

Creating Sustainable Community Radio Stations – a major challenge!

UNESCO is one of several development partners working to support the establishment of community radio in Mozambique. UNESCO is presently working to capacitate eight different communities in their wish to start a community radio since 1998. Besides from these 8 new stations, UNESCO is supporting four stations already on air, the creation of a women's community radio network and a national co-ordination forum for community radio. UNESCO got involved in this development as part of its implementation efforts within a major media development project, aimed at "Strengthening Democracy and Governance through Development of the Media in Mozambique".

Looking at Mozambique with literacy rates of 59% for men and a low 29% for women (1997 census), knowing that only a quarter of the population speaks the only common language, Portuguese, at a level sufficient to follow and understand fully a radio broadcast news bulletin in that language, taking into consideration the vastness of the country and its many distinctly different languages and cultures – along with the oral communication being both traditional, familiar and effective, community radio is a very appropriate response to the development issues at stake.

In preparation of turning plans into reality, creating these powerful - yet fragile - institutions, we carried out a number of studies to assess sustainability potentials and obstacles. The studies provided us with details of what we expected and somehow already knew: that when moving outside of the urban centres, experience with the creation of organisational structures, let alone effectively managing these, was very weak, when not totally absent. We would therefore need to design a process, doing our utmost to establish effective mechanisms to create a sound foundation for success, basing ourselves as much as possible on local capacity and local organising experience available.

At the same time, when looking around at the local/community radio stations already established, we saw ample evidence of the challenges and obstacles identified: stations being off the air for long periods of time due to lack of proper technical configurations (like lack of provision to protect against the general fluctuations and sudden surges in the electricity supply as well as lack of earthing protection mechanism against the effects of the frequent and powerful lightning 'attacks') and lack of effective financial and/or technical backup systems in place. This, combined with inadequately trained staff and usually a very fragile community-base for the radios, rendered such local radio stations extremely vulnerable.

Four decisive factors were identified to minimise this vulnerability and thus to ensure the sustainable functioning of the stations we could assist in creating:

(1) **A strong community ownership** should be at the core: when the community feels that this is their station to which it provides producers and stories, where it assists in overcoming financial problems, and where it prevents theft by all being alert and protective, only then would a station in rural Mozambique have a chance of survival. Creating this community ownership feeling takes time. Therefore we decided to plan for a one to two year mobilisation and capacitation phase before arrival of the magic equipment, which would absorb all interest once in place.

(2) Furthermore **effective training and capacitation** would need to be organised, facilitating that the farmers, the school teachers, the accountants, school children – in brief: the community, could run the station effectively in terms of management and community relations, programming, administration and technical maintenance.

(3) A **technical sustainability system** was needed, including effective and realistic responses at the different levels of support needed.

Beyond these core factors addressed in detail below, the importance of (4) financial viability beyond the period during which the UNESCO project is able to provide a security net for the station is being addressed in our work with our partners, including limiting costs to the absolute necessary minimum, on the one hand, and assisting to devise a multi-faceted system of sources of income – and capacity within the community to maintain this – on the other.

1 Creating community ownership

In many other parts of the world, community radio stations grow out of vocal civic movements, requiring a radio station to voice their concerns and ensure fulfilment of their objectives. As described above, few such civic movements exist in Mozambique, yet the need for communication media is great.

Based on the assessments above, and the initial realisation that the inception method of the stations already on (or again off) air needed important improvements, we decided to start with pilot stations in three locations which the project had identified in different parts of the country, all providing the minimum conditions of some basic infrastructures in place (like electricity and accessibility by air or road), yet in acute need of a communication medium. This was later expanded to include altogether eight communities, six of which are situated rather far outside the provincial capitals.

Based on experiences from many countries, and with the aim of a broad-based community involvement in the initial establishment of the radio stations, we designed a social mobilisation process, carefully identifying in each community the many sub-communities within, ensuring information to, dialogue with and mobilisation of all of these.

The initial rounds of such mobilisation culminated in a large community meeting that elected an installation committee under procedures designed to ensure representativity, credibility and the availability of sufficient capacity to drive the installation process.

