

The Integration of Community Radios in Achieving the Goals of the “*Big Results Now*” in Tanzania

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Abstract: *The “Big Results Now” is a development model adopted from the Malaysian government. It focuses on new working methods in specific timeframe for the effective and efficient delivering of required national development vision and mission (URT, 2013). The initiative is also considered being a delivery approach focused on delivering some specific goals in the country within a stipulated timeline. This paper aims at underscoring the significance of community radio stations as an avenue for the development of a country with specific reference to Tanzania. This is because, despite many efforts by a wide variety of stakeholders, the actual impact on the integration of community radio in Tanzania remains unclear. Thus, this paper attempts to provide some possible solutions of integrating community radio stations in attaining some planned goals of a country with specific reference to the goals of the “Big Results Now” in Tanzania. To explore this, diverse related literatures and documents were reviewed. The focus of the reviews was directed towards the roles played by the community radio in selected countries and how such roles may be utilized and adapted by community radio in Tanzania towards achieving the set goals of the “Big Results Now”. During the review, it was observed that community radio stations have significant contributions towards the attainment of the goals of the “Big Results Now”. It was further evidenced and confirmed that community radio stations had played significance contributions in implementing the goals of the “Big First Results Now” in Malaysia as well as the industrialization priorities in Thailand (Tahir, 2016). Thus, there is a greater need for Tanzania and perhaps all developing countries to strongly integrate community radio in their projects and developmental goals.*

Keywords: Integration, Community Radio, *Big Results Now*, Tanzania

1. Introduction

Tanzania has undergone diverse strategies and initiatives in order to eradicate poverty and improve the economy of the country since her independence in 1961. One of the recent initiatives was the adoption of “*the big fast results*” commonly known as “*Big Results Now*” from Malaysia. The main purpose of adopting this development model was to transform the country from being a low income to a high or middle income economy by 2025 (Darul,&Balozi, (2014).

This paper aims at underscoring the significance of community radio as an avenue for the development of a country with specific reference to Tanzania. Despite many efforts by a wide variety of stakeholders, the actual impact on the integration of community radio in Tanzania remains unclear. Tanzania has more than 130 radio stations in the country, among them; 35 are community radios (TCRA, 2018) but the impacts or contribution in the developmental matters appears to have not been visible at all. Likewise, it appears that the role of the media, particularly community radio seems to have been abandoned completely in Tanzania, thus, this paper attempts to illuminate on how Tanzania can utilize the community radio in achieving her 2025 vision through the “*Big Results Now* imitative.

2. Community Radios

According to the *Guide for the Civil Society* (2015), a community radio has been defined as a radio for the people in a community. It is a radio of the people because it is a two-way process that is considered to empower people in the community to have opportunities to identify various problems around them and also create solutions to those problems. It enables the most vulnerable to participate in decisions for positive change in their lives.

Moreover, community radio allows people to collaborate in producing programs on the radio which focuses on their local concerns and priorities. Moreover, a vibrant community radio is expected to help the remotest communities to participate not only into the national and global economies, but also to the development of knowledge-based economies. It is known to sharpen and improve governance by empowering people to hold both local and governments leaders accountable.

One of the common components of community radio stations is that they are people centered whereby they are established to serve a specific community or area. Gray (2002) argues that vibrant community radios are normally established and operated by community members themselves. They are sometimes established by Non-Governmental Organizations, while others are started as developmental projects, and some are started by community radio activists and supporters for community discussion and participation in their communities. Based on their nature, community radio stations serve a very significant role in providing various information in the areas they operate.

According to AMARC Africa (1998), vibrant community radios in an ideal world allow members of a community to gain access to information, education and entertainment just like what the mainstream media does. However, what distinguishes community radios from mainstream radios is that community radios have bottom-up approach, as they are not profit oriented, while mainstream media are characterized by profit needs and are mostly centrally called – top-down. This means that though community radios may inform, educate and entertain, the focus of such content must be different from the mainstream media. This is a critical point that many appear not to understand. Moreover, vibrant community radios which are well utilized by the

communities can serve as a platform for debate, exchange of ideas and reactions to plans and projects in a given community. Apart from being used as platforms for debates, community radios are also able to accommodate people's ideas and satisfy their spiritual and psychological wellbeing much better than any other form of broadcasting such as main stream media (AMARC Africa, 1998).

