

---

# FGM/C

---

/ ABANDONING  
FGM/C ON FM! /

---

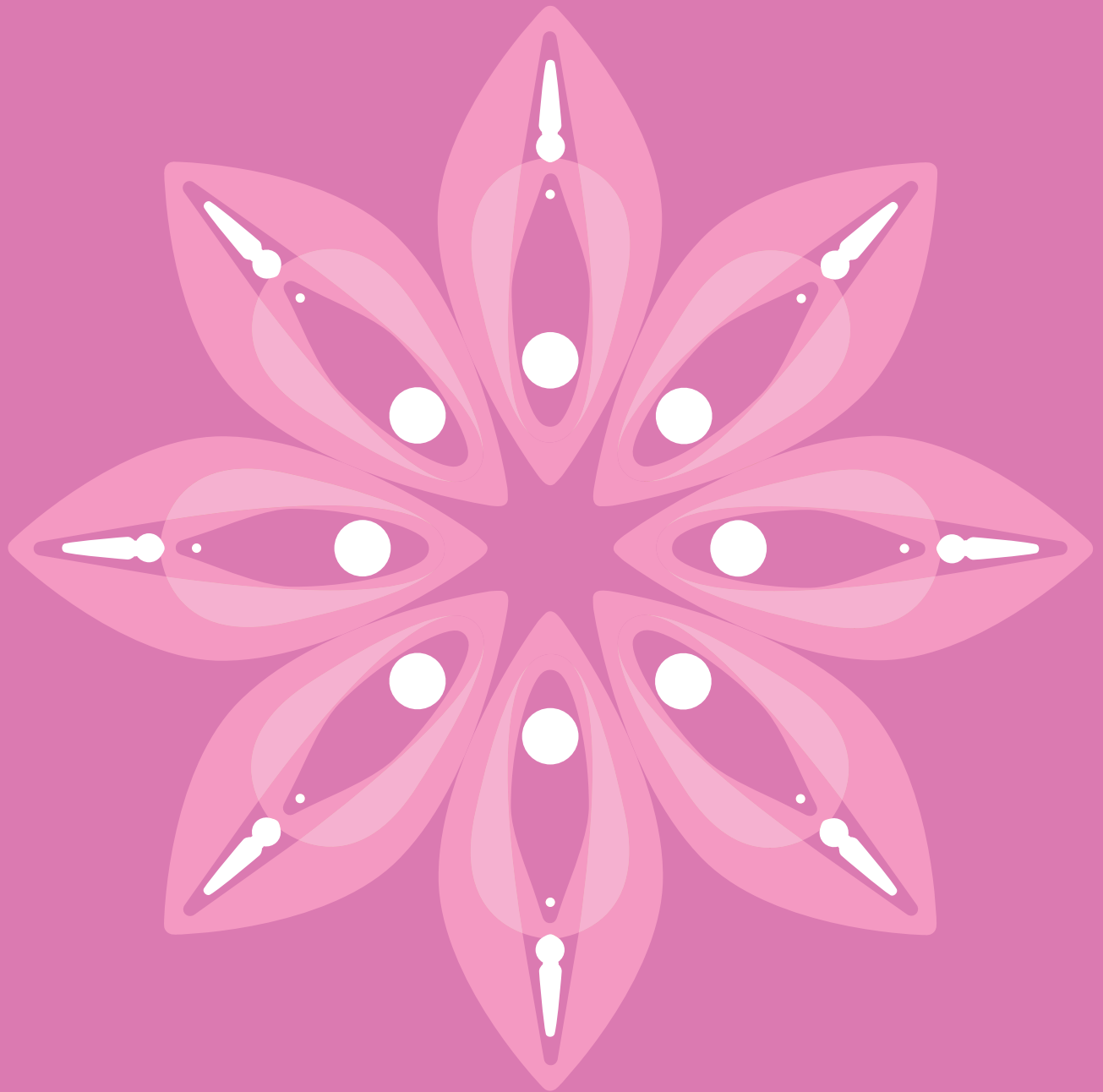
/ INNOVATIVE MEDIA TOOLS TO FOSTER  
THE ABANDONMENT OF FEMALE GENITAL  
MUTILATION/CUTTING /

---



/ AN INTRODUCTORY MANUAL /

/ A COLLABORATION BETWEEN  
// AIDOS - ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA  
DONNE PER LO SVILUPPO  
// AUDIODOC



---

## / CREDITS /

---

**Abandoning FGM/C on FM! Innovative media tools to foster the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting. An introductory manual** has been produced in the framework of the project “Abandoning female genital mutilation/cutting on FM!”, coordinated by AIDOS, Associazione italiana donne per lo sviluppo (The Italian association for women in development) and implemented in collaboration with Audiodoc, the Italian association of independent audio-documentarists. The project has been supported by UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, through the UNFPA-UNICEF UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting.

The project is part of the StopFGM/C! Campaign implemented by STREAM – Sharing technologies and resources for engaged and active media, a network of African NGOs coordinated by AIDOS and meant at improving media coverage to foster the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting.

---

Coordinator  
**Daniela Colombo / AIDOS**

Text  
**Jonathan Zenti / Audiodoc**

Contributions  
**Andrea Cocco, Annamaria Giordano,  
Elise Melot, Beatrice Rappo / Audiodoc**

Editing  
**Cristiana Scoppa / AIDOS**

Translation  
**Anna Formosa**

Research and documentation  
**Giovanna Ermini / AIDOS**

Conception and illustrations  
**Cristina Chiappini Studio**  
Clitotype Texture Mashup

**Giulia Flamini**

Page layout  
**Rossella Giordano**

Printing  
**Litostampa 3B**

Published by  
**AIDOS – Associazione italiana donne per lo sviluppo**

With the support of  
**UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund**

Through  
**UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital  
Mutilation/Cutting**

---



**/ AIDOS /** Associazione italiana donne per lo sviluppo  
Italian association for women in development

Via dei Giubbonari, 30  
00186 – Rome (Italy)  
Tel. +39 06 6873214/3196  
Fax. +39 06 6872549  
[aidos@aidos.it](mailto:aidos@aidos.it)  
[www.aidos.it](http://www.aidos.it)  
[www.stopfgmc.org](http://www.stopfgmc.org)

Rome, May 2013

---

Radio is the most accessible media in Africa. It is ever present in daily life, transmitting knowledge and sparking debate. The audio-documentaries, with their combination of spoken language, music and ambient sound, are a great tool for supporting the changes that are taking place due to the campaigns for the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting, a social norm that violates the rights of girls and women.

This training manual will guide radio journalists to produce audio-documentaries that can address the doubts and uncertainties that go with changes, exploring the available alternatives to female genital mutilation/cutting and the way in which those who have already abandoned the practice have dealt with the challenges of their new condition.

The manual was prepared to support workshops on the use of innovative radio formats to promote the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting, implemented by AIDOS, The Italian association for women in development, in partnership with Audiodoc, the Italian association of independent audio-documentarists, with the support of UNFPA through the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting.



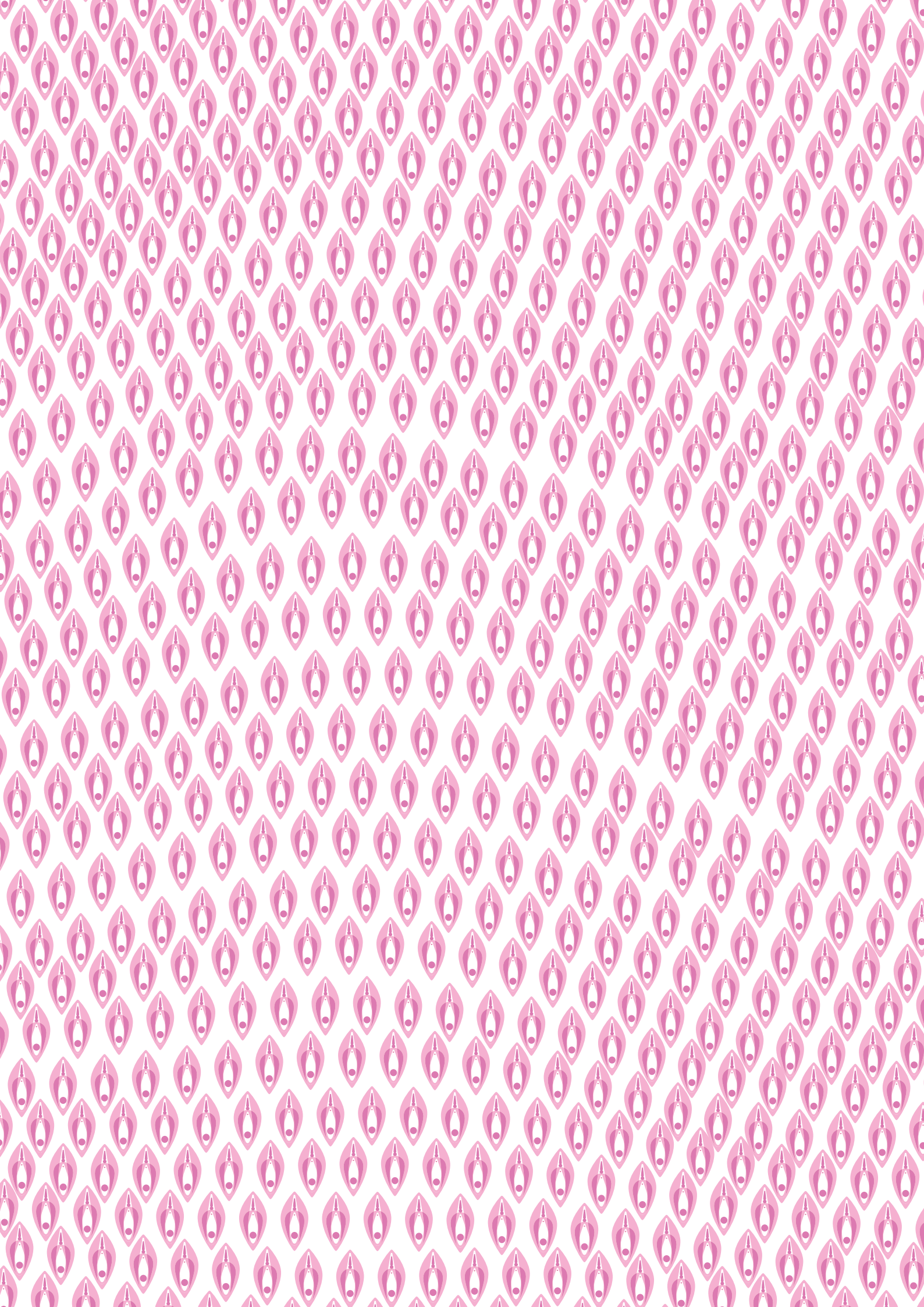
---

This manual has been produced with the support of the UNFPA - UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation / Cutting.



## / TABLE OF CONTENTS /

|                                                                                               |    |                                                             |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Foreword</b> by Daniela Colombo<br>AIDOS President                                         | 3  | 2.1.3 Foreground music                                      |    |
| <b>Introductory note</b><br>by Jonathan Zenti / Audiodoc                                      | 4  | 2.2 Ambient sounds                                          |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 2.2.1 The ambient sounds                                    |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 2.2.2 Silence                                               |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 2.3 The spoken word                                         |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 2.3.1 The word from archive documents                       |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 2.3.2 The interview: voices from the streets                |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 2.3.3 The interview with key informants                     |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 2.3.4 The interview with experts                            |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 2.3.5 Voice-over                                            |    |
| <b>I. THE RADIO AS A MEANS TO CHANGE<br/>SOCIAL NORMS</b>                                     | 7  |                                                             |    |
| <b>1. Talking about female genital<br/>mutilation/cutting today</b><br>by Cristiana Scoppa    | 8  |                                                             |    |
| <b>2. The radio as a tool for analysis<br/>and social change</b>                              | 10 |                                                             |    |
| 2.1 Putting things into context                                                               |    |                                                             |    |
| <b>3. The radio advertising campaign</b>                                                      | 11 |                                                             |    |
| 3.1 Advertising campaigns:<br>a short history analysis                                        |    |                                                             |    |
| 3.2 Possible interrelations<br>within the social context                                      |    |                                                             |    |
| 3.3 Meeting the objective by using<br>possible benefits from the interrelations               |    |                                                             |    |
| 3.4 The limits of advertising campaigns<br>in reducing the diffusion of FGM/C                 |    |                                                             |    |
| <b>4. The audio-documentary</b>                                                               | 13 |                                                             |    |
| 4.1 Analysis of the audio-documentary in the<br>context of communications                     |    |                                                             |    |
| 4.2 The audio-documentaries and the social context<br>of FGM/C                                |    |                                                             |    |
| 4.3 Meeting the objective by using possible benefits<br>from the interrelations               |    |                                                             |    |
| 4.4 The drawbacks in the use of audio-<br>documentaries in reducing the diffusion of<br>FGM/C |    |                                                             |    |
| 4.5 Forms and creativity                                                                      |    |                                                             |    |
| <b>II. PRACTICAL INDICATIONS</b>                                                              | 19 |                                                             |    |
| <b>1. The preparation of an audio-documentary<br/>aimed to social change</b>                  | 20 |                                                             |    |
| 1.1 From the target to the goal                                                               |    |                                                             |    |
| 1.2 Preliminary research                                                                      |    |                                                             |    |
| <b>2. The languages of the audio-documentary</b>                                              | 21 |                                                             |    |
| 2.1 Music                                                                                     |    |                                                             |    |
| 2.1.1 Theme music                                                                             |    |                                                             |    |
| 2.1.2 La musique de fond                                                                      |    |                                                             |    |
|                                                                                               |    | <b>BOX 1. Asking the right question</b>                     | 25 |
|                                                                                               |    | By Beatrice Rappo and Jonathan Zenti                        |    |
|                                                                                               |    | <b>3. Recording</b>                                         | 27 |
|                                                                                               |    | 3.1 Choosing a sound recorder                               |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 3.2 Choosing microphones                                    |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 3.3 Recording standards                                     |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 3.4 The headphones                                          |    |
|                                                                                               |    | <b>Box 2. Technical DR-100 fact sheet from<br/>Tascam R</b> | 27 |
|                                                                                               |    | <b>4. Editing and mixing</b>                                | 31 |
|                                                                                               |    | 4.1 Editing                                                 |    |
|                                                                                               |    | 4.2 Mixing                                                  |    |
|                                                                                               |    | <b>5. Tips and Tricks</b>                                   | 32 |
|                                                                                               |    | <b>6. Bibliography and linkography</b>                      | 33 |
|                                                                                               |    | <b>7. Footnotes</b>                                         | 34 |





## / FOREWORD /

This manual, produced as part of the project "Abandoning FGM/C on FM", continues AIDOS' work, in collaboration with Audiodoc, the first Italian association of independent authors of audio- documentaries. The work is based on the changing environment of female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C) to promote the abandonment of the practice through audio-documentaries and help bring innovative changes to radio broadcasts that address this problem.

The first step of this project, a training workshop, took place in Kenya, in 2010, with the participation of Kenyan, Tanzanian and Ethiopian radio journalists, and in collaboration with the women media associations of these countries (AMWIK in Kenya, TAMWA in Tanzania, and EMWA in Ethiopia). It is in this context that the first version of this manual was produced. The manual was later revised during a workshop organised in Ouagadougou, in 2011, for radio journalists from Burkina Faso and Mali, in collaboration with the NGOs Voix des Femmes and AMSOPT.

It is a manual aimed at radio professionals and it will first of all accompany the training workshop carried out as part of the project and help in understand the potential that has to make the radio, which is probably the most widespread and accessible media in Africa, even more effective in creating a cultural environment that can encourage the abandonment of this practice.

Audio-documentaries make it possible to capture - with the wealth of the background sounds that surround them - the voices of men and women, the parents of girls, grandmothers and young people who are already abandoning the practice. They also start off a dialogue between these voices and those of the persons who are still in doubt and support them with the voices of those who are actively engaged in promoting changes in behaviour. Thus, in a matter of a generation, listeners can appreciate the path taken towards the eradication of this practice, which is the goal of the UNFPA- UNICEF Joint programme on FGM/C, a path confirmed by the statistical data of the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) conducted in most African countries where this practice is widespread.

AIDOS has been working on FGM/C since 1986. The projects carried out by AIDOS in partnership with many African, European and Italian organisations have always placed the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting into the broadest framework of initiatives aimed at equality between men and women and the silent power dynamics between genders, at the human rights of women and girls and at health.

The media play a fundamental role in supporting and in enhancing changes towards a society where women and men can evolve to a level of equality, where women and girls can enjoy their human rights without encountering any risk for their health and wellbeing. In this world, female genital mutilation/cutting is not allowed citizenship.

It would be wonderful to soon hear on an audio-documentary broadcast the announcement that the last knife has been finally put down.

**Daniela Colombo**  
AIDOS President



## / INTRODUCTORY NOTE /

This small handbook is being written in a moment of geophysical transition as I am in Westlands, Nairobi, in the office of the President of AMWIK (Association of Media Women in Kenya) with bags and back-packs, waiting for my flight back to Italy. I'm also in a stage of mental transition, preparing a workshop on the use of audio-documentaries in the fight for the abandonment of the FGM/C practice, which will take place in Nairobi during the second half of September.

I'm on my way back to Italy after having spent 8 days in the chaotic capital of Kenya with Annamaria Giordano from Audiodoc, and Jane Thuo and Marceline Nyambala from AMWIK who were my unwavering guides. The first insight about this project came to Annamaria Giordano and Cristiana Scoppa from AIDOS and Andrea Giuseppini from Audiodoc. The idea was to prepare the workshop locally instead of doing it sitting at a desk in a Rome office, exchanging e-mails between Rome, Milan, Verona and Nairobi. This has enabled me to feel the pulse of the FGM/C issue in Kenya before running the workshop with Sara Zambotti from Audiodoc in September.

A few hours before leaving, I recall a few flashes from my Kenyan experience. For example, I remember arriving in the AMWIK offices on the day Alice Chae was supposed to give an interview. Alice Chae is an activist and journalist, involved in the issue of FGM/C, and is from the Kisii ethnic group, in which 90% of the girls are submitted to FGM/C. When introducing her to us, Marceline listed some biographical elements and discretely concluded: "She's a ... survivor?", looking into Alice's eyes for confirmation. Laughing warmly, she replied: "I'm not a survivor! I'm a victim!"

I also recall the interview I made with the gynaecologist Doctor Jardesa Guyo whom I ingenuously asked: "Maybe it's not your field, as a doctor, but do the men search for pleasure outside their marriage, with women not subjected to FGM?" He looked at me straight in the eye and answered: "Oh, that is my field!"

In these and dozens of other images, I came upon words that I wouldn't have found otherwise: survivor, victim, pleasure, sexuality, female orgasm, male

pleasure. Some of these words surfaced onto a clear slate and settled in. Other words I hadn't thought of but recognized at once, such as culture and religion: the cultural and religious motivations that justify the practice. As if "culture" were a chapter of the Genesis, or a permanently fixed natural element like the sun, the sea, the mountains, instead of a continuous motion and exchange, a combination of connections and interferences. I hear this type of assertion every day, even in Italy.

I started to see other words under a completely different light. I think of expressions like "take a bath". For me, taking a bath is part of the semantic field of total pleasure, of taking care of oneself, of wellbeing (economic wellbeing as well, as I can only afford an apartment with a small shower). Here in Kenya, however, the victims of infibulation are compelled to "take a bath" to prevent the bad smell generated by the "fistulas", that is the perforations produced between the vagina and the rectum because the foetus is unable to come out through the natural passageway. So, in my mind, taking a bath has completely new connotations.

The local preparation of the workshop has given great momentum and intensity to the research, as I have had to challenge my own position in relationship to the problems of FGM/C: as a man, as a European in Africa, as an Italian who grew up in a place where words like "tradition" and "culture" are used to define politics that I don't agree with, and finally as a person with great respect and affection towards female sexuality, be it anatomical, human or social. I believe that the participants will naturally approve of this need for an in depth analysis of this matter.

The final phase of transition I find myself immersed in is linked to my personal journey as an audio documentarist, trying not only to produce independent quality audio-documentaries, but also to search for and define a method that could confer an effective social function to communication media. This is why this manual is divided into two parts: part one is based on theoretical observations, and part two is an actual technical manual. In the theoretical part, there are many references to sociological and psychological writings: there is a great need to compensate for the absence of literature on radio-documentaries and, as explained at the beginning of the manual, sociologists and psychologists have shown great interest in the issue of female genital mutilation.

The theoretical factor is usually not considered in practical workshops on communication media, but I find it essential in order not to leave the students with a mass of technical notions and no plan or indication of possible trajectories. This method offers stimulating new horizons, but its procedures need to be defined to prevent getting lost in this new approach.

In Italy, where the media manage most of the social dynamics without being considered useless or invasive, it seems to me that the attempt to find a method for



effective means of communication used as social tools is a kind of “pleasant option”.

I have spent the past eight days in a context where the “urgency” is palpable, where an involvement in the movement against FGM/C means taking action (now, or as soon as possible) upon the physical health of women, in the hope that they may one day control their own lives or live their sexuality with the same freedom as men (whether they be African or not).

I am now convinced that there’s a way and that it must be developed. This is why I have asked that on the last day of the workshop, those who struggle every day on the front line for the abandonment of FGM/C hear the recordings. I want to have the opportunity to ask them whether the audio-documentaries and the promotion ads produced by the participants and the trainers might be useful in their fight to change the state of things. Even if there is only one “yes”, we will be able to say that our goal has been reached. Because our goal is to change an ancient culture. And culture does not refer to “yesterday” but to “tomorrow”.

**Jonathan Zenti**

**Audiodoc**

May 2010





I.

/ THE RADIO  
AS A MEANS  
TO CHANGE  
SOCIAL NORMS /

## 1.

/ TALKING ABOUT  
FEMALE GENITAL  
MUTILATION/CUTTING  
TODAY /

In recent years, “change in behaviours” has become synonymous of abandoning female genital mutilation/cutting “within communities that work in this field, not only in Africa. It is not easy to give up a practice that shaped the roles and cultural and ethnic identities over the centuries, a practice that is considered as an obligatory passage for marriage and, therefore, motherhood which is perpetuated as a social norm.

At the same time, the progress accomplished in relation to the equality of sexes and the rights of all people, especially those of women and girls, and the campaigns carried out over the last 30 years in almost all countries - African or not - where the practice exists, have raised a more critical examination of the tradition. A growing number of people question it and many families often decide discreetly not to subject their daughters to this operation.

To-day, female genital mutilation/cutting is recognised as a social norm: the abandonment of the practice is not necessarily an individual or a rational matter, but a choice influenced by a series of complex relational, psychological, social and emotive factors. The decision to submit a daughter to the practice might seem like a women's issue. In reality the opinion of men is an important influence, as well as that of the couples' families, the elders who transmit cultural values and traditional practices that form collective identity, and the entire extended community.

In addition to this, the practice of female genital mutilation, like any social convention, persists thanks to social dynamics that relate to the fact that people are convinced that this duty, imposed by society, must be carried out and that the abandonment of the practice would bring social sanctions and community marginalization. This feeling is aggravated by the fact that promoting the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting is often perceived as being a claim of “Western” cultural development models. It is important to create an environment that will contribute to change by divulging the transformations already carried out within society, and confronting the dilemmas of parents who do not know whether to admit to the ravages of the practice or respect the

traditions inherited by their ancestors. We need to offer them solutions based on experience and talk about those who have already abandoned the practice in order to help them resist social pressure and give up this convention.

All African countries, each in their own way, work towards abandoning FGM/C: by passing laws that prohibit the practice, by setting up national committees to promote the abandonment, and by supporting and promoting information campaigns. Locally, there are more and more community and non-governmental organisations challenging this practice. International organisations are also engaged, such as UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund and the WHO, World Health Organisation.

Today, girls are still likely to be victims of the practice especially in places where marriage is considered the safest way or the only way to ensure an “adequate” future and where one continues to believe that being cut ensures the best chances on the marriage markets. In many countries the excision of the clitoris, which guarantees fidelity during marriage and virginity before it, is still a necessary pre-requisite to be able to negotiate a good marriage and get a better price “for the bride.”

Is this really the case? If we continue to repeat to ourselves that this is the situation, are we contributing to keep things unchanged? Could it be the time to start telling a different story? A story that already exists around us. The story of families who have already decided not to submit their daughters to FGM. How many people will finally be able to recognise themselves in these examples? If we make this reality more visible, will it help to inspire others, so as to increase the number of mothers, fathers, grandmothers and girls who abandon this tradition, until it reaches a “critical mass”, which, according to social sciences is necessary to accelerate change and irreversibly modify the social rule?

It is increasingly necessary to show the substantial and constant changes that have already occurred in both rural and urban areas. Especially since they are confirmed by data collected by the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) carried out in several African countries over a period of 5/6 years. According to these data, there is a clear trend towards the abandonment of the practice: there is a reduction in the youngest age category, and an increasing number of men and women who are in favour of its abandonment. At the same time, there are other occurrences: for example, the practice is carried out at an increasingly lower age and traditional celebrations which for many ethnic groups emphasised the function of female circumcision as “the rite of passage” from childhood to adulthood, have completely disappeared under the pressure of urbanisation and changing life-styles. Thus, a powerful tool to alleviate some of the suffering

of this painful ordeal no longer exists; leaving the girls alone with a pain of which they do not understand the meaning.

Another important change relates to sexuality, a topic that is no longer such a taboo as it used to be, and that has strong implications in regards to female genital mutilation/cutting. We begin to recognise that cutting the clitoris does not entail the loss of sexual desire, which would have protected husbands from their wives having possible extra-marital relationships. However, the clitoris, the labia minora, or in the most severe form of FGM/C known as infibulation, which involves the cutting and suturing of the labia, severely limit the possibility for women to enjoy their sexuality, that in some cases, because of the scars and other sequelae, can be really painful. And that is the case, even if women do not talk about it, as they are educated and accustomed to bear all suffering, for fear of being regarded as "weak" or "not womanly enough".

As a Chadian woman said in the docu-fiction *Vite in cammino* (Lives in motion) produced by Cristina Mecci for AIDOS in 2009: "It is the brain that controls fidelity, not a part of the body that is cut!" The right to physical integrity is one of the fundamental human rights: sexuality, with the ability to feel pleasure during sexual intercourse, is completely affected.

It is, therefore, necessary to also address these aspects of FGM/C in communities in order to discourage those who have not abandoned the practice yet but may have questions, and show them they are able to offer their daughters a better future full of love, marriage, family life and wellbeing without having to submit them to genital mutilation.

In order to appeal to these feelings, we must keep in touch with emotions, facts and prejudices, values and ambitions of those responsible for the perpetuation of FGM/C: It is important to offer them the opportunity to work together, face to face, and talk with those who abandoned the practice and those who are actively involved in promoting the abandonment, in order to offer a new future perspective for their daughters. Radio is the most accessible form of media in Africa. It is present in everyday life; it imparts knowledge and creates discussion. Audio-documentaries, with their combination of spoken language, music and ambient sound are a very useful tool to support and help the changes made by the campaigns to fight for the abandonment of the practice of female genital mutilation/cutting. They address the doubts and uncertainties that accompany the change in progress, exploring alternatives to female genital mutilation/cutting and the challenges of the new condition of those who have already abandoned the practice.

The advertisement format is the shortest and the easiest to transmit. These ads can boost awareness: brevity and reiteration allow the message to creep into the minds of listeners, leaving them time to react, to choose, and possibly decide to act. But they do not

allow interaction, whereas an audio-documentary can be an opportunity to raise awareness, a deeper and more respectful conversation with the people being asked to give their opinion on the microphone.

Obviously, the media is not enough. But all African countries are reducing taboos relating to the practice through information and awareness campaigns, with some community projects sometimes attached to rites of passage that exclude the excision of the clitoris, with ceremonies where traditional practitioners deposit their knives, and public declaration where the whole village agrees to abandon this practice as well as early marriages.

The raising number of educated women and their increasingly important participation in political, economic and social affairs, the reaction to HIV infection, migration to other countries and the vast spread of mobile phones and mass communications are currently generating major social changes.

The project "Abandoning FGM/C on FM!" wants to focus on audio-documentaries as an innovative format to revive radio broadcasts on FGM/C in order to consolidate this trend and contribute to establishing a future where female genital mutilation/cutting will be a memory belonging to the past.

**Cristiana Scoppa**  
AIDOS

## 2.

## / THE RADIO AS A TOOL FOR ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL CHANGE /

In many areas of the planet where radio is the most widespread means of communication, sometimes the only means that the population can count on, it can undoubtedly become an important tool for cultural transformation, social progress, and political evolution.

Thanks to the use of radio by the NGOs that works in the field of media and by the United Nations agencies dealing with communication, important points were marked with regards to gender, health, the rights of minority groups, etc.

For example, a radio soap opera produced by the United Nations entitled "Soul City" has obtained great success, becoming a fundamental instrument for the spread of information on AIDS and the promotion of more responsible sexual behaviour among populations of South Africa. The NGO Internews has carried out programmes in Afghanistan and in Pakistan (and dozens of other "emerging democracies") on the rights of women, on the new Afghan constitution, on the education of children, etc. ... These broadcasts touch 300 million people every day and promote civil and political progress. Two radio dramas produced by PMC, Population Media Centre, on reproductive health have been for a long time at the head of the list of the ten most popular broadcasts in Ethiopia.

These are examples that we suggest should be followed in Abandoning FGM/C on FM! and we hope to achieve good results in continuing the struggle for the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting.

In the following pages you will find some brief information to get little more acquainted with the mechanisms of radio production and to acquire the basic skills to create good radio products for local radio broadcast.

## / 2.1 PUTTING THINGS INTO CONTEXT /

*"Radio is purely an apparatus for distribution, for mere sharing out. So here is a positive suggestion: change this apparatus over from distribution to communication. The*

*radio would be the finest possible communication apparatus in public life, a vast network of pipes. That is to say, it would be if it knew how to receive as well as to transmit, how to let the listener speak as well as hear, how to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him."* (1)

In 2008, AIDOS (Italian Association for Women in Development) asked Audiodoc (Italian association of independent authors of radio documentaries) to help them produce an audio documentary for the radio as part of a project for the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting in Burkina Faso. The first objective of the project was to contribute to the reduction of the diffusion rate of FGM/C in Burkina Faso. The association of radio documentarists was asked to participate in the process of resolving the FGM/C problem, be it in society, culture, health or psychology.

This is a new kind of request for a contemporary radio or audio-documentary journalist, accustomed to giving accounts of reality through the best possible use of available languages.

This new request originated from an organization that deals with social issues and whose work is based on the improvement of the condition of women. The journalist is not asked to be simply interesting, engaging and innovative but to be efficient in generating social change, which involves an expansion of his professional perspective. To fulfil this request, an interrelation must be established between the realm of mass media and the social, cultural, medical and psychological spheres.

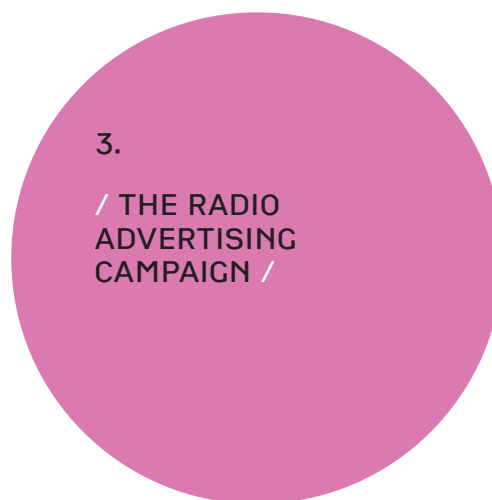
To many of the media workers such as journalists, writers, technicians, authors or producers, this request could provoke a deontological (2) crisis: their personal know-how is used only for commercial purposes (these medias are mostly used in advertisement), they have no way of being useful through their work as they are responsible for the technical aspect and have no access to contents.

Therefore, it is important to set foundations in such a way that an audio documentarist might fulfil his need to feel useful while being competent in his/her contribution to a social cause. AIDOS made a further request to Audiodoc that provided the occasion to set these foundations: to carry out a workshop involving radio journalists from Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia to train them on how to produce an advertisement campaign and some audio-documentaries that could help reduce the diffusion rate of the practice in their countries.

We now have the possibility to describe the interrelations, the meeting-points between two different grounds, the so-called "mass media" and the medical, social psychological fight against the practice.

In this manual, we will examine the advertising campaign and the audio-documentary and we will produce some examples during the workshop. For

each of the two products, we will try to identify their position in the “communications” world, analyze how to establish interrelations between the technical aspect and the social intervention, how to exploit these connections and where their drawbacks lay.



### **/ 3.1 ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS: A SHORT HISTORICAL ANALYSIS /**

The origins of the art of “promoting a product” probably coincides with the existence of man, forced to “promote” himself or to offer an irrefutable image of his experience in order to be able to reproduce. Without going through the whole history of mankind, we can skip directly to the “industrial revolution”, which in many ways still affects us.

In the context of communications, the industrial revolution has brought upon the possibility to technically reproduce a work of art or writing (3) . This process started with the invention of the printing press, which then led to lithography, photography, phonograph, cinema, television and to everything that is now transmitted through the internet and mobile telephones.

During the first industrial revolution, the promotion of a product was dependent on the product itself. The aim of the industry was to produce, on a wide scale and with moderate costs, objects considered essential to Western society. The fact that the product existed was already a promotion. People who never had the possibility of owning a new t-shirt would live a “promotional moment” simply by approaching a market stall full of affordable t-shirts.

Meanwhile, industry started to diversify the offer. When everyone had a t-shirt, it became inevitable to manufacture pants, then shoes, then socks, and so on, in all production fields. Barely one century later, the first industrial revolution had completed its task: by then, almost everyone in the Western world had access to the basic goods. Consequently, the industrial system felt the need to invest in innovation and diversification in order to keep the profit machine running. The development of innovation has been impetuous. They were no longer manufacturing “a t-shirt” but “a certain type of t-shirt, different from all the other t-shirts”. One of the problems of this new concept of industry was to understand how to convince a person who already owned a t-shirt, to now buy “a certain type” of

t-shirt. Having created this new demand, industrials were compelled to think not only about the product itself, but also about its potential buyer.

That's how marketing, design and publicity were born, systems that analyze and study ways to convince people to continue "buying" things they don't need. While the industry creates and produces objects, marketing and publicity produce objects buyers.

In time, the promotion of a product and the product itself are slowly diverging. It is now unusual to find an advertisement that really presents a product: in an ad for a t-shirt, you don't see a t-shirt. What you see is the buyer, the consumer, or else the misfortunes of those who don't buy. Regardless of the product.

### **/ 3.2 POSSIBLE INTERRELATIONS WITH THE SOCIAL CONTEXT /**

The effects of this historical process are obvious. Most of the products that surround us come from publicity. From what we drink (like Coca Cola, a global industrial product synonymous of modernity and cool lifestyle), to what we wear, to the computers we work with, and so on. When searching for a quality article, we must navigate the sea of hyped products.

When looking for the right drink, we first experiment with publicized drinks, easily recognizable and effortlessly found on the store shelf. Drinking that drink puts us in a "privileged" position, we become part of those who know how to choose and can afford that lifestyle, that cool lifestyle, as maintained by the advertisements.

From a social point of view, a person is viewed as a buyer. The person buys objects, always new ones, and uses them. The person is subject to constant one-sided media blitzes. Publicity is the quintessential use of "mass media" as a means of distribution; in fact, publicity is the biggest source of business in the communications market.

Advertising is one-sided and allows no "communication", no exchange. If an advertisement is wrong and deceptively promotes a product, there are no possibilities to interact in the same context, or within the mass media. The only possibility one has is to no longer buy that product, taking action at the economic level. An advertisement is fixed and non-negotiable. If, for example, an ad says: "If you don't use this t-shirt, people will no longer speak to you", there is no way to reply, it is impossible to alter the message. One can only believe or not believe that message. The number of those who believe (or don't) that message proportionally triggers social dynamics that can condition the relationship between people and ultimately change the social structure. If many people believe that with that t-shirt they will be more appreciated, and therefore

buy it and wear it, we will be surrounded by a certain number of people wearing that t-shirt.

These people will be motivated to interact within their social context according to the contents of the advertisement because they covet the promised "benefits" (the appreciation of others). There are two possible consequences: a certain number of people will be more willing to speak to someone wearing that t-shirt, but then if they don't, the person who bought it and wears it will be deceived.

### **/ 3.3 MEETING THE OBJECTIVE BY USING POSSIBLE BENEFITS FROM THE INTERRELATIONS /**

The analysis of the interrelations between contexts will enable us to locate entry points. The ads can be used to try to reduce the diffusion rate of FGM/C: we must simply establish parallels between our objective and the rules and conventions of advertising.

We must first settle on the product we need to sell in order to reach our goal, decide what our "t-shirt" is about: it could be, for example, "a society without FGM/C". Then we must create the "buyers", or people who want to live in a society without FGM/C. And then we will try to create a one-sided, non-negotiable message, such as "if you sustain FGM/C, no one will talk to you". The listeners will be unable to retort: their choices will be whether to believe it and change their lifestyle abandoning the practice, or not believe it and continue perpetrating it.

### **/ 3.4 THE LIMITS OF ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS IN REDUCING THE DIFFUSION OF FGM/C /**

A well-planned advertising campaign on the abandonment of FGM/C can reach quite a lot of people. By playing on their social position, on indirect involvement and responsibility, on the guilt-feeling for violating the right to health and physical integrity, or on how FGM/C are "out", many people can be reached and may start thinking about FGM/C in a different way, or start "believing" in the change promoted by the radio ad.

But the problem of those who "don't believe" remains. The one-sided structure of the ad drives those who have decided not to believe to other camps. They can decide not to think about it and ignore it, or continue with the practice motivated by the need to resist the message, comparable to the person who decides not to buy the t-shirt.

In the case of FGM/C in Kenya, this could happen to people who defend the practice maintaining that the fight against it is generated by a "Western occupation" whose goal is to wipe out local culture. They have no other way to interact with the message, so perpetrating



the practice becomes a means of “resistance” against Western interference. Therefore, the “non believer” becomes invisible, unreachable, just like his claims for “not believing” in our “product”, or in “a society without FGM/C”.



