

# Biso na Biso Newsletter

Issue N°3 April 2010

88 FM. GREEN FREQUENCY.  
EVERYDAY FROM 3PM TO 8 PM  
IN POKOLA AND ELSEWHERE IN THE CONGO BASIN



THE VOICE OF THE FOREST

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### **Editorial: First anniversary June 2010**

Radio Biso na Biso prepares to celebrate its first anniversary. Put into service in March 2009 and inaugurated on 7 June 2009, BnB enters its second year of existence. A number of activities are planned for this important celebration including a listener's survey and a cultural evening to be held in the forest at Ibamba, a typical indigenous village of very friendly listeners.

For this anniversary, the radio will be visited by local officials and representatives of partner CIB (Congolaise Industrielle des Bois) managers. In the last year, listeners and BnB's animators have gotten to know each other thanks to the support of the Fondation Chirac and CIB. Despite sporadic technical challenges to communication, Biso na Biso, « between us » in Lingala, continues to search for ways to be more efficient in satisfying the needs of all of its audience dispersed in the great Congolese forest.

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Radio Biso na Biso. Tel: 00242 5206924 Bp: 13 Pokola/ Congo  
Bnb-staff@tft-forests.org /www.tft-forests.org  
Draft and design: Privat Massanga and Lydie Koungou



Recording songs at the semi-nomads in Komo

### **New timetable and programming at Biso na Biso**

From 1 April 2010, the programme timetable at Biso na Biso has changed. The radio now broadcasts everyday from 3pm until 8pm. The revised schedule aims to be more consistent with the audience's needs; listeners are often busy in the early afternoon in the fields, fishing or with farming activities. When BnB was launched, broadcasting started at 1pm but since then, it appeared necessary to readapt the programming. Nonetheless, the emitter's solar power limitations remain; it is necessary to augment capacity in order to increase overall broadcasting. The new timetable has been adapted for the majority of listeners who follow the radio's programming—at an hour of the day when their obligations are finished. It also allows the inclusion of programmes which by tradition should only be transmitted at night, such as stories and the Pygmy tradition of « mossambo ». The first programmes of the day are then rebroadcast just before closing.

THE VOICE OF THE FOREST, HAPPY FIRST ANNIVERSARY

## A training workshop for the community reporters in Mboua

Radio Biso na Biso organised a training workshop on 28 and 29 March for community reporters. This was the first training of those radio collaborators who play a key role in village communities.

The workshop took place at the primary school of Mboua which is located over 120 kilometres from Pokola. Led by Biso na Biso's Manager, eight reporters and coordinators (including two semi-nomads) took part in this session of capacity building which focussed on the following themes: a presentation of TFT, the definition of community radio, Biso na Biso's editorial line, information questions and references, how to conduct an interview, how to prepare a story, how to plan and present a programme, sound recording techniques and a practical exercise which was a live interview and programme presentation.

During the workshop, the voluntary nature of their collaboration with BnB was also stressed. Each person signed a contract that includes an encouragement premium as part of their voluntary work with BnB. They also received two essential documents: the code of conduct and the charter for Biso na Biso journalists.

The President of Mboua village reported to BnB that the local population was having problems capturing the radio's signal and is in need of electrical wiring to install antennas on trees or roof tops to improve reception in their area.

Testimonies were also collected from listeners in Mboua, including from the village secretary and the police station manager. Nonetheless, the number of listeners remains small. Villagers have also requested additional radio receivers.

At the end of the workshop, participants were satisfied and expressed their wish that this kind of initiative be repeated once or twice per year.



In action, participants and trainer



Discussion between participants



Participants at the training workshop

Biso na Biso  
we are

- Ten coordinators
- Ten community reporters
- A manager
- An editorial committee
- A listener committee

**RADIO BISO NA BISO**  
**« IKINGO YA NDIMA »**

88 FM

IN POKOLA AND SURROUNDING  
AREAS

## Insight on the latest meeting of the editorial committee

The radio's editorial committee held its third meeting on Tuesday 2 March 2010 in the Biso na Biso meeting room. Opening the meeting was Doctor Benoît Essovia who took over from Doctor Moubouha at the Pokola medical centre.

During the meeting, participants verified the list of those issues from the previous meeting that had been resolved and those that were still pending; the pending issues include the need for additional hand-held radios and solar panels.

