



The Effects of Public Service Broadcasting on Rural Development: A Study of the Impact of Selected Programmes of Cross River Radio, Ikom and Four other Rural Areas

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Abstract

Broadcasting should not just inform, educate and entertain society. It should also influence the behaviour of persons. That is why the Nigerian Broadcasting Code describes broadcasting as “a most potent mass medium,” capable of reaching out to audiences simultaneously and availing man with the best means of information dissemination and reception, thereby enabling the individuals to share in, and to contribute to the best of their ability to the progress of the world around them. According to the Nigerian Broadcasting Code, “by means of broadcasting, every Nigerian is expected to partake of ideas and experiences, that will enrich their lives and help them to live in a complex, dynamic and humane society (4).” This means that broadcasting in Nigeria should not only influence societal values positively, it should also improve and strengthen the social, cultural, economic, political and technological values of the nation and indeed set agenda for the public good. The Broadcast Regulation in Nigeria also states that “broadcasting has been and continues to be a very potent catalyst for social mobilization and development” just as it is “a powerful instrument for positive change (109).”

Introduction

Moemeka posits that: “The part which radio plays in the transmission of information and culture is generally beyond question. It is the only medium of mass communication which makes

news of events and activities available to the widest possible audience in developing societies (42).” Thus, radio should feed the people with such information that is capable of making individuals and communities to re-adjust themselves in positive ways.

It is based on these postulations that this research has embarked upon this course essentially to find out whether or not there is any relationship between public service broadcasting such as Cross River Radio, Ikom and the rural development of those adjoining/catchment areas that receive and consume their programmes.

1. Statement of the Problem

According to Nwuneli, one of the challenges facing developing nations today in Sub-Saharan Africa is how to reach majority of the human population particularly, those in the rural areas, with information on development programmes on agriculture, health and family planning in order to improve their life-styles (103). This is particularly so because in the last three decades or so, successive governments in Nigeria have attempted severally to expose its citizens to socio-political programmes with widespread mass media implications with very little success (103). The poor results no doubt is due largely to the fact that most of the programmes have no known impact on the rural people because research was not done to monitor the effectiveness of the messages, just as some producers’ or broadcasting stations, especially public service broadcasting stations did not produce programmes that are very relevant to the targeted rural audience.

The problem of this research therefore is that the programmes of Cross River Radio Ikom, as a public service broadcasting station, do not seem to aid the process of rural development. This study therefore seeks investigated the effects of Cross River Radio, Ikom, as a public service broadcasting station to the development of the adjoining rural areas.

2. Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

The Effects of Public Service Broadcasting.....

1. Does the Cross River Radio Ikom broadcast sufficient rural Development Programmes to listeners within its catchment area?
2. Is there any relationship between the rural development programmes broadcast by the state towards development and the attitude of listeners in the rural communities?
3. Are there specific rural development programmes embarked upon by the communities as a result of a broadcast by the Cross River Radio Ikom?

3. Review of Major Concepts (Literature)

There are a number of concepts regarding broadcasting and development. A few will suffice. O'malley holds that the debate on public service broadcasting has been part of a wider contest over the structure and form of British Broadcasting which has intensified since the mid-1980s, reflecting a general shift in British cultural attitudes, as much as in economic practices, towards a market-based approach (3).

The groundbreaking study reported by Holland with the title "voices of the poor" is a clear depiction of this position. The study set out to listen to poor people's own voices on the experience of poverty. It took as its starting point, recognition that poor people's own views have rarely been part of the policy debate. The study noted that poor men and women are acutely aware of not having their voices heard, of their lack of information, and of their lack of contacts to access information. The study reports of how poor people across the world discuss how this puts them at a disadvantage in dealings with public agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), employers and traders. The results of the study have informed new thinking approaches precisely by showing how inclusion, access to voice and access to information can promote social cohesion and trust, enable informed citizen action and improve the effectiveness of development (28).

Senevipatne believes that public service broadcasting plays an irreplaceable role in providing citizens with information, education and entertainment, free of commercial influences, and enables each citizen to become a stakeholder in society, participating fully in the

life of the community to which they belong and actively involved in its organization and aims to serve all in the quest for the common good (11).

Empirical studies on Public Service Broadcasting and rural development are reviewed in the following works:

The first work considered is a research carried out by Mbuk Mboho and Nicholas S. Iwokwagh in 2006 on select radio programmes and adolescents' sexual behaviour in North-Central Nigeria (7). The research assessed the effectiveness of two selected radio programmes – “One thing at a time” and “radio diary” on adolescents' sexual behaviour in North Central Nigeria using a survey method. As it were, data were collected through interviews from a purposive sample of 120 respondents drawn from two Tiv speaking rural communities in Gboko Local Government Area and two Idoma speaking rural communities in Otukpo Local Government Area, among other areas. Results say that changing the behaviour of people can be a very difficult task. This was seen in the validity of the findings which showed that only 16.7% of the respondents positively changed their sexual behaviour as a result of information acquired from the selected programmes and concluded that there is a relatively low impact of the selected programmes on adolescents' sexual behaviour in north central Nigeria and recommended strong behavioural change component for the programme.

Another empirical reference in the survey, that was conducted by Sharon Murphy in 1978, where a survey of clustered sample of 497 people in eleven villages in Nsukka Local Government Area, were interviewed. The findings were that 37% of the respondents learnt about voter registration from radio, 4% learnt of it from newspapers and television combined, while interpersonal and other indirect means accounted for 23% and 36% respectively. Among those who eventually registered, 30% cited radio as a major influence on their decision to vote while 23% and 25% cited the councilors and village associations respectively (24).

Moemeka in 1989 did a survey to determine which of the seven media forms (social forums, town crier, village market, village school,

newspaper, radio and television) that villagers in the then Bendel State of Nigeria depended upon for their responses to three development projects – Operation Feed the Nation, Local Government Reforms and the Universal Free Primary Education. The result indicated that more than 80% of the respondents said that they first heard of the development projects on the radio, 15% from the newspaper. However, the reactions to the projects and subsequent messages were almost exclusively influenced by discussions and decisions that took place through face-to-face contacts (18).

4. Theoretical Framework

This research is based on four theories, including Social Responsibility Theory, Development Theory, Uses and Gratification Theory and Two Step Flow Hypothesis.

(a) Social Responsibility Theory

The social responsibility theory originated from the work of American-initiated Hutchins Commission (headed by Robert M. Hutchins) of 1947, which was a commission on freedom of the press. The emphasis of the Hutchins Commission was a free and responsible press. Social responsibility theory as it were, believes that freedom carries concomitant obligation. This means the press or media should accept and fulfill certain essential functions of mass communication. This theory applies to this research because the social responsibility theory compels the practitioner to seek to fulfill the essential functions of mass communication which includes educating the listening public on various issues, including issues relating to rural development.

(b) Development Media Theory

Development theory seems to have emerged in the second half of the 20th century and recognized the peculiar problems faced by the developing countries, especially in Africa and Asia, particularly the problems of illiteracy, tribal and religious loyalties. Mboho and Nwabueze posit that the Development media theory owes its origin to the findings of the UNESCO Commission of 1979 set up to research on communication problems and find the way out. The

main thrust of the theory is the position that the press constitutes powerful instruments, which can be used to achieve positive development in any society and views the media as agents of development which should not only report developmental issues or projects, but should activate the interests of the public towards such developmental projects.

(c) Uses and Gratification Theory

Uses and gratification theory explains media effects from the receiver/media consumption perspective. Afolarin explains that “the theory perceives the recipient as actively influencing the effect process, since he selectively chooses, attends to, perceives and retains the media messages on the basis of his/her needs, beliefs ... (65).” what this therefore means is that the receiver or listener exposes himself or herself discriminatingly to media content, he or she perceives has some utility value for him or her.

The core issues therefore as outlined by Katz et al are:

- (i) The audience member is largely responsible for media to meet needs.
- (ii) The audience of mass communication is active and goal-oriented and
- (iii) Media compete with other sources of need gratification and the individual chooses ways to satisfy needs (35).

This theory thus becomes relevant in this research because with it listeners will be able to say what programme (if any) on Cross River Radio, Ikom has been most relevant or useful to rural development and possibly make contributions or inputs to improve such programmes.

(d) Two-Step Flow Hypothesis:

This is one of the most popular media effects theories. The two-step flow model according to Wright emerged in 1940 when Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet conducted the first full-scale investigation of the effects of political mass communication in America. Their aim was to find out whether the mass media had immediate, direct and powerful effects (magic bullet) on the audience and their reaction. As it turned

out the study which covered 600 voters in Erie county Ohio, discovered that unlike in the previously acclaimed magic bullet theory, the mass media effects were minimal. Consequently, Lazarsfield and his colleagues developed the notion of a two-step flow of media messages, and that the audience has the ability to select and interpret media messages. Their conclusion was that messages filter through from the mass media to opinion leaders, peers or family, who then play vital roles in decisions that people make after being exposed to media messages. What the two-step flow therefore means is that the first step involves people who are relatively well informed because they are directly exposed to the media, radio, for instance, while the second step involves those who have less contact with the media or depend on others for information (266).

5. Methodology/Research Design

This research adopted the survey, analysis and oral interview methods for the purpose of inferring or drawing conclusions based on the samples. The survey method was particularly chosen because according to Smith, it is well suited to apply data analysis, just as it is a useful research tool for scholars who wish to explore theoretical as well as practical communications research problems (219). Other advantages of survey research as indicated by Tuckman include the fact that questionnaires are used by researchers to convert data into information, provide access to what is inside a person's head and enables the researcher to measure what a person knows, likes or dislikes and what a person thinks; apart from the fact that it is cost effective and time saving (78).

Oral interviews were also conducted for the purposes of reading qualitative conclusions.

7.1 Population of the Study

The area of study for this research is Ikom Local Government Area of Cross River State, where the Cross River Radio, Ikom is located. Ikom as a local government has a population of over 163,691 going by the last census conducted by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Although Ikom is made up of an urban, sub-urban and a rural area, it

is no doubt that the rural areas form the largest population of the local government. And despite the fact that Ikom as a local government area, has an urban area forming the local government, and inspite of the fact that Cross River Radio, Ikom is located at the urban area of the local government, it is no doubt that it is received across the length and breadth of the local government area and even beyond. This is why this study will centre on selected rural areas of Ikom local government area. The areas to focus on will include Akparabong, Adijinkpor, Ayugasa and Balep rural areas of the local government. The choices of these areas are based on the capacity to receive clear signals from Cross River Radio, Ikom and their status as rural settings.

7.2 Sample size/Sampling procedure

The sample for this study was drawn from 1,000 people from the four rural areas of Adijinkpor, Akparabong, Ayogasa and Balep. This means 250 people were involved in each of the four rural areas. The population of each of the four communities is estimated at between 2000 and 2500. Thus 250 persons were sampled per community so as to arrive at a reasonable percentage of the rural dwellers.

Three sampling techniques were adopted in this study. These are the stratified sampling method, the random sampling method and the systematic sampling method. The stratified sampling method was used to divide the four selected rural areas, gender, age and other social classes. The areas were numbered as follows – Akparabong (sample area 1) Adijinkpor (sample area 2) Ayugasa (sample area 3) and Balep (sample area 4). The random sampling method was used in picking the people that were interviewed and or filled the questionnaire in the four samples rural areas. This was done through random selection of compounds and administering the questionnaire on residents of those compounds. However the selection of compounds was done in such a way that there was spread across the length and breadth of each of the four sample areas. Thereafter the filled questionnaires and reports of interviews from the four sample areas and some of the officials of the radio station were collated and graded in percentages accordingly.

7.3 Research Instruments

This study made use of two key instruments in collecting data, a questionnaire and oral interviews. The reason the two methods were used was to give both the literate and illiterate rural dwellers and some staff of Cross River Radio the opportunity to express themselves freely and in the process do a proper assessment and or deal with the issues at stake. As many as 1,000 copies of questionnaires were produced and distributed for answers. Each questionnaire carried 18 questions. This was accompanied or followed-up with the oral interviews with some key staff of Cross River Radio, Ikom. This survey, in addition to oral interviews, was relied upon in drawing the conclusions.

7.4 Method of Data Analysis

The instruments collected from the respondents were analyzed using statistics and simple percentages and quantitative and qualitative analysis. Statistics is used because according to Dominic, it reduces data sets to allow for easier interpretations, especially as analysis of the information is easier if the data are organized in some meaningful way (233). This means that descriptive statistics will allow the researcher to take random data and organize them into some type of ordered fashion. On conclusion of the descriptive statistics, simple percentages were worked out to arrive at the final conclusion of the research results. Qualitative analysis was also employed in oral interviews before arriving at the conclusion of this research. It is important to state that the open-ended and closed-ended types of questions were adopted in this research questionnaire so as to enable respondents to sufficiently express themselves.

7.5 Data Presentation and Analysis

The researcher distributed a total of 1,000 (one thousand) questionnaires across four villages in Ikom Local Government Area – Adijinkpor, Akparabong, Ayugasa and Balep. Each questionnaire carried seventeen questions both closed and open-ended. Of the one thousand people sampled, eight hundred and fourteen were

males, while one hundred and eighty six were females. It should be noted that most females refused to participate in the exercise, on the excuse that either they do not have time to listen to radio or to fill the questionnaire. Out of the number, 372 were within the age bracket of 15 and 20, 452 were between 21 and 30 years old while 176 were 31 years and above.

TABLE 1: Showing four Sample areas and Questionnaire Distribution

Sample Areas	Name of Sample Area	Questionnaire Distribution
Sample Area 1	Adijinkpor	250
Sample Area 2	Akparabong	250
Sample Area 3	Ayugasa	250
Sample Area 4	Balep	250
Total	4	1000

Table 1: Shows the four Sample Areas that the survey was carried out, the names of the Sample Areas and the number of questionnaires distributed in each Sample Areas. Sample Area 1 is Adijinkpor, Sample Area 2 is Akparabong, Sample Area 3 is Ayugasa and Sample Area 4 is Balep. A total of 250 (two hundred and fifty) questionnaires were distributed in each of the four Sample Areas, making a total of 1000 (one thousand) questionnaires distributed in the four Sample Areas.

Table 2: Shows the responses according to gender, the frequency and percentage of listenership. The male gender recorded a frequency of 814, making 81.4%, while the female gender recorded a frequency of 186, making a total of 18.6%. This brings the total frequency to 1000 and a total percentage to 100%.

TABLE 2: Showing Responses to Question 1 (Gender)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	814	81.4%
Female	186	18.6%
Total	1000	100%

Table 3: Shows participation according to ages, frequency and percentages. Three age brackets were studied. Respondents between 15 and 20 years old recorded a frequency of 372, with a percentage of 37.2%. Respondents between the ages 21 and 30 years old recorded a frequency of 452, with a total percentage of 45.2%, while respondents from 30 years of age and above had a frequency of 176 totaling 17.6%. Again, the total frequency was 1000, while the total percentage was 100%.

Table 4: Shows responses on ownership of Radio sets. Thus, in response to the question: “Do you have a radio set? “Yes” or “No”. 584 ticked “Yes” while 416 ticked “No” adding up to 58.4% and 41.6% respectively for “Yes” and “No” thereby totaling 1000 respondents and making it 100%. However, only 452 people said they do listen regularly. On the question 6 “Do you have a favourite programme on Cross River Radio Ikom? 678 ticked

Table 5: Shows that a whopping 98% rural dwellers listen to Cross River radio, Ikom, while 0.2% say they do not listen to the station.

TABLE 3: Showing Responses to Question 2 (age bracket)

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percentage
Between 15 and 20 years old	372	37.2%
Between 21 and 30 years old	452	45.2%
31 years old and above	176	17.6%
Total	1000	100%

Table 6: Shows the rate of listenership, the frequency and percentage. From the table, 684 said they listen to radio regularly, which is 68.4% while 316, which is 31.6% said they do not listen regularly. The total frequency is 1000, while the percentage is 100%.

Table 7: Shows that 678 respondents, which is 67.8% said they have a favourite programme on Cross River Radio Ikom, while 322 which is 32.2% said they do not have.

Table 8: Shows ten selected programmes, the frequency of listenership and listenership percentage rating. As shown on the table “Positive Living” has a frequency of 174 with 17.4%, “Cocoa Village” has a frequency of 60, with 6.0%, “Age Grade” has 46, with 4.6%, “Development Control” has 26 with 2.6%, “Lets farm” has 14 with 1.4%, “Road Safety” has 12, with 1.2%, “People and Conservation” recorded a frequency of 6 and a percentage of 0.6%, “Radio Doctor” and “Child Survival” both have a frequency of 4 and a 0.4% each, while “Women Forum” is the least with a frequency of 2 and 0.2% rating.

