

Umoyo Wabwino: Using Radio Distance Learning to Support Community Health Workers in Malawi

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Overview of One Community

One Community is a five-year project that began in 2015 and is funded by PEPFAR through USAID Malawi. It is an integrated HIV project that aims to mitigate the impact of HIV and prevent new infections among targeted Malawian priority populations to enable them to achieve their maximum potential as

individuals and citizens of Malawi. One Community uses an array of community platforms to deliver targeted community health and social services to the most vulnerable populations and strengthens the capacity of local structures for sustainability.

The program is implemented by the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (CCP) in partnership with Plan International and Project HOPE. One Community works in seven districts in southern Malawi providing case management services to over 95,000 individuals infected and affected by HIV and HIV prevention activities to over 270,000 individuals.

Why Radio Distance Learning?

One Community provides health and social services to its priority audiences through low-literate volunteers called Community Resource Persons (CRPs), who are recruited, trained and deployed in all 7-program districts. CRPs need ongoing knowledge and skills building, as well as recognition and acceptance by the communities they serve. While One Community staff are able to provide some one-on-one support to over 2,700 CRPs, their numbers and geographic spread make this support inadequate.



One Community developed and broadcast a radio distance learning (RDL) program, Umoyo Wabwino, targeted primarily at CRPs to ensure that they receive ongoing knowledge and skills building support in a standardized manner. In addition to solving the problem of numbers and spread, the RDL reinforced and enhanced the work CRPs did and increased their standing and acceptance within their communities as resource persons.

Umoyo Wabwino Program

Key Facts

- Umoyo Wabwino means good health/life in Chichewa
- Aired from July 2017 until January 2018
- Twenty-six 30 minute episodes produced
- Aired on two national radio stations, Zodiac and Malawi Broadcasting Corp.

Episode Structure

- Two hosts welcome listeners and introduce the knowledge and skills topics
- Interview conducted on the health topic - Dr. Bambo Malata, a character for the program was interviewed about the health topic for that week, providing the key information
- Hosts ask two quiz questions based on the interview for CRPs to answer to themselves
- Musical break with a local song - written by local artists for this program and recorded to be played during this segment
- Drama was a continuous story that ran through all 26 episodes.
- Hosts review the skills that were demonstrated in the drama
- A preview of the next weeks topic was provided
- Hosts wrap up the episode by giving listeners an assignment based on the topics discussed that day.

Drama Storyline

The drama took place in the fictional village of Kwa-Chulu and centered around CRP Jackson Banda who was providing services to his community. The story line focused on initiation practices, specifically the fisi practice, where a man, the fisi, sleeps with young women in the community when they come of age. The intention was to bring awareness to the dangers of this practice and what communities could do to change it.

Listening Clubs

Listening groups of CRPs were set up and each group received a radio in order to listen each week. A facilitators guide was developed to discuss each episode and review the topics covered, allowing for further discussion and practice of the skills.

“The Umoyo Wabwino radio program has helped me a lot because at first I wasn’t aware of child protection laws but right now I know how to identify a child who is being abused through what I heard from Bambo Malata.”



“The program has helped me relate well with beneficiaries as I remember one beneficiary who refused counseling when I first approached him. However, after he heard the same messages through the radio he came back to me seeking counseling.”

“The Umoyo Wabwino radio program has helped me because earlier when we were starting our work many people did not take us seriously but later on when they too started listening to the radio program, many of them started coming to me to seek my support and many are now on ART treatment.”

	Topic Area	Knowledge	Skill
1	Introduction	How the series works, information on registration and certification	
2	90-90-90	Test and Start	Interpersonal communication (IPC) skills 1 – meeting and talking
3	Stigma and Discrimination	How stigma and discrimination affects HIV	IPC skills 2 – using good body language
4	HIV Risk Reduction	How beliefs and behaviours affect the spread of HIV	IPC skills 3 – open ended questions
5	HIV Risk Reduction	Gender based violence (GBV)	IPC skills 4 – reflect and summarize all IPC skills
6	Child protection	Understanding child protection	Moderating discussion in a family
7	Child protection	Forms of child abuse and neglect	Referral skills – conducting assessments
8	Child protection	Recognizing signs of child abuse	Counseling techniques
9	Child protection	Laws governing child rights in Malawi	Facilitating small group discussions
10	Feedback and Review	Review content presented so far, address listener comments and questions	
11	Parenting	Parents’ roles and responsibilities	Addressing resistance to change
12	Parenting	Discipline versus punishment	Moderating discussion in a family
13	Parenting	How to positively discipline a child	Demonstration of disciplining a child
14	AGYW	Safe environments for adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) (Go! Clubs)	Facilitating small group discussions
15	HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination	Ways to reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination among PLHIV	Addressing HV-related challenges faced by the family
16	PLHIV	Additional care and support for PLHIV	Referral skills – how to make a referral
17	HIV Testing	HIV Testing – community-based methods	Small group discussion
18	Feedback and Review	Review content presented so far, address listener comments and questions	
19	PLHIV	Benefits of disclosure	Disclosure counseling
20	PLHIV	How CRPs can support disclosure (PREP)	PREP demonstration
21	PLHIV	TB screening	Counseling skills
22	PLHIV	Recipe for positive living	Facilitating small group discussions
23	PLHIV	Five goals of ART therapy	Counseling skills
24	PLHIV	ART adherence issues	Referral skills – dealing with clients who are lost to follow up
25	PLHIV	Early infant diagnosis and PMTCT	Moderating discussion in a family
26	Summary/ Closing	Close the series with thanks, provide information on certification details, etc.	