

Community Media for Kenya (CM4K): A review of milestones and opportunities

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Abstract

On September 25th 2015, at a Sustainable Development Summit in New York, more than 150 countries of the United Nations acknowledged a pressing need to ameliorate the marginalization and disenfranchisement endured by those living in poverty. Vowing to 'Transform our world' by 2030, the Summit adopted 17 aspirational Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals have since been adopted by all nations including Kenya. Discussing the significance of the SDGs, Sir Mike Aaronson – Chair of the Strategic Advisory Group for the Global Challenges Research Fund – recently emphasized the need to break out of traditional silo thinking and called on researchers to work in transformative ways by creating real and meaningful partnerships with local people defining the issues; committing to capacity-building; and understand how people might use technologies in the context of their lives. Aaronson's call echoes the Partnership Education: Action and Research Learning Scenarios (PEARLS) approach of Community Media 4 Kenya, a partnership between the University of Brighton, UK and Rongo University, Kenya. Adopting a transformative approach to learning within and between academic and community partnerships, CM4K was established to focus on examining ways that community media¹ practice and inquiry can be utilized to build healthy active and sustainable communities, within the context of the SDGs. This paper introduces the first year of a campaign to co-

¹ Community Media is used in its broadest sense to include ICTs

create a community radio station at Cham gi Wadu in Migori County, which seeks to contribute to the attainment of the national development goals of Kenya. The outcome of this campaign is expected to inform policy on the need to enhance integration of community media practice for faster achievement of National Development Goals by developing a national network of interested stakeholders.

Key words: Community Media, Participatory Communication, SGDs, CM4K, CBPR

Introduction

Starting with a brief contextualising analysis of Kenya's National 2030 Vision programme in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) pledge to "leave no one behind" (United Nations Statistics Division, 2018), this paper suggests that historically national and international policy documents are often filled with the rhetoric of social inclusions, cohesion and empowerment but seldom deliver effectively at the micro or community level. Often, development priorities are focused at macro level infrastructure improvement and economic growth. Meso level social action campaigns often run quite effectively among the more accessible areas in urban populations. Unfortunately, much less attention is focused at the micro levels of disenfranchised and marginalised communities in the urban slums and rural areas. Appropriating the rhetoric used by policy makers, this paper provides insights into how sustainable development can become meaningful for communities at the micro level and opens a discussion on how Universities might make a significant contribution in this respect.

The authors introduce a community profiling (Hawtin, Hughes & Percy-Smith, 2007) pilot study currently being undertaken by Community Media 4 Kenya (CM4K) using community-based participatory research techniques blended with community media practices. The aim of the research is twofold: 1) to inform the development, management and operation of a sustainable community radio station (Jallov, 2012) in the marginalised rural community in Cham gi Wadu; 2) to promote community engagement and capacity building through skills development and knowledge sharing.

The Kenyan 2030 Vision and Development Priorities

Launched in June, 2008 by then President Kibaki and formed of 3 pillars – economic, political and social – Ruwaza ya Kenyan 2030 is,

The national long-term development policy that aims to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030 in a clean and secure environment.....The Economic Pillar aims to achieve an average economic growth rate of 10 per cent per annum and sustaining the same until 2030.

(Kenya Vision 2030, 2018)

The macro level priorities of infrastructure improvements and economic growth are illustrated in the quote above and is reinforced in the economic pillar and the ‘enablers and macros’ which seek to reform the foundations of Kenya for “socio political and economic growth” (Kenya Vision 2030, 2018a). Whilst there can be little doubt that many of the reforms being promoted here are laudable and necessary they appear to be situated at the meso level, i.e. regions or counties. There is little evidence of the social inclusion, cohesion and empowerment implied by the stated aim of “providing a quality of life for all its [Kenya’s] citizens by 2030” in the ‘visions and dreams’ rhetoric (Kenya Vision 2030, 2018a).

Sustainable Development Goals transform our world?

