



# IMPROVING LIVES

The catalytic power of community radio  
for transformative change

**IMPROVING LIVES**

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## Mozambique Media Strengthening Program



The Mozambique Media Strengthening Program (MSP) is a five-year, ten-million dollar capacity building and technical assistance program for the Mozambican media sector, funded by the U.S. Government through its Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by IREX.

The MSP community radio component consists of a six-person team of IREX program staff and covers the four northern provinces of the country. The team works out of a regional sub-office in Nampula, organizing capacity building activities and coordinating a network of assistant trainers and gender focal points.



## Where we work, what we do and how it impacts people



The main road between Gurue, Zambezia, and Cuamba, Niassa.

Covering an area the size of California (or more than all of Italy), the six-person IREX Nampula community radio team works with 32 radio stations in the four northern provinces of Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Niassa and Zambezia. The team organizes thematic trainings in Nampula and other key locations, works through a network of assistants trainers and gender focal points, coordinates and collaborates with other partners (such as CAICC, Dialogo and UNICEF) and makes field visits for mentorship and monitoring purposes.

### Our stories

- Civic Engagement & Accountability
- Gender Based Violence
- Early Marriage & Pregnancy
- Family Reconciliation
- Children & Youth
- People Living With HIV
- Education, Health & Nutrition
- Emergencies



*Sister Idalina of Nova Radio Paz in Quelimane, Zambezia, discussing the progress of repair work with a road maintenance crew.*

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY



## First Person: Idalina

When a bridge in a neighborhood on the periphery of Quelimane was damaged by floods, Nova Radio Paz brought attention to the danger posed to people crossing the unsafe structure. Children attending a primary school on the other side of the river would have to traverse a temporary metal structure to make their way to and from school every day. Through programs like "Citizen's voice" (A voz da cidadã) and "Word to the municipality" (A palavra ao município), Sister Idalina and other staff at this Catholic radio station received calls from concerned listeners and channeled the complaints to the authorities. On other occasions, the municipality has prioritized the repair of roads and failing structures, removal of garbage, drainage of stagnant water and other public health hazards as a result of the civic engagement facilitated by the radio station. During elections, the radio station reported on campaigns and provided objective information about what the authorities had accomplished.

*Children crossing an unsafe bridge on the way home from school. The bridge had been damaged in a flood, but is being repaired after pressure from the community radio station.*

Sister Idalina, a Catholic nun who has worked with Nova Radio Paz for sixteen years, is well known in the many neighborhoods of Quelimane. "Our job is to give a voice to people and help them communicate their concerns," says Sister Idalina. "Sometimes that is not popular, but the authorities listen to what the community radio has to say". Sister Idalina has found the authorities to be open and receptive to engaging with listeners on issues of public concern. "Many of the streets were full of garbage, for example, but they were cleaned up after we drew attention to the issue."

**"The authorities listen to what the community radio has to say."**

## FOCUS ON: Leadership

In February 2016, IREX held a one-week leadership conference for 27 participating community radio coordinators. IREX works systematically to strengthen the leadership and management capabilities of these coordinators and other community radio staff members and volunteers. Capacity building efforts include the development of business strategies and marketing plans and looks at organizational challenges and opportunities. The focus on leadership is also about nurturing the development of a spirit of entrepreneurship, drive and a positive approach to human resource management. Through seminars and individualized training opportunities, coordinators learn to think about the needs of their staff and encourage team spirit. After attending the

leadership conference in Nampula, Stivem Mapira, coordinator of RC Cuamba, started defining the tasks of his staff in greater detail and developed job descriptions for each position, thus clarifying roles and responsibilities. As a result, duplication of tasks and conflicts in the workplace practically disappeared. Stivem also started posting the station's bank statements on the bulletin board to promote full financial transparency between the radio and its community. A key leadership objective for IREX is to increase the recruitment and retention of women working in the radios, and this is pursued through the introduction of women friendly workplace policies, such as flexible working hours, and the nurturing of a network of gender focal points in the radio stations.



*Sister Idalina (right) has participated in several MSP management trainings and has sought to apply the lessons learnt to Nova Radio Paz.*



*Pastor Manteiga Bulaisse from Gurue, Zambia, addresses a range of social issues through his programs on the community radio.*

## **GENDER BASED VIOLENCE**



## First Person: Joana

When he was drunk, Joana's husband Artur would often beat her and leave her outside in the cold at night without any clothes to wear. Sometimes he would hit her in front of their young children. Through a community radio program on domestic violence facilitated by pastor Manteiga Bulaisse, Joana learnt that she could go to the police, which she did. According to Joana, there is much less violence now, because if a husband beats his wife, someone will come to investigate and there will be consequences for him. Occasionally a wife may beat her husband, and these cases are also investigated. Artur is grateful to the radio, which taught him that there are alternatives to violence, such as consulting with the neighborhood elders. The radio provided him information on how to deal with issues that he previously addressed through violence. Artur and Joana are raising four children and haven't had an episode of domestic violence for six years.

