

# Introducing a Social Benefits approach to Community Radio:

## A Compendium of Stories

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# 1. What's so Special about Community Radio?

What really differentiates community media from their local commercial counterparts is that they see themselves, from their foundation, as *part of the community*. They do not just serve the community, or reflect the interests of the community, they engage directly with the community and the community engages directly with them – they are inseparable. It is not just about capturing the attention of listeners, it is about listening to the community, being part of the community by engaging in activities, amplifying the voices of diverse groups in the community, opening a space for volunteers to take part directly and indeed to manage and run the station. Most of all it is about contributing to the *overall social benefit* of the community, as part of and engaging with the wider local empowerment and development infrastructure.

The bulk of this document comprises, in the long Annex, a diverse set of stories that describe, concretely, how the community and community stations interacting, in ways that benefit individuals and groups locally, and ultimately the community as a whole.

**What do we mean by benefits?** If it is not just about producing programmes people want to hear (and it is that too) then what other kinds of benefit can be generated? This is a crucial question, as it goes directly to those features that differentiate community radio and community media in general.

Before the Stories proper, we thus present a **Social Benefit Framework** to help understand the kinds of benefits that, in principle, are generated by community radio. It goes through the distinct types, six in all, that have been identified by looking through the literature and research and talking to community radio stations and their organisation, CRAOL. As well as identifying the types, the Framework gives a summary indication of how a station actually achieved this benefit.

For instance, the first type of benefit described is *“individuals are growing in confidence and creativity and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging, directly from engaging with the Station”*. How does this happen concretely? It might be that the Station is offering community organisations placements for various disadvantaged clients they work with – and who get a lot from it personally - and the Stories cover several examples of this. Or it may be that volunteers – a staple of all community stations – find a welcoming place to do useful and interesting work and make new friends. Many stations also offer formal training to groups such as refugees, and the evidence here is that it can generate a strong sense of belonging. Not least, however, isolated and marginalised people, such as older people living alone, can feel they are part of a wider community through listening to their special programmes, and indeed often contacting and interacting with the programme makers.

The Framework thus describes types of benefits and examples of ways that specific community station actions – many of them unique to community radio - can contribute to each type. It is intended to be of practical use, and the next section **Putting the Framework to Work** gives a flavour of what it can do, but as part of the wider research methodology that has been developed in another part of this project. This briefly illustrates the main components of that methodology and where the stories fit in.

After this, a more elaborate **Theory of Change map** is presented. This takes a further step, to look the wider logic and operations of a community station, and of the environment within which it is embedded, intersecting to enable the Station to bring about change. It is called a Theory of Change

because it first looks at the overall objectives of a community stations, and then, bearing in mind the challenges that it faces, it tries to map out the logical linkages and preconditions of how to get from the here and now, to the final objective sought i.e. to map out a theory of the how change can happen. In this case the final objective is to maximise the benefits that can be brought to the community by the Station, by means of the same six areas identified in the Framework.

The Theory of Change map is an exercise for those who like to engage in visual mapping and speculate about how change happens – the example given here is at a very early stage, and based on initial research. But it can be greatly refined, and ultimately it may enable a station, or the entire sector, to understand the dynamics of how it works, and hence to improve the outcomes it achieves.

However, the real star of this report, filling up a large Annex, is **the Stories**.

In researching and documenting these Stories, part of a wider process of developing a methodology to be able to measure social benefit of community radio, the researcher was struck by two things when visiting radio stations: First how the station's staff and volunteers would recount, often in passing, arresting anecdotes about people who have been in touch to thank them, and stories about how the Station engaged with all kinds of the amazing things going on in the community. And second, when pressed for detail, how little of this was actually documented. It turned out that the many Stations more or less take for granted the beneficial work they do – it is why they are involved in the first place - but-are so busy managing day to day operations, and often simply surviving, that these stories are seldom written down. When asked directly of the benefits they bring to different individuals, groups and organisation in the community, they often seem a little bit taken aback and mention just a few examples. But when pressed further, they begin to reflect on the different groups they engage with, and what they have done with them over the years; the individuals who drop in the stations apparently just for a chat; the often hundreds of volunteers that have passed through their doors and still stay in touch, some even going on to jobs in media; and the phone calls, cards, and chance encounters they have with people who regard the station's voice as that of a close friend, part of their life, and indeed sometimes even their closest friend. Many of the stories are collected directly from many of those interacting with the stations, offering authentic and verified experience of what it means it means to them.

Each Stories offers an often modest but rich and clear insight of how the Station engages with the community, in practical ways, that might benefit just one person, or the entire community; and usually somewhere in between. Each Story is preceded by a Table that summarises the types of benefits to which it contributes, as judged by the researcher, so that the reader can bear this in mind as they read it, and see what it means in practice. Each also begins with a very short summary.

The Stories presented here cover nowhere near the full breadth of possibilities of how community stations interact with people and community. Hundred more Stories are out there, and indeed many were recounted at a moving, and to this researcher, eye-opening, session at the CRAOL Féile in late 2019. Community radio practitioners told their own personal stories over several hours, more or less spontaneously, to a captivated audience that let the meeting run over an hour over time.

Nevertheless, what is presented here is a start, and hopefully the Stories will multiple over time.

## 2. Social Benefit and Community Media: A Framework

The Social Benefit Framework summarise the types of benefits that a community media can offer its community.

At the top is a definition of what ‘social benefits’ are from the perspective of community media.

Down the left column are **six types of social benefit**. These have been drawn from the literature and refined with the CRAOL and BAI committee that oversaw this research, and with Stations themselves, at the Féile in October 2019 and individually with others.

The second column suggests concrete activities that contribute to each type of benefit. Hence they can also be seen as **indicators that these benefits are being achieved**.

**Table 1: Framework for Assessing the Social Benefit of Community media:**

Definition of Social Benefit from Community Media:	
“Benefits to individuals or collective actors in the community that enhance their lives socially, culturally or economically, or in terms of development, empowerment and/or well-being, that otherwise would not have come about.”	
Social Benefits	Indicators of Social Benefits of each Type
1. <u>Individuals</u> , especially minorities and those marginalised, are <u>growing in confidence and creativity</u> and/or <u>reinforcing a sense of belonging</u> , directly from engaging with the Station.	SB1 is being achieved through... 1.1. <b>placements</b> from community organisation working with marginalised/disadvantaged people 1.2. <b>station volunteers</b> making programmes and in administration and support 1.3. <b>training</b> of marginalised/ disadvantages individuals; and taking in interns from external entities 1.4. <b>isolated or marginalised individuals</b> listening to radio programmes addressing their interests
2. <u>Individuals are enhancing their employment prospects</u> , through gaining skills and confidence reinforcing community identify	SB 2 is being achieved through... 2.1. <b>media training</b> that enhances vocational prospects. 2.2. <b>volunteer</b> opportunities that enhance employment prospects through personal development and skills acquisition 2.3. <b>staff</b> experience and training that enhance their vocational prospects.
3. <u>Community members are informed and aware</u> of what is happening around their community	SB3 is achieved through the use by community members of information broadcast by the Station, in the form of... 3.1. regular bulletins of <b>everyday information</b> such as traffic, weather events etc. 3.2. specific <b>social bulletins</b> such as death notices,

	<p>social events, etc.</p> <p>3.3. <b>transactional information services</b> such as Job Search or Marketplace delivered free or at low-cost</p>
<p>4. <u>Community members are responding more effectively to issues</u>—local to global—because they have access to diverse viewpoints and to more and better information</p>	<p>SB 4 is achieved through the station:</p> <p>4.1. <b>producing/broadcasting content</b> and format that addresses local to global, with diverse views presented in a balanced and constructive format, in studio and outside broadcasting</p> <p>4.2. <b>providing facilities and resources</b> for volunteers to do the same, covering issues of local interest and concern</p> <p>4.3. <b>referencing local advocacy groups</b> when reporting on news items</p> <p>4.4. <b>actively engaging in the community</b> through projects, advocacy and interactions on issues or local interest and concern</p>
<p>5. <u>Collective actors (CBOs, NGOs etc.)</u> are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity <u>to achieve their goals</u></p>	<p>SB5 is achieved through the Station...</p> <p>5.1 providing <b>airtime</b> to local CBOs to discuss and present their work, issues and requests to the public</p> <p>5.2 facilitating <b>CBOs to produce</b> dedicated regular slots or entire programmes, including training and facilities</p> <p>5.3 <b>actively collaborating</b>, beyond broadcasting, with collective actors for advocacy and joint work on issues relating to social benefit.</p>
<p>6. The community <u>sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced</u> through interaction and collective action.</p>	<p>SB6 is achieved through the Station...</p> <p>6.1. bringing <b>diverse community groups in interactive programmes</b> to discuss local issues, including to deal with conflicts and tensions</p> <p>6.2. helping to <b>mobilise community members</b> around issues of concern locally, for collective action, advocacy, etc. in an inclusive manner</p>

### 3. Putting the Framework to Work

#### What the Stories as a whole tell us.

The Social Benefit Framework is not designed for academic purposes. It will help stations to identify the benefits they generate and to demonstrate them to others. The Annex contains 29 separate stories from individual stations, each unique and each describing not just one, but usually several, of the benefits outlined above. **What can they tell us as a whole?** In the Table below, the Stories are grouped below into three: 1) those from Tipp Mid-West; 2) those from Dublin City FM, and 3) all 29 stories from the eight stations around the country.

For each type of social benefit, two sets of figures are shown.

The top one identifies, by number, each story that has generated that particular benefit for its community: Thus “*Stories 1,5,7,11*” allows you to look up each story in the Annex and read it in detail. Beneath that the total number of stories that illustrate that benefit is given..

Below that, in bold, is a number to give an idea, through the stories, of the size or significance of the benefit generated. It does so as follows: Each Individual story is scored for the contribution it makes to each type of benefit, from an X (small) to XXX (large). The number is bold is the sum of all the Xs given to each benefit, from all the stories. It is not precise, but offers a rough indication of the extent to which the stations, based on the stories, contribute to this specific type of social benefit.

Types of Social Benefit	1) Tipp Mid-West 9 Stories	2) Dublin City 9 stories	3) 8 Stations 29 Stories
1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging.	1- 4, 7-9 6 stories	12, 14-18 6 Stories	1-4,7-9, 12-14-18, 19-29 23 stories
	<b>Total Xs = 10</b>	<b>Total Xs = 12</b>	<b>Total Xs = 48</b>
2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence	2 1 story	14-16 3 stories	2, 14-16,21-22, 24,27 8 stories
	<b>Total Xs = 1</b>	<b>Total Xs = 4</b>	<b>Total Xs = 13</b>
3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community:	1-5, 8 6 stories	10-16, 18 8 stories	1-5,8,10-16,18, 20, 21 16 stories
	<b>Total Xs = 12</b>	<b>Total Xs = 17</b>	<b>Total Xs = 31</b>
4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints	2-3 ,6 3 stories	11, 14-15, 17-18 5 stories	2-3, 5, 11, 14-15, 17- 18, 19, 21 10 stories
	<b>Total Xs = 6</b>	<b>Total Xs = 9</b>	<b>Total Xs = 17</b>
5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals	2-6 ,8-9 7 stories	10-11, 14, 16 4 stories	2-6,8-9,10-11,14, 16,19, 21-23 15 stories
	<b>Total Xs = 16</b>	<b>Total Xs = 8</b>	<b>Total Xs = 31</b>
6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced.	1, 3, 4, 6, 8 5 Stories	14, 18 2 stories	1.3.4.6.8.14,18, 20 - 21, 24-25, 27-28 13 stories
	<b>Total Xs =7</b>	<b>Total Xs = 4</b>	<b>Total Xs = 22</b>

Apart from directing us to the relevant stories, this table suggest a few things.

The first thing to notice is that, an individual station, as shown in the central two columns, can offer communities *the full range of benefits* and *does not stop at one or two*. Thus to understand what a community station means to a community, w whole set of different aspects much be examined. ;

Second, and a review of the stories confirms this, a single Story is often the result of a *combination of several activities by the station*, and also almost always *delivers several benefits often to different groups and individuals*. Thus the relationship between a station and a community is complex, and requires more detailed exploration to understand.

Third, different stations can generate different types and levels of benefits. For instance Dublin City fm, based on the nine stories, generates most impact by informing individuals about what is happening around the community (benefit type 3), while still generating significant benefits in other areas. Tipp Mid-West fm scores highest on reinforcing community organisations to achieve their goals (benefit type 5). In some ways this makes intuitive sense since Dublin City fm serves a huge population and hence information provision (including their vital traffic information service) is what reaches so many of them; while Tipp Mid-West serves a small community in which the local community organisation are significant service providers. (Although this is based on a small number of stories, the difference is borne out in the pilot surveys undertaken in the two stations.)

Fourth, looking at all 29 stories, the largest number, 23 of them, benefit individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, enhancing confidence and creativity and reinforcing a sense of belonging (benefit type 1). This also scores by far the highest in terms of the overall impact, with 48 Xs marked in. Other really significant things that community radio does are: (benefit type 5) reinforcing community groups and voluntary organisation to achieve their goals (16 stories and 31 Xs); and (benefit type 3) providing information about local activities and events around the community (16 stories and 29 Xs).

Of course, the type of story collected was not intended to be numerically representative of all types, but only to make sure that all major activities are covered. But this research project also designed other means to collect information, a few of which are mentioned below.

### **Combining Stories with other Tools**

The CR Social Benefit Framework and the Stories are just part of a wider Toolkit for Community Radio.<sup>1</sup> This Toolkit is designed to enable stations, with expert assistance if needed, to explore and understand in depth what their communities think about them and to systematically document the results. Among the key research tools described, which were piloted in Dublin City fm and Tipp Mid-West fm, are online-surveys, used to reach out to three key groups:

- 1) **Station participants i.e.** everyone directly involved in the station for instance volunteers, staff, Committee members and interns;
- 2) **Local community and voluntary groups** that engage with the stations in all kinds of small and larger ways;
- 3) **Regular listeners** to the station, familiar with the programmes and what they mean to them.

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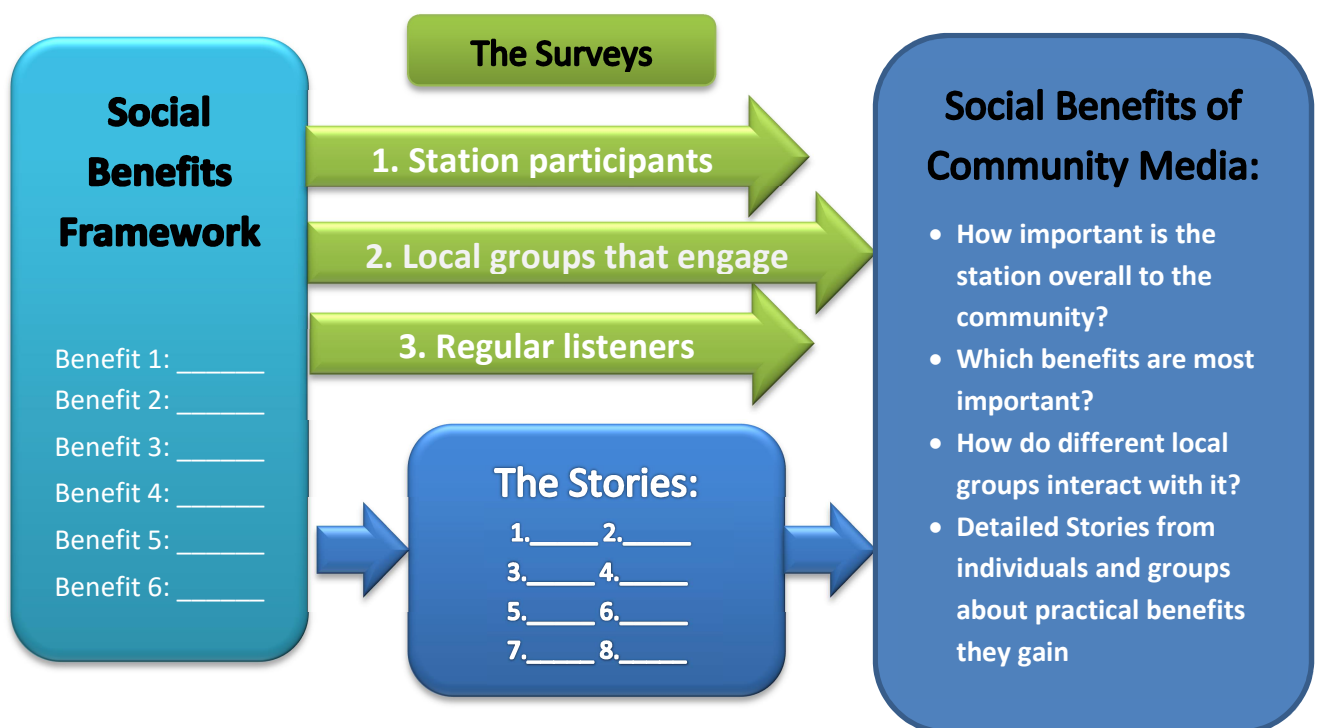
<sup>1</sup> *Assessing the Social Benefit of Community Media: A Toolkit for Community Radio*. April 2020. Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. Available from BAI.



These groups and individuals are spread throughout the community, and represent different dimensions of the community and its full diversity. A survey of their views, based on the Social Benefit Framework, offers deep insights, into what the station means for individuals and the community more widely. The surveys capture which of the benefits generated by the station they believe to be more important to the community as a whole, and to themselves. Combining the Stories with these views (and the Stories come directly from members of these groups) puts flesh on the bones or the survey results, describing the ways the station affects real lives, how the station integrates with the wider dynamics of community development, and supports the community to organise itself and make life better for everyone living in it.

The diagram below illustrates how these tools, all drawing on the same framework, can combine to build a rounded picture of what the station brings to the community, based on several sources of evidence, enabling comparison and aggregation of views and results

**Figure 1: Overview of Evaluation Tools**



The station itself can participate in implementing some of these, and indeed their input is essential in for instance compiling lists of organisations and individuals to be included in the survey and in selecting appropriate Stories. As time goes on, some might decide to compile their own stories, keeping an ongoing record of how they work with their communities to generate benefits – something that is too often taken for granted but is actually very valuable for stations to be able to show. The Toolkit also points to other areas in which stations can gather information, or compile existing information, from their everyday activities, that can further deepen an understanding of the social benefits they generate.

## 4. A “Theory of Change” for Community Radio

Some people relate better to visual presentation, and a Theory of Change capitalises on that. It creates a visual map of how community radio can deliver social benefits. The Theory of Change map overleaf is only a draft, but with more research could be turned into a true-to-life picture of how community radio integrates within its community. It offers a starting point to map out visually how community media work; the ‘avenues of change’ that they initiate and support, and how their internal processes and external factors influences these.

The way to read a TOC map is to focus first on the bottom (yellow boxes): an (incomplete) set of challenges that community media face in try to reach their goals. Now attention should be switched to the box at the top. This shows the ultimate objective i.e. that *social benefits are being maximised to the community* (taken from the Framework above) to which these can be seen as initial blockages. A *Theory of Change* then looks to preconditions of this desired long-term outcome, and works its way back down to the bottom, in a (reverse) set of causal linkages.