7 years after Kibaki introduced Kenya Vision 2030, at a Sustainable Development Summit in New York on September 25th 2015, more than 150 countries of the United Nations acknowledged a pressing need to ameliorate the marginalisation and disenfranchisement endured by people living in poverty. Vowing to ‘*Transform our world*’ by 2030, the Summit adopted 17 aspirational Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) comprising 169 targets with the express purpose of ending poverty and hunger; improving health, well-being and education; achieving gender equality by empowering women & girls; facilitating the growth of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities; combatting climate change and protecting the planet’s oceans and forests.

We will revisit Kenya Vision 2030 briefly but for now our focus turns to the significance of calls being made for an inclusive transformation of society as part of the launch of the UN’s SDGs programme. An example of these calls can be found in a speech by Sir Mike Aaronson – Chair of the Strategic Advisory Group for the Global Challenges Research Fund – who, whilst extolling the significance of the SDGs, recently emphasised the need to break out of traditional silo thinking and called on researchers to work in transformative ways by creating real and meaningful partnerships with local people that: 1) define issues of meaning to them;

2) commit to capacity-building; and 3) understand how people might use technologies in the context of their lives (Ince, 2017).

The adoption by the UN of a 15 year programme designed to build and improve on its predecessor the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) programme led to a flurry of activity calling for ICTs to be embedded as an integral component of the SDGs programme. Indeed, courtesy of the UN's International Telecommunications Union (ITU), proponents of this campaign even have their own hashtag (#ICT4SDG).

Of course, the issue of embedding information, media and communications in sustainable development initiatives is not new. The United Nation Development Programme, for example, have actively pursued ICT for development programmes at the strategy and grass-roots initiative level since the millennium and indeed have pursued both Sustainable Development (through the Sustainable Development Networking Initiative) and ICTs as an essential infrastructure for development since 1993 (UNDP, 2001). Similarly, UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) has, for the past 30 years, prioritised the most urgent issues in communications development globally (UNESCO, 2018). A significant example of UNESCO's wide ranging grass roots information and communications approach was observed in an international seminar on Community Media Sustainability held in UNESCO's Paris offices. The seminar recommended that community media focus on "enabling voice and access to information for the community" by promoting "measures to ensure internal diversity and representativeness vis-à-vis the community being served, including women, young people, persons with disabilities and marginalised groups, in relationship to participation, decision-making and the production of content" (UNESCO, 2015).

Placing this focus on issues of import at the societal micro level, a UNDP/UNCDF research report argues that focussing on 'the last mile' is essential in ensuring that 'no one gets left behind'. The last mile is defined as relating,

"Not only to the poorest of the poor but also to the people, places and small enterprise levels that are under-served and excluded, where development needs are greatest and where resources are most scarce",

(UNDP, 2016a, p.8)

The UNDP research collaboration with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), makes 8 recommendations as to how adopting a ‘last mile’ approach will ensure ‘no one is left behind’. The final recommendations call for investment,

in more research on how exclusions, inequalities, and discrimination interplay with poverty, and in understanding effective models that address the structural causes of what prevents people from contributing to, and benefitting from, economic growth.

(UNDP, 2016a, p.85)

Whilst there is a clear emphasis on economic growth in this recommendation, there is a distinction between the approach promoted by UNCDF and more traditional approaches to development programmes such as Kenya Vision 2030 (see above). In the UNCDF approach to economic growth the focus of attention is clearly the micro level of society, where localised innovative development interventions can promote opportunities to effect social change for individuals, families and small businesses at the community level – a form of community economic development if you will.

UNCDF’s financing models work through two channels: **financial inclusion** that expands the opportunities for individuals, households, and small businesses to participate in the local economy, providing them with the tools they need to climb out of poverty and manage their financial lives; and **localized investments** that show how fiscal decentralization, innovative municipal finance, and structured project finance can drive public and private funding that underpins local economic expansion and sustainable development.

