

99.9 RUBEN FM, NOVEMBER- DECEMBER REPORT.

INTRODUCTION

99.9 Ruben FM, the very first Mukuru community Radio station was officially launched on Saturday 19th of November 2016. The community Radio station plays a big role in facilitating the exposure and efficiency of Ruben Centre's eight diverse programs revolving around our mission to offer quality education, health financial and social services to children and families in the Mukuru Community. The mission of the Radio station that carries a slogan' **unganisha jamii**' is to empower and unite the Mukuru Community and mission to offer quality, educative, informative and entertaining programs to Mukuru Community. The 2km Radio station is reaching a population over 600,000 people from Mukuru kwa Ruben, Mukuru Kwa Njenga, Mukuru Kayaba, Lunga Lunga, Imara Daima, Pipeline and some areas of Donholm.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Application for the very first community radio station began in 2012 when the application letter was first drafted and submitted to the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) which is currently known as Communications authority of Kenya (CAK).The application was however rejected due to legal issues which led to all applications that had been made by then to be revoked. Re-application for the radio station license was drafted in June 29, 2016.The broadcasting license was acquired in July 2016.Concurrently, application for funding was done and Planet Whiller foundation committed to fund the startup costs as well as sustainability costs for a period of one year. Ruben FM's station manager, producer, four presenters and a technician were hired to help in running of the radio station as well as to foresee the construction of the station and hiring of equipment.

A survey was done by Mukuru Youth Initiative (MUYI) which is a youth founded and youth led community-based organization focused on social and economic well-being of Mukuru youth to engage the community in acquiring the programing content for the radio based on what the community would want to listen to.

Ruben FM was finally launched on 19th of November with an aim of facilitating the exposure and efficiency of Ruben Centre's eight diverse programs revolving around its mission to offer quality education, health financial and social services to children and families in the Mukuru Community and help to educate the immediate community of Mukuru via the most popular and accessible form of media; radio. The turn up for the launch as well as the reception of Ruben FM when it first went on air was positive. The radio is up and running with live programs running.

However, the establishment of Ruben FM has not been without challenges with the major challenge being inadequate personnel for this young radio station which is currently run by a team of seven journalists. Other challenges include inadequate working space and unwillingness of the community to give information to journalists.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Application for broadcasting license

Application for the very first community radio station began in 2012 when the application letter was first drafted and submitted to the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) which is currently known as Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK). The application was however rejected due to legal issues which led to all applications that had been made by then to be revoked.