The different types of social benefits are inserted (the green boxes) as a first set of preconditions to achieving the goal.

The next step is to identify the preconditions to achieving these social benefits. This is where speculation begins, and a full Theory of Change process would bring people together – initially those involved in the stations – to explore these issues for themselves.

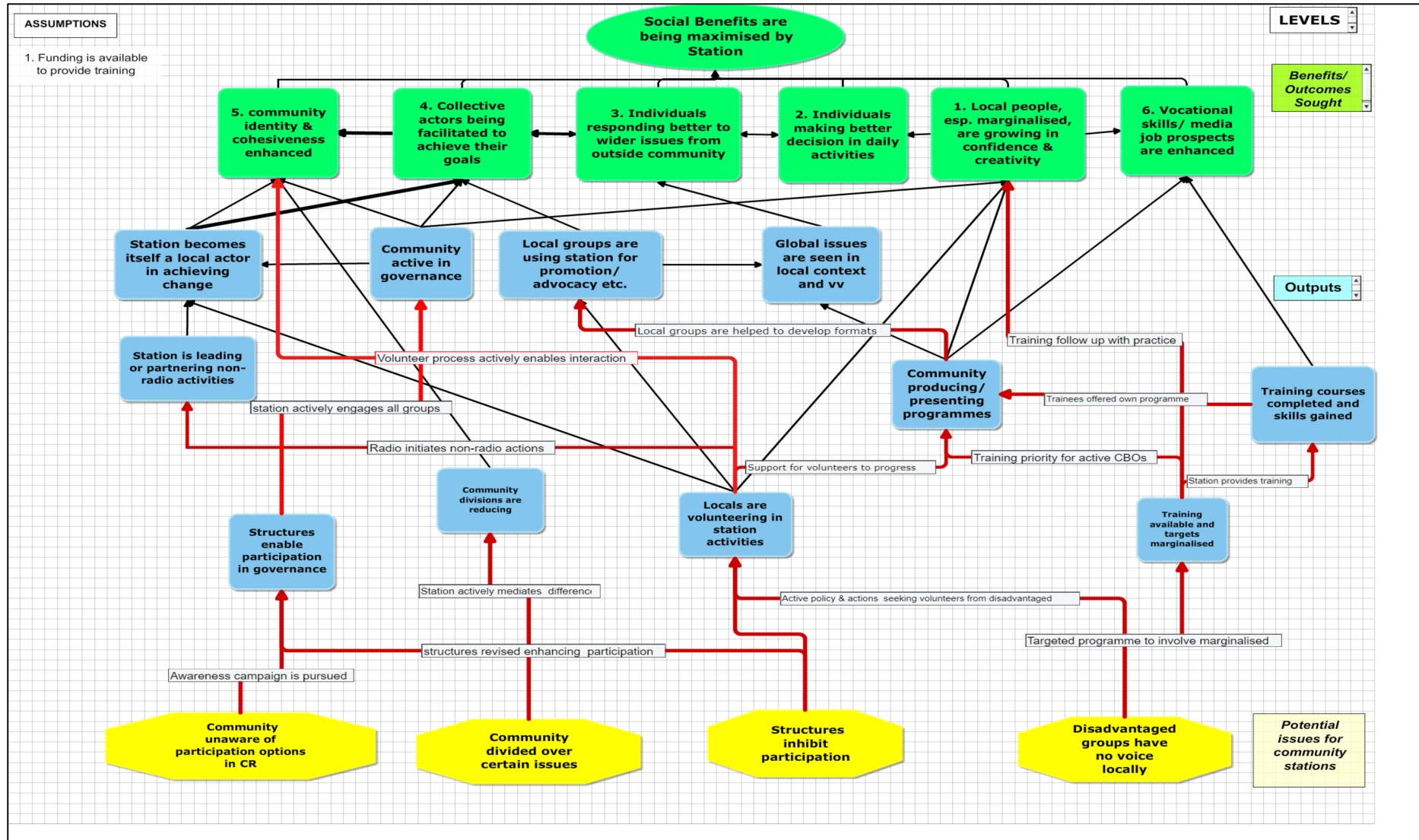
Thus the boxes in the ToC map represent “states of affair”, that may at the same time be *preconditions* (to higher objectives), and *outcomes sought or outputs to be achieved*. Specifically they *do not represent* actions or interventions. The arrows are *causative, logical, links* leading from a precondition to an outcome, and many of these can be influenced by the station to achieve or reinforce the outcome/output. Thus many of the arrows represent specific (in red) station actions.

For example, Outcome 6 on *enhancing job prospects* has preconditions that people have completed training courses to gain the skills, or that volunteers are programme producers (both blue boxes). The Station can make this happen (red arrows) through providing training, maybe enabling some to become producers; by actively recruiting volunteers directly into programme production (especially from marginalised groups); and so forth; and a precondition to this might be that the station has an active programme to target marginalised groups.

Or Specific Objective 5, *that community identify and cohesiveness are enhanced*, might have preconditions that community members are involved in the governance of the station which thus them together (which is turn might presuppose that the Station actively promotes it policy of community participation); that the station is bringing together large numbers of volunteers from all around the community; or that the Station actively engaging in reducing community tensions (for instance through mediating disputes); and the Station itself has become an active CBO in areas other than media for instance by provide a hub for the community to meet.

These examples just illustrate the use of this tool. In practice, a station gets stakeholders together to create its own maybe ToC map, enabling a shared understanding of how it generates social benefits.

Figure 2: Draft Theory of Change of Community Media and Social Benefits



## Annex: Stories from the Community Radio Sector

The Stories are organised into different groups.

The two Community Stations that were involved in the main *Social Benefits Assessment Methodology* pilots, Tipp Mid-West FM and Dublin City FM each has nine stories presented, all completed<sup>2</sup> by the authors/editors of this report but based on direct interviews with those involved and on documentation. NEAR FM and ROS FM were also involved directly in the methodology research and have three and two stories respectively.

Other Stories were drafted or submitted by Stations around the country in preparation for the session at the CRAOL Féile in October 2019 or as a direct input into this report. These were edited by the authors/editors, sometimes lightly, to conform more closely to the template.

Prefacing each Story is a table. This indicates which social benefits emerge most clearly from each story, with a short summary indicating why. These were also completed by the authors/editors of the compilation.

**It need hardly be added that the authors/editors are extremely grateful to all those who contributed through interviews and written pieces, and are hugely inspired by the wealth of creativity, talent and commitment to their communities demonstrated by their stories and experiences.**

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<sup>2</sup> The one exception is Tipp Mid-West FM story entitled “A Hell of Snow Storm, which was drafted by the Station itself and edited by the authors/editors of this report.

## Stories from Tipp Mid-West fm

### 1. “A Hell of a Snow Storm”

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>For those who were isolated and physically cut-off during the worst of the storm and its aftermath being able to tune in to Tipp Mid-West fm reinforced their sense of being part of shared community experience.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XXX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community: <i>A key Tipp Mid-West audience comprises older people living in isolated rural areas. During the 2018 Storm Emma, with road impassable and no other of local information, a staff member and volunteer bravely maintained broadcasting, offering vital updates, acting as a link to local services and comfort and company for those most isolated.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
XX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced. <i>The Station’s efforts brought together their listeners, especially those most isolated, to enable the community feel that they were facing the dangers of Storm Emma together, as a community.</i>

### Summary

In March 2018, the worst snowstorm in 36 years wreaked havoc in Ireland, as Storm Emma (known as “The Beast from the East”) provided a sudden and devastating weather event which effectively locked the country down for a week, or more, in some areas. While Tipperary was not the worst affected, tensions among our community were high, and many places became impassable and many of our listeners barricade at home. This story tells how Tipp Mid-West Radio (hereafter referred to as TMWR), aided a sense of belonging, and cohesiveness in our community during this period.

### 1. Context

Tipp Mid-West Radio (TMWR) is located in Tipperary Town and caters for the towns of Tipperary and Cashel, and its hinterland. Our community includes many small urban environments, but is mainly a rural community with strong links to farming, rural Irish moral values and a sense of tradition. Our listenership comprises a mixed age group and a mixture of socio-economic backgrounds.

However, our key audience comprises those aged 50+, largely from rural Tipperary. We differ from urban community radio stations, in that the people who we may refer to as “marginalised”, would mainly be the older members of our community, who frequently use TMWR as a lifeline to stay in touch with news and events in our area, and who contact us for a friendly chat. Many of these

people are isolated and live in areas where communication with human beings may be a seldom experienced event. For various reasons, a large proportion of our listenership experience immense loneliness, and depend on TMWR for company, friendship, connectivity, news and entertainment. Many of these people do not have access to public transport, and many more are not capable of gaining access to the physical community through ill-health, lack of economic means, rural isolation, and/or a lack of reliable friends/relatives and neighbours. These would be the on the more extreme side of our demographic.

At the same time, the general population in our community also rely on us for the same basic requirements, which they are simply unable to access in print media, or on national radio and television.

## **2. Issue/Problem Addressed**

The issue of rural isolation and the physical and mental toll it takes on those affected, cannot be overestimated. We experience daily phone calls highlighting the plight of loneliness and isolation of some members of our community. Our catchment area is one of socio-economic decline; one of the worst affected parts of Ireland in economic terms; with no major boost during the “Celtic Tiger” era, and seeing major economic decline during the recession, which is still heavily impacting our community.

During the run-up period to Storm Emma, we experienced a marked increase in communication from the public who depended on us to keep them up to date on issues such as possible road closures, weather reports, school/business closures, community event cancellations, water supply updates and medical/GP/hospital/pharmacy concerns. The issues really came to prominence when we realised that the entire country would be put on Red Alert by Met Éireann, and roads could be impassable for a period of time. Our service then became an area of major concern, as we had to negotiate the need to broadcast as normal, versus the health risk to our staff and volunteer presenters who would be obliged to travel in these atrocious and dangerous conditions. Tensions began to rise among our listenership, especially those who depended on us most, about whether they would be cut off from contact with TMWR in the event that we had shut down.

## **3. Relevant Community Radio Activity**

The management of TMWR decided to suspend live broadcasting at 8 pm (instead of the normal 12 midnight) on the night before the worst snow was anticipated. The overnight service was engaged, so that our listeners would have some form of service. The following morning, roads were in a terrible state and driving conditions were hazardous. All staff were instructed to stay at home.

However, a staff member and one volunteer braved the elements and arrived into the station for 9 am that day, in spite of near-total shutdown in the community. These two TMWR presenters went live at 9 am, and enabled live broadcasting on their own, until 6 pm that evening, taking turns presenting shows, playing music and entertaining the public. They also provided vital information about the situation on the ground at a local level.

The day was one of immense pressure as huge numbers of people contacted the station from all areas looking for information, providing local updates from their particular area, and offering a general picture of events during the storm as they occurred. This included liaising with the County Councils, ESB, Irish Water, members of community groups and local schools, medical centres,

doctors, emergency services and pharmacies to ensure the public remained informed about what was actually happening. We also provided regular updates of road conditions all day, as well as an updated list of businesses which were open and closed as the day passed.

This was invaluable to our listenership, who contacted us by the dozen, many of the most vulnerable in tears, as they expressed their immense gratitude for TMWR allowing them to hear a friendly voice and providing vital information on a local level, which they simply could not access elsewhere, during a time of great distress and fear. Many were physically isolated at home for up to 3 or 4 days.

The schedule was more or less fully maintained by willing volunteers literally risking their lives to keep the show on the road over the days that followed. And we know, without doubt, that this action on the part of TMWR was an invaluable, worthy, compassionate and beneficial activity for our community – both in individual terms and in collective community terms – for the listeners and for the businesses, community organisations, national organisations and services in Tipperary.

#### **4. Outputs & Outcomes of the Activity**

It is extremely difficult to estimate the social scientific and/or quantitative social benefit of this story, and much evidence can be classed as anecdotal. This is a story of human interaction on a very personal and emotional level. It highlights how the actions of a small group of people, with a common focus in mind, provided a marked social benefit to our community by providing a touchstone into an environment which was very uncertain and frightening, at least for a significant number of people who are deemed most vulnerable in our society. Without their actions, the people of our community would not have been in the loop about the nature of the event unfolding, and would not have been aware of the different issues affecting the outside world on their doorstep.

Perhaps most importantly to our “marginalised”, we availed of an opportunity to ensure that the lifeline that connects the largely unconnected in our community was not severed in the face of some very difficult and frightening circumstances. The knock-on effect, we have been reliably informed by the dozens of grateful people who communicated with us in the days of this event, was one of community cohesiveness and belonging. These people felt part of something larger, even on a local level. Their fingers were touched to the pulse of life outside their block-in doors – something that can never be found in the larger national media framework.

#### **5. Potential for sustainability of the benefits**

Tipp Mid-West FM is committed to maintaining its high level of service, and to respond to all emergencies facing the community.

#### **6. Concluding Comment**

The unique relationship between the community and Tipp Mid-West FM means that during this emergency situation, many of the most marginalised looked to the station for the support they needed; and the staff and volunteers, motivated by the needs of the community, responded beyond what could reasonably be expected in the context of a commercial enterprise.

**Source:** Tipp Mid-West FM

## 2. Supporting Family Carers in Tipperary.

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
X	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>FCI encouragers part-time carers to talk about their work on air, facilitated by the friendly atmosphere and allowed ample time to express their views, and this can be an empowering experience for them.</i>
X	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence <i>The Station provides low-cost advertising to recruit the part-time carers position from the community</i>
X	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The Station disseminates information about events and activities of FCI.</i>
XXX	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>FCI contributes short and long segments on the Stations discussion and news programmes on issues of concern, and lobbying local TDs around election time</i>
XXX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>The Station facilitates FCI across a range of actions that reinforces their ability to carry out their activities and to achieve their goals.</i>
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

The *Family Carers Ireland* Centre in Clonmel works closely with Tipp Mid West Radio in key areas of their work, including: contacting and getting information to carers in the home, especially in rural areas, to encourage them to avail of their services; supporting advocacy of local TDs to influence national policy; and helping to recruit part-time care workers to offer respite to carers in the home. The level of benefit, in terms of enabling them to deliver their services and engage in all activities, they describe as very significant. Without Tipp Mid West, they believe that the reach and impact of their work would be considerably weaker.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Family Carers Ireland (FCI) is a national organisation offering a range of supports to family carers – people caring for family members at home – and advocates nationally on their behalf. The Clonmel Centre, one of 18 nationally, offers a drop-in service for carers, provides respite relief through a team of about 25 part-time staff, and lobbies local TDs and others. The Centre’s clients are mostly in rural areas, many are quite isolated and do not use social media, and are thus difficult to reach; they are also often largely confined to the home many caring for relatives with 24 hour needs. The Centre has very limited funding for outreach, advocacy and other publicity activities.

### 2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

The Centre makes use of Tipp Mid West in a number of ways.



Centre staff frequently take part in discussions and information programmes on Joe Pryce's current affairs programme with a number of aims.

- The rights and entitlements of carers are discussed, for instance following a government budget or changes to services, and carers are advised on how to secure these in practice and to seek support if they need it.
- Longer programme segments are also aired, with wider and more in-depth discussion. This might include Family Carer Ireland's pre-budget submission and issues around the challenges facing carers.

In general the approach of the Centre is to encourage carers to lobby their local TDs for instance at the latter's clinics, but this is often personally and practically difficult for them. Centre staff thus sometimes bring a carer along to the Station, to give their personal story and present their views. (The annual Tipperary Carer of the Year award recipients offers such an opportunity very soon.) The Station gives them ample time, at their own pace, to describe and discuss their circumstances. Particularly important, according to the Care Support Manager, is the welcome that carers receive at the Station, and relaxed atmosphere and absence of pressure throughout the process: Some carers seldom move far from the home and are nervous of exposure to media.

- The Station, for a modest fee, takes advertising for part-time care staff, and on the Job Line service, successfully facilitating recruitment.

### **3. Benefit Generated**

The Centre also approaches Tipp FM, the local commercial radio station, and they sometimes broadcast items. This is useful and appreciated, and often generates a response from carers in and around Clonmel town, mainly. However, a number of features distinguish the community station from the commercial station.

Tipp Mid West appears to have more rural listeners, and more in the most relevant age groups. The evidence for this is the response: usually a significant number of phone calls are received after each broadcast, especially from rural parts of the county, seeking advice or assistance. When the Station advertises public information meetings in rural villages, for instance about rights and entitlements, many of those who arrive will have heard about it through promotion by the Station.

In terms of influencing the public and politicians, the Support Manager believes that broadcasting personal stories of individual carers carries the greatest impact. Tipp Mid West facilitates these by allowing plenty of time for the carer to tell their stories their own way but especially with the welcoming atmosphere. The Support Manager (himself an independent elected Councillor) interacts with the local TDs who, he maintains, take careful note of these stories, not least because of their perceived impact on voter opinion. Ultimately, he believes that this in turn influences their approach to political party and national policy debates on relevant policies. It can generate further benefits: Telling their stories on air can boost the confidence of carers, and deepen people's understanding of the valuable work that carers do.

On the other hand, Tipp FM necessarily takes a more business-like approach, an approach best suited to those already familiar with media and delivering succinct messages.

The recruitment of part-time carers, to provide respite care to families, is also facilitated by the Station. In the past, newspaper advertisements were used, costing up to €200 to €300 euro. Over recent years these became noticeably less effective as young people (who are the main target group) tend to read them less and less. The Centre also has a social media presence, but few of the target group would link to their sites. The Centre advertises on Tipp Mid West's service "Job Line", and this generates sufficient interest for recruitment. (Whether it is the young people themselves or their parents who listen to Job Line advertisement is not clear.) The benefit is simple: For an organisation with very limited disposable income, even a small cost saving makes a difference.

#### **4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits**

These services delivered by Tipp Mid-West do not incur any additional costs by the station: they are part of standard services delivered by Tipp Mid West in fulfilling its remit as a community radio station. As such, this level of support for the Centre is sustainable as long the Station can successfully continue with its ongoing fund-raising strategy, the support from statutory agencies continue (specifically Pobal's Community Support Programme), and volunteers are willing to give their time and commitment.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The evidence suggests that Tipp Mid West Radio facilitates the work of the Family Carer Ireland's Clonmel centre as a key enabler of their advocacy strategy, in terms of extending their reach to more carers especially in rural areas facilitating them to secure their entitlements and avail of the Centre's services, through raising the knowledge and understand of the community, and, more modestly in terms of saving advertising costs. What is particularly striking is that most of these benefits, for different reasons, cannot be delivered by the local commercial station – they derive precisely from the specific remit, commitment and practices of Tipp Mid West as a community radio station.

**Sources:** Richie Molloy, Care Support Manager, Family Carers Ireland.

### 3. Working with the *Irish Wheelchair Association Centre*

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
x	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
XX	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
XXX	5. Collective actors (community organisations) are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
X	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

#### **Summary**

Tipp Mid-West has broadcast five major features covering the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) South Tipperary in the last 12 months or so, several of them recorded in its Tipperary Town Centre or other outside venues. It also broadcasts numerous smaller information items. The informational, promotional and advocacy value of all of these is regarded, by the Centre Manager, as “highly significant”, and in some cases, the impact would be much lower were the platform that Tip Mid-West offers unavailable. It thus acts as a significant ‘magnifier’ of many of their actions.