(UNCDF, 2018)

Despite the ‘investing in the people of Kenya’ rhetoric in the social pillar, there is little evidence of the micro level development approach suggested by UNCDF in Kenya Vision 2030. In fact, it is interesting to note that the Vision 2030 website has little to say about the UN SDGs programme. This is astounding given how relevant the SDGs are to development in Kenya. This said, there is some evidence in Kenyan policy circles that attention is turning to the SDGs. Commenting on the unveiling of a plaque and SDGs implementation roadmap, the UNDP notes that,

Amid pomp and glamour, the Government of Kenya launched the national implementation plan for the Sustainable Development Goals, and expressed commitment that ‘no one will be left behind’ in the economic and social prosperity of the country. Representing President Uhuru Kenyatta, Cabinet

Secretary in the Ministry of Devolution and planning Mwangi Kiunjuri, said Kenya was way ahead of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals through its Vision 2030, and the devolved system of Governance.

(UNDP, 2016b)

Kiunjuri goes on to highlight how SDG related issues such as agriculture, health, water and sanitation have been devolved to County government. Speaking at the event a member of the county association said,

We are going to partner with all stakeholders to ensure that these SDGs are known by all the common *mwananchi* on the ground. We must move from board room to the village.

(UNDP, 2016b)

Whilst it is not yet clear how County Governments intend to take the SDGs to grass roots level it is suggested in the UNDP report that this will be ‘embedded in the 3rd Medium Term Plan (MTP) and integrated into the County Integrated Development Plans’. Launched in December 2017, with Dissemination Forums due to discuss MTP3 in the Counties from January 2018, it is as yet unclear as to how the SDGs will be integrated into Vision 2030. There is now at least a Sustainable Development link on the MTP3 website (Kenya Vision 2030b, 2018) but this currently just holds a UN publication. Given the recent political uncertainty of 2 general elections and the impact this will have had in the Counties also, it is perhaps understandable that the situation about how this will unfold and how both National and County Governments will act on SDG implementation remains blurred. The paper now turns its attention to the Community Media 4 Kenya partnership and how community media research and practice are being appropriated to effect social transformation at community level.

The Community Media 4 Kenya partnership of co-creation and inquiry

Now in its 8th year, CM4K is developing a suite of inclusive community media and research practices that promote social cohesion and empowerment through dialogue, knowledge sharing and community communications in order to effect meaningful transformation or social change. The partnership comprises community participants from Cham gi Wadu, community media academics from the Universities of Brighton and Rongo and undergraduate students from both institutions.

CM4K’s approach is informed by a theoretical understanding of community-based learning and community learning using the PEARLS approach developed by the CM4K partnership

between the Universities of Brighton and Rongo. PEARLS stands for Partnership Education: Action Research Learning Scenarios – and was designed to encourage the development of partnerships that appropriate community media practices in order to empower community voices and facilitate the building of active community relationships. PEARLS is best represented as a 5 stage model that requires researchers and practitioners to **engage** in dialogue with community partners to identify community assets and needs; **assess** how community media solutions might address the articulated needs; **plan** the community media activities that will provide these solutions; **create** and **implement** contextualised capacity building community learning interventions. Each stage of the PEARLS model is connected to and shapes the next in a virtuous cycle of community building and action. Critical reflection and collective deliberation through dialogue are essential to informing and shaping the actions necessary, and facilitates evaluation at each stage of the process. (Day *et al*, 2014).

PEARLS is both inclusive and innovative. It breaks from the traditional mould of silo thinking often found in policy and academic circles by enabling undergraduate media studies students and academic staff to develop learning partnerships with community participants that plan, design and implement sustainable solutions to community problems through dialogue, knowledge sharing and capacity building activities². The CM4K partnership appropriates community media tools in order to create spaces for community voices to be heard and processes that empower all participants as co-investigators and co-creators (Day, 2018)³.

Understanding and responding to the needs of local communities in [sustainable] development was identified by the World Association of Community Broadcasters (AMARC) in 1998. AMARC suggested that International Development requires a democratisation of communication facilitated by community participation in its processes and practices in ways that resonate with the specific social contexts of each community (Fraser & Estrada, 2001). To this end CM4K has grounded itself in the praxis of the “communications for development and social change” paradigm (Servaes, 2008) by seeking to create bridges between researchers, practitioners and communities in Kenya with a view to promoting

² [SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all] (UN, 2018)

³ [SDG 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels] (UN, 2018)

dialogue, action and knowledge sharing between stakeholders as evidenced by the current collaboration to build and operate a sustainable community radio station at Cham Gi Wadu in Migori County, Kenya.

