

# Interactive Radio for Justice

## Executive Summary of the Impact Assessment Report

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Interactive Radio for Justice (IRfJ) was founded in 2005 in Bunia, Ituri District, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The project is “designed to encourage dialogue between people in regions where the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigates war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, and the national and international authorities responsible for rendering justice to them. Dialogue is created through several series of radio programming, each addressing justice in an interactive manner, produced in local languages and aired on community radio stations.”<sup>1</sup> In July 2009, IRfJ opened activities in Goma and Kasugho in North Kivu Province, following the ICC Prosecutor’s decision to undertake a new phase of investigations. In January 2008 IRfJ was launched in Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR), after the indictment and arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba (formerly the Congolese Vice-President) by the ICC for crimes in CAR. In September 2009, IRfJ opened in CAR with local partners in Bangui, Berberati, Bouar, and Bambari. IRfJ organizes public meetings where target communities pose questions directly to national and international authorities. The Music for Justice (MfJ) initiative harnesses the talent of local music groups and encourages youth to take an interest in justice by writing and recording songs on topics like justice and reconciliation. When IRfJ was founded, Ituri was emerging from the second Congolese war (1998-2003). The DRC is nominally at peace, but armed conflict continues in the east, involving non-state armed groups and the armed forces. Congolese leaders are seen by many as unaccountable; the rule of law remains weak; and the justice system is plagued by corruption and a lack of resources. Beginning in 2006, the ICC has indicted several Congolese leaders for war crimes and crimes against humanity in DRC and CAR. Yet the ICC’s intervention remains controversial for reasons including but not limited to the perceived politicization of the court. Its early years in the DRC were characterized by the fact that it seemed to disseminate very little on its investigations. It was in this context of post-conflict reconstruction, ongoing violence, and challenges to combating corruption and establishing the rule of law that IRfJ was founded.

The following report details the results of the second year of a comprehensive impact assessment of Interactive Radio for Justice. The purpose of the assessment was twofold. First, the evaluation had the purpose of learning about the project’s impact on target populations in DRC and CAR, and at the international level. The second component was improvement of the project’s impact, drawing on the lessons learned.<sup>2</sup> The evaluation can be labeled formative in that one of its objectives was to provide “information to improve [the] project before it is too

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<sup>1</sup> “Interactive Radio for Justice Brief Description,” Interactive Radio for Justice, July 2009.

<sup>2</sup> “Guidance on evaluating conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities: Working draft for application period,” OECD: A joint project of the DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation and the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 2008, p. 26-27.

late to make changes.”<sup>3</sup> The user for the present impact assessment is the Interactive Radio for Justice team (both international staff and the local teams of technicians and journalists producing the programs at radio stations in DRC and CAR). The report is also aimed at several groups in the “reader” category, including: IRfJ’s donors, who have provided the funding for this assessment; staff of local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs); ICC employees; members of the international media; and academics working on issues related to Africa, justice, and human rights. The report will be posted on the IRfJ website, along with the executive summary in English and French. The report and the summaries will be disseminated through the project’s mailing list and to relevant list serves.

There are two overarching, long-term expected outcomes for the project: 1) Mutual respect between targeted communities, and the national judicial and ICC authorities who participate in IRfJ programs in the DRC and CAR; and 2) Establishment of a comprehensive network of academic institutions, western media, and Non-Governmental Organizations/Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working to bring attention/support to ICC efforts in DRC and CAR. The evaluation questions on which the Impact Assessment was based revolve around identifying whether certain expected intermediate (medium-term) outcomes, as set out in the logical framework, have been achieved. These specific intermediate outcomes are listed in the Objectives for the Impact Assessment section in the report. Indicators have been developed for these intermediate outcomes, each of which is dealt with in detail in the Findings section.

The report presents data from Bangui, Berberati, and Obo in CAR, and Bunia, Kasugho, and Goma in DRC. In the project sites, data was collected from the local teams; listening groups set up by the project; and local government and judicial authorities. At the international level, data was collected on publications and articles produced by NGOs; members of the media; and academics. A mixed-method approach was used, combining quantitative and qualitative data, to enrich the validity of the findings. Meetings with IRfJ’s local teams were held to discuss the implementation of recommendations to enhance the project’s impact, and to gather information on impact in the community. Direct observation took place at listening group meetings, with local assistants observing the group discussion resulting from the programs and taking notes. Surveys were conducted with listening group members to gather their responses on their beliefs, behaviors, and knowledge with respect to justice. Focus group discussions took place in which members were encouraged to flesh out their responses to the survey questions. Key informant interviews were held with government and judicial authorities, as well as a staff member from the International Criminal Court. Web research was conducted to gather data on IRfJ’s impact at the international level. All quantitative data collected was analyzed using Excel. A possible limitation of the chosen methodology includes the fact that because it was survey-based, this may have led to some confusion or lack of understanding on the part of participants of the questions posed, particularly those with a lower level of education. To remedy this, those who administered the surveys were encouraged to use any necessary examples to help listening group members understand what was being asked of them. Surveys prepared in the first year of the assessment were used in the second year to measure progress on the relevant indicators. These surveys were carried out individually and orally with listening group members to accommodate their low literacy levels, as well as to ensure that they were comfortable enough

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<sup>3</sup> Church, Cheyanne, and Mark Rogers, “Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs,” Search for Common Ground, 2006, p. 110.

to share their views. Listening group members were informed prior to each survey that there are no right or wrong answers. In Obo, new surveys were developed with the local team, translated into the local language (Sango), and tested several times with different members of the community.