*Artur Joaquim Pedro and his wife Joana Napana credit the community radio with helping them overcome a pattern of domestic violence.*

"Much has changed," says Joana. "If there is violence now, we know what to do and who to contact." According to Joana, the community radio brings authority to an issue like domestic violence. "People listen to the radio programs, but they also really listen because they see the radio as a voice of authority." Joana says that parents beat their children less as well these days. "Parents thought beating a child was okay, that it was the only way to educate the child, but now we know better." She is grateful that they can discuss these issues on the radio and learn how to deal with them in an informed and constructive manner.

**"If there is violence now, we know what to do and who to contact."**

## FOCUS ON: Network of gender focal points

In close collaboration with other IREX staff members, the MSP community radio team has helped nurture a network of 25 gender focal points at the various community radio stations. The work with the network has focused on GBV training, gender reporting and analysis of gender in the media and on strengthening the bonds of collaboration and friendship between the focal points, so that they may support and help each other in their local activities. Trainings have been held in Maputo, Quelimane, and Nampula. In 2015, IREX met with Civil Society Organizations to discuss strategies to increase gender content in the media and the role of community radios in raising gender awareness within their broadcast range.

The participants concluded that the radio stations have a crucial role in informing women (and men) about rights, laws and relevant services, such as referral services for victims of violence. In Gurue, a group of women journalists met over five days to exchange practical experiences around their presence in the media. The women consulted on how to increase the reporting on GBV and gender issues. The work is also supported by the production by IREX of an annual report on gender in the media, as well as a recently published guide to best practices in GBV reporting. In addition to gender trainings, IREX has carried out several seminars on related topics such as trafficking in persons and early marriage.



*Members of the network of gender focal points in the community radios work at the local level with local cases.*



*Ana Paulo was 13 when she became pregnant and was rejected by her family as a consequence.*

## **EARLY MARRIAGE & PREGNANCY**



## First Person: Ana

Some 48 per cent of girls in Mozambique are married by the age of 18, either formally or through traditional marriage, and some 14 per cent are married by the age of 15, even though this is below the legal age of consent. Early marriage is often accompanied by early pregnancy, which carries with it increased health risks for both mother and child. In Macomia, a district in the northern province of Cabo Delgado that also includes part of the Quirimbas National Park, Ana Paulo became pregnant at the age of 13. The father refused to acknowledge the child, and her parents expelled her from the home and rejected her and the child. Her grandmother took her in, however, and Ana started learning about computers at the local community radio station, where she also started producing content about pregnancy and women's health. She has now finished 12th grade and works at the radio station.

*Ana Paulo, with her young child, lives in Macomia, Cabo Delgado. She was rejected by her family when she became pregnant.*

"With the help of the program 'Woman's Voice', my self-esteem increased," says Ana. The radio program is broadcast by the Macomia community radio station on a weekly basis. "[Listening to the radio] helped me start my own business and return to school after I gave birth," she explains. Ana is a very determined person. "I had an early pregnancy, but that doesn't mean I am a worthless person," she says. "I am going to continue to study."

**"I had an early pregnancy, but that doesn't mean I am a worthless person."**

## FOCUS ON: Mentorship and local capacity

Community radios in northern Mozambique differ significantly in their access to physical facilities, equipment and other resources. While some stations are well-equipped, others are barely scraping by and operate on a shoestring budget. By customizing and individualizing training at the level of the community radio, IREX and its partner CAICC can work more effectively to address the specific needs of each station. The role of MSP assistant trainers is to provide continued training on content production and to conduct regular refreshment journalism trainings to new volunteers in their radios. They also sometimes co-facilitate IREX activities (such as the Adobe Audition trainings) in order to enhance their professional practice as trainers.

The assistant trainers use Whatsapp to discuss challenges and share these on a group list, where all the trainers can comment. IREX currently sponsors a group of nine assistant trainers. This type of cross-station collaboration has revolutionized the effectiveness of support and has also made it much easier for people to seek help when needed. When a person is asking for help, he or she is essentially asking a peer or a friend, not a distant expert. When an IREX staff member visits a station, he or she shares experiences and good practices and ensures that lessons learnt are circulated. IREX staff members know the local conditions and challenges well and are therefore able to work with the assistant trainers and respond effectively to local needs.



*Community radio reporter Matilde Tadeu at RC Macomia is an active and effective member of the network of gender focal points.*



*Leonardo Carmona João surveying the tea fields characteristic of his native Gurue. He was estranged from and later reconciled with his wife of four decades with the help of the community radio.*

## FAMILY RECONCILIATION



## First Person: Carmona

Maintaining family cohesion and unity is often a problem in both rural and urban communities in Mozambique. Infidelity challenges the established patterns of community life and the social fabric the communities are built on. A few years ago, Carmona strayed from his marriage and was separated from Rosalina, his wife, who he had married in 1971. After a period of time, he realized the follies of his ways and decided to return to Rosalina. Through the community radio, Carmona, who listens to his local radio station every day and sometimes talks on air as well, learnt that his behavior had negative consequences for the people close to him and decided to change his behavior. When he later shared his own story of reconciliation in a radio program, some 18 other couples in his local neighborhood were also moved to eventually reconcile and reunite. Some of these couples shared their stories on air as well.

*Carmona and his wife Rosalina outside their house.  
They have been married for 45 years.*

"When we got married in 1971, my wife was nicely plump and beautiful. Now she is just beautiful," says Carmona with a smile. "When there are problems in the family, we have many people we can talk to: the elders, the church or the radio." According to Carmona, the power of the community radio lies in providing alternatives to what people think they know or are used to doing. "The radio makes us think about things in ways we hadn't thought about them before," says Carmona, who gives credit to the community radio for saving his marriage.

**"The radio makes us think about things in ways we hadn't thought about them before."**

## FOCUS ON: Social media

MSP has focused heavily on the development of community radio social media capabilities through trainings and supporting efforts. A series of trainings has enhanced the use of social media for audience engagement and communication purposes. All MSP partner stations now have active Facebook pages. At RC Ile in Zambia, the person responsible for social media has also created a web site and made the radio broadcasts available over the internet, thus allowing people with internet access to listen to the programs outside the regular broadcast cycle. To facilitate greater use of internet tools, IREX has provided computers, routers and internet connection to 25 radio stations.

At the same time, members of the community radios communicate actively in Whatsapp groups, thus sharing ideas, concerns, problems and solutions in an informal, but highly effective manner. The use of social media is also a way of gauging listeners' interest in any given topic, most commonly seen from the number of comments, likes and shares on Facebook. Using this as a feedback loop, the stations can follow up or report further on those issues that are of the greatest interest to their listeners. Social media has also proven to be an effective way of reinforcing public interest messages first shared on the radio and to add pressure on local authorities if there are problems in the community.



*Children living in Carmona's neighborhood in Gurue, Zambia.*



*Maria Ernesta Bacalhau, community radio presenter at RC Mocuba, reaching a new generation of radio listeners.*

## CHILDREN & YOUTH



## First Person: Guida

Mozambique is a country of young people. With half of the population below the age of 20, children, adolescents and youth make up a significant demographic group, but one that rarely has the same opportunity to be heard as the adult population. UNICEF has worked for many years to address the information rights of children, for example by promoting child-to-child media programming and child-friendly media networks. Young boy and girl radio producers are busy encouraging their peers and local communities to learn about issues of health, sanitation and personal hygiene. At Radio Watana, for example, the children reporters discuss the impact of urbanization and look at the use of new technologies. According to them, their most important task is to clear up misinformation and myths that sometimes have been inherited from older generations or comes from outdated cultural practices.

*Guida Michaela, a young and socially responsible radio presenter at Radio Watana in Nacala.*

"There once was a rumor that condoms cause HIV, but we helped people ignore that rumor," says Guida Michaela, one of the Radio Watana reporters and a member of the UNICEF-supported child-to-child media network. "We are very happy when a lot of people call in to the radio station, because it means they have connected with a specific issue," says Guida. The young reporters adapt social messages for the radio and try to make them interesting to their listeners by talking about the issues that young people are interested in. "Young people listen to us."

**"There was a rumor that condoms cause HIV, but we helped people ignore that rumor."**

## FOCUS ON: Partnerships

IREX works extensively with a core group of partners that includes CAICC, ICS, Dialogo (DAI) and UNICEF. Through the effective and efficient collaboration generated by these partnerships, the organizations are able to optimize the use of available resources and minimize duplication of efforts. IREX works with Dialogo (DAI) on issues of elections, production of radio programs on good governance, management and media business sustainability and with UNICEF on trainings that involve members of the child-to-child media network. These trainings are focused on teaching community radio volunteers how to produce original radio pieces using the

Adobe Audition software. MSP long-term strategic partner CAICC co-implements interventions, including technical support and follow up of stations. IREX and CAICC coordinate travels to and activities with the stations, working in a seamless and integrated fashion on related issues. For the elections in 2013 and 2014, IREX helped co-organize training seminars on how to cover elections on the local level, where the pressures on the stations can be felt more strongly. The training for the 2013 municipal elections involved 50 community radios, whereas the training for the 2014 national elections reached 109 community radio volunteers.



*A young member of the UNICEF-supported child-to-child media network reaching out to his peers and their families.*



**ASSOCIAÇÃO HANKONI**   
**DE P.V.H.S E SIMPATIZANTES CUAMBA**

*Members of Association Hankoni in Cuamba, Niassa, in front of their headquarters.  
The association works with People Living With HIV and does outreach work in the community and through the local radio.*

**PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV**



## First Person: HELENA

An estimated 1.5-2 million people live with HIV in Mozambique, many of whom do not know that they have been infected and carry the virus. There is still significant stigma associated with HIV, and people living with HIV are often ostracized or discriminated against in their communities. Helena Xavier, a community volunteer at the Association Hankoni in Cuamba, has lived with HIV for ten years. Everyone knows she is HIV-positive, but she does not feel stigmatized. She frequently speaks about health issues on the community radio, addressing issues such as HIV testing, treatment, condom use and the special needs of discordant couples. Helena absolutely feels that the radio has played an important role in de-stigmatizing HIV and related issues. Members of the Association Hankoni talk on the radio using their full names and never try to hide. They address the issues clearly, simply and directly and speak in Macua, the local language.

*Helena Xavier works as a community activist and volunteer for Association Hankoni. Helena has been HIV-positive for 10 years.*

"HIV is more in the open now - it is more like having malaria," says Helena, describing how she feels that people see her. "People greet me and sometimes tell me they have heard me on the radio. It all feels quite normal to me." It has not always been that way, but community radio programs on health and prevention have helped overcoming the stigma, the sensitivity and the taboos connected with HIV. "We help people seek the basic services they need," says Helena.

**"If it wasn't for the  
community radio,  
I would not be alive  
today."**

## FOCUS ON: Sustainability

Over the course of the program, IREX has maintained a firm focus on sustainability, which takes two main forms: financial sustainability and stability of personnel. Every radio station needs a minimum level of income to function and needs to recruit, retain and train qualified people to operate. In order to increase financial sustainability, IREX has facilitated a series of marketing trainings and provided targeted consultancies to some stations. A key objective has been to create a better understanding of the income generating opportunities that exist at the local level. In some cases, station coordinators have been creative in leveraging other resources.

At Gurue community radio, for example, the station entered into a partnership with Star Times, a broadcaster, which installed its antenna on the radio's premises. As a result, the radio generates funds to help pay its rent, gets access to a backup electricity generator and could potentially share the use of the new antenna. At Radio Thumbine in Milange, the MSP marketing trainings enabled the station to generate income to purchase motorcycles that are used by reporters. In the trainings, a clear link is drawn between quality and sustainability, which depends primarily on a sound commercial operation. Some 90 community radio staff have been trained by IREX in marketing and commercial approaches.



*Children playing on the street outside the headquarters of Association Hankoni in Cuamba, Niassa.*



*Manuel Mariano, 17, is studying for his high school exams by listening to the local community radio.*

## EDUCATION, HEALTH & NUTRITION



## First Person: Regina

Community radio plays a critical role in disseminating essential health and nutrition information to rural areas in Mozambique. In Nangololo, Cabo Delgado, drought and erosion have made life a struggle. Little Paulo is the second son of Regina Sabonete. He was born anemic as a consequence of inadequate nutrition, which made him weak and sickly, which in turn caused his mother great concern. Like all mothers, she would have done anything to ensure his survival. Change happened when she listened to the program "Know how to do it" (Saber Fazer) on the local community radio São Francisco de Assis, which was presented by Jonas Valerio, a reporter at the station. It was through this program that Regina learnt how to make a nutritious paste of peanuts, corn, potatoes, sugar and moringa, and after little Paulo started the new and nutritious diet, he quickly improved and his myoglobin count increased.

