



SHARING IDEAS, GROWING SOLUTIONS.



The newsletter for
partners of
Developing
Countries Farm
Radio Network

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Food and nutrition education plays a vital role in promoting good health and food security

Kamari has just given birth to her third child, a girl named Saba. Little Saba weighs much less than a healthy baby born at full term. Kamari did not eat enough, or the right kinds of foods, during her pregnancy. Food was scarce while Kamari was pregnant, and she has a husband and two sons to feed. As well, Kamari worked hard during her pregnancy — tending the fields, collecting fuel wood, fetching water, preparing meals, and looking after the children. She had little time to worry about herself, or about the baby she was carrying. Saba is born undernourished. She is at risk of serious illness and death from infections such as pneumonia and diarrhea, as well as poor growth and mental development.

Kamari and Saba are not real people, but their circumstances are typical of millions of women and children around the world. Thirty million infants like Saba are born each year in developing countries due to poor nutrition during their mother's pregnancy. They are only one consequence of hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity.

All individuals and families have the right to be free from hunger — to secure the food they need for active and healthy lives. This fundamental right has been recognized since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and was reinforced at the recent World Food Summit held in

Rome in June 2002 where representatives from 185 countries and the European Community pledged their commitment “to achieving food security for all and to an on-going effort to eradicate hunger in all countries.” At the original World Food Summit in 1996, the international community pledged to cut the number of hungry people to about 400 million by 2015. Progress towards that goal has been slow and about 777 million people still do not have access to adequate food supplies.

The consequences of hunger and malnutrition are serious for every member in a family. A healthy adult who eats a nutritious diet is likely to be more productive both on the

Food security: When people have access to safe and nutritious food in adequate quantities to meet their dietary needs and lead an active life.



Food insecurity: When people live with hunger and fear of starvation.

To be food secure, households need:

- 1. sufficient resources to produce and/or purchase adequate food
- 2. the understanding of what constitutes an appropriate diet for health
- 3. the skills and motivation to make sound choices on family care and feeding practices.

farm and in the labour market than a person whose diet is nutritionally inadequate. Well-nourished infants and young children grow better, perform better in school, and are less likely to suffer from malnutrition-related illnesses, some of which can lead to death, or to develop chronic diseases when they are adults.

(continued on page 4)



Our partners help shape our program

The results are in from the comprehensive survey that we undertook this year. In January, we surveyed over 400 of our radio partners in order to learn more about them and their work. The primary goal of collecting partner data is to evaluate how well we are meeting our partners' needs. This information will help to guide the development of our program in the future.

Thank you to everyone who responded and returned the survey. We are still analyzing the results, but would like to share a brief overview of some of the responses. Overall response rate was 16% (70 surveys returned) — highest from our partners in Africa (22%), followed by the Americas (12%) and Asia (10%).

Survey results show high satisfaction with our scripts. On average, respondents used 69% of scripts produced in the previous year (75% of scripts with a health theme). Forty-six percent of scripts were ranked "good" and 28.6% were ranked "excellent."

Regular post is still the preferred method of delivery for our script packages. Only nine percent of all respondents indicated that they prefer to receive scripts by e-mail. No one said they download scripts directly from our website, and less than one third have visited our website.

We also learned about our partners' programs — three quarters broadcast farm radio programs weekly; the remaining quarter broadcast daily shows. Scripts on sustainable agriculture, health and the environment are still of greatest interest, while scripts about global issues were ranked as the lowest priority for our partners. Partners were also asked to identify other subject areas that they felt were of importance. Local traditions, indigenous knowledge and natural medicine are additional areas of interest for partners in both Africa and the Americas. Suggestions received from the partners in Asia who responded include technology and post harvest losses.

We are truly grateful for the responses to our survey. One of the things we have learned as a result of analyzing this feedback is that proper survey design takes considerable skill. We are still beginners in this process, but we are learning. In the meantime, this survey has enabled us to gather information that will be useful as we plan how we can improve the services we provide our partners. This is an ongoing process.

As we look ahead, we will continue to explore options for involving radio partners in planning and contributing to programs. As always, we welcome your ideas about how to accomplish this challenging objective.

Partner to partner ...

Farm Radio Network partner Canal Educatif — Francophone (French-speaking Education Channel) recently launched an experimental satellite radio project with the support of l'Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie. They are inviting other Network partners to submit audio programs for broadcast that are based on previously published Farm Radio Network scripts.