Each listening group was made up of between ten and 30 people. In Bangui, IRfJ worked with a women's association; an association for the disabled; and blind staff members at a school for the blind and deaf. In Berberati, the group was made up of a diversity of residents. In Obo, 98 participants were given transistor radios after completing a baseline survey, and were administered a final survey two months later. In Kasugho, there was a group of village residents and one of university students. In Goma, IRfJ worked with students at a school for vulnerable children and youth; women trained as carers for victims of sexual violence; inmates at Goma's central prison; and members of two women's groups for survivors of sexual violence. At the beginning of the assessment and through the life of the project, participants were informed about the benefits that IRfJ hoped they would reap through their participation, and invited to reflect on what they might gain. When personal data was collected, the confidentiality of this data was clearly explained. It was emphasized to group members that participation was voluntary, and that they should only participate if they felt they were benefiting. As much as possible, the assessment was implemented in a participatory manner. In Bunia, the analyst worked closely with the local team to review the assessment findings, develop recommendations, and create a timeline for implementation. Direct observation of listening group discussion was a key part of the assessment. Group members were given the opportunity to voice their views after each program. The research assistants were instructed to encourage those who did not speak regularly to express themselves. Members were also able to pose questions for the programs, which meant that they had concrete input into the programs. Equity was given consideration in the formation of listening groups: a diversity of social groups was targeted to participate, and emphasis was placed on ensuring the representation of less powerful and potentially vulnerable groups.

The second year of the evaluation was a challenge in terms of maintaining participation by members in the face of requests for financial support. While certain groups received support on a case-by-case basis, efforts were made as much as possible to reward participants in creative ways for their participation. Listening group events held in Bangui in January 2010 and Goma in March 2011 were organized with this objective in mind. These activities were also organized to increase the impact of the project by having IRfJ's listening groups actively engaged with it. Finally, because DRC and CAR are difficult working environments due to ongoing conflict and insecurity, every effort was made to ensure the safety of IRfJ staff and listening group participants, for instance by securing permission for IRfJ staff to visit the listening group at Goma's Central Prison.

In the Interactive Radio for Justice local project sites the project had a demonstrable impact: targets for eight of twelve indicators were met and several others were nearly reached. The results suggest that the project's greatest strengths lie in bringing about change to listeners' knowledge and beliefs related to their national and international authorities. With respect to knowledge, the percentage of participants who had heard of the ICC rose from 92% to 98%. There was an 11% rise in the number of members who said they had an increased understanding of the role of ICC authorities. This was just under the 15% target, but the increase meant that the majority (88%) of members reported an increased understanding. This was

validated by the 54% increase (to 78% of all respondents) in those saying they felt at least moderately informed on the roles of the ICC authorities. 86% of listening group members reported having an increased understanding of the role of national authorities after listening to IRfJ's programs, a 46% increase – higher than the 15% target set. This was reinforced by the 58% increase in the number of listening group members reporting being at least moderately informed on the roles of the governmental authorities – in excess of the 30% target. Even more significant was the 82% increase in the number of participants reporting that they were at least moderately informed on the roles of the judicial authorities. This may be linked to an activity held in Goma in March 2011, which gave three listening groups firsthand knowledge of two judicial institutions. There was a 37% increase in the number of respondents who could give the title and/or name of at least one judicial authority. The fact that this mainly took place among the group of university students in Kasugho, while there was a small decrease in Goma, however, shows that learning is not a simple one-way process and that activities that encourage learning in several ways can be of value.

In terms of the beliefs of the participants in the impact assessment, there were increases (27% and 44%, respectively) in the number of local community members reporting the belief that ICC officials have an understanding of their needs and of those expressing the belief that national authorities understand their needs. In both cases, the 15% target set for the second year was met. The overall number of those agreeing with this statement was higher for ICC authorities (87% compared to 61%), which may be linked to the perceived greater legitimacy of ICC officials as compared to local ones, which are seen by a number of listening group members as unresponsive and easily corrupted. In terms of participants' beliefs about the programs themselves, there was a 1% increase in the number of those reporting that they have confidence in IRfJ's programs to provide reliable information. While this was less than the 2.5% target, the final figure is an extremely high 99% of all respondents. An equally high percentage of listening group members (also 99%) reported that they had an increased awareness from the programs of their ability to effect positive change. These two indicators were the strongest results overall, which confirms that the project has had a clear impact in terms of participants' beliefs.

