

Module 4: Transformative Potential of Community Radio

Session 4: Radio Plug Production (Enhancing Media Skills)

Duration: 4 hours

Introduction:

People often hear jingles, spots and plugs over the radio in the form of an advertisement of different products, sometimes even public service announcements. Advertisers go for the use of these plugs, because with the short airtime given to it, if you come up with an ad catchy enough, people are likely to recall it. It is also for this reason that some non-government organizations like Isis International-Manila went into plug production as a form of awareness raising on the many issues and concerns of women in the region, together with several partners' organizations. At the end on the one day session the participants would have been able to:

- Gain basic knowledge on radio plug production
- Do a collective production of radio plugs

Session Topics:

- Different kinds of radio plugs
- Content of radio plug
- Format of radio plug
- Scriptwriting for Plug Production
- Hands on: Radio Plug Production

Infrastructure:

Room for 25 persons, LCD, sound system to play plug examples. For plug production: microphones, recorder, recording studio, sound effects, selection of music, computer for sound editing, USB Flash Drive.

A prerequisite to this session is that participants have already undergone the sessions Radio Studio Operation 101 and Digital Sound Editing with Audacity.

Session Plan:

Topic / Activity	Duration	Teaching Aids/Material
Activity 1: Rat Race (Our favorite radio plugs)	20 minutes	Metacards and masking tape

Topic: Radio Plug Production (Lecture Discussion)	40 minutes	Slides, and sample plug
Activity 2: Radio Plug Production (Hands on Exercise)	2 hours	Props, music as identified by the group, recording studio, sound effects
Activity 3: Identifying Areas for Improvement	1 hour	Whiteboard and markers

Activity 1: Rat Race (Our Favorite Radio Plugs)

The rat-race is an introductory activity to radio plug production, that should help surface participants experience of or association to radio plugs they have heard, and they still recall them. This exercise helps them to identify the characteristics of their favorite plugs, or those that they recall till now – all of these are helpful tips of what they need to watch out for. Instructions to this quick activity are as follows:

- Divide the plenary in two groups
- Give them metacards of 20-25 pieces per group
- Give them a few minutes to brainstorm as a group: list as many plugs as they can remember
- Assign one to write on the metacard, and one to run and tape the metacards on the wall or board
- After a minute of the race, count the metacards for each group
- The group with the most on their list of plugs wins
- Process Questions:
 - Select the two plugs from each group and ask the following questions:
 - What is the nature of the plugs that you remember?
 - Why do we still remember these plugs? What are the characteristics of these plugs that we remember?

Synthesis Points:

- Plugs are often used to promote and popularize products, services and public service announcements
- Plugs usually contain a call for action, buy this, watch that, go there, do this, don't do that...
- In the same way that it has been used by different companies, agencies etc to promote, it can also be used as an information tool to raise awareness on issues that are important to us

Topic: Radio Plug Production (Lecture Discussion)

The 30-minute session aims to share the basics of radio plug production. It discusses the different kinds of radio plugs, what they contain, and common format.

Scriptwriting for radio plug production, is also discussed to stress the importance of preparation to ensure message impact, and as a way of saving on editing time, because in real life editing does consume much of time and financial resources. The lecture may be strengthened by sharing actual plugs that have been produced, that may stimulate the participants' creativity and think about issues that they would like to focus on, and possible ways to get this across. Participants may also be asked if they know of other ways of how plugs have been used as an information tool. (You might want to use the example plug on Women Fishers with the script)

[Link: Slide Presentation on Radio Plug Production \(Jingle, Spot\) \(ppt file\)](#)

[Link: Radio Plug on Women Fishers in English \(mp3 file\)](#)

[Link: Script of Radio Plug on Women Fishers in English \(doc file\)](#)

Activity 2: Radio Plug Production (Hands on Exercise)

The Radio Plug Production is an important session and output of the Women Making Airwaves for Peace. It does not only give the participants actual hands on experience on the production process, but it also allows them to produce information materials on peace, equality, discrimination, cultural diversity, sensitivity etc, using the framework of engendered peace journalism and recognizing the transformative potential of community radio.

Different settings and different groups may have various ways of giving this session. In the experience of the Women Making Airwaves for Peace, it was helpful to do the exercise with groups of 4-5 members each. Each group goes through the following process of production:

- Brainstorming on possible focus issues, and choosing a particular issue
- Writing the script for the radio plug (20 Min.)
- Identifying props and materials needed (songs, sound effects etc) (20 Min.)
- Dry-run or rehearsal (10 min.)
- Consultation with Trainers for tips on how is the best way to produce it. (10 min.)
- Record the plug in the studio (30 min. per group)
- Edit the plugs with Audacity on the computer (30 min)

Activity 3: Identifying Areas of Improvement

Although the plug production process is an activity that is undergone by a group, the radio plugs are a collective output. The group is not only concentrated on improving the plugs that they produce, they also participate in improving the plugs of other groups. Within this process the role of the facilitator is not to initiate the critique, but rather to facilitate the group into a constructive feedback session. It may be necessary to always note that criticisms / points are not criticizing the person but it is aimed at improving the product and should be done in the spirit of wanting to be proud of the output of the group. Participants' feedback is also indicative of how much they have learned from the previous sessions. Possible guide questions to the feedback session are as follows:

- What was the main issue promoted in the plug?

- Did it follow a logical flow?
- What was the message? Was it clear? Effective? What made it effective?
- Is the product consistent with the principles and values of Engendered Peace Journalism?
- Do you think the product is an effective information tool?
- In hearing the plug, are you drawn towards action? Reflection? Or both?
- How was the quality of the recording?
- How can it be improved?

After the session ask participants to carry out the agreed improvements.

Synthesis Point:

Education and awareness raising is no longer limited within the walls of the educational institutions or training centers. Outputs of the session were information, education materials on gender sensitivity and cultural diversity, is proof that media and specifically radio can be an effective tool in raising consciousness or calling our attention to certain issues, especially when we want to reach the poorest of communities. This was made possible through sharing engendered peace journalism as a conceptual handle, highlighting the transformative potential of community radio, and sharpening radio production skills.

Evaluation:

[Link: Evaluation form to evaluate the radio plugs on their content and effectiveness \(doc file\).](#)

[Link: Website with a large selection of Sound effects http://www.pacdv.com/sounds/.](http://www.pacdv.com/sounds/)