

COMMUNITY RADIO PROGRAMMING CODE

1. BASIC PRINCIPLE OF PROGRAMMING

PROGRAMMING SHALL BE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF COMMUNITY RADIO AS A VOICE, RESOURCE AND TOOL OF MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES THAT ARE ACTIVELY WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT.

2. CONTEXT OF PROGRAMMING

AT THE HEART OF THE PROGRAMMING CODE OF THE GHANA COMMUNITY RADIO NETWORK (GCRN) IS ITS PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY. FOR COMMUNITY RADIO IN GHANA, EQUITABLE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES ARE THE TAPROOT OF NATIONAL AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT. THUS, THEY ASPIRE TO BRING OUT AND ENRICH THE FULLNESS OF THE LIVES OF THEIR COMMUNITIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO HAVE THE LEAST SAY AT EVERY LEVEL OF INTERACTION. BECAUSE OF THIS PERSPECTIVE, TAKEN AS A WHOLE, COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS MAY BE CONSIDERED TO REPRESENT THE FULLEST EXPRESSION OF DIVERSITY. COMMUNITY RADIO IN GHANA DRAWS INSPIRATION FROM THE WORDS OF THE GHANIAN POET KOFI ANYIDOH: "DEVELOPMENT IS THE COLLABORATIVE FRUIT OF A PEOPLE'S CREATIVE ENDEAVOUR".

3. OBJECTIVES OF PROGRAMMING

THOUGH DIFFERENT COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS MAY, AND SHOULD, DEPENDING ON THEIR SPECIFIC CONTEXTS, USE DIFFERENT PHRASEOLOGY, PROGRAMMING AT A COMMUNITY RADIO SHALL STRIVE TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES WITH RESPECT TO ITS SPECIFIC COMMUNITY:

- i. SUPPORT EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT
- ii. PROVIDE A FORUM FOR INFORMED DIALOGUE AMONG COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS
- iii. GIVE VOICE TO MARGINALIZED GROUPS AND CONCERNS
- iv. AFFIRM AND STRENGTHEN CULTURAL
- v. DRAW OUT AND PROMOTE INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE
- vi. PROMOTE TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE AT ALL LEVELS
- vii. ENCOURAGE A JUST PEACE, PROMOTE TOLERANCE AND FACILITATE CONFLICT-PREVENTION
- viii. ENHANCE RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

4. CONTENT OF PROGRAMMING

- 4.1 BE PREDOMINANTLY LOCAL AND ORIGINATED BY THE STATION FROM WITHIN ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY.
- 4.2 BE DRIVEN BY THE AGENDA OF ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY IN A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL HARMONY AND CONCERN FOR THE WELL-BEING OF ALL.
- 4.3 CELEBRATE THE STRENGTHS OF ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY, PARTICULARLY THEIR:
 - EXPERIENCES AND ASPIRATIONS
 - COMMUNITY-ORIENTED VALUES
 - CULTURAL HERITAGE AND TRADITIONS
 - INDIGENOUS TALENTS, KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITIES
 - INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES
- 4.4 IN PARTICULAR, GIVE VOICE TO AND SUPPORT THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE MOST MARGINALIZED GROUPS IN ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY; IE THOSE WHO ARE DISADVANTAGED DUE TO POVERTY, GENDER, AGE, DISABILITY OR ANY OTHER FACTOR.
- 4.5 SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY BY:
 - HIGHLIGHTING THEIR DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES
 - FACILITATING THE FLOW OF REQUISITE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
 - HIGHLIGHTING SELF-RELIANCE, CREATIVITY AND COMMUNITY-DRIVEN RESPONSES
 - PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR COMMUNITY-BASED INSTITUTIONS
 - CONTRIBUTING TO THE RESPONSIVENESS AND EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES, BOTH GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL
 - PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE PROVISION OF SERVICES AND RESOURCES
- 4.6 LINK WITH OTHER INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES SUCH AS EQUITABLE ACCESS TO BASIC RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, AND HIV-AIDS
- 4.7 ASSIST ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY TO UNDERSTAND AND EVALUATE EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR VALUES AND PRIORITIES.
- 4.8 ENHANCE THE AWARENESS OF AND FACILITATE ACCESS TO RELEVANT SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS.
- 4.9 BE CHARACTERIZED BY RELEVANT, ACCURATE INFORMATION AND CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN INFORMATION AND OPINION.
- 4.10 ENSURE EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE AND ESCHEW PARTNERSHIP AND SECTARIANISM

5. LANGUAGE

LANGUAGE AT A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS AN EXPRESSION OF THE LIFE AND CULTURE OF ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY AS WELL AS A VEHICLE FOR ITS EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN SHAPING THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.

- 5.1 PROGRAMMING AT A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION SHALL BE PREDOMINANTLY IN THE LANGUAGE/S OF ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY.
- 5.2 PROGRAMMING SHALL BE USED AS A PLATFORM TO FURTHER DEVELOP THE USAGE AND THTE RICHNESS OF THE LANGUAGE/S OF ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY.
- 5.3 COURTESY, SIMPLICITY SHALL BE HALLMARKS OF THE USAGE OF ALL LANGUAGES USED FOR BROADCAST.

6. MUSIC

MUSIC AT A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION SHALL PERFORM THE SAME FUNCTION AS LANGUAGE.