Canal Educatif Francophone is dedicated to education on the African continent, in the Near-East and in the Middle-East. The station's programs are broadcast on the Afristar satellite of WorldSpace Corporation and are accessible to the general public (see *Voices*, January 2002, for information on WorldSpace or visit www.worldspace.org).

Interested radio stations are invited to contact: M. Oussouf Diagola, Canal EF, Agence Intergouvernementale de la francophonie, 13, Quai André Citroën 75015 Paris. Tel: (33)1 44 373300, Fax: (33)1 44 373334

E-mail: oussouf.diagola@francophonie.org
URL: <http://canalef.francophonie.org>

A call for contributions



What strategies allow farmers to begin producing food as quickly as possible after a war? How can rural people resolve conflict in their communities? What are the most effective ways for people living in refugee communities to prevent the spread of disease? The theme of one of our upcoming packages is **Conflict, conflict resolution and reconstruction**. We would like to include your radio scripts. Please send your contributions by February 15, 2003, to: Jennifer Pittet, Script Editor, at Farm Radio Network or by E-mail to jpittet@farmradio.org.



Nutrition and health information sources

Publications



HIV/AIDS: A Guide for Nutrition, Care and Support

This guide provides information on diet and care practices for people coping with AIDS. Includes basic facts about nutrition and HIV/AIDS; food management for adults living with AIDS; and nutrition and care recommendations for infants and children. Available in English and French from: Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) Project, 1825 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC, USA 20009-5721. Tel: 202-884-8000, Fax 202-884-8432, E-mail: fanta@aed.org Also available on line at: <http://www.fantaproject.org/downloads/> Many other nutrition-related titles are also available in both English and French.

Feeding minds, fighting hunger: a world free from hunger

An educational initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations designed to raise awareness of hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity. Includes material, model lesson plans and activities on hunger and malnutrition. Available in booklet form and on CD Rom from: FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, I-00100 Rome, Italy, Tel.: +39.06.57051, Fax: +39.06.5705-3152 URL: <http://www.fao.org> (FAO resources are published in English, French and Spanish).

Child Health Dialogue A quarterly newsletter providing information on child health and disease prevention with focus on five childhood diseases: diarrhea, malaria, malnutrition, acute respiratory infections, and measles. Available in English as well as 10 other languages free of charge to readers in developing countries from: Healthlink Worldwide, Farringdon Point, 29-35 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3JB, UK. Tel: 44 171 242 0606, Fax: 44 171 242 0041. E-mail: publications@healthlink.org.uk URL: <http://www.healthlink.org.uk> Available online at <http://www.healthlink.org.uk/PDFnotes.html>

Fiji Food & Nutrition Newsletter Quarterly publication of the National Food and Nutrition Centre (NFNC) provides practical information on food and nutrition-related activities. Also available free of charge from NFNC: "Healthy Eating for Active Living," a pamphlet targeting obesity. Both are published in English and available from NFNC, PO Box 2450, Government Buildings, Suva, FIJI. Tel: 313055, Fax: 4-4032, E-mail: nfnc@is.com

Organizations



Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) CFNI's goal is to attain food security and achieve optimal nutritional health for all peoples of the Caribbean. Their library has over 4,000 volumes and a serial collection of over 100 titles, including their newsletter, *Nyam News*. For a list of available publications or to receive *Nyam News* contact: CFNI, PO Box 140, Kingston 7, Jamaica, WI.

Agromisa Foundation A Dutch non-profit NGO whose aim is to strengthen the economic and social position of rural populations in the south by providing information and advice on small-scale, sustainable agriculture and related topics. Agromisa publishes a quarterly newsletter in English (free of charge) as well as a series of low-cost booklets in co-operation with CTA (Centre Technique de Coopération Agricole et Rurale). Titles are available in English and French (some in Portuguese and Spanish) on a variety of topics. For more information or to receive a list of publications contact: The Agromisa Foundation, PO Box 41, 6700 AA Wageningen, The Netherlands. Fax: 31 317 419178, E-mail: agromisa@agromisa.org URL: <http://www.agromisa.org>

