



# Radio Campaigns for optimizing crop production



## Introduction

**Radio campaign** is a media-based activity that extend over a period and can be used to encourage a target population to adopt a certain behaviour, and to give instruction on how to do it. Radio campaigns will support awareness creation, mobilization and behaviour change and are suitable to reach the (rural) communities with the messages, through use of community radios. This guide is written to provide guidance and tips in setting up the radio campaign, as well as an example script for a radio program.



*Photos: Use of radio in local context.*

Radio is still the most popular, economic and accessible means of communication for rural populations. In Ethiopia the number of radio sets per head exceeds by far the number of TV sets. In kebeles with high rates of illiteracy, where electricity, phone or access to Internet may be lacking, radio plays a key role in daily local life. Radio can be used as a campaign tool to trigger people into action and to promote soil and water conservation interventions, such as Water Spreading Weirs, Dry Stone Measures. One can use a radio campaign not only to disseminate information, but also to organize events, communicate the venues for meetings with extension workers and advise on where to obtain inputs/services or to get technical support, with a focus on regional or local events.

An important point is that radio also provides opportunities to project implementers for:

- Sensitizing the rural communities about the WSWs and DSMs;
- updating all the stakeholders and the rural communities about the progress of the water and soil conservation programs;
- promoting adoption of various agricultural technologies through clarifying areas not well understood by the communities.

Advantages	Limitations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching people with a radio</li> <li>• Responding to actual events</li> <li>• Combine with field schools and local events</li> <li>• Monitoring possible</li> <li>• You can reach everyone, also people who are illiterate</li> <li>• Interaction: possibility of receiving prompt feedback</li> <li>• Opportunity: Drama /storytelling</li> <li>• Sections of the program can be shared through social media messages, for further spread of the information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penetration in remote areas can be difficult</li> <li>• Uses only one sense (hearing)</li> <li>• Need for regular replacement of batteries is a cost</li> <li>• Message only temporarily available at time of broadcast</li> <li>• It needs well trained broadcasters</li> <li>• Finding a radio station that is familiar with the target groups</li> <li>• Cost to prepare, record and transmiss the programs</li> </ul>

## Setting up a radio campaign

### Important points to consider:

- ✓ **Gender friendly approach.** In the radio campaign women need to be included in all stages. For example: by having a female voice in the radio broadcast, by choosing the time of the broadcast, so that women in the communities are available to listen. In general, by organizing, supporting, and coordinating activities for women they benefit the most from the radio campaign opportunities.
- ✓ **The broadcast needs to be in a local language.** Using the language or dialect of the pastoralist and semi-pastoralist communities will ensure that they understand the core message, but also feel respected and recognized at the same time.
- ✓ **Campaign music.** The program needs to have an attractive opening musical piece that is a reminder to people that the program is going to start. In addition, when they listen to the music piece, they will automatically make a link with the campaign and create an emotional connection. Be sure that the music piece that you use will not offend or confront the community's religion and beliefs or other cultural values.
- ✓ **Choosing appropriate timing for airing the campaign.** Research the daily activities of pastoralist and semi-pastoralist and choose a time when pastoralist and semi-pastoralist are available to listening to the radio campaign. Is it early in the morning or late in the afternoon? This is a very important part of the radio campaign and its effectivity.
- ✓ **Topics of interest for local communities.** Pastoralist and semi-pastoralist communities have many responsibilities and occupations during the day. They will only listen to a radio program that discusses relatable topics like opportunities to improve their health, livestock, crops, water or marketing.

### What do you need to prepare for a radio campaign?

#### 1. First agree about the target group you want to reach.

Be clear about the group you want to reach, are they pastoralist, or semi-pastoralist, women, youth, or all of them? Each of these groups has its own way of perceiving information and getting motivated. Considering also that the time for airing the broadcast differs from group to group, based on their daily activities. You need to choose a time when it is likely for the target group to be listening to the radio: remember your goal is to reach them.

#### 2. What is the campaign about?

Be clear about the message you want to disseminate, have a clear purpose and goal. What you want to achieve is to stimulate the target group to take a specific action, and this needs an appropriate planification according to the topics and the target groups.

#### 3. Budget: make a financial plan early on.

A radio campaign costs money, it is important to make a financial plan early on and to discuss cost, frequency, and duration with the radio station. Also, what are the options to cover those costs: is there a financial support from the government, NGOs or sponsorship?

#### **4. Duration of the radio campaign.**

The time of the campaign depends on the topic and the target group. If they need to adopt significantly to new farming practices and innovations, then you need to make the radio campaign to run long enough that it reaches the target population, and that it gives enough time to assimilate and adopt the new practice.

#### **5. With whom are you working together in the campaign?**

You do not do a radio campaign alone. This is a great opportunity to work with different partners; who can be those partners? Woredas extension workers, NGOs, donors, pastoralist association, cooperative, women association, universities, government department, etc. Work together with them during the planning but also after the campaign, this will improve quality and effectiveness. The partners can be a good source of ideas, feedback, but most of all, they can help the radio campaign to become a success.