*Regina Sabonete with her second son Paulo on her arm. She credits the community radio with saving his life.*

"If it weren't for the program Saber Fazer, my son would probably have died," explains Regina. "I am grateful to the community radio, to the program, to the reporter and to the listeners." Before, Regina's husband wasn't very receptive to trying new things, but he respects the radio: "The radio helps resolve issues here in the home and that is why it is a community radio. It is only a community radio when it solves problems in the community."

**"If it weren't for the program 'Saber Fazer', my son would probably have died."**

## FOCUS ON: Community journalism

In order for the community radios to address social issues and other relevant issues at the local level more effectively, IREX has systematically trained station staff in foundational journalism skills: reporting, journalistic writing and photography, and much of the social impact in the communities have come from such reporting. In May 2015, Rui Lamarques, IREX capacity building specialist and former editor of the @Verdade weekly, trained a group of reporters in Nampula on investigative reporting. As a result, the community radio journalists prepared well-researched stories on early marriage, access to safe water and inefficiencies in some local hospitals. The practical approach to training - a hallmark of all IREX training efforts - taught the reporters where and how to find data, how to understand the numbers

and what questions to ask based on them. As a result of the journalism trainings, some stations have established their own news functions and newsrooms. RC Cuamba, for instance, now has a dedicated newsroom used by its reporters. Community radio journalists are able to research and report on issues that are of direct and immediate relevance to the community, and they are able to report on them in their local language. In some cases, the reporting can help find missing persons or, in addressing specific cases, provide information about alternatives, referral sites and follow up for victims of violence or individuals in need of other follow up. Since 2012, IREX has trained more than 580 community radio staff members in journalism and reporting skills.



*MSP has focused on the development of core journalism skills for reporting at the community level.*



*Joaquina Cássimo (left), resident of a resettlement camp, together with Rosalina Caetano, coordinator of Mocuba community radio.*

## EMERGENCIES



## First Person: Jaime

In Mozambique, floods and other natural disasters are recurrent, occurring on an almost annual cycle, with the beginning of the year being the tough season. In 2015, the town of Mocuba was affected by a massive flood that cut off the north-south road in several places. The town sits at the point where the Licungo and Lugela rivers meet. An estimated 19,000 households were displaced as a result of the 2015 flood, with people being moved to temporary shelter on higher ground and some being placed in semi-permanent resettlements, where many still remain. Jaime Cororio was displaced along with his extended family from their territories on lower ground. The Mocuba community radio was his constant companion during the emergency, providing weather updates as well as health guidance and information about emergency services. According to Cororio, the radio helped reduce the cases of both cholera and malaria through the information that was shared over the air.

*Jaime Cororio was resettled with his family during the floods of 2015. Unlike many others, he decided to stay on higher ground.*

"We decided to move from our fields because of the instructions we received over the community radio," explains Jaime Cororio, who doesn't rule out that this might have saved him and his family from the floods. "When there was cholera, the radio communicated all the time, telling us what to do." Many people have returned to the risky low-lying areas, but a few have stayed in the resettlement areas. "People return to those areas because that is where they come from, where their home is," says Cororio.

**"When there was cholera, the radio communicated all the time."**

## FOCUS ON: Equipment & technical support

The lack of appropriate or up-to-date equipment often leads to interruptions in the local community radio broadcasts, with some stations staying off air for months at a time. Such interruptions can be caused by the breakdown in standard equipment, such as computers or cables, or in transmitters and antennas, but often the breakdowns are due to inadequate maintenance or lack of access to spare parts. At On'Hipiti community radio on Ilha de Moçambique, where the proximity of the ocean contributes to the corrosion of towers and cables, IREX helped replace faulty equipment to bring the radio back on air after a break of several months.

A small grants scheme facilitated by CAICC helps stations buy spare parts or do necessary repairs without having to wait for income to come in. At Radio Thumbine in Milange, local assistance funds provided by IREX helped the station cross the border into Malawi to purchase accessories that needed to be replaced after a power surge. IREX has distributed more than \$150,000 in equipment, including transmitters and solar panels. This equipment initiative is driven by the needs at each station and helps standardize much of the equipment across stations, thus facilitating training, maintenance and sharing of lessons learnt from one radio station to another.



*Children in Bairro Naverua in Mocuba, a resettlement area for families affected by the 2015 floods.*



ARILD DRIVDAL

Photos, stories, text & production

Arild is the Chief of Party of the Mozambique Media Strengthening Program. He covered Zambezia and Niassa provinces for this documentation project.



LAQUE FRANCISCO

Photos & stories

Laque is the Senior Communications Assistant at IREX Mozambique. He covered Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces for this documentation project.

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