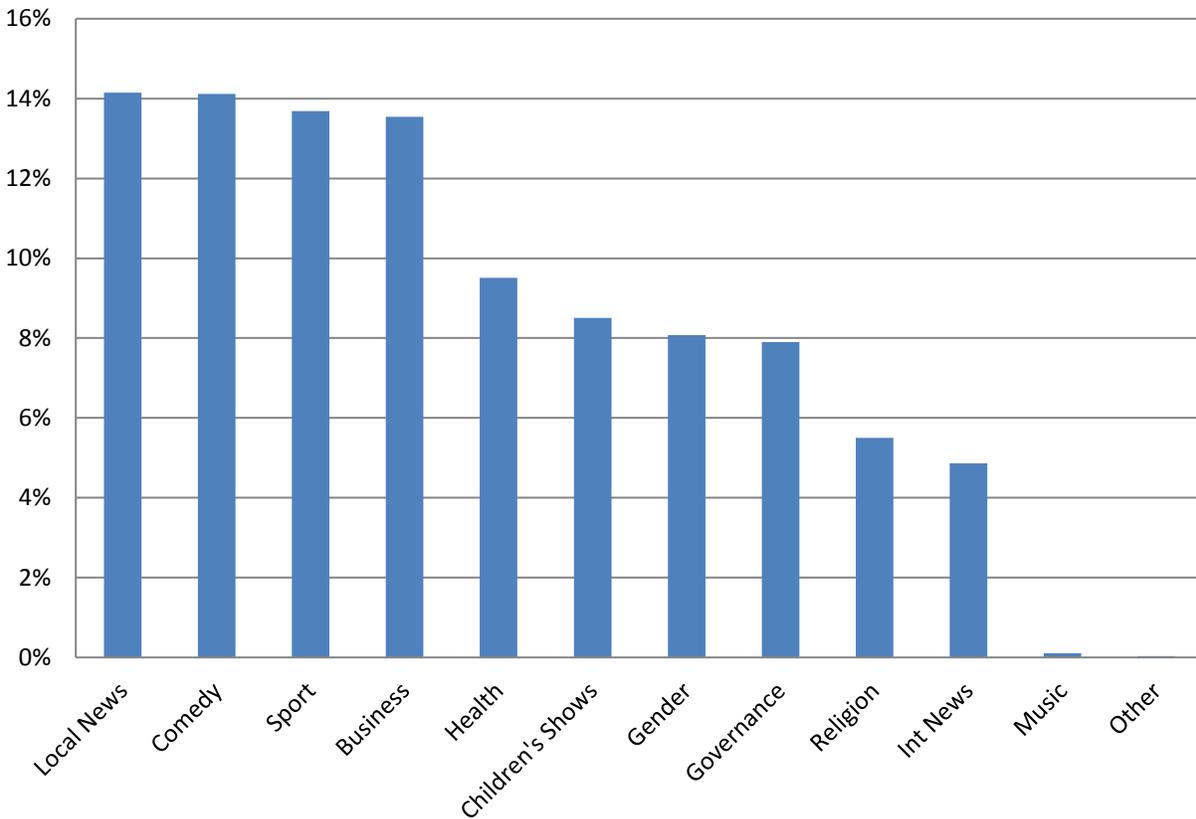


Re- application of the radio license was done on 29th June, 2016 and Ruben FM got a frequency to broadcast by the Communications Authority of Kenya {C.A.K} in July 2016. Some of the requirements that the Radio Station was supposed to meet before hitting the airwaves were hiring of professional journalists, to observe Media Council of Kenya's laws and ethics, purchasing radio equipment and preparing a program content draft for the Radio. Ruben FM met the above requirements and was officially given the frequency to broadcast live as from 19th November, 2016.

The Survey

Ruben FM in partnership with Mukuru Youth Initiative conducted a survey in the community to help engage the community in participating in planning of radio content for the radio station. During the survey that was conducted in Mukuru Kwa Ruben, Mukuru Kwa Njenga, Lunga lunga and Sinai areas, 1,000 people were reached. The Survey played a key role in giving creating the programs content based on the preference of the community and the issues they want the community radio station to address. The graph below summarizes some of the programs the community would want to listen to in order of preference.

What types of programs would you want to listen to?



Station manager and producer reporting

The station manager and producer reported on 5th October 2016 to help in management of the radio station after being successful in both practical and oral interviews that had been conducted by the organization's management and a hired qualified journalist from a qualified media house in Kenya.

Preparing a work plan

Being a Radio station that was in its initial stages of starting, the new leadership team was to come up with a work plan for the next three months to help in setting up the pace. A work plan was then prepared which included different activities, some of them being:

- ✚ Advertising for presenters' and technician position.
- ✚ Coming up with ways to promote Radio social media platforms
- ✚ Planning of the launching

- ✚ Preparing program content draft
- ✚ Getting sponsors for the Radio Launch

Studio construction

Studio soundproofing and setting up started on 10th October 2016 and was completed Mid November, thanks to our suppliers Karani, Boni and Phillip. It was done in various stages up to completion as per the agreement between them and Ruben Centre. Upon completion, the radio management team inspected the work done by the suppliers and wrote a letter to C.A.K to officially inspect the sound proofing and studio equipment.



Advertising for presenters and technician

Ruben FM management team advertised for the positions of four presenters and one technician who were to join Ruben FM in the month of November. We received seventy five applications from both qualified and non-qualified journalists within and outside Mukuru. The two major job requirements we were looking for were professionalism and work experience. We shortlisted twenty candidates for interviews at Ruben centre. The interview was both oral and practical with the practical interviews being held at Trans World Radio. The five successful candidates reported on 1st November 2016 with four of them being presenters and one Technician.

