

# Profitable Programmes for Small Business: A Manual for Radio Companies

Promoting sustainable and effective  
Business Development Services for micro  
and small-scale enterprises (MSEs) in  
developing countries

## A FIT Manual

Martin Ssemakula and Gavin  
Anderson - August 2001



***InFocus Programme on Boosting Employment through  
Small Enterprise Development (SEED)***

Access to decent work is an antidote to social exclusion across the global economy. The InFocus Programme on Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development (SEED) seeks to harness the ILO's diverse technical capabilities in enterprise development, conditions of work, regulatory and policy frameworks, gender equality, and organisation and representation to promote the large-scale creation of quality jobs in small enterprises. In keeping with Recommendation 189 on Job Creation in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1998, SEED's mission is to strengthen understanding of how development of the small enterprise sector can better serve employment goals and to put this knowledge to work through policy guidance, technical cooperation, and international advocacy. The research findings and lessons learnt from service activities are circulated through the SEED Working Paper series. Further information, and a complete list of publications, is available on [www.ilo.org/SEED](http://www.ilo.org/SEED). The In Focus Programme is part of the Job Creation and Enterprise Development Department within the Employment Sector of the ILO.



# **Profitable Programmes for Small Business: A manual for radio companies**

by

Martin Ssemakula and Gavin Anderson  
August 2001

## **The FIT Manual Series**

InFocus Programme on Boosting Employment  
through **S**mall **E**nterpris**E** Development  
Job Creation and Enterprise Development Department

International Labour Organisation  
Geneva

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## Foreword

This unique manual is intended primarily as a tool for radio broadcasters and production companies who are interested in launching a profitable radio programme that targets the micro and small business sector. The manual was written to encourage and support the development of new radio programmes that are both providing valuable services to the significant audience segment of small business and are profitable to the broadcasters and producers. But this manual is also relevant to any individual or organisation who is involved in small enterprise development and wishes to utilise the mass media as a tool to reach small businesses.

The ILO's InFocus Programme on Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development, IFP/SEED, is at the forefront of promoting initiatives to develop the commercial provision of services to the micro and small business sector, and is pioneering approaches of working with the private sector. The IFP/SEED work with media companies is a unique collaboration between commercial companies and development agencies, and shows the potential of marrying the commercial and development agendas to create truly sustainable and demand-led services. The mass media are able to diffuse information to large numbers of small enterprises, so that they can, for example, identify new market opportunities. In this way, their businesses can become more healthy, ultimately growing and creating more quality employment.

In addition, the mass media can give marginalised people in the smallest enterprises a voice, so that they can have some influence on policies which affect their daily lives. This is particularly true for women in micro-enterprises, since they often feel far from local and national government. In vibrant democracies, such groups can initiate a fruitful dialogue with those they elect, through the mass media.

This manual is written by, and based on, the experience of Martin Ssemakula, the Production Manager of Central Broadcasting Service (CBS) Uganda and Gavin Anderson, an ILO Technical Adviser on Small Enterprise Development. They initiated the first pilot programme on CBS in 1999, going on to support similar initiatives in West and Southern Africa. This manual will form an important component of the future replication of these radio programmes. For example, it forms a central part of the materials for a new training course for radio station owners and staff, developed by the ILO in collaboration with AFRINET, an African media training, consultancy and production company. Jim Tanburn leads IPF/SEED's work to promote commercial provision of business services and was instrumental in developing the work upon which this manual was based.

Christine Evans-Klock  
Director  
InFocus Programme on Boosting Employment  
through Small Enterprise Development



## **Acknowledgements**

The experience on which this manual is based was made possible by the hard work and dedication of a number of producers, presenters, journalists and marketing personnel who have worked to design, launch and run radio programmes for small business. Without their hard work and dedication these programmes would not have been successful and the manual could not have been written. Support of the managers and owners of radio stations, Central Broadcasting Service (CBS) Uganda, Kapital Radio (Ghana), Voice of Toro Uganda, Paidha FM (Uganda) and Voice of Teso Uganda, is also gratefully acknowledged. The authors would also like to acknowledge the contribution of the commercial sponsors and advertisers and most importantly small businesspeople who have contributed to, participated in, and listened to the programmes.

The work on radio programmes for micro and small enterprises (MSEs) has been pioneered in African countries where the governments have an enlightened approach to media freedom and deregulation. In particular, government policy towards radio liberalization in Uganda and Ghana has provided a model for other countries in Africa. The Ugandan Ministry of Finance and the Micro and Small Enterprise Policy Unit (MSEPU), were close supporters of the initial pilot programme in central Uganda. Many other local and national government officials in Uganda and Ghana have also shown an admirable willingness to respond to the questions and complaints of small businesses on these programmes and this spirit of open dialogue and transparency has been a critical factor in the success of these programmes.

Acknowledgement is made to the past and ongoing work of FIT Uganda Ltd, who was central in the initial design and launch of the first MSE programme in Uganda and has gone on to support the development of other MSE radio programmes in other geographic locations in Uganda. FIT Uganda's sister organization in Ghana, FIT Ghana, was also a critical player in replicating the programme in Kumasi, central Ghana. The work of the managers of these companies, Robert Kintu in Uganda and Robert Nsiah in Ghana, is gratefully acknowledged.

The radio programmes have primarily been designed, funded and initiated by commercial radio stations but a number of donors have provided small but strategic inputs to facilitate the development of these programmes. The Austrian Development Service (OED) supported the work of Gavin Anderson in media in Uganda from 1998 to 2000. IDRC (International Development Research Centre) provided FIT Uganda with initial funds to research the MSE audience and the commercial radio market in Uganda. The European Union Suffice Programme in Uganda also supported the replication of these programmes in Uganda.

The InFocus Programme on Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development (IFP/SEED) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has been a key supporter of this work. ILO provided support to the FIT organisations in Ghana and Uganda to research the market for information services for MSEs and to replicate the radio programme in Ghana. The ILO has also supported the development of a training programme for radio stations on establishing MSE programmes and is supporting the networking of the radio programmes in East and West Africa. ILO is also the sponsor of this manual.

The authors would also like to acknowledge the inputs to this manual by Mr Willy Thomas, Senior Editor of the English service of Deutsche Welle radio and manager of Independent Radio and Television Network (IRTN). Mr. Thomas has developed a training course for commercial radio companies to establish and run programmes for MSEs and is also establishing MSE programmes in Nigeria. Mr. Samson Bill Nyatia, the Marketing Manager of Central Broadcasting Service also contributed on aspects of marketing the programmes.

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## **Acronyms**

CBS	Central Broadcasting Service – a commercial radio station in central Uganda
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MSE	Micro and Small Enterprises
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PR	Public Relations
URA	Uganda Revenue Authority
USP	Unique Selling Point
VAT	Value Added Tax
VoT	Voice of Toro – a commercial radio station in western Uganda
VoTeso	Voice of Teso – a commercial radio station in eastern Uganda
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The mass media is an enormously powerful tool that can deliver information, provide platforms for debate, open channels of communication, increase understanding of complex issues and thus empower ordinary people. The mass media is also a growing and increasingly profitable industry across the world and the need for effective information flow and communication is recognised as critical in most areas of life including business, politics, democracy, education and health.

In many developing countries the media has been used by those in power to control information flow, but over the last decade there has been an increasing liberalization and privatisation of radio, TV and print media. This trend has been particularly prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa where there has been a considerable growth in independent media in recent years. In a continent with a strong aural culture, low literacy rates and with television remaining primarily the preserve of the elite, radio has formed the basis of an African 'mass information revolution'. Commercial radio stations have flourished since the mid nineties when a number of African countries lifted the state stranglehold on the media. Mali for example has the highest radio station to population ratio of any African country with 107 broadcasters for a population of just over 10 million. Other countries such as Ghana and Uganda with 38 and 18 commercial radio stations respectively have shown a similar rapid growth in commercial broadcasting since 1995. These radio stations are now recognised as a significant and effective force for development. They raise mass awareness, promote and facilitate debate, deliver crucial information and encourage transparency within national governments.

The independent radio industry in Africa is primarily commercial and while many stations recognise their role as service providers, they must also secure advertising and sponsorship revenues and become profitable. The experience detailed in this manual shows that these two agendas of providing a service through quality programmes that benefit audiences and maximising profitability are not in conflict with one another. In fact the independence of a media funded by commercial revenues rather than government or politically motivated sources can enhance the quality of information.

[Insert Listener 3.tif here]

This manual is a practical guide on how to establish and run radio programmes that marry these two agendas in a way which is beneficial to the listeners and to the profitability and competitiveness of radio stations. These programmes are targeted towards a unique segment of the audience and advertising market, namely the very small business sector which forms a huge and growing market segment in almost all

developing countries and advertisers who are interested in reaching this important segment of the economy. This audience segment, which encompasses market vendors, street hawkers, shopkeepers, restaurant owners, fishermen, manufacturers etc., is an audience that severely lacks information and representation. It is also a segment that is a large consumer of products and services and to which many companies target their advertising and sales.

This manual therefore details a business opportunity for radio stations to create new programmes that can capture new audience and advertising markets and therefore increase profits while being seen to provide an extremely beneficial service to a critical sector of the business community in developing countries.

## **ABOUT THIS MANUAL**

This manual is aimed primarily at commercial radio stations and the owners, managers, programme directors, marketing managers, marketing representatives, journalists and presenters in these stations. While the manual will be of use in many different parts of the world it is especially relevant in developing countries where there is a large informal and micro business sector. Media professionals in print and television may also read the manual so that the approach can be adopted and applied.

The manual comprises four sections. The first section details the rationale behind a radio programme for small businesses, why radio, why this is a viable audience segment and why the programme is popular both among the audience and with advertisers. The second section is a practical step-by-step guide on how to plan and establish a radio programme with the third section detailing the factors to consider once the programme is running. These sections address specific elements of the programme, and are treated with a practical perspective and provide the reader with the real experience of translating the programme concept into a practical and successful radio programme. The final section explores the possible difficulties that may be encountered in establishing these programmes. The content of this final section is based on experiences of radio stations that are running these programmes. Their experience offers possible strategies to overcome such difficulties. For those radio stations that are in the process of launching the programme, this section is useful in avoiding such setbacks.

The manual will serve as a useful tool in understanding the potential of the radio programme for MSEs and in making a quick start for radio stations in designing, launching and sustaining the programme. The manual offers the reader the rare opportunity to appreciate the challenges and successes experienced by the radio managers, programme directors, producers, investigative reporters and programme hosts who have already initiated these programmes.

### **Micro and Small enterprises (MSEs)**

In this manual the target audience will be referred to as micro and small enterprises or MSEs. This term refers to the very smallest businesses and includes part-time, home based, informal (non registered) businesses as well as formal small shops and workshops. While the programmes are primarily targeted towards those in business it should also be recognized that the programmes also attract listeners who are aspiring businesspeople, those who are interested in supporting friends and relatives in business and even recreational listeners who find the programmes of real human interest. The programmes also have a real and practical interest for government officials and others involved in supporting, legislating or representing MSEs. While the target audience is defined as MSEs, it should therefore be recognized that the

audience will in fact be much wider than just those running or working in small businesses.

[Insert MSE 1.TIF here]

#### **WHAT EXPERIENCE IS THIS MANUAL BASED ON?**

The manual is primarily written by Martin Ssemakula who is the Production Manager of the Central Broadcasting Service(CBS) and was involved in designing and establishing the first MSE radio programme in Uganda. He has subsequently produced and managed the programme since October 1999 as well as visiting and advising stations in rural Uganda, Ghana and Zimbabwe on establishing similar programmes.

