.openknowledge.net - the site for the Open Knowledge Network project; go to the 'workspace' section for background information, or to www.dgroups.org/groups/okn.

- www.iicd.org/ks - interesting paper on 'collecting and propagating local development content'; go to the knowledge sharing section, click on Publications, and scroll down.

Creating your own content and data base

"Let's face it, 99 percent of existing web pages (and we are talking of many millions duplicating almost every year), is irrelevant to 99 percent of the population of the world. One of every one hundred pages may be interest and use to a rural woman of India or a factory worker in Mexico.

The most successful Internet-connectivity projects are those that manage to create their own mini-web with appropriate contents for the local population. Otherwise, a CMC, regardless of its origin or funding, becomes just another cyber cafe used by the standard young consumer who uses the interactive games, chatting with friends (who are sometimes seated in the same room), or researching information for a copy-and-paste homework.

Developing local content implies researching on local priorities and subjects. The mini-web content should be able to respond to local problems. It should also reflect the local culture and identity, and contribute to strengthen it."

Alfonso Gumucio Dagron
Gumucio@Guate.net.gt

Copyright issues

Print

Most books and journals are copyright protected, meaning, in theory, that no part can be copied for use. However, most authors or publishers are often happy for part of the book to be photocopied so long as you use it only for information gathering, rather than any commercial purpose.

If you quote from any publication or material, don't forget to quote the author and the source.

Audio and video

If you intend to re-broadcast any audio or video content you need to make sure that the producers have no objection. Call, email or write to them and tell them what you intend; they may sometimes request that you send them a copy of the final broadcast programme, or at least tell them when it was broadcast.

This will not be necessary explicitly for rebroadcast material that is sent to you or is available for download.

Media convergence

Your CMC is a great example of how media convergence is happening. You will probably have all the available types of media at your disposal – books and printed material, audio online, audiocassette or mini-disc, and videos. You will have a computer that uses CDs but also gives you access to email and the Internet. You may have a broadcasting studio with all the radio equipment that is necessary to broadcast to your listeners.

Innovative media formats: radio browsing

Ours is a fast-changing world. Apart from the wealth of media sources and modes that exist, there are also new ways of using all these resources that are being developed – combining one or two to create a new way of investigating and sharing information. The 'old' media (print, books, magazines, radio) are combining with the 'new' (Internet, email, mailing lists) to bring together a whole new set of possibilities.

One example of this is radio browsing – combining the strength and popularity of traditional broadcasting with the innovation of Internet information gathering.

Campaigning and advocacy on development issues

Many organisations and communities wish to collaborate in gathering and sharing information around a specific campaign. Using this strategy, they can focus the issue powerfully and create a larger audience.

If you are a broadcaster, contact local organisations about planned campaigns in your area that you can link to, and use the services of local experts for programmes. Campaigners need publicity, so this could be an ideal partnership.

Where to find campaign information

The UN list of days is a useful peg for scheduling campaigns; for example, you can plan in advance to focus on children on Children's Day, women on Women's Day and HIV/AIDS on World Aids Day. See the UN website for the list of days.

Development organisations also have campaign sections on their sites with thematic and campaign links, background info, available audio and interested member contacts; these are good places to go and find the relevant and current background information.

eNRICH – a software for rural communities

eNRICH is a customisable browser that enables communities to quickly build their own gateway and provides interactivity with and among communities.
It enables easy access to authentic information and encourages local content production.

This generic ICT web browser, developed by National Informatics Centre in India, can:

- Act as a one stop solution for the information and communication needs of communities

- Be easily customised in local languages and content

- Encourage community members to produce their own local content

- Allow easy access to relevant and authenticated information

- Enable efficient communication within and among communities.

eNRICH provides two interfaces

Community Browser User Interface – used by community members and divided into the following sections:

- Information resources
- Local database
- Communication Services
- Services
- Opinion poll
- Bulletin board
- Learning Zone

Desk Manager User Interface – a browser-based site administration and analysis tool for the Manager of the site.

For more information, see the CD Rom with this Handbook.

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Radio Browsing at Kothmale Community Radio

An experimental UNESCO project using radio as the interface between rural communities and the Internet was launched in early 1999 in Sri Lanka.

One of the main features of the project is the community radio broadcasts on the Internet. A daily two-hour interactive programme allowed listeners to request (by live telephone requests or post) specific information from the Internet. The presenters got the required information from websites and interpreted the information from these sites in the local language, thus overcoming a common barrier to the Internet - a poor understanding of English.

Chanuka Wattegama
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A video on demonstration and training in radio browsing is included in the CD at the back of this Handbook.

CMC

CD Rom made for and by women in Uganda

Developed by International Women's Tribune Centre and women of Nakaseke CMC in Uganda, the CD uses speech interface and a simple point-and-click technique. The software utilised is a browser programme, therefore giving the women a sense of how to access information on the Internet.

The women who use the programme click on text and graphics and hear a voice speaking in their own local language, Luganda. It has empowered the women who are now expanding their ability to make money and experimenting with new small businesses.

Women travel from all over Uganda to be taken through the programme by the Nakaseke women. Very few of these women have had the opportunity to finish more than one or two years of primary school. However, they are beginning to recognise words as they follow the spoken text.

Anastasia, only partially literate and aged 73, has made the spreading of the information in the CD programme her life's mission. She walks over the hills of rural Uganda with a donated laptop in a backpack, searching out isolated women in their houses and villages and going through the programme with them. Nakaseke CMC has undertaken to recharge the laptop battery each night, and to provide companion security for her.

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AMARC **www.amarc.org**
OneWorld TV **www.oneworld.net/tv** and OneWorld Radio **www.oneworld.net/radio**
Indymedia **www.indymedia.org**
BBC **www.bbc.co.uk**
UNICEF **www.unicef.org**
United Nations International Days http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/infoserv/db/days.shtml

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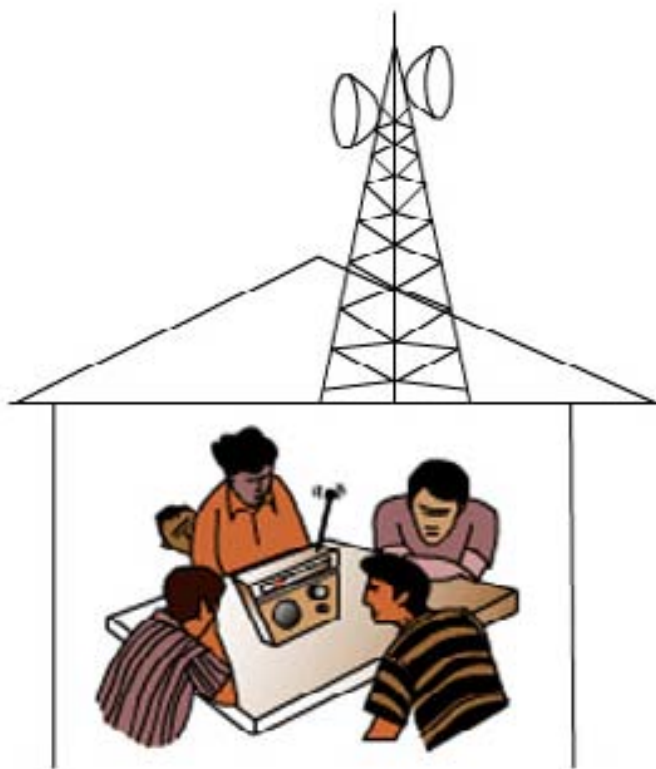
Sustainability of CMCs

Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron
and Hezekiel Dlamini
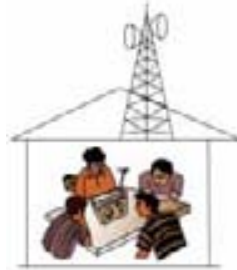
In this chapter

Part 1

● **Sustainability as a tripod**

● **Social, institutional, financial**

Part 2

● **Business models for CMCs**

● **Developing strategies**

● **Developing the business plan**

● **Fundraising**

Sustainability is a very wide topic that involves long term social change as well as medium to long term financial issues. In an attempt to address both broad areas, this Chapter is divided into two parts. Part I examines some of the broad issues of social and institutional as well as financial sustainability. It draws on important examples that you will need to reflect upon when starting up and organising your CMC. In Part II you will find some practical advice that guides you in developing a sustainable financial model for your CMC and provides step-by-step instructions for the creation of your business plan.

Part 1

Sustainability of CMCs and Community Media

Community based projects are expected to be *sustainable*, i.e. they have to survive and develop after an initial two or three year period of donor funding. Let's examine the complex issues around sustainability from a wider perspective that goes beyond financial autonomy, which is only one of many elements that can bring about long-term change in any given community.

Sustainability as a tripod

If economic sustainability were the primary objective of a CMC, it would be very disappointing. A community radio station may turn profitable if it chooses to air music all day long to satisfy the demand of the younger audience; a rural telecentre may become financially sustainable by providing telephone and fax services only. However, to achieve sustainability, we need to ask : how does the economic self-reliance of the centre impact on economic and social change in the community?

The importance of community participation during the entire process of planning and implementation is now widely recognised. Therefore, sustainability cannot thrive on funds alone. Rather, sustainability depends on social, institutional and financial viability, as presented in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1

Funding may fulfil one important need, but so do social involvement and participation, internal democracy and efficient organisation. Let's look at these three components in detail.

