

FAO 's Experience in the Field of Rural Radio: Lessons Learned and Methodologies



Jean-Pierre Ilboudo

Extension, Education and Communication Service

FAO



Why Rural Radio?

It is a privileged media belonging to the rural communities to:

- Facilitate the access of useful knowledge and information
- Enhance the value of local expertise
- Familiarize with local social, economic and health programmes
- Foster dialogue between the communities and their partners
- Share experiences, knowledge and techniques.

The role of rural radio is no longer limited to sensitizing local populations. Nowadays, it also allows communities to express themselves, to present actual experiences and to share social and cultural values.

It is no longer a matter of Education, but of Interaction and Exchange.



Rural Radio: A valid communication tool in Africa

FAO's Contributions: Milestones

- 1966 Organized Giseyni & Moshi meetings which led to the creation of radio clubs & farm radios in Africa
- 1976 Created rural radio station in Congo
- 1986 Strengthened rural radio in Mauritania
- 1986 Created rural radio in Guinea
- 1986 Trained rural radio staff in the Central African Republic
- 1986-88 Set-up rural radio in Chad
- 1993 Re-launched rural radio activities in Mali
- 1994-95 Introduced rural radio methodology in Niger & Guinea-Bissau
- 1995 Developed & tested multimedia kits to train trainers

FAO's Contributions: Milestones

- 1996 International meetings on rural radio in 27 countries in Africa
- 1997-2001 Set-up 4 local community radio stations in Southern Mali
- 1998-1999 Assessed trainers' training needs in more than 15 countries
- 1997-2002 Reflected on ICTs and on how to link radio to the Internet
- 1996 Developed a participatory & interactive methodology for radio
- 2000 Methodology for content analysis
- 2000 Methodology to monitor & evaluate the impact of programmes

These activities were carried out in collaboration with CIERRO, CRDI, CTA, FORD Foundation, GTZ, UNESCO, UNICEF, and with the Netherlands, Switzerland and France Cooperation

Concept and Strategy

Three operating levels

FAO's support to rural radio considers three kinds of radio:

- National
- Regional
- Local



3 types of radio, 3 systems whose consistency and linkages result in valid rural radio communication.

Concept and Strategy

Four principles

Integration

Interdisciplinary action

Interaction

Sustainability

Three operating areas

Human Resources

Legal and administrative
status and operating mode

Infrastructures

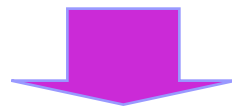
Rural Radio Participatory Methodology

- ✓ In the 80's, radio became more participatory and more interactive, with the emergence of the MARP (Méthode accélérée de recherche participative).
- ✓ The two tools were developed simultaneously, taking from the same disciplines, and borrowing various techniques from each other.
- ✓ The participatory approach is used in:
 - * Diagnostic activities (information, knowledge, etc.)
 - * Evaluation of activities.

Rural Radio: A tool for Social Enquiry

Public radio programmes give a voice to villagers and collect their opinions on the themes presented.

All social levels in the village or rural community participate spontaneously in the public radio programme.



Discussion-debate and interviews (open or closed questions) resulting in diagnosis and evaluation.

FAO's Areas of Intervention in Rural Radio

Support in 7 areas:

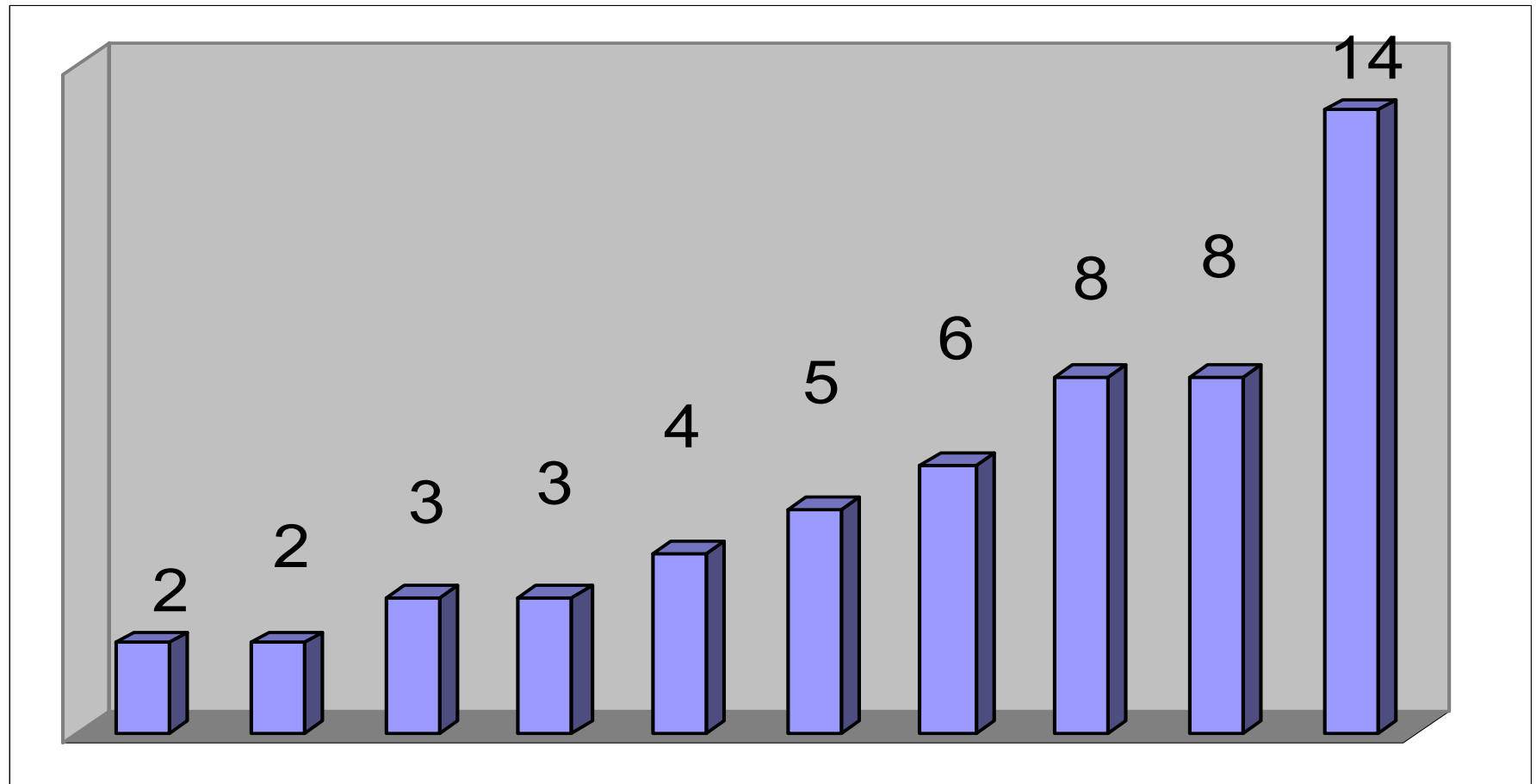
1. Training/human resources
2. Set-up of rural radio facilities
3. Definition of a communication for development strategy including radio and other media
4. Production of radio programmes based on a participatory methodology
5. Definition of technical standards for radio equipment
6. Deliberation and dialogue on rural radio
7. Research in the field of rural radio.

Rural Radio Workshops

- June 1996** International congress on the development of rural radio in Africa
- 27 participating countries of which 17 were French-speaking
 - 9 English-speaking and 1 Portuguese-speaking
 - 31 partners (bi- & multi-lateral Cooperation)
- February 2001** First international workshop on rural radio
- September 2001** Workshop on “*Linking radio to the Internet*”
- November 2001** Workshop on “*Rural radio and food security*”