2.1 Challenges Facing Community Radios in Africa

The challenges facing community radio stations in Africa has quite a long history since the inception of the same in the continent. Community radios in Africa can be traced back to the 1950s when broadcasters across Africa begun designing some agricultural programming focused on rural and farming constituents commonly known as farm broadcasting or "farm casting" through which agricultural radio programs were produced and disseminated to the general public, largely as part of agriculture extension strategies (SADC-CCD, 2006). Moreover, the development of community radios as such were focused and concentrated in rural communities as practice of taking radio to the people in the form of farm and rural broadcasting from public broadcasters. Sourou, (2013) argues that community radio stations concentrated in disseminating developmental messages to the respective communities in Africa. However, despite of their long history, community radios have experienced various challenges as discussed below:

2.1.1 Financial Problems

Financial constraints and donor dependence has been one of the major challenges facing community radio stations in Africa. According to Manyozo (2007), the schemes and implementation of community radio projects in Africa have experienced some financial problems. This is due to the fact that majority of the community radio in Africa are donor funded. This has led to many of the community radio stations not to be able to fully perform their indented roles of informing community members about the various issues found in their communities. Above all, this financial challenge not only affects the respective communities in which such radio stations are located but it also makes it difficult for such community radios to source and purchase broadcasting transmitters and other equipment. In this vein, the financial problems facing community radios in Africa have also led to majority of such radio stations to fail to transport journalists to the communities to collect news stories because they cannot afford to cater for their fare. Salary delays to the staff and volunteers, constructions and rehabilitations of buildings, payment of utility bills, staffs training are just amongst the results of financial problems facing community radios in Africa.

According to Ochichi and White (2013), the majority of the community radio stations in East African countries have experienced significance financial crisis and many of them went off air from time to time because of financial crisis. Moreover, most of the community radio stations were reported to receive financial funding from national or international sources for their initial set ups. It must be noted (Ochichi and White, 2013), that some few community radios had continued to get some help from time to time from donors as a form of bail out in order to allow the radios to

stay on air.

Likewise, due to the fore mentioned financial challenges, most of the community radios maintained only a very weak broadcasting team and as such they had to take advantages of the staff under volunteering working schemes. In addition to that, some volunteering staff cannot tolerant or persist working in such financial crisis, thus some of them often leave working with the community radios and go for green pastures elsewhere.

2.1.2 Inadequate Training Opportunities

According to the studies on development radio broadcasting training in Africa (DCFRN, 2003), there are some key elements that characterize the sector. They include; insufficient human capacity for community broadcasting; lack of understanding of the praxis of community development; poor connectivity of radio for development to new media and ICTs; formal training not based on learning needs; and dependence on donor funding as previous discussed. In the case of training opportunities in community radios, the formal training institutions such as Universities and colleges which training journalists in Africa appear to lack the required capacities to offer specialized training for community programs. As such, it is reported (Kamlongera, 2001) that most broadcasters in Africa have not undergone any specific training in issues of development broadcasting. Moreover Kamlongera (2001) adds that there is still no any extra training arrangement being done by most of the community radios in Africa due to lack of adequate training equipment, qualified trainers, and appropriate training infrastructure.

2.1.3 Problems of Evaluation Instruments

The problem of sustainable evaluation instruments in the community radio stations in African is also one of the challenges facing community radios in Africa. According to Manyozo (2007), program evaluation in community radios is very important as it improves project training, institutional decision making, and quality programs. Manyozo adds that programs evaluation is very significant and should be made compulsory for community radios because it gives out a full picture on areas which needs improvements or changes.

2.1.4 Lack of Systematic Local News

According to Ochichi and White (2013), most of the community radio stations do not have proper policy or strategies to cover local news in the surrounding communities where such radios operate. Instead, the content of their news is normally very brief and less focused on the local news stories or events. Likewise, the present community radios in most of the Eat African countries have no persons competently prepared or assigned to report in any systematic fashions on local events or news stories especially news stories dealing with community developments where actually most of the priorities of the *Big Results Now* model are embedded in.

2.2 The Nature and Benefits of Community Radios

A community radio station is expected to run on a nonprofit basis. This is because a community radio is established to serve the interest of the communities and thus most of the

manpower is very low (Lawrence, 2010). Though they are nonprofit making radios, they are neither restricted from rising funds from other means sources of funds. Moreover, a community radio station is that which is normally operates in very specialized areas or communities to serve a specific purpose in the respective communities.

Likewise, community radio stations per se generally have a large staff of volunteers who work in those community radios on a volunteering basis. In that case, such volunteers may maintain the station, build the station, produce and host programs, or manage the station. However, having paid staff members does not usually conflict with being run by volunteers (Lawrence, 2010). Additionally, most of the staff in the community radios work on a voluntary basis though there are no any restrictions on employing paid and professional journalists to work there. Moreover, community radios are established, operated, and or owned by the community, which they serve (White, 2013).

Community radios have creditable powers in the communities they operate in. They are the central to the success of development and democracy. It is a particularly effective means of communication in communities where most people can neither read nor write, as those people can speak and listen because the means of broadcasting in these community radios is the local language or language which is understood by the respective people in a given community.

Moreover, community radio stations have a very significant role to play in the developmental aspect in a given community because this enables community members to share all developmental matters amongst themselves, this can also help community members to voice their own experiences and to critically examine issues, processes and policies affecting their lives. Community radios have vibrant influence in the education and mobilizing community members in the developmental initiatives and strategies that may result in a better life for listeners.

However, community radios perfectly serve as the means to promote democracy, sustainable development, and peace in communities they operate in (Gustafsson, 2013). It allows community members to share various information surrounding their communities. For example, citizens and non-citizens can develop their political understanding and work to take their problems to the attention of the bigger public. Moreover, Gustafsson, (2013) reports that the presence of community radio in respective communities have great chance to create and sustain political stability. Maiva further says that community radios are very significant in the communities due to the fact that they act as platforms for discussion of various issues found in such communities. Since most of these radios are concentrated in rural areas and in needy localities of cities where almost members from those communities are always excluded from decisions, simply because they lack awareness, therefore community radios are very vital in such communities as they fill that vacuum of such uninformed communities (Sarr, 2014).

Furthermore, community radios are so useful amongst community members. They act as voice of the voiceless by

allowing community members to participate and use the radio stations to give out their views on issues affecting their communities. For example, they may discuss on how they can manage their natural resources, raw materials, community affairs and many other issues. Moreover, community radios are tools for social justice because they effectively respond to a real need to be informed, which is a fundamental right of all members in such communities (Sarr, 2014).

The establishment and existence of community radio stations have also been very vital in the communities where such radio stations operate because members in those communities have a greater chance to increase the partisan and social power, knowledge, and experience of those who participate (Sourou, 2013). According to Sourou (2013), community radios have a significance role to play especially in the rural areas. This is because they have power to reach out to people in rural settings, people who may not meet or converge in any other places. This is a very vital role played by the community radios bearing in minds that much of the population of Africa is rural, and this has been pointed out as a challenge for developmental projects.

Likewise, communities which have community radio stations have very significant benefits as community radios also have the influence to inform listeners and participants to focus on local issues especially those which affects their communities, they can as well mobilize listeners and participants to fully engage in their community developmental issues (Sourou, 2013). In addition, community radios have a greater chance to empower marginalized groups by giving them skills in political communication, helping them develop support networks, and programming for their basics needs or priorities in the community.

Moreover, community radios play significant roles in providing civic education during election periods to the prospective voters. According to Gustafsson (2013), the community radios fully engage in civic education. Gustafsson gives an example of the 2013 general election in Kenya where community radios played a major role. During the election period the community radio stations in Kenya informed citizens about their civic rights and responsibilities and provided them with the knowledge and information necessary for them to make an informed and sober decision making during the voting process.

Apart from provision of civic education, community radios do also engage in peace building during election periods. Since most of the elections in African countries have been characterized by conflicts and instability, community radios have been fully being engaged in airing out peace messages, and sometimes they do invite and give airtime to any peace building agent on institution as a mechanism to restore peace and tranquility during the entire election process. In Kenya for example, during the 2013 general election, most of the community radios invited religious leaders and NGO representatives as an initiative to preach for a peaceful election in the country.

In the same line, community radios play a remarkable role in preventing or minimizing hate speeches during election periods especially in countries where ethnicity is a major problem. Hate speeches are so dangerous and illegal in any democratic countries as they can cause destruction in society. A visible example resulting from hate speeches based on ethnicity was in Rwanda whereby because of hate speeches anchored by the media, thousands of civilians lost their lives in the 1994 genocide. As a result, many community radio stations have devoted themselves in fighting hateful speeches during elections. For example in Kenya, during the 2013 general election, all media, including community radio stations were compelled and sensitized by the government about the use of hate speech. This move played an accredited and credible role throughout the election because the country witnessed a peaceful election compared to the 2007 election.

2.3 Community Radio in Tanzania

Tanzania has got about 35 community radio stations across the country. However, based on the various definitions of what a community radio is, Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA, 2018) has categorized community radios into two: (i) *community radio commercial* and (ii) *community radio non-commercial*.

2.3.1 Community Radio Commercial

The community radio commercial in Tanzania are those radio stations which have some features of community radios but in nature they are commercially oriented. Most of their programs appear not to target the needs of their listeners or communities. Their major concentration is to maximize profit and not to serve the people in their localities, in other words, they are less to people participation like the purely community radios. Most of the community radio commercial in Tanzania are established at district level and thus they serve very few people in the country. Thus, there is a need for the government and or any other stakeholders in the country to invest more in community radios in order to allow majority of community members in other district participate to the developmental goals of the country through the various programs aired by community radios. Currently, Tanzania has about 20 (15%) community radios in operation which are commercially oriented as displayed in table 1.1

Table 1.1: Current Operating Community Radio – Commercial in Tanzania

	Name of Radio	Location	Operating areas
1	Entertainment FM	Dar es Salaam	District
2	Kings Broadcasting Services Ltd	Njombe	District
3	Rasi FM Radio	Dodoma	District
4	Ndingala FM	Sumbawanga	District
5	Arusha One Radio	Arusha	District
6	Standard FM Radio	Singida	District
7	Tanga Kunani FM Radio	Tanga	District
8	Storm FM Radio	Geita	District
9	Tanga Kunani FM Radio	Tanga	District
10	Big Star FM	Mbeya	District
11	Mpanda Radio FM	Mpanda	District
12	Dream FM	Mbeya	District
13	Radio Ihsaan FM	Tanga	District

14	Alternative FM Radio Station	Dodoma	District
15	Ice FM Radio	Makambako	District
16	Idea Radio	Arusha	District
17	Big Star FM	Mbeya	District
18	Mpanda Radio FM	Mpanda	District
19	Dream FM	Mbeya	District
20	Mazingira FM Radio	Bunda	District

2.3.2 Community Radio Non-commercial

Apart from the presence of about 20 community radio stations in the country, Tanzania also has about 14 (11%) community radio stations in operations which appear to purely accommodate characteristics of a community radio per se. Table 1.2 below displays some of the community radio stations in Tanzania.

Table 1.2: Current Operating Community Radios Non-commercial in Tanzania

	Name of Radio	Location	Operating areas
1	Radio Wananchi Newala	Newala	District
2	Maarifa Radio	Dar es Salaam	District
3	Radio Wananchi Newala	Newala	District
4	Radio Hope	Iringa	District
5	Nkasi FM	Nkasi	District
6	Pangani FM Radio	Pangani	District
7	Kyela FM Radio	Kyela	District
8	Ukombozi FM	Mwanza	District
9	Uvinza FM Radio	Uvinza	District
10	Radio Karagwe	Karagwe	District
11	Radio Karagwe	Uvinza	District
12	Radio Sengerema	Sengerema	District
13	Orkonerei FM Radio,	Manyara	District
14	Fadeco Community Radio	Karagwe	

The difference between these two categories of community radios is that community radio commercial are those community radios which do engage in some advertisements and other strategies to make profit whereas the latter only focuses at serving the community with less attention on maximizing profit. However, there are other categories of radio stations listed by TCRA as commercial radios 53 (41%), non-commercial radios 40 (31%), and 2 public radio stations (2%) and commercial radio stations.

