

Interactive Radio for Justice Mid-Project Impact Assessment Analysis

Summary

The Mid-Project Impact Assessment Analysis of the *Interactive Radio for Justice* (IRfJ) project details the results of the first year of a two-year assessment that began in June 2009. The research was conducted in Ituri District, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where the project has been active since 2005, and in IRfJ's new sites of operation, active as of September 2009. In DRC, the new project sites are Goma and Kasugho, in North Kivu province; in the Central African Republic (CAR), they are the towns of Bangui, Bambari, Berberati, and Bouar. The objective of the assessment is to establish whether IRfJ programming has a favourable impact on justice-related indicators including members of target populations' *knowledge* of national and international justice systems; *beliefs* on whether national and international authorities understand their needs; and *behaviour* in terms of consulting their judicial authorities for assistance. A mixed-methodology approach was used for the assessment, primarily quantitative but with a large amount of qualitative information gathered through open-ended questions, focus group discussions, and observation. In Ituri, individual and group interviews were conducted with listening group members and other target communities, both in the capital, Bunia, and in other villages and towns in the district. In the new sites, listening groups of vulnerable individuals (such as physically handicapped people and survivors of sexual violence) were set up for the impact evaluation. Group members completed baseline surveys before they started listening to the programs, and then again near the end of the first project year. In addition to the results of the research carried out in the first year of the assessment, the report contains a number of recommendations for improving IRfJ's impact, which can be found in the full report.

Results from the target communities

The first-year results from the assessment show a mixed picture with respect to the changes in respondents' *beliefs*, *knowledge*, and *behaviour* with regard to national and international justice. In terms of *beliefs*, there was an increase in three of the four sites in the number of respondents agreeing that International Criminal Court (ICC) officials understand their needs. Qualitative data gathered from respondents suggests a belief that the ICC is working for justice, and is not corrupt the way national officials are. In Ituri, **54%** of respondents said that IRfJ's programs have allowed ICC officials to better understand their needs in terms of justice. The special circumstances in Ituri may account for the split in respondents' views, for the Congolese personalities currently on trial at the ICC are perceived by many Iturians to be the legitimate leaders of different ethnic groups in Ituri, and many do not agree with what the ICC is doing. There was an increase in all sites in the number of respondents agreeing that *national* officials have understanding of their needs. This is a surprising result, given that respondents frequently expressed the belief that the authorities are corrupt and only help those who can afford to pay them to do so. Yet in focus groups, some listening club members revealed that they believe that their authorities *do* understand their needs, but due to their need for money (in the case of lower-level authorities) or their corruption, they act in contradiction to the population's interest. In Ituri, **55%** of respondents reported that *Interactive Radio for Justice* has allowed national officials to better understand their needs in terms of justice. Those who agreed said that this is because the authorities hear their needs on the radio; those who said No reported that the authorities are aware of their needs, but say one thing on the radio and do another.

With regard to respondents' *knowledge* of national and international justice, the majority (**78%**) of listening group members in the new sites reported an increased understanding of the role of ICC officials after the first project year. This is higher than the same statistic for the

national authorities, and may point to a greater trust shown by listening group members towards ICC officials, as opposed to national ones, who are often perceived as corrupt and self-seeking. Within the listening groups in the new sites, there was a **53%** increase overall in the number of members reporting having heard of the ICC (from a baseline of **61%** to **93%** after one year). Overall, there was a **55%** increase in the number of people reporting being at least moderately informed on the roles of ICC authorities (this represents an increase in every site except Bambari). This result is consistent with the high number of those saying that the programs have increased their understanding of the role of ICC authorities. In Ituri, **51%** of 175 respondents reported that they have a better understanding of the roles of ICC officials due to *Interactive Radio for Justice*. As discussed above, the fact that this percentage is lower, after five years of IRfJ programming, than the figure in the new sites after one year, may be due to the specific circumstances in Ituri, where the ICC is trying Congolese leaders who are still viewed by many Iturians to be their legitimate representatives.