Social sustainability

The social component is essential when planning for sustainability of CMCs. Moreover, it underlines the importance of a participatory approach at all levels and at all times. Community media services in any form – radio, theatre, Internet, telephone, or video – need community participation for their creation as well as for their use and survival.

There are three basic conditions to achieve social sustainability.

– Community ownership of the communication process

– Development of local content

– Language and cultural relevance

The social appropriation of the communication process is central to sustainability of community media. It also includes the ownership of infrastructure and equipment, but is not that alone. The concept of appropriation is wider; it includes the whole process, including decision making, management and technical skills and, if possible, acquiring the property of all fittings and equipment.

Distinction between CMCs and cyber cafes

Contrary to grassroots' radio stations, community telecentres are still struggling with the issue of appropriation of the communication process. Many of them are "projects", that is, initiatives of the government, the development community or even the private sector. Whilst the distinction between a commercial radio station and a community radio is clear, the line between community telecentres and commercial cyber cafes is blurred.

It is unrealistic to think that installing a few computers in a remote community will have any positive influence in social change, particularly when the community didn't ask for it and scarcely sees any benefit. Setting up computers in rural areas doesn't make any sense if it is not part of a wider social development initiative.

Computers, Internet and "local area web" are additional tools, not the centrepiece of a community development initiative. Computers *alone* will not have a high impact unless associated with community radio as a relay for online information.

Development of local content

Students hone their computer skills at Sengerema Telecentre in Tanzania

The second condition for social sustainability is the development of local content. The most successful Internet connectivity projects are those that manage their own mini-web with appropriate content for the local population.

A third factor is language and cultural pertinence. The fact that English largely dominates the World Wide Web already marginalises the vast majority of people in Third World countries. Unless local web content is developed in languages of the local people and in a way that appeals to their culture, one cannot expect the participation of traditionally marginalised communities. Its important that the CMC does not become a standard cyber café that merely entertains young people with interactive games and chat rooms. Local communities will not use the Internet if they don't find it useful — it is as simple as that.

The success of community radio is also related to the above conditions – speaking the language and culture of the community they serve, building appropriate content relevant to community needs, and facilitating a permanent process of democratic participation, empowerment and appropriation of the communication process.

Institutional sustainability

Community media have fought many decades to gain recognition. In Latin America, the continent that has pioneered the field since the early 1950s, community radio stations were first established without asking permission and often in frank confrontation with military dictatorships and corrupt governments. Later, many of them already had the benefit of legislation that recognised their right to exist and did not have to defend their centre from bullets and soldiers. South Africa lived through a similar situation in the early nineties, when the first "pirate" stations were established in open defiance to the apartheid authorities.

Key factors for institutional sustainability

The critical issues in achieving institutional sustainability are :

Enabling legislation, regulation and policies

In some countries, where licences for community media centres exists, the critical issue is that of community ownership and voice. If community media really represent the community and become its voice then they also become an instrument for establishing and strengthening the vision of a better future. You will need to be aware of external influences and tread carefully in the presence of powerful political and economic interests that dominate the community. You will need to chart a careful course to avoid political interests taking over or controlling the CMC.

Ownership by the community and their involvement in identifying issues to be addressed

Ownership can become a deciding issue: you will be in a better position to defend your CMC against control or silencing attempts if your community group legally owns the CMC.

Internal democracy, training and participation

The in-house dynamics in CMCs are also a factor of institutional sustainability. Internal democracy, training and participation in decision-making, programming, development of content, management and accountability are essential. The transparency of the management, the spirit of camaraderie and solidarity among workers, a permanent dialogue in the process of building programmes together and acquiring new skills to serve the community better must all send a clear signal about the nature of your CMC and its sustainability.

Appropriate and democratic structure, management and supervisory bodies

The role of stable institutional structures is very important for institutional sustainability. There can be no institutional sustainability unless there is an effective board of governors, steering committee, or core user groups and unless these are representative, accountable and renewed regularly.

There is also the key issue of clear and appropriate division of responsibilities within the organisational structure. You may encounter crises and conflicts over the responsibility of funds, budgets, fundraising etc. This can jeopardise sustainability unless clearly defined responsibilities and procedures are put in place.

Appropriate technology

Many community media projects fail because of a weak design. This often happens when the knowledge of social

Baraka Telecentre : owned by the community ...it lasts!

Baraka is a small and poor locality in the heart of a residential area of Dakar, capital of Senegal, inhabited by squatters from Mali, Guinea and rural Senegal. The average household income is US$ 70 a month and its surrounding, more affluent, neighbours often ostracise its residents. Maybe this is why there is such a strong sense of community here. In Baraka, even access to water and electricity are community-based, as all households must share one water hole and an electricity outlet.

It is within this context that Enda Tiers Monde decided to build a Baraka community tele-centre. The telecentre gives residents access to a phone and the Internet, trains them on how to use ICTs and serves as a

Photo courtesy: Laurent Elder

The Baraka Telecentre, Senegal

meeting place for community leaders. Its management is based on a community ownership model, where a local steering committee organises telecentre activities and finances.

There was a fire recently in Baraka, which looked like it would destroy the whole village. The only way the residents could get in touch with the fire department was through the phone in the telecentre. That saved their community.

However, as in many telecentres in Africa, Baraka Telecentre has had trouble paying for its telephone and Internet bills, as the revenues generated by the telecentre are not meeting its costs. Despite this, the telecentre is still working, because the Baraka community decided it was too important to have it close down.

How did they do this?

They've used a continuing surplus from the community water fund to settle unpaid telecentre bills.

Laurent Elder
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and cultural reality is limited and proper use of appropriate technology, which is essential to institutional sustainability, fails. Sophisticated hardware does not replace the numerous steps involved in the communication process and equipping a multimedia centre with expensive computers that become outdated by the time the centre starts using them is a case of poor planning, which does not serve a sustainable purpose.

It is therefore important to plan carefully and avoid accumulating equipment to the extent that it cannot be used. Such oversight can lead to serious issues that can, on their own, cut short the life of a CMC. Ask yourself, during the planning stages, if you are investing in equipment before securing a telephone line for Internet connectivity. How are your decisions on equipment being made? Who decides the number of computers that are needed? These are important questions to consider when planning for sustainability.

There seems to be more rationality in designing community radio stations than telecentres, perhaps because of the experience accumulated over decades. Also, radio equipment is made to last longer. Some radio stations still work with recorders and mixers purchased twenty years ago. Telecentres can become victims of hardware and software multinational companies competing for new markets; be wary of being led into buying expensive equipment which may be used at 5 per cent of its capacity. Initially, many CMCs need computers primarily for word processing and email if connectivity with Internet is available.

Networking and convergence

It is increasingly difficult to foresee institutional sustainability without networking and convergence; networks can spread the total investment and costs, pool expertise, share good and bad practices. The stand-alone nature of some CMCs can be a disadvantage. The Tambuli Radio Network in the Philippines works because there is at least a strong sense of being part of a wider network. Telecentre projects that are associated with community development programmes have more opportunities of success than those operating in isolation.

Financial sustainability can come in many ways

In the case of public service radio, public funds are usually the major source of financing (often directly from users as licence fees).

If CMCs are going to provide a real community service, than the community/public should also have a direct role in financing them. If a CMC works with the community to ensure its social sustainability by, among other things, providing a service that is valued by the community, then it can translate that social sustainability into financial sustainability. This is a political challenge - to convince the public/government that it is better to pay for a public service than to get a "free" commercial service at a very high cost in terms of values, "acceptable" exclusion of the poor, services that are optimised for commercial rather than public use...

Public money supports other infrastructure development, e.g., roads. In the long run, if we are really going to have an "information society", I think it will be more sustainable if publicly financed than advertiser financed.

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The One to Watch:
Radio, New ICTs and Interactivity
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Financial sustainability

Funding is, indeed, an important issue. However it involves many aspects that are not often taken into consideration. Income generating activities and financial sustainability must mean the survival and development of the CMC within the framework of freedom of expression and consistency with the needs of the community. The best models of financial sustainability have managed to combine different sources of economic support to keep their independence and ensure the continuity of their community vision.

See *Business models* and *Fundraising* sections later in this chapter.

Government support

It is appropriate to mention government responsibility and support while discussing CMCs. Elected governments are often sympathetic or at least tolerant towards community media. The network of indigenous radio stations in Mexico is an example of this tolerance and clear policies that have evolved over the years to a modern and fully participatory model. Similarly, South Africa has an enabling policy to promote community radio stations, telecentres and CMCs.

Community media centres have a social and cultural role in development and do some of the educational work of the government. Therefore, it may be possible to approach the government to give funds to set up a CMC, in the same way it funds rural schools or public libraries.

You can also consider approaching your government to contribute towards financial sustainability of your CMC in different ways – for example, providing the Internet connection, giving preferential tariffs, advertising, grants etc.

Local institutions and businesses

Local institutions and organisations can support community media if they find it is useful for development. Local NGOs that are contributing in education, agriculture, human rights, or health related programmes may find it very useful to have an alliance with your CMC for creating and distributing programming content relevant to their activities. Unions, cooperatives, women's clubs, and other civil society organisations usually contribute to community radio stations by buying airtime for their programmes. Similarly, international agencies like UNICEF, Communication Assistance Foundation, OXFAM, Save the Children, have often contributed to community radios and CMCs, either with direct support for their role in ensuring information and communication diversity, or in exchange for airtime.

Banikoara CMC in Benin opened a cafe to service their users and raise more revenue

Many community radios in Africa (like Radio Kwizera (Hope Radio), at the border of Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi) co-produce radio programmes on water and sanitation, health, peace and reconciliation with support from Oxfam, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, etc.

Support from local businesses is very important for CMCs – they could be key contributors to your financial sustainability. They can help stabilise your CMC's revenue, e.g., the CMC can operate as a local ISP to local enterprises by paying an annual subscription for Internet access or businesses and NGOs can rent office space in your premises to perform periodic activities.

Advertising

Countries that have an approved legislation recognising community media often ban or limit the amount of advertising that community radio stations can air. This measure is said to protect the station itself from becoming too dependent on advertising and to ensure that community radios do not compete unfairly with private FM stations that pay much higher license fees. However, this restriction can also hamper the ability of stations to become financially sustainable. Wherever possible, CMCs must consider local advertising as a significant source of income.

> **Innovative ways to generate funds**
>
> *La Primerisima, an independent radio station in Nicaragua, has been struggling during 18 years not only to survive, but to compete for the first three positions in national ratings. The station is owned by a collective of journalists, and through many years of fighting for its independence, has managed to create innovative ways of generating funds.*
>
> *For example, any worker at the station is allowed to bring in advertising revenue and to keep a percentage of it. Several programme slots are "rented" to NGOs that use them to air programmes on human rights, environment, migration or gender issues. Advertising has been scarce for La Primerisima due to its progressive political position, always favouring the less advantaged in Nicaragua. However, the support from the audience has been enormous. External support from sympathetic organisations in Europe and Australia only amount for 6 to 10 per cent of the station's annual income. The rest is generated locally.*

Community support

The contributions from the community are often neglected by project planners and not accounted for. The truth is, communities contribute more than is generally perceived. For example, it is not unusual for the community to donate the land where the building of the CMC and the radio station will be raised. The community often contributes the labour for the actual construction and provides construction materials that are available locally.

A famous example of direct contributions from the community is that of the Bolivian miners' radio stations. During more than thirty years, each worker in the tin mines donated one day of his monthly salary for the radio station. This is a demonstration that even the poorest communities can afford to contribute to a communication project that empowers their voice and identity.

Conclusion

Community participation and commitment is the fundamental condition for the sustainability of CMCs. You may find CMC projects that do not worry about their future because they have continuous funding from a donor; however, if the other two sustainable components are not present, the centre would collapse soon after the external funding is withdrawn.

The sustainability of your CMC is closely linked with the level of user participation, the capacity-building work you do, and the funding support of your community and other stakeholders. You will also find that the effective integration of the radio and telecentre components contribute to sustainability as they balance, complement and support each other.

If social, institutional and financial sustainability are closely interwoven, your CMC will survive and evolve over the years, in tune with the people you serve.

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Part 2

Planning for Financial Sustainability

CMCs could be considered as business ventures with a development mission. The business and development approaches need to be modeled carefully to satisfy a community service on one level and a properly managed, self-sustaining, small to medium-scale enterprise on another level.

The core business of a CMC is in the media services you provide using both traditional and new information and communication technologies (ICTs). Some basic management tools need to be employed not only to ensure these services are delivered efficiently but also to draw credibility from potential partners and stakeholders and sustain the longevity of your centre. In this Chapter you will be able to visualize the types of business models you can combine and adapt, develop a CMC business plan, and generate funding for your CMC.
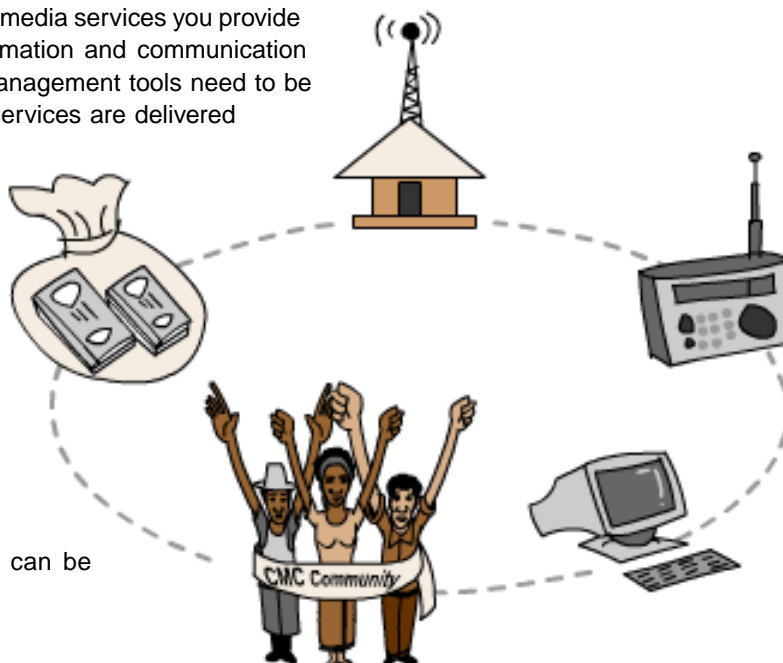
Business models for CMCs

Some of the business models that can be implemented in CMCs include:

The brokerage model

In this model, the CMC provides radio and Internet space to local brokers or representatives of local producers to bring buyers and sellers together for direct sales or auctions.

A fee can be charged for each transaction supported by the CMC. This model requires the CMC to be proactive in selling its services to local brokers as a new way of enabling market place exchanges.

The local producers thus benefit by dealing directly with buyers rather than having urban brokers collect their produce at reduced rates. This also creates business for the CMC. If well implemented this model can facilitate transactions in business-to-business(B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C) and consumer-to-consumer (C2C) markets.

This model can also cover the development of product catalogues for online or offline use. In this case, a *search agent* finds out the price and availability of a specified good or service and locates hard-to-find information for the buyer.

Similarly, this model can facilitate market information for people who want to know about similar products from other areas. CMC radio and Internet services can be used to inform local producers about market developments.

The advertising model

Community radio advertising is well understood by many CMCs and constitutes one of the main sources of revenue generation.

However, the same cannot be said of web advertising. In most cases, web advertising entails the provision of content and services, e.g., email, chat, forums – mixed with advertising messages in the form of banners.

A listing fee or membership fee is charged for web advertising whereas, for radio, a fee is charged for airtime used.

An advertising website may contain original content or can play the role of a content distributor. On its own, the web advertising model works well only when the volume of viewer traffic is large. Hence the website should be accessible through search engines, portals and other "bigger" websites.

Depending on the type of CMC, advertising can be used successfully to target users beyond the immediate community and to attract buyers from other areas.

The infomediary model

This model, which implies information intermediaries, is based on the concept of market data provision. Data about consumers or producers and their practices are collected and analysed to target marketing campaigns.

To apply this model, CMCs could create web databases containing information about local production and development issues in their areas to support government, political, NGO and even business campaigns, e.g., handicraft production, local HIV/AIDS information and trends etc. Information about library users is also very important for content providers especially as e-books become widely available and local readership increases. This information can be collected over time and provided at a fee.

Independently collected qualitative and quantitative data about consumers, producers, communities and their habits and practices are very useful for development initiatives and investors.

The community model

Photo courtesy: Habby Bugalama

Internet and email subscription services are becoming increasingly popular

This model is already very popular in CMCs, community radio stations, and multipurpose community telecentres. Its strength is based on user loyalty and the amount of time users invest in the business.

Revenue can be generated from the sale of ancillary products and services and/or voluntary contributions. On a larger scale the model is used to support open source development initiatives, public broadcasting, knowledge networks and specialized discussion sites.

CMCs could apply this model by training youth and women in return for some volunteer work. Another area that can produce growth for CMCs is to establish national/regional networks.

The subscription model

The success of this model depends on the type of CMC you are running and the financial ability of your community to spend. In this model, users are charged a periodic fee to subscribe to a service on a daily, monthly or annual basis.

An example drawn from Uganda on the use of this model is the monthly CMC membership cards to frequent users. These cards allow the user to borrow library books, CD-Roms, etc. An effort is being made to develop membership services to include a more "privileged" package without compromising service provision to one-time users. This means that CD-Rom readings can take place at a fixed fee for one-time users, and at no charge to subscribed users who can also borrow books, CD-Roms, video cassettes, and DVDs using their subscription.

The subscription model can be extended to Internet users. Internet use can be provided for a specific duration, such as 30 minutes per day, at a fixed subscription rate. This is useful for businesses and individuals who find the one-time use payments too expensive.

It is important to maintain free or subsidised services in a CMC in order to maintain the development purpose and the public space that can serve as a hub for civil society participation. Hence, the CMC management should be very careful when applying this model to avoid over subscribing their services.

The utility model

This model is already being used by many CMCs when offering telephone, email and web browsing services. The utility or *on-demand* model employs a method of metering usage, or adopts the *pay-as-you-go* approach. Metered services generate revenue based on actual usage rates. This model has been traditionally used in the provision of essential services, such as telephone, electricity and water. However, many Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and cyber cafés in developing countries also use it to generate revenues from Internet users.

CMCs should continue to use this model in the most familiar and tested ways. It is a model that is easy to apply with numerous tools available in the market to support its application.

Developing short, medium and long term strategies

Any CMC, like other small-scale enterprises, should start by developing a business plan, which embraces short term, medium term and long term strategies. Lets take a look at the different strategies before tackling the many steps involved in developing a business plan.