Having pointed out the power and influence of the community radio stations amongst community members and surrounding communities, it is imperative to state that the current community radio stations available in Tanzania seem not to be representative for them to have any significant contributions in achieving the **“Big Results Now”** initiative. Likewise, the available community radio stations in the country appear to miss some components to qualify them in the vibrant community radio stations as explained in the previous sections.

It is thus ironical that Tanzania with about a population of 55 million and 150 districts to rely on only 15 percent of community radio-commercial and 11 percent community radio-noncommercial is neither health for the developmental issues nor the millennium goals. This is because of the expected vacuum of the flow of information from the community radio stations which have been reported to be more close and participatory to the majority of community members compared to the commercial radio station

available (41%) in the country which mostly focus at maximizing profits. All these forms of community radios are considered very vital in the development process of the country.

The current state of radio stations in Tanzania appears to be dominated by the commercial radio stations (41%), followed by the noncommercial radio stations (31%), community radio-commercial (15%), community radio-noncommercial (11%), and public radio stations (2%). Based on the main characteristics and prime focus of commercial radio stations of making profit, it is likely that these radio stations have very little or no contributions in achieving the sustainable development goals.

Likewise, the nature and majority of the noncommercial radio stations (31%) in the country are religious radio stations which are mostly bombarded with religious programs and content. This also is an indicator that there is very little contribution of radio stations in Tanzania towards the achievement of the millennium goals and other social problems or opportunities. Surprisingly, there are only two public radio stations in the country which represents about 2% of all radio stations available in Tanzania.

Therefore, in this regard the focus and interest of this paper is to highlight the need for the Tanzanian government and other media stakeholders on the need for expanding or establishing more community radio stations and if possible public radio stations across the country in order to allow diverse community members across the country use the community radio stations for their developmental, political, economic, and or social issues, hence, meeting the objectives of the *Big Results Now*.

3. The Big Results Now

The *“Big Results Now”* is an initiative introduced in 2013 by the government of Tanzania as a mechanism to accelerate the realization of the country’s vision 2025 which among other things focuses on a multi-sectorial development programs intended to drive the country to achieve a middle income country status by the year 2025. It is a development model adopted from the Malaysian government. The model is focused on new working methods in specific timeframe for the effective and efficient delivering of required national development vision and mission (URT, 2013). The initiative is also considered being a delivery approach focused on delivering some specific goals in the country within a stipulated timeline.

After the adoption of the *“Big Results Now”* in Tanzania, every ministry was compelled to align its budget and priorities to the high-level initiatives of the government as defined within each five year development goals, which in turn are targeted at moving the country from being a low income country to a middle level economy by 2025. To achieve this, six key areas (priorities) of the economy were set by the Tanzania government to be implemented by 2025.

The six key areas are: agriculture, water, education, transportation, resource mobilization, natural gas and energy. In Malaysia, the Big Result Model was established

in 2009 so as to enhance the country to become a high income economy by 2020. Since then, the model has shown significant transformation in Malaysia since its establishment.

Amongst the transformation it has made includes the industrialization process which has made Malaysia to be labeled as one of the leading country in economic development amongst the Asian countries. However, the execution of the *“Big Results Now”* in Tanzania has experienced some stumbling blocks, amongst which include budget deficits in the ministries, individual resistance, lack of enough knowledgeable workers and unskilled labor which are hardly witnessed in Malaysia and other developed countries (White, 2013). In order to implement the six priorities set in the big fast results strategies, there is high requirement for knowledge dissemination and absorption to the citizens whereby the community radio stations have a very potential role to play.

3.1 Integration of Community Radio in the *“Big Results Now”*

There are quite a number of reasons as to why Tanzania and perhaps other developing countries need to integrate vibrant community radio stations in all developmental matters. Most of the community radio stations are located in specific geographical localities or communities in order to boost the development of such communities. It is unfortunate that the present community radio stations in Tanzania do not cover nor exists in many of districts in the country.

The current average of the coverage or operations of the vibrant community radio stations in Tanzania covers about eight percent (8%) of all districts and municipalities in the country whereas the average operations of the community radio stations which are commercial oriented is about twelve percent (12%) only. Thus, the implication of this is that there is a significant vacuum on the contributions of community radio stations in Tanzania.

One of the reasons why Tanzania needs to integrate community radio stations for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the Big Results Now is based on the existence of a few number of community radio stations across the country. The current number (8%) of vibrant community radio stations, and which are commercial (12%) in Tanzania seem not to be sufficient enough to boost the attainment of the objectives of the Big Results Now due to the fact that they do not reach a big number of communities in the country.

The current community radio stations (both commercial and noncommercial) in Tanzania only cover about 23 districts (14%) out of about 168 districts and municipalities in the country (including Zanzibar); this is not a good number for a developing country like Tanzania. For example, in countries like Thailand, India, and Indonesia, the presence of good number of community radio stations accelerated the development in these countries. According to Tahir (2016), until 2016 there were about 3000 community radio stations across Thailand and more than 100 across Indonesia and India.

Moreover, in order for Tanzania to achieve the objectives of the “*Big Results Now*” there is a need to invest more in community radio stations because of their ability and influence in the respective communities. Community radio stations are seen (Tahir, 2016) as a collective enterprise devoted to developmental matters in their respective communities, they are considered as communication amongst the members of marginalized communities in the remote areas, away from main urban centers. Thus, having such a number of community radio stations in Tanzania would enable majority of the rural-based citizenry to fully participate in achieving the third objective (agriculture) of the *Big Results Now* by fully using the community radio stations as their platforms to obtain, discuss and share various educative information concerning their agriculture.

Tahir (2016) notes that in Malaysia and Thailand community radio stations have been considered as agents for change in the agricultural sector because they play a significant role in providing new agriculture skills and other essential information to the peasants. Radio in this regard provides a set of participatory communication techniques that support agricultural extension efforts by using local languages to communicate directly with farmers and listeners’ groups.

Malawi is amongst the few countries which has somewhat utilized community radio stations for the developmental matters of which Tanzania also needs to learn from in order to fully achieve the Big Result Now objectives. According to Mhagama (2015), some community radio stations in Malawi focus on agriculture known as Farm Radio stations with the aim of disseminating agricultural news to farmers especially in rural areas. In other words, Farm Radios are those community radios which focus on the agricultural development in the rural areas. According to Banda (2003) as quoted by Mhagama (2015), community radio stations are also referred to as “a communicative tool that is used to mobilize communities to support development initiatives, either those started by the government, the international aid agencies, or the local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s). In this regard, Tanzania could tap such strategies and take immediate steps to establish vibrant radio stations if she really wants to achieve the objectives of the *Big Results Now*.”

Generally, Tanzania needs vibrant radio stations because of their ability and power to mobilize community members to fully participate in all developmental matters in their communities. Evidence from countries which have succeeded shows that community radio stations have had significant contributions of which Tanzania should not overlook. A country with vibrant community radio especially those scattered across the country is more advantaged than a country dominated by commercial radio stations. With the availability of community radio, it is easy to reach every member of community, including those at the grass roots level for rural development. Likewise, community radio stations help in providing diverse community issues such as water management, poverty, education, social problems amongst others which could be the focus for programming.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

In view of the foregoing, it is observed that the role and contributions of community radio is inevitably important in any community. However, the state of community radio in Tanzania appears to be somewhat weak to play any significant contribution in achieving the objectives of the “*Big Results Now*”. Amongst the weaknesses of the community radio available in Tanzania is that they are very few, and only concentrated in few geographic areas. In other words there are more commercial radios (41%) and non-commercial radio (31%) in the country compared to public radio (2%), community radio (11%), and community commercial (15%). Nevertheless, if Tanzania really wants to easily achieve the objectives of the “*Big Results Now*”, it is paramount for the Tanzanian government to fully integrate and involve community radios available in the country because of their devotion and concentration to the community affairs and concerns compared to the commercial radios which are normally profit oriented.

Overall, community radio allow community members to dialogue, debate, contribute, critique, educate, and to bring together community members in all developmental matters. Thus, it is very vital for Tanzania to integrate such community radios not only in achieving the objectives of the big results now but also in all developmental matters. Therefore, there is a need for the Tanzania government and other stakeholders to put more priorities on the establishment of more community radio stations in the country which would at least the majority of media audiences who are mostly in the rural areas.

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