4.  
/ THE  
AUDIO-DOCUMENTARY /

/ 4.1 ANALYSIS OF THE AUDIO-DOCUMENTARY IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNICATIONS /

It is difficult to draw an account of the audio-documentary from its creation till now. Very little has been written globally on the subject, and it is often confounded with ethnomusicology and contemporary musicology.

One of the few certified definitions of the audio or radio-documentary is one from the Graduate School of Journalism of Columbia University: “At its best, a radio-documentary combines the power and immediacy of great documentary films with the intimacy and poetry of a New Yorker-style magazine piece.”

This definition is very appropriate, but too America-centric, making it hard to understand in countries where there is little diffusion of video-documentaries or no distribution of the New Yorker magazine. Until now, there is no universally shared definition of the audio-documentary. Those who approach this tool for the first time will not find a semantically well-defined context but one whose boundaries are vague and easily confused with other branches of artistic or media production.

It is possible to obtain a definition of the audio-documentary through the etymology of the term. If it was named like this, the linguistic elements of the term probably hold the key to its definition.

**Audio-documentary** is a composite term, which is formed by two complete lexical elements (that exist independently outside the composite term): “audio” and “documentary”

**Audio:** “of or for the transmission or reproduction of sound, from Latin audire, to hear.” (4) The use of audio as a prefix in composite terms indicates a connection with hearing or refers to acoustic perception. This indicates that the moment in which we want to enter in contact with the audio- documentary, we must keep in mind that the user will receive the message through

listening. We must therefore use a language that has been developed to be “heard”. The more precisely we choose the elements of that language, the deeper we will enter the “sound sphere”, a world made of elements of the sound “species.”

**The languages specific to the sound sphere are:**

**Music:** sound language (5) formed by voluntary sonorities, generated to be heard;

**Ambient sounds:** sounds extraneous to pure listening, that may be generated involuntarily (the sound of a motor: what interests us is the function of the motor and the sound is a side-effect) or voluntarily (the horn: uses sound, hence also the auditory canal, to call attention, but the intention is not one of pure listening) (6);

**Spoken word:** It is the system of vocal signs that enable ordinary language to be listened to, be it the rendering of thoughts, memories, writings (7) or experiences assimilated through other senses.

**Documentary:** is a confix, or composed term, formed of a root document and a suffix –ary. A suffix can adjectivate nouns (a beneficiary is he who receives a benefit), or it can be used to form a collective noun (a formulary is a collection of formulas). Document stems from the Latin *doceo*, which means “show, demonstrate”. A document shows something. A document is the proof of a fact, the element that demonstrates that something has taken place. So a documentary is a collection of elements, which aims not to catalogue but to show, to prove and to diffuse something that exists, something related to our daily lives, something real.

***In fact, a documentary produces knowledge based on reality. The documentarist is asked to document reality.***

From this short analysis, we can draw a primary legitimate definition of the audio-documentary.

***The audio documentary is a body of documents collected with the aim of producing a certain knowledge of reality, through a cognitive process that involves languages specific to the sound sphere such as music, ambient sounds and spoken words.***

The definition encircles the role of audio-documentaries within the frame of communications. Following the definition, one can produce an audio-documentary. But the basic requirement of our research is to establish a base upon which an audio-documentary can be used as a tool for social intervention. We must closely examine the different ways of conceiving reality in order to understand how to go about creating a documentary that will meet the request.

## / 4.2 THE AUDIO-DOCUMENTARIES AND THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF FGM/C /

Once we have established that *reality* is the object of the research for an audio-documentary, we must now specify how to go about that research, how to reach knowledge of reality.

In order to reflect on the approaches to knowledge, we need to refer to epistemology, which is “the theory of knowledge, esp. the critical study of its validity, methods, and scope.” (8)

Epistemological philosophy individuates **three levels of realism, each of which corresponds to a different “concept of reality”** involving different forms of knowledge, in accordance with what is assumed to be real.

**Monist realism (or ontological or “ingenuous” realism)** contemplates “given” reality, which exists independently of categories or of the process used to attain its knowledge. On this level, priority is given to the “observed” rather than to cognitive categories of the observer. On this level of realism, the scientific principles individuate the object and measure it with precision, in reference to objects that belong to an empirical-factual system. The observation becomes the mere photographic process of an existent reality, autonomous from the observation process itself.

In **hypothetical realism**, reality is postulated as existing, but remains un-knowable; it is however possible to create theories, construct hypothesis to “approach” it. So the map – or theory – is knowable, but the territory – or reality – is not.

In **conceptual realism**, reality does not exist ontologically, but is “built” from the categories of knowledge used to describe it as real or, vice versa, becomes real or “known” through the cognitive act of description. On this level of realism, consideration is not given to the contents – the “known” – but to the processes of constructing reality, or cognitive modes applied. Removing the cognitive map leaves no knowable territory: so it is not “reality” that is considered, but the “configurations of reality”. (9)

We can reassume this epistemological reflection with this chart:

|                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>monist realism</b>       | reality <b>is</b>              |
| <b>hypothetical realism</b> | reality <b>is according to</b> |
| <b>conceptual realism</b>   | reality <b>is known as</b>     |

Now that we have traced the cognitive paths of reality, we must put them into practice to create the documentary. As we asserted in the definition, ***“the audio-documentary is a body of documents collected with the aim of producing a certain knowledge of reality”***.

We must now define **how to collect the necessary documents**. Depending on what is collected and how it is presented, we can trace a different cognitive path of reality, or a different type of documentary.

Working on the **monist reality level**, we present reality as existent and define it as such. This is reality, this is the factual truth, and the demonstration will be based on the cognitive process. On this level of realism, documentaries are normally presented as **investigations** of a pre-established and defined reality. Using a metaphor to illustrate this, reality is like a stone thrown in a pond while we were turned the other way. Working in monist realism, we must say “this is the stone” and present documents that “prove” that a stone was thrown, and that this is the stone that was thrown.

they came about, describe them and suggest ways of transforming them or of creating others, regardless of what was thrown in the pond. Because the existence of those circles creates reality. With this type of documentary, we will not learn about reality but about the process of knowledge. (11)

Now that we have explained the different ways an audio documentary can investigate and depict “reality”, we can try to describe the different possible scenarios, keeping in mind that the aim of our documentary is to contribute in “reducing the rate of diffusion of FGM/C”. Let’s assume, for example, that we have been asked to document the “reality” of the relationship between men and the practice of FGM/C.

| LEVEL OF REALISM     | TYPE OF DOCUMENTARY        | METHOD OF PRODUCTION ACCORDING TO THE METAPHOR OF THE “STONE THROWN WHILE WE TURNED THE OTHER WAY” |
|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| monist realism       | investigations             | demonstrate which stone was thrown                                                                 |
| hypothetical realism | coverage                   | expose the circles created by the thrown stone                                                     |
| conceptual realism   | documentary as social tool | describe the circles on the pond’s surface                                                         |

Working on the **hypothetical reality level**, we show reality as existing but impossible to define. We can define aspects of reality only through the tools we use to present them. On this level of realism, documentaries are normally presented as **coverage**. In this cognitive map of reality, documents are not used to demonstrate reality, but to show aspects of reality. When creating coverage, we often collect “statements”, not reality itself but accounts of the effects produced by reality. Going back to our stone in the pond, the stone is not knowable because it has been thrown and ended up on the bottom of the pond, but we can try and define it by tracing a profile of the circles it created on the surface.

If we work on the level of **monist realism**, we will make an **investigation**. We will first need to establish what is real and in what terms. We could, for example, produce a documentary on the “responsibility of men in the perpetuation of the practice of FGM/C”. We have established that there is something to prove and have defined what we want to demonstrate (responsibility of men in the perpetuation of FGM/C). The collection of documents will be corroborative or confuting of what was defined as real. If the objective is to prove the existence of the “responsibility” of men in maintaining the practice, the documents confuting this theory will be discarded, or the traces that would lead in the opposite direction won’t be followed. Our aim is to focalize on demonstrating the “responsibility”.

Working on the **conceptual reality level**, we create **documentaries as social tools**, in which reality itself does not exist, but is constructed in the moment in which it is generated as reality. The collection of documents “is not proposed in terms of a “discovery” of reality, but as a description of the process that established it as such.” (10) The documents collected have no need to “demonstrate” an autonomous reality that exists without being observed. It is the observation that created the reality, so the documents are a mere “description” of how it was created. In this way, there is no hierarchy within the collection of documents (no document has more “value” than another because there is nothing to prove): they all acquire the same value because they describe the ways in which reality is constructed. All the documents and statements collected interact, and reality is formed through this interaction. Going back to our pond, we should look at the circle on the pond surface, understand how

If we work on the level of **hypothetical realism**, we will produce a **coverage**, keeping in mind that it will be impossible to identify and comprehensively define the basic reality of this research. We will get to experience it according to the collected documents and their classification. We will no longer talk about “responsibility” but of “the role of men in the perpetuation of the practice of FGM/C”. The collected documents will relate a “version” of reality that would vary if we had come upon different documents during our research. Repetitive elements will be discarded, or those elements too divergent from the others (not to prove anything but because on this level reality no longer needs to be defined).

If we work on the level of **conceptual realism**, we will produce a **documentary as a tool for social change**,

keeping in mind that there is no existing reality to be proven or to be researched. There are configurations of reality or ways in which reality is described or defined as such. The subject of our documentary will be “men and the perpetuation of the practice of FGM/C”. All the configurations and all the documents will be on the same level, there will be no need to make a selection based on what is more useful. Everything that is collected, or that is to be found on the documentarist’s path from the beginning to the end of the research, is part of the making. The documents will be presented, drawing attention to the way they developed as documents, regardless of their contents. Our perspective will be about “how” reality is configured.

#### / 4.3 MEETING THE OBJECTIVE BY USING POSSIBLE BENEFITS FROM THE INTERRELATIONS /

By examining these three possible types of documentary, we can make conjectures about their potential success or failure as a tool for social change.

The *investigation* is the most exploited and successful form of documentary. In television documentaries or in the film world, important directors like Michael Moore conduct investigations, claiming to bring out “hidden truths” or reveal the “factual truth”. They are all declarations of intent that have strong communicating powers, and are very reassuring for the public but are totally without foundation [12]. In an investigation, the emerging “truth” never attains an absolute level, but is always controversial and open to disagreement. The interesting part of investigations is not the conclusions they reach but the documents used as arguments. For example, if a documentarist researching the “responsibility of men in the perpetuation of FGM/C” reveal the amount of money involved in the clandestine practice of FGM/C, this fact becomes very relevant even if it doesn’t specifically refer to the “responsibility”.

The *coverage* doesn’t try to define “factual truth”, but “hovers around it”. The truth is “according to” someone or something. For this reason, many types of coverage are produced (travel coverage, historical coverage, etc...) Coverage makes a great use of testimonies to document the effects of reality. They are very useful in understanding the daily lives of the people affected by the question. It is a great instrument used to “give an insight” to those who are uninformed about the question. In our case, a coverage on the role of men in the perpetuation of the practice can be very useful to those who know little or nothing about FGM/C. The author of the documentary is familiar with the issue he is dealing with and illustrates it to the listeners with the support of the collected documents.

The *documentary as a tool for social change* does not deal with reality as such. It has no reality to demonstrate, or to explain. It is a collection of documents pertaining to a cognitive process. It is a compilation of testimonies, concealed microphone

recordings, presentations of laws and regulations, etc. Each element is given the necessary space to expose its definition of the relationship between men and FGM/C. The way the documents are connected will describe the process by which reality is configured as such. The author will also describe the process he/she went through while researching the configuration of reality. This way, author and listener will follow the same “path” from the beginning. This type of documentary offers a wider prospective as a social tool. There is no hierarchy between documents, they all have equal value. All the constituents, from the purchaser to the author, witnesses and listeners are directly involved as elements of the documented reality. Having established the fact that reality is constructed according to the way it is defined as such, and that interaction is a basis for cognition, this type of documentary is the only form that admits the possibility that reality is subject to change. Not only the documentarist, but also the medical, legal, psychological and social workers dealing with FGM/C will have the possibility to mediate on the processes of configuration of reality, changing “what is said” and thus reality itself.

#### / 4.4 THE DRAWBACKS IN THE USE OF AUDIO-DOCUMENTARIES IN REDUCING THE DIFFUSION OF FGM/C /

The main drawback is in the nature of the audio-documentary which was not conceived as a social tool. We have tried to describe different ways in which it could be effective in generating a change, but it cannot function alone. An author working on this use of the documentary must be concerned not only with the product, but of all the aspect that precede or follow its creation.

One possibility could be, for example, to get people who consider themselves “victims” involved in the creation of the documentary. Often, “victims” have developed a need for change, if not for themselves, for others who could find themselves in the same situation, and for future generations. By participating in the production, they can feel “useful” and prevent other people from enduring the same pain.

Should there be no involvement or interest in an issue raised by the documentary, it will be the author’s duty to suggest, in line with his/her competence, social intervention programs. Generally speaking, if a documentarist wants to be efficient in generating social change, he/she will have to take responsibility **for the creation and preservation of a network of resource persons** involving victims, witnesses, social workers, doctors, media technicians and all those who can generate change.

