

Transcript of Base FM interview with Jaco du Toit – UNESCO Field Officer – about the project “Empowering Local Radios with ICTs”

Jaco Du Toit: Local Radios in Africa are in dying need of use of communication and information technologies and this prompted cooperation between the Swedish Development Agency and UNESCO to see to which extent can we design a 3 year project, that can actually improve this use of ICTs by local radios. The project covers about 7 countries in the southern African region. It covers Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and we also intend to work specifically with Base FM as one of the beneficiaries of the project.

Base FM presenter: Which radio stations are you mainly looking at? Is it community radio stations or commercial radio stations as well?

Jaco Du Toit: The project targets in Namibia specifically community radios, so, in Namibia they are three community radios that would benefit from the project: it is Base FM, it is Live FM and Ohangwena community radio station.

Base FM presenter: I believe you are first going to conduct the survey. How are you going to conduct this?

Jaco Du Toit: Well, the survey is a very important step in the whole program because we first want to see what the needs are of these radio stations that we are going to work with, and secondly we need also want to set some benchmarks in order to measure the impact of the project over the three year period. So the project would make use of surveys, interviews and some monitoring of programming in order to determine what the needs are and where we are going in terms of improving program content by the use of ICTs.

Base FM presenter: Does this mean that you are going out in the community and ask questions?

Jaco Du Toit: This is very important aspect that you mentioned, because by nature community radios represent the community. So of course they should be interaction and views expressed by the community on their needs vis-a-vis their community radio station. It also permits the community radio stations to forge better relationships with the community radios and to see what are the needs of the people listening to the radio stations.

Base FM presenter: After the survey is done what will the way for it be?

Jaco Du Toit: After the survey we will look at the needs of the community radio stations and the needs would benefit from some investment in terms of training, management, schemes to enlarge the network of correspondents and all of these should make community radios more sustainable.

Base FM presenter: And lastly, when do we expect it to be implemented?

Jaco Du Toit: The project has been approved in April [2012] and we would like to kick off with the project as soon as possible, so hopefully already in the month of May we can start with the assessment and the benchmarking.

Base FM presenter: May this year?

Jaco Du Toit: Yes. And congratulations again for Base FM to be one of the beneficiary radio stations in this project.