



FARMERS VOICE RADIO

Project Design and Formative Research

The Farmers' Voice Radio methodology can be used by any farmers' organisation, radio station, NGO or agri-business that wants to enable farming communities to access and share the knowledge they need to succeed. Programme Reference Groups made up of men and women farmers are central to Farmers' Voice Radio programmes; they provide the content and are the voices on the radio programmes. In order to assess whether Farmers' Voice Radio is right for your project and context, we have compiled a list of questions that will help you in your formative research:

01 Purpose and description of target group*

What changes do you wish to bring about with the radio programme? What problem are you trying to address?

Which community(ies) will the radio programmes serve, i.e. who is the main audience? Where do they live (inc. distance from each other if there is more than one group)? What are their needs? What is the terrain like? How many people are you trying to reach? How are they organised? (cooperatives etc.). Which language(s) do they speak?



What other agricultural extension services currently exist? How are they delivered and how well do they address the needs of the target communities? If your organisation is already involved in delivering extension services, what does that entail?

What other radio stations or programmes currently exist for this audience, if any? What is their focus and how do they address the needs of the communities?

02 Local operating capacity

Will you or a partner be managing and implementing this Farmers' Voice Radio programme series? The main implementing organisation is usually an NGO or farmers' organisation that has an existing relationship with the target communities and ideally also with other sector actors. You and your partner staff will become familiar with the Farmers' Voice Radio methodology through the online resources or training from the LYF team. You will assign a local facilitator who will be responsible for coordinating activities with the radio station(s) and target communities, to set up community-based Programme Reference Groups and get the radio programmes on air.

Overview of other stakeholders – who are the key organisations and individuals operating in the sector that would need to be involved in the project? For example, cooperatives /producer organisations, local traders, processors, exporters, international buyers, agri-input suppliers, agricultural extension agents, other government agencies, traditional leaders, social & health services etc.

What local radio stations currently exist that reach the target communities with a good signal, if any? Identifying the most appropriate radio partner(s) will be one of the first project activities – you will need to explore the mission and capacity of potential candidates, including goals, focus, funding source, technical capacity, equipment (studio, recording and editing), signal strength/reliability and geographic reach, estimated audience numbers, broadcasting hours, access to reliable electricity source, access to technical support etc. The radio station presenters will also be trained in the Farmers' Voice Radio participatory approach.

03 Other considerations

- **Timing issues** – what are the key dates in the agricultural calendar that affect field-based activities (rainy / wet seasons, planting, harvesting etc.) and the implications on capacity?
- **Are there any government regulations on broadcasting that you need to take into account?**
- **Environmental restrictions and risks** – radio is excellent at reaching communities that are isolated due to issues such as conflict or disease outbreaks. However, it is vital to develop a full understanding of the implications of these in the planning stages, especially when organising the Programme Reference Group meetings and recording the farmers' voices.

* Most projects start with a baseline setting exercise, gathering data on the following areas through a survey conducted with a sample of the target group - see our [resource on establishing a baseline](#) for full details. You may have conducted similar research or a baseline already, in which case the data could be very helpful in designing your Farmers' Voice Radio project:

