



FARMERS VOICE RADIO

Planning your Farmers' Voice Radio programmes

This guide will give an overview of the key considerations for planning your Farmers' Voice Radio programmes. As noted in resource 4, [Farmers' Voice Radio Approach and Ethics](#), effective radio programmes keep the listener in mind at all times! You must plan the radio programmes so that they are Entertaining, Informative, Educational and they Raise Listener Voices. It is important that the radio programmes are in the local language of the target audience and do not dump information, preach, disrespect farmers or ignore complex issues.

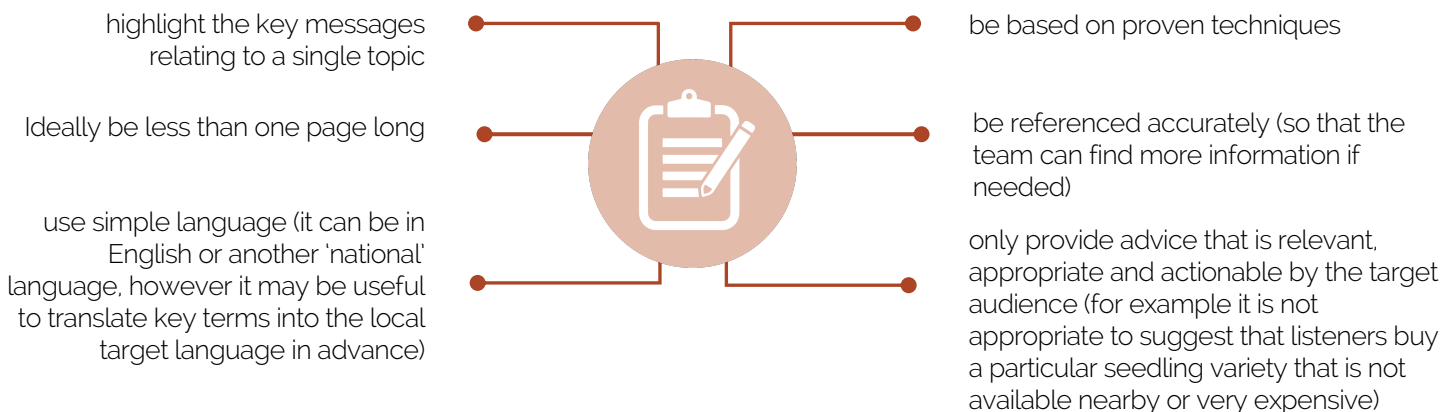
Well planned Farmers' Voice Radio programmes will connect farmers to the knowledge they need to succeed and will bring about real change! Here are the steps that we go through to plan each Farmers' Voice Radio programme:

01 Selecting the topics

In the [Training and Planning workshop](#), you will have developed a Programme Plan that lists the different topics that are relevant and important to your target audience across the whole calendar year. This is an important reference document for every Programme Reference Group Meeting and should be used to select the specific topics that will be discussed at each meeting (usually 4-6 topics, to generate content for 4-6 programmes), brief participants, and identify local experts or stakeholders who can be invited to answer any technical questions that might arise during the discussion (see resource 9 on [Engaging Stakeholders](#) for more guidance on this) – either during the Programme Reference Group Meeting itself or separately in a recorded interview.

02 Planning the content

In our experience it is helpful to develop a series of Information Sheets relating to each topic that can guide both the Programme Reference Group discussions and the post-production to ensure programmes are complete, accurate and consistent. Each Information Sheet should:



You may wish to get other technical experts or stakeholders involved in the preparation of these information sheets. Here are some examples of Information Sheets for different thematic areas:

[Health and Safety in Shea Picking and Processing](#) | [Forest Friendly Cocoa](#) | [Seedling Nurseries](#)

The content for the Farmers' Voice Radio programmes comes from the regular Programme Reference Group Meeting discussions that take place in the community, which is described in detail in Resource 11: [Running the Programme Reference Group Meeting](#).

03 Agreeing the format

The Local Facilitator and Radio Presenters must agree a format for each radio programme to guide the post-production process. All of the radio programme content should be in the most relevant local language and will include:

- A name for the programme that is used in advertising and promotion – the name is usually selected by Programme Reference Group members.
- A short jingle for the programme that distinguishes the programme from others aired on the radio station. Jingles are often written and recorded by Programme Reference Group members to promote ownership – [listen to this example from a previous project in Uganda](#). This should be played at the start and end of each programme.
- Brief introduction covering the project partners, the radio programme's overall aim and that week's discussion topic. It could also include a short introduction to the Programme Reference Group and any other stakeholders, technical experts or donors involved.
- If you choose to answer listeners questions on a weekly basis, a short Q&A section, grouping together any similar ones and providing a comprehensive response – either 'live' from the radio presenter or a technical expert in the studio, or via a pre-recorded interview. Listeners like to be mentioned by name, so it is important to say where the questions have come from.
- Recorded discussion of one topic from the Programme Reference Group meeting, which will usually incorporate input from the local expert or stakeholder. It is important that the post-production ensures that the farmers' voices are predominant in the radio programmes (Farmers' Voice Radio programmes should NOT be a monologue from a local expert) – see section five below.
- Short, pre-recorded (and if necessary, translated) interview with a technical expert or other relevant stakeholders, if it has not been possible for them to attend the Programme Reference Group meeting.
- Invitation for listeners to submit questions, comments, suggestions and other feedback to the radio programme team via a studio phonenumber, dedicated mobile phone number, social media or a custom designed Listener Feedback System – see resource 10 on [Engaging Listeners](#) for more detail.

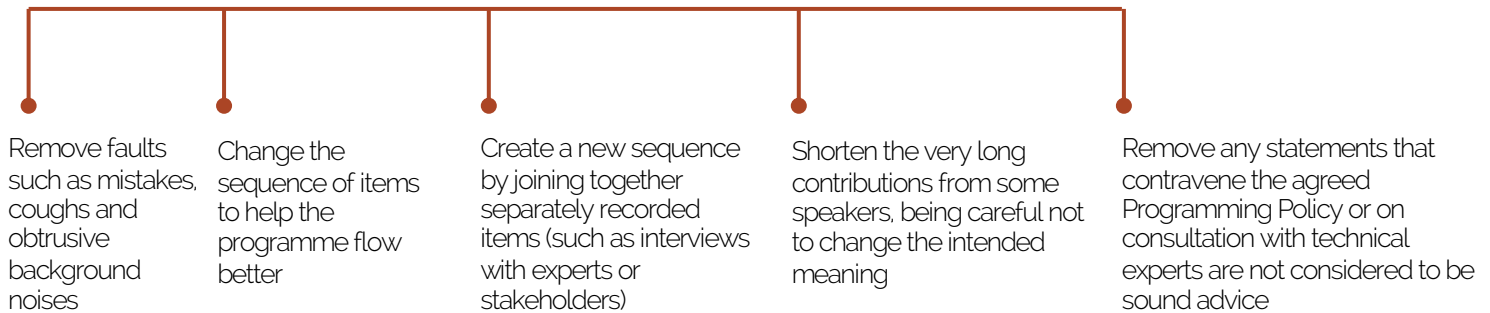
You can listen to some sample Farmers' Voice Radio programmes from different countries [here](#).

Note that if you choose to answer listener questions on a monthly basis through a dedicated Q&A programme, the format for those episodes will be different and will likely feature a live or pre-recorded panel discussion where listener contributions are responded to by relevant guests.

04 Editing the content

Programme Reference Group meetings generate hours of recorded audio material that provides the content for 4-6 programmes, which will be broadcast weekly until the next meeting takes place. The radio production team must edit this material down into short, punchy episodes of around 15 minutes, each covering one topic, that retain the listeners' attention and communicate key messages. It is important to note that Farmers' Voice Radio programmes are not intended to be polished, 'BBC standard' productions – informality, human error and background noise all help the programmes to appear familiar and trustworthy. However, there are some important points to note during the post-production process:

When editing, the production team can:



Although editing is a very useful tool, it can also be dangerous and it is important to observe the ethics of editing – see resource 4 on [Farmers' Voice Radio Approach and Ethics for more detail](#)

After the first Programme Reference Group meeting, the Local Facilitator and other members of the project team should work closely with the radio station production team to ensure that the post-production follows the Farmers' Voice Radio approach and meets the VOICES standards before the first programmes are broadcast. The radio production team may need accompaniment in this process after the first few Programme Reference Group meetings to ensure the radio programmes meet the expectations of the project team.

The project team and Programme Reference Group members should listen as often as possible to the radio programmes as they are broadcast and provide constructive feedback to the production team.

MP3 audio recordings and transcripts (in local and/or national language) should be made available by the radio station to assist with monitoring as well as to be reused on other occasions.

05 Promoting the radio programme

There is little point producing and broadcasting an excellent Farmers' Voice Radio programme if no one listens! Agreeing the best way to promote the radio programmes to the target audience should also be included in your plan. Here are some methods to consider that have been used in previous projects:

The radio station can promote the Farmers' Voice Radio radio programme throughout the week (short spots to be played at key times).



The Local Facilitator and partner organisations can promote the programme amongst its beneficiaries and members through its activities (trainings etc) and by using posters, t-shirts and word of mouth. Here are examples of posters from two Farmers Voice Radio projects:

- [Sierra Leone](#)
- [Ethiopia](#)

Programme Reference Group members and Radio Guardians agree in their terms of reference that they will promote the programmes to family, friends and neighbours.