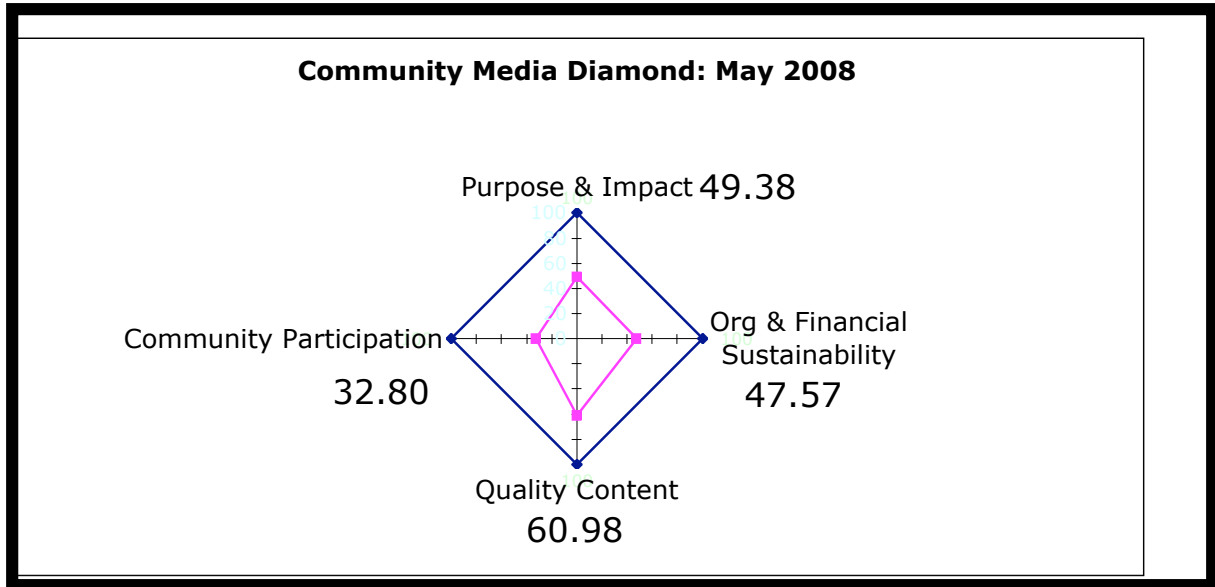


Mohodi Community Radio Community Media Index



SUMMARY BASELINE

May/June 2008

Produced for the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF)
www.ncrf.org.za



NCRF Service Provider: Amandla!
www.communitymedia.org.za



The Community Media Index (CMI) Tool, including its data gathering, evaluation, and reporting formats, are copy rights of Amandla! licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 South Africa License.

You are welcome to share o copy, distribute, transmit and adapt the Tool provided you attribute the Tool to Amandla! and reference our website: www.communitymedia.org.za (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work). Amandla! invite you to share your experience and learning from use of our tools through our website at www.communitymeda.org.za

The content of the report remain the property of the commissioning organization.

Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. What is the Community Media Index?	5
3. CMI Findings & Conclusions.....	6
Purpose & Impact: 49.38%.....	6
Community Participation: 32.8%.....	7
Organisational & Financial Sustainability: 47.57%.....	9
Quality Content: 60.98%	11
4. CMI Recommendations.....	13
Purpose & Impact	13
Community Participation	14
Financial and Organisational Sustainability	14
Quality content.....	15

1. Introduction

Mohodi Community Radio participated in the Community Media Index (CMI) assessment on the 30th of May and 10th of June 2008. The CMI is a participatory assessment and action-planning tool used by community media projects to enhance their ability to reflect and grow. It empowers projects to ‘index’ themselves, creating goals and benchmarks.

The application of the CMI in the South African Community Radio Sector was initiated by the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF) as part of their commitment to enabling sustainability in the Sector.

The CMI assessment was a structured opportunity to enhance the Mohodi Community Radio’s ability to access information about other members of the community and share information about themselves to improve their self-awareness and ability to reflect, and thus enhance their performance. Greater dialogue among stakeholders enhances transparency, accountability, networking, and partnership.