The co-author, Gavin Anderson, was the originator of the concept of a commercial programme for MSEs and managed the small business consultancy company, FIT Uganda, that worked in collaboration with CBS to establish the first programme. He subsequently took up employment with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and has supported the expansion of the programme in Uganda and Ghana as well as the development of a training course for radio stations in establishing programmes for MSEs.

The manual is therefore based on the practical experience of establishing 4 MSE radio programmes in urban and rural locations in West and East Africa as well as running a programme for MSEs successfully and profitably for over one and a half years. Since the launch of the MSE programme, named 'Nekolera Gyange', on CBS twice weekly, the programme has enjoyed full sponsorship by MTN, a mobile telephone company, and Centenary Rural Development Bank. Its listenership continues to grow and focus listener clubs have been established for the purpose of making the programme closer to its intended audience in terms of content and participation.

Based on the interest generated by Nekolera Gyange other private radio stations in Uganda have been keen to run similar programmes and Martin Ssemakula has offered technical advice on launching this programme to VOT (Voice of Toro) in Western Uganda, Paidha FM in Northern Uganda and VOTeso (Voice of Teso) in Eastern Uganda. Weekly programmes have subsequently been launched on Voice of Toro and Paidha and a further programme is planned to be launched on Voice of Teso. Furthermore, in October 2000, Kapital FM in Kumasi, Ghana launched an MSE programme following technical support being provided by the authors.

In November 2000, Martin also visited Harare, Zimbabwe and worked with a local consultancy company, FIT Zimbabwe, and ZBC (Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation) to design and format an MSE programme in that country. Unfortunately no programme

has been launched in Zimbabwe due to the lack of liberalization in the media and the economic situation of the country at the time, although useful insights were gained on the viability of establishing programmes for MSEs in a country with a state monopoly on radio media.

In June 2001, plans to establish MSE radio programmes in Nigeria were finalized and at the point of writing this manual Afrinet, a Nigerian media training and consultancy company, was in the process of finalizing demo tapes of an MSE programme and intended to launch a programme in October 2001. The managing director of Afrinet, Mr. Willy Thomas, who is also a senior editor for the Africa service of German national radio (Deutsche Welle) and an experienced media trainer in Africa, has also worked closely with the authors to develop a training course for radio stations on establishing MSE programmes and is supporting the pilot testing of a collaborative network of radio stations to broadcast MSE programmes across Africa. Mr Thomas has also contributed technically to this manual.



## **Section 1**

### **THE RATIONALE BEHIND A RADIO PROGRAMME FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

Recent liberalization of the media in many countries has stimulated considerable private sector investment in the electronic media. This has been particularly apparent in liberalizing economies in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In terms of radio programming, this is an opportunity but also a challenge. There is need to design programmes that target specific audience segments around which an attractive marketing proposal can be developed to attract advertisers and sponsors. With increasing competition there is also an increasing need to differentiate programmes and create formats that are tailored for specific audience interests. A successful commercial programme should therefore have the following ingredients: -

- High listener-ship resulting from an interesting and varied format.
- Attract an audience that has a strong commercial interest for potential advertisers and sponsors
- Be distinct from the programmes on other stations.

How does a programme that targets MSEs fulfill this criteria?

### **TARGETING MSEs AS A FOCAL AUDIENCE GROUP**

In the developing economies of the world the MSE sector forms one of the most important segments of the economy. Unlike developed countries, which are dominated by large formal businesses and where most people are formally employed, a significant proportion of individuals and families in developing countries are reliant on the income derived by informal or small business activities. Even many of those who are formally employed in developing countries supplement often meager wages by establishing small businesses. Uganda is typical of many developing countries where the small business sector forms the largest commercial sector (after smallholder farming). In 1995 it was estimated that there were over 850,000 small businesses in Uganda that employed over 2 ½ Million people, this being 20 % of the Ugandan working population and 90% of all those employed in the private sector (not including subsistence farmers). Employment in small business was estimated to be growing at 21% per annum and it is therefore probable that over 4 million people are now employed in this sector in Uganda<sup>1</sup>

MSEs in numerical terms are therefore an enormous and growing segment of the market in most developing countries, but more importantly perhaps for their viability as a specific audience segment is the fact that they form a sector that is critical to the economic growth of many countries and to the commercial success of many of the formal businesses in these countries. The MSE sector forms one of the largest and fastest growing consumer segments in many countries, purchasing raw materials, stock, services, vehicles, fuel, land, tools and equipment. They are also a critical factor in the transportation, wholesaling and retailing of the products of small, medium, large and corporate business. MSEs dominate in the service, transport, restaurant, secretarial, tailoring, woodwork and small-scale construction industries of most developing countries. It is the MSEs who run almost all the retail shops that make direct contact with millions of consumers in the urban and rural areas. It is the MSEs who run metal works and carpentry, making the single biggest market for the big metal rolling plants and timber mills.

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<sup>1</sup> United States of America International Development (USAID), Micro and Small Scale enterprises in Uganda. A Report on the National Baseline Survey, 1995.



Diverse as they are in their activities, the MSEs have common factors that affect their businesses and experience has shown that small businesspeople in countries as diverse as Uganda and Cambodia have real interest in programmes designed for them. The diverse nature of the sector also allows for a full, varied, interesting and lively format that attracts avid and loyal listener-ship.

[Insert radio listener 1.TIF here]

The MSE sector is therefore a very viable target audience segment for radio programmes in most developing countries in numerical terms, in terms of the commercial interest these programmes generate from the private sector and in terms of content.

#### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A RADIO PROGRAMME THAT SPECIFICALLY TARGETS MSEs**

While informal micro and small-scale entrepreneurs form one of the most important sectors in the economics of many developing countries they have often been denied much needed media attention, which would provide them with a voice to influence change and improve the performance of their businesses.

More often than not, media attention follows the formal sector and the big business companies which dominate on the business pages of the major publications and business news on radio and TV stations. These big companies can comfortably afford to buy space for special supplements in print and sponsor major programmes on radio and TV stations and local micro and small businesses remain sidelined in most media.

With MSEs located in the most remote parts of a country or concentrated in chaotic and overcrowded market areas, with most not being registered and many, particularly informal businesses, without telephone or postal communications they are a difficult group to reach on mass. The flow of information to and from small businesses is therefore poor and many MSEs remain ignorant of the issues that can, and are, effecting their every day business such as economic conditions, market opportunities, government legislation etc. The MSE programmes can provide the perfect channel to improve the flow of information to the benefit of the small businesses as well as provide them with a national voice.

## **THE BENEFITS OF THE MSE PROGRAMME TO THE RADIO STATION**

While the MSE radio programmes can provide tangible benefits to the MSE audience there are also real and tangible benefits to radio broadcasters who produce and air such programmes. The liberalization process has attracted many investors into the radio business and the competition to stay in the market is growing significantly in many countries. This competition often results in a price war where stations compete directly on offering similar products targeted towards the general audience and ultimately profitability suffers.

Rather than competing for the general market, the MSE programmes create a new market niche that results in unique and targeted offers to advertisers and sponsors to reach a specific segment of the audience. The experience of CBS in Uganda showed that premium rates could be charged for this unique programme and the MSE programme on CBS has become the second largest money earner for the station.

Furthermore, the programme not only potentially attracts sponsors and advertisers but attracts new listeners to the station. The programme formats are new and lively, and offer direct benefits to the audience unlike music, general chat or political shows.

A programme that focuses on MSEs therefore offers a profitable solution to the radio station that aims at consolidating listenership and increasing income.

### **The key aspects that makes the MSE programme unique**

- It is focused on a specific audience as opposed to the general audience thus creating a unique programme for listeners and a unique channel for advertisers and sponsors to reach a segment of the market.
- It is targeted on a large dynamic business group that is of commercial interest to sponsors and which is difficult to reach through other media channels.
- The small business audience itself is varied, interesting and often outspoken about issues and problems. Interesting features and content can therefore be developed on many, varied issues and problems.
- The unique programme format emphasizes the need to take radio to the target audience on location, allowing direct interaction and feedback on issues of concern. This earns the radio station special credit and recognition for reaching out to the people who may not have had the opportunity to be heard which enhances public relations for the radio station.
- The programme has the potential to influence policy change in areas that affect small businesses and provides useful and up-to-date information thus providing tangible benefits to the listeners and making the programme popular with the target audience.
- The popularity of the programme and its ability to influence positive change in MSEs in turn attracts sponsorship and advertising especially from advertisers whose business targets the MSEs or who rely heavily on MSEs to wholesale, distribute or retail their products.

### **The key aspects that makes the programme popular among MSEs**

- Its content is primarily driven by the expressed concerns and priorities of the target audience and therefore focuses on issues of immediate interest to the target audience
- The investigative approach embraced by the programme results in in-depth analysis and follow up on issues of concern to MSEs.

- Direct interaction on location, 'taking radio from the studio to the people', enhances the quality of interaction with MSEs as well as allowing the programme staff to develop a better understanding of the problems and issues.
- The format allows MSEs to listen to issues being discussed in their own voices which receive direct reactions from specific quarters where the issues are directed e.g. Government officials, members of parliament, specialists etc.

[Insert MSE Interview - Retailer.TIF here]

- The ability of the programme to achieve results on behalf of the MSEs. After talking about issues of concern, the MSEs gain confidence in the programme if they realise tangible results, and after all this is the major reason for them to have a voice on radio. The MSEs want to see unfavorable policies reversed, corrupt officials sacked and support facilities and infrastructure put in place.
- It provides a source of vital information to the sector via the most accessible medium, radio.
- Pervasive broadcasting coverage guarantees that reaches even the remotest business community.
- The segmentation of the programme allows for variety, which makes the programme more informative and more interesting to listen to.

## **Section 2**

### **HOW TO ESTABLISH A RADIO PROGRAMME FOR MSEs**

In the last section, the rationale behind a programme for small businesses, it becomes clear that this programme is unique in terms of audience, content and presentation. Taking the programme from the concept stage to actual launch therefore requires considerable work if the programme is to succeed. The steps in planning and launching an MSE programme are suggested and explained in this section.

#### **THE STARTING POINT – EQUIPMENT AND STUDIO FACILITIES**

Running an effective and high quality MSE programme demands that basic studio facilities are in place. It is assumed that those wishing to establish such a programme will have the basic equipment and facilities (sound proofed studio, studio recording equipment, microphones etc). But to produce the programmes described in this manual, radio stations will require equipment to effectively handle and mix prerecorded materials and undertake field recording. Without adequate production facilities, studios and field recording equipment stations may not be able to handle the MSE programme.

Investing in digital audio work stations can be wise and cost saving. In fact, it is easy and cheap to install a work station. A simple multi media personal computer (PC) with the right editing studio software is all an MSE programme production team requires and this is usually within the means of most stations and can be used for a variety of programmes and purposes.

Portable digital recorders such as the minidisk have replaced cassette recorders and producer clean audio. A minidisk recorder may be a much more expensive utility than the portable cassette recorders which many radio news rooms use, but in the long term, the minidisk is cheaper since the recording medium is re-useable for close to a million times without loss in quality while cassette tapes degenerate with each use.

#### **A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO ESTABLISHING AN MSE RADIO PROGRAMME**

**Step 1: Researching the market**

**Step 2: Developing the programme format and content**

**Step 3: Establishing the programme production team**

**Step 4: Creating a dummy programme**

**Step 5: Marketing the programme to sponsors**

**Step 6: Launching the programme**

##### **STEP 1: Researching the market**

Asked what he thought about the idea of having a regular radio programme for MSEs, one radio producer replied:

*‘Well, not a bad idea; but in my area, I think I can only run about five programmes and in the last programme, all the problems for this focus audience will have been addressed’*

This radio producer had assumed that the MSE’s problems were limited to only those he had heard about. The producer had not envisaged the much bigger scope of the MSE programme and the diverse dynamics of change in their day-to-day activities. Subsequent experience showed that MSEs faced a myriad of different problems, and issues and priorities altered regularly so rather than running out of content the

programme opened up numerous issues and began to generate and drive its own content.