Short-term strategies

A short-term strategy describes your desired outcome with a focus on immediate and specific issues. This category of strategies addresses key questions that include:

- what services are to be provided?

- where and who is the target market?

- who are the competitors?

- what is the sales strategy?

- how much money is needed to start the business?

- what is the source of finance?

- what are the human resource and material inputs required for the startup and daily management of the centre?

- what are the managerial requirements of the business and what management controls should be put in place?

- when should changes be made to the business plan?

- where should the management go for technical support and advice?

Your CMC should identify services that can be offered quickly and with minimal operational cost. For many CMCs, this would imply using cheap and simple technologies. The services you offer would typically include: community radio broadcasting, basic computer training, telephony (if available), and perhaps a library with e-books on CD-Rom where Internet is not available.

A vigorous marketing and sales strategy should follow your short-term strategy to inform the community about your CMC.

Once the basic plan has been elaborated, use a *start small* approach for results.

Medium-term strategies

Once your short-term strategy is in place you will need to take steps towards carrying out the medium term vision of your CMC. For example, a CMC focusing its comparative advantage on business differentiation and image building will want to promote customer loyalty and goodwill by taking actions that include:

- introducing additional services, such as a full-fledged library, to strengthen its image

- defining and applying a business model or combination of models, e.g., if the centre plans to use the brokerage model, the CMC can start to identify existing brokers or representatives of associations to be trained for the implementation of this model.

Microcredit group members broadcast from Radio Afia, Senegal

Photo courtesy: Birima Fall

Long-term strategies

Here the CMC will be looking at the social change it aims to bring about and attempts to realize its overall vision by exploring, e.g., linkages and networks.

Major concerns would include:

- setting up or joining a national or regional CMC network for radio programme exchange, joint human resource development, group purchasing and maintenance arrangements, etc.

- linkages with national and regional institutions for complementary service provisions and value-adding

- participation in knowledge networks

- creation of discussion sites as an outreach to the diaspora.

Developing a business plan

As discussed in the Starting Up chapter, developing a business plan is a first step in the creation of any CMC. A business plan is a written document that makes it possible for a CMC to share its plans with an investor. The content of the business plan will therefore need to demonstrate a detailed and properly articulated plan that ensures the creation of a sustainable, viable, well-managed entity. Depending on the type of CMC, it will be useful to include how this entity can make a return on the invested capital.

There are many types of business plans that can be adapted to your particular situation. In all cases you will need to gather and present your information under various categories that are outlined in a table of contents and summarized in the executive summary. You will also need to explain:

- goals and values of the CMC
- history of the CMC
- structure and organisation of the CMC
- services offered
- how the CMC generates an income
- how much money it makes
- how much income it plans to generate
- how much money it plans to spend.

The business plan allows potential supporters and donors to judge the value of the CMC and the chances of its success. It also helps the CMC management map out its needs and identify problems. A good business plan is very useful in making short-term decisions and allows helps to set goals in forecasting the future of the CMC. Fundraising efforts must always be embodied in the business plan. The following exercise may help you conceptualize the amount of time that is required to develop your business plan.

You are now ready with all the elements that are required for the composition of your business plan! Refer to the annex at the back and adapt the format to your needs.

Diversifying funding sources and partnerships

CMCs need to be aware of the following when planning to mobilise funds from various sources:

- It is important to keep up-to-date with the development priorities of the donor community, as they are very dynamic. Explore opportunities that will allow you to access donor networks; find out if they issue newsletters; try and visit their websites.

> **Step-by-step business plan checklist**
>
> **Step 1** – List all the major things that must be included in your business plan — services, marketing plan, operational plan and structure.
>
> **Step 2** – Check these points for the following:
>
> 'In the Budget' – make sure that your financial plan shows the income or expense. For example, if you are distributing t-shirts in your marketing plan, there should be an expense for making the t-shirts in the financial plan.
>
> 'Important Value' – each part of the business plan must serve the values of your mission statement and your ability to serve that mission statement.
>
> 'Proved' – demonstrate that you can support the importance of the point you are making with experience or documents
>
> 'Agreed'- show that all internal stakeholders, who include the Board, the staff, and the community, have agreed to the point you are making.
>
> **Step 3** – If you have checked Step 2 and done what is asked, then present the business plan in a readable format. For example,
>
> | Major Point | In the Budget | Important Value | Proved | Agreed |
> |---|---|---|---|---|
> | Move to bigger premises | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

- Donors are more likely to finance development initiatives that comprise substance rather than infrastructure, e.g., content development, targeted training, development campaigns. These require the use of the CMC services.

- Government or public sector institutions are likely to provide funds for national and community development programmes. Be aware of these and always seek to play a role in them.

- Civil society organizations such as NGOs and CBOs can provide some funds for the development of thematic initiatives that require CMC services, e.g., HIV/AIDS, women's empowerment, etc.

- The corporate or private sector will most likely buy a service or a product from a CMC. A CMC product could include information about local markets/producers (see the infomediary model above). However, approach partnerships within this sector with caution to avoid conflict of interest.

- The diaspora community is a potential contributing source to CMCs, but their contribution is less likely to be financial and more likely to be voluntary time, expertise and technical support.

Fundraising from the community

You can use creative ways to raise funds from your immediate community in addition to providing

services such as ICT training, Internet access, radio announcements, and recorded and live radio coverage. One of your community members may be interested in making a specific contribution e.g., for the expansion of the library. The community as a whole may be interested in paying a contribution for the broadcast of a school play or coverage of an important local event.

Involving the diaspora

Any diaspora is often equipped with a financial capacity that would be of significant importance to community development. Keep an open invitation to your diaspora for financial or voluntary contributions including technical expertise and support.

Fundraising from this community will require extensive and creative ways of networking by CMCs. Possible ways of promoting their service to the diaspora include leading debates on development issues, proactively informing the international community about the development of their communities, broadcasting suggestions about how the diaspora can play a role in community development, and announcing services that may be of interest to the diaspora.

Working relationships with commercial operators

CMCs could be seen as potential channels for reaching new markets in a country or region. The corporate sector will be interested in expanding and accessing new markets so it may be beneficial to explore ways of forging partnerships. However, you will need to keep guard against commercial organizations that use friendly or hostile approaches to gradually take over the CMC.

Your CMC can request the participation of the private sector on valid grounds for corporate social responsibility, which may provide valuable support for development initiatives.

A businessman watches his tender application being faxed from Sengerema Telecentre, Tanzania

Photo courtesy: Habby Bugalama

A possible window of opportunity for your CMC may be to establish relations with commercial operators once you have identified a service or a product that you can re-distribute at community level.

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Research and Evaluation

The Ethnographic Action Research Approach

Jo Tacchi, Don Slater
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Why do research?

In this chapter

- **Why do research? What for?**

- **Ethnography and action research**

- **Broad and targeted research**

- **Planning your research**

Research and Evaluation

Ethnographic action research is a methodology, which provides a flexible and adaptable approach to gather knowledge about community media centres, their users and wider communities. The methodology is based on combining two research approaches: **ethnography** and **action research**.

Ethnography is a research approach that has traditionally been used to understand different cultures. An ethnographic approach ensures that project development takes place within a broad understanding embedded in local contexts and needs.

Action research is a research approach used to promote new activities through new understandings of situations. It is based on a cycle of *plan, do, observe* and *reflect* – and this enables the collection of rich research data through an ethnographic approach to be fed back into project activities on an ongoing basis.
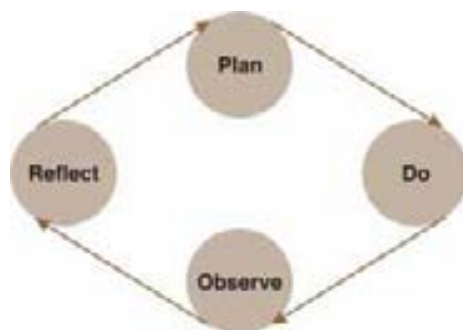
In this chapter we present an outline of ethnographic action research. For a full guide to the approach we recommend *UNESCO's Ethnographic Action Research: A User's Handbook* (Tacchi *et al.* 2003).

Why do research?

The *ethnographic action research* approach encourages CMCs to develop a 'research culture' as a part of their routine. The research itself is always aimed at helping the CMC to develop and to work more effectively in its local context.

Underlying the research process are four key questions that need to be addressed throughout the life of CMCs:

*   What are we trying to do?
*   How well are we doing?
*   How are we trying to do it?
*   How can we do it differently/better?

What are we trying to do?

The answers to the first question will establish the *purpose* and *goals* of your project.

Every CMC takes a direction and tries to produce outcomes, e.g., defining the purpose of a CMC publicly identifies what the CMC is there for and defining specific goals of a CMC helps it to stay on track. These goals can be used to assess whether a CMC has been successful. In other words, goals describe what should happen as a result of the CMC's work.

How are we trying to do it?

The second question turns goals into specific plans. How is your CMC trying to achieve its purpose and goals in its day-to-day operations? It requires an awareness of:

- your own CMC's activities
- the ways in which you are attempting to achieve your purpose and goals on a day-to-day basis, as an organisation, and in relation to stakeholders, including the communities you serve
- an awareness of your CMC's internal structures and systems, including the ways in which you use the resources of the CMC.

How well are we doing?

The third question demands a realistic and researched *evaluation* of how your CMC is working to achieve its purpose and goals, through reflection and self-awareness, and through researching those whom you are trying to impact.