61% of listening group respondents in the new sites reported an increased understanding of the role of national officials after the first year. This represents the majority of members, yet the percentage is lower than the corresponding figure for ICC authorities. This may be due to confusion and a perceived contradiction between national authorities' official roles, and the (corrupt) role they play in reality; this contradiction was raised by several members of the listening groups. In Ituri, **72%** of respondents said that they have a better understanding of the role of judicial officials due to IRfJ, a higher percentage than in the new sites. This may be due to the fact that IRfJ has been operating in Ituri for five years. Another factor may be the fact that several respondents have spoken on IRfJ's programs a number of times over the years, therefore consistently reinforcing listeners' understanding of their roles. For instance, several of those surveyed in Ituri mentioned the name of the Judge President of the Military Garrison Court – who has participated in the programs many times – in their responses to this question.

Across the new sites (137 respondents), there was a **44%** increase in the number of listening group members reporting being at least moderately informed on the role of the *governmental* authorities. The increase was only observed in Bambari and Kasugho, however: in Bangui, there was no change, and in Goma, there was a *decrease*. A possible explanation for the results in Goma lies in several group members' comments that some of the answers given by authorities on the programs were not satisfying to them. A potential unintended impact of the programs could be to create confusion on the roles of the national authorities, if listeners hear answers that contradict facts that they know to be true. Yet it should be noted that even in Goma, impact was observed at the lowest end of the scale. In Goma, some improvement was noted as the number of those on the “not at all informed” end of the scale decreased by half, from 16 to 8. In Kasugho, similarly, the number of respondents who in the baseline surveys said they were “not at all” informed on the role of the governmental authorities decreased from 21 to 8. Disaggregating the numbers therefore provides a fuller picture of the learning process.

With respect to their *judicial* authorities, there was an increase in Kasugho in the number of listening group members reporting being at least moderately informed on the role of the judicial authorities. In Bangui and Bambari, there was no change as all members had reported, in the baseline survey, being already at least moderately informed. In Goma, there was, again, a *decrease* in this number. A possible reason for this may be that hearing responses from authorities that contradict the difficult realities that members have faced could cause confusion, as opposed to a greater understanding, of authorities' roles. Therefore, there may be a potential unintended impact of IRfJ's programs in raising expectations about authorities' roles and willingness to act which are then not met, and even contradicted, in practice. As above, the impact for this indicator was strongest at the bottom levels of the scale. In Goma, although there was a decrease in the total number of listening group members reporting that they were at least “moderately” informed, the number of members reporting being “not at all” informed on the role

of the judicial authorities dropped from 19 to 10. This suggests that learning is taking place, though in a way not easily captured by the survey instrument. The conclusion that learning took place in the project sites on the role of the judicial authorities was reinforced by the increase in the number of listening group members able to give the title and/or name of at least one judicial authority. After year one, the share of 50 listening group members in Goma able to do so doubled, from **18%** to **36%**, and the share of 53 members in Kasugho able to do so more than doubled, from **17%** to **42%** (in Bangui and Bambari, this condition was already met at the baseline level).

The questions posed on the International Criminal Court by Ituri residents over the five years of the project to date likewise suggest that there has been a significant increase in Iturians' understanding of the ICC: what it is, how it functions, and what cases it is currently involved in. Over time there was a steady decrease in the number of questions posed on basic ICC structure or procedure, with a corresponding rise in the number of enquiries made in follow-up to specific, ongoing cases. While it is not possible to draw a causal link between IRfJ and this evolution, the fact that IRfJ's partner station in Bunia, Radio Canal Révélation (RCR) is said by many to be the most popular station in Bunia, and that IRfJ constitutes RCR's main, and most regularly broadcast, programming on justice, is suggestive. So too is the fact that IRfJ was one of the earliest, if not the earliest, projects in Ituri in terms of educating the population on the ICC. Evaluating the evolution of the questions related to *national* law posed over time in Ituri was more difficult, as these questions have dealt with a wider range of topics, bodies of law, and institutions than those on the ICC. However, an analysis of the questions posed on a specific legal instrument – the 2006 law on sexual violence – shows an evolution in listeners' understanding of the new law. There was a change in the terminology used to pose questions over time: the use of "rape" peaked in year three and declined thereafter, while there was a steady rise in references to the broader category of sexual violence, which corresponds to the definition in the new law. In Ituri, IRfJ has been a source of information for listeners on the new legislation for several years, and can therefore be viewed as having contributed to this evolution in the public's understanding.