Number of Training Sessions in Rural Radio



Guinea-
Bissau

Rwanda

Benin

Chad

Congo

Mauri-
tania

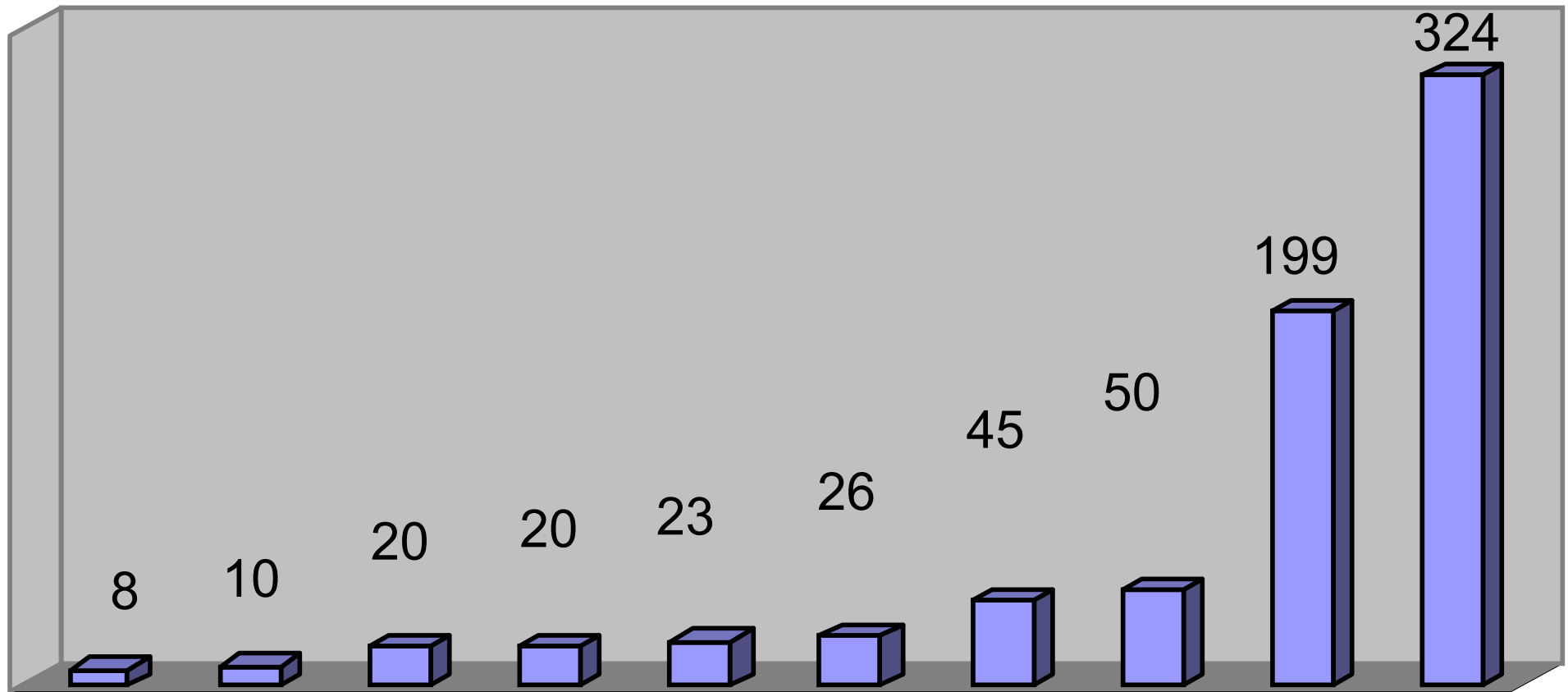
Central
African
Republic

Burkina
Faso

Guinea

Mali

Number of People Trained



Guinea-Bissau

Congo

Benin

Mauritania

Guinea

Rwanda

Chad

Central African Republic

Burkina Faso

Mali

Lessons Learned: The Mali experience

FAO helped with the installation of a community rural radio network in Mali.

Main lesson learned:

The importance of respecting
the 15 following steps.



The 15 methodological steps for the installation of community radios

1. Sensitize the local populations

2. Set-up the administrative committees

3. Build the premises

4. Develop the status & temporary terms and conditions

5. Recruit the staff (broadcasters, producers & technicians) on the basis of oral & written tests

6. Chose and order the equipment

7. Set-up the equipment

8. Train technical staff & administrative committees

The 15 methodological steps for the installation of community radios

9. Assess the information-communication needs of the people

10. Open the radio station

11. Study the electromagnetic field

12. Set-up the tools for sustainability

13. Assess the operating costs of a radio station

14. Create a listening and feedback system

15. Develop a system to monitor and evaluate impact of radio programmes

Other Lessons Learned

- The administrative committees should be more involved in income generation for operating the radio stations
- Regarding technical equipment:
 - Ensure the availability of spare parts as soon as the equipment is installed
 - Know the signal radius
 - Reorient if necessary the antennae of the transmitters to improve coverage
- Monitoring and Evaluation of the impact of radio programmes is based on:
 - Mail from listeners
 - Field visits
 - Fact sheets - Level I - Listening and comprehension of the programme content
 - Fact sheets - Level II - Contribution (in terms of information, knowledge and awareness) of the programme for the listener
 - Fact sheets - Level III - Attitude changes of the listeners or socio-economic changes in the community/village/region
 - Qualitative techniques, such as focus groups or in-depth interviews

Mali : Testimonies from Women

Tenimba Samake from Sido village: « *We, as women, listen a lot to the radio - morning, noon and night -, because when we have no information and knowledge on a given topic, and somebody else does and tells it to you in a direct manner as radio does, it is a pleasure to listen to. We like listening to programmes on marriage, family life, cooking and hygiene. When you understand well all these subjects, it brings something positive to your life.*

Woman from Kolondièba : « *Radio has brought independence and freedom to women, because it develops awareness amongst men who deep-down remain old-fashioned and close versus women. Radio speaks loud and clear what we feel inside. We respect the lucidity of the broadcasters and we hope that all radio programme aimed at women will continue»*

The Specific Request from Young People

- That radio programmes are dedicated to them «48 hours per day»
 - Introduction of specific topics
 - Increase of broadcasting time
 - Strengthening of programmes on: AIDS, retailing, family planning, nutrition, radio dramas, sports and information on the village.