Your research will uncover how well you are doing according to your local communities, local users, project staff and volunteers, donors and other external agencies.

How can we do it differently/better?

Informed by your research findings, the fourth question requires a re-evaluation of your purpose and goals, a review of your processes and practices, and an analysis of your effectiveness, achievements and shortfalls. It requires renewed planning and actions that will draw on the research, reflection and evaluation undertaken and improve the overall effectiveness of your CMC.

Beyond these four questions there are more specific questions that will need to be asked as the CMC develops. Ethnographic action research will assist you in raising these key questions and in defining more specific questions appropriate to your CMC and its purpose.

What should you research?

Instead of focusing on individual media technologies and their 'impacts', an ethnographic approach implies that we should look at the whole structure of communication and information flows in people's ways of life:

- the kinds of communication and information activities they do (or want to) carry out
- the communication resources at their disposal and how they understand the way these resources can be used
- the social relationships and institutions through which they are communicating.

Once we have built up this bigger picture, it is far easier to understand the impacts and possibilities of a particular medium, and how communications fit into the other things that people are doing. This is about placing particular media and media uses within a broader '**communicative ecology**'.

In the case of CMCs, focusing on the complete picture (communicative ecology) and on social networks and pathways (information flows) is important. Often we are dealing with new media that do not yet have a fixed form. We need to, and can, adapt them to local ways of communicating. Moreover, in the case of multimedia, we have to bring together media with different histories and institutions, creatively adapting them to make something new, effective and – importantly – locally relevant and appropriate.

Ethnography

Ethnography literally means to 'write or represent a culture'. Ethnography is traditionally based on long-term engagement in the field of study, or 'field site' (i.e., your CMC and its community). A key method is *participant observation*, where the ethnographer participates in the society or culture being studied (i.e. lives amongst those people) yet retains an analytical or observational position so that through reflection and analysis the ethnographer can describe and interpret the subject of the study. An ethnographer looks for patterns, describes local relationships, understandings and meanings. Ethnography takes a 'holistic' approach to the subject of study – that is, the ethnographer looks at the whole social setting and all social relationships.

The key to ethnography is that we focus on understanding a specific place, in detail and in its own terms.

Ethnography fits very well with action research because it is all about understanding how your particular community and your particular project work together.

For our purposes, an ethnographic approach aims to make sense of the complete range of social relationships and processes within which a CMC is doing its work. They include:

- the immediate circle of workers and active participants – how they are organised, how they carry out their work, how the CMC fits into their lives

- the users – their everyday lives and ways of doing things (both in the CMC, but also in their families, friendships, social networks, jobs and so on)

- the wider social context of the project – (e.g., social divisions within the community, language issues, local economy, social and cultural resources, power relations and institutions in the community)

- social structures and processes beyond the community – (e.g., infrastructure, government policies, economic developments).

Action research

Action research depends on the way you continuously plan your research in relation to the needs of your CMC. The aim is to build up a **research culture** in your CMC where research and documentation is an integral part of its daily operation. Everyone contributes to and learns from research; it is discussed at your meetings; staff and volunteers think about research when planning any activities.

Ethnographic action research involves the production of knowledge through well planned, structured and self-aware methods. All participants in a CMC can contribute to the research, feeding back their thoughts and observations and actively engaging with the research process. People generate enormous amounts of knowledge in the process of doing their work and generally call this 'experience' or 'instinct'. But if you gather and document this knowledge and reflect on it, it is also good research.

The social mapping done with the community of Nabanna in India

Example 1

Budhikote is a large village of 750 houses, with many outlying smaller villages. The Namma Dhwani CMC combines cable radio, radio programme making, computers and Internet. It is strongly connected to 15 well established women's self-help groups (SHGs), as well as drawing in people from the general population.

The CMC used the following methods to carry out their social mapping:

• Because the SHGs are so important to their work and to the community, they studied these groups by doing group exercises, interviews with individual members and taking field notes on their meetings. They also used the same methods on a few SHGs, which were not connected to the ICT project. All these methods looked at issues of poverty (including people's perception and definition of poverty), at media use and at the social problems that concerned the community.

• Many low-income people are not in SHGs. Namma Dhwani therefore organised their mapping into two categories: organised low-income (SHG members) and non-organised low-income groups. For the latter, they organised group exercises with neighbours, they did household interviews with non-SHG members and interviewed men (husbands of SHG members, but also men from other families).

• The CMC interviewed community people who had a special knowledge of the area: teachers, health workers, social workers, religious leaders, the operator of the cable network, and local council members.

• CMC staff made sure that they covered all sectors of the population – e.g., households of different religions, castes and occupations, selected outlying villages and Budhikote village itself. Not only are all these groups important to the project but also representative of different levels of poverty, media use and ways of working with the project.

• They conducted a survey of 130 households in Budhikote and a neighbouring village, with a very large questionnaire requesting information about family finances, education, media use and much more.

• They kept extensive field notes on the life of the village: public events and dramas; observations of where people met and communicated (e.g., wells, tea-shops, street gatherings during power cuts); and everyday use of the CMC.

• The CMC did regular broadcast research: during a radio broadcast the staff and volunteers would walk down a few streets to see what programmes each household was watching or listening to, and have a chat with many people along the way about their media use.

• They also mapped Namma Dhwani itself by drawing an organisational chart to visualise how the organisation works, who does what, and how the CMC involves community members in managing and running the project?
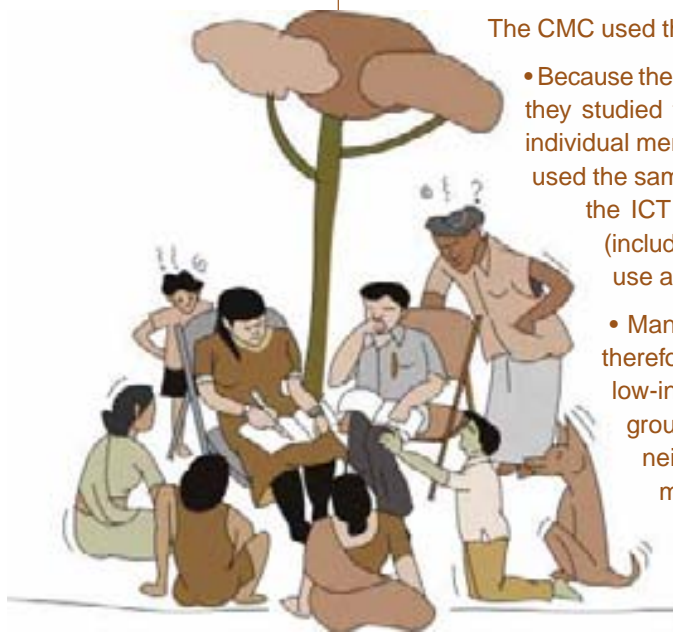
Being part of the research process, for CMC participants, may simply involve taking a different attitude to what they already know and sharing this knowledge with others. You can encourage CMC participants to reflect on what they and their colleagues are learning. All of this turns the activity into action research: they can reflect on the work of the CMC, learn lessons from it and think about how to develop it or replicate it.

Broad and targeted research

You will undertake both *broad* and *targeted* research in carrying out ethnographic action research.

• Broad research (social mapping and contextualising)

The overall aim of *broad* research is to build the 'bigger picture' of the CMC and its social context by using a range of methods to build a rich understanding of the CMC and its context.

As you can see from Example 1, there are a variety of objectives for this kind of research; it is broad in its scope. It depends on the community that you want to map. In fact, although you want to plan your social mapping, you will also want to keep adapting it in terms of what you are discovering. In the case of Budikote, they started by focusing on the self-help groups, but then realised that they were missing other groups of people who might be quite different.

In general, the objectives of social mapping might include the following specific objectives:

*   the gathering of local demographic and statistical information
*   a description of communication and other service infrastructures
*   building an understanding of the local communicative ecology
*   building an understanding of local information and communication needs
*   the identification of stakeholders
*   the mapping of relationships
*   a reflective examination of the CMC and its structures and processes.

You may want to add more objectives depending on your context.

Member of Radio Primerisima, Nicaragua, talks to striking miners

• Targeted research

Targeted research can be used to focus on specific issues that have emerged from broad research, on particular groups within your target communities, or on particular aspects of your CMC's work. From your broad research you would have identified some of the main issues and areas of work that are appropriate and/or important to explore for your CMC's development. You would then need research targeted specifically on these themes or issues.

You might, for example, want to explore why certain groups in your local community do not engage well with your CMC, or why others do. You might want to explore what these groups aim to get from your CMC and whether they think they achieve this. Targeted research can be undertaken on a number of different issues throughout your project's life. The same issues may be researched more than once as the CMC and community involvement keep growing.

In essence, targeted research should have a clear focus – it should aim to answer specific questions such as 'why do young women fail to take advantage of the services we are offering them?' or 'what do the young women who use our project facilities feel about us and what do

they gain from the services we offer?' In this way you will obtain information that you can then feed back into your centre activities and improve the appropriateness of your services.

As you can see from Example 2, targeted research can involve investigation of specific themes, specific kinds of people, political processes, and specific actors in the process, particular groups of men or women. These focuses are ones that are important for the project's development and for further developing a rich understanding of the centre and its local context.

Example 2

In Budhikote, the researcher gradually focused on three major themes. This focus arose from both the social mapping and from the development of the CMC itself.

1. Education – how to work with schools: their mapping showed that parents were ambitious for their children's education but very concerned about the low level of educational resources. At the same time, Namma Dhwani wanted to work more closely with the schools in order to bring their more informal teaching methods into the curriculum.

They started a project in which pupils and their teachers would make radio programmes a part of their school work and broadcast them on Namma Dhwani. This 'experiment' would need to be carefully researched: the researcher can make extensive field notes about the development of the project; interview teachers, pupils and parents about their experience; study the programmes that are made; observe and document classroom activities – and much more.

2. Governance and local politics – social mapping showed that, particularly through the SHGs, people were becoming very articulate about local problems but their relations with political bodies like the Panchayat (local council) were confused and unsatisfactory. A main aim of Namma Dhwani is empowerment: being aware of one's rights and acting on them.

Therefore, they decided to focus research on local political processes by, for example, studying Panchayat documents (their accounts and information systems); the flow of information between community and Panchayat; what issues were important to people and how they organised themselves to act on them.

3. Organised versus non-organised poor – this theme was present from quite early in the social mapping, as the researcher realised they were working more closely with SHG members than anyone else. Aside from needing to know about other kinds of people for the purposes of social mapping, she also became very interested in the differences between organised and non-organised poor people. For example, why were there only two Muslim women in all the 35 SHGs in Budhikote? And what difference did this make for the other Muslim women? Men saw the benefits of SHGs very clearly but so far had not been able to organise themselves in similar ways. Again, why? And could research help find a way to organise them?

In the case of both Muslim women and village men, targeted research involved in-depth interviews as well as observation to understand their place in the community and how they related to each other and the rest of the village.

The research process

The research process needs to be repeated regularly throughout the life of the CMC. We can think about this process in the following terms:

Guidelines for matching research methods to data needs

You need to select the most appropriate methods and techniques for your CMC research project or evaluation study.

Avoid the single-method solution

As a general rule, there is strength in having more than one method in any study. Some methods are clearly better suited to certain kinds of data and social situation. Reliance on a single method, usually a questionnaire survey, inevitably reduces the richness of the data and the possibility of crosschecking information. Data on how people use equipment is better observed than data obtained from an interview — why people wanted to use the equipment and how they felt after the experience can only be found out by asking them.

Match the method to the available human resources

The time and resources available to the research project and particularly, the availability of trained researchers and field workers are important considerations. Only researchers with specific training in design, coding, and analysis can effectively implement the methods.

Other methods are more robust in their application, such as observation, performance reports, and self-assessments. Group techniques require a skilled facilitator in leading group discussions. Questionnaire surveys are often more difficult to design than most people believe but field assistants with limited training can effectively carry out a well-designed survey instrument in the field, and a well-designed survey instrument is the key to good data collection.

Match the method to the type of data needed by the stakeholders

Assess the type of data needed by the various stakeholders. At the local level, highly statistical information is probably less useful than the more in-depth, qualitative kind that enables education and learning. However, potential investors in telecentres and international donors may require data with provincial or national validity, so a good sampling design is crucial. This may require financial data with statistical significance. The mix of stakeholders and their information needs will influence the research design, sampling strategy, and mix of methods.

Excerpted by **Laurent Elder** from Assessing Community Telecentres, Guidelines for Researchers, Ottawa: IDRC, 2000.

Each strand of your research should follow this process, and you might have more than one research strand happening at any one time.

You must go through this same process in both broad research and targeted research.

Planning research

In any research-related activity, there are fundamental questions to address prior to carrying out the research. This is especially so for participatory research approaches such as ethnographic action research. Participants will only engage fully with research activities and give the time and human resources required if they understand its purpose and can recognise the benefits.

Collecting and documenting data

The need for research planning applies to both *broad* and *targeted* research. The selection of methods and participants is also a part of the planning stage. You then conduct that research, using and adapting the methods you have chosen as you go about the collection of data.

You may find the need to use an alternative research method while you are collecting data. **Use more than one research method to strengthen the validity of your findings.**
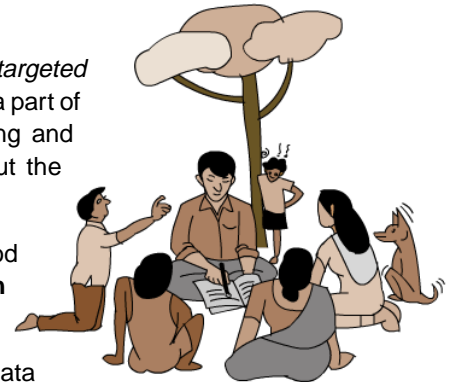
It is very important to ensure that you document your data thoroughly. You might conduct a fascinating set of in-depth interviews supplemented by participant observations - but this data will be lost and useless if you do not *write it all down*. You will forget most of what you found out or perhaps only remember the bits that interested you at the time. You will not be able to code and analyse your material properly because it is all in your head and other people will not be able to read the details of what you have learned.

Organising, coding and analysis of data

You must be disciplined and organized, both in the way you carry out the collection of data and the ways in which you manage it. Avoid cutting corners because those tasks are time consuming. Instead, organize your documents and long passages of text to prevent spending long hours finding your way around them.

Make sure that you label all the data you collect with basic information such as date, time, place, who was there, etc., and file them systematically.

Analysis is a continuous part of the research process, not something you leave until the end of research when all the data is gathered. You start to think about analysis as soon as you have collected some data. In ethnography, we spend some time each day reading and thinking through our material in order to:

*   see what interesting and significant issues are emerging

*   develop ideas and interpretations that we can pursue through further research

*   explore ideas across *all* the different kinds of material we are gathering.

In this kind of analysis, you are normally looking for common themes, ideas, issues or questions that are emerging across your research methods. This is one reason why documentation is

essential: it is impossible to analyse your material properly unless it is on paper or in electronic, image, or audio form.

Coding. In the example given, formal education is important to the interviewee, an issue that is also important to your CMC. By writing the phrase 'formal and informal education' on your interview notes, right next to this part of the interview you will start a process known as 'coding'. In other words, you are simply labelling interesting sections of your notes with appropriate 'codes'.

Using 'codes' will allow you to quantify the importance and relevance of issues in your community as in the example above. In this case, once you have completed 'coding', your next step might be to look over your other interview notes and transcripts to find other discussions of 'formal and informal education'. You also look over your field notes, questionnaires and any other material, such as diaries. You also look at the material that your users have produced in your project such as websites, or drawings, and at how they relate to different styles of learning. What do all these things tell you about 'formal and informal education'?

You will then move on to *organise* and *explore* your data in terms of particular 'codes'. This allows you to look at all of your material in terms of significant themes or ideas. In ethnographic action research, much of the work of analysis is done through coding, organising and exploring your data. As your research develops you will explore many more codes in this way, building up an increasingly detailed understanding of your CMC and community.

For example, in one interview you find some discussion about education and learning. This interviewee has been taking computer classes at your centre. Although she enjoys the informal style of teaching at your centre, both she and her parents worry that it is not 'like school', and therefore might not be as worthwhile. Moreover, you do not give out diplomas or certificates like private computer schools, and so her parents question whether they should pay a fee for your classes.

On the basis of your coding and analysis you will think of new ways to develop your research and relate your research to your CMC. For example:

- you might want to interview some teachers at local schools or private computer schools
- have a group discussion with some users of your centre
- add a question about informal education in your feedback form or questionnaire
- discuss this issue with project workers or bring it up at the next staff meeting
- suggest ways of organising your training courses so that they address issues that came out of your analysis.

Planning and action

You now have all this data, gathered through different methods, you've organised it according to codes and themes; next step – what do you do with it?

You can draw out some pertinent findings and recommendations for your CMC and you may identify areas where you need to do further research. You will need to look at:

- what you have found out and how you might apply this to your CMC's development

- how to deepen your understanding about the issues you have explored, and what other issues you need to explore.

You can write reports from your analysis and disseminate your research findings widely. This is an evaluation of your project's work, what it has achieved, and importantly, its strengths and weaknesses. Your research approach will allow you to ground this evaluation in the wider

social context in which your CMC is working, and you will be able to describe direct and indirect benefits that your CMC has delivered in great detail. Research is a valuable resource and it places your CMC in a good position to decide improvements on its performance.

Armed with your findings, your CMC can *plan* actions, it can then *implement* them, and you can *observe* and *reflect* on how they work or do not work. On completion of each research cycle, you are equipped with a better understanding of what is possible and how your CMC might achieve such possibilities.

Further information on ethnographic action research

Tacchi, J., Slater, D. and Hearn, G. 2003. *Ethnographic Action Research: A User's Handbook.* New Delhi. UNESCO. http://cirac.qut.edu.au/ictpr/downloads/handbook.pdf

Tacchi, J., Slater, D. and Lewis, P. 2003. 'Evaluating Community Based Media Initiatives: An Ethnographic Action Research Approach'. Paper for OURMedia III conference, Barranquilla, Colombia. 19-21 May 2003. http://cirac.qut.edu.au/ictpr/downloads/TacchiOM3.pdf

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Annex 1

How to Prepare a Business Plan

I. Front page

Include:

- CMC Name
- Document's name (<<Business plan of…>>)
- Date publication of document
- Name, address and telephone number of the company or of the focal point
- *Optional:* notice informing the reader of the plan's confidentiality.

II. Table of contents

III. Executive summary

Investor questions:

- *Who ? What? Why? How?*
- *Is it the type of company in which I want to invest?*
- *Will I obtain the return I am seeking for my investment?*

Include the following information:

- Indicate who's looking for funds, whether it is a community company or a single owner company
- Size and growth rate envisaged
- Total value of the financial needs. Indicate the main uses of funds envisaged *(computer and software purchase and installation)*
- Financing sources *(community contribution, subsidies, etc.)*
- Expected return.

Note: This summary should be written after the rest of the plan is finalised. Often, the reader decides to read the rest of the plan because the executive summary arouses the reader's interest.

IV. CMC company

Financial backer or investor question

- *Why should I put my money in the CMC?*

Description

- Type of activity: communication, trade, services, etc.
- Type of company: community company, private company
- Situation: setting up, expansion, etc.
- Size: sales volume, number of employees, number and size of the installations.

Management

- Board of directors and management team: Indicate who they are, what advantages they bring to the company (ICT experience, specialised skills, etc.)
- Indicate the post held by each
- Indicate whether it is the sole post they hold.

V. Possibilities

- *Why will people buy and use the CMC services?*
- *Are there going to be enough users?*
- *Which are the prospects for the future?*

The product or service

- Indicate what it is and what it is for
- Describe the new or innovative features of the CMC
- Indicate if modifications or a future update are envisaged.

The market

- Indicate who are the potential customers (corporations etc.)
- Indicate how your product or service meets their needs
- Indicate the size of the market. Justify with help of data obtained from community surveys, etc.
- Indicate the market growth potential. Justify with help of data based on facts.
  Take into account the local competitor markets
- Indicate your share of market and the share you aim to get during the first year
- Setting your tariffs. Indicate how you will manage to make profits while staying competitive
- Give the next five years' sales forecast (worst results, best results and expectations).

Competition

- Main competitors: names and shares of market
- Indicate whether competitor's share is rising or dropping, or if they are stable, and explain why
- Strong and weak points: make a comparison between your company and those of your competitors (size, reputation, site, etc.)
- Strong and weak points: make a comparison between your product or service and those of your competitors (quality, price etc.).

Sales and promotion

- Indicate how your good or service will be sold
- Specify what kind of advertising and promotion will be used (radio, open door etc.).

VI. Production

Site
- Indicate advantages offered by your site (proximity to markets, to centre of the locality, etc.).

Installations
- Indicate whether you are the owner or tenant of your premises. Specify conditions
- Describe briefly the premises. You can include sketches
- Indicate if renovation is necessary. Specify the cost.

Staff
- Indicate your staffing needs, is qualified staff available in the community or must they be recruited in town?
- Indicate necessary skills and training and the training cost
- Draw up the list of allowances and advantages associated with each position. Include salaries, wages, overtime remuneration and welfare benefits.

Organisation
- Indicate the specific municipal or governmental approvals which may be required on environmental or other criteria and specify the time needed to get approval
- Indicate how long it will take to get the premises, equipment, staff, etc., and to install everything.

VII. Financial data

Required investment
- Indicate the total financing amount necessary and the community contribution
- Indicate source of contributions
- Indicate when the investors can expect the CMC to become self-financing.

Assessment
- Opening assessment.

Statement of results
- Monthly statement of results for the first year.

Statement of treasury moves
- Monthly treasury moves for the first year.

Annex 2

Developing a Constitution

The constitution explains the legal nature of the CMC, its objectives and the way that it is to be managed. Below is a list of the headings that you would find in a normal constitution. If you already have a constitution or something similar, then it is important to be sure to amend it so that the CMC is included or considered under each heading.

Legal nature and personality of the centre

This section of the constitution explains how you want the law to see you.

For example, will a co-operative or an association govern the centre? What do the laws in your country say about setting up the sort of organisation you want to be?

Objectives of the association

This is a list of the things that your centre hopes to do.

Management board

Who will oversee the running of the centre? This is not the manager but a group that the manager reports to. This group will also support in the general management of the centre.

This section of the constitution should explain what roles each person on the board should have. It should also explain how these members would be selected.

Vacancies

This explains the ways in which any member can be removed from the Board.

Powers and duties of the management board

This explains exactly what is expected of the Board. It is very important here that you check the law in your country to understand what is expected of board members. Remember that you want the board to be able to support the centre.

Management roles

Normally, this will explain what is expected of the manager(s) at the centre. There might also be a section for the financial administration of the centre and/or the association.

Financial matters

This explains how and where the money is kept. It will also explain when financial reports are due and who must see and approve these reports.

Assets of the centre

This is a list of moveable and immoveable items which the centre owns. It should be updated regularly.

Membership

If an organisation or association runs the station, you should explain who could belong to the association. You will also need to explain how they can become members and how they can discontinue membership.

It is also a good idea to have a section explaining when and how the general meetings are held for the organisation. Also describe anything that needs to happen (the agenda) at these general meetings.

Dissolution

This section explains how the organisation or centre can dismantle. For example, who decides to close the organisation and what happens to everything the organisation owns?

Amendments

This section explains how changes can be made to the constitution. It outlines who decides on the changes and when they can do this.

Remember that everything in your constitution must serve the values that are stated in your mission statement.

Ian Pringle

Annex 3

Constitution of the IT Clubs
Uva CMC Network, Sri Lanka

Aims

- Maintaining the IT facilities for the benefit of the knowledge society members and the listeners of the Uva Community Radio

- Providing information to the community using modern information communication technologies

- Educating the community of Uva on the use of modern IT facilities

- Designing, organizing and producing programs for the Internet and on the use of the Internet

- Sustaining, maintaining and developing IT centres

- Establishing a fund to sustain the Community Multimedia Centres.

- Designing a programme of action for raising funds for the maintenance and development of the centres

- Organizing welfare activities for the members

- Strengthening Knowledge Societies

Authority

- Executing all work relating to the centres with the consent of the Manager, Uva Community Radio

- Establishing and maintaining a fund for the sustainability of the centres

- Buying, renting, selling any moveable or immovable properties for the activities of the centres

- Accepting grants and funds from local and foreign donors

- Organizing IT related training with or without a charge

- Organizing projects to create employment opportunities for the members

- Granting, canceling or rejecting the membership of the centres

- Creating a programme to attract associate members

- Opening and maintaining a bank account

- Above-mentioned activities should be performed with the knowledge and consent of the Manager of Uva Community Radio

Membership

- All members of the Knowledge Societies of UCR are eligible for the membership of the IT User Clubs; application form to be filled to obtain membership

- Members must accept and adhere to the aims and constitution of IT User Club

- Resource persons of MCR are eligible for associate membership without voting rights

Organisation

- The General Council will be the Supreme Authority with the decisions in-between to be taken by the Management/Steering Committee

- Steering Committee should manage the Clubs for the first 12 months

- At the end of this period an Annual General Meeting to be held to elect new members to a Management Council

Committee structure

- Manager of UCR or representative

- President of the IT User Club

- Secretary

- Vice President

- Asst. Secretary

- Treasurer

- Asst. Secretary-Training and Education
    - Welfare
    - Publicity
    - Development
    - Community Services

- One member from the mini-IT Centres.

Exception: Giradurukotte Club: the Manager or a nominee of the manager of Giradurukotte Community Radio Centre will be included.

Steering/management committee responsibilities

- The secretary of the IT User Club is the Secretary of the Committee

- The President of the IT User Club is the President of the Committee

- Drawing up and endorsing the Strategic Plan to which the Committee and Manager will work. This document sets out the goals for the Centre for the coming 12 months

- Performance is measured against these goals on a monthly basis to determine whether the Centre is on target to meet its commitments both financially and with regard to the development of programmes and services promised

- Developing policies and rules for the Centre

- Seeking community endorsement and input for programmes and services offered

- Maintaining financial accountability of the Centres

- Marketing Centre and its activities. The Manager will assist with this but the Committee is responsible for the ultimate success of the Centre

- The Committee will have the authority from the General Assembly to carry out the day-to-day activities of the Club.

Annex 4

Course Content for a 3-day Community Radio Production Training Programme

Objective of the training

To produce three or four features of 5–10 minutes of broadcast quality through group work.

In the process of production, the participants learn the different tasks of radio production for community radio. The features may need some editing and volume adjustment. The trainees will be very proud and motivated if their first pieces are broadcast.

Day 1		
10.00 am	Introduction of participants, programme and trainer	
10.30 am	Introduction to the medium of radio	
11.00 am	Democratisation of the airwaves	
12.00 am	Community radio, structures, community participation etc	
01.00 pm	Lunch break	
02.00 pm	How to draft a programme format, feature format and a plan of action	
03.00 pm	Group work: Draft format and plan for features (3-4 persons/group)	
04.00 pm	Writing for radio	
05.00 pm	Writing and reading exercise	
Day 2		
Group 1	**(max. 6 persons per group)**	**Group 2**
10.00 am	Studio operation	Editing with mini disc recorder
11.30 am	Editing with mini disc recorder	Studio operation
01.00 pm	Lunch break	
02.00 pm	How to conduct an interview	
04.00 pm	Preparing and doing interviews for the features	
05.00 pm	Selecting music, sound effects, writing scripts for the features	
Day 3		
10.00 am	Editing interview with mini disc, preparing for recording	
11.00 am	Recording in the studio in groups (60-90 mins. per group)	
01.00 am	Lunch break	
02.00 pm	Recording in the studio and final editing	
03.30 pm	Listening to the features and evaluating them	
05.30 pm	Evaluation of the training	

Designed by **Bianca Miglioretto**

Annex 5

Comprehensive Community Radio Training

Three weeks daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

This training is planned for community people who work in community radio stations as facilitators and volunteers. The objective of the training is that the participants produce features of 10–15 minutes duration on current local issues with local interview partners. In the second part, they produce educational radio dramas of 10–15 minutes. The work is done in groups.

