



FARM RADIO AND THE FOOD CRISIS

Some 20 km outside of Douala, the capital of Cameroon, Marie Gisèle Sintcheu grows maize and cassava. The farmer owns only a small parcel of land, but it is very fertile. She is able to produce enough of the staple foods to feed her family and, with the right kind of support, she could produce more.

The recent upsurge in food prices has created a global crisis. As a result, Ms. Sintcheu and millions of other small-scale farmers across Africa and around the world have become the focus of global leaders' attention.

The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the global agency tasked with defeating hunger, hosted a conference on world food security in early June of this year, and shone the spotlight on small-scale farmers. Meanwhile, recent media reports have noted that neglect of small-scale farmers has led to a reduction in the annual growth of cereal crop production in developing countries.

Farm Radio International has always believed in small-scale farmers. They have the ability to feed their families, communities and countries. With the right resources, their hard work on the farm can translate into food security, better health, and a decent livelihood.

Since 1979, Farm Radio International has worked to support small-scale farmers, helping to connect them with information they need to overcome challenges, and produce food for both their family and the market. Often the answer is in the next community – or in a neighbouring country where farmers work in similar conditions. For this reason we work with African farmers, researchers and journalists to produce radio scripts, information packages and news stories that are shared with our network of over 300 radio African radio organizations, and, from there, adapted and broadcast to millions of farmers.

Farm Radio International helps farmers to make the most out of the resources at their disposal. For example, a recent script carried information about how a locally-grown pepper can be used to protect a farmers' harvest of rice from pest damage. Last month, a news story about farmers in Burundi using rice bran, a byproduct of rice threshing, as a substitute for expensive chemical fertilizers was carried in our news bulletin, Farm Radio Weekly. These and other low-cost sustainable solutions can help small-scale farmers increase and diversify their production, improving their lives and contributing to global food security.

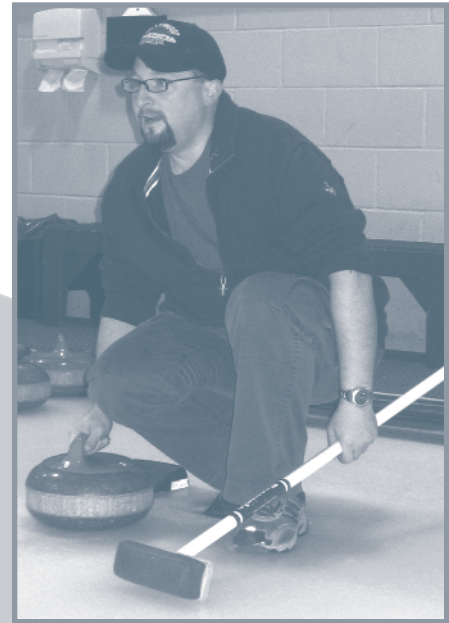


Bonspiel Update

Curling bonspiels are a great way for people of all ages and skill levels to get together with friends and family for a day of fun. As Farm Radio International supporter Mark Elliot has shown, holding a bonspiel or "Funspiel" can also be a terrific way to raise funds to help radio broadcasters serve African farmers.

We are happy to announce that there will be a bonspiel held in Ottawa to benefit Farm Radio on **Saturday, November 15th** from 10 am until 2 pm at the Rideau Curling Club. If you are interested in participating, please contact Brenda Jackson at 613-761-3646 or brenda@farmradio.org.

If you are inspired to run a bonspiel in your neighbourhood or town, we would be happy to assist you! Please visit our website under "Getting Involved" for more details.



Circle of Producers

Farm Radio International's work has been made possible by the support of thousands of Canadians. Recently, we created the *Circle of Producers* to pay special tribute to those who have been especially loyal and generous over the years.

The word "Producers" was chosen because it refers both to the farmers who grow crops and raise livestock to feed the planet, and to radio broadcasters

in Canada and Africa, who offer powerful radio shows that meet the information needs of their listeners. Farm Radio International supporters who, over the years, have donated over \$1,000 cumulatively, are also producers – enabling us to create services that help African broadcasters meet the needs of smallholder farmers.

To find out how YOU can become a member of our Circle of Producers, please contact Brenda Jackson at brenda@farmradio.org or 613-761-3646.

Farm Radio International: A New Name, a New Website – The Same Mission

The news is out: Developing Countries Farm Radio Network has been re-named Farm Radio International. We have received positive feedback from many of our supporters and partners, all of whom feel that the new name sounds better and is much easier to use and remember. To accompany our name announcement, we launched a new and improved website. Along with its updated look and feel, we have made some changes to the way the site is structured. There are now two linked sites – one specifically for radio broadcasters and producers, and another providing general information to supporters and volunteers in Canada. The former gives our radio partners quick access to our scripts, Voices newsletter, Farm Radio Weekly, broadcaster resources and project information. The latter site provides visitors with information about, for example, how to get involved as a volunteer or donate. The sites are linked so that visitors can easily flip back and forth from one to another, encouraging all visitors to take a look at some scripts or find out how to donate.

We would love for you to pay a visit to our new website and let us know what you think. We always appreciate and value your comments. www.farmradio.org



Volunteers Profile

Seven People Volunteer Their Time and Expertise to Judge Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Climate Change Adaptation Strategies

In October 2007, Farm Radio International, in collaboration with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), launched a radio scriptwriting competition for African radio organizations on the subject of Climate Change Adaptation Strategies.



Venus Easwaran Jennings

Like most activities of Farm Radio International, the scriptwriting competition benefited from the participation of volunteers. We extend our thanks to the 7 individuals who volunteered hours of their time to judge the 51 script entries we received from 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Their knowledge and feedback was extremely valuable and will help the participants improve their ability to produce excellent radio scripts.

For more information about the winners of the script competition, please stay tuned for the fall issue of Network News or visit the script competition website at www.scriptcompetition.net.

The 7 judges included:

Nathalie Beaulieu joined the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in September 2006 and is based at the centre's West and Central Africa Office (WARO) in Dakar, Senegal. She is a program officer with the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA) program.

Kelvin Chibomba is the Radio Editor for OneWorld Radio Africa, a not-for-profit organization (NGO), whose secretariat is housed in Lusaka, Zambia. One World Africa was founded to promote sustainable development and human dignity across the African continent.

Anna Egan is managing editor of radio and print journalism for Panos London. Since 2004, she has worked with journalists from over 20 countries to produce features and news stories on public health, the environment, agriculture, and the information society.

Venus Easwaran Jennings is a Communication and Information Program Specialist, working for the Media Capacity Building Section at the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Andreas Mandler is a social scientist, working with GTZ and FAO in the field of Communication for Development and Rural Radio. The German Organization for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) is a knowledge organization dedicated to good communication practice.

Mr. Traoré Sayouba currently produces the show Le Coq Chante. This production is heard on the Africa Network of Radio France Internationale (RFI) and is also included in the broadcast Élan, RFI's global network.

Mr. Leon van den Boogerd works at the Radio Netherlands Training Centre (RNTC www.rntc.nl) and is in charge of a large capacity building program of 68 community radio stations in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Senegal, Guinea and Guinea Bissau.

Partner's Profile

Dzimwe Community Radio – 93.1 FM

Dzimwe Community Radio is based in Mangochi in the southern region of Malawi. It is an important partner in Farm Radio International's **African Farm Radio Research Initiative**. The station was established in 1998 to provide a voice to rural communities. Funded by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Dzimwe aims to encourage development by facilitating dialogue on community needs and issues in order for people to identify appropriate solutions. Several of the issues the radio station addresses are of particular interest to women, including health, violence against women and girls, income generation activities such as farming, sustainable natural resources management, and safe motherhood. The station has formed and works with 15 "radio listening clubs". These clubs consist of small groups of villagers who come together to listen to programs, comment on them, and record their own stories and observations for broadcast by the radio station.

Dzimwe Community Radio covers a radius of 150 km, serving communities in almost the entire District of Mangochi and parts of Ntcheu, Dedza and Balaka Districts. Dzimwe Community Radio broadcasts its programs from 5:55am to 10:00pm daily.

Hilda Jambo is manager of Dzimwe Community Radio. She runs the station with the support of an assistant supervisor and a Board of Directors made up of community representatives. Dzimwe benefits from the input of many volunteers including three program producers, eight presenters and announcers, and various support staff.

Food Security Radio Programming at Dzimwe Community Radio

The majority of people reached by Dzimwe Community Radio rely on farming and/or fishing for their livelihoods. Crops grown in the area include maize, groundnuts, millet, sweet potatoes, cassava, cotton, tobacco, vegetables and fruit. Agriculture programs, therefore, are featured strongly in the broadcasts of Dzimwe Community Radio. **Ulimi Wokhazikika** (Sustainable Agriculture) airs Monday and Thursday between 14:00 and 14:30. The program promotes sustainable smallholder farming and agroforestry practices and food security through dramas, poems, documentaries and interviews. **Tisodze** (Fisheries Conservation) airs Tuesday and Saturday from 10:30 to 11:00am. The program aims to conserve Malawi's freshwater fishery by making the community aware of legal and illegal fishing practices. **Zachilengedwe** (Natural Resource Utilization and Conservation) is a program aimed at encouraging sustainable management of resources, including processing of indigenous fruit trees and other wild resources into valuable products. The program has assisted people to introduce guinea fowl rearing, goat rearing, beekeeping and baobab, tamarind and jujube fruit tree juice processing.

Information Sources

Chapota, Rex (2007) " Assessment of radio stations: The case of AFRI Malawi." Malawi: African Farm Radio Research Initiative (AFRI).

Manyozo, Linje (2007) "Knowledge Gaps in the Effectiveness of Farm Radio In Africa." Ottawa: African Farm Radio Research Initiative (AFRI).



Dr. Spider hosts a radio show at Dzimwe Community Radio.



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

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