Overall Mohodi Community Radio scored 47.68% on the Community Media Index. On the four dimensions the Station scored as follows:

Purpose & Impact	49.38%
Community Participation	32.8%
Org & Financial Sustainability	47.57%
Quality Content	60.98%

Based on this assessment, unpacked in the report, the report makes a series of recommendations of improvements that can be made to the Station’s performance.

As a consequence of its action-research philosophy, the CMI assessment seeks to provide information that can easily be translated into practical actions by the Station and stakeholders. Mohodi Community Radio engaged in the CMI process with an openness and willingness to learn. This was critical to the success of the process as it is not intended to expose or shame the Station but rather to offer the Station and its stakeholders an opportunity to reflect honestly on the current reality in order to improve the Station's performance in the future. As such this is a baseline CMI and it is hoped that through future assessments significant improvements will be tracked.

2. What is the Community Media Index?

The Community Media Index (CMI) is a participatory assessment and action-planning tool used by community media projects to enhance their ability to reflect and grow. Projects can implement the CMI themselves as a self-assessment tool, involve stakeholders from their Development Eco-System and use the CMI as a participatory learning and information-sharing tool, or invite an external agency to apply the CMI as a form of external evaluation.

As a consequence of its action-research philosophy, the CMI assessment seeks to provide information that can easily be translated into practical actions by stakeholders.

In short the CMI is envisaged as a lens – a common language or perspective. It can be applied in specific contexts once off (as a strategic planning tool) or over periods of time (for planning and evaluation). In specific contexts it empowers projects to 'index' themselves, creating goals and benchmarks.

There are four key dimensions of a media project that need to be assessed in order for a full and balanced picture of the state of the project to emerge.

3. CMI Findings & Conclusions

Overall the Mohodi Community Radio scored 47.68% on the Community Media Index. The following sections unpack the four dimensions of the Index.

Purpose & Impact: 49.38%

This dimension addresses a project’s strategic assessment of their environment, the development of a vision and strategic goal, the extent to which this vision informs the project’s activities, and the extent to which the project has actualised its vision in the period under review. Mohodi scored as follows:

	WEIGHT	%
Vision & Mission clear	20	63
Vision/Mission recorded	4	100
Vision/Mission relevant to community needs	5	60
Vision/Mission inspiring and measurable	3	55
Participatory strategic planning takes place	3	30
Annual targets are set to realise vision	5	60
Vision & Mission Owned	30	34
Community participation in developing/reviewing Vision/Mission	5	20
Vision/Mission known to stakeholders	5	47
Vision/Mission shared by stakeholders	15	35
Activities are informed by vision/mission	5	35
Social/Community Impact	50	53
Data is collected to assess impact	10	50
Strategic evaluation takes place	10	35
Progress is made towards realising vision	30	63

Mohodi Community Radio has a clear and well articulated Mission and Vision Statement that speaks to the communication and developmental needs of the community. These statements are prominently displayed in the Station. However, the statements are not in a language and wording easily accessible to the community. While none of the participants in the community workshop were familiar with the statements, they did identify the key elements of the Station’s Vision and Mission when identifying the Station’s purpose.

While internal stakeholders are confident that the Statements are clear and appropriate to the Station’s context, there is a general view that staff and volunteers do not use them to inform their day-to-day activities. The Station’s strategic purpose does not directly inform the participation of community members.

The Station has a Monitoring and Evaluation system in which progress towards realising these Statements is tracked. Community members in the CMI workshop had not participated in this review process and were not aware of the formal M&E system. The Board does not engage adequately in strategic review. Internal stakeholders agree that the Station is making progress towards realising its purpose and that there is an increase in listenership and the Station budget.

Community Participation: 32.8%

This dimension looks at the degree to which community stakeholders participate at all levels of the project. It reviews the ownership model, participation in management, planning, reporting, reflecting and editorial/programming. This dimension makes an assessment of the extent of the projects engagement with its Development Eco-System, it looks at stakeholder mapping, partnerships and collaborations. Mohodi scored as follows:

	WEIGHT	%
Participating in Governance	50	37

Participatory AGM	10	48
Democratic Governance	12	45
Participatory Strategic Planning	8	15
Input into policy	6	33
Wide reporting of progress	4	60
Participatory Evaluation	10	28
Participating in Management & Implementation	30	32
Participatory operational planning	5	15
Participatory Operational Monitoring	4	10
Organisations partner in practice	8	30
Individuals with skills participate	6	30
On/Off air campaigns take place	7	60
Participating in Programming	20	24
Participation in schedule design	6	30
Participation in show design	6	10
Representative sources	3	37
Participatory evaluation of shows	5	25