**The audio-documentarist can be as efficient as a social worker** only if he/she is part of a network. The creation of an audio documentary does not end with

the production of a sound file: the documentarist will have to create spaces where the contents of the documentary can be discussed. It is his responsibility to keep in touch with all that comes before and after the production of a documentary.

#### **/ 4.5 FORM AND CREATIVITY /**

This theoretical foreword has no intention of invalidating the creativity and the personal style of the authors, or of suggesting the creation of documentaries according to this or that criterion. On the contrary. It is an attempt to establish solid bases so that the authors may feel free and confident to use these different languages.





II.

/ PRACTICAL  
INDICATIONS /

## 1.

## / THE PREPARATION OF AN AUDIO-DOCUMENTARY AIMED AT SOCIAL CHANGE /

In order to create a sound product, be it an advertising campaign or an audio documentary, different procedures can be used, according to the sensibility or technical skills of the author. A great variety of material has been written on the subject: most authors describe their personal working process, exposing the practical features of their approach. In the next chapter, we will illustrate and suggest the techniques that we found most effective for the creation of audio documentaries intended for social mobilization, and that correspond with the first part of this manual.

### / 1.1 FROM THE TARGET TO THE GOAL /

When producing radio contents, one of the first things editors and producers demand is to “identify the target”, a practice that has become part of the radio world through osmosis with advertisement.

“The identification of a target” is the first step in creating radio contents, and the basis on which to draw the characteristics of a “format”, that is a radio product with specific features. The **“target” is the segment of hypothetical public to be reached by the product**, be it advertisement or radio program. This permeation is effective if we consider radio as a tool for entertainment or for commercial uses (13), but becomes a problem when attempting to expand the product into a context of social intervention.

When conceiving a documentary, we must think of the **possible consequences** brought about by the arguments and the story we plan to include in the debate. When we identify a target, or a hypothetical public, we exclude all the other potential listeners. This entails a lack of cohesion with the social context within which we have chosen to work. When we are confronted with an issue, we must keep in mind that the elements of the issue are closely linked to the context from which it stemmed, and the elements of the context contribute in creating the issue. If we define a slice of potential listeners, we leave out all the other slices, and trigger secondary issues.

Let’s take for example a possible audio documentary on FGM/C: if we decide that the documentary should refer to a “young public”, the selected documents and testimonies, the music and the spoken language will be enticing to young listeners. However, this alternative excludes the victims of FGM/C who are no longer young. Furthermore, we would bring to light only models or references we suppose will appeal to a young public, but they might be misunderstood or misjudged by more mature listeners.

Another consequence that must not be underestimated is that a generational prejudice could be created: should the documentary be efficient with a young public, it might be deleterious to an older public who might label the anti-FGM/C arguments as “kids’ stuff”. We must also keep in mind that those “youngsters” were brought up and educated by their parents and grandparents, and these bonds must not be ignored.

Hence it is necessary to avoid using the target as hypothetical selection of the public: the issue stems from a context and the documentary must be introduced into that context. All the elements of the context are possible documents on which to work, and anyone can be a potential listener of our finished work. The target must not be seen as an end but as a **goal**, an abstract point to be reached. To reach this goal, we must first set the features we need to create the format.

Going back to our possible audio-documentary on FGM/C, one goal could be to “describe the way young people experience the persistence of the practice of FGM/C”. In this way, all the elements of the intervention context are potential listeners: the social workers that have ways to find out how the new generations feel about the tradition of FGM/C, the youngsters who are concerned and could do some soul searching, the elders who could reflect upon their models of education, and so on.

### / 1.2 PRELIMINARY RESEARCH /

In order to establish a target as a “goal”, we need to do some **research** on the chosen theme. Preparation is fundamental because it helps us in getting acquainted with the context we will be working in, and it allows us to be ready to adjust to any change in the scenario that could come up during the making of the documentary. As we said earlier, the audio-documentary as a tool for social intervention must describe the process by which reality is configured as such. Reality becomes our point of observation as we collect the necessary documents. The documentary will not reveal an existing “reality”, but will describe the elements detected from the point of observation and **combine them in such a way that they can generate a reflection, a debate** or any other form of adjustment within the context of the intervention.



A documentary is not a “rendering of reality”, or a version of “factual truth”, but a description of the path followed by the author within the issue, from the first contact - whether triggered by a personal interest or a specific commission to the finished product that will be transmitted on the radio or the Internet.

When **dealing with the preparation of a documentary**, one is already inside it. Extracts from references that were studied during the preliminary research can be read by speakers and become part of the final product. The same goes for phone calls and fixings of appointments.

It is appropriate **to record the preliminary phases of the preparation and keep the collected or taped material in good order**. For example, if we should phone a Member of Parliament to propose an interview on FGM/C and the secretary answers that “the Member of Parliament is not interested in being interviewed on the matter”, this non-answer has the same value as an interview because it describes how that politician deals with the issue of FGM/C. The recorded conversation can become part of the documentary.

Preparation allows us to focus on the goal and make it as effective as possible. As the material is collected, some useful elements for the description of our goal will emerge: on one hand, we start to understand the demands of the person who commissioned the work and the needs of those who live in the specified context; on the other hand, through research, the critical points start to surface, such as the “areas” in which it is possible or necessary to intervene, those areas that will be the centre of the story told in the documentary. The goal may change in the course of creation, according to indications found in the collected materials. The goal is not an end in itself, it is just a point of reference that enables us to select one document rather than another, or to follow one path rather than another.

## 2.

### / THE LANGUAGES OF THE AUDIO DOCUMENTARY /

As we have said in the first part of the handbook, audio documentary may use three distinct languages: music, sound and spoken word. Let us examine these languages and analyse the risks of error. We are not establishing rules, but just giving practical indications: how and when to use those languages will depend on the author’s sensibility.

#### / 2.1 MUSIC /

Music has an enormous potential in audio narration. First of all, because it responds to a habit (when a person listens to the radio, it usually is to listen to music). It is a language that knows no frontiers, and can transmit very strong sensations in a very short time. It is a very powerful tool and must be used cautiously.

Music can achieve three functions in a documentary: theme, background and foreground.

##### / 2.1.1 THEME MUSIC /

The theme must be carefully chosen because it will be the trademark and give the tone to our work. It is the moment in which a listener can decide whether or not to continue listening. A functioning theme can be used not only in the beginning but also at the end of the programme, giving the listener the impression of having come to a full circle, of having been through a beginning and an end. The theme will have to be closely connected to the documentary. We must not choose music only because we “like it”: tastes are not universal. The music is not chosen to please the listener, but to help him find links with the contents of the documentary and orient him throughout the program.

### / 2.1.2 BACKGROUND MUSIC /

Background music is used as comment or accompaniment to the voices and sounds that are in the foreground. Background music should be instrumental. If it accompanies an interview, the words of a song can be confounded with the spoken words; if it accompanies ambient sounds, the words of the song might not be heard because its volume will be lower.

It is better not to fill a documentary with music: there will be moments of particular emotion where we will need music to communicate a certain state of mind. This won't work if the listener's ear has been accustomed to a continuous music flow. It is recommended not to use too many different styles of music in the same documentary. Music has a role, even if it is in the background. In a key moment of the documentary, when for example the contents express what was said in the title, we can use an instrumental version of the theme as a background. Or if we use some music as comment for an observer who refuses to talk about a given issue, we can use the same music every time we encounter a similar response.

It is important to pay attention to the structure of the background music to avoid using lively music as background for a contemplative narration. It is also better not to use music with a strong rhythm section. When we reduce the volume (usually 10 db lower) of background music, the risk is to hear only the drum or the bass.

### / 2.1.3 FOREGROUND MUSIC /

Foreground music is used in some points of the documentary, at the same level as the rest (testimonies, interviews, ambient recordings). It is a space in which music is used not as an opening curtain (theme music), or a comment (background music), but to be listened to. Music can be a document, material we have collected during our research. In the case of a long documentary, we can repeat the theme music to create an interlude. It could also be a recording of ambient sound in which someone sings or plays music and that is worth listening to as a testimony.

In general, the rules for foreground music are the same as those for the theme. We must keep in mind that music is a language, and every time we use it we convey something. It must be used when necessary and when we feel that music is an important element in the course of the documentary.

We must also be aware of the lyrics of the songs we use, especially if they are foreign songs. Sometimes the music seems right for the documentary, but the lyrics could lead in a totally different direction. If we don't understand the language of the song and use it merely as musical sound, the listeners might understand it and be disoriented by the clashing contents of the lyrics.

### / 2.2 AMBIENT SOUNDS /

When in the recording phase, it is important to collect as many ambient sounds as possible, single or panoramic. In the editing phase, they will become the "soundtrack" for our documentary. Also silence has a role to play in an audio-documentary.

#### / 2.2.1 THE AMBIENT SOUNDS /

When preparing for an interview, it is important to always record a few minutes of ambient sound: we ask the interviewed person and the production staff to remain still and we record a few minutes of the sounds in the room. It is also good to start recording before the interview starts and not interrupt right at the end: in these moments, we can collect precious sounds that are part of the ambient and the habitat of the interviewed person. These sounds can then be used, for example, to create a pause during a long interview.

If we are using a MONO directional microphone during outdoor recordings, it would be recommended to make a long recording of ambient sounds in stereo to later use as background for the MONO recording.

Often, sounds can be used to orient the listener. If you think in terms of images, a shot of a church or a mosque offers an immediate cultural indication of the setting we are working in. In the same way, we can use the sound of bells or the prayer of a muezzin.

If we are working in a particular geographical area, we must remember to record long ambient sounds, even 5 or 10 minutes. They can turn out to be very useful as background for voice-overs. It is also useful to record passages that seem unimportant, like our arrival in a place where we will make an interview.

Many elements, like coming out of the car, or greetings and presentations, can then be inserted as background to create a setting or a pause. Ambient sounds are a fundamental part of our "set design". They must be carefully chosen and used with motivation, to try and faithfully express what we want to transmit to the listener.

#### / 2.2.2 SILENCE /

Silence is also an ambient sound. It is not only the radio author's "white page" or the nil creation starts from, it is also a very important narrative element, just as total darkness in cinema. Silence can be an important element within narration, to create a short break or to isolate a concept that has just been stated, to let it resonate for a few seconds in the listener's ear.

## / 2.3 THE SPOKEN WORD /

### / 2.3.1 THE WORD FROM ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS /

The spoken word could be a voice recovered from an archive document such as a telephone call, a recording of a radio newscast, a declaration or a speech: a document that the author did not have direct live access to but that can be retrieved from other recordings.

In this case, the quality of the recording is important. Even if it is possible to find an enormous amount of audio files on the Internet, their quality is often very low. The risk is to introduce a disparate element into a flow of high quality sound. It is important to use documents that have the same quality as the rest of the sound material.

Sometimes, archive documents can be combined to improve a narrative sequence. They can be inserted into the foreground music, with added reverberation or other sound effects. Or they can be inserted into ambient sounds. For example, a political speech can be used not only for its contents, but because that speech has already been introduced in most homes through television. We can then record the speech from television together with the surrounding sounds from the room.

### / 2.3.2 THE INTERVIEW: VOICES FROM THE STREETS /

An interview can be made with an ordinary person, a key informant or a specialist in the issue treated in the documentary.

There are many ways to prepare an interview, and every author or journalist finds his own style. Here are a few suggestions.

The “street” voices are widely used in journalism. One collects impressions and opinions from people on the street, trying to give an account of “what people think”.

These interviews present a lot of drawbacks when making an audio-documentary. People who are stopped on the street have other things to do, they are thinking about other problems. They see a big intimidating microphone right in front of their face. The first thought that comes to their mind is that many people will hear their statement, and this perception can alter their answer. It is very unlikely that the collected sample may be useful in understanding “what people think”. But these interviews can be very useful if one of the interviewed persons proposes a very simple consideration, or points out a discrepancy in the state of affairs. This can become the starting point for a new investigation.

### / 2.3.3 THE INTERVIEW WITH KEY INFORMANTS /

Interviews with key informants are very important. **The key informant is a person who has been, at one point in his/ her life, directly involved with the issue we are dealing with.**

Compared to video, audio has the great advantage of using compact devices and of not having durational limitations. It is easier to establish a face-to-face dialogue with the key informant. During the conversation, the key informant can easily forget about the microphone and give way to his/her thoughts to share his experience and impressions.

To be able to work under the best conditions, we must gain the key informant’s confidence: explain the project and its objectives, and attenuate the elements that could disengage him and make him/her refuse to give the interview. For example, if we have the opportunity to interview an excisor in a village, it might not be a good idea to say that the goal of the documentary is to promote the abandonment of genital mutilations, but to refer to the documentary as a “coverage of the practice”, and avoid using terms such as “mutilation”, replacing them with “female circumcision” or “cutting”, or any other words used to describe the practice in that cultural context.

Even if at times we don’t feel comfortable, we must keep in mind the objective of our project and accept to “play dirty” for the sake of all the girls and women that could be spared if the documentary reaches its goal.