Regarding the *behaviour* of listening group members in the new sites, Kasugho was the only site which exhibited an increase in the number of members reporting accessing a judicial authority in the past three months. Qualitative data collected suggests that of all the indicators, this is the one for which IRfJ may be the least likely to lead to behaviour change, despite the potential for change. Data from the observation of listening group sessions suggests that IRfJ is both a source of information on how to seek recourse, and an inspiration for seeking help when group members' rights are violated. Yet in focus group discussions, a number of respondents raised what they perceive to be serious obstacles to accessing their judicial authorities. They reported that when they have approached the authorities for assistance, they have been asked for money, and their poverty has prevented them from taking any claims further. They expressed the fear that any new attempt to consult an authority would bring the same response. Another consideration is whether or not group members have problems that they consider significant enough to consult a judicial authority. In focus group discussions with one of the listening groups in Goma, for instance, the women indicated that they couldn't consult an authority as it would be necessary to have a problem in order to do so. In the end-of-year surveys, the listening groups were asked if they had had a problem linked to justice in the past three months. In Bambari, where the number of members reporting accessing a judicial authority declined from 6 to 0, there was also a drop in the number of people reporting having had a problem linked to justice, from 6 to 2. Therefore, several factors may have affected the results for this indicator, making it difficult to establish impact. In Ituri, the fact that the majority (**54%**) of respondents said that they do not access their judicial authorities more often since they began listening to IRfJ programs may be due to these same obstacles. In addition to the belief that they would be asked for money if they went to consult their authorities, respondents outside of Bunia raised the lack of resources (time and money), as well as distance, as obstacles. Those living far from Bunia reported, too, that they

would not seek out a higher-level authority unless they had a serious problem – in the case of lesser problems, a local chief or church leader would handle these local justice issues.

Nearly all listening group members in the new sites (**95%**) as well as respondents in Ituri (**97%**) reported that they have confidence in IRfJ's programs to provide reliable information. The reasons given for this by respondents in Ituri were: 1) the information comes from experts in the subject matter and 2) it confirms the experiences they have had, and the things they have seen, in their own lives. Several respondents also indicated their belief that the information is reliable because it has been verified by the journalists. According to a group of local authorities interviewed: "Yes, all this information is verified before being broadcast. The presenters of these shows are responsible people; they can't broadcast anything that isn't true."

An analysis of the percentage change in the number of questions from a diverse group of listeners received by IRfJ staff over the life of the project shows that fewer questions made it onto programs in the second and third years than in the first. Possible explanations include longer answers given by authorities, or the fact that in recent years especially, multiple authorities have been sought out in Ituri to give their responses to a single question. In year four, there was a slight increase in the number of questions posed as compared to the previous year. In year five, a significant jump (a **236%** increase over the previous year) was noted, due to the expansion of the project to additional sites in the DRC and CAR. The data shows that a diversity of geographical target communities, ethnic groups, and social groups are being consulted to pose their questions for the programs, particularly with the project expansion. This is a positive trend and should be encouraged. However, there has been a consistent imbalance in the number of men and women posing questions throughout the life of the project. For instance, in the past year it is estimated that nearly twice as many men as women posed questions for IRfJ programs. In interviews with IRfJ journalists, these journalists reported that women – particularly young women – are more reluctant to pose questions, as compared to adult men. This suggests that efforts should be made by the journalists to seek out more women to pose their questions.