The Station has a regular AGM where reports are talked about and a Board is democratically elected. While all internal stakeholders (staff and Board Chairperson) believed that the AGM is well attended and representative of all sections of the community, participants in the CMI workshop did not highlight aspects of governance or refer to AGM proceedings suggesting a low significance attached to the AGM as a mechanism for their participation in the strategic orientation of the Station. While the Board is elected at the AGM some internal stakeholders felt it was not fully representative of the community. The Board meets regularly but some internal stakeholders feel that the Board does not adequately resolve on key issues confronting the Station. There are no clear means for the community to participate in shaping the Station's strategy or to ensure accountability beyond attending the AGM and participating in the Board.

Community members have limited participation in the management and implementation of activities at the Station with some skilled members of the community offering their time, according to the internal stakeholders. While the Station does implement a number of projects in partnership with other organisations, at the CMI workshop there was no evidence of any participation in the running of the Station.

Regarding Programming, community members participate as guests - providing information - but have very limited participation in the design or review of the schedule or shows.

Organisational & Financial Sustainability: 47.57%

This dimension assesses the strength and functionality of an organisation’s systems including governance and decision taking, human resource development, financial management, and critically, the ability of the project to develop and grow different income streams. Mohodi scored as follows:

	WEIGHT	%
Strategic Management	15	34
Strategic planning	5	40
Effective Governance	5	44
Effective Partnership Development	5	17
People Management	20	54
Healthy team dynamic & remuneration	8	46
HR policy supports staff	6	68
Staff Development takes place	6	50
Financial Management	25	63
Financial policy gives guidance	8	60

Financial systems are maintained	12	56
Assets are well managed	5	83
Project Management	15	43
Projects are planned and implemented	7	44
Projects are systematically managed	5	60
Community participates in project planning, monitoring, and evaluation	3	10
Income generation	25	39
Balanced & Diverse income streams	9	20
Planning for income generation takes place	3	78
Annual income targets are met	9	40
Station is Marketed	4	50

Governance systems (effective AGMs and Board) at Mohodi are functional with regular reporting and decision taking. However internal stakeholders identified strategic planning as a weakness. Staff does not participate in strategic planning and the Board is not satisfied with the level of Board participation in strategic planning.

There is limited community participation in the governance, management and implementation at the Station. Stakeholder mapping does not take place systematically, and limited joint planning and evaluation takes place with partner organisations.

There is a healthy team dynamic, low levels of staff turn over, and staff takes initiative at the Station. Staff have contacts and there is an organogram outlining roles and responsibilities, however not all staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. While the Station has a Human Resource policy and handbook, this is not readily available to members of staff.

The Station has a training plan based on an assessment of the staff's skills and training and staff appraisal takes place. However, all internal stakeholders noted that the Station lacks the skills to function optimally.

While the Station has a Financial Policy, internal stakeholders all felt that staff did not fully understand their roles and responsibilities regarding finance. Annual budgeting takes place and there are functioning systems to track income and expenditure, however internal stakeholders noted that financial obligations not always met. The Station does perform an annual audit and the audit report is presented to stakeholders. The Station has a register of its assets, these assets are ensured, and their value grows year-on-year.

The Station’s income is generated from a mix of advertising, sponsorship, and donor finance however there is a greater dependency on advertising from government departments. The Station does not receive significant resources directly from the community. While income mapping takes place and an income generation strategy is developed and implemented, the Station does not meet its income targets.

Quality Content: 60.98%

This dimension assesses the extent to which the project’s editorial/programming meets the information and expression needs of its community. It will assess the editorial/programming in terms of the representation of women and marginal groups in the community, bias towards institutions holding political, social, or economic power, the application of media ethics, accuracy and fairness in reporting, the spread of stories and sources, quality of presentation, and the extent to which the programming upholds and advances the values contained in the South African Bill of Rights. Mohodi scored as follows.