#### **1. Context and social issue addressed**

The Irish Wheelchair Association in South Tipperary runs a Centre in Tipperary town, offering meals and client-selected leisure, art and health activities four days a week, and outreach centres one day a week in Cashel and in Carrick-on-Suir. They employ four full-time and 12 part-time staff, many on a CE scheme. Three buses transport clients from throughout the county. They also pursue advocacy actions, such as the “Back in Five” campaign, which highlighted the use and misuse of parking bays for people with disabilities. A “Pre-loved” clothes shop in the Tipperary town, and independent living housing in Cashel, are also managed and run by the IWA.

Thus, raising public awareness on disability issues (including the fact that all people with disabilities, and not just with those in wheelchairs, can avail of their services), publicising their services to potential clients throughout the country especially to those marginalised or isolated, and promoting fund-raising activities, are all core activities, central to enabling them to achieve their goals. Yet they have very limited funding for such activities and thus have to rely on low-cost and more creative ways to get their diverse messages out.

#### **2. The Station activity, outputs and costs**

A number of examples of Tipp Mid West supports, that generated concrete benefits, can be cited.

- Two Tipp Mid West staff featured IWA on “Out and About”, a topical programme. They came into the community to interview clients about their lives and concerns, and what the Centre

means to them. The Centre Manager feels this gave them a voice in the community and boosted their confidence. “These users clearly enjoyed feeling part of the community.”

- On the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2019 the IWA won the Country Tipperary Chamber of Commerce *Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award*. The Centre Manager featured it on her Facebook Page, where it was seen by Tipp Mid West who contacted her and requested an interview following the presentation. It went out on “Morning Call” with Joe Pryce. The Manager noted that “the award night would not have reached so many people if not for the radio feature, which is a valuable promotion for us and helps in our fundraising. Loads of people later on came and congratulated us.”
- Such fundraising was needed during the year for a new bus, their fleet of three dating from 2001 and prone to break downs. IWA planned a sponsored parachute jump in conjunction with Clanwilliam Rugby Club to fundraise, and credits Tipp Mid West FM with boosting the numbers going on the jump to 53, Tipp Mid West attended the launch night and broadcast it on the station thus generating more interest - including six wheelchair users.
- The “Back in Five” advocacy campaign was to sensitise the public about the use and misuse of disability parking bays. As part of the campaign, IWA used wheelchairs to block off ten able-bodied parking spaces on the main street, each with a sticker saying “Back in 5” on it, to highlight the frustration caused for people with disabilities by the misuse of their spaces. However it was critical to get this message – the rationale for blocking them - out to the public in order to prevent a negative reaction. Tipp Mid West played a key role in this, on the “Morning Call” Programme air and through their Facebook page.

In this case, the local commercial station, Tipp FM, also contributed to a wider impact. They recorded a video of wheelchairs blocking the parking and posted it on their Facebook page – attracting about 340,000 views and publicising the event globally.<sup>3</sup>

Overall the “Back in Five” campaign is believed to have been very effective in highlighting the public to the issue, and has since been extended by the national IWA office throughout the country.

- The IWA “Pre-Loved” clothes shop advertises for clothes and sales on the daily “Community Diary” segment.

### 3. The Benefit Generated

In the last 12 months, the Manager recalls five extended features (15 minutes or more each) broadcast by Tipp Mid West FM, each generating its own benefits through promoting the activity. After each, a spike in phone enquiries to the Centre or on Social media is noted, but they also have a long-term impact in informing the public and potential and actual clients. Tipp FM also broadcasts short messages but their programming does not facilitate such longer features.

In general, IWA in South Tipperary for publicising events turns to Tipp Mid West and to The Nationalist local newspaper, both of which cover community events for free. Tipp FM would charge

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<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.facebook.com/TippFM/videos/vb.221599401189017/2273749202640683/?type=2&theater>

advertising rates in some cases; and in terms of radio coverage they believe that Tipp Mid West reaches a sufficiently wide and varied audience.

For more sustained promotion pieces and extended coverage Tip Midwest is their main outlet. Overall the manager says the support received is “very significant” in terms of enabling them to achieve their aims.

IWA maintains good relations with both Tipp FM and Tipp Mid West. On the whole, however, the community station “is much more approachable and keen to get you to come in – they are pro-active in reaching out to us. When you arrive they give you a cup of tea; I never feel like I am rushed.”

#### **4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits**

Some of the services provided by Tipp Mid West to IWA do require resources beyond the basic Station activities, for instance when recording or broadcasting outside the studio. Most, however, fall within the normal range, and their sustainability depends on the continued capacity of the Station to raise funds, grants and public support, and volunteers.

#### **5. Concluding Comment**

The support of Tipp Mid West is, to quote the IWA manager. “highly significant” in terms of enabling it to achieve its goals. Among the key factors are the pro-active approach of the station to provide support, and the willingness to provide ongoing, extended coverage across the range of their actions.

**Sources:** Josephine Carroll, Manager, Irish Wheelchair Association South Tipperary.

## 4. A Range of Activities with the Moorehaven Centre.

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
X	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>The Centre's clients (adults with mild to moderate intellectual disability) are given placements in the Station, about 50 annual for 3 hours a week for six weeks; and these are highly valued by the job coaches and the clients gain significantly.</i>
	2. People's employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
X	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The station broadcasts their events at which the public participants and attends.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
XXX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>Support is provided to four main aspects: it publicises services and encourages clients to contact them; it is key to fundraising events; it offers work placements for some clients; and it enabled them to recruit relief staff at no cost.</i>
X	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

Moorehaven Centre provides a range of supports to adults with mild to moderate intellectual disability. The Centre Manager rates Tipp Mid West's contribution overall to its capacity to achieve its goals as "very significant", across four main dimensions. It promotes the Centre with the public, publicising the services available and encouraging clients to come forward; it is critical to the success of their fundraising events in several ways; it provide highly valued placements for many clients; and it enables them to recruit relief personnel , especially, for the Centre at no cost.

### 1. Context and issue addressed

Moorehaven Centre in Tipperary offers a range of supports to adults with mild to moderate intellectual disability, including day, residential and respite services; and also offers services in Thurles one day a week. It currently serves about 115 clients and employs 50 full time equivalent staff. Most of their approximately €3 million annual income comes from a Section 39 HSE grant, but the 13% raised by the Centre is vital to service delivery and development.

Moorehaven's core values are about community inclusion and active citizenship within the community, in line with the HSE's New Direction model. Thus, sensitising the community about the Centre and its ethos, and enabling clients to integrate within the normal life of the community, are central goals. Despite over three decades of service, not everyone in Tipperary would be aware of the work and ethos of the Centre, and getting their message out is also critical to reaching out the

families and clients in need. Fundraising is a constant challenge with regular and occasional events at the centre of the strategy.

## 2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

Tipp Mid West works with the Moorehaven Centre in several areas.

- The Centre runs an annual Christmas Fayre on a Saturday around the 8<sup>th</sup> December, for both fundraising purposes and as an Open Door day for schools and community to come in the Centre, which is close to Tipperary town centre. The Fayre sells arts and crafts, produced in the Centre and includes musical bands and choirs from the local schools in transition year musical productions. It raises about €15,500 annually, though its community promotional value is perhaps the most important outcome.

Tipp Mid West has long been an integral and indispensable part of the Fayre. Several weeks before the event, tailored Fayre promotional advertisements are recorded by Centre clients, and broadcast several times a day. A week before the event, the “Morning Call” presenter, Joe Price, produces a 20 minute feature with contributions from Centre clients, and runs a raffle. And a core feature of the event itself is an hour-long live Outside Broadcast, from 2:00pm to 3:00 pm, from the event itself, featuring a mix of items that might include the town Brass Band. The Station’s promotion is also instrumental in recruiting volunteers to help organise the event.

Tipp Mid West promotes another major fundraiser, the annual Golf Classic and coffee morning in the Golf Clubhouse, that raises about €7,500, the raffle component of which is heavily advertised by the Station. Every five years or so the JP McManus Pro-Am pre-qualifier also raises up to €20,000, and is promoted by the Station.

Worth noting also is a documentary programme completed a few years ago for the Centre’s 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, looking at its history and growth over the decades, and the broadcast generated significant interest and response from the public.

- A second key service is the provision of client placements in the community. Annually a number of clients expressing an interest – in 2019 it was eight - are placed for a few hours a week for six weeks in the Station premises by the Centre’s two Job Coaches. They may operate the phone or undertake other duties, and are welcomed and supported as part of the Station team. The Job Coaches highly value these placements, for the positive and motivating environment, the team spirit, and the social and other skills developed. About 50 of the 115 clients secure placements every year in different places, but the Coaches find they must spend little time at the Station supporting the clients as compared to many other placements. In future, it is hoped that roles can be found for some in programme production. The Manager reports that the clients themselves also gain a lot from their Station placement, and rates the overall experience as very positive, and fully in tune with the Centre’s ethos.
- Moorehaven is establishing a panel of Relief Personnel, to fill in for staff in the short term and on short notice. They are vetted and require Garda clearance, but their initial recruitment is facilitated through Tipp Mid-West’s *Community Diary* service. Many are older people with time on their hands. The Station has enabled them to build the Panel, and at no cost. For staff positions they use other means to recruit (Active-Link, the National local newspaper, or Limerick

Leader) but most are quite costly. The Manager comments that Tipp FM, the local commercial station, would charge a fee for advertising and is anyhow based in Clonmel which is more distant from the Centre – but the Centre anyhow finds that the service from Tipp Mid West fulfils their needs.

The Manager also values the Station's *Community Diary* for enabling them to sell equipment and other items that they wish to dispose of from time to time.

### 3. Benefit Generated

The Manager rates the contribution that Tipp Mid West makes to enabling the Centre to achieve its goals as “very significant”.

The general promotion of, and raising awareness about, Moorehaven among the local population, a horizontal feature across all the above actions, he rates very highly, noting that despite a long history in the town, their recently renewed community and person-centred ethos is not as widely understood and appreciated as he would wish. It also means that potential clients and their families become aware of the services and are more likely to avail of them.

The Station's support for the Fayre especially, but also other fund-raising activities, is an integral part of these efforts, and would be far less successful without it.

The client placement, which account for an appreciable proportion of all placement, are highly valued by the Job Coaches, and according to the Manager, greatly appreciated by and beneficial to the clients who readily integrate within the Station team and environment.

### 4. Sustaining and replicating benefits

Tipp Mid West invest significant time in supporting the Moorehaven Centre, through its normal programming, the Outside Broadcast, and accommodating the Centre's clients on placements. While the additional expense is not great, this level of support to the Centre must rely on the Station being able to continue to receive its existing level of support from public and other sources, to fundraise, and to attract and train volunteers.

### 5. Concluding Comment

This is an example of Tipp Mid West, as part of the community support infrastructure, working with another component of that infrastructure, the Moorehaven Centre, to reach outwards into that community and deepen in linkages: through raising awareness of Moorehaven's ethos and activity, encouraging responses from potential client, recruiting relief personnel, helping to raise funding, and enabling clients to spend time in a positive workplace experience. This last is indicative of the relationship: Because the community development approach is an integral part of the Station, including its workplace, Moorehaven Centre client placements fit in naturally and hence are highly valued.

**Sources:** Derry McMahon, Manager, Moorehaven field Centre, Tipperary Town.



## 5. Citizen’s Information Centre, Tipperary.

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging.
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>Tipp Mid-West broadcasts regular CIC bulletins with information of interest to many groups of the public, and in particular access some hard-to-reach groups</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
XX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>The Programme offers a low-cost effective means for them to raise awareness of the services and disseminate information.</i>
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

The Citizen’s Information Centre (CIC) in Tipperary town provides information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public entitlements, services and rights. Tipp Mid West contributes to this through broadcasting a regular fortnightly CIC information bulletin, informing the public and especially, the Information Officer believes, those who are hard to reach by other means including older and more isolated groups. Listeners use the information themselves too access entitlements and also contact the Centre for further details and assistance.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

CICs are present throughout Ireland to enable local access to information the public needs to access their rights and entitlements. There are four in County Tipperary alone, and the one in Tipperary town has developed a relationship with Tip mid West, facilitated by the fact that they both operate from the same premises. A key CIC activity is to inform the public about rights and entitlements especially as they evolve and change, so that they can take steps— including visiting or contacting the Centre directly – to access them. Members of the public can drop in, which is open daily, or ring in for information. It has two part-time Information Officer and as well as highly experienced volunteers.

Having a very limited budget, conventional media advertising is impossible. Thus a key challenge for the CIC is to inform the public of their existence, to find a means to disseminate information especially when rights and entitlements change or are seasonably available, and to encourage them to avail of their service.

## 2. The Station activity

Tipp Mid West has agreed to broadcast a regular bulletin, every fortnight, prepared by CIC Tipperary. It goes out at on Wednesday morning between 10:00 am and 11:00 am, and comprises a 1,000 pre-recorded segment a few minutes in lengths. The bulletin is prepared by three or four CIC volunteers, and updated to include seasonally relevant items (such as fuel subsidies) and changes to entitlements, as well the usual issues. The technical quality of the recording is checked by the Station before broadcast.

## 3. Benefit Generated

The CIC lacks a budget for promoting the services it provides. And the regular broadcasting, according to the Information Officer, serves two purposes:

- It alerts people to the presence of the Centre and to the services it provides;
- It provides specific subject matter than can often trigger an enquiry directly to the Centre.

Certainly some members of the public will act directly on the information they receive on air, though it not possible to quantify how many. And the bulletin also generates a perceptible reaction. Though the motivation for contacting the Centre is seldom explicitly stated – and the Centre does ask people – some do directly refer to hearing it on the radio.

## 4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits

The Station provides the broadcasting signal and facility, and checks the technical aspects of the Broadcast. The Bulletin is produced and recorded by the CIC itself. It is thus sustainable as long as the Station remains on air.

## 5. Concluding Comment

This is a straightforward free service that is nevertheless very useful to CIC Tipperary. The CIC Information Officer notes that it is a service provided by one community organisation to another.

**Source:** Michael Cussen, Information Officer, Tipperary CIC

## 6. Knockanrawley Resource Centre.

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging.
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
X	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The Station disseminates information on many activities, such as upcoming training, Fun Days and other events, at no charge.</i>
XX	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>KRC has a regular monthly slot to raise awareness about human rights an social justice issues.</i>
XXX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>KRC regards the Station as indispensable to reaching their target group, especially older members, with information and views.</i>
x	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

*Knockanrawley Resource Centre (KRC) in Tipperary Town provides a range of services to the town and its hinterlands, many targeting disadvantaged groups. Tip Mid West disseminates information regularly on Community Diary, and through a monthly slot goes into more depth with a local angle on topical issues, such as violence against women, poverty etc. The Centre has very limited resources for advertising, promotion or advocacy campaigns, but they highly value what they get from Tipp Mid-West. The Centre’s Community Development Coordinator says: “We would not close if Tipp Mid were not there! But it offers a vital local link, and is a great service. In our outreach strategy, Tipp Mid West is always there as a central part.”*

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

KRC offers a wide range of services, including training, information, advocacy, counselling, organic gardening, allotment care, childcare, room rental and more. It caters to local groups, families and individuals in Tipperary Town and hinterland, often with a special focus on disadvantaged and marginalised. The Centre draws on strong human rights based values, promoting social justice, equality and sustainable development, and employs eight full time staff, about the same part-time, and 15 on a CE scheme. It has a local Management Board. While receiving funding from a variety of sources (including as part of SICAP), much of it is project based or targets specific staff and employment positions – there is little left to disseminate its work and services among the community, to advertise specific activities such as training, its Fun Day and other events, or to support advocacy on behalf of local groups and individuals for instance with the Local Authority and through the PPN. This is where Tipp Mid West comes in.

## **2. The Station activity, outputs and costs**

KRC works with the Station across a number of areas. Community Diary advertises its training and other services on a regular basis. They take advantage of similar free notice services with for instance The Nationalist local newspaper and the Tipperary People, an occasional free magazine distributed throughout the Town – but the Community Development Coordinator notes they cannot afford the advertising rates of Tipp FM, the local commercial station broadcasting from Clonmel.

For deeper discussions of 10 to 15 minutes, the Community Coordinator (or sometimes another key staff member) does a regular slot on Joe Pryce’s Morning Call programme, often accompanied by a Centre member to talk about a particular service or topical issue in line with the Centre’s ethos. It goes out on the second Tuesday of most months. Topics might include violence against women around international Women’s Day; or Climate Change when weather events are current; or poverty around the budget, often making a link between local activities and groups and wider trends. The Centre values these as promoting discussion and deepening understanding on these topics.

They have also very occasionally been asked to contribute to Tipp FM with an interview, and sometimes to a newspaper article, but Tipp Mid West is their main platform for this type of outreach and general advocacy, and their only regular one.

The Station also covers specific events, such as their recent 25th Anniversary event and the occasional Fun Days, a reporter coming out to record the event and sometimes broadcast live. They did approach Tipp FM before their Anniversary, wanting to reach as wide an audience as possible with the celebration, but could not afford the cost of coverage – and they were very happy with what they received from Tipp Mid West.

## **3. Benefit Generated**

Tipp Mid-West, the Centre feels, cannot reach all its target groups, as its audience tends towards older groups while the Centre targets the full age spectrum. Nevertheless they regard it as indispensable in promoting their actions, but also see it as genuinely seeking to be welcoming and helpful. In terms of professionalism of the service and staff, the Community Coordinator experience is that Tipp Mid West and Tipp FM are comparable, both very professional.

The Community Development Coordinator has no doubt that their work with the station helps them to do their job, in ways that others cannot, and ultimately contributes to community benefits in different ways. She regards them as partner in the community development infrastructure.

## **4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits**

Tipp Mid-West supports KRC as part of their strong remit in the area of reinforcing the impact of local development actors, and KRC is one of the largest and most important. They will continue to do so as long as they have the basic broadcasting resources, and the additional expenses incurred are very small.

## 5. Conclusion

KRC and Tip Mid West work hand in hand as community development organisations, the Station magnifying the reach and impact of the Centre, and the Centre providing useful and interesting content for broadcast. .

**Sources:** Ruth Smith, Community Development Coordinator, KRD; Tom from Tipp Mid West.

## 7. Easy Listening with Paddy O’Leary

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>The presenter himself is retired and finds this relaxing and allows him to pursue his niche musical tastes. He caters to a non-mainstream listeners, many older, many of whom would have no other to enjoy their common interests collectively</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced.

### Summary

Paddy O’Leary is a retired accountant and volunteer programme producer of “Easy Listening with Paddy O’Leary”. To him, the Station offers an opportunity to relax doing something creative and enjoyable. He believes that his specific musical offering does reach a group of probably older listeners with minority tastes. One older listener living along occasionally corresponds to show her appreciation and to interact about the show, and there are undoubtedly others.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Paddy O’Leary is in his mid-70s, married, retired, and lives in Cashel. He began volunteering with Cashel Community Radio about 15 years ago, first as Treasurer, taking advantage of his accountancy skills, and after a few years, as programme producer/presenter of mainly light operatic music, in *Easy Listening with Paddy O’Leary*. Cashel Community Radio closed nearly five years ago and it was suggested that he transfer to Tipperary Mid West.

### 2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

Tipperary Mid West welcomed him and he has broadcast the programme each Wednesday (except the last in each month) from 8:00am to 9:00 pm. The format is simple and he does not take phone calls or direct requests (though at one point he did). He goes into the Studio quite late after staff have left, and as he says “passes the earlier producer in the corridor”, and there he has all the facilities needed, having earlier received the appropriate training.

He responds to occasional letters or emails, and chance encounters, though he does not seek requests *per se* on the programme.

### 3. The Benefit Generated

The benefit for him is clear: “I find it relaxing. I am in the studio on my own in the evening, playing music I like”.

He says his musical offering, light opera and musicals, is not typical of the station, which tends strongly towards Country & Western and so he believes he attracts a niche audience. From social interactions and the communications he receives, he believes he has an audience perhaps “in the low hundreds” though he has no way of confirming this; and they tend to be in the older age groups. Some small evidence of a segment of that audience comes from is offered by an occasional correspondent, a woman in her 80s living alone. She comments in one letter” I make sure I am in bed at eight o’clock to listen to your programme”.

He finds the Station staff and others to be friendly and welcoming. He has a couple of time been interviewed (on other matters) on Tipp FM the local commercial station, but says that Tipp Mid West “is different; more relaxed, less commercial” and he greatly appreciates the fact that he can use the facilities there .

### 4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating benefits

Paddy intends to continue the programme, and Tipp Mid West will do so as long as resources etc. allow. Tip Mid West is opening a second studio, in Cashel, and this will make it easier in the future.

### 5. Concluding Comment

Paddy is a typical volunteer producer, a retiree with niche musical interests who gains a lot from presenting the programme. At the same time, he benefits others with this niche taste in the community and can, given the nature and era of the music, reach more isolated individuals.

**Source:** Interview with Paddy O’Leary.

## 8. A World of Local Tipperary Sports

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
X	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>For many individuals, often older and living alone in remote areas, being able to engage with local sport is critical being feeling part of the community. Being able to keep up with these enhances that sense of belonging.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XXX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>Tipperary is known for sport’s enthusiasm, and this programme and Facebook page relays results and commentary on about 400 local sports fixtures, across a huge variety of sports, many entirely ignored by all others media.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
X	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>This is an invaluable tool for numerous sports clubs to obtain information and to broadcast it to their members.</i>
XX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced <i>Sports, as in most rural areas in Ireland, is a key component in a sense of identify and cohesion, around which the entire community gathers. These regular broadcasts, with unique information unavailable elsewhere reinforce this sense in a positive manner.</i>

### Summary

Stevie O’Donnell, in his 50s, attends about 400 sports fixtures a year across all of Country Tipperary, and reports on these - and hundreds more - in his regular series on Tipp Mid West radio programme bulletins, Website and Facebook, reaching not just the local population but a significant diaspora who retain their interest in local sports, reinforcing their sense of identify with their schools, localities and country. No other media outlet carries such a variety and wealth of local sports information and commentaries.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Tipperary is known for its sporting prowess nationally, especially in GAA, but this is built on the many hundreds of local sporting clubs, committed schools and events. In towns and countryside, multiple sports activities play a crucial role in identity development for young people, in team skills, and in healthy living. Yet most go unreported, or results are scattered online between multiple websites and other dedicated social media. Stevie O’Donnell, now in his early 50s, had long been a volunteer as Referee Coordinator for West Tipperary. All his spare time is spent travelling to up to 400 events across the county annually, covering everything from GAA hurling, football and Camogie, male and female, soccer, rugby and athletics to kickboxing, Skettles (a type of bowling), Churn-rolling and more, from the very local to the County level. He is a self-confessed sports fanatic, and believes it is a vitally important aspect of the social and cultural life of the County.



## **2. The Station activity, outputs and costs**

What Tipp Mid West FM allows him to do is share this enthusiasm and knowledge with others, both in the County and outside. Stevie consults regularly his database of local sports Website and social media for all fixtures and results, including changes, and combined these with his own knowledge and fixture attendances to produce a suite of radio programmes and inserts. For upcoming fixtures, including changes and updates, he delivers short pieces to other Tipp Mid West presenters to read out at key times. And he himself produces and presents three regular programmes:

- *Sports Preview*: Friday 6:30pm to 7:00 pm
- *Sports Roundup*: Sunday 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm
- *Sports Review*: Monday 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm

He has been broadcasting for about 12 years now. Tipp Mid West very recently launched a dedicated Facebook page to sports, to which he contributes a lot of material; and he also hosts his own Facebook page, and a dedicated Twitter account has been launched.

His interest in sports goes beyond the field. A few years ago he produced a special documentary on sports people who were addicted to gambling. Interviews with three sports people recounted very honest and disturbing stories about how they began gambling on games in which they were involved- one was an All Ireland minor hurling winner in 2006. A GAA Referee was also interviewed. The programme was picked up overseas, and he was invited onto radio stations to explain more about how it the documentary came about. It featured in the national papers; RTE covered it and he did interviews in the UK, USA and Australia.

## **3. The Benefit Generated**

No other media covers the Munster Junior League Rugby, Division One, two and three; or North and South Tipperary Soccer District Leagues; or numerous other minor and sometimes obscure sporting leagues and fixtures. Stevie believe he is providing a valuable service, via streaming and Facebook, not just for those in the County but also those who live outside in Ireland or further afield, and even for local sports enthusiasts to avoid withdrawal symptoms on holidays. He is also particularly proud of the documentary on gambling, a good example of where sports reporting carries lessons beyond the field and into the community.

His Tipp Mid West Facebook page has been 'liked' almost 800 times in the first week, with a similar number of video views, suggesting a large following; and the twitter account is already very active.

Feedback to Stevie is mostly informal through personal interactions, or through 'likes' on Facebook etc. and he was nominated for an award a few years ago. He says that people tell him he should be doing it on other media, but is happy with the coverage Tipp Mid West gives it. He says "Tipp Mid West is absolutely fantastic – I could not ask for any better, how you get on with them, they are all a happy family, and their technical facilities are very good".

## **4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits**

Stevie is a heavy user of Tipp Mid West facilities but the Station believes he provides a valuable service for young people, all those involved in local sports, and for minority and traditional sports too. The Station does not subsidise his transport or any of his activities – he is entirely self-funding.

## 5. Concluding Comment

It is not possible to measure the benefit to social cohesion and cultural reinforcement. But there is evidence that his broadcasts and postings are widely accessed and of interest to a large number of smaller audiences, including many now distant from County Tipperary. His dedication as a volunteer allows Tipp Mid West to cater for numerous very local and small minority interests, which are impossible or impractical for other media to reach; and the documentary on gambling is a natural extension of his commitment both to sport and to the community.

**Source:** Interview with Stevie O'Donnell. His Facebook page is at:

<https://www.facebook.com/tippmidwestradiosport/>

## 9. Eight Hours of Mary O’Brien’s Music

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>This programme caters especially to the musical interest of older people and, reinforced through personal contact by phone, generates a sense of community to sometimes isolated listeners. The presenter herself also benefits significantly</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
X	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>The programme’s fundraising activities and its volunteer presenter have helped to support the Station and a local community hospice. She also contributes as an active member of the Station’s Board</i>
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

Mary O’Brien, now in her mid-70s, produces and presents eight hours of music weekly over four programmes, volunteers on Tipp Mid-West Board, and runs fundraising events for the Station and even for a local Hospice in earlier years. It gives her confidence, is a great social activity, and she caters to the musical interests of sizeable audience in Tipperary, generating she believes a sense of community around the programme especially among older people.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Mary O’Brien is retired over a decade ago but long before that had volunteered with the predecessor to the current community-licensed Tipp Mid-West radio. At first she was “cajoled into being a phone volunteer, and I never thought I would go on radio”. Not long after arriving, she complained about the “terrible music”, and was advised to go home and make a tape of what she liked. A year later she had her first 30 minute programme of Irish and Country music, that soon grew to an hour, and then more. She later joined the Board and has been “unable to get out of it since”.

### 2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

Now she produced and broadcasts four separate weekly two-hour slots:

- On Monday’s *Late Night Show with Mary O’Brien*, from 10.00 pm to 12:00 pm, she usually co-hosts with an invited musician host, chatting and playing Irish ballads and Country from the 1960s to today.
- Tuesday and Thursday’s *Afternoon Delight with Mary O’Brien*, from 2.00pm to 4:00 pm, covers a wide range including rock and roll and folk music.

- Saturday's Country Jamboree with Mary O'Brien, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm, includes less usual American and Irish Country.

While she does not take live phone calls, for fear being live would put people off, she does, while the music is playing, talk to many people who phone in, as also does the volunteer on the switch. She believes her audience is aged from about 40 years, up to the 90s and beyond, and is mixture of rural and town dwellers.

Some years ago, she decided to use the contacts she had made in the music world to fundraise. This began with a local Hospice, to which she has a personal commitment. She raised almost €15,000 over three events, promoting it over the radio, and getting the musicians and venue for free, and a few volunteers ran the event itself. More recently she runs an annual fundraising concert for the Station. (She ran two this year, as she had not done one last year.) Using her network of contacts, she secures performances from five or six musicians free, a few songs each, while paying the headline band, the backing band and the venue. It raises from €4,000 to €6,000 each time for the Station.

### 3. The Benefit Generated

Mary loves music and this gives her a way to share it. "It also gives me confidence, because this is something I did well. I like to be busy, so I can also do the fundraising through the contacts I made in the programme."

Mary believes she has a large listenership, and is well known about the town and outside, especially by her voice. The social side is a very important part of the programmes, and some of those phoning in might be quite isolated or lonely, and stay on for a chat with the phone volunteer. She further leverages the programme and Station resources to raise funding for the Hospice, and at this point is part of the Station's own fundraising strategy.

Not surprisingly she is a strong advocate for Tipp Mid West. "People tell you they would die without the Station – it was off for a day last year and I never heard the end of it. People really know what is going on around the whole local area, what's coming up, the obituaries, and the station helps to promote a lot of charitable events. It keeps the community going, really."

### 6. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits

Mary intends to continue as long as she can and the Station and her listeners want her.

**Source:** Mary O'Neill, Volunteer and Tipperary Mid West Board Member.

## Stories from Dublin City fm

### 10. ALONE Media Partnership

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging.
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XXX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community: <i>The audience of the station was kept highly informed regarding issues relating to older people living in the community. All events, including campaign work or launches were covered and the voice of ALONE participants included in the story presentation.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
XX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>Volunteers were recruited through awareness raising activities supported by the station. The organisations messaging work was facilitated and supported through the knowledge that all press releases and campaigning work would be covered and supported by Dublin City FM</i>
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced.

#### Summary

Dublin City FM and ALONE developed a formal media partnership that ensured real value and meaning for both partners. ALONE received coverage of events, launches and press releases, the station attended all such events and received input from ALONE participants and volunteers for their stories. This allowed the stories to be given an authentic voice. This also allowed for ALONE to become recognisable and key to presenting the concerns of the older community.

ALONE also were able to use the station to promote calls for volunteers on a regular basis, allowing their targeted approach to have a media outlet working in support. The relationship that was built over the course of the partnership duration has continued to allow for ALONE’s voice to be heard on station news stories.

#### 1. Context

ALONE is a Dublin-based charity that supports older people to age at home through providing housing with support, support coordination, befriending, training and technology. The organisation has a national focus, working with hundreds of older people weekly, some who may be homeless, socially isolated, living in deprivation or in crisis.

As people get older they may require additional support to help them age at home. ALONE advocates for older people to address specific needs where a support service may be failing them, or if no service is available to meet these needs. The staff and volunteers support older people where they may not always have the capacity to advocate on their own behalf. ALONE works actively on

targeted campaigns aimed at raising awareness, creating public debate and forcing real changes at an individual, local and political level.

## 2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

In order to progress their organisational aims in relation to advocacy, awareness raising and active campaigning, ALONE and Dublin City FM came together to develop a formalised media partnership. This represented an innovative step for both the NGO and the station and worked explicitly to develop a mutually beneficial alliance that would support the work of ALONE, through raising awareness of issues facing older people living in Ireland.

The partnership was developed to ensure that ALONE's work would receive increased media presence, emphasising the issues concerning older people. The partnership also allowed for the station to build a strong relationship with the organisation, its staff and volunteers.

Specific ALONE services such as support coordination, befriending, housing support and dedicated campaigns were to be publicised on an ongoing basis as per the terms of the media partnership. Regular appeals for volunteers were also to be a feature of the alliance. This new partnership aimed to improve awareness of the full array of ALONE's work as well as highlighting opportunities for public and recipient involvement.



Picture showing: CEO of ALONE, Seán Moynihan and CEO of Dublin City FM, Mick Hanley

At the time of the launch, Seán Moynihan, CEO of ALONE, commented, “We are delighted to begin this new partnership with Dublin City FM. It points to the prevalence of issues facing older people and highlights the importance of ALONE's work as we fight to combat these. By partnering with us, Dublin City FM recognise these issues and I look forward to seeing how our work together can ultimately help older people.”

He continued, “This alliance will greatly help to communicate ALONE’s services and messages to the public, bringing such issues of homelessness, loneliness and lack of supports to the forefront of listeners’ awareness. This is of increasing importance as Ireland faces a rapidly growing older demographic.”

CEO of Dublin City FM, Mick Hanley, spoke on the new partnership:

“Dublin City FM is excited to embark on this new partnership with ALONE. We greatly appreciate the work they have achieved and hope to support this work, and further the benefit to older people in Dublin. The issues that ALONE campaigns for are central to our society, deserving of attention and action. Together, Dublin City FM aims to be a part of this action.”

The partnership represented an important step for community radio stations in adopting a formal relationship with a community based organisation that would allow for a consistent outlet for stories and ensure that an authentic voice would be included when reporting on stories in relation to its older community of listeners. These stories served to educate the public both about the many gaps in services that are facing older people, but equally importantly about the positive impact older people are having within the community. When all community organisations are in some way “fighting for air” to allow their stories and messages come to the fore, the media partnership recognised the importance of having a dedicated commitment to working together.

### **3. Benefit Generated**

Through the duration of the media partnership, ALONE and Dublin City FM worked closely on delivering a series of mutual benefits for each organisation.

The arrangement ensured that all ALONE press releases were covered by the station reporting teams. When ALONE was involved in organising campaigns or awareness raising initiatives, Dublin City FM would send reporters to cover the events. The ALONE organisers in turn made sure that the reporters had access to ALONE representatives and volunteers who would give first hand insight into the particular event or campaign launch. From the radio’s perspective, this allowed for a seamless broadcasting experience with authentic voices being brought to the airwaves.

Through this messaging process, ALONE felt that they were enabled to make the public aware and educated about the aging demographics and the positive implications. Dublin City FM made a commitment to cover and carry these items. The participants in the various news stories also gained in confidence from their engagement within the news story.

A further important role of the media partnership related to the promotion and targeting of volunteers by ALONE. Throughout the duration of the alliance, the station would promote volunteering drives as they were happening in particular areas of the city. This programme of effort from the station assisted ALONE in developing its volunteering programme.

The ongoing positive exposure and coverage for ALONE directly supported its awareness raising work and volunteer recruitment drives. The media partnership formalised the relationship and ensured that both partners could benefit from the alliance.

#### 4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits

The media partnership had a time limited dimension, as Dublin City FM works with a wide range of community based organisations in the city. However, the relationship between ALONE and Dublin City FM had become strong enough over this period that many of the commitments remain in place, even if not formalised. The station continues to cover events and launches, as well as press releases and news stories. Volunteering drives are also supported.

ALONE have secured their role as spokespeople for the older community in the city and beyond. When the station is seeking input in relation to a story, ALONE continues to put forward its participants or volunteers when a vox pop is required for a story. Their voice is valued and can be relied on.

#### 5. Conclusion

Dublin City FM and ALONE worked hard to build a working media partnership that provided real value and meaning for both partners. ALONE received coverage of events, launches and press releases, the station attended all such events and received input from ALONE participants and volunteers for their stories. This allowed the stories to be given an authentic voice. This also allowed for ALONE to become recognisable and key to presenting the concerns of the older community.

ALONE also were able to use the station to promote calls for volunteers on a regular basis, allowing their targeted approach to have a media outlet working in support. The relationship that was built over the course of the partnership duration has continued to allow for ALONE's voice to be heard on station news stories.

**Sources:** Seán Moynihan CEO ALONE, and Mick Hanly, Dublin City FM.



## 11. Inner City Helping Homeless.

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The Station disseminates information about events and activities of ICHH. The station makes a proactive effort to ensure that the voice of ICHH and the homeless community that it supports are heard through its reporting channels.</i>
XX	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>Through its ongoing promotion of key messages and campaigns, community members are encouraged to volunteer as well as support specific appeals.</i>
XX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>The Station facilitates ICHH across in its campaign and awareness raising work, reinforcing its ability to carry out activities and achieve goals.</i>
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

Through the development of an informal media partnership, both ICHH and Dublin City FM have been able to ensure that an authentic voice for people living in homeless situations is consistently heard. This alliance has allowed that ICHH can continue to present its analysis and ongoing focus on the key issues that are affecting many of Dublin City FM’s listeners as well as the wider community. Appeals for new volunteers and donations are supported and considered an important means of maintaining the focus on the key issue of homelessness in Ireland.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Inner City Helping Homeless was founded in November 2013 as a result of the increased number of people sleeping rough around Dublin City. Members of the local community in the North Inner City came together to do a soup run around the city and on the first night over 40 volunteers turned up wanting to help. By 2014 ICHH was operating a 7 night a week outreach service all across Dublin City. ICHH now have over 200 volunteers on their books, with an office in Dublin 1 that is open 14 hours a day, 5 days a week.

The ICHH outreach volunteers are on the streets of Dublin city and surrounding areas seven nights a week. The volunteers leave the office at 11pm on designated walking routes on both the northside and southside of the city. They bring supplies such as tea, coffee, soup, pot noodles, sandwiches, fruit, water, hats, scarves, gloves, clothes and sleeping bags. Most importantly they offer empathy and compassion as a simple chat can mean so much to people sleeping rough around the city.

ICHH offer a seven day advocacy service assisting homeless individuals and families and educating them on how to navigate through homelessness. As the number of homeless families and children has increased over 200% since 2015, the demand from families needing assistance in getting out of

homelessness has increased. Over 3,000 children are now homeless in Ireland and ICHH have stepped in on numerous occasions and accommodated families that were left with nowhere to go.

ICHH has put in place an active team of volunteers who support the organisation’s administrative functions, as well as the outreach and warehouse supports.

Each year, ICHH organises a Christmas campaign with partner organisations. These campaigns have worked to raise awareness and solidarity with the public as well as the collection of resources for homeless individuals and families. The Shoebox appeal represents a critical part of this campaign.

## 2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

Dublin City FM has worked closely with ICHH to proactively support its activities and campaigns. This has allowed for ICHH to ensure that it can present its key messages on a timely manner.

ICHH spokespeople and volunteers have been interviewed on a regular basis and stories aired in relation to critical issues. These stories have focused on developments in housing and homelessness policies as well as on how they have affected people living under these challenging circumstances.

