

REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION THROUGH RADIO



Executive Director, FRI, Kevin Perkins.

For many, radio is yesterday's technology, going the way of fax machines, pagers and 8-track cassette players. But we know radio, and its cousin the podcast, is more popular than ever, and not just for boomers and gen Xers. It's no longer just for listening to music, either. Young people are getting hooked on radio shows too, and they are learning from them, contributing to them, telling their stories and making themselves heard.

Consider *Serial*, a podcast Sarah Koenig spun off from *This American Life*, which attracted over 2 million listeners — mostly youth — for each weekly episode.

Farm Radio International has had its own success at reaching youth over

the air as well.

Our highly popular *FarmQuest* reality radio show that aired in 2013 featured six Malian youth challenged to try farming as a business, with mentors answering the contestants' and listeners' questions. About 50 per cent of youth aged 15-30 tuned in to the show, and 40 per cent listened to most or all of the episodes — an audience share that would make the producers of *Game of Thrones* jealous.

A second example is on the air right now in Malawi and Tanzania: Mental Health on Air. The program features a radio drama and discussion, allowing youth to talk openly about issues that affect them.

The *Nkhawa Njee (Depression Free)* program is the most popular radio show for youth in Malawi, and 94 per cent of listeners say the program is entertaining and gives important information to young people. *Positive Mood*, which airs in Tanzania, is receiving similarly rave reviews.

Learn more about Mental Health on Air — the radio campaign of the "Integrated youth mental health" project — in a story on the back page.

And spread the word to those who are too quick to dismiss "outdated" radio! We are proud to join hands with our fellow audiophiles who celebrate the power and popularity of radio.

A leader in the field of communication for development!

FRI is proud to share that our work has been recognized with a prestigious international award! Our "Radio for farmer value chain development" project has won a project prize from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). This award recognizes our innovative and impactful use of radio and information & communication technologies to support farmers.

FRI is committed to supporting women in all aspects of our work

The women we work with — farmers, broadcasters and staff — face a variety of challenges. Many women farmers do not have access to cell phones or radios; others are prevented from owning land or talking to male extension workers. Women broadcasters may face discrimination at work or in the field.

Farm Radio International is committed to promoting women in all aspects of our work. We have launched a new gender policy, committing to:

- respond to the information needs of women and men farmers, including equal representation and respect in agricultural production and rural development;
- develop the capacity of rural radio stations and broadcasters to facilitate dialogue about gender equality; produce programs to respond to the needs and give voice to women and men;
- encourage a positive working environment at radio stations that supports women;
- facilitate access to radio listening and participation by women farmers;
- create a working environment at our offices to promote gender equality.

Learn more on our website:

bit.ly/genderequalitypolicy



Staff Profile: Viola Nuwaha

Taking the field of technology by storm

Viola Nuwaha was 10 years old when she first sat down in front of a computer. She was visiting her mother's office and sat down to play so she didn't interrupt her. Viola still plays around with computers, but has advanced beyond simple games to pass the time.

Viola is our radio and ICT development officer in Uganda, where she works with broadcasters to combine radio with the latest technologies, pushing radio into a two-way communication medium. This can mean incorporating mobile polling, Beep4Weather or brainstorming new innovations for radio.

Viola's interest in computers persists in her free time too. She occasionally participates in hackathons, during which



Sakina Majawa Kaima, radio broadcaster with Malawi's Chanco Radio.

Meet Malawian broadcaster

Sakina Majawa Kaima

Sakina Majawa Kaima is an experienced farm radio broadcaster presently hosting two shows on Malawi's Chanco Radio. These shows address two important issues facing farmers: soil fertility and climate change.

Chonde mnthaka (Retaining soil fertility) promotes improved soil fertility, featuring tips on the value of growing legumes, which add nutrients to the soil, practicing crop rotation and using manure wisely.

Her other program is *Mavuto a Kusintha kwa Nyengo (Effects of climate change)*, which discusses conservation agriculture



Viola Nuwaha, FRI's radio and ICT officer in Uganda.

Barza Wire: Telling the small-scale farmer's story

Every week, radio broadcasters across Africa receive stories about farmers straight to their email inbox courtesy of Farm Radio Weekly, FRI's unique news service. This year, the service was re-named Barza Wire, bringing it under the banner of Barza, FRI's online social community for broadcasters.

Barza Wire produces 40 original stories each year covering issues affecting small-scale farmers. These stories are packaged with news on farming issues from across Africa and shared with more than 2,000 radio broadcasters.