It is therefore important to conduct practical research and interact with the target audience to develop an understanding of the interests and priorities of MSEs. Ideally, this should be done in a systematic way with a reasonable sample of MSEs from various locations and among the various business sectors. A survey that uses a simple and short questionnaire can be most useful in collecting specific information on the day, time and preferred language for the programme, while interviews and group discussions can provide the best information on potential content for the programme, suggestions for programme style and for gauging listener interest. While formal surveys can be undertaken by hired researchers or even well briefed students, it is best that the interviews and group discussions are undertaken by the programme producer or other staff who will have a long-term involvement in the programme.

[Insert MSE Interview Kumasi Market.TIF  
here]

Although many people today carry portable radio receivers, even to their places of work, it is not wise to make assumptions on the best time to air a programme intended for them. In both urban Uganda and Ghana it was seen that the MSE audience preferred the programmes to be broadcast later than expected and after the usual primetime while few MSEs wanted the programmes to be broadcast during the daytime even though many of them listened to the radio at their place of work. The reason for this was that they would be unable to concentrate on the programme while involved in work and dealing with customers. They wanted the programme to be on when they had returned home and had eaten their evening meal (often late in the evening). Having said this, the preferences of many rural MSEs were different with earlier times preferred which highlights the importance of directly consulting the target audience on this and other aspects of the programme.

Another consideration when reviewing the findings of the audience research is that of gender. Women are dominant in retail, trade and many other sectors of small business and it is important to try and attract them as listeners. But women, particularly in most developing countries, often have less time to listen to radio due to family and domestic duties that they are required to undertake on top of their business activities. The interests and priorities of women entrepreneurs may therefore be different from men and it is important to develop a format that attracts both male and female listeners.

A benefit encountered in Uganda in completing a formal survey with a short report on the findings was that the marketing department were able to utilize the survey to convince potential sponsors and advertisers that the programme times were optimum for this specific target audience. In Ghana a formal survey was not undertaken and the

decision for the programme time was based on informal interaction with MSEs. When one of the sponsors complained about the programme timing this even raised doubts in the mind of the production team and it was only through a subsequent formal survey of 200 MSEs that it was proven that the timing was appropriate.

It is also useful to review thoroughly, the existing business and demographic data, survey findings and any other available information to ensure a good understanding of the basic business, social or economic problems to be addressed in the programme. Statistical information on the MSE sector is also useful for persuading potential advertisers and sponsors about the importance of the MSE sector, and to draw on when preparing a story on a specific issue. Such information and data may be accessible in government departments, UN Agencies, NGOs etc.

## **STEP 2: Developing the programme format and content**

Research into the MSE audience conducted by radio stations and stakeholders in Uganda, Ghana and Zimbabwe showed that the interest in the programme was based on its potential as a platform for representation in the decision making process on matters of concern to the sector and as a channel for technical, market and business information.

Fitting these aspects into a single programme requires designing a suitable format that allows for smooth presentation and logical sequencing of the programme elements that will result in the overall smooth flow that should sustain the audience throughout the programme. Most radio stations that have established MSE programmes have adopted a 'magazine' style format where the programme is divided into distinct segments. The number of segments, as well as what goes into each segment, to a great extent depends on the audience's interests and the individual radio station's programming capacity and style.

A typical example of a format for the 30 minute programmes produced by CBS in Uganda is as follows:

Programme jingle & opening billboard	1 min
Programme introduction	2 min
Business news	3 - 5 min
Main feature	7-10 min
Feedback	5 min
Business opportunities	3 min
Sponsors message	2 min
Closing remarks	2 min
Programme theme & closing billboard	1 min

### **Segment content and sequence**

#### **i) Programme jingle and opening billboard**

Programme Directors or Producers often choose instrumentals of 30 – 60 seconds as programme jingles. These are normally selected from the station's music library. However, a customised programme jingle or theme tune can create more impact for the programme if the theme is specifically designed to suit the interests of the focus audience and especially if the theme is composed as a song with lyrics delivering a definite message to the listener. Such theme songs have been composed for the MSE programmes on CBS and VOT (Uganda) and Kapital FM (Ghana).

For the theme song to stand out as an artistic piece of work that makes an impact, its composition should be assigned to a professional production company. The theme songs of the MSE programmes on the radio stations mentioned above have the names of the programme in their chorus. The theme tune or jingle will also be used to demarcate the various segments of the programme.

***Nekolera Gyange ('I run my own business'): Lyrics to the theme tune / jingle***  
*(Translation from the Ugandan language Luganda)*

*I run my own business,  
This is how I earn my living.  
This one is a trader  
Over there is a carpenter  
I have got my own Kafunda (local name for a combined bar and grocery shop)  
My mother works in Kikuubo (a well known small business market)*

*Nekolera, Nekolera, Nekolera Gyange*

*Let us all rejoice  
Because we now have a voice on radio  
now we can learn  
about issues that hamper our business  
Now we can find  
New business opportunities*

*Nekolera, Nekolera, Nekolera Gyange*

The programme opening billboard, that is the sponsors' identity to the programme, is placed at the end of the theme song that opens the programme, while the closing billboard is placed at the end of the theme song that closes that programme.

Choice of the name for the programme should also reflect and identify the interests of the target audience. The name is a critical aspect in packaging the programme. It should give a positive image to the MSEs, be a source of pride and encouragement to them and convey that the programme is targeted at very small, local businesses i.e. it is not a traditional business programme that caters for large companies.

***A name for the MSE Programme***

*Examples of names for the MSE programmes that have been produced are 'Nekolera Gyange' in central Uganda (I run my own business), 'M'Adwumayi' in Central Ghana (My livelihood), 'Abicamu Kani' in Northern Uganda (where shall I eat?) and 'You fit make big money O!' (you can make big money in Nigerian Pidgin English). Each name reflects different local values and culture or local sayings hence the variety.*

**Programme introduction**

In the introduction, the presenter may give a quick reminder of the issues in the previous programme and give a run down of the issues in the current programme. Endorsement of the sponsors is encouraged as well as calling on the MSEs to actively participate in their programme.

**Business News**

A 3 – 5 min segment of investigative reporting and analysis of news of interest to MSEs. This news may not necessarily be current (as required in the main stream news bulletin), what is important is the investigative and analytical angle that brings into the spotlight issues of interest and relevance to MSEs. Another possibility is to take current

topical issues (such as fuel price rises or insecurity within a part of the country) and cover it from a small business angle giving it a unique appeal to the target audience.

#### **Business News – examples from Ghana and Uganda**

- *Commodity price increases.*
- *Eviction of businesses by city authorities*
- *accidents effecting businesses e.g. floods, fire, disease (for example cholera outbreaks result in the government closing informal food stalls)*
- *Problems of lack of small denomination bank notes and coins*
- *Banditry and insecurity*
- *Changes in business regulations and laws.*

#### **The programme feature**

In this segment, a topical issue or issue of special interest to MSEs is covered using various approaches:

- Hosting resource people in the studio for a discussion on a specific issue possibly using live phone-ins.
- A reportage packaged using recorded material from different sources and locations
- A combination of both of the above

#### **Features – some examples from Uganda and Ghana**

- *Investigating the impact and cause of a large market fire which destroyed hundreds of business using field recordings, a panel discussion (with market authorities, fire department, engineer for the Electricity Board, City Engineer and traders) and telephone phone ins.*
- *Investigating the impact on small businesses of a government ban on small scale milk vending using interviews with milk vendors, their customers, government officials and hygiene experts.*
- *Investigating accusations that vulture meat was being sold as chicken in small restaurants using field interviews (even interviewing a convicted vulture poacher), studio interviews with MSE representatives and phone ins from MSEs and consumers.*
- *Interviewing a company involved in the marketing and export of honey products who explained their products and their willingness to train individuals to produce honey that they will purchase. Similar programmes on companies involved in exporting organic dried fruits.*
- *Discussing the pros and cons of employing relatives in your business using a panel discussion and phone-ins.*
- *Investigating the accusations of corrupt officials extorting money from MSEs involving field interviews with MSEs, senior government officials and where possible the accused officials.*
- *Investigating the reasons behind a ban on fish exports from Uganda to Europe and the possible solutions to the ban involving field interviews with fishermen, government officials and exporters.*
- *Studio based interviews with tax officials to explain the complaints of small businesspeople using pre-recorded interviews and phone ins. Similar interviews with other officials (mayor, market authorities etc.) and experts in areas of interest to MSEs (experts on finance and bank loans, management training) but in each case the emphasis is on these people answering the complaints and/or questions from MSEs*
- *An investigation of the effects on business of government failure to provide basic infrastructure and services i.e. sanitation, rubbish collection, water and road maintenance involving field interviews with MSE and officials.*
- *Exploring the failure of an export promotion board to identify export opportunities and effectively communicate them to businesses across the country.*



The feature is the key tool for following up on issues of concern to MSEs and providing not only a voice for small businesspeople but effective advocacy. It is the ability of the programme to influence policy makers and others in power that is one of the key ingredients for the programme's potential popularity. The features are usually generated by audience feedback, discussions with MSEs and resource people and topical events and seldom are they the 'invention' of the production team.

### **Sponsors messages and advertisements**

The sponsors' messages are the entitlements that are aired at specific times on the programme. The messages may be simply an acknowledgement of the sponsors support for the programme by the presenter, a pre-recorded message by the sponsor or a regular advertisement from the sponsor.

Additional advertisements, other than those of the sponsors, are also aired including companies who are promoting products or services or those seeking products and services from MSEs.

### **Business opportunities**

The business opportunities slot is used to air special messages and announcements of benefit to MSEs e.g. trade fairs, exhibitions, training courses, business seminars and workshops, grand sales, international markets for MSE products etc. This information is collected during field interviews for features and news but are also self-generating i.e. once the MSE programme is known, and the fact that these types of announcements will be aired is understood, then the station will be contacted by those wishing to have their event etc. broadcast. This section will only appear if there are announcements to be made.

### **Feedback**

While features involve interviews with MSEs and phone-ins, this segment of the programme allows for more general interaction and participation. This is via mail and phone-ins and could concern general topics or concerns, issues connected to past programmes, comments on the programme content or ideas for future programmes. Where appropriate, the issues raised by the audience can be directly addressed in the programme, but where direct reaction is not possible, the issues raised are directed to the relevant people who in the future programmes are given time to respond. This feedback can therefore generate future topics for features and follow up.

### **Closing remarks**

The presenter puts in perspective the issues raised in the programme and reminds the listener of the issues to follow up on in the next programme. The presenter may also encourage interaction from the listeners providing telephone and postal details.

### **Programme theme song and closing billboard**

The programme ends with the theme song and the closing billboard that identifies the sponsors to the programme.

### **Frequency and length of the programmes**

The frequency and length of the programme depends on both the audience and programming constraints as well as the broadcasting culture that has been built up by the radio broadcasters in the location. In Uganda both the audience and the sponsors have expressed interest in increasing the programme duration from 30 minutes to 45 minutes. The audience urges that issues should be given more time to enable more analysis. For the sponsors, 30 minutes is too short a time for a programme that is informative and a vital source of information for the target audience. Additionally as the

programme has gained more popularity, there is need to include more segments to deal with other specific issues of interest to the MSEs, e.g. a segment called 'how to start your business'. In Ghana, Kapital FM, opted for a one hour programme once a week because this fitted with the stations programming and the demands of the audience.

As explained in this manual, the MSE radio programmes require higher than normal inputs on fieldwork and production and therefore require relatively high levels of sponsorship and advertising revenues to become fully profitable. Daily programmes may therefore prove unfeasible both in terms of manpower requirements and advertising revenues and there is a danger of reducing the quality of the programmes by broadcasting too frequently. It is therefore suggested that the MSE Programmes be launched on a weekly or twice weekly basis initially with the potential of increasing this once the production team's capacity grows and advertising and sponsorship revenues increase.

### **Step 3: Establishing the programme production team**

The MSE programme that is being described in this manual is in a magazine programme format and its production and presentation therefore requires input by a number of individuals working as a team. The effective marketing of this unique radio programme requires that the marketing personnel are also directly involved in the planning and execution of the programme in order for them to market the programme with authority.

[Insert Production Team - CBS.TIF here]

### **The advantage of having the programme production and marketing team**

A team of people with different experience and backgrounds bring different perspectives and angles to the programme. It is the consideration and reconciliation of different ideas that provide the basis for focused production, presentation and marketing of the programme. It is only through teamwork that meaningful evaluation of the programme is possible thereby ensuring the positive development, sustainability and profitability of the programme.

### **The programme production team**

The MSEs programme production team are the individuals who make the essential decisions related on the content, production and presentation of the programme. The production team should clearly understand the aims of the programme and be committed to their responsibilities and the programme itself.

Although the make-up and number of people in the production team should not necessarily be standard and will depend on the different radio stations' setup and other

factors in the market, a functioning team should at least have members who can undertake the following roles:

- Programme Manager
- Programme Presenter
- Investigative reporter
- Producer

### **Programme Manager**

The programme Manager is not necessarily the radio station's programme Manager or Director. As far as the MSE, programme is concerned, this role is restricted to managing this particular programme. The MSE programme manager heads the team, leads the programme production and presentation, is responsible for organising all the necessary logistics, making necessary contacts and keeps the programme on track. The programme manager ensures that the decisions made by the team are acceptable and practical and also has ultimate editorial control over the programme deciding what does and does not feature each week.

### **Programme Presenter**

The presenter plays the role of moderating the programme. It is the presenter's voice coordinating the programme that the audience hears on the radio. He/she conducts interviews, hosts guests, answers listener's calls, reads mail and announces the names of winners in programme competitions.

The presenter must be able to articulate clearly, engage the attention of the listener and be able to communicate the issues simply. Communication is about sending ideas. Presenters must therefore be able to articulate these ideas, concepts or views in a style that allows the listener to recreate them in her or his mind. Presenters must generate excitement but not over project (shout). They must never be dull or flat.

The presenter needs to have special skills to be able to work with the rest of the production team, the target audience, resource persons and even advertisers and sponsors. The presenter must be able to interact with the smallest businesspeople who may not be literate or educated as well as senior government ministers, academics etc. The voice of the presenter, their confidence on air, their ability in the language of the programme and their interest in the MSE sector will be key factors in choosing a good presenter (see choosing programme presenters and managers – page 24).

### **Investigative Reporter**

[Insert MSE Interview Drink Processor.TIF  
here]

The investigative reporter takes care of the journalistic elements of the programme i.e. gathering news and investigating issues of relevance to MSEs. Since the actual content of the programme originates from outside the radio station, it is the role of the investigative reporter to follow up on issues. It is therefore important that the reporter has skills in news reporting and investigative journalism. Since the MSE programme focuses on business, a reporter with experience in business reporting would be a better choice for the job.

### **Producer**

The producer's responsibility is to ensure that the production team's work is aesthetically and technically correct in terms of the final audio product. It is a possibility to combine the duties of the programme manager and producer. It is therefore better to consider case-by-case examples of how individual stations have dealt with these two designations in the production team.

### **How does the production team work in practice?**

A look at different approaches by various radio stations:

#### **i) CBS FM (UGANDA)**

The programme production team members

- Production manager and producer
- Programme presenter
- Investigative reporter

Programme manager and producer : - The role of programme manager and producer is played by one person who is also the radio station's production manager. On top of being the head of the production team as the programme manager, the work of writing scripts and audio editing are in his brief, including archiving of both text and audio material.

Programme presenter :- CBS opted for a freelance presenter based on his:

- 1) Ability to communicate and interact with the target audience
- 2) Interest in and understanding of business issues
- 3) Fluency in Luganda, the language widely spoken by the majority within the target audience and the language of the programme.
- 4) Availability for assignments especially recordings on location including remote areas.

Investigative reporter :- This role is played by a freelance reporter writing for the business page of a daily newspaper. Although CBS has staff reporters, there were advantages to assigning a freelance person to the programme.

- 1) The print reporter has more exposure and contacts than their counterparts in radio.
- 2) The print reporter tends to go for more detail as opposed to the radio reporter who is running after so many stories to beat tighter deadlines in radio news reporting.
- 3) The print reporter has therefore acquired more skills in investigative and analytical reporting than radio reporters.

But radio and print are very different media and special skills are required for print journalists to be able to write for and present on radio. Not every print journalist is therefore able to work on radio and special care should be taken in working with print journalists.

#### **ii) Paidha Radio (Northern Uganda)**

The Paidha set up, particularly on journalism aspects of the programme, was developed to respond to the particular constraints of a rural station covering many small towns and a wide geographic area.

Programme manager :- Is the manager of the station that has a particular interest in the radio programme.

Producer :- The producer is involved with producing a number of programmes including the MSE programme. He links to the upcountry reporters and representatives and the presenter to develop features and works with the presenter to package the programme.

Presenter :- The presenter is also the technical editor of the station and as such is also involved in production. He is involved in interviewing MSEs but also taps into the pool of upcountry reporters.

Investigative reporters :- because of the large geographic area covered by Paidha, the difficulties of transport within this region and the number of small towns covered by the station (as opposed to other stations that broadcast from a capital or central city) the station relies on a pool of reporters who feedback local information to the station. The MSE programme uses this pool of reporters to develop features, create business news and promote the programme.

### **iii) ZBC (Zimbabwe)**

The programme production team

- Programme manager
- Programme presenter and producer
- Investigative reporter

Programme manager : - The planned management of this radio programme was under a private consultancy company. This private company has substantial experience in working with MSEs. Based on their experience the company director heads the editorial desk for the programme.

Programme presenter and producer : - The programme presenter is a veteran radio presenter on ZBC. His voice is popular on radio and he is quite familiar with the target audience and issues that interest them. The presenter also doubles as the producer and audio editor and has hands-on experience with the editing equipment.

**Investigative reporter:** - Freelance reporter working with an MSE publication.

### **iv) Kapital FM (Ghana)**

Programme production team

- Programme Manager
- Programme presenter, investigative reporter and producer
- Assistant to the programme presenter

Programme manager : - the station's production coordinator plays this role.

Programme presenter/investigative reporter and producer : - The presenter works at the station on a full time basis. The presenter hosts two other popular shows and his voice is familiar to the general audience. He was chosen to present the MSE programme because of his good knowledge of the MSEs, fluency in the language of the programme and his ability to interact with his target audience. He also plays the role of investigative reporter and producer (working in collaboration with sound

engineers), but after four months on air it became clear that this multiple role was too demanding and an assistant was designated to work with him on the MSE programme.

### **Choosing programme presenters and managers**

There is a temptation to assign any of the radio station's staff presenters or DJs to the role of presenter of the MSE Programme. The radio station may consider this choice wise in terms of saving money, since the presenter is already on the pay roll and his contribution to the programme comes with little extra expense to the station. It could also be argued that the staff presenters have already acquired popularity and high audience ratings and will therefore bring instant popularity to the MSE programme but some caution is required here. Many radio stations employ young presenters who usually present chat and music shows and are commonly referred to as 'radio stars'. These 'radio stars' are often preoccupied in projecting their radio personalities, sometimes at the expense of the issues and content of the programme.

[Insert MSE Interview - Trader in  
Kumasi.TIF here]

The MSE programmes should be issue driven as opposed to revolving around the personality of the presenter. However, prioritizing issues does not make the MSE programme presenter less popular. In Uganda, the MSE programme presenter, Charles Muyanja, has acquired a new name, Nekolera - the name of the programme and audiences now identify Charles Muyanja directly with the programme and the issues he covers, thereby merging his radio personality with the real issues.

***The need for the MSE programmes to present different views and stimulate debate***

*When one Ugandan radio personality was arrested by the authorities for announcing that small businesspeople should strike and demonstrate against the introduction of Value Added Tax he actually gained considerable popularity among MSEs. But this should not be the approach of the MSE programme. Even though he became popular with MSEs he had also alienated government and therefore destroyed his ability to act as a facilitator and stimulate a meaningful debate that could result in effective changes in the mode of introduction of VAT for small businesspeople.*

Another factor in choosing the presenters and managers of the programme is that they must be willing and able to act as a 'facilitator' in exploring issues rather than projecting their own views and beliefs. The programmes are a 'voice' for the MSEs and not a voice for the production team to express their views on MSE issues. The programme explores issues by allowing MSEs, experts, officials, consumers and others to give their point of view and the audience draws its own conclusions from these interviews, discussions and debate. This not only encourages and stimulates debate but means that the production team do not have to portray themselves as experts on the issues that they are covering. This issue is explored in more detail under ethics, rules and broadcast regulations (page 33)

#### **STEP 4: Creating a dummy programme**

Why produce a dummy or demo programme?

- 1) The dummy programme is the first trial of translating the programme idea from the concept stage into actual audio material. In the process, every member of the production team appreciates the practical modalities involved in putting a programme together and is given a chance to prove their ability to deliver.
- 2) The dummy allows for the identification and correction of the mistakes made during previous steps.
- 3) Through the dummy production, the radio station's management is able to appreciate the costs and logistics involved in the production of the programme e.g. Transport, telephone bills, recording inputs, studio time required for the production of a magazine programme.
- 4) The dummy can be used to pre-test the programme with the target audience and potential advertisers and sponsors. The reactions to the dummy may form the basis for improving the programme in order for it to have the required impact and commercial appeal. Pre- testing is therefore necessary for fine-tuning before the actual programme goes on air.
- 5) After making the pre-test evaluation, the production team produces the final dummy that is used as promotional material by the marketing department to solicit for sponsorship and advertisements.

#### **Step 5: Marketing the programme**

The uniqueness of the MSEs programme warrants drawing up an equally unique marketing strategy. The programme is not a music show hosted by a popular DJ whose rating is already established. It is neither a hot political talk show nor a radio soap. This is a magazine programme focusing on a distinctive audience, the MSEs, and it is important that appropriate advertisers and sponsors are targeted in a focused manner.

Many marketing representatives of radio stations in countries where a competitive commercial media is relatively new do not understand the concept of segmenting the market and selling specific audience profiles to advertisers and sponsors. Furthermore, this concept may often be new to the local marketing executives of even international companies who are used to assessing programmes on their mass market penetration. It is therefore important that those who will be marketing this programme have a full understanding of the unique selling points of an MSE programme and are equipped and able to present this in a convincing way to clients.

It is therefore important that experienced marketing staff are used to sell this programme and that they work closely with the production team to understand the

programme reach and strengths and the potential of the format to include content from advertisers and sponsors. Having said this, it should be stressed that the MSE programmes often have mass appeal and large audience numbers but marketing it as a general audience programme ignores the Unique Selling Point (USP) of the programme and the programme's competitive advantage in the radio market.