The assessment looked at the number of people from a diverse group of listeners (different target communities, education levels, genders, ethnicities, and religions) reporting consistently listening to IRfJ radio broadcasts. As the project has been active in Ituri District since 2005, it was decided to use Ituri as the focus for this indicator. The analyst and her Bunia-based field assistant spoke to 460 people, from a diversity of social, ethnic, religious, and educational backgrounds, in Bunia and the surrounding towns. While the results cannot be used to draw conclusions about the general population's listening behaviour, as the surveys were not done through random sampling, there were some general trends. Of the 460 respondents in Ituri, 381 (**83%**) reported listening to the radio. Of these respondents, 264 (**69%**) had heard of IRfJ. Of these, 170 respondents, or **64%**, reported regularly listening to IRfJ programs. The profile of these regular listeners suggests that regular listening to IRfJ programs is by no means confined to the listening groups associated with the project. Members of a number of different target communities – people from all walks of life – reported in the surveys that they listen to IRfJ regularly. Of note is the fact that a higher percentage of Bunia residents surveyed listen to IRfJ regularly, as opposed to respondents from the towns and villages outside Bunia. This was the case for both listening group and non-listening-group members. This may be due to a number of factors, including the possibility that higher education levels, greater access to radio, and a higher proportion of residents speaking one of IRfJ's three broadcast languages all prevail in the capital.

A higher number of men participated in the surveys in Ituri. As a number of respondents were listening group members, this reflects the fact that in nearly all cases, the majority of listening group members – particularly in the case of the listening groups outside of Bunia associated with IRfJ's local partner, RCR – are men. The data suggest that IRfJ programs are having a greater impact on men than on women, as a higher share of male respondents reported

listening to IRfJ regularly. This reflects the views of RCR staff, several of whom expressed the opinion that women are less likely to listen to the radio. The results also suggest that regular listenership is not limited to one or a few ethnic groups, but that the programs appeal to the members of a number of groups. In some cases, the ethnicity of the participants was relevant in the sense that a language barrier prevents listeners from accessing IRfJ programming fully. In Mahagi, Ituri District, the two listening groups met with, from the Alur ethnic group, said that they have difficulty understanding the IRfJ programs in Swahili. Only **20%** of the 93 respondents surveyed in Mahagi said they regularly listen to IRfJ, which suggests that translating IRfJ's programs into additional languages, such as Alur, would make these programs accessible to a wider range of people. The results gathered also indicate that people from different religions listen to IRfJ, and not just the members of any one religious group. Finally, the results suggest that IRfJ's programs are of interest to people with a variety of education levels, and not only to a well-educated few. The surveys show that IRfJ's regular listeners include men and women, as well as individuals from a number of social, ethnic, religious, and educational backgrounds, and therefore that IRfJ is of interest to a wide variety of target communities.

92% of respondents across the different sites reported increased awareness of their ability to effect positive change after listening to IRfJ's programs. The number of Yes answers was high across all sites, indicating that this is one of the most clear-cut impacts of the programs. Only in Bambari was the figure significantly lower than the average (**65%**). This may be due to the fact that in Bambari, listening group members had only listened to four programs prior to filling out the surveys. Yet only three respondents in Bambari said No, while four said they could not answer the question at that stage. In Ituri, **86%** of respondents answered in the affirmative. Respondents who said Yes reported that IRfJ's programs have given them the ability to raise the awareness of fellow community members on the law, as well as to spread the knowledge that it is people's responsibility to access the judicial system, instead of taking the law into their own hands. Several people said that even the fact that members of the population – and in particular, women – now feel that they can express themselves on the radio is a positive change to which IRfJ has contributed in Ituri.

Results from ICC and national authorities

The assessment explored the understanding and involvement of **ICC and national authorities** who have participated in IRfJ programs or been exposed to them through the mailing list. In Ituri, 14 national authorities who have appeared on IRfJ programs were interviewed. **86%** reported that IRfJ has increased their understanding of the needs of target community members. Respondents said that the questions posed by the population allow them not only to develop a greater understanding of people's needs, but also to adjust their policies in consequence. The same question was posed to ICC officials in The Hague, Bangui (CAR) and Bunia (Ituri). Of 24 respondents, **50%** reported that the programs have increased their understanding of the population's needs. The results show that the programs may be of more value to ICC officials based in The Hague, as opposed to field staff, who have more direct access to the views of members of the population. **67%** of the 15 Hague-based staff surveyed answered Yes, as compared to **22%** of field-based staff. Staff in The Hague also had a greater awareness of the project: **20%** of those surveyed were unable to answer the question, while **67%** of the 9 field staff interviewed was not sufficiently familiar with the project to respond. As a higher percentage of Hague-based staff were on the mailing list at the time of interview, this shows the effectiveness of IRfJ's monthly mailings in raising awareness of the project and its activities.

