



Supporting broadcasters in Africa to strengthen small-scale farming and rural communities



## What we do

Farm Radio International listens to African farmers. They inspire us to prepare simple, useful radio scripts based on their needs. The information is then broadcast to millions of farmers and their families on over 300 stations throughout some 37 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

*"Welcome listeners. You may know that insect and microbe pests cause serious damage to rice crops in West Africa. But did you know that there are local solutions? Today, we will listen to Mr. Bamba, a rice farmer from Guinea. Mr. Bamba uses pepper powder to preserve rice crops. Stay tuned to hear him explain his recipe for protecting stored rice."*

*Farm Radio Script #81.2, August 2007*

## Why we do it

400 million Africans live on family-run, small-scale farms. To **grow more food** and improve their lives, they need practical information about **sustainable farming, health, and community development** issues – such as fertilizing crops with compost and preventing disease by protecting drinking water. They also need to **have their voice heard**, to share their wisdom and raise their concerns.

- Radio reaches people where they live, in languages they understand. Radio is affordable.
- Radio does not require literacy. 72% of rural Kenyan families, for example, regularly listen to the radio.
- Radio speaks to women and men, young and old.
- Radio encourages learning, discussion and debate.
- Radio gives a voice to local people, allowing them to influence policy and have a say in their community.

## How we do it

Since 1979, Farm Radio International has been working hand-in-hand with African broadcasters, farmers' groups, and researchers, to share ideas and information about issues that small-scale farmers care about: sustainable agriculture, nutrition, health and community development. Our approach is simple, but effective:

- We ask farmers and communities to share their questions, stories, ideas and needs.
- We learn about successful, affordable and sustainable practices – ideas that have worked for farmers in the next village, a neighbouring country or even halfway around the world.
- We share information about these practices through *Farm Radio Scripts* and *Farm Radio Weekly*, an on-line news bulletin for broadcasters.
- We distribute these resources to 320-plus radio organizations in 37 African countries (and more every year).
- Our radio partners interpret and adapt the material to local languages and contexts, and broadcast the information to millions of farmers and their families.
- We provide tips, guidelines, resources and training information to broadcasters to help them better serve farmers' communication needs through knowledge sharing, dialogue and exploring their ideas.

## How we have helped

### We link farmers to farmers over the airwaves

#### *An example of Farm Radio at work:*

Some African communities use seed banks to sustain access to good seeds. A seed bank is almost like a library – farmers contribute to, borrow from and replenish seeds in the bank after the harvest. It improves farmer access to a diversity of seeds. Farm Radio worked with researchers to prepare scripts about seed banks. The scripts went through the Farm Radio network to 100s of broadcasters, including one in Zambia, who used it to inspire radio listeners to introduce community seed banks, thereby reducing dependence on expensive store-bought seeds.

### We serve smallholder farmers

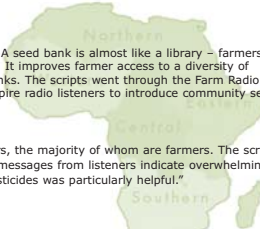
"We broadcast Farm Radio International's scripts to about one million listeners, the majority of whom are farmers. The scripts are relevant, simple and easy to adapt to local languages and settings. Text messages from listeners indicate overwhelming support. A script on food/grains storage using pepper instead of chemical pesticides was particularly helpful."

*- Umar Baba Kumo, Gombe Media Corporation, Nigeria*

### We serve broadcasters

"We are happy to receive script package #81. We thank you so much. We wish to inform you that three programs have already been broadcast on Radio UMOJA FM. Every Thursday at 19:30 we air one of the scripts. They are translated into Kiswahili, Mashi and Kifulero."

*- Alexis Nalunja Kajabika, Director, Radio UMOJA FM, Democratic Republic of Congo*



## What else do we do

### Research

In 2007, Farm Radio International launched the African Farm Radio Research Initiative (AFRRI), a new program made possible by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to World University Service of Canada. Through AFRRI, Farm Radio International will conduct a 42-month study of the impact of radio broadcasting in five countries: Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Tanzania and Uganda. Researchers will evaluate best practices for using radio to improve the lives of rural communities in Africa.

### Training

Farm Radio International builds the skills of broadcasters. We regularly deliver tips through our newsletters – *Voices* and *Farm Radio Weekly* – and our script packages. We sponsor workshops and discussion forums. We research training needs and develop courses to meet those needs.

**Yes, I would like to help Farm Radio International!**

with a gift of  \$500  \$250  \$100  \$75  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**FARM RADIO INTERNATIONAL**  
1404 Scott Street, Ottawa ON K1Y 4M8 / Toll free: 1-888-773-7717  
Tel.: 613-761-3650 / Fax: 613-798-0990 / www.farmradio.org  
Charitable Registration No. 11888 4808 RR0001

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