- 6.1 TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF THE LISTENING COMMUNITY SHALL BE GIVEN PROMINENCE.
- 6.2 ONGOING COMPOSITION AND PERFORMANCE OF MUSIC IN INDIGENOUS FORMS AND LANGUAGES SHALL BE ENCOURAGED.
- 6.3 LYRICS OF ALL MUSIC SHALL ADHERE TO THE SAME GUIDELINES AS SPOKEN LANGUAGE.

7. FORMATS AND PRESENTATION

FORMAT AND PRESENTATION AT A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION SHALL BE VEHICLES FOR PROMOTING ITS CULTURAL AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES.

7.1 FORMATS

- 7.1.1 SPECIAL IMPORTANCE SHALL BE ATTACHED TO FORMATS THAT DRAW FROM THE ORAL TRADITIONS OF ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY.
- 7.1.2 FORMATS SUCH AS DRAMA THAT NOT ONLY NURTURE CREATIVITY BUT ALSO FACILITATE GIVING VOICE TO MARGINALIZED GROUPS AND CONCERNS SHALL BE ESPECIALLY PRIZED.
- 7.1.3 DIALOGIC FORMATS THAT PROMOTE INFORMED AND REASONED DISCUSSION SHALL BE USED LIBERALLY.

- 7.1.4 FORMATS THAT ENCOURAGE INTERACTION AROUND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES, SUCH AS FACE-TO-FACE FOR A WITH OFFICIALS, SHALL BE USED ON A REGULAR BASIS.
- 7.1.5 NEWS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMMS SHALL BE CHARACTERIZED BY RESPONSIBLE JOURNALISM. COMMUNITY NEWS AND ANALYSES OF REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND WORLD NEWS FROM COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE SHALL BE GIVEN DUE PROMINENCE.
- 7.1.6 PHONE-INS SHALL BE USED JUDICIOUSLY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF, NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR, PROGRAMMING, AND ESPECIALLY WHEN UTILIZED FOR DISCUSSION, SHALL BE HOSTED WITH BALANCE, JUDGMENT AND DECORUM

7.2 PRESENTATION

- 7.2.1 PRESENTATION SHALL PROJECT THE CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY.
- 7.2.2 PRESENTATION SHALL PROMOTE INFORMED REASONING AND DIALOGUE.
- 7.2.3 WHILE EXERCISING NEITHER FEAR NOR FAVOUR, PRESENTATION SHALL DEMONSTRATE AND ENCOURAGE A SPIRIT OF TOLERANCE, SENSITIVITY TO PRIVACY AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY AS WELL AS POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY.
- 7.2.4 PRESENTATION SHALL BE A MODEL OF POSITIVE COMMUNITY VALUES AND MORES.
- 7.2.5 ISSUES THAT ARE LIKELY TO GENERATE CONFLICT SHALL BE HANDLED WITH PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY, BALANCE AND TACT, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF BRINGING OPPOSING STANCES TO A POINT OF DIALOGUE.

8. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION PROCESS

THE PARTICIPATION OF ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY THOSE MOST MARGINALIZED, IS CORE TO THE PROGRAMMING OF A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION.

- 8.1 PROGRAMMES SHALL AS FAR AS POSSIBLE BE PRODUCED WITH THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF MEMEBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE THE LEAST ACCESS.
- 8.2 AS APPROPRIATE, THEY SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PROCESS AND TOOLS THAT ENABLE MARGINALIZED GROUPS TO SHARE MORE FREELY OF THEIR EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE AND TALENT.
- 8.3 IN THIS PROCESS PRODUCER BASED AT A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION SHALL ACT AS FICILITATORS FOR IMPLEMENTIING THE IDEAS OF THE GROUP DRIVING THE PROGRAMME.

9. SYNDICATION

IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF COMMUNITY RADIO AND TO PROMOTE THE GREATEST DIVERSITY IN BROADCASTING IN THE COUNTRY, THE USE OF SYNDICATED MATERIAL SHALL BE LIMITED TO THOSE PRODUCED BY THE COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT, INFORMATION AND EDUCATION MATERIAL FROM PUBLIC RADIO STATION.

10. SPECIFIC NEGATIVE PRACTICES

PROGRAMMING OPERATIONS AND PROCESSES AT A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION SHALL BE INFORMED BY THE SAME REASONED JUDGMENT AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS THAT IT SEEKS TO ENHANCE AMONG ITS LISTENING COMMUNITY. NEVERTHELESS, THE FOLLOWING ARE INCLUDED AS REMINDERS OF NEGATIVE PRACTICES THAT COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS SHALL SHUN:

- OFFENDING GOOD TASTE OR DECENCY
- PERSONALIZING CRITICISM INSTEAD OF FOCUSING ON ISSUES
- USING WORDS CONTEMPTUOUS OF, CASTING ASPERSIONS ON, OR OTHERWISE DENIGRATING ANY INDIVIDUAL, GROUP OR INSTITUTION.
- MAKING DEFAMATORY REMARKS OR AND/OR SUGGESTIVE INNURNDOS AND HALF-TRUTHS.
- INCITING VIOLENCE OR ANTI-NATIONAL ATTITUDES.
- ENCOURAGING SUPERSTITION OR BLIND BELIEF.

THE GHANA CIMUMUNITY RADIO NETWORK (GCRN) IS THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS AND INITIATIVES IN GHANA

COMMUNITY RADO IS NON-PROFIT, DEVELOPMENT-SUPPORT RADIO. IT REPRESENTS THE THIRD SECTOR OF BROADCASTING (THE OTHER TWO BEING PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL)