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TRIP REPORT
ON
URTNA/PEC RADIO TRAINING PROGRAM

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Dates of In-Country Work:
July 22-26, 1985
August 7-8, 1985
September 9-13, 1985
September 26-27, 1985

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Executive Summary

JHU/PCS consultant, Betty Rogers, is a free-lance radio producer who has prepared cassette tapes of National Public Radio programs on family planning topics for use by JHU/PCS and has conducted a radio training workshop for the JHU/PCS staff.

Ms. Rogers was asked by JHU/PCS to assist the Union of Radio and Television Organizations of Africa, Programme Exchange Centre (URTNA/PEC), located in Nairobi, Kenya in the production of three family planning demonstration tapes for radio. Specifically, she was asked to assist Mrs. Rachel Ogutu, Programme Exchange Officer for the JHU project, to finalize the radio tapes she had already prepared. For this purpose, Ms. Rogers was present at URTNA/PEC for 10 days on four different occasions: July 22-26, 1985; August 7-8, 1985; and September 9-13 and 26-27, 1985.

The consultancy occurred in three different stages. The first stage was an evaluation of the tapes which URTNA/PEC had already produced, an introduction to recording and tape editing, and preparation of an interview with the president of IPPF, Mrs. Avabai Wadia. During the second stage, they prepared the production schedule for September and program outline for the three programs which Mrs. Ogutu was to produce. In addition, under the supervision of Ms. Rogers, Mrs. Ogutu reviewed the complete tape editing cycle and edited the tape of the interview with Mrs. Wadia. In the third stage, the three demonstration tapes were actually produced.

Ms. Rogers found that the radio production equipment at URTNA/PEC is of high quality and well maintained. She found that the sound engineers, though not thoroughly experienced in radio mixing techniques, are competent and cooperative. With more experience and more specific guidance in sound production techniques, they could acquire a smoother technique. The addition of some minor supplies, such as large reels, would also be helpful.

Ms. Rogers believes that Mrs. Ogutu has had a good introduction to radio production. She does feel, however, that Mrs. Ogutu could benefit in her

production work by receiving, in addition to voice lessons, more guidance in interview techniques and field recording and in expansion of her concept of family planning programming. Mrs. Ogutu needs to listen to and discuss the structure of many more production tapes, and she needs to develop a concept of the step-by-step development of pieces. It would also be useful for Mrs. Ogutu to have additional instruction in tape editing and studio production with a lot of hands-on work under supervision.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project was to assist URTNA/PEC in Nairobi, Kenya in the production of demonstration tapes for radio on the topic of family planning. This is a summary of my training work with Mrs. Rachel Ogutu at URTNA/PEC in Nairobi, Kenya. We worked together in three stages.

STAGE I July 22-26, 1985

Initially, I met with Ms. Ogutu and discussed her concept of the three demonstration tapes she had been asked to produce. I reviewed taped interviews she has conducted and a program which she and Oscar Musyoka of URTNA had made. We discussed why I thought the microphone placement, recording levels and mixing were not of broadcast quality, and I learned as much as possible about the techniques they had used in this particular program.

I gave Mrs. Ogutu an overall introduction to recording and tape editing, and then helped her set up an interview with Mrs. Avabai Wadia, President of IPPF. I discussed interviewing techniques and preparation with her and we auditioned tapes that illustrated correct microphone placement.

In addition, we had several listening sessions using tapes I had brought with me, and we discussed the production of each program.

STAGE II August 7-8, 1985

As agreed upon during my telephone conversation with Margaret Parlato on July 25, 1985, I returned to Nairobi for two days to assist Mrs. Ogutu in the preparation of the production schedule for September.

During this time, we went through the complete tape editing cycle, using the raw interview Mrs. Ogutu had made with Mrs. Wadia. This included auditioning and logging the tape, selecting tape segments, cutting the tape, and making a master reel. Mrs. Ogutu did the actual tape editing under my supervision. While in Paris, I put together a kit which allowed her to edit using the razor blade-style technique.

We also drew up a work schedule and program outline for each of the three programs she was to produce. I left her with a list of activities to complete before my return in September. During my absence, Mrs. Ogutu suffered a bout of malaria, and although she had made the necessary arrangements for producing the programs, she had not been able to practice the editing assignments or the activities for listening to tapes at double speed.

STAGE III September 9-13 and 26-27, 1985

During this period, we produced the three demonstration tapes which were mixed in the URTNA studios by studio technician Mr. Pius Ndirangu. Mr. Kassaye Demena, Director of URTNA/PEC, and Mr. Solomon Luvai, Deputy Director, were pleased with the overall results of the tapes, although they did make several suggestions for changes. Unfortunately, Mrs. Ogutu was unable to work full-time since she was recovering from malaria. She, therefore, was not present at this tape critique or during the final days of the production. I do feel, however, that Mrs. Ogutu has had a good introduction to radio production.

Our work included:

1. studio and field recording techniques;
2. script writing and editing;
3. tape editing;
4. script recording and voice coaching;
5. preparing and packing for remote recording;
6. setting up and conducting interviews;
7. production and sound techniques;
8. tape listening sessions;
9. microphone placement;
10. tape labelling, logging and cataloguing;
11. creating program outlines and roadmaps;
12. basic technical theories behind equipment being used;
13. preparation for studio mixing;
14. studio mixing; and
15. final editing of produced programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the studio work was of a good quality. Mr. Ndirangu had not had very much experience with this type of program mixing, but we went step-by-step through the mixes, and they were adequately done with only a few minor problems. He was extremely cooperative throughout, assisting us in recordings, tape dubbing and the studio mixing. I think that once he becomes familiar with the standard radio mixing techniques, he will be able to perform any studio work that Mrs. Ogutu might require.

The programs were almost completed, but due to Mrs. Ogutu's illness, they are not in the final form I would prefer. The programs must still be packaged for distribution with an introduction stating the nature of the tapes. I felt that the introduction of the magazine-format program on IPPF could have been better written and recorded with an identification of Rachel Ogutu as the reporter in the program. In addition, this program needed specific identification for each speaker in the program. I left a list with Mrs. Ogutu specifying the additions needed.

My experience at URTNA revealed that they have good equipment (see Appendix A) and that it is well maintained and adequate for any production which Mrs. Ogutu might undertake. Since URTNA does not produce radio programs at present, the engineers do not have experience in this area. An engineer needs regular experience under the guidance of a producer to acquire a smooth technique. Also, some minor supplies, such as additional large reels, razor blades, grease pencils and tape dispensers, are needed.

I think Mrs. Ogutu would benefit most by:

1. Additional instruction in tape editing with a lot of hands-on work under supervision;
2. Additional guidance in interview techniques and field recording;
3. Listening to many more production tapes and discussing the structure of each;

4. Developing a more defined "system" of producing a program, having more of a concept of the step-by-step development of pieces;
5. More focused studio production instruction (she needs to learn each of the standard radio production techniques, i.e. fade up, fade down, cross fade, backtime, use of music, monitoring mixes on the speakers); and
6. Voice lessons.

Mrs. Ogutu seemed to be a bit isolated in her production work, and was not taking as much initiative in the production as she might have. The process seemed to intimidate her, and any activities that would de-mystify the work would be helpful. Also, in interviews, she tends to ask the same questions and use the same approach for each person she interviews. She could, therefore, benefit by receiving guidance in expanding her concept of family planning programming.

It would also be helpful if the sound engineer received more specific guidance in sound production techniques. If a production-oriented engineer could work with Mr. Ndirangu and Mr. Amadou Biteye, the other engineer, with Mrs. Ogutu as liaison, Mrs. Ogutu's production capability might also be improved.

A point that Mr. Demena raised was that Mrs. Ogutu is not trained for using her voice on-air, nor are her interviewing techniques developed. It might, therefore, be possible to bring in reporters or other talent on a regular basis so that Mrs. Ogutu could function solely as a producer. This would probably work best if Mrs. Ogutu and the reporter had some supervision during their early work together, and possibly some joint production training.

I met with Barbara Kennedy of AID/REDSO/ESA and her assistant, Mrs. Rosaline Waichaka, on Friday, September 27, 1985. I outlined the work that Mrs. Ogutu and I had accomplished and discussed the overall structure and operation of URTNA and the possibilities for future radio production. They requested a copy of the demonstration tapes when they are packaged and completed.

URTNA Radio Production Equipment

1. Two (2) Sony TCD Stereo cassette recorders.
2. Various microphones.
3. Three (3) Studer B67 console Tape Recorders.
4. One (1) EMT 948 Broadcast Turntable.
5. One (1) Studer Master Recorder A 80.

(This means that the studio can have three playback and one recording machine at its maximum capacity.)

The board mixer for the studio can have a total of four tape decks and has six inputs.

Additional Equipment:

1. EMT 948 Broadcast Turntable.
2. One (1) Philips N45-5 Magica Control Tape Deck.
3. Two (2) Ferragraph SP7 tape decks.
4. Studer Power Amplified A 67.
5. REVOX cassette machine in the studio.

The studio recording room can have a maximum of three microphones. The studio is not sound proof completely. There are two headset monitors in the studio.

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List of Contacts

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

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Mrs. Barbara Kennedy
Population Officer

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Assistant Population Officer

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Mr. Kassaye Demena
Director

Mr. Solomon Luvai
Deputy Director

Mrs. Rachel Ogutu
Programme Exchange Officer

Mr. Oscar Musyoka
Librarian

Mr. Amadou Biteye
Sound Engineer

Mr. Pius Ndirangu
Studio Technician