



Africa Scout Radio

The Results

The Africa Scout Radio started in early 2002, so the service is still in its early stages. Presently, eighteen programmes have been produced and a total of 48 programmes are scheduled for production within the year.

Scouting has a huge potential in Africa as 60 % of the population is below 25 years of age. However, only around 1% of this population is in active Scouting, due to lack of resources, infrastructure and the possibility to communicate effectively to spread the word about Scouting in the region. This is especially true in rural areas where most of the population lives.



Rover Scouts prepare to rehearse for a radio

In Africa, radio remains the most effective channel of communication, as it reaches an estimated 90% of the population. The Africa Scout Region has therefore embarked on the use of the radio to make Scouting available to more young Africans.

This new concept/service is in line with the growth strategy in the 10-Year Development plan for Scouting in the Africa Region, which was adopted by the 11th Africa Scout Conference in September 2001.

The overall goal of the Africa Scout Radio is to disseminate information on Scouting widely within the Africa Scout Region, resulting in a better understanding of Scouting, increased membership, and better Scouting for more young Africans. The specific objectives set for the project

are to:

- Create a better understanding of Scouting in the community;
- Intensify the dissemination of Scouting information by reaching a wider geographical scope;
- Use the radio as a training tool for Scout Leaders;
- Promote Youth Programme development, Leader Training, Community Development and Public Relations;
- Use the radio as a marketing and publicity channel for Scouting in the Africa Region.

The Reasons

The growth strategy for Scouting in Africa aims to make Scouting accessible to more young people. This involves increasing the number of member associations in the region, as well as increasing the number of Scouts in each National Scout Association. Segments of the population where Scouting has not reached will also be targeted e.g. difficult geographical locations (distances and terrain), social factors (street children, slum dwellers), physical factors (persons with disabilities).

Other means of communication such as the Internet, satellite, and even the basic telephone are still distant dreams for many people in rural Africa. As such, the power of the radio remains the most effective as a channel of communication and for the dissemination of information.

Compared to other media, radio has the following advantages, especially in Africa:

- 1) It is cost-efficient in terms of investment both for those who produce the programmes and for the audience.



Technical operations before recording starts



- 2) It is relevant to local practices, traditions and culture.
- 3) In terms of outreach and geographic coverage, radio has a strong advantage over other media.
- 4) It is affordable to the vast majority in the rural areas.

The Methods

Use of Volunteers

Volunteers are engaged right from the start, from the concept development, through to writing of scripts and recording at the studio.

Use of a Christian radio station

A Christian radio station currently facilitates production of the programmes at cost. This has made it possible to produce and plan for at least the first 24 programmes.

However, the use of this radio station is not guaranteed, as production of their programmes takes priority.



The radio programmes are recorded in a professional studio

Our Learning

- We need to attract volunteers with a variety of talents. So far, we have not a single volunteer with the skills of script writing and radio production. This means that once the write-ups on each programme are ready, we then have to engage the services of radio experts to prepare the scripts and edit the programmes.
- Commercial/private radio stations are unwilling to air programmes free of charge, so we have started by asking Scout associations to approach national and community radio stations for free airtime.
- We need to pull in more volunteers, especially adult leaders to contribute to the writing of briefs on various Scout topics, which can later be developed into radio scripts.
- In order for Scout associations to broadcast widely,

(i.e. use commercial radio stations, especially those with high listener figures) they need to get sponsorship for the airtime, especially from their local business communities. This means that Scouting should engage in professional marketing, public relations and profile building in order to attract such help.

Our Future Plans

- To procure our own studio equipment thus reducing the cost of production which is escalated by the hire of recording studios.
- Ensure that for a start, all English speaking Scout associations succeed in broadcasting the radio programmes in their countries.
- Translate the programmes to French for the benefit of French speaking Scout associations in Africa.
- Support National Scout associations to translate the programmes into local languages such as Kiswahili. (Kiswahili is spoken in Kenya, Tanzania, and parts of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Congo)

For further information, contact the Africa Regional Scout Office at afrcscout@africa.scout.org or visit the Africa Scout Website: www.scout.org/africa