TABLE 4: Showing Responses to Question 3 (ownership of radio sets)

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	584	58.4%
No	416	41.6%
Total	1000	100%

TABLE 5: Showing Responses to question 4 Do You Listen to Cross river radio, Ikom?

Yes	980	98.0%
No	20	0.2%

Table 9: Shows responses to the question 10 “Is there any rural development programme on Cross River Radio Ikom that you know?”. In this table responses for “Yes” are 386, a percentage of 38.6, while responses for “No” are 614, which is a percentage of 61.4, totaling 1000 responses which is 100%.

Table 10: Shows responses to question 12 “Has the programme helped you or your community to develop in any way?”. 420

respondents which is 42% said “Yes”, while 580 respondents which is 58% said “No”.

Table 11: Shows responses to question 13 “Have you ever discussed the benefits of the programme with other members of the community?”. Responses to “Yes” were 378 which is 37.8%, while responses to “No” were 622 which is 62.2%.

Table 12: Shows responses to question 14 “Do you listen to any other radio station apart from Cross River radio, Ikom?”. Responses to “Yes” were 648 which is 64.8% while responses to “No” were 352 which is 35.2%.

TABLE 6: Showing Responses to question 5 (“how often do you listen to Cross River Radio Ikom?”)

Listenership	Frequency	Percentage
Listen regularly	684	68.4%
Do not listen regularly	316	31.6%
Total	1000	100%

Table 13: Shows responses to question 15 “If yes, which one?” The responses were as follows: Ebonyi radio 424 (42.4%), Benue Radio 74 (7.4%), Enugu Radio 62 (6.2%), BBC 26 (2.6%), AKBC 22 (2.2%), Imo Radio 20 (2.0%) , CRBC Calabar 20 (2.0%).

Table 14: Shows responses to question 16 “Are there specific rural development projects embarked by the community as a result of a broadcast by Cross River Radio, Ikom?”. The responses to “Yes” were 265 which is 26.5%, while responses to “No” were 735 which is 73.5%.

Table 15: Shows responses to question 17 “Do you think Cross River Radio, Ikom, is doing enough to educate your community in rural development?”. The responses to “Yes” were 256 which is 25.6%, responses to “No” were 496 which is 49.6% while 248 which is 24.8% respondents were Indifferent.

TABLE 7: Showing Responses to Question 6: Do you have any Favourite programme on Cross River Radio Ikom?

Yes	678	67.8%
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No	322	32.2%
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TABLE 8: Showing Responses to Question 7 “if yes what is your favourite programme on Cross River radio Ikom?”

S/N	Name of Programme	Favourite Programme	Percentage Ranking
1.	Positive living	174	17.4%
2.	Cocoa village	60	6.0%
3.	Age grade	46	4.6%
4.	Development control	26	2.6%
5.	Lets farm	14	1.4%
6.	Road safety	12	1.2%
7.	People and conservation	6	0.6%
8.	Radio doctor	4	0.4%
9.	Child survival	4	0.4%
10.	Women forum	2	0.2%

TABLE 9: Shows Responses to Question 10: “Is there any rural Development Programme on Cross River Radio Ikom you know?”

Yes	386	38.6%
No	614	61.4%

TABLE 10 Shows Responses to Question 12: Has the programme helped you or your community to develop in any way?

Yes	420	42.0%
No	580	58.0%

TABLE 11: Showing Responses to Question 13: Have you ever discussed the benefit of the programme with other members of the community?

Yes	378	37.8%
No	622	62.2%

TABLE 12: Shows Responses to Question 14: Do you listen to any other radio station apart from Cross River Radio Station Ikom?

Yes	648	64.8%
No	352	35.2%

TABLE 13: Shows Responses to Question 13: “If Yes, which one?”

Stations	Respondents	Percentage
Ebonyi Radio	424	42.4%
Benue Radio	74	7.4%
Enugu Radio	62	6.2%
BBC	26	2.6%
AKBC	22	2.2%
Imo Radio	20	2.0%
CRBC Calabar	20	2.0%

TABLE 14: Showing Responses to Question 16: Are there Specific Rural Development Project Embarked upon by the Community as a result of a broadcast by Cross River Radio Ikom?