The national and otherwise very open and democratic media legislation does not yet recognise “community media” as such. When neither state nor commercial, a community needs to form an association which can be granted a license/sending permission and a frequency. The first challenge for the installation committee was thus to prepare a set of statutes through community meetings, that have to achieve a certain level of consensus on what the objectives and modalities of this new organism are to be.

Once the papers of the association, including statutes, identification of the founding members, etc, have been approved by the provincial governor (representing the state in each of the ten national provinces), the general founding assembly elects its social bodies, including the presidency of the

association, the management committee, and the supervisory inspection committee, overseeing that the management committee conscientiously works along the lines agreed in the general assembly.

Once the association is founded, the management committee takes over the functions of the installation committee, and in most cases we have seen an important similarity in the composition of the two bodies: when community members have served well and continued to be credible and worthy of the community's respect and trust after serving for the initial period on the installation committee, they are also elected to continue the important organising and mobilisation work in the communities.

When the association is functional, it can have a radiation study carried out, upon which it can apply for a sending permission, including a license and a frequency. Now the legal basis for the community ownership is in place. In order, however, to ensure not only the formal, but the real, felt and functional community ownership, this is only the very beginning.

To maintain and to ensure a continued broad-based community representation in the management committees, we have recommended strongly that the community radio associations have 12-14 members like the installation committees. This also means that once the organisation process is so far that it is time to recruit the four paid staff members of the radio station, each of these can have a background support group from the management committee of three to four of its members.

These background groups are initially pivotal in ensuring a good entry into the community work by the staff members, who are recruited to ensure the effective implementation of the community's dreams and aspirations. As such they are the employees of the community, and need to know this very clearly on the one hand. On the other it is in many of the places, where community radios are being established, very difficult to identify persons with knowledge and experience in the area of management, administration, mobilisation and technical support. Mentoring, training, support and thorough and continued coaching of the staff members by the management committee background groups, is usually needed.

This is a good beginning for ensuring the real-life community ownership. We are, however, still talking only about a very limited group of people from the community involved in the work, and have still no programmers involved!

In order to accommodate this need, we created what we called a "Process Coach Scheme": a person is employed to work in the community every or every second weekend. This coach is responsible for the mobilisation process within the community, for assisting and facilitating the organising work of first the installation committee and afterwards the management committee, and finally for organising training processes for the many volunteer community members in order to prepare them to function effectively within and around the community radio. As most volunteers are interested in becoming community radio programmers, the coaches have to stress the importance of some support functions that also need community assistance, such as security guarding, cleaning and keeping the membership files in order, and not least the important functions of a technician.

The Process Coach Scheme has proven to be extremely adequate and effective, creating not only a basic nucleus of between 20 and 70 knowledgeable, trained, committed and highly motivated community members around the station, but also having ensured that much wider parts of the many

communities within the community are informed about the processes and plans, thus ensuring their feeling of belonging to the process.

Besides from these two primary and parallel processes – creation of the association and the process coach scheme - both pivotal in creating community ownership feeling, a number of other, very different measures have been carried out, in order to facilitate the community ownership: Effective enrolment, registration and documentation of memberships; a well thought out and strategic location of the future station; encouragement that the radios create a comfortable, community meeting area just outside of the station: a shady place selling tea and sodas with wooden pillars and grass roof (“palhota”); just to mention a few of the many possible, adequate local means and ideas to give the radio a true community profile.

2 Creating adequate training solutions

Starting a community radio or a newspaper can seem relatively simple, with the funds available and one or a few dynamic core persons involved. When we for the first time visited isolated communities, expecting them to ask us to turn the funds earmarked for starting a radio into improved schools or hospitals, we were met with clear community statements demonstrating the need for a radio station, explaining to us what the local problems are, and giving concrete examples of how a radio could help the community overcome some of these. We have been encouraged to find that even without much schooling and very few opportunities for receiving information, let alone much knowledge of what “a radio” is, people know well what their needs are, and have clear ideas about how to get there. So even in these difficult contexts, the initial dynamism to get something going can be found. Ensuring a sustainable continuity, by contrast, is like in most other contexts in the world, extremely difficult.

