



104.7 FM – Cashew farmers: Listen up!!!
ACi radio programs for cashew farmers in West Africa

Mr. John Dare and his wife Grace shift their chairs closer to a small radio set standing on the floor between them on the little terrace in front of their house in Subinso in the North of Ghana. Chicken are busily scabble in the dust. "Shhh!" makes Mr. Dare and turns the small radio device louder. It is 8 pm and time to listen to the daily program on agriculture of the local community radio.



Farmer listening to radio in Northern Ghana.

Radio as the most famous medium

The devices are mostly small, portable and relatively cheap in purchase. Everybody listens to radio everywhere: at home, on the road side, during farming activities in the field, in market places, public busses and at village meeting spots under a mango tree. Especially farmers are favoring the radio: they carry the device, operated on batteries, on their long walks from their houses to the farm, listening to music and programs whilst they are working on the plantations. They prefer local radio stations as they broadcast in the local languages and bring news from the region. Additionally farmers value the information programs on community development topics.

ACi produces Cashew Radio Program

As ACi is implementing activities to promote the competitiveness of African cashew farmers "from fruit to fork" in the five project countries, the initiative has observed the acceptance of radio with cashew farmers in West Africa and uses it since 2010 to broadcast programs on good agricultural practices in cashew plantations. ACi plans to incorporate all training modules, harvest and post-harvest techniques, management of cashew plantations and the establishment of new farms into the program.

Cashew Radio Program broadcasted in Benin

Benin made the start and chose 12 local radio stations for cooperation in the beginning of 2010. 24 journalists were invited for training on training contents which ACi offers in its cashew trainings session. Until now over 240 radio programs about the three main modules of farmer training, each with an approximate duration of 25 to 30 minutes, have been broadcasted in French as well as over 12 local languages. ACi is presently kicking-off radio program activities in Burkina Faso and Ghana.



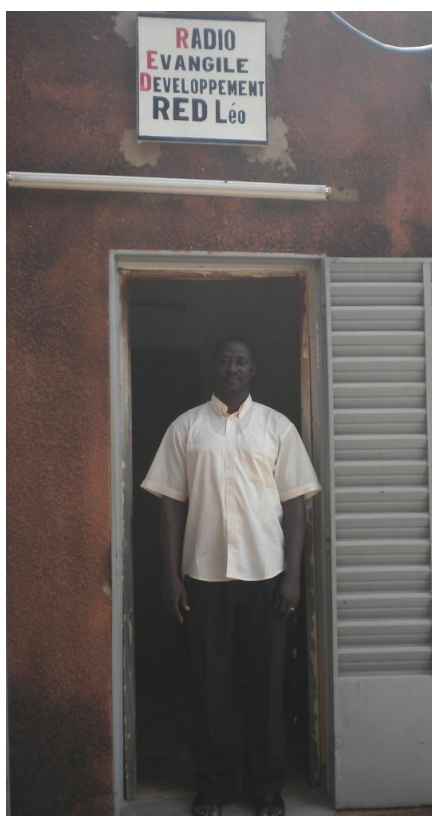
Production of a radio program with experts from ACi in Benin.

Cashew Radio for Burkina Faso

Mr. Benjamin Nama, director of the community radio station Radio Evangile Developpement (RED) in Léo, Burkina Faso, is very satisfied with the newly arranged



cooperation between his radio station and ACi: "I am a cashew farmer myself – so this cooperation is not only business for me - it also adds knowledge about cashew farming techniques and how quality and quantity can be improved!". Together, the ACi team in Bobo Dioulasso and Mr. Nama are currently developing different radio programs. During Round table discussions for example, part of the ACi team, the Ministry of Agriculture, the president of a farmer-based organization and other local stakeholders are presenting and discussing various topics in a conversational style. "Last week we finalized the round table program on the avoidance of bushfires. Just lately one of my neighbor lost 2.5 ha of cashew plantation – this program comes just at the right time." says Nama.



Director Benjamin Nama at the studio entrance of Radio Evangile Développement (RED) in Léo, Burkina Faso.

Micro programs transfer knowledge

Radio journalist will broadcast information about ACi training modules in 20 minutes and short trailers of only a few seconds

will remind of core messages up to ten times a day. In Wenchi, the north of Ghana Mr. Adu Agyarko Pinsang, Director of the community radio station ROYALS FM, guides visitors through his studios in an old building from colonial times. "We started to work on cashew already", he says.

Potential cashew programs ahead

Apart from the general topics ACi also wants to tackle specific issues like separating the nut from the apple. "We have realized that cashew farmers still do not use a string or knives. They just plug off the nut with their hands. The remaining fruit flesh affects the quality of the nuts negatively", describes ACi Country Coordinator Nii Orleans Chinery. He urges: "We must get them adapted to improved practices." The ROYAL FM Director answers promisingly: "After our programs in e.g. gender we do evaluations. We go to villages and ask listener what they have implemented of the programs' content in their everyday life. We achieve high adoption rates. I am sure we can do the same for cashew."



Nama during work in the studio of RED, Léo, Burkina Faso.

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