Planning the launch

Ruben FM's Radio launch was expected to be the biggest event of the year and so proper planning was to be done by various people. Ruben FM management team with our partners Mukuru Youth Initiative commenced the planning process on 9th October with the first meeting being held in Edmund Rice Room. Our initial budget was around sh. 254,000 and the team was to think outside the box to find ways of generating this amount of money. We approached different organizations to sponsor our launching and various organizations agreed to be part of us in launching Mukuru's new Community radio station. Our biggest sponsor was FRESH LIFE who happened to be also celebrating World Toilet Day on 19th November 2016; we had to push our launching from 18th to 19th November for a joint event with FRESH LIFE who took three quarters of the budget.

Launching partners

After making several trips to different organizations for sponsorship, we received positive response from some of them who agreed to generously support the launch. The organizations that sponsored the launch are:

- ✚ Fresh Life - took three quarters of the budget
- ✚ Muhindi Mweusi Supermarket – Donated sh. 10,000
- ✚ Tarpo – Donated tents for the launch
- ✚ Lea Toto – Donated sh. 15,000
- ✚ Unilever- Donated Life buoy soap as give aways
- ✚ Jubilee insurance

The launch event

Ruben FM launch took place on 19th November 2016. The event was presided by a caravan on 18th November which was done by Ruben FM team, Mukuru Youth Initiative and Fresh Life team. The areas visited were Imara Daima, Mukuru Kwa Njenga, Lunga lunga, Sinai, Kingstone, Mareba and Mukuru kwa Ruben. During the caravan, we gave out t shirts and soap to some of the residents in the areas visited.



The Launching day started with heavy rains up to around 11am delaying the event. Our two presenters Martin and Molly were in the studio that morning to help air the event and invite people to the event. The live show was very important as it helped see many people attending the launching later on that day .The event officially started at 11am after the rains. The guest

of honour Mr. Walter Mong'are flagged off the event by cutting the ribbon at Ruben fm studios with the help of Ruben Centre's Director. The event attracted many organizations and even other community radio stations. We had representatives from Pamoja FM, Mtaani Radio, Koch fm , Musyi fm and KBC. The event went on well and ended at around 5.30 pm with the station manager closing it officially and thanked everyone for making it a success. Our guest of honor Walter Mong'are helped us by ensuring that the event featured on KBC TV news on 20th November 2016.

Kicking off of the programs

Our programs officially kicked off on Sunday 20th November 2016. The first program to go live after the launching was 'Utukufu', a devotional program hosted by Martin Bunyali. The program was very interactive with over one hundred people calling in and sending messages which for us was very great as it is very difficult to get such interaction in a community radio station that is just starting. We introduced two programs, 'Changamka' and 'Mishemishe' later on that week

which were also received positively by Mukuru residents. After one week of live broadcast, we introduced the rest of the programs and we have seen positive impacts in the community through the programs. Currently there are ten continuity programs running weekly.

Paying of C.A.K licence fee

After completion of setting up the studio, the next step was to Invite C.A.K to inspect the studio equipment and give us the final approval before going live. Communication was made by the management to C.A.K inviting them to approve the equipment and they gave a go ahead and promised to make regular visits to Ruben FM to monitor compliance on the requirements. After being given the permission to hit the airwaves, a license fee of ksh.30, 000 was paid to C.A.K.

Role of Ruben FM in Advocacy

Ruben Centre's vision is an empowered and just Mukuru Community through Advocacy and Networking to transform unjust structures and improved infrastructure, safety, security habits and positive social change in disparities and inequalities that exist throughout the community. This is made possible through programs like Wangu Kanja Foundation, Lea Toto Foundation, Social Department and now Ruben FM through various radio programs.

The morning talk show program incorporates advocacy through Political discussions involving the political leaders, aspirants and community leaders whereby the community can engage them on development. The mid- morning show focuses on social issues of concern to the community such as family issues, child protection, human rights, social change, health education, gender based violence to try and bring change in the community. The afternoon program focuses on issues concerning the youth such as Drug and Drug Abuse, unemployment, talent nurturing and youth leadership to help empower and transform the lives of the youth in the community. The evening program is aired by a youth presenter born and brought up in Mukuru Community to help encourage all the community residents to believe in themselves and unite as a community.

Ruben FM has been incorporating advocacy through its programs to create a positive impact in the community.

- ✚ **Ruben FM spearheaded a campaign against gambling** which had emerged a very major issue among members of the community. Casinos were everywhere with women spending their time gambling in the casinos and forgetting their roles in the homes. Even school going children would hide tuition money or even steal from parents to get a few coins to gamble. Ruben FM intervened when a youth from Mukuru community was killed attempting to steal the gambling machines. Ruben FM involved local authorities majorly the local area chief and all the people running the gambling businesses were arrested and the machines destroyed. This was a great achievement for Ruben FM to reconcile the broken families due to gambling.

✚ **Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) voter registration campaign:** It is an election year in Kenya and the Radio has actively been involved in voter education in order to eliminate voter apathy in Mukuru by ensuring that voters are ready, willing, and able to participate in electoral politics. The Ruben FM has been giving different political aspirants from Mukuru a platform to sell their ideas to the residents so that they can determine the kind of leaders they want to have. These live interviews have given the community a deeper understanding of politics and the importance of them getting involved in electing their preferred leadership.

✚ **Crowd Funding Initiative:** The oasis of hope program was started to assist pupils from Ruben primary school who often come from very needy families' access secondary education after completion of their 10 years in primary school. The pupils who do well get scholarships to secure secondary education through the Oasis of hope. However, the Oasis of hope was experiencing financial challenges and therefore there were no funds for Secondary education scholarships. Ruben FM in partnership with Oasis of hope reached out to the Mukuru community to help in pulling resources together to educate their own.

A documentary on the impact of Oasis of Hope program was compiled and the project launched on 23rd of December. The response from the community was positive and they contributed as little as Ksh 50 towards the campaign. Ruben FM managed to Raise Kshs 10,000 through the campaign.

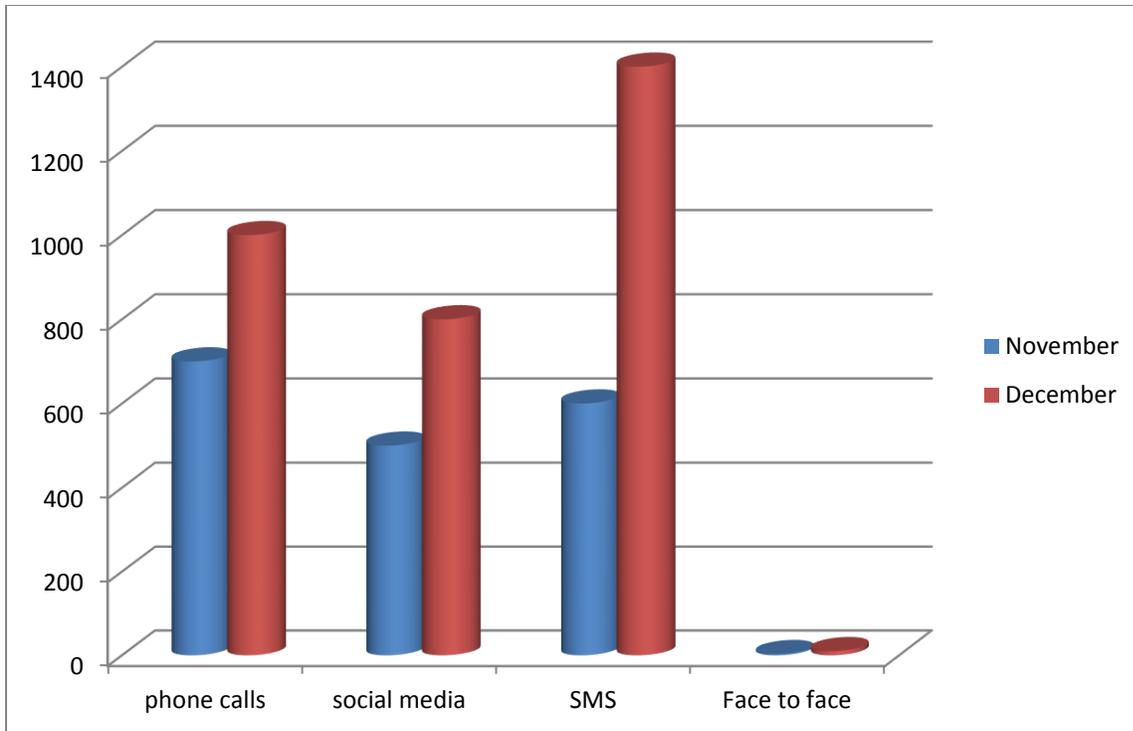
✚ The Ruben Centre clinic has utilized the Radio by talking on health issues which are affecting the community every Wednesday.