This unique service ensures broadcasters have the latest news, information and original stories sharing farmers' voices, which broadcasters can share with their small-scale farming audience.



she helps to develop new and useful computer programs.

Attracting women to the field of technology is difficult, as it is still widely seen as an occupation for men. Yet it was the popular television show *24* that Viola says first showed her the power of technology. "I just loved that the guy behind the computer had the power and yet all he did was sit at his computer," she said.

Viola studied computer science in university and then worked for Women in Technology Uganda, whose offices were at Hive Co-lab, an incubation space that gave Viola contact with the tech community. Through Hive Co-lab, Viola organized and participated in hackathons. She also had the opportunity to mentor younger programmers just entering the field of computers.

"I look at it as something anyone can do, you just have to set your mind to it," she said of the technology field. "I don't focus on it as being mostly men."

and other ways of retaining soil moisture while preparing land for planting.

Sakina is in close contact with her small-scale farming audience, so she understands their information needs.

"The audience listens to the programs in community listening groups. These were set up by the radio station so that the farmers can give us feedback on the programs, so that we can continually improve the content," she said.

She is also constantly working to improve her own skills as a broadcaster. Sakina was one of the 65 broadcasters who completed our Farmer program e-course in December. Participants learned about storytelling, listening to their audiences and shaping episodes around major issues

affecting their communities.

Broadcasters were also introduced to FRI's VOICE standards, which ask that all broadcasts emphasize the value of farmers, provide opportunities for farmers to speak and be heard, offer informative and relevant information, are aired consistently and are entertaining.

Sakina says she will keep these lessons in mind as she plans upcoming episodes of her radio programs. "The e-learning course will help me improve my productions, as I will concentrate on applying the VOICE standards and being gender-aware," said Sakina.

On the air with important information about ... guinea fowl



Theodora Kubaje (left) and her daughter-in-law feed their guinea fowl.

Guinea fowl are a popular livestock in northern Ghana, where about 90 per cent of families keep a small brood. Guinea fowl are an important source of protein, or can be an additional source of income if sold when times are tough.

Yet farmers across Upper East Region of Ghana are facing challenges such as low hatch rates, high mortality rates and a lack of information about the right feed to use. On average, 70 per cent of keets, baby guinea fowl, do not survive.

We have partnered with local radio stations to address these challenges in the guinea fowl value chain and farmers are excited.

"A radio program that will educate us on these challenges will help solve food security and increase family income for me and my

fellow farmers," said Theodora Kubaje, a farmer from Paga, Ghana.

This radio program is the second phase of a successful project that has already reached 2.5 million farmers in Malawi and Tanzania. The "Radio for farmer value chain development" project has provided farmers with valuable information on local value chains: groundnuts (peanuts) in Malawi and cassava in Tanzania.

This project is made possible with funding from the Government of Canada, but matching support is needed from FRI's supporters in order to realize phase two: radio programs about guinea fowl and cowpea value chains in Ghana and radio programs about the legume value chain in Mali.

Using radio to tackle youth issues

At the launch of the second season of *Nkhawa Njee*, hundreds of young people gather in Mchingi, Malawi, where they yell "Nkhawa Njee! Yonse Bo!" (Depression Free! Life is Cool!) in a boisterous call and response initiated by popular radio host, The Diktator. The radio program is one of the most popular in Malawi, reaching an estimated 500,000 youth each week.

Nkhawa Njee, along with *Positive Mood* airing in Tanzania, are produced as part of the "Integrated youth mental health" project, funded by Grand Challenges Canada. The Mental Health on Air radio programs include a drama with characters tackling the challenges of adolescence: break-ups, sex, drugs, pressures to succeed and value clashes. On-air discussions following the drama allow youth to share their own views.

"I think the program is really cool. We are the youth and they talk about how we live our life and how we can make it better," said Achmed, a 17-year-old who participates in one of the radio listening clubs established as part of the program.

The project, which brings together FRI, TeenMentalHealth.org, Farm Radio Trust in Malawi and WUSC, has also trained teachers and primary health care workers to support the mental health of youth, ensuring communities, like Mchingi, have the resources to keep farming families healthy.



Supporting broadcasters in developing countries to strengthen small-scale farming and rural communities.

Design: Warren Chang | **Contributors:** Kevin Perkins, Kathryn Burnham and Brenda Jackson

Farm Radio International

1404 Scott Street | Ottawa, Ontario | K1Y 4M8

Tel: 613-761-3650 | Fax: 613-798-0990

Toll-free: 1-888-773-7717

Email: info@farmradio.org | www.farmradio.org

Donate online at farmradio.org

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