**Question:** *Can a programme which is listened to by 5,000 people compete for advertisers with a programme that is listened to by 50,000?*

**Answer:** *Yes, if it has good penetration into a distinctive segment of the audience. For example, a radio programme that is listened to by significant numbers of restaurant owners is extremely attractive to companies selling inputs such as cooking oils, flavorings etc. or products such as food preparation equipment, catering utensils, etc. or who are promoting brands of drinks. Such a programme could compete very favorably with a programme with general appeal and can offer the advertisers the ability to fine tune their advertisements to cultivate the commercial consumer rather than the domestic consumer market for their products.*

### **Why sponsor or advertise on an MSE programme**

- In most developing countries the MSE sector is huge and one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy.
- As such this sector forms one of the largest consumer groups purchasing stock, raw materials, tools and equipment, components, and a wide variety of services (e.g. banking, communications, transport)
- The small business sector also forms a critical link in the retail chain of a majority of larger import and manufacturing companies. In fact they form the direct customer interface for products as varied as soft drinks, groceries, cosmetics, beers, hardware and domestic products.
- A targeted media, such as the MSE programme, allows advertisers to adapt their message and therefore achieve greater impact on their small business clients, retailers or wholesalers e.g. A mobile phone company could therefore promote the ways in which phones can enhance communication for MSEs with their customers or reduce the need for expensive offices and secretaries etc.
- A small business targeted media will allow advertisers to build profile and undertake a long term, strategized marketing campaign which can enhance the retailing and sales of the advertiser's products, while avoiding conflicting with more general marketing campaigns and messages.
- A targeted media ensures that limited advertising will reach the correct target group, takes the 'pot luck' out of random advertising in the general media and can in the long term save the advertiser money.

Potential commercial sponsors and advertisers therefore fall into two categories:

- A) Companies who are interesting in targeting small businesses as consumers.
- The MSE Programmes can be used to develop and increase sales within the MSE market which is large, fragmented and often informal and therefore difficult to reach through traditional non targeted media.
  - Products can be advertised in a targeted way to businesspeople, competitions can be developed which revolve around the products or services of the advertisers, and new products, brands and services can be introduced and explained to the MSEs.
- B) Sponsors who are interested in retail development through small businesses.



- The MSE Programmes can be utilised not only to publicise brands, but to improve sales techniques for products, promote USPs of products to retailers, develop more effective displays and point of sales and improve product distribution.
- Competitions, advertisements and features can therefore be created on an MSE programme to develop the retail aspects of many large companies.

#### **Why should Unilever want to reach MSEs?**

*Research undertaken by Unilever in India 'reveals that about a third of rural purchases are based on a retailers recommendation. Rural consumers are ignorant of brands and ask for products, such as shampoo, by type. This makes them dependent on the choices of retailers, who emerge as a powerful intermediary\*' In countries where most retailers are informal and small businesses, a programme that reaches the MSE segment of the market should therefore be of real interest to a company such as Unilever to undertake retail development, promote brands to retailers etc.*

*\*Extract from the International Financial Times, 11 December 2000*

The MSE programme should be sold in two ways:

- 1) Sponsorship
- 2) Advertising

#### **1) Sponsorship**

Sponsorship will be a critical factor in the profitability of the programme. Ideally, identifying and approaching sponsors should begin as early as possible in the process of designing and developing the programme. The suggestions of potential sponsors on content and format are important and wherever possible should be accommodated but it should also be remembered that the popularity of the programme among the target audience is the key to attracting and keeping both advertisers and sponsors in the long term. The demands of potential sponsors on the content and format should therefore be secondary to the interests of the target audience. But in practice these two interests can be balanced effectively if the correct sponsors are brought in and the marketing and production teams and the sponsors work effectively together.

Sponsorship differs from advertising in the following ways:

- The sponsor signs up for a long term commitment to the programme
- The programme is associated and identified with the sponsor
- While the sponsor receives advertising space they also receive acknowledgements, billboards and are provided with limited airtime to present their products and receive feedback from the MSEs. Sponsors in Uganda received a maximum of 15% of the airtime, not including ads and billboards, and 85% was free for other content.
- the sponsor pays a premium price for this package of benefits.

The provision of airtime is often a key aspect in the marketing offer to sponsors and can be used in many creative ways that create a win-win scenario for the MSE listeners and sponsors. For example in Uganda the representative of a bank that sponsored the programme was able to act as a resource person to answer questions on financial issues. They were also able to answer queries and complaints from existing clients on their financial services and gained a clearer understanding of some of the problems encountered by their clients. A sponsoring mobile phone company was able to launch a mini-franchise of telephone kiosks on the programme and explain franchise to the small

business audience. Competitions are also another possibility for developing interesting content for MSEs that can also be beneficial to the sponsor.

These win–win scenarios for sponsors and audience are usually developed through discussions with the programme manager (whose primary interest should lie with building the audience) and the marketing executive (whose primary interest should lie in building sponsorship and advertising revenues). It is therefore important that the programme manager and marketing executive work closely on developing proposals for sponsors and negotiating the sponsor’s input to the programme.

### **Targeting appropriate sponsors**

To maximize the opportunities for creating content that benefits listeners and sponsors it is important that careful consideration is given to which companies should be targeted for sponsorship. There is sometimes the urge among marketing representatives to bombard large numbers of potential sponsors with proposals but this is unlikely to prove effective for the MSE programme that requires careful targeting and explaining. This approach can also result in signing up inappropriate sponsors who have less to gain from the programme or offer to the programme and these inappropriate sponsors are likely to quickly lose interest and stop sponsorship.

The first task is to prioritize potential sponsors before any attempt is made to meet them. Priority should be given to:

- companies that are relevant to a majority of the MSE audience of the programme. For example a bank has an interest in most areas of small business whereas a metal rolling company only has an interest in a small section of the audience.
- companies that are already penetrating the MSE market or are actively trying to penetrate this market.
- companies that already have a strong and positive image among MSEs
- companies that can offer useful and interesting content and resources to the programme.

In Uganda and Ghana group sponsorship has been used where 3 to 4 complimentary (non-competing) companies sponsor the programmes. This strategy requires that a list of complimentary companies be drawn up, for example it could include a bank, telecommunications company, a domestic product manufacturer and a beverage company.

The companies that have been highlighted as being of most interest should then be researched in an informal way by visiting their MSE clients, tapping into contacts who know or work for the company and if possible approaching the marketing staff to find out more about their interest in the MSE sector (visiting the company to seek feedback on the dummy tape is a good opportunity to do this). The range of products or services that they already sell to MSEs should be identified, where their products are strongest and weakest (geographically and by sector of businesses) and their current interest in the small business sector. Do not assume that the company’s interest is primarily in selling more. For example, a sponsoring bank in Uganda stated that they already had enough new clients approaching them and their interest in the small business sector was on educating MSEs on what the bank could and could not offer so that they could lower unrealistic expectations and reduce the time their staff spent in dealing with MSEs whom they could not assist.

Once the potential sponsoring companies have been researched a meeting should be held to present the programme concept before a sponsorship proposal is drawn up. This meeting should sound out the company and their level of interest will be gauged. If the company is hesitant and unsure, the proposal can be cut down perhaps to a trial

sponsorship of a limited number of programmes or sponsoring a competition. Being flexible with the marketing offer is important, it is better to develop the beginning of a relationship with the sponsor through a small deal for a few programmes than have a firm refusal after having pushed full sponsorship.

Once the interest level has been fully gauged then a preliminary sponsorship proposal can be drawn up. The key elements of the sponsorship proposal are:

- 1) A brief introduction of the programme (it is important to convey the fundamental concept of the programme as quickly as possible in any proposal)
- 2) Why the company should specifically target MSEs : If available providing figures on the number of MSEs and their importance to the potential sponsors business.
- 3) Justification of the choice of the radio station to run the programme, and choice of language and airing time including figures from the preliminary research if available.
- 4) Programme format, production and presentation detailing why the programme has been designed in this way.
- 5) Sponsorship benefits: what the programme can potentially do for the company e.g. increase sales, develop retail, increase customer understanding, provide customer feedback.
- 6) Entitlements: Specifically what the sponsor will receive in terms of advertising space, billboards, airtime etc.
- 7) Costs of sponsoring

A proposal should be short and direct, ideally no more than one and a half pages. The proposal could be sent with a demo tape (containing the dummy programme). In larger companies it may not be obvious who this proposal should be sent to and a choice between different brand marketing managers and retail development managers must be made. With some companies, marketing decisions are contracted to advertising agencies. As with all marketing proposals, these should be sent to a specific person and followed up within a week by telephone. A meeting should then be organized to present the proposal and explore possibilities for collaboration through sponsorship. The programme manager should also attend this meeting if possible.

***Some examples of companies who would be interested in sponsoring or advertising on the MSE programme***

***Services:*** banks, micro finance institutions, insurance companies, telecommunication companies, transport companies, tour agents (particularly in parts of Africa where many MSEs travel to trade, international and local money transfer companies etc.

***Products:*** raw material wholesalers (e.g. timber, fabric, metal), wholesalers of finished products, equipment and tool manufacturers, vehicle retailers (particularly for the small business public transporters e.g. minibuses, motorcycles etc.), Oil companies (for transport sector and small business vehicle mechanics), manufacturers of shoe shine products, beauty and hair products (to small salons) etc.

***Retail development:*** Domestic product manufacturers (interested in small shops, wholesalers, hawkers and transporters), Commercial product manufacturers and agents (for the small business to small business trade in components, equipment and tools), Drinks and beverage manufacturers (particularly to bars, restaurants, shops and street vendors) etc.

### **A note on non-commercial sponsors**

There is the possibility of bringing in non-commercial sponsors to a programme for MSEs. Potential non-commercial sponsors include government, donor agencies, NGOs, business associations, chambers of commerce and even companies sponsoring for philanthropic reasons (e.g. company trusts). While these sponsors can provide useful inputs to the programme, caution is required in certain respects. Experience shows that many development and government projects have clear objectives in the messages that they want to convey to MSEs and may expect a higher degree of control over content than commercial sponsors due to their past experience of 'buying' airtime to broadcast programmes on radio. No sponsorship should significantly undermine the editorial control of the radio production team and this should be stressed when dealing with non-commercial sponsors. Non-commercial sponsors should be dealt with in a similar way to commercial sponsors and explicitly offered limited airtime to cover or discuss issues on their agenda.

It is also important to avoid single sponsorship by a non-commercial organisation and a 'portfolio' of sponsors should be developed that includes commercial sponsors. Unfortunately government and development projects often end abruptly or their priorities abruptly change and funding is targeted elsewhere. Relying totally on non-commercial sponsors can therefore swing the programme from profitability to complete loss overnight. Additionally, if the programme is strongly associated with a non-commercial sponsor it will often be difficult to bring in commercial sponsors at a later date. For these practical reasons it is therefore recommended that commercial companies be dominant in the group of sponsors and non-commercial sponsors be in the minority.

### **2) Advertising**

While significant income can be derived from sponsorship, marketing the advertising slots in the programme can also bring in additional revenue and the MSE programme provides a unique selling point for the station and therefore a competitive advantage over other stations. Advertising targeted specifically towards MSEs is also a useful source of information to the audience and can enhance the programme content e.g. advertisers will let small businesses know about where to buy tools, raw materials or services.

Marketing specific advertising spots on one programme often requires radio stations to change their mode of marketing and there is the tendency to put a low amount of input into selling these spot ads on this specific programme particularly if the programme is fully sponsored and current advertising at the time the programme is aired is high. While this is understandable, a station that does this is missing out on nurturing a niche advertising market and adding useful content to the programme.

The regular marketing representatives of the station can undertake the marketing and sales of the advertising spots on the programme, but it is useful to orient the staff on the USP of the programme and opportunities for marketing this niche audience. A useful way of orienting the marketing representatives to the potential of the MSE programme is to send them to visit areas where there are high concentrations of MSEs and look at the businesses and surrounding shops. They can then make lists of the products, equipment and raw materials they see for sale or being used by the businesses. The companies who manufacture, wholesale and retail these products are some of the potential advertisers on the programme. Other advertisers will include service providers and non-commercial organizations (government, NGOs, donor projects etc.). As with all sponsored radio programmes, the advertisers should not be competitors to the sponsors.