In one such recent interview, Brian Mc Loughlin of ICHH spoke at length with a Dublin City FM presenter in relation to a specific campaign and highlighted the issues of people’s reality of “the groundhog day of dealing with homeless services and possibly sleeping on the street every night.”<sup>4</sup>

Dublin City FM in working with ICHH has ensured that any such interviews are quickly available to be shared as podcasts or as news cuts. ICHH can then use these links of the interviews through their own social media channels. This support from the station has ensured that all ICHH interviews and reports can be shared widely and in a timely manner. Many such news stories are then maintained as an online repository through ICHH and the Dublin City FM Soundcloud pages.

During such interviews, ICHH spokespeople have been granted enough time to discuss key issues as they are emerging in the public domain. For instance, as complex figures are presented in relation to numbers living in homelessness (see figure below), the station has ensured that adequate time can be given to breaking down such figures and explaining their significance in terms of spikes in numbers.

### Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government Homelessness Report January 2020

*Details of households accessing local authority managed emergency accommodation during the week of 20 - 26 January 2020*

REGION	HOMELESS ADULTS	GENDER		AGE GROUPS				ACCOMMODATION TYPE *			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+	PEA	STA	TEA	Other
Dublin	4600	2773	1827	577	2687	1250	86	2349	2278	62	0
Mid-East	301	186	115	40	160	90	11	183	114	4	0
Midlands	109	58	51	22	58	28	1	73	12	24	0
Mid-West	341	208	133	48	189	97	7	121	182	38	0
North-East	128	77	51	18	63	36	11	70	56	2	0
North-West	67	45	22	14	34	18	1	19	31	11	6
South-East	222	160	62	35	122	56	9	58	162	0	2
South-West	578	358	220	73	342	138	25	328	254	0	0
West	351	202	149	42	195	101	13	205	144	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6697</b>	<b>4067</b>	<b>2630</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>3850</b>	<b>1814</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>3406</b>	<b>3233</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>10</b>

PEA - Private Emergency Accommodation: this may include hotels, B&Bs and other residential facilities that are used on an emergency basis  
STA - Supported Temporary Accommodation: accommodation, including hostels, with onsite professional support  
TEA - Temporary Emergency Accommodation: emergency accommodation with no (or minimal) support

\* Note: clients may have accessed multiple accommodation types during the week

<sup>4</sup> <https://soundcloud.com/dcfm-1032/gmd-interview-brian-mc-loughlin-3rd-december-lkm>

Other projects that have been promoted by Dublin City FM include the work of the Babs empowerment project, a free listening service provided through Inner City Helping Homeless.

The station has also assisted with the promotion of volunteering appeals. ICHH is dependent on the work of its extensive volunteer team and the station's support in promoting the need for further volunteers is considered to have played an important role.

### 3. Benefit Generated

Through this informal media partnership, both ICHH and Dublin City FM have been able to ensure that an authentic voice for people living in homeless situations is consistently heard. This alliance has allowed that ICHH can continue to present its analysis and ongoing focus on the key issues that are affecting many of Dublin City FM's listeners as well as the wider community.

Press releases from ICHH are consistently used by the station news teams and reporters. Interviews take place and key messages are presented.

While specific numbers of new volunteers or donations are not logged in relation to whether the station's reporting acted as a referral point, ICHH consider that the work of the station has supported its recruitment efforts for volunteers and appeals for donations.

### 4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits

ICHH has indicated that there is potential for increased levels of engagement with Dublin City FM, whereby more detailed monthly style interviews can be conducted and developed as podcast series. Such unfiltered stories could in turn be reduced or cut to shorter clips for use by station or ICHH. These podcasts could be shared more widely through streaming services that have a wider reach.

The media relationship that has developed over recent years between the two organisations is considered secure and sustainable. There is a proactive level of support from the station, whereby ICHH are confident that their voice and that of the homeless community will receive an audience through the station's reporting.

### 5. Conclusion

Dublin City FM and ICHH have developed a strong working relationship that can be characterised as an informal media partnership. Press releases and campaigns receive airtime and recorded news clips and interviews are shared and re-shared through a wide range of media channels.

Appeals for new volunteers and donations are supported and considered an important means of maintaining the focus on the key issue of homelessness in Ireland.

**Source:** Brian McLoughlin, ICHH Head of Communications

## 12. Early Learning Initiative

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XXX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>A group of children from the north inner city were supported by the station to develop a new skillset and competences in relation to communication, allowing their voice to be heard live on air. Increased levels of self confidence and self-esteem were outcomes of the initiative.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>Dublin City FM promotes any initiatives being run by the ELI and NCI.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors (community organisations) are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

Dublin City FM and the Early Learning Initiative worked together to develop an innovative programme that would bring a cohort of children together to develop new skills and competences. These children had participated in the initial implementation of the ParentChild + Programme and were now in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class in primary school. The initiative allowed for this group to be re-engaged and for the ELI team to re-connect and see their progress. The children participated in workshops in the station and produced material that was then broadcast. This successful initiative has the potential to be carried out again with other groups of children.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

The Early Learning Initiative (ELI) at National College of Ireland was developed to address the problem of educational underachievement in marginalised communities. Working closely with the local community, ELI aims to address disadvantage through a comprehensive programme that provides for children; their parents, families, and educators from early years up to third-level. ELI has operated as a pilot programme since 2006 and delivers a wide range of different programmes to 12,000+ children, parents and professionals a year.

One such programme, the ParentChild + Programme, forms a key part of the overall family support programmes. ParentChild+ is a ‘learning through play experience’ for parents and their preschool children. It is designed to strengthen the natural bond between parent and child and to encourage a love of learning. It encourages the parent as the child’s first and best teacher and prepares these children for later success in school. ParentChild+ employs specially trained local women as Home Visitors, to model verbal interaction for the parent and child. The Home Visitor meets the family

twice a week, in their own home, for two short (1/2 hour) visits, during the (primary) school year. Home Visitors receive extensive training and are supported through ongoing supervision meetings.

As part of research undertaken by ELI with participants on this programme, a parent described the outcome from involvement in one such parent support programme:

“The Home Visitor is very good with my child and I’m learning a lot from the techniques she’s been using. I’d never have known how to explain properly or encourage him in the ways I am now. My reading has come on better and I am calm. I am a lot more relaxed and my child is the same with me. I love reading to him and we enjoy playing together. The Home Visitor is great in giving me tips and looks at all the different sides. I have said it to my family, friends and the intervention team”.

In Dublin’s inner city, the ParentChild+ has now reached over 1,236 children since 2007 and supported over 40 local parents to become home visitors. ELI Research carried out with the participants has demonstrated significant outcomes for both the children and the home visitors involved.

## **2. The Station activity, outputs and costs**

In order to recognise the achievements of the initial cohort of children involved in the ParentChild+ programme, the ELI team organised a session with Dublin City FM. This served as an opportunity for ELI to check back in with these children, who were now at the final stages of their primary school education, in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes in local schools. Of the original 25 children, 15 participated in the station session.

The station programme focused on upskilling the group in areas of communications and language. The station hosted the group of children for a workshop, leading to the group participating in a recording session where they were given access to the station studios. The recordings were then broadcast and made available to all those engaging in the initiative.

The partnership arrangement between ELI and Dublin City FM has also allowed for the dissemination and promotion of other ELI and NCI initiatives, including the Discover University programme.

## **3. The Benefit Generated**

The feedback from the group was extremely positive, highlighting the new skills learned and the increased confidence in being able to use their voice in a new way. Access to the studios also allowed for an insight into the workings of the station and the presentation of news items. Family and friends of the children also were able to hear the results of the recordings when they were aired. The initiative had focused on the children’s talents and skills, ensuring that their levels of self-confidence and self-esteem were enhanced.

From the perspective of the ParentChild + Programme promoters, this initiative successfully brought together the initial children involved in its roll out, as well as their parents, some of whom had become Home Visitors in the interim period. The workshops acted as a useful means of connecting the children together and allowed the programme promoters the opportunity to re-engage with the children.

A review of the initiative indicated that these children had seen confidence boosted and new skills gained. The children were taken out of their “comfort zone” and encouraged to think about skills and competences that are important for their next steps in their transition to second level.

The promotion of other initiatives by Dublin City FM has allowed for ELI and NCI to maintain a dissemination strategy within the local area and its wider community.

#### **4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits**

While the initiative was organised as a one-off event for this specific cohort, the programme organisers would be open to building this into their follow up programme. The initiative was considered a very useful means of re-connecting with the children and affording them an opportunity to develop new skills as well as presenting their own talents live on air.

#### **5. Concluding Comment**

The ELI and NCI have a strong working relationship with Dublin City FM. This has allowed for the development and testing of innovative means of bringing children into the station and developing new competences and skills. The ParentChild + Programme participants were the beneficiary of one such initiative. This allowed for 15 children to engage in a workshop within the station, focusing on their communication and language skills. They were supported to present themselves on air and make recordings that would be broadcast. The initiative was regarded as a success by all stakeholders, especially the children involved and the ParentChild + Programme promoters.

**Source:** Josephine Bleach, Early Learning Initiative

## 13. Dublin City Traffic Management Centre

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging.
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XXX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The station broadcasts traffic updates, bulletins and news items to ensure that the commuting public has access to real time information that can assist their journeys. The station also promotes awareness of Dublin events, as well as potential public safety concerns or risks on a regular basis.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

Dublin City FM and the Dublin City Council’s Management Centre have created a mutually beneficial arrangement through the weekday “Live Drive” Programme. Live Drive allows the station to reach over 100,000 listeners on a regular basis. The presenters and production team have worked to maintain these as a community of commuters, who engage with one another and provide information and support. The listeners have continued to stay tuned in to the station beyond these specific “Live Drive” programmes, allowing the station a wider audience than may have been the case without this targeted approach.

### 1. Context and issue addressed

Dublin City Council’s Traffic Management and Incident Centre is a single control room in DCC offices that handles traffic management for the Greater Dublin Area. The control room has access to live feeds from 300 CCTV cameras located across the city, the M50 and in neighbouring local authorities. The system also uses sensors at traffic intersections to detect how many vehicles are in each lane. Traffic lights are then adjusted dynamically to respond to congestion. In the event of road traffic incidents, they can manually override automatic traffic lights to intervene and alleviate congestion. Data streams that are generated are used to develop and deploy new technologies to further automate and detect anomalies and black spots in the roads network.

The Traffic Management Centre works in cooperation with public transport service providers, An Garda Síochána, AA Roadwatch, and other stakeholders. These partners can access the systems and disseminate the relevant information back to their people on the ground. This streamlines communications and allows for better management of incidents as they arise.

## 2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

A critical partner for the Traffic Management Centre is Dublin City FM. A programme entitled “Live Drive” is broadcast weekday mornings and evenings making use of the system to keep the listeners up to date with live traffic news. The programme operates from the control room and goes out from 7.00am to 10.00am and 4.00pm to 7.00pm on a Monday to Friday basis. The team of producers and presenters use information from the city’s traffic cameras to provide live updates and regular bulletins. Texts and tweets from travelling commuters are also used by the team to develop a more detailed analysis.



The presenters play music and engage the listeners with regular quizzes. Playlists are then uploaded to the station website. As Dublin’s only dedicated live traffic update service, a community of listeners has developed with regular contributors and feedback from commuters. Kantar analysis from 2015 indicated that the “Live Drive” programme was reaching over 100,000 listeners<sup>5</sup>. Other more recent surveys put this figure at over 125,000 listeners<sup>6</sup>.

## 3. Benefit Generated

Through the listenership of the Live Drive programmes, Dublin City FM have developed a community of commuters. The traffic updates are mixed with news stories and music and are presented to the

<sup>5</sup> <https://radiotoday.ie/2015/10/dublin-city-fm-celebrate-impressive-listener-figures/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.dublincityfm.ie/advertising/>



commuters in a lively and engaging manner. Regular contributors participate in discussion with the team, as well as providing on the ground news about specific traffic stories or incidents.



These listeners also remain engaged for other Dublin City FM programmes, where the focus might be on more diverse topics.

#### 4. Sustaining and replicating benefits

Dublin City FM has a long term arrangement with the Traffic Management Centre to maintain its current programming focus and content. The presenting and production teams have a base in the control centre.

#### 5. Concluding Comment

Dublin City FM and the Dublin City Council have successfully sustained a mutually beneficial arrangement that allows for the station to reach a very large set of listeners. The presenters and production team have worked to maintain their listeners as a community of commuters, who engage with one another through providing information and support. The listeners have also continued to stay tuned in to the station beyond these specific “Live Drive” programmes, allowing the station a wider audience than may have been the case without this targeted approach.

**Source:** Niall Bolger, Dublin City Council.

## 14. Viva Vox: “A Disability Show with a Difference”

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>This show targets especially people with disability, in a manner that treats them the same as abled bodies. It has also personally benefited the producer presenter, following an unexpected encounter with disability in his middle age.</i>
X	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence <i>The presenters predecessor left for an position of employment, facilitated by his experience in the Station.</i>
XXX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The programme covers many issues around disability, but – deliberately- those that affect everyone, able-bodies and not.</i>
XX	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues–local to global–because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>The programme addresses topical and controversial issues, talking to politicians, activists and others.</i>
X	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>The programme often features people involved in community support and development organisations, allowing them to promote their positions and activities.</i>
XX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced. <i>Above all, the programme promotes an inclusive approach in content and style, for both abled-bodies and disabled.</i>

### Summary

Gary Kearney has been producing and presenting the Viva Vox programme on Dublin City fm, as a volunteer, for over two years. The programme is about “issues that affect the disability community” and often that affect everyone in Dublin. Suddenly struck by a brain disability, Gary says he was “thrown on the scrapheap at 45 years old”. The show has not only given him a voice; it educates and advocates for a wide community of disabled and abled, without shouting or lecturing. Whether you’re a TD, Chief Executives, or a just someone with a story, you get treated the same. Gary, as a spokesperson for Disability Federation Ireland, is well used to both radio and television, but he believes this kind of show is only possible because of the flexibility, freedom, support and welcome that he and everyone gets in Dublin City fm, a central part of its ethos as a community radio station.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Dublin City fm has always included a strong remit in the area of disability. Its programme Viva Vox has been dedicated to the issue and over the years has addressed it in different ways. In 2017, the show’s presenter left for a full time employment (in no small measure aided by his experience there) and the position became vacant. For Gary Kearney, whose disability manifested at the age of 45 and from which recovery was slow, this opened an opportunity to move his role in advocacy on disability

to a new level. He had long felt that much of the commentary on disability was condescending (“isn’t she great – she can tie her shoelaces”), and that the able-bodied shied away from the topic unable to deal with it. His goal was to produce a programme that was different, that would treat those with disability like everyone else, and delve into topics that affect a much wider community.

## 2. Station activities and outputs

Gary had been made redundant from his job due to the onset of the disability, and while recovering became active in the arts and in disability advocacy. In mid 2017, Viva Vox, was looking for a new presenter and the Station Manager was put in touch with Gary. In August, he took it on and has since been producing and presenting the 30 minute programme every Thursday at 12:30 am. He prefers it to be pre-recorded, so that he can spend time putting his interviewees at their ease.

The Station provides him with everything he needs to produce the programme, including initial training, (done by a Dublin City fm executive producer) and technical support. At the start he would spend up to 30 hours a week researching the subject, but he now has it streamlined and, depending on the topic, it might take him anything from 20 to just a couple of hours. Discussion is topical: from obstacles to people using Dublin’s buses (he has become involved in Bus-Connect initiative), to issues of people - ill or with disabilities -being forced out of independent living and living indefinitely in nursing homes due to the absence of appropriate support and support s – these are discussed as issues that affect many more people than the disability community. Gary chats to his guests, putting them at their ease; those with disabilities “come across as people first, who just happen to have disability”. He tries to introduce humour and avoids a “po-faced approach so often brought to the topic”.

## 3. Benefit Generated

When asked on the benefit to himself, Gary quips: “On the scrapheap at 45, an award winning broadcaster at 55”. In 2019, he won a Community Radio Ireland, Silver Achievement Award for Social Benefit. It shows the benefits go well beyond himself as it was in recognition of a highly effective promotion campaign over the past two years of the “Ablefest”, that helped attendance rise from 300 in 2017, to 90 in 2018, to 3,000 in 2019 (see <https://www.ablefest.com/>).

The programme’s popularity is also attested to by the extensive feedback he gets on his Facebook and Twitter accounts (he has 950 followers) from individuals and organisations involved with the issues, and ongoing requests from politicians and others to appear on the programme.

He says the atmosphere of the station, not just for him but for many interviewees who are unfamiliar with and wary of media, is central to getting the tone of the programme right. He notes that Dublin City FM usually has interns from the National Learning Network working away in the office, and the feeling when you enter is inclusive - “for my guests, it’s great for them to see others with disabilities when they walk in”. He compares the ethos of the Station to that he tries to generate in his programme: “I found that people talked *at me* when I got a disability; Dublin City fm, the office and the programmes, talks *to people* and *with people*.”

He feels that radio, when it is like this, can make a real difference, help people to express themselves; to show others that people with disability “don’t bite”; to take the mystique and fear

out of it. Gary himself, as a spokesperson for DFI, is no stranger to numerous local and national radio and television studios.

“They are very clinical; the programme controller calls all the shots. The commercial ones are ‘plastic’, the clock is ticking. What I love about Dublin City fm is that everyone is pulling together for the greater good. They try to make it as human as possible – and everyone cares about what they are talking about; they are just sharing their interests with everyone.”

#### **4. The Future: Sustaining the benefits**

Dublin City fm invests heavily in its volunteer producer/presenters in terms of staff time, training and support, and creating a welcoming, relaxed and creative atmosphere. The programme does not cost any additional funding and from that perspective is sustainable. Gary is considering seeking sponsorship, to contribute to station finances .

#### **5. Concluding Comment**

Dublin City has given Gary a platform to fully recover from the trauma and obstacles of his late-onset disability, allowing him to express his creative abilities. He also believes the programme really makes a difference to many people, to those he works with on the show but especially to the disability and wider community. He maintains that only a station dedicated to the community would have taken him in, in the first place – but more than that: this type of programme and the tone and ethos it sets, is possible only because of the ethos of the inclusive station itself.

**Sources:** Gary Kearney, Volunteer Producer/presenter with Dublin City fm. (Reviewed, approved)

## 15. “Aftering”: A different approach to mortality

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
X	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>This programme caters for a minority audience not covered in other media, some of whom may have had bereavement or other loss</i>
X	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence The presenter, encouraged by the Station, successfully applied for programme funding from the BAI’s Sound & Vision scheme, giving a solid track record in quality production.
XX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The programme is a source of information on the topics discussed including events.</i>
XX	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>The presenter created the programme precisely because no other media covers the issues address – mortality and end-of-life – and discussion and analysis.</i>
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

Valerie Vetter produces a weekly programme on Dublin City FM called “Aftering” on the topic of mortality in all its diversity, interviewing people from different perspectives and approaches – emotional, cultural, practical, economic, legal, etc. For her, it offers a creative outlet and reflective platform unavailable in any other media entity, but also covers a topic that is beyond what is of commercial or mainstream interest. The programme - like many on Dublin City fm - caters for a non-mainstream audience, often people at a particular stage in their life, who have few public fora to reflect on the issues raised. While the audience is likely to be small, she believes they highly value the programme precisely because it is unavailable through normal channels. Its posting as a podcast, which she ensures is well indexed and tagged, ensures people can listen as and when they need it, and pass it on to others, something that is confirmed through her social media responses.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Dublin City fm offers members of the public opportunities to explore their interests through the medium of radio, regarding it as a valuable service to those who seek it. Over a decade ago, Valerie Vetter completed a Master’s degree in journalism, and heard of Dublin City fm through her fellow students. Alongside two classmates, she first volunteered to be a presenter on *Good Morning Dublin* once a week. She developed a strong interest in radio as a result. Though there are very few opportunities to turn it into full time employment, Dublin City fm has enabled her to pursue a

sustained and deep interest in issues around mortality, end-of-life, and other topics, and through her programmes to share these with others.