Yes	265	26.5%
No	735	73.5%

Table 15: Showing Responses to Question 17: Do you think Cross River Radio Ikom is doing enough to Educate your Community in Rural Development?

Yes	256	25.6%
No	496	49.6%
Indifferent	248	24.7%

8. Discussion of findings

From the analysis above, it shows that about 68.4 percent of the rural dwellers listen to Cross River Radio Ikom. However, of this percentage, only 38.6 percent listeners agreed that they know any rural development-related programmes on Cross River Radio Ikom, while a higher percentage, about 61.4 said they did not know of any. Ironically, 42 percent listeners said their programme of interest has helped their community to develop in one form or the other. However, only about 37.8 percent listeners admitted that they had

ever discussed the benefits of the programme they listened to on the Cross River Radio Ikom with other members of their communities. On the very crucial questions of whether the Cross River Radio Ikom was doing enough to educate the rural communities on rural development, only 25.6 percent said “Yes”, 49.6 percent said “No”, while 24.8 percent respondents were not sure of any specific answer of “Yes” or “No”. But there was a remarkable percentage improvement on the question as to whether there is any relationship between the Cross River Radio Ikom programmes and the attitudes or tendencies of listeners in rural communities. On this question 40.2 percent said “Yes”, while 59.8 percent said “No”. Out of the 1000 people sampled from the four areas, 814 were males, while 186 were females. Out of the 1000 people, 372 fell within the age bracket of 15 and 20 years, 452 within the age bracket of 21 and 30 years, while 176 were 31 years old and above.

Responses on radio set ownership showed that 584 had radio sets, while 416 did not own radio sets. Again from the 1000 samples 684 said they listen to radio regularly, while 316 say they do not listen to radio regularly. The other major findings is that out of the 1000 samples, 614 said they do not know any rural development programme on Cross River Radio, Ikom while 386 others said they knew of a rural development programme on CRBC Radio, Ikom. On whether CRBC Radio Ikom is doing enough to educate their communities on rural development, 496 said “No”, 256 said “Yes” while 248 were indifferent. Analysis of oral interviews also show that no particular targeted at rural development is run by the radio station.

9.0 Conclusion

From the findings and analyses of both the programmes of the Cross River Radio, Ikom and responses from 1,000 rural listeners, it is clear that although the Cross River Radio Ikom plays very significant roles in broadening the horizon of rural dwellers’ and helping them have access to general information, but it has not done enough to substantially promote or aid rural development through its programming. The conclusion therefore is that despite the fact that

Cross River Radio Ikom, as a public service broadcasting station, has stepped up general information dissemination, especially in rural areas, it cannot be said to have done enough to aid or promote rural development through its programmes. This is so because there are no clear-cut programmes on Cross River Radio, Ikom, specifically dedicated to or geared towards rural development and where some rural development related programmes exist the coverage or listenership is highly limited as they are broadcast in vernaculars thereby making it impossible for majority of the rural dwellers to understand and benefit from such programmes.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on conclusions drawn from findings from the study, the following recommendations are made by the researcher:

1. The Cross River Radio, Ikom, should introduce programmes specifically geared towards the promotion of rural development. In doing so, the station being a public service broadcasting station, should find ways of encouraging more ordinary people and grassroots leaders to take part, either as guests or contributors, as a means of carrying them along and getting them involved.
2. The rural development programmes when introduced, should be translated into pidgin or “broken” English in addition to various dialects as to enhance wider audience or listenership for greater effect.
3. There should be training and retraining of staff, especially staff of the programme and news departments on developmental communication, as this will sharpen their skills in this area of broadcasting
4. Field research should be embarked upon before coming up with any programme geared towards rural development as to know the needs and concerns of the rural areas and indeed take their interests into consideration in drawing radio programmes.
5. In order to overcome financial challenges in the production of such rural development-driven programmes, especially in view of the lean financial resources at the disposal of public service broadcasting stations such as Cross River Radio, Ikom, sponsorship could be sought from International

Development Agencies, NGO's and institutions or companies whose agenda are connected to rural development in general or specific rural development programmes.

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