In order to create their own radio station, communities have to start from scratch in practically all areas that form crucial parts of the capacity to run a sustainable and effective community radio station: community radio management, organisational development, staff and volunteer management, administration and financial management including donor relations and fundraising, programming and programme format production including audience research and continued audience relations, not to mention technical operation and (preventive) management skills.

In all communities there are people who possess some of these skills, at times due to training and education, yet in most cases due to amply proven real life experience in making life work – too often under extremely adverse conditions. The challenge is to identify these people, ensure that they become involved in some way in the organisation in or around the radio, and to create a number of adequate ways to further strengthen this capacity and the many others that are needed.

Based on our needs assessment, we have designed a five-tier capacitation strategy including the following components: (i) A series of intensive 8-10 day training courses, (ii) A community training programme through process coaches, (iii) Exposure to related realities, including study trips to other community, commercial and public radio stations, (iv) Management Seminars and Workshops, and finally (v) Establishment of a ‘Training Station’, which can receive teams of up-starting radio stations and help these get going at a basic, yet sound basis and pace.

2.1 Intensive Community Radio Training Courses

With the aim to facilitate the concrete and high quality transfer of concrete skills, we organised a series of five intensive 8-10 day training courses in the following areas:

- “How to start and manage a community radio station”;
- “Community Radio Programming”;
- “Audience Research”;
- “Preventive Maintenance, level I and II”.

Each course had to be organised several times in different parts of the country, in order to allow 2 – 4 representatives of each of our partner communities to participate in each of these courses without exceeding a total of 16-18 participants per course in order to ensure maximal training impact.

Upon return the participants organised – often in collaboration with the coach - seminars for the relevant groups of community volunteers, thus sharing the skills they had acquired and discussing how to make best use of these locally.

For the five course areas we have developed tailor-made training materials in Portuguese language, which participants took back home and used as a basis for further community capacitation. These materials include formats for budgeting, job descriptions and contract formats for different paid and/or volunteer staff contracts, basic formats for development of internal policy papers including the rules and regulations for the many different areas of work of the stations, overviews of different programme types as well as methods for development of overall programming formats and plans, audience research methodologies and background materials to be locally adapted, technical manuals, guides on establishment of preventive management routines, and much more.

The strength of these courses is the special, intensive training and capacity-building dynamic of bringing people together for a longer period – day and night – to learn, discuss and live with new concepts, insights and skills. The effect of this type of training covers all three of the well-known “**KAP**” set of factors, providing **Knowledge**, working during the many days and through the intense nature on the participants’ **Attitudes**, and imparting some new skills through – initial - **Practice**. All of these factors are crucial for our partners to obtain a broad-based insight into the many factors that bring life to the community’s radio dreams.

On top of this, the courses and the way they were organised yielded a number of important secondary effects: While all communities are different and include individuals with different basic capacities, bringing people together from different parts of the country, who are all in the same basic situation resulted in strong lateral links and a feeling of partnership between the eight participating communities. We have seen important examples of these being brought to effective mutual use. Another – to many individuals overwhelmingly – important factor is, that these courses brought participants around in their country. Many of the rural community radio programmers we are working with, had previously never been very far outside of their birthplace, and thus often visited the capital Maputo and the other training locations for the very first time.

As the programming of the community radios is primarily based on volunteer staff, a certain circulation/fluctuation in this corps must be expected. Training can therefore not be done once and for all, but rather has to be seen as a process that continuously trains new entrants, and further develops the skills of those already involved. UNESCO in Mozambique – concretely our media development project here – is therefore planning to repeat all of the courses already held, and to

develop new types of intensive training courses and seminars, including topical seminars capacitating the community programmers to cover effectively core development issues such as HIV/AIDS, Health in general, Agriculture, Environment, Gender, Youth – with an emphasis on the girl child, etc.

However, downsides of these courses are not only their comparatively high costs (travel, board, high level trainers, course and material development and printing) and the necessity of a full-time person in charge of the organisation. A more fundamental weakness is that the courses can only provide training for two or at best three or four representatives from each community. While often these representatives conscientiously share what they have experienced and learnt with the community upon return, this does not always happen, at times for a lack of will, more often due to lack of capacity to do so effectively.