#### **6. What outcome do you expect from the radio campaign?**

If everything goes well, the radio campaign will stimulate pastoralist and semi-pastoralist to a certain action, they will be triggered into a new venture with the information they will be listening to. You need to prepare following steps for pastoralist and semi-pastoralist to access more detailed information and to get enrolled, and what are the points of action. Plan those steps before you start the radio campaign.

#### **7. Monitor the progress during the campaign.**

Review how the campaign is going, are you reaching the target group? For this it is important to reserve some time for the campaign to get landed. Take this into account when planning the frequencies of broadcasting and the duration of the campaign. Are you getting some feedback, are the communities getting the right information? Are communities starting to mobilise and getting motivated to search for more detailed information or start to get enrolled? All these points will help you evaluate if the radio campaigns are working well. Do not hesitate to make some changes if it is necessary.

#### **8. Evaluation.**

An important part of a radio campaign is the evaluation. At the end of the campaign many facts and findings will come out. You can get a good feedback from the pastoralist and semi-pastoralist communities, about how they received the information sent on radio, and how this information helped to create new ideas. Ask what needs to be improved! Furthermore, include evaluation of the partners in this report.

## Example of Radio Campaign for optimizing crop production

**Objective:** To enthruse communities to adapt practices to optimize crop production in order to use the potential of the Water Spreading Weirs and Dry-stone measure

**Target Audience:** Pastoralist and semi-pastoralist

**Core story:** soil degradation can be turn around trough Water Spreading Weirs and Dry-Stone Measures; with these mechanisms there is a great oppotunity for water conservation and growing of fodder crops

**Program name:** Optimizing Crop Production through soil and water conservation

**Duration:** 8 to 12 weeks, broadcast per week and one repeat.

**Topics/content:** Optimizing crop production through Water Spreading Weirs (WSW) and Dry Stone Measure (DSM)

**Features/formats:** Opening broadcast of interviews with communities' leaders, Kebele public association, women and pastoralist/semi-pastoralist, field interviews, testimonies, case studies (and core stories), interviews, open broadcast with farmers

**Sample Script:** Optimizing crop production: growing fodder grasses

### Sampled broad cast series:

1. Teaser: Bringing fodder to the market – what is value chains
2. Controlling water with WSW and DSM – spreading water, controlling gullies
3. How to build WSWs
4. How to builds DSMs
5. Optimizing crop production
6. Maintaining the WSWs and the DSMs
7. Developing wells
8. Women issues

### Structure:

1. Spot 30 sec
2. Staged dialogue with farmers – community discussion
3. Spot 130 sec
4. Interview experts
5. Spot 130 sec
6. Announcement, competition, where to get information

## Annex 1: Sample Radio Scripts

In this document one sample radio script is provided, discussing important components of the Dry Valley Rehabilitation and Productive Use Approach:

- Optimizing crop production: growing fodder grasses.

As part of Package 1 – Soil and Water Conservation, two other radio scripts are prepared on

- Water spreading weirs
- Dry stone measures

Each complete program will last 8-12 minutes and ideally should be part of a series on the different elements of DVRPU. More programs can be made – giving room to more experience sharing.

Also, a short 30 or 130 second announcement/ pitch can be used to announce all programs in the days before the airing of the program.

Two examples of a spot of 30 seconds and a spot of 130 seconds are provided as part of this document.

A suggested structure of the program:

1. Spot 130 sec
2. Staged dialogue with farmers – community discussion
3. Spot 130 sec
4. Interview experts
5. Spot 130 sec
6. Announcement, competition, where to get information

### 1. Radio script Optimizing Crop Production: Growing Fodder Grasses

#### Guidance:

- For this program you will need a Host and Female Pastoralist.
- It is important to have a (music) tune when the program is starting and finalizing. Use for all the soil and water conservation program the same tune, so the listener will make the connection with the topic by listening to the tune.
- Before going on air make sure the host reviews the questions with the guest and be clear on the topic, the objective, and on the time available.
- You could use this script as inspiration to research and write a script on a similar topic in your area. Or you might choose to produce this script on your station, using voice actors to represent the speakers. If so, please make sure to tell your audience at the beginning of the program that the voices are those of actors, not the people involved originally.
- Make sure, that you include the right contact for further information on the topic, if there are listener who are interested they can easy access and obtain more information.
- Estimated running time: 10 minutes, with intro and outro music

## Script:

### Introduction with music (music playing)

**Host:** Welcome to our weekly program of water and soil conservation, today we have a special guest who will share with us her experience on growing fodder grass. Welcome Aysha.

**Host:** Aysha I understand you come from Eru. Can you explain how farming is in Eru?

**Aysha:** Thank you for having me in your radio program. In my community we listen to the program every week. The water and soil conservation programs have helped us to understand why the lands in our village are degraded and what the possible solutions are, and what we as a community can do to solve this problem.

For us what is the most important activity is our livestock. We live from our camels and goats, they provide us with milk, leather, meat, almost everything we need we get from our livestock. In the last years it has been more and more difficult to find sufficient good pastureland. During droughts we have to travel far. We are always afraid that we try to get to some good pasture area, but do not reach it in time and then have nowhere to go.