The author must not be distracted if he/she wants to gain the key informant’s confidence. If he/she continuously watches the recording level, fiddles with the microphone or controls background noise, the key informant will not feel secure and will not get into a confidential dialogue with the interviewer.

For this reason, it is best to work with a colleague that takes care of the technical problems. If this is not possible, it is better to set all the instruments before starting to record the interview in order to be able to fully concentrate on the conversation.

There are also different techniques in preparing an interview. As a rule, it is recommended to study the subject beforehand, without programming the full contents of the interview. This way, one can start the conversation without prejudices or personal positions. When interviewing a key informant, we are often confronted with intense suffering. The author probes this pain, and must move extremely gently, with attention and efficiency like a surgeon operating on a patient.

Every author is also an individual, with a personal history, with feelings and opinions. When interviewing a key informant, all his/her personal considerations must disappear. The goal is to describe how people

define a reality, and will be impossible to reach if we project our own opinions and thoughts on top of the key informant's. We must accept that what a key informant tells us and shares with us is true and legitimate, even if we don't agree with the contents.

As we have seen in the first part of the manual, there are no hierarchies in the description of reality: no one is right and no one is wrong, and no one has more right to speak than another. We must always keep this in mind while doing an interview, because it is the only way of not influencing a witness.

Often we must prepare an interview one step at a time, for example also involving a friend of the key informant so as to make him/her feel more at ease.

If we have studied the issue, it will be easier to ask a question that has been triggered by an answer. This will also instil faith in the interviewee, because if the questions stem from what he/she is saying, he/she will feel like an integral part of the project rather than one who is simply submitted to an interview.

That is why we must be ready to some surprises and to take unexpected turns. It doesn't matter if the interview goes in an unpredicted direction: the author is there to serve the documentary and the story, and not vice versa.

### / 2.3.4 THE INTERVIEW WITH EXPERTS /

The interviews with experts are a fundamental part of documentary work, because they have a double value. On one hand, they speak as key informants because the experts are people who have dedicated their lives to a given issue (regardless of how they have been treated); on the other hand, we suppose that they hold the key to a scientific approach of the issue, different from ours or that of other informants. The experts can offer explanations and examples to illustrate obscure points of the matter. An issue must involve the whole context that surrounds it, and the experts are an integral part of the essence of the issue.

It could be useful to handle the interviews with experts towards the end of our research. This way, we can come prepared with examples, stories and testimonies collected during the previous recordings, and invite the expert to offer his/her impressions on a specific example. Besides, the expert can help clear doubts that might have emerged during the research.

Also in this case, it is essential to be well prepared on the issue: it could be useful to present the specialist with a list of doubts, controversial questions or other elements that need to be elucidated.

### / 2.3.5 VOICE-OVER /

Voice-over is the spoken word that stems directly from the author's writings. It is an important component but it is not crucial. Some authors, like Martin Johnsson in Sweden, use it liberally. Others, like David Isay in the U.S.A. or Andrea Giuseppini in Italy use it very rarely and only when it is essentially needed to create narrative connections. We must remember to use the best possible tool to reach our goal, disregarding our personal tastes or inclinations. A lot has been written on the rhythm and the timing of voice-overs. Every author is convinced that his/her method is the best; some have advanced cognitive theories trying to describe how one's brain experiences the timing and the pitch of radio elocution. They are all theories, some more interesting than others, but nothing irrefutable.

The most important thing is that **the author must see him/herself as his/her own first listener**. He/she must listen and listen again to the sections of interviews to be edited, the parts played by the actors, the music, the breaks, the fade-ins and the fade-outs. The same goes for voice-over.

A calm and relaxed reading, where each word is clear and understandable, can go through 10/11 lines a minute. But the rules applying to the spoken word are different than those applying to the written word.

While writing, it is important to read out loud what we have written: beware of difficult words to pronounce, use language that can be understood by nearly everyone, and avoid long sentences and digressions. When following one's voice becomes difficult, when the sentences seem too long or when we tend to get distracted, it is necessary to take action: we can eliminate parts of the text, or divide it by inserting less than a minute foreground music or ambient noise.

At times, voice-over can be used as an interval in the middle of a long interview. Instead of leaving six straight minutes of interview, it can be broken down into two-minute modules. The eliminated parts can be reassumed through voice-over.

A voice in an audio-documentary is the equivalent of a face in a film. Each voice has characteristics. We must pay great attention in the use of voices: a thin shrill voice is not suitable to report a tragic event. Each voice plays a different role. If we decide to insert some spaces dedicated to the laws and regulations concerning a certain issue, they should all be recorded by the same voice.

The texts should always be descriptive. Every time a matter is discussed and an opinion is expressed, it is necessary to specify that the opinion is personal and not universal (14). Too much dwelling on an element can lead us astray. Simple descriptions are the best approach. Each author must use his/her sensibility to find the right words to reach the goal.

## BOX 1. ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTION

Here we present a brief passage taken from an interview with Zara, a 29-year-old girl from Nairobi, part of the Somali community in Kenya. In this phase, the interviewer tries to ask **generator questions**, that is to say open questions that should enable a person to respond in a free way, **so that the public can enter into Zara's private life while assimilating the heart of the problem.**

### Interviewer: Do you want to talk about your relationship with young men?

*Zara: Ok. I was dating a guy for 6 years, but he does not come from the same community as me. When I spoke with my mother, the first time, I had the courage to say "Oh I'm going out with a guy who comes from Western Kenya." She answered, "Are you crazy?" I do not want to hear about it", so I had to talk to him and say, "My mother said this and that "... So I think our relationship ... I loved him ... But it took me a very long time ... Even today I think I should have done something with this guy, but because of my mother's interference, I said, "Okay, I have to stop this. But today I am still in contact with him, we talk on the phone; we go and have coffee and things like that. Yeah...*

The question of the interviewer is **a generator**. There is no subliminal indication in the way in which it is placed. We simply request Zara to describe the relationship she has with young men. In fact Zara does not begin answering with "an opinion." She immediately starts to provide descriptive evidence about her relationship with a guy who does not belong to the Muslim Somali community in Kenya.

In her reply, we can identify a major problem associated with this relationship: the announcement to the family. If infibulation is practiced to allow a girl to marry within the community, what could happen in the case of a relationship with a foreign person, who may not understand these cultural values? Indeed, the mother answers: "I do not want to hear about it." No other possibility is considered or conceived.

This exchange provides an overview of FGM/C that can inspire an intervention which promotes change in social norms: we can put family members in a condition where they would consider the possibility that their daughters go to work or study, and meet and become close to people who do not have the cultural skills to "understand" FGM/C. As a journalist we can also highlight positive examples of families who were in the same situation and have finally opted to abandon FGM/C in order to allow a daughter to marry in a different context where the practice is not accepted.

### Interviewer: Is circumcision a problem when you go out with a guy?

*Zara: Oh yes, it is! In fact, a man ... when you are circumcised ... In fact, when I went out with this guy, you know, we had known each other for a long time. We talked*

*and he asked me: "So are you circumcised?" and we felt very free together, we trust each other. But I told him: "Yes but why you asking me?" You know, **his friends told him that a circumcised woman cannot satisfy a man.** But he said: "These are the comments of my friends, not mine." But ultimately it seemed like he'd thought about it a lot. I said, "Okay, you told me this and that but, you know, your friends have a great influence on your life, like when they tell you: "You're going out with this girl? Did you know that Somali women are circumcised "[...] and I said, " Yes, I am. **Because it is not my fault,** I was only 9 or 10 or 12 years old. I do not remember the age, but I'm sure it's more or less that, in general it is around that age. So when I said "yes" and he said "ok", I asked him: "Why are you asking me this question?" "Because my friend told me you would make me convert to Islam and that I will have to support a circumcised girl. It was hard for him, but he's a good guy, he understands me, he is not quarrelsome, you know.*

The issue involved an **implicit conditioning** for Zara. Even if the answer was long, the risk was to close the doors to the narrative. The conditioning is evident in the choice of the word "problem" as the interviewer put a label on what should have been left to the response of the interviewee.

It is very important to avoid, whenever possible, questions that could generate the responses that begin with a "yes" or "no." In this case, it was a "yes." Zara then continued to explain the reasons of her "yes". It happened because Zara and the interviewer saw this as a "problem". The interviewer could ask the same question to the father, a man who decided to perpetrate the practice, and the answer probably would have been "no" and nothing else. The fact of not agreeing with his point of view could make the interviewee distrustful of the interviewer. In this case, the question could be: In what way does the fact that you are circumcised affects your emotional connections?" In that way, Zara could not hide behind a "yes "or" no ", but would have been "obliged" to give a narrative type of answer.

### Interviewer: Do you believe that your circumcision affects your sexual relations?

*Zara: Well, I think it really does affect it.*

Zara's previous answer, which was already detailed, prevented the interviewer to see that he was conditioning his interviewee. The risk that appeared in the previous question materializes itself in this answer, where Zara is practically responding, "Yes, it's like this (it is exactly as you say)." Questions of this kind bring nothing to us in regards to the purposes of our reporting.

The aim of our work is to discover narrative elements on which we can intervene to generate change. With this last question, not only was Zara not put in a position to provide narrative elements, but also she proved to be a witness completely without influence. The people we interview are not simple subjects that could legitimize our theory on the reality that we are exploring,

but they must rather be considered sources of narrative and of elements that will be used to support our work.

In this case, the interviewer would ask the question differently: "In what way does the fact that you are circumcised affect your relations from a sexual point of view?" The answer would have been more structured and narrative, Zara would have told how her condition as a victim of FGM/C affects her when she has sexual intercourse.

**Beatrice Rappo** and **Jonathan Zenti**

## 3.

## / RECORDING /

Recording is the backbone of all sound productions, be it music, ads, radio programs or documentaries. It is very important to feel familiar with the tools and the procedures inherent to audio recording, to be able to fully exploit the possible forms of sound.

In order to do so, the writing skills must be supported by a good knowledge of recording, editing and audio mixing techniques (15) : in this handbook, we will only illustrate the basic notions needed to carry out your first recordings.

In the past fifteen years, technological progress in the audio field has drastically reduced the costs of equipment. This way, any author can independently produce an audio documentary without difficulty.

On the other hand, editors and producers are requesting self-sufficiency from the authors in order to cut the costs of technical materials. The author must thus have the basic competence to buy the right recorder, microphone and all the necessary equipment to adequately edit and mix sound.

### / 3.1 CHOOSING A SOUND RECORDER /

Recently, both professional and amateur audio productions have turned from analogical to digital technology. Nowadays, audio recording equipment is quite affordable due to the great variety of products on the market, less expensive raw materials and lower production costs.

The parallel race of technological progress and price reductions has reduced the gap between professionals and amateurs. It is now more difficult to distinguish between equipment that fulfils the basic needs of an amateur and equipment that can produce a professional audio quality.

At times a company famous for its professional equipment like BlueTech®, may put non-professional devices on the market, such as a quality microphone to be used with smart phones.

With the proliferation of Mp3 players, many professional audio companies have launched high quality, small, easy to handle and inexpensive digital recorders on the market. These products were not conceived for an exclusively professional market. When faced with choosing one of these devices, you must be aware of your own requirements and pay attention to the technical specifications.

For example, Sony® PCM – D150 is apparently an excellent device, with good built-in microphones, good versatility, good software, easy to handle and functional. Looking at the technical specifications, however, you will note that there are no XLR sockets for external microphones, which means it would be difficult to record ambient or panoramic sounds.

Or M-Audio® Microtrack II is operated by a built-in lithium battery that is rechargeable only with a charger or through a USB slot, making it difficult to use for outdoor recordings when there is no electric plug or computer available.

For this manual, we have chosen Tascam® DR-100, a device with good technical specifications, well adjusted for outdoor recordings, with reasonable built-in microphones and an affordable price (16)

## BOX.2 TECHNICAL DR-100 FACT SHEET FROM TASCAM R

### / DESCRIPTION /

The DR-100, designed to take professional sound applications in the field, allows high quality recording directly in WAV or MP3 format, and possesses a rugged metal build. It offers a choice between two pairs of integrated microphones, cardioids and unidirectional, two XLR microphone inputs with switchable 48V phantom power, and an input line on a mini-jack stereo - covering all fields of applications: music recording, voice, ambiances, and the minutes of meetings or recordings at concerts.

The recording level is easily adjusted via a double physical potentiometer (not a menu option). The recording starts manually, automatically (through level detection) or thanks to a remote control, it has a 2 seconds pre-recording buffer memory which can differ slightly (so as to avoid recording the touch sound of the keys). The DR-100 has a speaker control, which can be deactivated. You can make different layers, manually create a new file during recording, cut a saved file in several parts and place location marks. The camera also possesses an automatic tuning with switchable gain and limiter which work analogically, a high pass filter with three switchable frequencies cuts, a headphone output connector for wired remote control and a USB port.