	WEIGHT	%
Appropriate Format	15	67
Variety & Spread of formats	10	85
Participating format design	5	30
Appropriate Sources & Topics	30	58
Variety and representative sources	9	58

Campaigns around themes and issues	6	70
Local content promoted	6	60
Well researched content	9	49
Independent, Balanced & Fair	30	69
Independent	10	55
Balanced & Fair	20	77
Technical quality	15	60
Clear voice and sound	6	70
Useful Equipment	4	60
Staff are skilled for broadcasting	5	48
Community Participation	10	38
Participatory production of shows	5	15
Participatory feedback mechanisms	2	30
Coverage of Community Events	3	80

Mohodi Community Radio has a programming schedule that caters for different sections of the community with regular news bulletins and a good mix of music and talk. While the community does not participate actively in the schedule design, participants in the CMI workshop were satisfied with the overall programming.

Programmes give a platform to all members of the community and engage perspectives from government and sections of civil society. Divergent perspectives are given airtime and the Station takes up themes and issues that identified and focused on over an extended period of time and across shows. The Station promotes local music and has a well organised music library.

The Station maintains a diary of upcoming news events and has dedicated reporters on staff but does not make use of reports or stringers from the community. While all presenters prepare a script for their shows, the Station does not have an organised resource library that presenters can use to research and there is also limited internet access for the preparation. Community members do not participate in the design or

production of shows.

While participants in the CMI workshop felt that programming is independent from sponsors and advertisers, the Station is overly dependent on government advertising. According to the Programme Manager the Station adheres to all ethical journalism practices.

The Station's equipment is in good working condition but does not fully meet the needs of staff.

4. CMI Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the above assessment.

Purpose & Impact

1. The Station should engage its staff and community stakeholders in a process that unpacks its Mission and Vision statements ensuring that staff and community members share the Station's purpose and that this purpose informs their participation in the Station.
2. Planning at the Station should be based on realising these statements and should include staff and community stakeholders in the planning to ensure greater ownership and accountability.
3. The Station should conduct a participatory evaluation process at the end of the agreed period where it should engage staff, Board, partners, and community members in achieving the following:
 - a. Assessing where targets have been met and missed,
 - b. Assessing if strategic statements are still relevant,
 - c. Drawing lessons from the period's experience and agree on practical and realistic

strategies and activities for reaching their objectives,

- d. Agree on a new set of annual targets and how these targets will be measured.

Community Participation

1. The Station should develop mechanisms to offer a greater opportunity for community members to participate substantively in governance. These should include ways for stakeholders to participate in strategic planning and evaluation as well as to receive and engage with organisational reports on an ongoing basis. Annual General Meetings should be prepared for and structured to enable meaningful engagement with critical aspects of the Station.
2. Community members and partners should be engaged in project management and project design from the conceptualisation of shows through to evaluating the impact of projects.
3. A greater emphasis should be placed on encouraging disadvantaged groups in the community to participate in the life of the Station including governance and the production of programming.

Financial and Organisational Sustainability

1. As stated above, Annual General Meetings and other mechanisms should be prepared for and structured to enable meaningful community engagement with critical aspects of the Station, including engaging with evaluations of strategic planning and adopting new plans.
2. Partnerships should be systematically managed and include joint conceptualising of projects, joint planning, management and evaluation. Partners should also be drawn into implementation.
3. Staff development plans should be budgeted for and implemented to ensure that skills gaps are addressed.

4. Staff should participate more actively in planning and be inducted into the financial policies of the organisation to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities.
5. Financial reporting, and accurate tracking of financial obligations needs to be improved to ensure transparency and accountability.
6. To ensure the Station's independence, income needs to be diversified significantly away from the current dependence on government advertising and sponsorship. Local CBO and business and well as national NGO and donor income streams should be explored.

Quality content

1. Community members should be engaged in evaluating and developing the Station's format.
2. The Station should involve ordinary community members more in production. They should explore the possibility of training people as stringers to provide local news and perspectives for the Station.
3. The Station should diversify its sources of information to include more local community members and non-governmental perspectives.
4. The Station needs to enable staff to access the internet and develop and maintain a resource library to keep material for presenters to do research in preparation for their shows
5. The Station should ensure its transmitter works properly and invest in more field recorders, outside broadcasting capacity, and more studio phone lines to support the participation of the community in production.

ENDS