## **Step 6: Launching the programme**

### **Why launch the programme?**

A launch:

- Prepares the audience for this unique programme
- Brings to the attention of the public and potential advertisers and sponsors the significance and importance of MSEs and the programme.
- Stimulates the involvement of all the stakeholders right from the very start of the programme.
- Provides good public relations for the radio station and increases its listener-ship share.
- Provides the programme with the opportunity to stand out and assert its uniqueness right from the start.

### **Raising resources for the launching activities**

There are financial costs involved in the launch activities and the radio station may not be in a position to meet all the expenses involved. One way of solving this problem is for the radio station to come up with a proposal inviting sponsors and advertisers to participate in a joint launch promotion. In the proposal, the radio station clearly spells out in detail all the promotional activities, the programme and schedule of activities and the budget. In the proposal the stakeholders and the sponsors should know their entitlements and other benefits.

### **Pre-launch promotion**

Media, both print and broadcast, should be used to create public awareness through promotional advertisements. Promotional teasers (ads which hint at what the new programme is about without fully explaining it) can be used that will arouse curiosity followed by detailed factual messages. The programme jingle can play an important role here particularly if the tune and lyrics have been adapted specifically for the programme. Additionally, arrangements with existing programmes can be worked out where authoritative resource persons are hosted on radio to talk about the MSEs and in the process inform the listeners of the launch of the programme. Radio presenters on existing programmes can contribute to the pre-launch by giving mention and reminding listeners not to miss the launch of the programme. Other promotional materials include special features in the print media, posters, flyers and banners.

### **Launch activities**

The launch can be an official function at a designated venue, where the programme launch is witnessed in public and in the presence of specifically selected invited guests. The timing, choice of venue, choice of the invited guests and the day's programme depend on the prevailing social-economic environment within which a particular radio station operates. However, it is important that the focus of the launch activities is on the MSEs. They should therefore feature prominently and be given a chance to make a statement. It is an added advantage to the radio station to have the function relayed live on air, and the rest of the media should be invited to cover the function for wider publicity.

### **Post launch**

The media articles, photographs and video footage of the launch activities are valuable for future use in the radio station's public relations and marketing activities.

It is important that publicity for the programme does not stop at the launch and other publicity events and activities should be held to maintain and raise the listener-ship of the programme (see programme promotion page 43).



### **Section 3**

#### **RUNNING THE MSE PROGRAMME**

Once the programme has been launched, the real work of editing and broadcasting the programme begins. This section details some of the issues that a radio company must consider when running an MSE programme. It provides information on planning the programmes over time, script writing, editing techniques and details some possible additional components and formats that will keep the programme fresh and interesting.

#### **ETHICS, RULES AND BROADCAST REGULATIONS**

There are standard regulations covering the conduct of broadcasting in every country and the broad outlines are usually contained either in a broadcast edict or code. Producers are advised to familiarise themselves with provisions that deal with programme standards, even though no clear cut rules are spelt out in many cases. However, the Broadcasting Council, or equivalent body that issues licenses, should have an outline of these standards.

Programme Managers or Producers must maintain editorial responsibility especially since advocacy issues can form a large part of the MSE programmes. Statements, comments and views must be processed to ensure that they do not infringe the rights of others. Offices, positions or responsibilities should be the target as against direct attacks on persons or individuals.

It is also important for producers to watch out for inflammatory statements. For instance, taxation issues can be very sensitive and often people react when new taxes are legislated. Views must be expressed without any inhibition but presenters must resist the temptation of adding their own comments. The code is very clear on such issues – presenters must not pass judgement. Comments, judgements or conclusions should be left to interview partners or the public.

Producers must also weigh extremist views properly before projecting such. However, this does not mean that self censorship should be imposed. In many cases, an opposing view can always tone down the effect of extreme or charged statements. Balance is a key and producers are advised to always strive to seek the other side's view when such charged statements are made.

#### **EDITING AND PROGRAMME PLANNING**

With the MSE radio programme's objective of providing a voice and platform for its audience, it is important for the production team to understand that they are playing the role of facilitating the MSEs to effectively communicate their messages and to seek the kind of response the MSEs require. The best way of achieving this goal is to have a central planning point in the form of an editorial desk where every aspect of the programme is handled.

##### **The editorial desk**

The editorial desk is simply a meeting point where the production team discusses and lays strategies for the programme. The programme manager heads the editorial desk. The role of the editorial desk is to:

- Plan and lay strategies
- Identify programme issues
- Identify contact persons, resource persons and locations.
- Allocate assignments.
- Write scripts.

- Arrange for recording and editing.

### Planning and laying strategies

Having a work plan that clearly maps out the programme path (in terms of content and time) is necessary for the production team. An MSE programme is a complex magazine style programme and demands that every detail is planned. Producers get inundated with many details and information and the only way to be able to process them is to develop a work plan. The plan guides the team in making the necessary production arrangements well in advance.

### ISSUES/ACTIVITY WORK PLAN - January

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 <b>Airing</b> news Feature Business opportunities feedback competitions	2 <b>Contact:</b> PR URA Director Ug. EXPO Promo board	3 <b>Field recording</b> 1) handicraft makers opportunities in export	4 <b>Airing.</b> News Feature Bus URA EXO Feedback Sponsors	5 <b>Field recording:</b> 2)PR URA 3) Market fire	6 <b>Editing</b> 1) handicrafts 2) PR URA 3) Market Fire	7
8 <b>Airing:</b> News Feature PR URA Bus. Opp feedback Competition	9 <b>Contacts</b> for fire, City Council recording studios sponsor's messages	10 <b>Recording</b> promo contacts on fish Feedback Sponsor	11 <b>Airing</b> news feature PR URA Bus Opp. Director Ug. EXPO	12 <b>Field recording:</b> Fish inspectors from EU Ug EXPO	13 <b>Editing</b> 1) Fish story 2) Director Ug. EXPO	14
15 <b>Airing:</b> Fish inspector news, market fire feature CC report bus. Opp URO feedback Competition	16 <b>Contacts:</b> fish authority Field recording landing sites landing site sponsor	17 <b>Recording</b> promo fish authorities <b>Editing</b> Fish Authorities	18 <b>Airing:</b> News, fish feature BUS. Pop.URO	19 <b>Contacts.</b> Women traders credit lending scheme	20 <b>Recording:</b> promo <b>field recording</b> credit scheme	21
22 <b>Airing</b> news, evicting traders feature: land development vs. effected traders Bus Opp. URO feedback competition	23 <b>Contact:</b> Fish authorities director credit scheme	24 <b>Recording:</b> promo	25 <b>Airing:</b> News Fish feature credit scheme Bus. opp. seminar sponsor	26 <b>Contacts.</b> land devpt. Credit lending scheme	27 <b>Recording.</b> Businesses effected by land devpt.	28
29 <b>Airing</b> News evicting traders Feature Land devp vs. Affected businesses Bus. Opp. URO Feedback Competition	30	31				

By working to such a work plan as above, the production team can clearly see their specific tasks and make the necessary coordination. Since members of the production team have other assignments and obligations besides contributing to the MSE programme, it is important that each member has a copy of the work plan in order to reconcile it with other scheduled assignments. In case of any changes the programme manager can easily make them in advance without losing control of the entire work plan.

In drawing up a work plan the production team should:



- Identify the programme airing days and dates of the week.
- Identify topical issues and plot them against the work plan clearly indicating: -
  - Contacts required with relevant contributors and resource persons.
  - Appointments to be made with resource people.
  - Field visits and recordings required.
  - Requirements for booking the production studio for recording and editing.
- Determine when to start and drop a programme issue.

During the production meetings, the team decides on the topical issues and their priorities. In the above work plan, the production team decided to give the VAT (Value Added Tax) story prominence because of the problems MSEs have in understanding and dealing with this tax. According to the plan, the issue is featured in five programmes and various approaches are used to exhaust the issue.

VAT is covered in the business news, field interviews with the concerned business people and an official from the Revenue Authority. The public relations and tax education official would then react to the MSE's queries and are hosted on a live phone-in programme to answer questions.

The production team allows flexibility in the programme format in order to accommodate special programme arrangements as circumstances may warrant. For example, because of the magnitude of the VAT impact on business the production team may cancel some segments of the programme to create more time for a particular issue. In the programme work plan, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, the programme hosted the public relations and tax education official in a live phone-in programme to have direct interaction with listeners. In that particular instance, the last three programme segments i.e. business opportunities, feedback were cancelled out. The timing, duration and the approach used in packaging content for a particular issue is the duty of the production team at the editorial desk guided by the programme manager.

The programme team can design another work plan to take care of the content of specific segments such as a 10 minute feature on micro finance. Such segments can be planned on a quarterly basis and the material may be pre-recorded in advance and aired according to the work plan that clearly indicates the pre-booked airing dates for the entire quarter. Combining the two programme work plans gives the programme proper direction and avoids poor programme presentation that often results from poor production planning.

### **Individual assignments and execution of duties**

Returning to the programme work plan, the production team scheduled a programme on fishermen on the 18th of January 2001. The programme elements include news stories, field recording of interviews with the fishing communities at a landing site, recording of interviews with the visiting fishing inspectors from abroad, interviews with the fishing department officials. According to the work plan, planning for this programme starts on the 10th of January 2001, seven days before the airing date.

#### What goes on in the seven days prior to the airing date?

10th January	Making contacts with the relevant sources.
12 <sup>th</sup>	“ Recording of interview with the fish inspectors.
13th	“ Editing of the interview with the fish inspectors.
15 <sup>th</sup>	“ running a news item on developments in the fish industry.
16th	“ Making contact with authorities in the fish department.
17th	“ Recording interviews with the fish authorities.
	“ Recording interviews with the fishing community.

18th “ Editing the interviews of the fish authorities and fishing community.  
“ Airing the full programme on fish.

In the seven days prior to airing the programme, each member of the production team is assigned particular tasks and it is the contribution of each member's input that makes the completed feature.

## THE ASSIGNMENTS

### **Making contacts with the relevant contributors and resource people**

The task of making contact is primarily the responsibility of the programme manager. However it may be assigned to any member of the team who may be more conversant with the issue and may know the right source to contact. Contact is made by physically visiting the resource people, telephoning or faxing them. When contacting these people the team member should brief them on the programme, explain the issue of interest and the information required from the source and make an appointment for the recording interview or invitation to the radio station for a live show.

It is also at this stage when the interviewer will undertake research so that they have a reasonable understanding of the issues they intend to tackle or issues that have been raised by MSEs. There are likely to be many government agencies, organizations, business associations and NGOs that have done extensive work with MSEs and these can be major sources of information, data or facts for the programme.

#### **Who to interview?**

*It is extremely important that the production team relies primarily on interviews with operating small businesspeople themselves when seeking the MSE's point of view. NGOs, governments and development organizations may wish to talk on behalf of MSEs, but this should be avoided. Unfortunately, even some associations may not be as representative as they should be, sometimes they have very low membership, sometimes they have spokespeople who may not even be in business or who are from larger businesses very different from those of their members. Some associations are therefore not in tune with the problems and issues of the majority of MSEs. In the worst case scenario, some associations may even be actively working to stifle the views of their members as in the case below:*

*During research for a feature on an MSE programme, reporters from the station visited the large bus park in the center of town where there had been numerous complaints about the charges levied by the national taxi and bus operators association. The interviewers sought comments directly from a number of taxi and bus owners who stated problems of harassment, corruption, association election irregularities and rising membership tariffs by the association, but the reporters were unable to bring the recordings to the studio. They were intercepted by a group of officials from the association and forcibly taken to the association office where the tapes were confiscated and they were told that the association was the spokesperson for all taxi and bus owners, and that the press must **only** talk to the association if they require any information.*

### **Recording an interview with a source**

Those involved in field or studio interviews must always build trust with their interviewees. This is particularly important for interviewees, such as MSEs, who are not used to being interviewed. MSEs can be suspicious, so it is important that producers warm up the interviewee before going into the real issues. This way, the microphone fright is overcome and interviewees become more willing to open up to the microphone. Once this trust is established, producers must give the interviewees ample time and enough latitude to express their views.

### Recording outside the studio (field recording)

There are advantages of recording an interview on location.

- 1) It is more convenient to the resource person since it does not take much time nor cost money to get to the recording studio. Some resource persons e.g. officials have busy schedules and prefer interviews conducted in their offices where they may attend to other matters. In addition, such officials in the course of the interviews may refer to documents in the office, which might contain vital information to the programme.
- 2) Some people also feel intimidated by the studio environment, which affects their input in the interview. People tend to be more relaxed in the environment they are used to. Moving radio to the people (i.e. field recording) is more reassuring especially to the MSEs and this gives more people a chance to take part as opposed to recording in the studio, which can only accommodate a limited number of people.
- 3) Recording on location gives the production team a better understanding of the actual working conditions of the MSEs and the location ambiance also adds more presence and impact (see the use of radio pictures, page 38).
- 4) Recording on location also reduces the workload on the recording/production studio, which in most radio stations is always busy.

[Insert Resource Interview - Govt. TIF  
here]

### Recording in the studio

Although there are many advantages of recording on location, it should be noted that recording in the studios is important for some aspects of the programme e.g.

- Pre-recording of news items
- Recording sponsors' messages
- Recording serialized segments
- Recording resource people who find it more convenient to come to the studios.

The programme manager assigns the team member best suited to conducting the interviews. Any member of the production team should be able to do this and a variety of voices on the final programme enhances the variety and therefore listener interest in the programme. It is therefore important for all the production team members to have the technical skills to operate the field recording equipment.

It is important for the programme manager to determine what type of interview he wants. For an MSE programme – there can be at least three types:

- 1) An interview that seeks facts or general information and tend to be quite long and detailed. The producer tends to use this interview to inform himself.
- 2) An interview conducted to grab a comment, seek views, opinions or to explain a situation, event or incident.
- 3) An interview to recount an experience or react to an event. For instance, MSEs can recount or react to a fire incident in a market or a traffic accident that resulted in the deaths of MSEs conveying their goods to the central market

### Studio Editing

Effective editing is crucial in the production of the MSE programme because raw recordings will contain material that is not relevant to the programme and there is need to keep the actual programme material to exact time limits. Editing enables the programme manager to determine the exact audio material to be included in the programme and to logically develop the story behind the features. Who undertakes this role depends on the set up of the radio station and the skills of the production team.

This job is assigned differently in the radio stations that run MSE programmes:

CBS FM	Uganda	Programme Manager/Production Manager
Paidha	Northern Uganda	Programme presenter/Programme producer
Kapital FM	Ghana	Production technician
VOT	Uganda	Programme Manager/Programme presenter

No matter who does the actual technical editing, what is important is that the job is done professionally and conforms to the programme's requirements as determined by the programme manager. It is therefore important for the programme manager to get involved and supervise the final edited material.

### Editing techniques

#### The use of Radio Pictures or Images:

A good radio production or programme must be visual and contain images that can create the exact setting in the mind of the listener. Although radio is blind, creating sounds that contain pictures makes the MSE programme more interesting and therefore popular, and as such radio can be television without pictures.

For instance, a producer will be missing an opportunity to assist the listener in understanding the interview if he visits an MSE at work without capturing the noises of her or his work environment. Interviewing a market woman for instance should involve building sound "pictures" of the environment into the feature. These could include the sound of the market woman tending to a customer or haggling over price. These are some of the visuals that will take the listener to the scene and aid their comprehension of the subject. Field interviewers should capture these 'pictures' with their recorder for subsequent processing in the studio.

<i>Radio Pictures: A typical format</i>	
<i>Effect:</i>	<i>Sound of maize mill.</i>
<i>Narration:</i>	<i>"We are here at a maize mill operated by a group of MSEs who have joined forces to run a small business that processes grains for a big food industry. Chilaka Simba is the leader of the group and his work starts with first dehusking the maize.</i>
<i>Effect:</i>	<i>Sound of Chilaka Simba dehusking maize – fade under and bring Voice Up.</i>
<i>Voice grab:</i>	<i>Chilaka explaining the process.</i>

Building a radio picture such as the example above can be demanding but creates a good programme with variety as against straight interviews conducted in a “ping pong” manner (questions and answers).

[Insert MSE 2.TIF here]

#### Vox Pops

‘Vox pops’ are a series of clips from interviews with different people stating an opinion on a certain subject. These clips are very short, sometimes just a couple of words or a single phrase. They are important especially when advocacy issues are concerned and provide a quick picture of public sentiment on a topic or issue. But producers must keep these to a limited time and not make them bore. It is best to arrange ‘Vox pops’ in a logical sequence such as male/female or harsh voice/soft voice to make the overall effect more appealing to the ear.

[Insert MSE Interview Kumasi Market 2.TIF here]

#### **WRITING PROGRAMME SCRIPTS**

Although the programme is audio, much of its content, its production, preparation and presentation is done on paper, in form of scripts. The different programme scripts could include:

- News scripts
- Presenter’s introduction
- Presenter’s guiding script for hosting the programme
- Segment links
- Interview guide scripts
- Sponsor’s messages, business opportunities, programme promos etc.
- Competitions

- Feedback (mail or telephone messages)
- Guidelines provided to a guest
- Presenter's closing remarks

Writing scripts follows the same basic rules as presenting the programme and a script must be simple, written for the ear in everyday language and designed for one listener so that it becomes personal. When treating specific MSE issues, it is also important to become familiar with the MSE language or terminology.

#### News scripts

news scripts for the MSE Programme are similar to ordinary radio news scripts but of course with more of an angle on MSE issues. A typical radio news script for the general news may run as follows:

*'a fire gutted the Capital Main Market yesterday and destroyed goods worth 50,000,000 shillings. Police are investigating the cause of the fire and the market remains closed'*

The news script of the same story for the MSEs programme could run as follows:

*'a fire gutted the Capital Main Market yesterday and destroyed goods worth 50,000,000 shillings. The market houses a variety of small businesses including metal workers, spare parts dealers, and other services that are very vital to the city dwellers. Our reporter spoke to a number of affected business people who accused the city authorities of neglecting to properly lay and maintain electrical cabling in the market. Traders say the fire was caused by an electrical short circuit. We shall speak to the city authorities about these accusations in our future programmes.'*

#### Presenter's programme introduction

Although many presenters are used to introducing their shows without any scripts, this is not advisable with a radio magazine programme with a number of segments. The scripts help the presenter to be very clear and precise on events, names of people places, figures etc.

#### Presenters guide script for hosting a guest

Before undertaking a recording or a live show with a host, the presenter and the host should meet and map out the course of the interview. Issues of interest are jotted down and the presenter plans the flow of the interview in the proper sequence and with well-formulated questions. The presenter then keeps on referring to this script in the course of the interview whether live or recorded.

#### Segment links

As the programme flows from one segment to the next, the script guides the presenter as he/she links the segments.

#### Interview guide script

The programme manager prepares a sketch to be followed by the investigative reporter or presenter on field assignments. The purpose is to guide them and keep a tight focus on the real issues relevant to the programme. However the interview may not be restricted to the guide script only. In the course of the interview, other issues of interest may arise that can change the entire direction of the programme.

### **COMPETITIONS**

Exciting and relevant competitions can be designed and incorporated into the programme. A well-designed competition serves four purposes.

- 1) It arouses and attracts increased listener interest in the programme

- 2) It rewards listeners
- 3) It can create impact and awareness among MSEs that can benefit the radio programme or the sponsor of the competition.
- 4) And can therefore consolidate the relationship between a sponsor and the MSE programme

The competition should be catchy, enjoyable, and simple since listeners will lose interest if they realize that it is hard to enter the competition.

Competition ideas are often developed by the programme production or marketing teams and then presented to the sponsors/advertisers, but sponsors and advertisers should also be invited to suggest competitions or to participate in the development of competition ideas. Collaborating on the design of competitions benefits the sponsors/advertisers by enabling them to take advantage of the creative and innovative inputs from the radio professionals, as opposed to engaging the services of advertising agencies that may not have the deep understanding of this unique programme. The radio programme also benefits as the process offers the opportunity to improve the business relationship with its clients, and utilise the financial contributions by the sponsors, thus cutting down on expenses involved in running competitions.

An effective competition should result in benefits for the sponsor but ideally also be interesting, informative and educational for the listeners. For example, a bank may be interested in educating MSEs on how to write a proposal for the bank's loan scheme. A simple competition could be designed in which the listener is asked to write a simple business proposal to the bank and request for a loan to set up in business. The best proposals would then be discussed on the programme thus providing useful information to the listener while achieving the sponsors goals.

### **LIVE LISTENER PARTICIPATION**

The production of the MSE programme involves a large amount of pre-recording, both on location and in the studios, but there are situations where a live show is very effective and potentially very interesting to listeners, providing the audience with an opportunity to interact and participate more actively.

Resource people including government officials have been hosted on the MSE programme to directly interact with the audience and respond to their queries on a wide range of issues.

- In Ghana, the audience benefited significantly when the MSE programme on Kapital FM hosted; the city engineer, the municipal official in charge of the city market, the city fire department chief and representatives of the small businesses in the market, to discuss a fire that had badly affected the biggest market in Kumasi.
- Also in Ghana, a live debate was held on the problems of employing relations within a business which provoked a heated debate.
- In Uganda, CBS FM has regularly hosted officials from the Uganda Revenue Authority in live discussion programmes to answer questions raised by the business community in regard to tax matters.

In such a programme, the listeners have the chance to hear the different perspectives being aired in a round table discussion and are able to draw their own conclusions from what they hear. Such a show is popular and necessary, but special attention should be paid to ensure that the audience is guided to remain focused to the issues and respect

accepted ethics. Since most radio stations are not equipped with the delay mechanism, which takes care of incoming calls, the presenter has to be alert to take control of the programme in case of undesirable contributions from the callers. (also see roadshows page 42)

### **LISTENER FEEDBACK AND LISTENER GROUPS**

Listener feedback is an important component of any programme. Without effective feedback, the production team will be operating blindly not knowing which aspects of the programme are popular and which are not. While the MSE programme production team will receive feedback during their everyday interaction with programme participants and listeners in the field, and through phone ins and letters, this may not be enough to effectively understand the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. For a programme to remain popular over a long period of time there is a need for inbuilt procedures and mechanisms that allow the production team to understand and adapt to changing audience demand. Some of these procedures have already been described in this manual, for example a short feedback section built into the magazine style programme but additional feedback can be sought in a number of ways for example:

- Encouraging the establishment of listener clubs for the programme and establishing regular contact with these clubs.
- Roadshows.
- Running special annual phone-in shows inviting comments on past programmes and suggestions for future programmes.
- Undertaking listener surveys possibly by the production team or, if resources allow, someone outside the team who are independent of the programme.

No matter how the feedback is collected, it is most important for a programme to 'take stock' regularly and review its content and direction. This should be done at least on an annual basis or more ideally every 6 months since a year is a very long time in business.

#### Listener Clubs

Another approach used to take the programme closer to the MSEs is forming listener clubs. These clubs (sometimes known as fan clubs) are formed voluntarily by listeners who have a particular interest in the programme. The clubs help radio to gauge the popularity and impact of the programme to the target audience. Listener clubs also generate feedback, often help to contribute to content and can also assist the production team in identifying local resource people and contacts for the programmes. To maximize the benefit of these clubs in providing feedback to the programme, the listener clubs should be encouraged to submit regular monitoring reports in written form. The station should put together a simple set of questions that the club can discuss, answer and then feedback to the station

Listeners clubs are an extremely useful source of news and information to the programme, and when their profiles and activities are well documented, clubs strengthen the market value of the programme, as advertisers and sponsors are also interested in groups of MSEs. But it should also be recognized that forming, supporting and maintaining effective links with listener clubs will demand time and some resources from the radio station. There are dangers that these clubs also demand too much and it



is important that they are adequately controlled and that the limitations of what the radio station can offer the clubs is clearly explained.

#### Roadshows

Radio generates considerable audience interest when it moves out of the station and goes on location into communities. The MSE programme can take advantage of road shows to reach out to its target audience. The road show provides information and entertainment, and it is a good marketing platform for sponsors and advertisers.

#### Telephone, fax, e-mail and post

Telephone, fax, e-mail and post can all be used to collect ongoing feedback for the programme. It is important that the contact numbers and addresses are broadcast on each programme. A hot line, where listeners can always call in and have their views recorded, can also be established. This is a very effective way of collecting feedback and is very participatory and the recordings can be edited for inclusion in the programme. However, talk-backs should be restricted in time and not dominate the programmes since they can actually disenfranchise many listeners and take too much programme time when they are not controlled. Another danger of written or telephone feedback is that of repeat callers or writers who can end up dominating the feedback sections with their own point of view.

#### Surveys

It is important for stations running the MSE programme to see surveys as often as possible, especially audience and listening habits. In-house survey of listeners should be carried out from time to time, but where resources permit, stations should commission independent organizations to conduct audience research since this is more credible to advertisers and sponsors and an outsiders view on a programme can provide a useful new perspective.

### **BUILDING A NETWORK OF RESOURCE PEOPLE**

The MSEs programme is a platform for the small business entrepreneur to speak out and get answers to issues raised in the programme. The programme is a source of news and information about innovations, business news, opportunities and markets. For radio to adequately address issues raised by the MSEs, it has to collaborate with resource people, officials and experts. In this respect, the programme editorial desk operates much like the news department editorial desk and the programme manager has to make a list of contacts such as city council officials, specific ministries, tax spokespeople, heads of business associations, members of parliament, etc.

However, it should be emphasized that the resource people need to have a clear understanding of the programme and its target audience. There is no point interviewing a member of parliament who puts aside the issues raised by the MSEs and uses the programme to for own political benefits. The MSEs cannot benefit from the public relations officer (from the tax department) who becomes preoccupied with complicated mathematics of tax indices rather than explaining in simple terms why the taxes levied on small businesses are high. It is therefore the responsibility of the programme manager to set the premise and brief the resource people on the best approach to handle MSE issues. These resource people should not be allowed to come on the programme to lecture the listeners or present their agenda but should primarily be answering the questions of MSEs and addressing their problems and concerns.

## **PROGRAMME PROMOTION**

MSE programmes are niche market formats and are audience specific. The style of on-air promotion will differ from the style adopted by general programmes. While an announcer on general programmes may not give the particular time a programme is airing, with the view of keeping the listener tuned in for a long time, this format is not advisable for audience specific programmes. Broadcast times must be reflected in MSE programme promos so that the listener can know when to tune in. Producers should write weekly trailers for the MSE programme and it is very important to continuously remind the listener of the programme time and not assume that listeners know when the programme airs.

Press releases on major MSE programme features should be written for the business sections of newspapers and any high profile guest making an appearance on the programme should be promoted and advertised. A transcript of every interesting programme can also be prepared and offered to business correspondents in the newspapers.

## **ARCHIVING**

Every programme aired on radio should be archived. In other words the master tapes should be maintained and logically filed to act as a resource for future use and future programmes. It is a big disappointment to the production team to find that the material aired, say eight months ago, is missing yet that very programme has become relevant to a topical issue of the day.

The archive is used to keep track of the programme development and follow up on issues. Since the programme gains its popularity by achieving results, the archive can be used to check whether commitments made by authorities have been fulfilled. In a situation where an official has made promises or commitments only to please the MSE listeners, the recordings can be played back and the official can be confronted with the broken promises in his/her own voice. This becomes a big challenge prompting action!

The marketing team can also take advantage of the archives to compile relevant material useful in making marketing presentations to clients. For example, in Ghana, the programme material covering the market fire was used by the marketing team of Kapital FM to solicit for sponsorship from a company dealing in fire fighting equipment.

With the MSE programme developing on new stations and in additional countries the potential for sharing content is also increasing. Problems and issues that are being covered on one station may have been covered by others in the past and Nigerian listeners for example may benefit from hearing how this problem was addressed in Uganda. Afrinet and the ILO's IFP/SEED-FIT programme are currently developing this collaborative network and archiving will be most important for sharing information and content.



## Section 4

### **Potential difficulties in establishing and running an MSE programme**

This manual has detailed a type of programme that is very different from most radio programmes that are broadcast by commercial radio stations in Africa. While a programme for MSEs could be created which is more studio based, relies on a presenter and phone-ins rather than investigative journalism and therefore operates in a similar way to most political chat shows, such a programme would not create the audience or commercial interest that can be achieved by a magazine style, investigative current affairs programme. This MSE programme can yield greater returns, i.e. audience levels, commercial revenues, public relations, station profile etc., but also demands more from the station, in terms of:

- Personnel
- Financial investment
- Content
- Production
- Time spent on putting together the MSEs programme

### **Possible strategies to make establishing and running the MSEs programme easier**

#### Personnel

A radio station that may not be in the position to assign its staff the responsibilities of establishing and running the MSE programme may exploit the option of contracting freelance people. As it has already been stated, the MSE programme presenter is not under pressure to project his personality as a star but rather someone who understands and values the MSE sector and he/she can therefore be hired specifically for this programme. The same applies to the investigative reporter who can work for the MSE programme on a freelance basis and could, as stated previously, even be from the business desk of a local newspaper. Under this arrangement, the radio station remains with the responsibility of coordinating the programme, which can be handed by the Programmes Department.

In a different scenario, the radio station may not have the capacity to manage, market and coordinate the MSE programme, although it might have suitable presenters and adequate production facilities for editing the programme. This problem can be overcome by contracting a production company and an advertising agency to take care of all aspects of the of the programme regarding its management, marketing and production leaving the radio station with the responsibility of promoting and airing the programme.

In Uganda, both the presenter and investigative reporter are attached to the programme on freelance arrangements, in Zimbabwe the management of the programme was the responsibility of a consultancy firm, while in Nigeria the programmes are being established and marketed by a production company.

#### Expenses

There are increased financial implications in running the MSE programme that is described in this manual. There are additional costs incurred in transport, telephone bills, and remuneration and incentives to the production team who will have to work exceptionally hard on the programme. The costs involved may look rather high as compared to the costs of running other radio programmes but such expenses should be seen in the context of the commercial revenue that the programme can generate and the unique niche that this programme carves out in the market place. It has been seen that the MSE programme is one of the most profitable to CBS in Uganda, and the

management of the station are now willing to invest additional money into the programme. No matter how much money the programme is generating, it is important to minimize expenses. It is important for the production team to effectively plan their activities to avoid repeat visits for interviews and to undertake a number of assignments rather than one when traveling out of the station.

#### Content for the programme

While the MSE programme does require greater content than most programmes this should not be of great concern to the producers. This programme takes radio from the studios right to the people and the resulting interaction with MSEs opens up issues to the production team that would otherwise be unknown to the programme manager. One issue often leads to others that are equally important and relevant to the programme. It has also been seen that the MSEs also take the lead in generating issues or following up on those that have already featured on the programme. The MSE programme's listener clubs are also a vital source of news and issues for the programme. They can compliment the work of the investigative reporter by filing news items and issues from their locations.

#### Equipment

Many radio stations, especially commercial and privately run stations, operate with only two studios, an on-air studio and a production studio. As the operations of radio stations grow and programming widens in scope, there is considerable pressure on the production studio and the MSE programme, with its need for considerable editing, will add to this pressure.

If the production studio congestion proves to be a major problem then there may be a need to invest in the installation of an extra production facility. This additional cost is really a wise investment that can not only assist in producing the MSE programme but improve the production standards of many programmes. The good news for radio stations is that such additional facilities are becoming cheaper by the day. To set up a recording/ editing studio, one requires a computer with professional software that is in itself a full recording studio, plus microphones, sound proofing materials etc.

#### Time spent on putting together the MSE programme

Although putting together the MSE programme takes more time as compared to other programmes such as chart shows and talk shows, a combination of the strategies laid out in this manual, particularly teamwork and programme planning, can significantly ease the work and cut down the time spent on the programme. The key aspects to running this programme efficiently are:

- Good planning
- Correct choice of personnel
- Effective teamwork in the production and marketing teams
- Appropriate investment in and support to the programme.
- Building a broad and effective networking of MSEs and resource people

## **CONCLUSION AND FUTURE POSSIBILITIES.**

The MSE programmes that have been established are a result of a unique collaboration between commercial radio companies, consultancy companies involved in media and small business, and organizations involved in small enterprise development. As this unique collaboration develops and matures increased possibilities are opening up to develop these and similar types of programmes targeted at the small business sector.

At the time of writing the manual, a network of radio stations has been established in Uganda that brings together 4 radio stations that broadcast to different parts of the country. This network is being formed to enable collaboration on developing features and content for the programmes, sharing content and features, and joint marketing of the MSE programmes. This arrangement has already attracted commercial sponsors who view this as a considerable added benefit to the programme. At the same time, similar radio networks are being planned in Ghana and Nigeria and as the number of radio stations broadcasting MSE programmes increase there is a growing potential for these stations to collaborate. This international collaboration would be particularly beneficial in two areas.

Firstly, the stations can collaborate on sharing content particularly features. For example if 6 stations agree to share a 10 minute feature every 2 months then each station will receive 5 features in return for their contribution. Re-recording the commentary and overlaying translations on the original recording can overcome language complications and the resulting features on the perspectives, methods of working, problems, and solutions developed by MSEs in other countries would provide interesting and potentially useful content for the listeners.

Secondly, it has been seen that a collaborative network assists in marketing programmes on a national basis, but an international network is also likely to assist in marketing the programmes internationally. For example, a network of radio stations broadcasting across 4 countries in Africa and perhaps reaching well in excess of a million MSEs should be a most interesting channel of communication for non-African based companies who are selling machinery or equipment, seeking suppliers from Africa or looking for local representatives.

The ILO's IFP/SEED-FIT Programme is in the process of exploring these possibilities and plans to work to establish and promote these collaborative networks of radio stations. Any broadcaster, media or production company that has read this manual and is interested in establishing an MSE Programme is therefore encouraged to contact the ILO (contact details at the beginning of the manual). A training course for radio stations who intend to establish an MSE Programme has also been developed and covers most of the aspects contained in this manual as well as technical training in using editing and production equipment and software and programme planning, editing and field recording. The ILO can also provide details of these training courses.

While there are benefits to linking to a network of radio stations, the MSE programme detailed in this manual can be effectively established by a radio station or production company on its own. It is hoped that this manual has provided a detailed understanding of the dynamics behind such a programme and that companies who work on establishing an MSE programme can use this manual to create an appropriate mix of programme content and components that suit the local requirements and market. As the authors and others involved in this work have seen, establishing and running an MSE programme can be hard work but is extremely interesting, exciting and rewarding. Good luck to all those who take up the challenge.

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