The project had an impact, though a less significant one, on participants' behavior in terms of the percentage increase in the number of those reporting having accessed a judicial authority in the past three months for a problem linked to justice. While the target, a 20% increase, was exceeded by a factor of three, the relatively low numbers of members involved as well as the continued scepticism expressed by several people in group discussions on the feasibility and value of consulting local judicial authorities suggests that there is still progress to be made. An activity held in Goma in March 2011, which brought group members together for a visit to two local judicial institutions and which was hailed as a success by participants, may be a valuable intermediate step when it comes to changing behaviour.

One area in which the project has shown meaningful progress is in integrating the voices and views of a diversity of individuals by encouraging them to speak out and to understand that their opinions and questions have value. Those participating in the project in its sixth year include different and diverse authorities, as well as individuals from a diversity of target communities; ethnic groups; genders; ages; and social groups. In year six, an all-time high of approximately 400 questions were posed in the different sites. This is ten more than the previous year, an achievement given that the project was closed in Bangui and Berberati in

December 2010 and in Kasugho in February 2011. Certain areas remain to be worked on, like the fact that the share of women posing questions remained static, and older people should be more frequently sought out to pose their questions. In the sixth year of the project, 97 different and diverse authorities participated in the programs (compared to 91 in year five). There was a drop in the number of ICC officials and other international authorities participating, which was more than compensated for by a rise in the number of judicial authorities and representatives of local NGOs and civil society who spoke on the programs. The majority (60%) of the authorities interviewed in the second year of the assessment (two in Ituri, four in Goma, two in Bouar, one in Bangui, and one from the ICC) reported that IRfJ's programs have enhanced their awareness of the needs of the population.

In Obo, qualitative data collected through interviews and meetings with a diversity of local groups revealed the population's keen desire for information, particularly on the latest regional and national developments. Baseline and final survey results from 98 participants who received transistor radios to listen to the programs produced by Radio Zereda following the capacity building revealed an immediate impact of the pilot after only two months. Participants welcomed programming on the LRA and the ICC in particular, and showed increased knowledge and awareness on these topics. Listeners reported listening to the radio more frequently, and sharing their knowledge with family, friends, and neighbors. Future projects should explore the question of radio ownership and the democratization of knowledge in Obo so as to ensure that a broader base of individuals is able to benefit from Radio Zereda's new broadcasting capacity.

At the international level, IRfJ was the most solicited for information and assistance by NGOs seeking to work in or report on DRC and CAR. This reflects the continuing high level of production on and involvement in DRC and CAR issues by the NGOs represented on the mailing list. The targets set for contacts by journalists and members of the academic world were both met, though the production by both categories of pieces and publications on CAR and DRC was considerably lower than that by NGOs; it was also principally focused on DRC rather than on CAR. The clear impact of IRfJ's outreach component (presentations and conference participation) on encouraging academics and students in particular to contact the project shows that this should be a priority for similar projects seeking to raise their profile, and that of the countries where they work, at the international level.

As Interactive Radio for Justice will be closing down its activities starting on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, the report presents a shorter list of more general recommendations which may be useful to inform the work of other organizations working on the same or similar issues. These include:

#### Interactive Radio for Justice Project Sites

- Reinforce the linkages between members of the population and national-level authorities through original activities such as guided tours to judicial institutions, and public meetings
- Create more dynamic programming, which could involve the use of field visits as a basis for some programming, and contests inviting IRfJ listeners to call in and answer questions
- Produce translations of IRfJ programs into relevant local languages for broadcast on partner radio stations in areas where these languages are widely spoken

- Increase local authorities' awareness and understanding of the project and the population's needs by distributing leaflets and CDs of programming to them

#### Pilot Project in Obo

- Gain a better understanding of the number of people who own radios in the town, including by supporting a study being carried out by the Radio Zereda team, and reflect on/support measures to increase the number of radios available to the population
- Continue to participate in and help strengthen a network of donors and local and international organizations that can support Radio Zereda in ways including:
  - Purchasing additional equipment and providing technical training to increase the numbers of hours broadcast by the radio each day
  - Providing additional training for the journalists to produce programs of an interactive, citizen-driven nature on issues of interest for the community
- Through radio staff, engage with local representatives and residents in discussions on community engagement and the potential uses for the information broadcast on the radio

#### International Outreach

- Increase the number of public appearances at relevant institutions and conferences to raise awareness of the project among an international audience
- Consider low-cost possibilities for developing a media strategy, such as hiring an intern with a background in communications or outreach to create a multi-media package
- Research, and become involved in, more networks of organizations and academics working on issues of justice or relating to the DRC and CAR

#### Conclusion

The principal key lesson from the assessment is the fact that while radio is a good medium for changing knowledge and beliefs in particular, and for gradually moving listeners' behavior in new directions, there are limitations to its power in contexts where the rule of law remains weak and corruption in the justice system is seen as rampant. Specially planned activities and the production of innovative programming can enhance the impact of the programs produced. These measures require additional funding and other resources, which points to the importance of collaboration between initiatives working on similar issues, such as that which IRfJ was recently involved in with Invisible Children in Obo, Central African Republic.