



“Thanks to projects like Kids waves, when the behavior of a child positively changes at early age, he or she is likely to be a good leader in the future.”

A mayor in Mali

# Kids Waves

Young People Promote their Rights and call for positive changes in the lives of children through Radio in West Africa

In 2008, close to 5,000 young people were directly involved and acquiring life skills to improve children lives in their communities

2,500 radio shows were produced in 10 countries with 110 radio partners

Millions of listeners in Africa

Youth learn about their rights, and articulate them using the power of radio to inform the population about children issues in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and calling for positive change in the lives of children.

10 countries in West Africa



Programme: Kids Waves  
 Partners: Nokia, Plan and local partners  
 Period: 2009  
 Location: West Africa Region  
 Countries involved: 10 (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo)  
 Reach: Close to 5000 young people directly involved, aged 8-18, more than 500,000 attended the live shows, millions of listeners from the region.  
 Model: Training, production and radio broadcast with youth on the rights of the child

## The Challenge

There are millions of young people under 18 in West Africa, close to half the population. Yet despite these numbers, youth in many societies are rarely heard and often have little chance to express themselves about issues affecting them. Many do not have the skills or tools to communicate their messages to others. All too often, adults are unaware that children and young people have something useful to say. This situation must change, and the media is a powerful way to draw attention to youth issues and to let young people speak out. Youth media projects create channels to spread information from children and young people, to other children/youth and adults. Various evaluations on youth media show that children are receptive to information from other children and so are adults. Reaching larger audiences with better, clearer, more accurate messages is the main goal of all youth media projects.

## The Programme

*Deviwo Be Radio* in Togo, *Radio Gune Yi* in Senegal, *Bibir Radio* in Burkina Faso, *Eto Dodo Deviwo* in Benin, *Denmisenw Kun Kan* in Mali, *La Voix de Finda et Alpha* in Guinea, *Pikin Dem Voice* in Sierra Leone, *Yen Adwen* in Ghana, and *I am a child but I have rights too!* in Cameroon and Liberia.

The partnership between Plan and Nokia laid the foundation for Kids' Waves to build awareness on the Rights of the Child (ROC) through various media, and developing relationships in communities across the region to produce and broadcast popular and educational radio programs to thousands of children in hundreds of villages.

The goals for the year are to

- Reach out to still more radio stations and producers to implement systems capable of producing a steady stream of recorded broadcasts,
- Strengthen links between Kids' Waves and other media providers, and;
- Tailor each program to the specific issues and themes foremost in all 10 participating country programs.

In all countries, in 2008, surveys identifying key issues have been completed, animators and other participants trained, programs launched, produced, and evaluated, and thousands of children made aware of their rights and responsibilities in their respective communities. Most important, the program has created models for new systems of dissemination of information that will continue in perpetuity.

At present, the project is implemented in ten countries. In each country, the project involves the production and recording of a 30-minute radio show in a different community almost every week. Each show has a theme linked to a particular aspect of child rights, e.g. education, health and protection. It is estimated that millions of listeners are reached and that around 2,000 people are attending each recording.

Across West Africa, the Kids Waves project involves several partners including national broadcasters, rural radio stations, government agencies, private companies, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations and, importantly, local communities.

## Plan

Plan is a humanitarian child-centered organization working in 46 developing countries, with families and their communities. Founded almost 70 years ago, Plan has no religious, political or governmental affiliation. Plan and Nokia have a multi-year, multi-country partnership, which projects currently implemented in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and Uganda.

**“Since the broadcast of programs on the importance of school began, we see fewer children in the streets. More parents send their children to school.”**  
 – Alfred, parent, Benin

**“This is the best training I have attended since I started as a journalist. It really helped me improve in my broadcast skills.”**  
 – Pauline, journalist, Liberia

**“Thanks to the program, girls in my village have been relieved of their after school tasks like doing the dishes so we can do our homework. We are no longer beaten at school by teachers.”**  
 – Youth participant, 15, Mali