Without underestimating the strength and importance of our training courses, we therefore deemed these alone as being far from sufficient to capacitate communities to be in charge of their own radio station. We thus had to identify an effective way of training the communities in a much broader way and came up with a concept, which proved to live up very effectively to our expectations: The Process Coach Scheme.

2.2 Community Training Through the Process Coach Scheme

After getting the idea of having regular training activities taking place in the community for all its members interested in becoming involved in the work with the radio, the question was: how? What kind of people, professionals, would be effective as community facilitators, mobilisers and trainers? As these “coaches” would be required to prepare the basis for strong and empowering community action through the development of a community medium, we identified as the core and overriding quality needed, a personal one: the coach would need to be used to and to have a proven capacity to work effectively with rural communities, in an atmosphere of respect and mutuality. The challenge to the coach would be to empower people, who had no or very little experience with seeing themselves as dynamic forces in their community’s democratic development, who had strongly varying – and often only very basic - educational and experience backgrounds. And to capacitate these future community movers through basic awareness-raising, through concrete individual and collective capacity building and through creation of comprehensive organisational structures.

We therefore decided to look for either radio journalists, local school teachers or community organisers/workers with this profile, who were living as near as possible to the communities in question. The first group of three coaches were all recruited from the public broadcasting station, two of these, however, being women who formed part of a special national programme with a focus on rural women. These three journalists – with different levels of professional background, education and experience themselves – knew about radio, but little or nothing about what **community** radio could be. We therefore needed to start the process with the capacitation of the future coaches.

The first “Training-of-Coaches” (TOC) was organised as a two week process, where the professional staff of our UNESCO Media Development Project visited with the three coaches two distinctively different community radio stations in two different parts of the country, demonstrating one very simple, bamboo-hut like station with rudimentary equipment, broadcasting some 8 hours a

day through programmes, primarily directly on-air, to a vastly rural community. The other was a station in a middle sized town, with more equipment, a higher level of internal organisation, more daily programming hours and more pre-produced programmes.

During the TOC study trip, long internal discussion sessions on how to turn national and international community radio experience effectively into workable formats in the Mozambican reality, interchanged with meetings with the local station managers, volunteers, community members, providing the project and our coaches with the opportunity to listen and learn.

On this basis each of our coaches started to work approximately 30 hours per month in “their” communities, besides continuing their primary work with the public broadcaster. One of these coaches lived in the community in question, and worked with the installation committee every Wednesday evening and with the growing group of volunteers every Saturday morning. Another one of the coaches lived some 4 hours away by boat and bus, and found with her community the best rhythm to be working together every Saturday. The third coach, needing to travel some 8-10 hours by train each way, agreed with her community to work every second weekend, from her arrival Friday afternoon and until Sunday evening.

In order for the project to closely follow developments and progress made, we installed a monitoring system including weekly telephone conferences on a set time with each of the coaches, and the receipt by us of a monthly written report. This report served at least four purposes: it forced the coach to reflect on developments month by month, to present and assess the activities carried out, to describe and justify the plans for the coming month and to discuss the main problems and challenges, including areas where assistance was needed from us, UNESCO. Secondly it was our tool to monitor progress, and to ensure that the processes in each of the three and – since December 2000 – nine¹ communities was still on track. Thirdly the report was our proof that the coach had been working, and the coach only received his/her monthly honorarium upon approval of the report. Finally, the report served the purpose of documenting this important and – to our knowledge – innovative community mobilisation and training work-process, carried out in preparation of community ownership of a radio station. We are presently having a book prepared based on the first one hundred monthly reports from December 1999 and until July 2001.

Besides these weekly and monthly monitoring exercises, we carried out bi-annual evaluation seminars, first with three and since December 2000 with nine coaches. These seminars lasted between two and four days, and covered a combination of exchange of experience, assessment of successes and failures during the past six months, planning for the coming six months and further refinement of our work methods in each of the participating communities.

Like the first three coaches, also four of the six new coaches were recruited from the national public radio. The fifth one comes from a catholic community oriented radio station and the sixth from a community development NGO. With one regrettable exception the coaches have all lived up to and even exceeded our high personal, ethical and professional expectations, and they have all worked much more than what is covered by their symbolic thirty monthly hours’ pay. They were in charge of not only training, but also of mobilisation and the facilitation of organisational development processes. During the bi-annual evaluation seminars they expressed that working as a coach

¹ We only support the creation of community radio from scratch in eight communities, but due to special circumstances we have also decided to support a coach for a catholic community radio station, that requested support for its transition into a community controlled and managed station.

required that they use all they have ever learnt, tried, heard – and more. Two of the three first coaches were after two years promoted by their employer – the public broadcaster - to become heads of their local delegations. Both attributed this professional and personal development in part to the very creative, demanding and rewarding coach experience.

Once the stations will be up and running, we have designed a model – discussed in more detail below – where large groups of volunteers support only four paid staff members who run the station: the Co-ordinator, the Administrator, the Technician, and finally, the Mobiliser. It is our plan that this latter person will work closely together and finally take over the functions of the coach. Together with the Co-ordinator, the Mobiliser will be responsible to organise and manage the volunteer programmers, continually mobilise the communities within the community to provide programmers, and in general to support the station. Further tasks will comprise an effective system of training and capacitation activities, as well as continued and effective ways of absorbing new volunteers in the life and work of the station.

With this scheme in place, the crucial question still was how to turn the themes of the many sessions into a real life context. Most of the participants had never seen a radio studio, and had only a faint idea of what it could look like. It was therefore found important to couple the formal courses and the work of the coaches, with some exposure to ‘radio station realities’ – as diverse and different as possible.

2.3 Exposure to Related Realities, including Study Trips

While intense training courses provide in-depth understanding of a specific subject, and the weekly coach-sessions provide a broad-based insight into community radio programming and work methods, the need for the community member to understand how this all can be turned into one working organism still prevails.

Therefore, as an important part of our training and capacitation strategy we encouraged – and often actively planned and organised – visits to as many other related realities as possible, in order for our community radio back-bone, the volunteers and ‘owners’, to find themselves in a position, where they can choose between different – not just theoretic, but real life - models, seen, experienced and discussed with colleagues.

Some study visits were thus paid to the public broadcaster, Radio Mozambique – usually one of its eight provincial delegations, that belong closely to the public broadcaster, but are in a process of some, gradual decentralisation in specific areas. Other visits led to more community oriented radios, of which presently no less than four different types exist: community radios initiated by the state communication institute (7 so-called community stations and 14 rural radio and TV stations), the catholic community oriented stations (5 in the country), the independent, community-association based radios, and one single municipal community radio station.

Another interesting model to visit and to measure dreams and plans against are the other religious radios that have developed a mix between commercial broadcasting and missionary messages. Finally, one of the two known politically driven local radio stations, that also applies the commercial radio format, was visited by one of our groups.

In order to learn yet more on basic organisational development and functional structures for sustainability, we encouraged some of our community groups - besides visiting other radio stations - to liaise closely with other civic organisations. This also opened their eyes to the fact that within their own communities, or nearby, they may find organisations that – while quite different from radio development groups - possess much of the capacity for sustainability that our communities will need in their further development processes.

2.4 Management Seminars and Workshops

As emanates from the description above, our capacity building strategy builds on a continuous assessment of the ever changing needs for specific capacity-building activities that become visible through specifically commissioned consultancies, the monthly, analytically geared reports from our process coaches, and not least our almost daily contact with the community management committees and the staff of the stations.

On the basis of this continuous needs assessment, a number of special, tailor-made and need-driven management seminars and workshops were developed. Examples comprise the revamping and strengthening of financial systems, devising an effective and efficient organisation structure and work flow, co-ordination between the many editorial groups of volunteer programmers, among others. They are implemented between three and five times per year for the management committees of the radio stations (the ‘real’ managers), the co-ordinators of the stations with the administrator or the mobiliser, depending upon the special focus of the different sessions.

2.5 Establishment of a Training Station

Towards the end of 2001, our partner stations are planned to be on air. At that time we plan to designate one of the stations that is somewhat better organised, structured and capacitated, to function as a training station. This does in no way mean ‘training centre’, nor does it mean that it will carry out any kind of training activities as such.

What we are aiming at is a station, where the core team of a new station – or a station undergoing re-structuring – can come and “double” the functions of the existing staff members. The core idea is to get “under the skin” how the routine interaction makes the station work: who does what, when, with whom, and with what consequences for the (well) functioning of the everyday of the radio station. This means that the future, visiting co-ordinator closely follows the resident co-ordinator in his/her daily work functions, where the future, visiting administrator does the same with the administrator, where the mobiliser follows the work routines of the mobiliser; and the technician works with the technician. The (only) prerequisite for an effective training station is thus that its co-ordinator and staff have the willingness and capacity to receive such teams, and are able to explain their daily routines and chosen work methodologies while working.

The visiting team should stay between 2 and 3 weeks, and ensure time for analytical assessments of what they are seeing, what they want to copy, and what not. A facilitator should be attached to these analytical sessions.

The effect of this “stay” naturally is beyond what formal, in-depth, but specialised training courses can give, beyond what the coach can provide, much more and much more detailed and targeted than

what a study visit can provide and very different from the effect of a management seminar or workshop. A stay at the training station will thus effectively complement the other parts of our training and capacitation strategy.

3 Creating technically sound and sustainable responses

While the relevant and effective community content is the core of any Community Radio all over the world, nothing will get on air without the technical part of the magic being in place. In a country like Mozambique, the importance of this cannot be exaggerated. Many of the community radios we looked at in our initial assessment phase were off the air because of a combination of factors that surfaced due to insufficient technical planning. Such factors included inadequate technical overall configurations of the stations that were not geared to the specific local conditions but were provided as pre-prepared packages from different donors; inadequately prepared local staff without any particular (preventive) maintenance skills or routines; insufficient funds to cater for upcoming technical problems; and insufficient community mobilisation that would ensure community backing in times of trouble.

In an attempt to learn from the sad and painful experiences in Mozambique and in its neighbouring countries, we decided to opt for a vast set of different conditions that had to be in place, in order to avoid repeating the worst of the existing past experiences.

3.1 Technical policies and magic configurations

With respect to the configuration of the studios it was necessary to relate carefully to today's discussions of using semi-professional or not quite as robust equipment (maybe) of obscure origin, thinking of a throw-away-and-buy-new philosophy, against a more traditional quality-oriented attitude. Whereas the economic aspects of the technically weaker options might seem advantageous to a country in a financial situation like Mozambique, the consequences are totally unappealing: it is not possible in the local market to buy the (cheaper) substitutes, nor is it easy to import them into the country, where formalities, procedures and bureaucracy is prohibitive. These factors are prone to result in late arrival of equipment, less than interesting end-prices and increased vulnerability to equipment failure and non-replacement.

In the Mozambican situation the configuration therefore rather needs to look for sturdiness, standard brands with spare-parts easily accessible, ease of preventive maintenance and compatibility with other brands, simplicity and, if at all possible, two studios per radio station, putting less immediate pressure on one on-air studio.

As Mozambique also lacks qualified repair technicians, it is furthermore necessary to look for suppliers from neighbouring countries who are more than sales-people. They must not only be ready to provide an adequate after sale service, but also to provide the necessary initial training of the staff members responsible for the operation and of all station members in (preventive) maintenance.

Finally, none of the above will have the needed impact, without the station (management committee and executive body) having put into place precise policies, regulations, and resulting basic rules in the many different areas of work, including the technical area, such as: who has access to what

equipment upon what level of training and insight. Who is responsible for the weekly, the monthly, the semi-annual, the annual preventive maintenance routines. And: when break-downs occur, who carries out which diagnostic, methodical routines, and with which sequence of reactions and connections?

3.2 Capacitation for a sound technical sustainability

To prepare the community programmers and technicians to this reality we devised the following sequence of training and capacitation actions in the technical area: First of all a formal training course (see above, 2.1) was organised in Preventive Maintenance, that also focused on the identification of needed community station policies, which had to be detailed in regulations, that in turn could be specified into basic rules to be posted in the station. This course further comprised an introduction to the most basic technical equipment operation rules and methods, focusing on the prevention of problems as well as front-line maintenance, including basic diagnostic routines. Due to its important management component, both the core technician and the (future) co-ordinator of the station were requested to be among the 3-5 persons from each station that participated in the course.