After the training, the trainees should have the capacity to improve their own skills and to introduce community radio volunteers from the community radio to the basics of broadcasting.

This content may be changed depending on the needs of the participants. It can emphasise more on the structure and establishment of a community radio station and less on production; or more on production and less on community radio structure.

Proposed schedule

Week One:	What is community radio and radio formats
Monday	**Radio - most accessible information and communication technology**
Morning	Introduction of the participants, trainers and the programme
	Radio as mass media: advantages and disadvantages
	Radio landscape and the concept of community radio
Afternoon	Programme format, different radio segments
	Draft a format and plan of action for your feature in groups
Tuesday	**Ethics of fair journalism**
Morning	Power relations in journalism
	Gender sensitive radio programming
Afternoon	Operation of a radio studio and the path of the signal
Wednesday	**Research**
Morning	Research for radio
Afternoon	Research for the feature
Thursday	**Interviewing**
Morning	How to conduct an interview with on spot Interview exercise
Afternoon	Interviews with partners
	Listening to and analysing the interviews
Friday	**Writing for and talking on radio**
Morning	Writing for radio
Afternoon	Using the microphone and working on the feature

Week Two	Pre-production and live broadcasting
Monday	**Editing**
Morning	Editing on mini disc, cassette and computer
Afternoon	Working on the feature, interviewing, selecting music, recording sound effects
	Writing scripts, recording in the studio
Tuesday	**Production**
Morning	Production in the studio and on the computer
Afternoon	Listening in groups and correcting the features produced
Wednesday	**The results**
Morning	Listening to the different features and discussing them
Afternoon	Visit to a local commercial or state radio station
Thursday	**Panel discussion and live hosting**
Morning	Hosting a panel discussion and live programme
Afternoon	Recording a panel discussion with live guests
	Listening to the programme and analysing it
Friday	**Participatory radio**
Morning	Participatory radio, working with the community
Afternoon	Planning for future participatory programming

Week Three	Radio drama and training of volunteers
Monday	**Radio drama**
Morning	Introduction to producing radio dramas
Afternoon	Conceptualisation of a radio drama, in groups
Tuesday	**Production**
Morning	Production of the radio dramas in groups
Afternoon	Editing of the radio dramas
Wednesday	**The results**
Morning	Completing the radio dramas
Afternoon	Listening to the radio dramas, discussion on how to improve them
Thursday	**Community based training**
Morning	How to conduct community based radio training
Afternoon	Conceptualising community based radio training for participants' communities
Friday	**Evaluation**
Morning	Presentation of the concepts and discussion
Afternoon	Evaluation of the training
	Distribution of certificates and celebration

Designed by **Bianca Miglioretto**

Annex 6

IT Skills Assessment Form

A sample of a skills assessment form handed out to students of telecentre training.
(Can be downloaded at http://www.school.za/edict/appl.htm)

ICT SKILL	HAVE NOT DONE THIS	I AM STARTING TO LEARN THIS	I STILL NEED TO PRACTICE	KNOW THIS WELL
File Management				
Open file	I cannot do this	I have opened files before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only open files in the word processor or the Web browser, but not both	I can open files in both the word processor and Web browser
Close file	I cannot do this	I have closed files before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only close files in the word processor or the Web browser, but not both	I can close files in the both word processor and Web browser
Save a file	I cannot do this	I have saved files before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only save files in the word processor or the Web browser, but not both	I can save files in both the word processor and Web browser
Save as a file	I cannot do this	I have saved files in a different location or under a different name before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only save files in a different location or under a different name files in the word processor or the Web browser, but not both	I can save files in a different location or under a different name in both the word processor and Web browser
Name a file	I cannot do this	I have named files before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only name files in the word processor or the Web browser, but not both	I can name files in the word processor and Web browser
Rename a file	I cannot do this	I have renamed files before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only rename files in the word processor or the Web browser, but not both	I can rename files in the word processor and Web browser
Print a document	I cannot do this	I have printed files before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only print files in the word processor or the Web browser, but not both	I can print files in the word processor and Web browser

ICT SKILL	HAVE NOT DONE THIS	I AM STARTING TO LEARN THIS	I STILL NEED TO PRACTICE	KNOW THIS WELL
Create a folder	I cannot do this	I have created and named a folder before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only create and name a folder in Explorer, but not in other locations, or vice versa.	I can create and name a folder in Windows Explorer and within file dialogue boxes of the word processor and Web browser
Rename a folder	I cannot do this	I have renamed a folder before but may need assistance to do so.	I can only rename a folder in Explorer, but not in other locations, or vice versa.	I can rename a folder in Windows Explorer and within file dialogue boxes of the word processor and Web browser

Email				
Sending mail	I cannot do this	I am able to send a basic email to one user	I am able to send email to a user and CC another user. I am also able to send to mailing lists	I am able to send and forward email to individuals, multiple users, mailing lists, discussion lists
Reading mail	I cannot do this			I am able to read email
Replying to mail	I cannot do this	I am able to reply to an email message that I have read	I am able to reply to an email message and include the original in the reply.	When I reply to email I am able to dictate whom the reply goes to and how much of the original mail is included in the reply.
Attachments	I cannot do this	I am able to send attachment, but not receive, or vice versa. I sometimes have difficulty with this	I am able to send and receive basic attachments	I am able to manage file attachments fully. I am also able to receive and send attachments
Folders	I cannot do this	I am able to store mail in folders, but sometimes have trouble creating folders	I am able to store mail in folders	I am able to manage mail by storing it in folders and trays
Dial-up	I cannot do this	I do not regularly dial up for Internet access, but have done it.	I am able to dial up to the Internet	I am able to dial up to the Internet and am able to understand the reason when it does not always work successfully

Atieno Aluoch

Annex 7

CMC

Weekly Programming Schedule for Namma Dhwani Radio

Morn	6.30 - 6.45 a.m.	6.46 - 6.55 a.m.	6.55 - 7.05 a.m.	7.05 - 7.15 a.m.	7.15 - 7.25 a.m.	7.25 - 7.30 a.m.
SUN	Devotional songs	Bus timings and market prices	Childrens songs	Environment	Cinema music	Public service announcements (PSA) Jingle and contact info
MON	Devotional songs	Bus timings and market prices	Janapadha geethe (folk songs)	Indigenous medicine	Cinema music	PSA Jingle and contact info
TUE	Devotional songs	Bus timings and market prices	Pairu naati geethe (folk songs)	Agriculture	Cinema music	PSA Jingle and contact info
WED	Devotional songs	Bus timings and market prices	Bhavageethe (devotional songs)	Health	Cinema music	PSA Jingle and contact info
THU	Devotional songs	Bus timings and market prices	Sanghadha haadu (women's songs)	News about sangha	Cinema music	PSA Jingle and contact info
FRI	Devotional songs	Bus timings and market prices	Children's songs	Education	Cinema music	PSA Jingle and contact info
SAT	Devotional songs	Bus timings and market prices	Awareness songs	Local news	Cinema music	PSA Jingle and contact info

Eve	6.00 - 6.05 p.m.	6.05 - 6.15 p.m.	6.15 - 6.25 p.m.	6.25 - 6.40 p.m.	6.40 - 6.55 p.m.	6.55 - 7.00 p.m.
SUN	Jingle and contact info	Family values	Awareness Songs	Youth forum	Cinema music	PSA and contact info
MON	Jingle and contact info	Answers from the doctor	Children's programmes	Debate	Cinema music	PSA and contact info
TUE	Jingle and contact info	Income generation progs	Janapadha geethe	Story telling	Cinema music	PSA and contact info
WED	Jingle and contact info	Resource Centre progs	Agricultural songs	Success stories	Cinema music	PSA and contact info
THU	Jingle and contact info	Questions for lawyers	Bhavageethe (devotional songs)	Farmers discussion	Cinema music	PSA and contact info
FRI	Jingle and contact info	Resource centre progs	Sanghadha haadu (women's songs)	Panchayat news	Cinema music	PSA and contact info
SAT	Jingle and contact info	Children and women	Childrens programmes	Local news	Cinema music	PSA and contact info

Programming languages: Kannada, Telegu, Hindi.

The CMC Handbook is a result of suggestions and feedback from communities in rural and urban areas, NGOs working for community empowerment, communication planners supporting development activities, rural and urban small entrepreneurs.

"What would be most useful to me and to the people I work with who are actually running telecentres, would be a practical guide in simple language on how to set up and run community multimedia centres, that can be applied for different cases –making it clear that there is no one way".

"Coalition-building –how do we bring media and issues together?"

"Communities, stakeholders and audiences… what is a community?"

"How to analyse the main needs, social divisions, tensions and inequalities in our locality? What role can community media play in dealing with these issues?

We need some guidance on these questions."

Responses to a consultation with stakeholders in Community Multimedia Centres

The CMC Handbook will be a useful guide if you are already operating a community radio station or community multimedia centre, providing communication services or considering starting a community communication centre.

http://www.unesco.org/webworld/en/cmc

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