A review of the different and diverse authorities participating in IRfJ programs since 2005 revealed a steady increase in the number of officials participating in the programs (with a slight dip in year four). In year five, as a result of the extension of the project to the new sites, there was a significant rise in the number of national (though not ICC) authorities participating in

the project. There was also a broadening in the nature of participation, with a higher proportion of authorities from governmental and security agencies involved, in addition to judicial officials.

The Vox Pop series

The *Vox Pop* series was a three-program series developed in Goma and Kasugho in the spring of 2010 to address specific questions related to the International Criminal Court. The analysis of the *Vox Pop* series showed that these kinds of programs are a useful tool for educating listeners on key concepts in justice, but that three programs is not sufficient to convey complex concepts which may be new to listeners. In Kasugho, the groups exhibited a significant amount of knowledge acquisition from the programs. This indicates that radio programs are useful for conveying knowledge, and accessible to people of different education levels. The results in Goma were weaker, which may be due not only to the lower education level of these groups (as compared to Kasugho, where one group is made up of university students) but also to the analysis method used. In Kasugho, short surveys were filled out prior to the programs, and immediately afterwards, while in Goma, listening group members filled out surveys before and after the three programs in the series. The results of the surveys show the strongest impact for the questions: “Have you heard of Thomas Lubanga, Mathieu Ngudjolo, Germain Katanga, Jean-Pierre Bemba, and Omar Hassan Al-Bashir?”; “What do these men have in common?”; and “Do you know of any other people from whom the ICC has issued arrest warrants?” This suggests that when it came to knowledge of people they had already heard of, or the names of individuals, listeners retained the information more easily than in the case of the crimes for which the ICC issues arrest warrants. It is clear that three radio programs, while a useful tool for education, may not be sufficient for complex concepts to be clearly understood. A positive aspect of the project is the production of one base series program each month in each of the sites, featuring questions and answers on the ICC, which reinforces the concepts discussed in the *Vox Pop* series. The results also suggest that for new series, a short wrap-up from the previous program at the beginning of each new program could help to reinforce the knowledge gained in the previous show.

International outreach

The *Interactive Radio for Justice* project also involves a significant international outreach component. IRfJ Director Wanda Hall goes on regular outreach trips to universities in North America and Europe, as well as to places with international courts like Cambodia and The Hague, giving talks on IRfJ. IRfJ also provides regular updates on its activities through its website and mailing list. The IRfJ website was set up on 14 December 2005; as of June 30, 2010, there were 221 people on the mailing list. The objective of this international outreach is to facilitate *non-governmental/inter-governmental organizations* (NGOs/IGOs), the *media*, and *academics* to increase their involvement with DRC and CAR issues. The peak for NGOs/IGOs on IRfJ’s mailing list becoming involved in the DRC was in 2007-2008. This was also the peak for organizations contacting IRfJ for information and assistance. In 2010, after a drop, the number has risen again. This suggests an upsurge in interest in the project on the part of NGOs/IGOs working in, or interested in working in, the target sites. *New* contacts have dropped slightly since the peak in 2006-2007, which points to the need for IRfJ to make additional contacts. Over the years, IRfJ has cultivated several long-term relationships with NGOs, who have contacted IRfJ repeatedly for information and assistance. The number of journalists contacting IRfJ was highest in 2007 and then again in 2009; in 2010, IRfJ is currently on target to match or exceed this. In 2009 and 2010, a number of the journalists contacting IRfJ were first-time contacts, which is a positive trend. With print media and radio broadcasting, output in recent years from people on IRfJ’s mailing list has been increasing; the same trend was also observed for academic output. Therefore, the trend is going in the desired direction. However, the relatively small number of academics on the mailing list who are producing research on DRC and CAR issues suggests that IRfJ should intensify its efforts to engage with more students and academics.