It is the synthesis of community-based learning, with community media practice and community-based participatory research as CM4K praxis (Friere, 2000) that breaks from silo thinking and facilitates socially innovative and educationally novel approach to community media research and practice. In this respect the community media curriculum from the University of Brighton is contributing to curriculum development at the newly founded University of Rongo. Senior academics in Rongo, who participated in a CM4K workshop 5 years ago, have embraced the PEARLS approach and are taking the first steps towards the development of an innovative and ground breaking curriculum. In essence, the community is shaping the curriculum and by developing community participation the curriculum is shaping the community.

Media and communication studies students at the University of Rongo are now being trained and taught in community media practice and theory. As part of the curriculum they are learning to become community media trainers and in turn will train the trainers in their communities. They have, through their application of theory and practice in the community, become community assets. Local students engaging with communities to contribute to the learning of community citizens and community-based organisations.

Experiences from the CM4K partnership indicate that collaboratively minded students committed to social change can contribute to effective community media engagement, That these untraditional and cross boundary relationships are mutually beneficial and illustrate the potential significance of students and young participants in general, as community media assets, in the capacity building and community-learning of participating communities towards sustainable development.

Why community-based learning is of significance to CM4K

For CM4K community-based learning has two purposes – both of which are connected to multiple intelligences theory. It is based on the premise that individuals learn, understand,

and can teach, in different ways (Gardener, 1993). As such individuals possess and can contribute unique gifts and assets to communities of learners.

The first purpose of community-based learning is to challenge students (in the first instance) and subsequently community participants to question their existing assumptions about social justice and the way they perceive the world through dialogue with others. The second is to extend that dialogue to include the activities they engage in and the learning that occurs during their engagement with community media practices and to reflect critically on these processes. Reflecting not only on their interactions with others but also on how they felt, what they thought throughout and how these activities might contribute to community life. Using inquiry – questioning, analysing and solution seeking to problems (Kiely, 2005). In essence community-based learning is a form of transformative learning, intended to refine, elaborate, transform and create new meaning and challenge what is already learnt through communicative learning (Mezirow, 1991).

This is achieved through open, cooperative and critical exchanges of skills and knowledge between students, academics and community as equal learning-partnership participants rather than the more philanthropic approach often found in service-learning. Community-based learning is about learning by doing ‘with’ community partners rather than doing ‘to’ or ‘for’ them. In essence, community-based learning emphasises sustainable partnerships of learning and development (Annette, 2002).

Community-based learning therefore not only seeks to promote the development of mutually beneficial and sustainable learning partnerships that effectively meet student and community learning needs through inquiry and discovery but also emphasises learning as a process of action and empowerment in which the capacities and capabilities of the communities can be realised.

Community radio and sustainable development

Outlining the significance of the contribution community radio makes to sustainable development at the micro level, UNESCO argues that,

What makes a community radio so powerful is its potential to reach out to people with little or no access to information. It is an efficient tool for educating and informing villagers about such critical issues such as health, education, and sustainable development.

(UNESCO, 2018)

Sentiments echoed by community radio practitioners from across Africa, who drawing from their own experiences in community radio, suggest in an AMARC⁴ publication that community radio plays an important role in conflict prevention, resolution and transformation; raises awareness of issues of relevance to the community; creates jobs opportunities by supporting small community businesses; promotes social justice and facilitates sustainable development (Sarr, 2012).

Researchers from the School of INFOCOMS have a long standing relationship with community leaders in Cham gi Wadu and CM4K took the decision to turn its efforts into collaborating with the community to support them set up a community radio station. The decision to collaborate was an easy one after the authors of this paper were invited to address a community meeting attended by over 60 enthusiastic community representatives in September 2016.

A location for the radio station in Cham gi Wadu has been provided in the District Chief's Offices located in the heart of the community. A fund raising campaign to secure the finance necessary (circa £20K) to get the station up and running was launched earlier this year by the CM4K2018 students from the University of Brighton. This campaign is about to be scaled up through the launch of a crowdfunding website and a range of social action campaigns by 1st year community media students in Brighton.