Radio Resources



Soul City Institute of Health & Development Communication

Soul City is a multi-media health project that uses drama and entertainment for health promotion and development in the South African region. The Soul City project includes a daily radio drama; booklets on health topics covered in the broadcast media; adult education and youth life skills materials; and a prime time television series. Education packages are available in English and many African languages. Contact: Soul City, 2nd Floor Park Terras, 33 Princess of Wales Terrace, Parktown, South Africa. Tel: (2711) 643-5852, Fax: (2711) 643-6253, E-mail: soulcity@soulcity.org.za URL: <http://www.soulcity.org.za/>

OneWorld's AIDS Radio Network OneWorld is an international network of over 1000 partner organizations using the internet to promote human rights and sustainable development. Their AIDS Radio Network offers services and networking for broadcasters and organizations interested in using radio to promote awareness and public education on HIV and AIDS. The Network offers access to free audio content for broadcast in many different languages as well as a platform for free exchange of programs between stations and organizations around the world. OneWorld also offers online training resources for broadcasters. Membership is free. Contact: AIDS Radio Network, Siviwe Minyi, Editor, 14 Poplar Avenue, Thornton, Cape 7460, South Africa. Tel: 27 21 534-2235. E-mail: siviwe.minyi@oneworld.net URL: <http://aidsradio.oneworld.net/>

Neighborhood radio production. A 16-page practical guide to community radio production/broadcasting and communication techniques. Contact: Louie Tabing, Project Manager, Tambuli Community Radio Project, 5th Floor, UP-ISSI Bldg., UP Campus, Diliman 1101 Quezon City Philippines. Fax: +(632) 920 6939, Tel: +(632) 920 6940, E-mail: tabingln@philonline.com.ph URL: <http://www.tambuli.org.ph>



How can radio broadcasters help their listeners to practise good nutrition?

Ensuring food security is an international, national, regional, community and household responsibility. At the community and household level, rural radio broadcasters have an important role to play. For the more than two billion men and women who live in rural areas of developing countries, radio is still the most popular, the most economic and the most accessible means of communication.

You can inform your listeners about how to reduce hunger and malnutrition by promoting appropriate diets and healthy lifestyles in your radio programs. Farmers can learn how to make the best use of local foods and to practise healthy eating patterns. They need to be advised, for example, that it is possible to eat enough food and yet still have serious diet-related vitamin and mineral deficiencies.

Simple, low-cost solutions for improving nutrition and health are highlighted in this package. Scripts provide information about what is necessary for a well-balanced diet — one that includes carbohydrates, protein, vitamins and minerals. They explore growing a variety of foods as a strategy for maintaining good family nutrition. A varied diet that includes all essential nutrients is necessary for good health. The nutritional value of home gardens and traditional foods is emphasized in several scripts. Home gardens are diverse, flexible, and, once established, easy to manage. Traditional foods are often inexpensive and very nutritious.



There are many other important topics for radio programs that promote nutrition and health with the ultimate goals of reducing hunger and achieving food security. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Promote breast-feeding as a way to prevent vitamin A deficiency in infants and young children;
- Prevent pre-birth growth retardation and the serious consequences for infants by emphasizing the importance of a healthy diet for pregnant women;
- Promote drying methods and other ways of food processing that minimize nutrient loss in foods and allow for a nutritious and varied diet throughout the year;
- Emphasize the importance of small-scale technologies such as water harvesting to increase crop production;
- Focus on food from other small-scale enterprises including small livestock and poultry.

Whatever the topic of your radio show, try to create and develop programs that emphasize the important role that women play. Women produce and prepare much of the world's food yet lack access to fundamental tools of food production — land, credit, training and decision-making power. Empowering women and working to ensure they have full human rights is one of the most important ways to ensure proper nutrition, good health for children and food security.

Hunger is not a simple problem. It is usually the result of a deeper crisis — the economic condition of a family or village, such as low employment or savings; degraded land that is vulnerable to nature's forces; or a lack of nutritional balance. Food may even be plentiful, but divided unequally



Developing
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Radio Network

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

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within and among families. The key to ending hunger is in educating those who are hungry to address the root causes. Radio programs that empower people and communities to take action result in not just more food, but also in a more sustainable future — a future where mothers like Kamari and their babies will be well-nourished.

Sources

Food for Thought, World Neighbors, <http://www.wn.org/WorldFoodDay.asp>
World Food Summit: Five Years Later, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/english/index.html>