The second part of the technical capacitation process was to send the main technician from each of the stations to Cape Town. There, these technicians were guided through a ten day intensive process of “learning-by-doing” through which they built up their own future studios. In this way – besides from feeling very much as the ‘owner’ of and responsible for the equipment - they came to know the role and importance of practically every screw, and learned how to take good care of the specific equipment as well as basic (preventive) maintenance procedures.

After the visit in Cape Town, the next step was for the staff and volunteers above mentioned, as well as other staff foreseen to be active within the technical area – maximum ten persons – to install the studio together with the installation technicians coming from Cape Town to set up the equipment in the community. During this practical installation-cum-training process, the local group of technicians will be working with a technical manual, which the supplier has developed specifically for each individual studio, and which describes for each of the machines and software the most important operation and maintenance details. Translated into Portuguese by UNESCO in Mozambique, this manual is meant to be the daily operations and preventive maintenance handbook in each of the stations.

The fourth and final part of the technical package within the first phase of the UNESCO Media Development Project, was a continued, and more in-depth, level II Preventive Maintenance training course, foreseen to be held when the eight stations have used the equipment for some months. By then, the users and technicians will have identified the first problems, which will allow them to benefit maximally from the training provided.

With the carefully composed equipment packages, configured to match the individual situations, climates and conditions maximally, and this technical capacitation process in place, it is expected and hoped that the stations will be able to prevent a major part of the initial technical problems identified during our early technical assessments of the community radio environment in the country. For the technical problems that still will occur, a system needs to be in place.

We are therefore presently planning the establishment - within the realm of a newly established national co-ordination network of community radio stations (state, catholic and independent) – of a national network of technicians at different levels of documented maintenance and repair capacity. This network will need to be prepared and oriented in a way that ensures its sustainability. Some of the equipment suppliers from neighbouring countries are considering to become involved in such a network, which could help to build a sustainability potential. However, we are still at the initial steps of this process and still need to find adequate ways of turning this idea realistic, operational, and viable in a long-term perspective.

4 Looking to the Future in Anxious Expectation

Through the preparatory measures described above, UNESCO has in Mozambique aimed at ensuring that **the community itself** forms part of the creators, movers and active beneficiaries of an **appropriate knowledge-based local development**. Based on the empowerment we have seen take seat in and among our partners, we trust and believe that the above combination of a multitude of training and capacitation responses, carefully designed to mutually reinforce each other, is one part of the response to the complex and persisting challenges at hand. a major one among these is the challenge to ensure that communities and the individuals therein are capacitated to provide and find access to information that enables them to take informed decisions and proactively take control of their own lives.

When on air, the stations will have four paid staff members: the co-ordinator, the administrator, the mobiliser and the technician. Besides of this, the volunteers will be organised in editorial groups, preparing adequate community programmes in their area of specialisation (health, education, culture, agriculture, environment, youth, women, etc.) through a combination of pre-prepared parts of the programme that give them time to go in-depth with the issues, and further on-air discussions of the themes.

To encourage this way of getting in-depth with the issues, all stations – even the technically more modest ones – have both a pre-production studio and an on-air studio, facilitating the work of the between 5 and 15 editorial groups organised and active in each of our partner communities. These studios provide in most instances of a combination of analogue and digital equipment, which renders them flexibility, stability and future orientation.

In order to ensure a continued, coherent programme profile development, and mutual, continued training, all stations have developed a work rhythm, where an overall weekly editorial meeting discusses and evaluates the programmes of the past week, and comments on the initial preparation of the programmes for the coming week.

Mozambique needs functioning, community based and community controlled media for **long-term** social, economic, cultural and politic development. Above I have presented a number of the crucial sustainability factors which we identified and for which we attempted to define a series of adequate, working responses. We will need to continue to carefully monitor the development, and to find adequate and creative responses to the arising needs by developing a range of diverse models and experiences that work.