The DR-100 is delivered with an SD card with a capacity of 2GB, a wireless remote control, windshield and cover. It is powered by either a rechargeable lithium-ion battery provided or by two LR06 batteries (AA), easy to find, or by an optional AC adapter. Its integrated thread enables it to be attached to a tripod or a microphone stand.

/ DR - 100 PORTABLE STEREO RECORDER /

// MAIN FEATURES //

- ▶▶ Digital hand stereo recorder for professional use
- ▶▶ Robust metallic box
- ▶▶ MP3 and WAV player and recorder
- ▶▶ Records onto SD / SDHC cards
- ▶▶ Formats available for recording:
  - ▶▶ -WAV, resolution in 16-bit or 24-bit
  - ▶▶ -MP3, at a flow rate of 32, 64, 96, 128, 192, 256, 320 Kbit / s
- ▶▶ Sample Rate 44, 1, 48 or 96 kHz frequency
- ▶▶ Four high quality integrated static microphones: two unidirectional microphones for stereo music recordings, two Omni-directional microphones for meeting recordings.
- ▶▶ Two XLR microphone inputs with switchable +48 V a Phantom Power supply
- ▶▶ High performance mic preamps enabling a high performance (input sensitivity of -58 to +2 dBu)
- ▶▶ A/D and D/A range of Audio4pro™ AKM, offering a higher signal/noise ratio of 100 dB
- ▶▶ Stereo line input with level adjustment for external source (3.5 mm mini-jack connector)
- ▶▶ Two level adjustment potentiometers for intuitive use
- ▶▶ Commutable high pass filter (cut off frequency 40Hz, 80Hz or 120Hz)
- ▶▶ Automatic performance control working in analogue
- ▶▶ Analogue limiter commutable per physical sector, to avoid all clipping time
- ▶▶ Integrated speaker control (can be disabled by selecting manually)
- ▶▶ Headphone output with level adjustment (mini-jack 3.5 mm connector)
- ▶▶ Dedicated stereo line output (on 3.5mm mini-jack connector)
- ▶▶ Pre-recording memory buffer (2 seconds) to start recording before pressing the record button
- ▶▶ Delayed recording feature to prevent the DR-100 from recording touch sound of keys
- ▶▶ Automatic recording activation feature (it starts only when the level of the input signal exceeds a certain threshold)
- ▶▶ Overdubbing (recording overlay) feature to add narration, a sung part or instruments to an existing recording
- ▶▶ Location marks
- ▶▶ Renaming files (Date / personal text)
- ▶▶ A dividing file feature, allowing for example to cut unwanted noise
- ▶▶ Creation of a new file during recording (manually or when the file reaches a certain size)
- ▶▶ Quick Menu to delete or mark ("tag") a file directly from the home screen
- ▶▶ Many reading features:
  - Loop between a point and another
  - Play by folder or playlist
  - ID3-tags of MP3 files (up to version 2.4)
  - Adjust playback speed (-50% to +16%)
  - Change the tempo without changing the tone (pitch) of the song
  - Change the tone (pitch) without changing the tempo
- ▶▶ Thread at the base of the unit enabling to attach it to a tripod or a microphone stand
- ▶▶ USB 2.0 port to transfer files to/from your computer
- ▶▶ Two options for stand-alone use:
  - Lithium-ion battery BP-L2 (provided, high autonomy) and 2 LR06 batteries (AA), easy to find
- ▶▶ Delivered with a wireless remote control RD-DR100, BP-L2, foam windshield and protective cover
- ▶▶ Delivered with an SD card with a capacity of 2GB
- ▶▶ Optional:
  - Battery Pack BP-L2
  - PR-P520 AC-Adaptor



## Audio inputs and outputs

|                                  |                                                                |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Microphone inputs</b>         | On XLR 32 -3 (symmetrical)<br>Switchable 48-volt phantom power |
| Input impedance                  | 1,2 kohms                                                      |
| Nominal input level              | -58 dBu (HIGH GAIN), -36 dBu (MIDI GAIN) - 14 dBu (LOW GAIN)   |
| Maximum input level              | -42 dBu (GAIN HIGH), -20 dBu (GAIN MID), +2 dBu (GAIN LOW)     |
| <b>Line In</b>                   | Mini-jack 3.5 mm stereo                                        |
| Input impedance                  | 23 kohms                                                       |
| Entry level (nominal / maximum)  | 10 dBV/ +6 dBV                                                 |
| <b>Line Out</b>                  | Stereo mini-jack 3.5 mm                                        |
| Output Level (nominal / maximum) | 10 dBV/ +6 dBV                                                 |
| <b>Headphone output</b>          | Stereo mini-jack 3.5 mm                                        |
| Maximum output power             | 2 x 25 mW (32 ohms)                                            |
| <b>Built-in speaker</b>          | Output power 0.4 W                                             |

## Audio characteristics (line In > line Out)

|                      |                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Frequency response   | 20Hz-20kHz, +1 / -3 dB (a 44.1 kHz)<br>20Hz-22kHz, +1 / -3 dB (to 48 kHz)<br>20Hz-42kHz, +1 / -3 dB (at 96 kHz, line input, XLR mic input) |
| Distortion           | < 0.01                                                                                                                                     |
| Signal / noise ratio | 90 dB                                                                                                                                      |

## Audio files compatibility

|                  |                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MP3 files        | Digital output: 32 to 320 kbit/s, VBR (variable output, read only)<br>Sampling frequency: 44.1 / 48 kHz<br>ID3 compatibility up to version 2.4 |
| WAV files        | Sampling Frequency 44.1 / 48/96 kHz<br>Digital resolution 16/24 bit                                                                            |
| Recording medium | SD (64 MB to 2 GB) or SDHC (4 GB to 32)                                                                                                        |
| File system      | FAT partition: FAT 16/32                                                                                                                       |

## Computer Requirements

|                              |                                                                                             |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Compatible operating systems | Windows 2000 Professional SP4 or later, Windows XP, Windows Vista<br>Mac OS X 10.2 or later |
| Windows                      | Pentium 300 MHz or faster, 128 Mo RAM or more                                               |
| Macintosh                    | 266 MHz Power PC, iMac, G3, G4 or better, 64 Mo RAM or more                                 |
| USB Port                     | USB 2.0 recommended                                                                         |
| USB host controller          | Intel components set recommended                                                            |

## Supply and other characteristics

|                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Supply                                                                                                           | Lithium-ion battery (BP-L2, included) or NiMH batteries (HR15/51) or alkaline (LR60 or PS-P520 AC adapter (optional)                                                                           |
| Autonomy (continuous operation, backlighting disabled, MP3 playback 128 kbits/s, according to conditions of use) | Lithium-ion battery: approximately 5 hours (recording or playback)<br>NiMH batteries: approximately 4 hours (recording or playback)<br>Alkaline: approximately 2 hours (recording or playback) |
| Operating temperature                                                                                            | 0-40 °C                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Consumption                                                                                                      | 1.7 W (MP3 playback), 5.5 W (maximum)                                                                                                                                                          |
| External dimensions (L X H X D)                                                                                  | 80 mm x 153 mm x 35 mm (excluding protrusions)                                                                                                                                                 |
| Weight                                                                                                           | 0.29 kg (without batteries)                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Optional Accessories                                                                                             | Replacement Battery BP-L2<br>PS-P520 AC adapter                                                                                                                                                |

### / 3.2 CHOOSING MICROPHONES /

Many portable digital recorders, especially those with a shoulder strap, have no built-in microphone. Most handheld ones have built-in low quality microphones that do not meet the requirements for a professional sound product that is to be radio transmitted. So you often have to buy and use an extra microphone.

It is not easy to choose from the vast variety of microphones on the market. We must bear in mind both the technical characteristics that fulfil our requirements and the quality of sound we want to obtain. We will try to point out the basic materials needed by an audio documentarist, and the type of microphone to be used in different situations.

When recording a narrative voice, an annotation or a musical instrument, you will need a MONO microphone, with a single capsule that records on a single channel.

**When recording voice**, it is best to use a *microphone with a wide diaphragm condenser*. The condenser microphone captures sound according to an electrostatic principle. The diaphragm is the membrane that will "capture" the sound. Usually, a narrower diaphragm consents a more precise sound recording. When recording a voice, however, a wide diaphragm microphone is preferable; a wide membrane captures broader and less precise oscillations, amplifying the overtones created by the emission of a voice, making it more full-bodied.

When choosing a microphone, one must also pay attention to the "**polar response**", that is the orientation of the capsule in respect to the sound source. In our case, the capsule must be oriented directly on the source, producing a "cardioid" polar response.

**When recording in non-professional studios**, like a room or an office without acoustic treatment, it is best not to use the omni-directional or the bi-directional types of polar response in order to avoid phase cancellation (17).

The condenser microphones, especially those with a wide diaphragm, are very delicate and sensitive. While recording, it is appropriate **to install the microphone on a stand with a shock mount**, a fastener that keeps your microphone isolated from stand vibrations. You will also need to position **a pop filter** to protect the capsule against the accumulation of saliva.

**For outdoors recordings**, you will need a different microphone: one that is less delicate and more precise in capturing sound, possibly STEREO, with two directional recording devices in order to capture sound from two directions. You will probably be **recording in precarious situations**, so you must be ready for sudden shifts. This is when most phase cancellation errors occur. You must use a stereo microphone whose

diaphragms are placed in the so-called XY position, with the criss-crossed orientation of the left and right capsules.

One of the major problems in outdoor recordings is **the wind** that hits the diaphragm creating an intense low pitched sound that covers the ones you want to record. Normally, microphones are equipped with a light windproof protection that often is not enough. You must then get a better sort of "furry" windproof protection that redirects the wind away from the capsule.

**A hand-held microphone** could be uncomfortable, and in long interviews can be quite painful for the arm. To avoid these problems during long interviews, you could use a small tabletop stand. Or for outdoor recordings, you can use a "boom" pole, a support that stands on two rods, together with a shock mount.

Another recurring problem in outdoor recordings is **the background noise** that can cover a voice or another sound. You then would need to use a directional "shotgun" microphone. This type of microphone has a hyper cardioid polar response, a highly directional device with an extremely restricted field of recording, that can successfully eliminate background noise, or, when in a crowd, isolate the rest of the voices and concentrate on the one the microphone is directed on.

### / 3.3 RECORDING STANDARDS /

When you enter the menu of a recording device, you have access to the recording settings: sampling frequency and quantization of waveforms. In analogical recording, the sound and the recording are parallel by nature, whereas in digital recording, the recording of the waveform is periodical. These periodical recordings are called "samples" and are transformed into binary terms in order to be interpreted, stored and made available by a computer.

The *sampling frequency* or *sampling rate* is the measurement of the number of samples captured in one second. *Quantization* is the assignment of a binary number to the amplitude of a wave within a sample, in other words the conversion from analogical to digital.

We will now illustrate the different standards in use and the setting adjustments.

When the Compact Disc (CD) hit the market as an audio storage device, the standard for a digital audio file was established at 44.1 kHz for sampling rate, and 16 bit for quantization. These two parameters are still a valid reference for recording.

But since the CD came out, technology has made enormous progress and many different portable devices offer the possibility of recording high quality sound.

The DR-100 that we chose as reference for this handbook offers the possibility to record at 24 bit quantization and 96 kHz sampling rate. When possible, it is best to make the highest possible quality recording. Even though the resulting audio file will end up being reduced to a standard format, it is preferable to work with sound that contains more precise information at the source.

You must however remember that once you decide to record sound according to certain standards, it is highly recommended to keep the same parameters throughout the recordings. And later when you start a session with editing and mixing software, you must use the same parameters as you have in the recordings.

### / 3.4 THE HEADPHONES /

One of the easiest mistakes to make is to think that what you hear with your ears is what enters the microphone. That's not how it is. A simple piece of paper leafed through during an interview creates a movement of the air that hits the membrane and creates a distortion that our bare ear does not perceive.

We must always remember **to monitor the course of our recordings with the help of headphones**, preferably wide enough to cover the whole ear and isolate it from outside noise. The headphones are essential devices during the editing and mixing phase, especially if we are working in non-professional environments, because they enable us to listen to the recordings regardless of the acoustic qualities of the room we're in.

## 4.

### / EDITING AND MIXING /

**Editing** is the assembly phase of everything that has been collected and recorded, and **mixing** is the process that enables us to balance all the edited material. Both steps are carried out on a multi-tracking software (18) that processes different parallel audio tracks.

#### / 4.1 EDITING /

Editing is done in modules. One interview at a time, one music track at a time, one voice recording at a time. The interviews and other documents are selected and abridged, always keeping our goal in mind.

Sometimes we must clean out hesitations from the interviews – the mumbles and stutters – that can hinder listening. In visual communication, these hesitations are compensated by a facial expression or a gesture, elements that are missing in sound communication.

These hesitations can be due to the search for the right word, or a distraction. But other times they stem from embarrassment or difficulty. At times, it might be worth it to leave them in.

#### / 4.2 MIXING /

Once all the pieces of the puzzle are ready, the delicate phase of mixing begins. Through this operation, our sound file will become smooth and uniform.