It is essential to understand that building and sustaining community media initiatives is about more than buying equipment; setting it up; turning it on and broadcasting content. Achieving successful sustainable community technology initiatives requires being relevant and meaningful to the community. They need to be embedded in the realities of everyday community life; owned and run by the community. Successful and sustainable community media initiatives are operated in the community, for the community, about the community and by the community.

Effective community radio utilises tools, creates spaces and encourages processes for community development. It facilitates and supports community capacity and capability building through skills development; access to information; knowledge sharing, dialogue and

⁴ AMARC is an international non-governmental organization serving the community radio movement, with almost 4 000 members and associates in 150 countries (AMARC, 2018).

promoting a collective confidence to tell and share stories. In short community radio enables community empowerment through voice.

Profiling for community radio in Cham gi Wadu

The next section discusses the community profiling fieldwork undertaken by staff, student and community partners between 2017 and 2018 in order to inform and enable the community of Cham gi Wadu build, manage and operate a sustainable community radio station. CM4K's approach is informed by a seminal work on empowerment radio which draws suggests the use of a community mapping approach to understand the community's needs and assets (Jallov, 2012).

This use of community mapping is similar to the community development related theory of community profiling, which suggests.

A comprehensive description of the needs of a population that is defined as, or defines itself as, a community, and the resources [assets] that exist within that community, carried out with the active involvement of the community itself, for the purpose of developing an action plan or other means of improving the quality of life of the community.

(Hawtin, Hughes & Percy-Smith, 1994)

Whilst community profiling is a tool to inform community development processes it does so through the collection of information (data) with the involvement of the community to develop knowledge about/understanding of community needs and assets through critical reflection (analysis). In this respect community profiling is therefore a research method. In the field, CM4K blends community media practices, such as empowerment radio, with community development techniques, such as community profiling, in order to develop and understanding on community life. In addition to engaging communities in education and learning activities for development, the PEARLS approach incorporates research into its partnership undertakings using a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach in which all partners become co-investigators (Horowitz, Robinson & Seifer, 2009).

Community profiling, where community knowledge is synthesised with that of academics and practitioners to create a living knowledge-base of the community – its members, needs,

assets, activities, events and environment – facilitates sustainable development through CBPR.

The spirit of co-inquiry underpinning CBPR assists in building the community research capacity in terms of identifying research problems, designing methods of data collection and analysis and in so doing enables the community to critically examine the underlying structures that shape their material social conditions – what Friere calls conscientization or critical consciousness (2000). Through this synthesis of knowledge CM4K partners are able to develop a critical understanding of community needs and assets in a manner that promotes community engagement; facilitates community mobilisation to build and sustain an effective community radio organisation (Jallov, 2012; Sarr, 2012).

CM4K 2017– identifying community needs

As mentioned above, the first CM4K community meeting took place in Cham gi Wadu in September 2016, although staff from the School of INFOCOMS had met with community representatives prior to this and continued to do so subsequently. Despite these close links, unfunded international collaborative partnerships such as the Cham gi Wadu collective have several limitations. One such limitation is the time available for collaborative activities such as the community learning and CBPR community media activities of CM4K during fieldtrips; another is the time between such trips. Working under such severe restrictions can cause difficulties and takes a great deal of trust as well as regular, open and honest communications.

After a great deal of planning and almost as many problems (Rongo’s electricity and internet connections are not the most reliable) it was agreed that the January 2017 fieldtrip would conduct a community communications needs analysis. At this point without the time to conduct any research training with the community we decided to employ a methodological approach similar to UNESCO’s ethnographic action research (EAR) – “a flexible and adaptable approach to researching and developing ICT projects.....within a broad and embedded understanding of local contexts and needs” (Tacchi, Slater and Hearn, 2003. p103).