## 2. Station activities and outputs

After receiving initial studio and desk training and a year volunteering on the *Good Morning Dublin* programme, in 2013 she developed the idea of a regular programme on issues relating to mortality, and put it to the Station. They approved a 13-week pilot slot, and it has been broadcasting more or less continuously since then, with the exception of a couple of 13-week slots when she produced and presented a variety of short series on life stories, the environment and social enterprise. The programme currently goes out 12.30pm Mondays, and alternates between live and pre-recorded. For the pre-recorded programme, the station would lend her the equipment but now she's invested in her own.

The Station also encouraged her to apply for funding for one-off documentaries from the Sound & Vision Scheme. Several applications were successful over the years on different topics, and were broadcast.

## 3. Benefit Generated

She says: "community radio lets you explore off-beat ideas in a safe environment, and I can connect with other volunteers in the station... For me, it's a real pleasure and a privilege. And to be able to get S&V support for little guys like me is fantastic."

She gets feedback from Twitter and Facebook, and occasional emails and phone calls. Sometimes it comes from podcasts, either through the Station website or her own Soundcloud account. "Podcasts live forever," she says and recently a young widow contacted her after she discovered a programme broadcast some months ago online, finding it had deeply affected her. She decided that she would like to tell her own story in order to help others going through the grief of profound loss. After some interaction and careful consideration, she was invited on, later commenting that sharing her experience with others greatly helped her cope with what she's been going through.

Community radio operates very differently from mainstream media. Valerie reflected that:

"When you remove the drive for profit, it leaves scope to do new things, explore and take risks. You can give a forum to people and groups not represented anywhere else. It follows that, when it works, the programme can be far more valuable to those that it connects with as it has a far greater meaning"

## 4. The Future: Sustaining the benefits

Valerie pre-records some of her programmes outside the station but equally she also needs the support of Dublin City FM's other volunteers for creating live on-air programmes or when a guest comes into the studio in East Wall. She knows how much goes the Station puts into building up her skills and confidence and providing her with this unique platform. She intends to keep doing it into the future, as long as the Station continues.

## 5. Concluding Comment

Valerie is not someone who can be described as marginalised or disadvantaged. The Station's ethos extends to enabling her and people like her to develop their specialist creative interests while also building their skills in radio production and presenting to a high level. In addition, there are benefits to meeting with other diverse volunteers who share a passion for radio. But the benefits also accrue to the listeners, whose interests are not catered for either by mainstream media and commercially-run stations.

**Sources:** Valerie Vetter, Volunteer/Member of Dublin City FM. (Reviewed and approved)

## 16. “Making a Difference”

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
X	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>The programme many individuals in living unusual and creative lives and gives them an opportunity to talk about it live, which can be an empowering experience.</i>
XX	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence <i>For the producer presenter, her experience at the station is a factor in enabling her to weather a difficult personal and employment period, and build a new career.</i>
X	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The programme includes information on various events and activities around Dublin.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
XX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>She regularly gives social activities and groups a platform to discuss their activities.</i>
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced, and community tensions and divisions are reduced

### Summary

Jillian Godsil produces and presents a thirty minute programme on Dublin City fm called “Making a Difference”. A range of people, from social activists to creative artists, most of them under the radar of most media, talk about what they do, and why. She, and her guests, believe that the publicity and understanding they generate, multiplied through rebroadcast by SoundCloud, reinforces the impact and potential of what they do. For Jillian herself the programme opened a new career, and gave her the confidence to approach East Coast FM where she now also hosts a weekly programme.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Jillian Godsil is in the unusual position of presenting a show on a community station, Dublin City fm, and a commercial local station, East Coast fm. Now in her early 50s, her background was in technology PR, and her career in radio started late. In 2008, as she was having her home repossessed and going through her own traumatic austerity programme and bankruptcy, she found herself in demand on Irish and even international media, as a human face of the crash that Ireland was going through. The experience, and confidence, she gained from multiple media appearances helped her to rebuild her life (she is now a marketer in the Blockchain industry), but also led to a real interest in radio. Having weathered the storms and with more time on her hands, about two years ago she approached the Manager of Dublin City Radio, which had interviewed her several times, with an idea for a programme.



## 2. Station activities and outputs

Her idea, for a 30 minute programme entitled *Charity Heroes*, was approved by Dublin City FM going out every Monday from 11:00 to 11:30 am. She received studio training and went on air. She interviewed numerous “unsung heroes” doing valuable, usually low key, work in Dublin. After about a year she began to find it hard to find new stories to fill the weekly slot. In discussion with the manager, she decided to broaden the format and to rename it *Making A Difference*. It now covers a wider variety of people making unusual, creative and positive contributions to living, mainly in Dublin; everything from people running informal soup-kitchens, to street artists to a woman who specialises in a form of creative chanting. One programme will often lead to another – she recently had the CEO of the award youth scheme *Gaisce* on, and is now lining up the young Gold Award recipients to feature in her programme.

She lives in Wicklow, and produces a mixture of live and pre-recorded programmes.

## 3. Benefit Generated

Jillian considers herself very lucky, despite all her troubles around the economic crash, and she sees her programme as a way of giving something back. Few of those she interviews would have access to radio to promote what they do, and many find the experience of being on radio personally empowering and confidence building. And for some it also offers new opportunities and forms of support to their endeavours. She stays in touch with many of them, and some disseminate the show further via SoundCloud (Dublin City fm posts all programmes there). She also receives positive feedback by text and other means.

The experience and confidence she gained allowed her to approach East Coast FM, a commercial station in Wicklow, with a programme idea. Called *Wicklow This Week*, it goes out for an hour on Saturday morning and is more journalistic in style, and she is paid a modest fee. She says both Stations are highly professional, though East Coast, where she has her own producer, tends to have more rules around what she can do, whereas Dublin City fm gives her almost total freedom within the format.

She was nominated for an IMRO last year, and has come a long way since the crash.

## 4. The Future: Sustaining the benefits

Jillian intends to keep up the programme for as long as she can. Dublin City fm continues to provide her with the blocks of studio time, as she requires, as part of their normal service to support individual creativity and community groups and actions.

**Sources:** Jillian Godsil, Volunteer, Dublin City fm

## 17. “Human Interest Stories”

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>This programme reaches out especially to young people, to inspire them to overcome challenges and achieve what they can. For the presenter himself, it is the realisation of a person ambition.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
X	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>Through interviews and discussion, it engages with serious personal and career related issues, often bringing new perspectives to bear.</i>
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced, and community tensions and divisions are reduced

### Summary

Billy Kilkenny, formerly a professional singer and now working in hotel hospitality, produces and presents a weekly programme called H.I.S “Human Interest Stories”. Drawing on his own experience, the idea of the programme is to explore, in an informal way, the challenges that people face in achieving their life goals, and their successes, and the need to keep moving on. The programme allows Billy to reach his own goals in radio, but the wider objective is to inspire young people to achieve what they can, and to overcome setbacks that they experience.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Billy Kilkenny used to be a professional singer, at its high point in 2007 touring internationally with Dolly Parton’s show. Now in his mid-thirties with that career behind him, he works as Guest Relations in the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin where his prior experience in entertainment helps in meeting and greeting their high-profile guests. His earlier career also gave him a love of media, and he did a pre-production course with Today FM. However, his chance to develop his own programme idea came when he approached Dublin City fm about six months ago.

### 2. Station activities and outputs

He pitched the programme to the Station Manager, and after discussion and some studio training, was approved to broadcast 13 episodes. It goes out on Tuesday at 11:30am every week. Called *Human Interest Stories* (H.I.S. for short) it focuses on what he calls stories of inspiration: people, who like him, have been through highs and lows in their lives and have come out the other side. They include entertainers, media ‘personalities’, business start-ups, artists, educators and others but the

focus is always on the personal trials and challenges they have faced, or continue to face, and how they confront and deal with them.

Billy produces the programme live every week, and says that “everyone in the station is fantastic and totally supportive.”

### **3. Benefit Generated**

The idea, for Billy, is to inspire young people to achieve what they can, not to give up when they encounter obstacles, but also to build a life that really suits their talents and interests. “Young people need to hear stories, of failure as well as success; of picking up and going on, and being happy with what you have.”

For Billy himself, this is the realisation of an ambition. “I love the media and especially radio – and also the community that is Dublin. This lets me do it all.”

### **4. The Future: Sustaining the benefits**

Billy is hoping to extend the series and to continue working. For Dublin City fm, the show fits with fully with their ethos and brief.

**Source:** Billy Kilkenny, Volunteer and Presenter.

## 18. “The Brazilian Coffee Time”

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XXX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>Many Brazilians arrived in Dublin with few contacts and subject to exploitation and sometimes loneliness. This programme links them up and offers a sense of belonging, including the Team who have come together to produce the programme.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>The programme provides information on events and activities of interest to this community, not available in other media.</i>
XX	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>The programme discusses issues of serious and less serious concern to the Brazilian community in an open and inclusive manner.</i>
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
XXX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced <i>For a Brazilian community in Dublin of over 13,000 this offers a unique platform to feel a part of the city and develop their own sense of identity within it.</i>

### Summary

Julianne came from Brazil about four years ago to study a MA in Journalism in Dublin. Today she leads a team of five compatriots, broadcasts a half-hour weekly programme on Dublin City FM to Brazilian community in Dublin. It has become the sole voice of, and for, the community in the media, and the evidence suggests it is highly valued among members of that community, informing them of what is going on in the community and at home, addressing issues they confront major and minor, and ultimately building their sense of belonging, both as a community and as part of a multicultural Dublin.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Julianne arrived in Dublin about four years ago to study a Master’s Degree in *Journalism and Public Relations* in Griffith College. After successful completion, in 2016 she applied to numerous radio stations in Dublin for an internship, to gain media experience. The commercial stations did not respond (with the exception of one, which however, judged her accent to be too strong!) but Dublin City FM did, as part of their ongoing intern programme. She joined and initially became involved with the *Good Morning Dublin* Programme.

She had noticed from the time of her arrival that media coverage about, and for, the Brazilian community in Dublin (and Ireland) was virtually non-existent. with the help of Mike Glynn and Mick Hanley, she soon launched a five to ten minute regular news slot for the Brazilian community on *Good Morning Ireland*, and found no shortage of material. With positive feedback from those in the

community, she pitched the idea of a regular programme to the Dublin City FM Board, called *The Brazilian Coffee Time*, dedicated to the Brazilian community in Dublin. The idea was accepted and the programme went on air. To produce the show, she asked for some help from some friends with certain influence and knowledge about the Brazilian community, in different aspects (cultural, news, exchange programmes etc.) to be part of the team. After some changes during the year, we now have the final format of the team and programme.

## 2. Station activities and outputs

*The Brazilian Coffee Time* is broadcast every Monday at 1:30 to 2:00 pm, the time when Brazilians traditionally relax after lunch with a coffee. A team of six friends, all Brazilian, work on it, with Julianne as Director and Presenter; alongside Victor Hugo, Head of Production; Naara Mendes, News & Events; Mario Bortoletto, who has a bi-weekly slot covering study exchange programme; Gislene Oliveira Assistant Producer covering event in Brazil and links to Brazilian Embassy; and Hellton Nobrega who covers social media, and event photography that go out on their Facebook page. Naara, Gislene and Victor also present some of the time.

It describes itself as: “A mix of good taste, flavour, friendship, good chats, updates, elegance and the nice ending of a meal.” It broadcasts live and includes news both from Brazil and Dublin’s Brazilian community, a listing of upcoming events, and always at least one Interview with a Brazilian living in Dublin or visiting, including some well-known people. The language is generally English, though Portuguese is used if an interviewee is more comfortable with that. It covers stories of success for Brazilians here, alongside small and large problems that confront the community, from harassment and racism, to residency and finding a dentist! It tries to give an open voice to the community to speak as it likes, but when serious allegations against members of the community are brought to them, Julianne - as a journalist - and other team members, investigate further before deciding whether to broadcast the issue.

Overall the six-person team spends perhaps twenty hours a week on each programme, and they meet each Monday before and during the programme. It demands a major time commitment from each of them.

From the start they have found Dublin City FM to be extremely friendly, to the whole team, providing them with everything they need.

## 3. Benefit Generated

Julianne herself says she has met so many wonderful people through the programme, not only Irish and Brazilian, but people from all around the world, and she feels “embraced”. And the programme does that for the whole community. “When I came there was no one and no way to share within the Brazilian community. Now people are willing to trust us and to share. We get a lot of people telling us about the issues they face.”

She says: “We became the voice of the Brazilian community in the media. Some people have contacted the Irish Times or the Independent, but of course there are editorial and other approvals so maybe a little gets through. For us, we are their voice; we cover everything.”

Brazilians are now the sixth largest non-Ireland community, and the 2016 Census counted 13,640 living in Dublin. Their Facebook page has nearly 1,200 likes, and gets dozens of messages after some shows especially if someone well known is on or a very serious issue is raised. It is impossible to be precise about the number of listeners but all team members get informal feedback and believe they have a strong following. Many listen from Soundcloud, after they have finished work, and some programmes have several hundred hits.

#### **4. The Future: Sustaining the benefits**

The programme will continue as long as the team sees a need for it, probably for as long as there is a Brazilian community here. If individuals team members leave, others can be recruited to replace, and in that sense it is a robust group. Dublin City FM will continue to provide the resources for as long as they can.

#### **5. Concluding Comments**

This programme in some respects is an archetypal community radio programme. While addressing a particular group within the wider community, it does so in a manner that both builds solidarity within the group, and enhances their identification as part of the Dublin community.

**Source:** Julianne, Volunteer. Dublin City FM. Webpage: <https://www.dublincityfm.ie/shows/the-brazilian-coffee-time/> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/brcoffeetime/>

## Stories from Around the Country

These Stories have been developed by Staff and Volunteers of the Stations themselves. The exceptions are the first two from ROS fm, which were produced by the Consultant.

### 19. Respect Words: A journalistic approach to hate speech (Near FM)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>Through this project, an online and offline set of spaces were created for NGOs, activists and advocates to come together to support the voice of minorities and allow for their voice to be heard across local and international media outlets</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
X	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>The dissemination platforms used allowed for local and global issues to be examined and presented to a wide audience</i>
XX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>NGOs were enabled to work together across a common theme to develop a set of resources that will be used into the future to support their work</i>
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced.

#### Summary

This was a two year long project (2016-2018) aiming to combat hate speech, racist and xenophobic projections in the European media by improving the quality of contents broadcast in Europe. The project successfully examined how media present issues of migration and minorities, involving more than 150 European media outlets, over 1,300 journalists, in 8 partner countries. In Ireland. Near Fm worked with a wide range of national and local NGOs and journalists to develop a framework and set of ethical guidelines to fight against hate speech. These resources highlight such issues as the use of terminology, accuracy in reporting and avoidance of sensationalist measures. The Ethical Code and Good practice map were shared widely through local and international seminars. A series of podcasts and programmes were developed giving voice to a wide range of marginalised groups and continues to act as a repository for NGOs, youth centres and schools interested in examining issues in relation to migration, discrimination and the lived experiences of marginalised communities in Ireland.

## 1. Context and social issue addressed

During most of the last 20 years, Near FM has been working on EU funded European projects that involve collaboration with other community media in Europe to develop and organise training courses, seminar and/ or radio programmes. One of Near FM's recent projects that involved a lot of collaboration with organisations in Ireland was the project Respect Words. Seven radio stations in seven countries (Spain, Greece, Italy, Germany, Slovenia, Hungary and Ireland) were involved, and the International Press Institute of Vienna (Austria). It was supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. Shane O'Curry of the European Network Against Racism in Ireland was a key contributor to this, and has been working with NEAR FM as a guest on radio, advisor and partner on this project.

## 2. Station activities and outputs

As part of this project Near FM made contact with community groups and organisations that already work in the field to combat hate speech to form a Local Expert Committee (LEC) of people working in the field of:

- Migration and integration of migrant populations
- Media and media discourse (online and traditional)
- Religious and Ethnic Minorities
- Cultural diversity and attention to migrant populations.

The LEC assisted Near FM by supporting the local seminars in Dublin (in Spring 2017) to which Near FM invited journalists and organisations working in the field of migration, racism, integration, religious and ethnic minorities to develop the ethical code to combat hate speech, racist and xenophobic projections in the European media.

The LEC also advised and participated in the selection process of good practices which were uploaded in the interactive European map of Good Practices about Communication and Migrant Population and also gave input and recommendations for the finalisation of the ethical code.

The NEAR FM LEC included representatives from: European Network Against Racism; New Communities Partnership; NUI Maynooth; Pavee Point; Immigrant Council Ireland; No hate Speech Ireland; Akidwa; Trinity College Dublin and Irish Traveller Movement

The BAI (Broadcasting Authority Ireland) as well as the NUJ (National Union of Journalists) also participated in this project and were sent all material that was produced.

## 3. Benefit Generated

The project achieved the following results over its two year duration:

1. An 'Ethical Code' was created in relation to reporting on migration and minorities. This code presented a best practice approach and guidelines related to migration processes and ethnic and religious minorities in Europe.
2. Local seminars were organised in each of the participating countries, involving 20 journalists. These journalists received training on the Ethical Code. The seminar offered the opportunity for these journalists to work closely with 8 NGOs and experts. A set of recommendations were



produced, emerging from workshops and panel discussions. Near FM facilitated 3 such seminars in Dublin during 2019.

3. An online interactive map was developed highlighting best practices about communication and integration of migrant populations and minorities. 10 good practices per country were identified and published within the interactive map (including audio and some with video).
4. An international seminar was held in Brussels, bringing together experts from the partner organisations and other stakeholders. This conference allowed for the dissemination and discussion of the finalised Ethical Code. It also allowed for a showcasing of the results, outcomes and findings that had emerged from the participating countries.
5. A radio campaign was broadcast involving some 20 programmes of 30 minute duration from each of the 7 radio partners. These programmes focused on the central themes of the project. Sister radio stations in each country also broadcasted the content and programmes.

The project results led to important social benefits:

1. Establishment of a working group in Ireland that had as a key concern matters of ethical broadcasting, ensuring that community radio was taking a lead role.
2. Mapping of examples of good practice
3. Engagement with journalists in relation to this practice, encouraging dialogue and interaction through a series of seminars, both at local and international level
4. Dissemination of the results through sharing seminar results, Ethical Code and the wide range of programmes
5. Liaison with key stakeholders in Ireland through the BAI and national media interests

#### **4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits**

The programme content remains available through the NearFM and Respect Words project websites. This content continues to represent a unique and invaluable repository of insights and interviews with hidden voices from Irish society, including members of the Traveller and Roma Communities, people living in direct provision, asylum seekers, activists and advocates. This has been disseminated widely by the team and has been in turn used within youth centres and schools as a means of better understanding issues in relation to racism in Ireland.

All partners in the project have remained committed to disseminating the materials produced from the project. NearFM continues to receive requests from groups about the project materials. The Ethical Code has also been requested and downloaded from these sites since the project has been completed. Near Fm have continued to promote this as an important tool for journalists and those working in the media.

The LEC group however does not continue to meet in its current form, although the relationships that were developed during the project have allowed for ongoing contact in relation to these issues.

#### **5. Concluding Comments**

With its project motto 'Ethical Journalism against Hate Speech' the project successfully examined how media professionals present issues related to issues of migration and minorities. In a context whereby these key societal concerns are often treated with a lack of empathy and understanding, the project successfully involved more than 150 European media outlets and over 1300 journalists in the 8 partner countries.

In Ireland, Near Fm worked with a wide range of national and local NGOs and journalists to examine a framework and set of ethical guidelines to fight against hate speech. The emerging Ethical Code acts as a detailed resource for the NGOs themselves as well as journalists to highlight such issues as the use of terminology, accuracy in reporting and avoidance of sensationalist measures. The guidelines were developed in a consultative manner and shared widely through local and international seminars. A mapping exercise of good practice led to another useful resource.

A series of podcasts and programmes were developed giving voice to a wide range of marginalised groups and continues to act as a repository for NGOs, youth centres and schools interested in examining issues in relation to migration, discrimination and the lived experiences of marginalised communities in Ireland.

**Source:** Ciarán Murray, Near-FM

## 20. “Mature Voices” (Near FM)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>Through this project, groups within the community accessed a new space where they could get to know one another better, share experiences and insights. Through the training experience, they felt more creative and engaged</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
XX	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>Through the ongoing interaction and collaborative approach of the project, the group members increased their awareness of their neighbours and created programmes that would highlight these issues to the wider community.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
X	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced. <i>Evaluation feedback highlighted that participants felt more involved and accepted in their community</i>

### Summary

The Mature Voices project brought together community members who do not often mix or integrate in their daily lives. Through investment of Near FM expertise in the development and implementation of the project, groups of older people and members of migrant communities from the catchment area were supported to work together on developing programmes and content for broadcast. Through the project, the participants received training and upskilling and through the process, grew in confidence and creativity. Evaluation feedback highlighted that involvement in the project had increased their sense of belonging. In this way the community sense of identity and its cohesiveness are enhanced.

The resources developed through the project, specifically the podcasts, remain on the Near FM website in a focal point and receive downloads and new listeners on a regular basis.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

The Near FM catchment area has a high percentage of older people and also has a percentage of from migrant communities. The station has a strong integration ethos and one of supporting immigrant voices. The station has also a long track record of collaborating with local and national NGOs to support the inclusion of marginalised groups within content programming and in dissemination. Other projects in this regard include European initiatives working to challenge hate speech.

The Mature Voices project set out to challenge xenophobia, particularly with regard to ignorance within the community regarding the migration experience of people new to the area, as well as the experiences of these communities since coming to live in Ireland. The specific target group for this project was older people living in the community. It was felt that sometimes older people who may not have had an opportunity to meet immigrants, may hold opinions based only on second hand information.

## 2. Station activities and outputs

Training was provided in radio and media literacy to the group. They then worked across teams in order to produce their radio programmes.

A particular approach was adopted to promote this collaborative effort. For example, in the audio material programming, there was an interview with older people through the “Golden Years Club” located locally in the Belcamp Centre. It focuses on their memories of radio when they were young, and parts of the interviews were carried out by older migrants.

The thematic focus for the programmes was on experiences of living in the community. It was important for the programme that the interviews were not specifically about migration or similar political issues, but that people could be brought together talking about things they have in common.



## 3. Benefit Generated

The project worked successfully to bring together groups of people from within the community who do not get opportunities to meet and talk to one another. In receiving training regarding radio programming and recording, trainees and trainers worked proactively and opened up new spaces for engagement between community members. The podcasts were disseminated widely through Near FM’s website and all social media channels, receiving a very positive feedback from listeners.

At the presentation of certificates, there was full attendance of all participants. Indicating the close relationship that had developed over the project between trainees and trainers, as well as trainees receiving their certificates, trainers were presented with flowers and chocolates by the trainees.

Each participant filled in a feedback form (anonymously) after completion of the course. Most comments have been overwhelmingly positive. The following examples are indicative:

- *I would recommend this course. Amazing commitment and dedication from the Near FM crew. Inspiring. All the topics were relevant. Great guest speakers. The group of trainers and trainees were brilliant, all very interesting individuals. By far the best experience I had in a long time.*
- *This course has been a wonderful opportunity and please continue your wonderful course. My favourite part was interviewing and researching, it was a new world [to me]. I learned so*

*much and I want to continue. My least favourite part was the course ending, I wanted it to continue. I loved the group. I [also] loved looking for people to interview. I am very grateful to Debbie, Michael and George.*

- *My favourite part was meeting new people. Diverse, a good mix of personalities. [The course] was enjoyable and [brought me] outside my comfort zone.*
- *I would recommend the volunteer training course as it is a great vehicle for people to learn how to develop ideas for a radio show- at our own pace. We learned naturally and discovered naturally our own role - research, interview, presenting. This course is user friendly, many thanks to Debbie, George and Michael and especially my team.*

#### **4. The Future: Sustaining the benefits**

This project was funded by the Department of Justice and Equality, Office for the Promotion of Migration Integration with a budget of €5000. In order to repeat this initiative, Near FM would require similar levels of funding.

In their analysis of the project input requirements, Near FM would need to have access to trainers for up to 4 hours per week over the project duration. This level of trainer resourcing was critical to the success of the project and would need to be replicated in a future initiative. This was regarded as critical especially at the early outreach phase of the project in order to be able to build relationships and provide the right level of support to all participants. This support is wide-ranging, including technical direction, supervision, mentoring, training and development.

#### **5. Concluding Comments**

The Mature Voices project brought together community members who do not often mix or integrate. Through investment of NearFM expertise in the development and implementation of the project, groups of older people and members of migrant communities from the catchment area were supported to work together on developing programmes and content for broadcast. Through the project, the participants grew in confidence and creativity and evaluation feedback highlighted that it had increased their sense of belonging. In this way the community sense of identity and its cohesiveness are enhanced.

The resources developed through the project, specifically the podcasts, remain on the Near FM website in a focal point and receive downloads and new listeners on a regular basis.

To some extent Individuals and local groups are making more informed decisions in their daily lives, because they are more aware and informed about what is happening around their own community. And to some extent Individuals and local groups are responding more effectively to wider issues— integration and racism – originating from outside the community, because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints.

**Source:** Ciarán Murray, Near FM

## 21. “An Inspirational Voice for Disability” (Near FM)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
**	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>Through this training programme, groups of people with a disability are empowered to be able to present stories and experiences from their own lives. The community is thus able to hear their voice. The experience of Andrew demonstrates that there are progression pathways open and supported by the station.</i>
***	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence <i>Andrew’s experience through his initial training, train the trainer development, ongoing programming, European exchanges and public speaking, demonstrates the potential for other people in the community.</i>
**	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community <i>Through the ongoing relationship with the CRC, people with a disability are able to develop and broadcast content reflecting their own experiences and stories.</i>
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
*	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced. <i>Evaluation feedback highlighted that participants felt more involved and accepted in their community</i>

### Summary

A training programme developed to bring the voice of people with a disability to air was run on an annual basis, with support from the Near FM, the Central Remedial Clinic and BAI. Through this training, young adults with disabilities have been supported to develop content that is broadcast through the station.

One of these training participants has maintained a long term relationship with Near FM. Having graduated from this initial training, he has since availed of further “train the trainer” courses and is now actively involved, as a member of the Near FM training team, in delivering programmes for new cohorts from the CRC. He has also presented his own popular music programme for the station. He successfully applied for a place on the Community Employment scheme, where he spent four years, supporting other volunteers and community groups. Other important achievements include involvement in EU exchange projects, around adapting training for people with disabilities and presenting and speaking at international events in Spain and in the UK about his experience. Andrew is still broadcasting weekly with Near FM.

### 1. Context

Near FM has worked with the Central Remedial Clinic to ensure that the station is engaging with people with a disability living within its catchment area. The station has a strong history in ensuring an inclusive ethos and one of supporting all voices. The station has also a long track record of

collaborating with disability organisations to promote training and education within the station as well as programming and dissemination opportunities.

## 2. The Station activity, outputs and costs

A group of young adults with disabilities from the Central Remedial Clinic's (CRC) Rehabilitative Training centre together with Near FM came together to produce a series of radio programmes, entitled CRC Talks. A series of these CRC Talks have been successfully developed and broadcast. They have typically comprised of five 30 minute shows featuring the themes of youth, arts, culture, transport, access and employment from the perspectives and experiences of young adults with disabilities. The series have been produced between Near FM and CRC.

Training was provided in radio and media literacy to the group. They then worked across teams in order to produce their radio programmes.



## 3. Benefit Generated

One of the participants from these early training programmes has remained involved within the station since his initial contact. His story is considered a major success in relation to the range of training and outreach work carried out by the station. In his first engagement with the training programme, he was involved in producing a programme, which was broadcast.

After the initial training Andrew was keen to remain involved and he came back to do further training. He has since this time become a trainer himself and has followed this up by supporting newer trainees from the CRC in their own programme making.

Andrew then became part of the Near FM training team, and working with other trainers, trained the new trainees in studio skills and radio production. While still doing this, he applied for his own programme, a pop music programme. He then applied for a place on our Community Employment, where he spent four years, supporting other volunteers and community groups.

## 4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits

The success of Andrew's participation and development within Near FM has presented a clear pathway for other young people who have participated within the training programme.

As a trainer he also became involved in EU exchange projects, around adapting training for people with disabilities. Through this work, he spoke at events in Spain and in the UK about his experience. Andrew is still broadcasting weekly with Near FM, and has consistently raised issues of importance for people with a disability living within the community. He has also generated much focus on these themes through a range of interviews that he has conducted with key people within this sector, including representatives from the Irish Wheelchair Association youth service. Andrew has also received awards for his volunteering work.

## 5. Conclusion

A training programme developed to bring the voice of people with a disability to air has continued to be run on an annual basis, with support from the Near FM, the Central Remedial Clinic and BAI. Through this training, young adults with disabilities have been supported to develop content that is broadcast through the station. The station has accessed BAI funding to support this programme.

One of these training participants has maintained a long term relationship with Near FM. Having graduated from this initial training, he has since availed of further “train the trainer” courses and is now actively involved, as a member of the Near FM training team, in delivering programmes for new cohorts from the CRC. He has also presented his own popular music programme for the station. He successfully applied for a place on the Community Employment scheme, where he spent four years, supporting other volunteers and community groups. Other important achievements include involvement in EU exchange projects, around adapting training for people with disabilities and presenting and speaking at international events in Spain and in the UK about his experience. Andrew is still broadcasting weekly with Near FM.



## 22.A Place for Syrians (ROS FM)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XXX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>The six refugees taking part in the training gained significantly in skills, confidence and engagement with the Station and community. Two in particular went on to work further with the community's integration.</i>
XX	2. People's employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence All completed QQI level 3 qualification in broadcasting, and two have since entered college
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
X	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints <i>The programmes produced and broadcast discussed issues for refugees entering and engaging with a new community</i>
X	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>ROS fm worked with the Roscommon Resettlement Support worker of the LEADER programme, offering an excellent training opportunity and publicising further events</i>
XX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced <i>Through the experience and confidence gained, two Syrian refugees participated prominently in community events, bringing their unique experience to wider audiences. Discussions are underway to develop a series of programmes with new communities.</i>

### Summary

Six recently-arrived Syrian refugees completed a community radio training course in ROS FM in late 2018. For all of them the experience meant far more than gaining skills, including especially a greater sense of being a part of the community. Two have gone on to volunteer in other community areas, and have now entered college; and plans are in place in ROS FM to develop a set of programmes working with more new communities in County Roscommon.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Between July 2018 and December 2018, 20 Syrian families arrived in Roscommon as part of the government refugee resettlement programme. They varied greatly in background, age, skills and English language ability. Some had no English and limited Arabic literacy, others had a reasonable conversation level. They had lived through seven years of internal displacement, in camps, on the move, many experience extreme trauma. Five families were settled in Roscommon town, and the others outside.

Mena Doherty is the Roscommon Resettlement Support worker under LEADER, and has worked directly with them and a range of service providers. She is keenly aware of the challenge they face, although says that Roscommon people generally are extremely welcoming. "Their trauma shows in

different ways... being displaced for so long, being away from their own kind, not being part of their new community... these are immense challenges in relating to their new environment and even in claiming the services that everyone is entitled to.”

## 2. Station activities and outputs

Mena was aware of ROS fm (though she lives outside the catchment) and met with the Manager there. A proposal to engage in a community radio training course was discussed and agreed. Supported by Community Foundation Ireland (CFI) as part of their wider national programme, it came together quickly. In late 2018 six Syrian refugees (five men and one woman) – all already had some English and most were from Roscommon Town – successfully completed a six week QQI Level 3 Qualification in Radio Broadcasting. They completed the course in ROS fm, learning to operate the studio, to undertake interviews, to edit and to present.

ROS fm supports other events for the many new communities living in Roscommon. UNHCR in conjunction with Roscommon LEADER Partnership Resettlement Team organised a Food Fare on the 25<sup>th</sup> October in Roscommon Town where in excess of seven nationalities came and presented their national cuisines, which was well attended by Irish and others. ROS fm covered the event, interviewing participants and those attending, and is in the process of editing for a special programme to be broadcast soon.

## 3. The Benefit Generated

All six trainees feel that they benefited from the course, especially from a sense that they moved from being on the periphery, towards feeling part of the wider community. ROS fm offered a warm welcome and safe environment. Mena says: “I liaise with many services that interact with the refugees, but they often find it a challenge i.e. language and culture. With ROS fm, I never had to push them – they loved going there.”

Two younger participants in particular went on to further activities: Both enthusiastically committed to translating for future ROS FM courses and in future programmes. In addition:

- One went on to volunteer for the Youth Advisory Panel of Jigsaw locally. Both became involved, through Mena, in other LEADER activities, for instance in assisting in



the compilation and launch of an Information Book on services and places of interest in the county, called “From Home to Home”, in both Arabic and English. One also acted as MC for this event in King House Boyle in August 2019.

- To celebrate national Culture Day 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019, Roscommon LEADER Partnership with Castlerea Family Resource Centre and Roscommon County Council organised an evening of Music and Voice. One joined a panel discussion on their experiences of coming to Ireland. This event brought together many nationalities including Brazilian, Lithuanian and Russian, Syrian and others – and he proceeded to MC the rest of the event. Both are now studying in College.

Mena quotes what she heard from them: “I like this whole idea, being able to speak beyond the microphone, out there”. “It gave me awareness of the town around me, I didn’t feel so much on the fringes; I no longer felt we were imposing on the Town”. Mena believes that the community radio is “by the people, for the people, and has no commercial banner. The Syrian families can identify with it, because it is pure.” She regards the station as a “conduit of talent and ability, of different communities of people. It gives a voice to those who do not know that they could even have a voice, that it was possible”.

#### 4. Sustaining and replicating the benefits

Although ROS fm providing the facilities, without the funding from CFI, the training course would not have been possible.

Following the UNHCR event, Mena and the ROS FM Manager are discussing a series of programmes, using the skills of those trained. Each programme would feature people from a new community talking about their experience, what they felt when they arrived, the challenges and also the positive side and what they can offer. The idea is to raise awareness among the wider community of the reality for migrants and new arrivals and enhance a sense of belonging and mutual understanding.

While ROS FM can provide the basic resources, and Mena is ready to do her part, such a set of programmes will require a major effort from volunteers and modest funding for the minimum expenses involved in producing such a series to a high standard.

#### 5. Concluding Comment

Mena feels that ROS fm, and community radio in general, have huge potential in the area that she works i.e. in creating a safe and welcoming environment for refugees and other new communities, by offering opportunities to communicate with the local community and vice versa, and by building a wider sense of community between everyone.

**Source:** Mena Doherty, Roscommon Resettlement Support Worker, Roscommon LEADER Partnership.

## 23. Brothers of Charity, Roscommon (ROS fm)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging. <i>Several people with disabilities gained significantly in terms of confidence and skills, and empowerment, as a result of volunteering, including as a DJ, with ROS fm</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
XX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals Brothers of Charity in Roscommon and ROS fm have a mutually beneficial relationships; with BOC benefiting from publicising and promoting its activities and services, and ROS fm receiving practical support during its establishment and in access to premises.
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced.

### Summary

Brothers of Charity in Roscommon were involved in the setting up of Ross FM and, especially in the early years, worked with the Station in several ways to support their activities with people with intellectual disabilities. BOC staff appeared on the programme with other staff, and with clients, to talk about what they do, the types of services they offer in the county etc. The Station also enabled some clients to pursue their dream to be a radio presenter. They also publicised events and activities of BOC.

### 1. Context and Issues addressed

Brothers of Charity (BOC) Roscommon provides a range of services for people with intellectual disabilities, from mild to severe, including in-community residential support, in home respite, training etc.

Ross fm emerged from an earlier joint project involving many organisations across County Roscommon working in the area of disability. At some point, the idea of a radio station was put forward, and a number of enthusiasts ran with it and secured a license to broadcast. The Board included representatives from members of the earlier project.

More recently, the support relationship with BOC continues in that Ross FM rents a part of one of their premises at preferential rates. For several years also, support from Pobal enabled the Station to employ a manager and other staff, though this was discontinued over two years ago.

### 2. Station activities and outputs

Because of its background, from the earliest stages the Station placed a special emphasis on supporting people with disabilities. The BOC Social Work Team Leader, and other staff, frequently

requested and received airtime to talk about the range of BOC services, often in studio with another service staff member or client. Events and activities would also be advertised.

The Station also offered opportunities for clients to develop their media skills. For instance, a young man with cerebral palsy achieved his ambition of becoming a radio DJ in the station, with a regular music programme; and there were other cases.

### **3. The Benefit Generated**

For BOC, especially in the early years, ROS fm increased public awareness of the services available, and understanding of the work they do and of issues relating more broadly to intellectual disability.

The benefits for some of the volunteer broadcasters were immense, at a personal level, in terms of confidence building and skill development. The community, through listening to the programmes, were more sensitised to the fact that people with disabilities can fully develop their skills and talents.

### **4. The Future: Sustaining and replicating the benefits**

A challenge for Ross fm during this period was that working with some of the volunteers with disabilities requires a level and type of support that was not always available at the station, and so the service gradually fell away. A further issue was that the Pobal support for Ross FM came to an end, and the Station lost its paid staff. At the same time, volunteers are obliged to spend more time raising funds, leaving less time for supporting community participation in the Station.

**Source:** John Armstrong, Brothers of Charity

## 24. Merchants Quay: The Grumpy Old Men (Athlone Community Radio)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XXX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>Marginalised through homelessness and often addiction, this group grew in confidence and creativity, and gained a sense of belonging, through their shared learning experience and volunteering.</i>
XX	2. People's employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence <i>In addition to the training and general confidence building, several in the course continued on the third level college.</i>
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
XX	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals <i>This was a joint effort between the Athlone Community Radio and Merchant's Quay.</i>
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

In 2015 Athlone Community Radio delivered a QQI Level 3 *Media Expression* course to a group from the Merchants Quay homeless charity in Athlone. Eight from this original group progressed to a Level 4 in Community Radio in 2016 also run by the Station and then joined up as volunteers. They present their own radio programme, which involves researching, recording and editing a music programme. They work with staff and other volunteers from the Station, and feel valued members of the community organisation.

### 1. Context and issue addressed

Merchants Quay is an Irish homeless charity, which provide vital supports to people who are homeless, hungry and in addiction. Some of the people who use their service avail of a Community Employment scheme and the Scheme seeks training opportunities to help them develop skills. Most of the group will have dropped out of school at an early age because of their backgrounds and they feel that they need to take a small step to get back into education.

These participants were unskilled and needed an avenue where they could learn a new skill, feel valued and take part in a community organisation in a safe, friendly and caring environment. As some of the participants had not completed junior or leaving certificate, they were anxious about their voices, their spellings, their handwriting and their grammar.

### 2. Station activities and outputs

Working with the training team at the radio station the group was encouraged to have their voices heard, they were given support and encouragement to research, produce, record and edit a 30 min

long radio programme. They chose homelessness as their topic as they had all experienced homelessness in their lives. They also talked about the problems they had overcome and gave their “younger” selves words of wisdom while introducing a song that meant a lot to them. They worked on their projects over a 10 week period per each course.

Participants gained ten learning outcomes from the course, and they were given additional help and support with their reading, writing and spelling where necessary.

They produced a biweekly programme in teams of 4, one called *The Three Amigos* and the other *The Grumpy Old Men*. These programmes aired on alternative weeks for over a year until some of the participants were accepted for college places - they had gained so much confidence from their QQI Level 3 and Level 4 Courses they applied to college for different courses.

The remainder of the group continue in the Station each week, and broadcast their music programme under the title of “The Grumpy Old Men” every Monday morning on the community radio.

### 3. Benefit Generated

When they first arrived in 2015 they lacked confidence and self-esteem. Now they arrive in with confidence, obtain the key for the studio, set up the equipment, record their programme and file the running order. They are signed-up volunteers and they gave a talk recently to a new group of Level 4 students, telling them that it is the best decision they ever made to complete QQI Level 3 and Level 4 with the community radio.

They share their post on Facebook with pride every week and are delighted when their friends and colleagues tell them that they were tuned in to their programme on the community radio. This is what community radio can do for men who were struggling to find meaning in their lives, through our ethos of being all inclusive we have changed their lives and in turn the lives of their families. Sometimes we do not realise the impact community radio can have until we look at groups like these.

**Source:** Athlone Community Radio.

## 25. “Lions and Leprechauns” (Athlone Community Radio)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XXX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>Hundreds of children from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds gained confidence, and gained a heightened sense of belonging through the broadcasting of their stories.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
XX	7. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced <i>Hundreds of children, parents and the community shared in this multi-ethnic celebration of stories and storytelling throughout ACS the catchment area.</i>

### Summary

Our production ‘Lions and Leprechauns 1, 2 and 3’ had the active participation of more than 350 children from national schools who were reading their own stories. Most were rural schools from the area and Athlone Community Radio (ACR) brought equipment to the schools for the recordings of stories.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Children in primary schools have few opportunities to see radio production or to take part in one, and this was changed for about 350 children in the ACR catchment area, in three annual projects implemented with the support of the Sound and Vision Broadcasting Scheme.

### 2. Station activities and outputs

This series were completed over the course of three years. Twelve schools participated with different age groups and classes, altogether around 350 children. A technical team set up the equipment and four microphones in each school.

Each of the 18 programmes creating during this project involved two short stories told by professional storytellers, one African and one Irish folklore story. The African story was told by the girl from Zimbabwe in her traditional, colourful outfit; and she would do an African dance with the kids who just loved it. The Irish story was

Simmy Ndlovu does her piece





bilingual, recounted in Irish and English languages. After that, the children themselves took to the stage and read their original stories. These had been drafted and sent in advance so we could prepare sound effects (thunder, knock on the door). Some sound effects were made by other kids (laugh, knocking etc.).

The programmes were all broadcast throughout the area, to the delight of the children, parents and community.



Group of Students in Lions & Leprechauns

### 3. Benefit Generated

At the start of the recordings we anticipated that maybe 5 to 10 children from each class would be interested in storytelling. We were thrilled with that response – every child in the class wanted to be part of this programme. We had teachers approaching us to ask if we could record more kids and we said yes. So instead of the five programmes originally planned for Lions and Leprechauns 3, we produced seven. Reading the stories in front of the class and microphones, and taking active roles in the production, boosts their confidence and experience.

Raising awareness for community radio was especially positive as we were working with rural schools. Demand for the podcast of this programme was very high and the promotion was in the local newspapers and social media. All programmes could be easily reached on Mixcloud.

### 4. Conclusion

This major production was very big step for Athlone Community Radio. Nothing similar had been done in the primary schools on this scale, covering 350 voices and original stories.

Both community radio and the participants were making sure that the ancient art of storytelling in Ireland is still alive and well.

**Source:** Athlone Community Radio

## 26. Reaching out to Direct Provision Centres (Athlone Community Radio)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XXX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>Participants in the programme, among the most disadvantaged and marginalised people in Ireland, gained in confidence, learned skills and volunteered with the community.</i>
	2. People's employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
XX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced <i>Through the medium of radio and by telling personal stories, the wider community gained a deeper understanding of the situation of residents in direct provision.</i>

### Summary

Thirty one residents from two Direct Provision centres in our locality were feeling very isolated, especially one group from Horseleap in Moate. One of the biggest challenges they faced was lack of transport: they are 10 Kms from the nearest village and 30 Kms from the town of Athlone. ACR delivered QQI Level 3 Media Expression training, enabling the participants to use the studio and hand held recorder to make a programme under the umbrella of "Supporting the voices of marginalised groups" Since completing the course eight have joined as volunteers and taken part in programmes. They also travelled to Claremorris in Co. Mayo in summer of this year to receive their certificates.

### 1. Context and Issues addressed

Temple Accommodation centre and Lissywollen Direct Provision centre provide food and accommodation for the residents in the direct provision system while they wait to find out whether or not they will be allowed to legally remain in the country. They are from different countries and feel very isolated, and need the support of local organisation like the community radio to help break down these barriers.

Funded by the Community Foundation of Ireland (CFI) ACR delivered QQI Level 3 Media Expression to 24 Asylum Seekers in Temple Spa Direct Provision centre in Horseleap, Moate, Co. Westmeath and to six participants in Lissywollen Direct Provision centre in Athlone.

In Temple Spa, the first group of 15 successfully completed their course in November 2018 and the second group of 10 course in January of 2019. The Lissywollen group successfully completed their course in May of 2019.

Direct Provision centres are mostly run by private companies and while they offer food, shelter and a safe environment, the residents need more. The Centre residents identified their biggest challenges as lack of transport, the food served each day was repetitive and in some cases were not prepared in line with their religious beliefs, they feel isolated and want to meet their neighbours and to be accepted.

## 2. Station activities and outputs

A trainer with Athlone Community Radio delivered QQI Level 3 Media Expression training to 31 residents over a nine month period. During this time they were invited to visit the radio station and take part in live programmes. The mobile unit was brought out to the Direct Provision centres to facilitate the recording of their programmes.

The participants had to identify people in authority and invite them to take part in their programmes as part of the outcomes from the course. This gave them contacts in different areas and they were able to build on these meetings to register to vote in the local elections to lobby for and obtain an extra bus service laid on in response to their programme.

The participants worked together to record three one hour programmes entitled “The Indelible Plight of Direct Provision”, “Immigration Integration Challenges in Moate” and “Life in Direct Provision” These programmes were broadcast on Athlone Community Radio and we are offering them to other community radio stations throughout the country to broadcast.

## 3. Benefits and Conclusion

The participants feel empowered since they completed the course; they are now actively taking part as volunteers in organisations in Athlone. An example is St Hilda’s special school, the school caters for pupils aged between 4 and 18 years who are assessed with a moderate, severe or profound general learning disability.

**Source:** Athlone Community Radio

## 27. “Roller Coaster of a Radio Course” (Community Radio Youghal)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XXX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>This Story, largely narrated by one of 12 asylum seekers who completed a radio training course, clearly gained enormous confidence and a sense of belonging in Ireland</i>
X	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence <i>Course completion yields a QQI Level III certification.</i>
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced

### Summary

Asad Mahmud came to Ireland as an asylum seeker. While living in a Direct Provision Centre he and twelve others completed a radio course, during UCC’s Refugee week on 21<sup>st</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2019, run by Community Radio Youghal (CRY 104) FM). He enthusiastically described the impact on himself and the group of asylum seekers of learning to produce a programme and of hearing it broadcast in a highly articulate ten page testimony “Roller Coaster of a Radio Course”, complete with photographs.

### 1. Context and Issues addressed

UCC Asylum Week raises awareness and offers activities and practical assistance, and Youghal FM decided use the occasion to deliver a community radio training course specifically tailored to their needs and circumstances. It was run on the UCC Campus.

The Direct Provision system in Ireland has been heavily criticised in a number of ways, including the constraints imposed on everyday life of residents, such as a prohibition on seeking gainful employment (recently somewhat relaxed) and even on households preparing their own meals. Studies have shown that these can lead to a decline in the feeling of self-worth and sometime to serious depression especially for long-term residents.

### 2. Station activities and outputs

As part of Refugee Week celebration in UCC, Youghal Community Radio organised a five-day crash-course in radio production for twelve asylum seekers from around County Cork. Community Foundation for Ireland provided €4,000 in funding.

They learned how to do record Vox-Pops (in the Campus), to introduce and present topics, record programmes promos, undertake interviews, develop a running order, and create “intro”, “outro” and “Anchor” links – everything you need to produce and present a programme from scratch. The

five-day training was followed by a sixth day in CRY-FM's studio, where the various components were assembled and a panel discussion recorded and added.

Asad Mahmud at work



A radio programme was produced from the course entitled "Life In Limbo, Any Hope For The Future". It was broadcast by CRY 104 FM at 7.00pm on February 5<sup>th</sup>.

The evidence here is Assad testimony, written on his own initiative. For him the event was a welcome antidote to the experience of Direct Provision, though he was by no means embittered about the latter. He says:

"Today I am not gonna bore you with the discussion about Direct Provision and how to Improve it on the other hand I will try to make you a part of that beautiful and amazing experience which we had while learning an extensive Radio Course..."

He praised the trainers for developing skills he had no idea he could achieve:

"We were able to do an unscripted Panel Discussion with ease under the able and experienced supervision of Linda and Darragh".

His final description points strongly to the confidence and empowerment gained.

"During the week of Course, [as] I listened back to my own recordings, I was abhorred by my own voice frankly, It was nothing like very soothing and composed voices of anchor persons, I used to hear on Radio or TV. But believe me, the end result which came after editing was really amazing, I was sounding way better than I really am. The end result in the form of a programme aired on 5th February at 7 PM was really a beautiful programme, I was not abhorred this time to hear my voice on Radio, contrarily, i loved it."

His sense of belonging was also clearly enhanced:

"Representing all of my class fellows, here, I would love to thank Ireland. First of all, despite



dealing with various issues..., It's only because of Ireland and the good people of Ireland that we were able to earn this honour for ourselves to record our own Radio Programme."

Successful course completion also yields a QQI Level III certification.

### **3. Benefits and Conclusion**

With a modest, though essential, grant of €4,000, the radio course targeting Asylum Seekers generated strong immediate outcomes for the participants, certainly for Assad, in terms of new skills, boosting self-worth and confidence, and in countering some of the negative feelings towards Ireland and the community that inevitably accompany living in the Direct Provision system. Although his future remains uncertain, it seems likely that this has potential for long-term benefits, including the possibility of enhancing employment prospects.

**Sources:** Community Radio Youghal and Asad Mahmud.

## 28. Reaching the young LGBT Community (Liffey Sound)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>For Caitlin and James, producing this programme offers an opportunity to develop their creative skills, build confidence, skills and capacity, and experience a sense of belonging among the Station team.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
XX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced <i>The young LGBT community in Dublin has few collective media outlets to express their interests and build a sense of identity. This programme offers that.</i>

### Summary

This is a story of Caitlin and James, in Caitlin’s own words, who came to Liffey Sound and got a lot more than she was expecting, and now believes she can reach out to her community, the young LGBT community of Dublin.

### 1. Context and Issues addressed

Liffey Sound is a not for profit Community Radio service licensed to serve the community of Lucan and its environs. The Station is committed to serving its community irrespective of creed, class, colour or race, and to giving a voice to those not served by the mainstream broadcasting services. In the last 20 years, many different nationalities have moved to Lucan, and Liffey Sound endeavours to give them a voice.

The context for this specific story is the absence of any programme on mainstream radio discussing LGBT topics among young people.

### 2. Station activities and outputs

Caitlin Early came to Liffey Sound to do work experience as a transition year student. She then submitted a proposal to present a programme with James. This is her personal account of what it means to her:

“I first came to Liffey Sound when I was 16 years old. I was in transition year at the time, and I came to the station to do work experience with them. As a teenager unsure what career to pursue, or what exactly interested me, Liffey Sound offered an opportunity to challenge myself and to explore my own abilities by putting together an interview and an opinion piece of my own to be played on the radio.

“Almost two years later, James and I now present our own show, *Insert Title*, in which we discuss important topics and issues faced by young people today, in our own fun and light-hearted style. When we first wrote the proposal for our show, we both felt it was important to try to reach out to young people on the radio, and to try to establish a safe space for teenagers to tune in and hear popular topics discussed by people their own age.”

### 3. Benefit Generated

“We believe that, by offering this type of radio show in our area, we are enriching the community by inspiring young people to become more involved in the media, and in radio, specifically. We believe that its important and beneficial to discuss topics of this sort on the radio, in order to encourage young people to tune in and listen, even if it is just once a week. We believe that it is vital to introduce teenagers to the radio now, so that they can help bring radio into the future.

“We like to think that we are assisting this effort by making radio appealing to a younger audience. As well as that, we like to address a wide range of topics in our show such as school and college, politics, personal issues, mental health, and LGBT topics by making teenagers and young people feel less alone in their thoughts and in their feelings. We like to think that radio has helped us provide a beneficial insight into these issues and offer help to those who need it. We take pride in using our radio show to communicate our views and our message to a diverse group of people from different backgrounds.

“When I first began at Liffey Sound, I never could have imagined the positive effects and the benefits that it has supplied me with, and continues to supply me with today. Since the beginning of our show, James and I have both seen a noticeable increase in our confidence levels, as well as in our social skills, which have both supplied us with skills that we will have for the rest of our lives. We have become more capable, organised, and more in tune with and aware of the world around us. As for the feedback we have received at the station, all the volunteers and staff have treated us with nothing but kindness and generosity. The support system at Liffey Sound is one of the most rewarding attributes of volunteering there, as the warm atmosphere of the station makes it seem as though it's a second family.”

### 4. Conclusion

“The benefits of being involved with Liffey Sound have truly enriched our lives, and we like to think that these benefits have extended beyond just us, and into our community. It amazes me to think of what community radio stations, such as Liffey Sound, could do for other people if they opened up their ears and their hearts to it. James and I are willing to help them on that journey, and we know that every other volunteer at our station would say the same.

“We honestly believe that working in radio has opened new doors for our future, and has provided us with new skills and abilities that we will never undervalue or forget. More than anything, we love what we do and we look forward to participating in radio for many years to come.”

Caitlin and James have the potential to podcast their programme, thus reaching more young people.

**Sources:** Caitlin Early



## 29. A Programme for the African Community. (Liffey Sound)

	<b>Types of Social Benefit generated by this story</b>
XX	1. Individuals in the community, especially minorities and those marginalised, are growing in confidence and creativity, and/or reinforcing a sense of belonging <i>Manne has been welcomed into the station to reach out to his community of African origin and has found it immensely personally empowering.</i>
	2. People’s employment prospects are enhanced, through gaining skills and improved confidence
	3. Individuals are informed and aware of what is happening around their community
	4. Individuals are responding more effectively to issues—local to global—because they have access to more and better information and to diverse viewpoints
	5. Collective actors are facilitated, and reinforced in their capacity, to achieve their goals
XX	6. The community sense of identity and cohesiveness is enhanced <i>Manne is broadcasting a music and information programme targeting his community of young Africa people living in and around Ballyowen in Lucan.</i>

### Summary

It was difficult for Manne, who is from Africa, to connect with the local community, but he also wanted to promote his own community’s culture. Now he presents his own programme for the African community in and around Ballyowen, Lucan.

### 1. Context and social issue addressed

Liffey Sound is licensed to serve the community of Lucan and its environs. Committed to serving its community it tries to give a voice to those not served by the mainstream broadcasting services. In the last 20 years, many different nationalities have moved to Lucan, Liffey Sound endeavours to give them a voice. Manne Efinda found it difficult to connect with the local community, but he also wanted to promote his own community’s culture.

### 2. Station activities and outputs

The South Dublin Volunteer centre contacted the radio station about the case of Manne Efinda, and this subsequently led to Manne submitted a proposal to the station to present a programme.

This is his personal account of what it means to him.

“Volunteering with Liffey Sound FM community radio station as a Radio DJ is an amazing opportunity which has allowed me to be part of their wonderful vision.

“From the day I started doing my show, it’s been a fulfilling experience throughout. My radio programme caters for the African community living in and around Ballyowen, Lucan. Although my show aims to entertain my audience with the very best of African music, I use a twofold approach to introduce a topic that has two equally important segments

“I dedicate 60% of the programme on music and I also highlight the accomplishments of Artists (Past & Present) who have changed and continue to change the world of music.

The remaining 40% consists of an informative segment, to my audience, about the remarkable self-achievements of both young and old in the African Diaspora in the field of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Literature, Sports, and Arts etc.

I give most of my attention, when doing research for each of my shows, on African Achievers who continue to contribute greatly to the advancement of the world through modern medicine, technological innovation etc.”

### **3. Benefit Generated**

“This empowers me significantly to also double my efforts in making a difference in my community and hopefully across Ireland and the world over.

Without a doubt, Liffey Sound FM community radio station made it possible for me to establish links and promote our community culture and needs in the manner that established radio seldom does.

“I’m grateful and honoured to be joining the Liffey Sound FM family.

“Both the Station Manager as well as the Technical Support Officer have been very welcoming and so helpful which automatically allows a conducive atmosphere for self-expression and creativity.”

Manne is eager to have guests in on his programme and promote it on Facebook live.

**Source:** Manne