✚ The Human Development and Skills Training Program had an opportunity to advertise for the tailoring and dress making course intake 2017 through the Ruben FM radio and the turn up was very positive compared to other years. The HDST department coordinator has also been on the morning shows discussing issues on Relationships and other issues of concern to the Youths of Mukuru in an effort to bring social change in the community.

Statistics

Since its launching on 19th November 2016, Ruben FM has seen positive engagements from the community in our radio programs. This is gaged from the feedback acquired through social media platforms, phone calls, Short Messages (SMS) and face to face interactions with the community members. The program engagement daily is on an average of 1000 calls, 1400 SMS, 800 Facebook engagement and at least 10 people visiting the office daily which was slightly high compared to the first month of live broadcast which was November 2016.

Here is a graphical analysis on the statistical feedback.



The Radio Station was officially launched on 19th of November. The feedback got from the community through social media platforms, Phone Calls, SMS and One on one feedback where fans visit the Radio station to give their concerns was fairly good compared to other community Radio stations. The feedback has however gone up as indicated in the chart due to the following reasons:

- ✚ Increased listenership as Ruben FM continued to be known to the community
- ✚ More programs were added as the Radio station continued to stabilize.
- ✚ Incorporation of programs of interest to the community in line with the survey conducted

CHALLENGES

We have so far encountered a few challenges in our day- to –day activities. Some of them are:

- ✚ Inadequacy of personnel: Ruben FM started off with a team of seven journalists who are not adequate if we want to do comprehensive program which should run 24hours a day and 7 days a week. We are forced to bring in volunteers to try and ease the strain.
- ✚ Lack of enough working space: There is inadequate work space for the radio team since the production studio and live studio are always out of bound except for the presenters

who are running shows in the studios. This leaves the presenters in the manager's office which is inadequate for the work.

- ✚ Refusal of some residents to give information to our journalists- The Radio station relies on confidential information provided to them by the community especially in investigative journalism which sometimes is met with resistance from members of the community. Experts sometimes want to get paid before they can give Expertise information. This is a major challenge since local news is mostly given by the local community.
- ✚ Shortage of funds: Ruben FM is a non-commercial radio station which is striving to survive by reaching out to the business world in the community to sponsor the programs like the Children's show to keep the programs running. The news journalists need transport and other essentials to bring in adequate and relevant news to the station.

WAY FORWARD

Now that the programs have started well and the response from the community is very positive, this year we concentrate on getting partners to help in sustaining the radio programs. The station manager with the help of Ruben Centre's management have come up with proposals to different organizations to get partnerships and sponsors for various programs to help in making the radio station sustainable by overcoming financial constraints especially in the first year of the Radio station. Currently we are finalizing on partnership with Trans World Radio and Deutsche Welle {DW}. Most of the partners that we have approached so far is willing to partner through in kind sponsorship.

The radio team of seven is not enough to bring in up to date information and to run relevant programs 24hrs a day. We have conducted interviews for volunteers and interns who will add up to the team. The Volunteers will help in gathering of news items and running additional programs thus making it possible to run the station for 15 hours. STARTING MONDAY 6TH A THREE HOUR EVENING SHOW.

CONCLUSION

Generally the radio station has picked so well with a lot of positive response from the community. In just two months a lot of activities have taken place and a number of achievements realized. The radio has become a great tool of advocacy and networking in the community of Mukuru. Ruben FM is playing a big role in facilitating the exposure and efficiency of Ruben

Centre's eight diverse programs by hosting different departments in the live programs to shade light on different programs running in the Centre. Local artists especially the youths have also had a platform to express artistic talent through Ruben Fm. In long term, Ruben FM will seek to empower local community and facilitate change, social economic progress and better living conditions for the Mukuru community.

We welcome feedback and questions about this reports and also regarding potential ongoing future support.