Our rationale was to generate knowledge of community realities that could be used to support and sustain community development processes and in turn inform and contribute to

engagement in the community radio campaign. So it was that around 50 students and staff from the Universities of Rongo and Brighton met with 50 community representatives from 7 self-help groups from poultry, dairy and fish farming; brick making; tree growing; horticulture and a water spring project to discuss the why they wanted to build a community radio station and what they hoped to get from it. However, this was not without its challenges. For example, how on earth could we get 2 groups of 50 people from culturally, socially and economically diverse backgrounds with very little knowledge of each other to **engage** in a meaningful dialogue that would enable us to **assess** the problems the community face and start to **plan** communicative solutions⁵.

Clearly, these 7 groups didn't fully represent the entire community but we decided to adopt an approach common to community development in the UK – the involvement ready approach (Chanan, Garratt & West, 2000), that is to say start working in partnership with those ready to be involved as they talk to others in the community so the partnership will grow and so, in turn, will the community [radio] development activities. This is the strength and joy of community communications to practitioners and academics alike.

After the most amazing welcome from the community, the communication challenges didn't seem so huge. We split the community representatives into their self-help groups and linked students with a range of community media assets to each group. This enabled the groups to act as Participatory Learning Workshops (Day & Farenden, 2007). The PLW rationale acknowledges 2 main considerations. Firstly, learning is contextual and affected by the environment in which it occurs. Secondly, social interaction is a crucial component of learning. In the context of CM4K2018 the PLWs provided spaces for diverse community stakeholders to situate their engagement with the research in a community context.

The PLWs were facilitated by students who captured the community responses using flip charts – so the community members could see the responses; still and video cameras; as well as audio recorders so that the processes, as well as the data, could be captured for later use. It was interesting to note that some of the community had already thought about these processes and were recording their group activities on their smart phones. The purpose of this approach was to stimulate dialogue among the community partners about their daily lives; develop an

⁵ NB This is the start of CM4K's PEARLS approach in an applied context.

understanding of their information and communication needs; and elicit data from them using the various media to record this for subsequent analysis.

Space restrictions preclude a full report on the results of both the 2017 and 2018 pilots but these are being written up elsewhere. A documentary describing and reflecting on the processes of 2017 has been made (Walter, 2017⁶) and is available on the CM4K YouTube channel and another presenting the 2018 processes is currently in production. However, it is important to note that the EAR processes not only led to informed insights into the lives and environments of subsistence self-help groups such as these in Migori County but also resulted in a strengthening of commitment to and engagement in the CM4K collaboration. The entire process strengthened relationships of friendship between participants strengthening CM4K's social capital and sense of cohesion.

Unfortunately, despite coming back to teach community media students at Rongo in September, the lead author of this paper was unable to do any more work with community representatives between fieldtrips. It is essential that INFOCOMS gets the resources and support to formalise community media into its curriculum so that they can continue to work with the community when the Brighton contingent of the CM4K partnership are back in the UK. The next collective activity was not until January of 2018 and it is clear that this had caused a little uncertainty within the community.

CM4K 2018 – mapping community communication assets

The group that travelled to Rongo from Brighton in January was significantly smaller than the previous 14 that visited in 2014. This year's cohort consisted of 5 undergraduate students and 1 staff member. Since that last fieldtrip the Cham gi Wadu community had set up a Steering Committee of 12 local people. This was a big step forward enabling them to discuss issues, making plans and take decisions. This is significant because despite our best efforts it sometimes still feels as if a sense of dependency on the academic partners exists among some of the community. The establishment of a steering committee is a big step in them taking ownership of the community radio project.

The first 2 days of the workshops were spent with the 2 sets of students getting to know each other socially – building relationships among themselves so as to become one CM4K

⁶ The URL can be found in the bibliography.

learning community rather than 2 separate groups. On the 3rd day the 22 students were joined by the steering committee for a 'getting to know you' session and some workshops contextualising the asset mapping research we were about to undertake..

Before the CM4K2018 fieldtrip commenced the steering committee met with colleagues from INFOCOMS for preliminary discussion about asset mapping; its purpose and what we hoped to achieve. This gave the steering committee time to decide which community assets they wanted us to focus on to start with. As with last year's research it was simply impossible to map all community communication assets. Both elements of the community profiling need to be continued during the absence of the UK partners – another reason why it is crucial for the University of Rongo to establish community media within its curriculum sooner rather than later. The research we undertook in 2017 and 2018 is best described as pilot studies. It was more a process of developing the active relationship between the partners from Migori County; training community researchers and facilitating community engagement in the project.