The first thing to do is to import into our session a CD whose sound quality we would like to replicate. Once it is imported, the volume must be reduced by 2 db, which is the volume acquired by an audio file through mastering. This file will be our point of reference for the whole mixing operation.

There are no fixed rules for a mixing operation: basically, you learn by experience. Equalization and compressor plug-ins can be used to adjust and clean sound files.

If we want to use ambient sound as background, we just have to turn down the volume by 10 dB, or 16 dB for music. But we must be the first listeners of our products and judge the quality for ourselves. The best reference is our own ear.

Mixing can improve or clean a sound, but it can't do miracles. It is important to be meticulous and precise in the recording phase so that the material we import into our editing sessions can be as clean as possible. When editing and mixing, it is preferable to rely on friends or colleagues as listeners. After spending many hours working on sound, we can easily lose our instinctive perception of quality or of rhythm in an audio file. Having someone else listen to it before consigning the final product offers precious feedback and enables us to add finishing touches where needed.

## 5.

### / TIPS AND TRICKS /

Here are some suggestions to avoid making mistakes while the work is in progress:

1. Before recording, make sure all the devices are plugged in or charged.
2. Always bring extra batteries for the equipment. Assurez-vous d'avoir assez d'espace de mémoire à disposition.
3. Make sure to have sufficient memory space.
4. Always carry extra memory cards.
5. When recording outdoors, make sure you have windproof protection and use headphones.
6. Always listen to recordings through headphones, don't trust your bare ears.
7. When using a MONO microphone for outdoor recordings, remember to record ambient sounds in STEREO on the spot.
8. When recording in motion, always try to keep one hand free, with which you can move objects that block your way, or open doors, etc... If you are using a hand held recorder with a microphone, try putting the recorder in a shoulder bag.
9. Before starting an interview, make sure the device is recording and not in stand-by.
10. Before you start an interview sitting at a table, ask the interviewee to be careful not to hit the table with his/ her hands.
11. When you finish a day's work, feed your recordings into the computer right away, listen to them and name them in reference to the contents: if you spend months recording, you won't end up with a mass of audio files that you have no idea what they contain.

12. At the beginning of an interview, always remember to have the interviewee give his/her name, surname and profession/function.
13. Avoid referring to visual images that cannot be heard.
14. Remember that the standard for audio files is 16 bit 44.1 KHz.

## 6.

### / BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LINKOGRAPHY /

#### / 6.1 BIBLIOGRAPHY /

1. Berger, P. L. and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, Anchor Books, Garden City, NY, 1966
2. L.Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1969-1975  
(available on <http://budni.by.ru/oncertainty.html>)
3. John Biewen, *Reality Radio - Telling True Stories in Sound*, Carolina University, 2010  
(available on [http://www.amazon.com/Reality-Radio-Telling-Stories-Documentary/dp/0807871028/ref=sr\\_11?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1284366002&sr=1-1#reader\\_0807871028](http://www.amazon.com/Reality-Radio-Telling-Stories-Documentary/dp/0807871028/ref=sr_11?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1284366002&sr=1-1#reader_0807871028))
4. M. Kramer, W.Call, *Telling True Stories: A Non-fiction Writers' Guide from the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University*, Harvard University, 2007  
(available on [http://www.amazon.com/Telling-True-Stories-Nonfiction-Foundation/dp/0452287553/ref=pd\\_bxgy\\_b\\_text\\_c#reader\\_0452287553](http://www.amazon.com/Telling-True-Stories-Nonfiction-Foundation/dp/0452287553/ref=pd_bxgy_b_text_c#reader_0452287553))
5. J. Kern, *Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production*, NPR, 2009.

#### / 6.2 LINKOGRAPHY /

**Transom.org** is a website published by Atlantic Public Media: it is a tool for all radio documentarists, radio authors or simply fans. Inside, you can find radio documentaries, reviews and links, hardware and software tools, tips and tricks for recording and editing audio documentaries.  
[www.transom.org](http://www.transom.org)

**Swedish National Radio (Documentary Department).** In its website you can watch some "Radio-Video", mp4 files in Swedish with English translation on video.  
<http://sverigesradio.se/sida/default.aspx?programid=3297>

**StoryCorps** is a sound-project by author David Isay that collects stories of American people, trying to give a portrait of the United States. (<http://www.storycorps.org>). You can see also SoundPortraits.org, a previous project by David Isay where you can find his best radio-documentaries  
<http://www.soundportraits.org/>

**The Kitchen Sisters** are Davia Nelson and Nikki Silva, two independent radio producers that focus their work on gender issues and memories  
<http://www.kitchensisters.org>

**Radio Diaires** is a website led by Joe Richman, that works with people to document their own lives for public radio: teenagers, seniors, prison inmates and others whose voices are rarely heard  
<http://www.radiodiaries.org>

**This American Life** is the most important radio-documentary based program broadcasted in the US. It counts 1.7 million radio listeners and half a million web-downloads each week. It is produced by Chicago Public Media  
<http://www.thisamericanlife.org>

**Audio doc** is the Italian association of independent audio-documentary authors. Their website also has a page in English. Audiodoc works in partnership with AIDOS in the project "Abandoning FGM/C on FM!" The audio-documentaries produced as part of this project are available through the links below on the Audiodoc website:

- Burkina Faso 2008  
[http://.audiodoc.it/archivio\\_scheda.php?id\\_scheda=128](http://.audiodoc.it/archivio_scheda.php?id_scheda=128)
- Kenya 2010  
[http://www.audiodoc.it/archivio\\_scheda.php?id\\_scheda=153](http://www.audiodoc.it/archivio_scheda.php?id_scheda=153)  
as well as the audio newspaper "Diary – A Voyage to FMG/C Issue in Kenya",  
[www.audiodoc.it/archivio\\_scheda.php?id\\_scheda=151](http://www.audiodoc.it/archivio_scheda.php?id_scheda=151)

**STREAM – Sharing technologies and resources for engaged and active media**, is a network of African associations of women working in the media and NGOs (non governmental organizations) promoting the abandonment of FGM/C, coordinated by AIDOS, that manages the [www.stopfgmc.org](http://www.stopfgmc.org) web portal addressed to media practitioners: a database of media coverage, laws, research and documentation, video and audio material that offers an entry point into the topic of female genital mutilation/cutting  
[www.stopfgmc.org](http://www.stopfgmc.org)

## 7.

### / FOOTNOTES /

1. Translation from Brecht on Theatre, translated and edited by Jon Willett, New York, Hill and Wang, 1964. ["Der Rundfunk als Kommunikation apparat" Blatter in the Hessischen Landestheaters, Darmstadt, No.16, July 1932]
2. Deontology refers to "all the rules and obligations that govern a professional category" (translation by Zingarelli N., Lo Zingarelli 2005 - Vocabolario della lingua italiana, Zanichelli 2004). A deontological crisis occurs when professional ambitions no longer coincide with the duties of the profession.
3. Walter Benjamin's book *The Work of Art in the Era of its Technical Reproducibility* is recommended as a reference to study the relationship between the industrial revolution and technical reproduction. At the very beginning of the preface, Benjamin cites the "diagnosis" of Karl Marx's capitalist model of production. Benjamin thought he had to contextually analyse the economic model and the production policy and the ability to reproduce works of art. Indeed, the text ends with a reference to "fascism" and "communism", two totalitarian regimes from industrial models that have prospered thanks to the control of the media.
4. From the Larousse dictionary online
5. Music is described here as a language. According to Schonberg, musicology has evolved very much over the twentieth century. For centuries, music was regarded as a science dealing with the knowledge of God, or its presence in nature. It has developed its own formal language, like any science that belongs to monistic realism (see next paragraph). Over the centuries, as Galilean sciences evolved, the absolute divinity of musical knowledge was questioned, replacing it by interference between the formal language (musical notation) and ordinary language (adagio, andante, etc.). Thanks to Schonberg's studies on noise and interference, and the experiment on quasi-notes and the relationship between music and text, the field of music has moved from science to language (e.g., Luigi Nono,

- studied music as "a global language"). The formal language, ordinary language, technique and listening live alongside. The objective of the music is not knowledge but communication.
6. It is important to clarify that the difference between music and ambient sounds is not at the level of the means, but of the intention. For example, the fire siren used by Brian Wilson from the Beach Boys Smile disk is regarded as music because it only serves to listening. On the contrary, some musical themes such as military marches must be regarded as voluntary ambient sounds because they only exist to keep the pace.
  7. The writing system is graphical and non-vocal.
  8. Larousse dictionary online. The epistemological reflection is inherent in science and contains no guidelines regarding communication in general or . But it can prove to be extremely useful for the subject of the desk based research: "reality" is what the scientist and the documentary have in common: they are called, although in different ways and for different reasons, to pursue a path of knowledge of reality.
  9. Source: GP Turchi, C. Della Torre, *Psicologia della salute - dal modello bio-psycho-social al modello dialogico*, Armando, 2007, p. 30-39. (Psychology of health - from the bio-psycho-social model to the dialogical model.) This book discusses epistemological thoughts on the degrees of realism with some sections directly related to psychology. It seems natural to ask where the link between a branch of science of communication such as an audio documentary and a subject "of health" such as psychology is. In our search for the bases upon which to define the audio documentary and its usefulness as a social tool, we find "answers" reading thoughts from deontological professionals in the fields of psychology and sociology: sociologists such as Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, Erving Goffman, the psychotherapists such as Miguel Benasayag and psychology professors such as Gian Piero Turchi. bidl was struck by a sentence in the book by Miguel Benasayag "Sad Passions": "the clinician must assume his responsibilities towards the patient and his family and find together a direction to take in order to change the present situation: direction in its primary sense of direction, movement towards..."This is what the documentary maker needs to know in order to act like a social worker. He must accept responsibility for the information he is gathering and must collaborate with other subjects concerned with the same policy area in order to find a direction that can generate change. In other words, what professionals of various disciplines have in common is the deontological demand and the sense that it is essential to discover ways and effective methods to generate daily change (positive).
  10. Source: GP Turchi, C. Della Torre, *Psicologia della salute - dal modello bio-psycho-social al modello dialogico*, Armando 200 pag.38. (Psychology of health - from the bio-psycho-social model to the dialogic model).
  11. Ibid. pages 77-82. In this chapter, there is an explicit description of the contemporary psychologist's demand: "Cultural exchanges" more frequent and evident at a national and international level (e.g. immigration, flexibility and mobility of workers, etc.) create the requirement of having at our disposal models that allow us to operate in the presence of "narrators' voices" extremely diversified in a same context of intervention. "The contemporary documentary maker feels the same requirement when he is gathering information on a "reality "made of new and intangible elements". Each definition of reality as" effective data "becomes obsolete at the very moment it is formulated. By focusing on knowledge of the process, it is possible to keep pace of the changes.
  12. Quotes to date deal with reflections on linguistic distinctions between disciplines according to their degree of realism. To address this issue, we suggest reading Turchi GP, C. Della Torre, *Psicologia della salute - dal modello bio-psycho-social al modello dialogico*, Armando 2007 pag.30-34 (Health Psychology -. From the bio-psycho-social model to the dialogic model). This reflection does not directly affect the field of audio-documentaries because they are outside the scientific sphere, and especially far away from the sciences that operate at a level of monistic realism (which are intended to individualise a subject of research and establish a measurement system to review it). The only suitable language for a documentary is ordinary language. In the case of surveys, one should simply specify that any attempt to define "the truth of the facts" is baseless since there is no system of measurement in ordinary language. Investigations are constructed "as if one could measure reality" and documents are used as the measuring system. We can use, for instance, court judgments to measure responsibility, but the definition of a verdict is based on the "deliberation parties" involved. Besides, you need a "trial" to obtain a verdict.
  13. For instance let's take the example of "series" broadcast on American radio since 1927: this genre dedicated to housewives started off with advertisements for soap and house-wares. Already, in this historic case, the target group for the radio broadcast depended entirely on the advertising target, hence its original name (Soap Opera).
  14. If we present our thinking as the absolute truth, we are working on a "demonstrative" level of reality, which, as we saw in the first part of this

manual, is not effective in the context of social interventions.

15. We suggest you study the technical and registration processes. We suggest one of the most comprehensive books written in English on the subject: Huber, David M., Runstein, Robert E., *Modern Recording Techniques*, Butterworth - Heinemann, 1995.
16. The instruction booklet Tascam DR-100 is in a BOX in this manual, p. 27.
17. Phase cancellation is an audio phenomenon whereby if two sound waves strike the same width capsule at different times; it may cause the modification or the cancellation of the sound.
18. Over the years, some software has become commonplace in the world of editing, such as Cool Edit, and especially Logic Pro Tools. These are quite expensive professional instruments. To use Pro Tools, for example, one must purchase computer equipment without which the software does not work. For the purpose of this manual, we would choose two audio editing Audacity software pieces, a free software that can be downloaded from internet and Reaper which is sold for an affordable price (around US\$ 60) and provides an upgradeable 30-days trial version.