**Host:** Aysha, you are here because things have changed and now you have another story to share. Right? You have been planting fodder grasses on your land. Can you explain to us why you took that decision? Because your situation reflected that of many others pastoralist who are struggling with the same problem, they also don't have enough grass for their livestock.

**Aysha:** Yes, that is correct, many pastoralist women and men are going through the same difficulties. What made the difference in our village was that in our area water spreading weirs and dry-stone measures were introduced. They have helped a lot in keeping the water in our area. They helped to increase soil moisture. This has made it possible to grow several crops and my family has planted fodder grasses. Because of this we are no longer only dependent on the open grazing areas for our livestock and can also provide the livestock with higher quality food.

**Host:** That sounds fantastic Aysha. Is it difficult to plant fodder grasses?

**Aysha:** Like all things in life, things are difficult if you do not know what to do, or how to do, but they are much easier when you have learned how to do them. In planting fodder grasses there are a few things that one needs to take care of. First good land preparation is required. Land preparation and minimal soil disturbance is needed. It is important to loosen the soil surface in the area where you want to plant the grasses. The open soil surface will reduce runoff, enable better water infiltration into the soil and ease the penetration of roots into the soil. It will also prevent grass seeds from being blown away by wind.

Next is the planting of the grass seeds. For one hectare we use 7 to 8 kilogram of seeds. When the seeds are hard, you can do pre-soaking of seeds in water to make them soft. Another method is to do rubbing of seeds with sand to make them softer. After softening the seeds, you can do the planting in the soil. Best is to plant them in a very shallow furrow of not more than two centimeter deep and cover the seeds with only a very little soil so birds do not eat them. This is the most effective use of the seeds. If you do not want to make such a furrow lines, you can also broadcast the seeds but good then to keep the direction of the wind in mind so the seeds get evenly distributed.

**Host:** Thanks Aysha for all these tips. What more do we need to know?

Like I mentioned the grass seeds should be planted very shallow or not covered at all. Otherwise, the grass seeds will not germinate. If possible use animal manure before planting and harrow this into the soil. Also apply manure after harvesting.

The best planting season for grasses is near the early rains. This will ensure that the young established grasses have a short period of drought before the summer rains. It takes about 3 months after planting of the grasses for them to reach maturity. Two seasons will provide a good basis for the grasses to establish well, after that they are more hardy to survive long periods of drought.

**Host:** Aysha, what you have explained to us is really surprising and eye-opening. Because it shows us that with some innovations, such as the water spreading weirs and dry-stone measures the land can be rehabilitate and be use for different crops. What are your future plans?

**Aysha:** I have seen that some people dry the fodder and make hay. I am keen to learn this. If we have hay we can keep the fodder for a long time and use it during droughts when there is a shortage. If we make hay we can also sell this when we produce more grasses than we need for our own purposes.

**Host:** Aysha, many of our listeners are wondering how they can also access these initiatives. What you can tell them?

**Aysha:** In the case of my village, we got in contact with the people from GIZ and together with the development agent, and the village representative we organized different meeting where they explain to us the opportunities that the water spreading wears and the dry-stone measure will bring. In those meeting we had also the opportunity to discuss our concerns and doubts. When the WSW and the DSM were implemented, we learned that we could planting fodder grasses, later that day we talk together in my family, and we agree that we will try to grow fodder grass.

**Host:** Our time is up, I want to thank you Aysha for sharing your experience with us, it was very useful to understand what you are doing. I also want to thank our listeners. If you want more information about how to grow fodder grass, please go to the nearest DA. Remember next week we will continue with a new program of water and soil conservation, supported by GIZ

**Close the program with the same music you started with...**

### 3. Short Spot (30 sec)

<b>Signature tune</b>	(Play the tune developed for the program – short version)
	Hey listeners! Do you know that there is much to do to make our lowlands greener and more productive? Yes, you are hearing it correctly! By better soil and water conservation and new ways of doing farming!! Listen to our program every [mention day] – with first-hand experiences in dry valley rehabilitation and productive use. Go to the nearest local agricultural office for more information, or contact your local development agent today!
<b>Signature tune</b>	(Play the tune developed for the program – short version)

### 4. Long Spot (130 sec)

Below the two-men version is explained. You can also make a version with two women, and one focusing on dry valley rehabilitation and productive use.

<b>Signature tune</b>	(Play the tune developed for the program)
<b>Market ambient sounds</b>	(In the background, during the conversation)
<b>Voice one</b>	I am so happy now, that after three years of hard work, we stopped erosion and land degradation. We can make good use of our land and the fertile soil again! Look at the grass, our goats and camels now have plenty of fresh grass!
<b>Voice two</b>	We benefit from the dry stone measures in many ways. Our soil is getting more moisture, and more organic content The crops grow much better thanks to more water and nutrients, and we have higher yields Fodder grasses grow better on our land, and our camels and goats have more feed. And lastly, we are better prepared for droughts. Erosion is now under control!
<b>Host</b>	There is so much to do to rehabilitate low land, and get more food, more incomes, more jobs! Go to the nearest local agricultural office for more information or contact your local development agent, today!
<b>Signature tune</b>	(Play the tune developed for the program)