It was decided that we should focus on schools; faith organisations and shopping centres/markets as these are places where many community activities and much community communication occurs. Our approach to asset mapping was a synthesis of traditional community asset mapping (**citation**); community media data collection and geo-mapping (**citation**). In addition to the capacity building and community engagement elements of the fieldwork, it was our intention to construct a digital map of the community assets. The reason for this was twofold: 1) To create a resource that would facilitate reflective praxis in terms of the community radio station building processes; and 2) To create an living knowledgebase to be used by the radio station (once operational) to ensure inclusivity, representation and participation for the entire community (Sarr, 2012). The fieldwork programme consisted a day in the field meeting the community and capturing data followed by a day on campus reviewing the data, editing and building the digital map.

As is often the way when technologies are involved community work, this session was not without difficulties. Some of these were as a result of the intermittent nature of electricity and internet services but some of these were down to inadequate planning on our part. We made assumptions in the planning stages that turned out to be based on shifting sands and provided a number of problems and salutary lessons. For example: 1) What works in the UK on UK mobile phones with different service providers does not necessarily work in remote rural

Kenya; 2) Assuming that student ownership of viable smart phones would provide us with adequate tools for geo-mapping without resourcing their credit was an error on our part; and 3) When geo-mapping, we required a better understanding of the presentation of longitude/latitude co-ordinates, and their uses, on different online systems. Running into difficulties with these 3 areas was a little embarrassing because it became painfully clear that we had not prepared well enough for work in an unfamiliar field. Luckily, the lead author was able to think quickly and drew on his extensive map reading experiences as a young man – blending this with the knowledge of the local area of the local people to locate the assets in the correct places on the maps. It was a long winded and at times challenging process, as the coverage of rural Migori County provided by Google Maps is not as comprehensive as the service they provide in the UK

Communications between the steering committee and INFOCOMS and then INFOCOMS and the Brighton contingents of CM4K were not as effective as they might have been at this stage and the first day in the field proved to be a little chaotic. Starting at the District Chief's sub-offices in Cham gi Wadu, where the radio station is to be located, required various cultural and social protocols to be observed – all of which can be time consuming and so it proved. The instructions we had given out in the morning to the students went largely unobserved, as the Rongo students in their excitement started to point and click at anything that moved causing much confusion and duplication of effort. Interviews and data collection was either attempted several times or overlooked completely. In addition to these issues, local people, all of whom showed interest in participating in some way, seemed to emerge from every corner. The one hour we had planned on spending in this location became 2 hours and it was not at all clear who had done what but this was not the end of the matter. From the Chief's offices we had arranged to visit Kakwara Primary School. We had visited here in September to discuss the project and were under the impression that this would be a courtesy visit to capture data. However, this was not to be the case. In September, we had we thought met and discussed with the Head Teacher. In fact this was not the case at all, we had met the Deputy Head. So what was intended to be a 20 minute courtesy visit turned out to be closer to an hour plus as we again observed the formal greeting protocols with the Head and then with his staff. At this point after, several hours in the burning sun, the UK contingent was ready to return to campus but the Chief had arranged for us to visit Omwara Secondary and Primary Schools. However, this turned out to be an incredibly rewarding visit. Unaware that we were going to be asked to speak with a large cohort of the School's pupils, we improvised a

participatory media workshop with them. The CM4K students showed the pupils how to use the various pieces of equipment and within moments those trainees swiftly became the trainers and they taught their friends and colleagues how to use them. This was one of the most rewarding parts of the visit. Sometimes, when employing the PEARLS approach we experience problems (see above) and then at other times it just all comes together in a meaningful and useful manner. This visit, that we had not planned for this day, actually turned out not only to be incredibly rewarding but also resulted in the forging on a strong link between the School and CM4K that will see future activities planned to the benefit of the community. Discussions are already underway and plans being considered for next year's CM4K fieldtrip.

So it went on for the next 10 days or so, the CM4K partners visited schools, health centres, shopping centres/markets and faith organisations across the

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