The radio Manager informed participants on the initiative to purchase fuel for the generator to relieve certain broadcasting difficulties seen due to the lack of autonomy with the batteries at the central emitter. This is a temporary solution as the emitter in the forest cannot be left to function long-term by generator power alone for obvious environmental reasons.

The Committee decided to revise the programme timetable to try and reach a greater number of listeners during broadcast hours. Participants chose to start the programming at 3pm and the radio Manager will sensitise the audience over several weeks on this change before implementing it definitively.

Opening up the content of the radio was also mentioned. Instead of concentrating on the target area, the radio will also invite people living elsewhere and relay certain regional and national information while still respecting BnB's editorial line, including environmental, agro pastoral and health issues. The Committee examined the content of two documents to assist animators in their work as non-professional journalists: the Journalist's Charter and Code of Conduct.

Finally, regarding defective radio receivers, participants concluded that the multiple functions, particularly the torch, of these devices are causing them to break down faster than normal. In the future, participants urged BnB to supply devices without the supplementary functions.



Installation of an artisanal antenna on a tree in Matoto

## A side glance: Makeshift antennas capture the radio signal

Populations listening to Biso Na Biso are imaginative. In lowland areas, local people have fabricated antennas to enable them to more easily capture the radio's signal.

Using electricity conductors and bits of aluminium panels, people have managed to enhance the receptivity of their handheld radios. Antennas on trees or roofs of houses can now be seen in certain villages. To facilitate these tasks, the radio occasionally distributes rolls of wires to those people who express the need. This is the case in Toukoulaka, Mboua and Matoto.



Installation of an artisanal antenna in Mboua



**7 JUNE 2009 - 7 JUNE 2010  
SOON 1 YEAR!  
THANK YOU TO ALL WHO  
MADE THIS PROJECT POSSIBLE**

## BnB: meeting with Pokola farmers

The meeting held on Tuesday 9 mars 2010 at 3pm in the Biso na Biso meeting room was organized to reinforce the link between the radio and farmers around Pokola. The discussion with the Pokola pre-cooperatives groups concerned the creation of a community work platform.

This reinforces communications in the TNS area (Tri-National Sangha) which include a range of issues such as poaching, illegal forest exploitation and poverty. The situation is identical in all three countries of the TNS (Cameroon, RCA and Congo Brazzaville). The ReRaC-TNS (network of Radios and Communicators of the Tri-National Sangha) leads communication activities towards appropriate themes and coverage, and adds value for conservation, natural resource management and the fight against poverty through a variety of programmes, including alternatives to hunting and income generation. This meeting resulted from the report by Mr. Dominique Elenga, President of the Union of pre-cooperatives groups in Pokola, on BnB after his participation in the TNS meeting in Yokadouma, Cameroon. Through the radio, the farmers are able to put aside their difficulties and share their experiences with all communities. Members of the different groups were asked to collaborate with the radio and supply content for the programme « The Voice of the Farmer ». From now on, under a well-established schedule, Biso na Biso will organise weekly programmes with different groups in the agro-pastoral area: NTFP (non timber forest products) and agro-forestry producers, farmers and breeders of all types.



## RADIO BISO NA BISO TAKES ACTION DURING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On 8 March, on international women's day, radio Biso na Biso actively participated in the different activities organised in Pokola by the women at CIB and those living in the township.

Biso na Biso offered airtime to women and the three women working at the radio took part in the special celebrations: a debate on HIV-AIDS, a popular parade through town, a special dinner with CIB managers and broadcasts discussing women's participation in sustainable natural resource management, particularly forest resource.



**RADIO BISO NA BISO  
THE VOICE OF THE FOREST  
FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY  
FOR THE PROMOTION OF OUR CULTURAL AND  
TRADITIONAL VALUES  
FOR A POSITIVE COMMUNITY ACTION**

## BREAKDOWN OF A NUMBER OF RADIO RECEIVERS

Recently, BnB has witnessed problems with some of the hundreds of radio receivers that have been distributed to the Pygmy and Bantu populations in the CIB concessions. These receivers were a gift from CIB to the indigenous people living in the forest. In several villages and camps, people have reported various problems; for example, the power handle is broken, the solar panel has been separated or the on-off buttons no longer work. As a result, the demand for new receivers is increasing. It is clear that the population is using these devices improperly. At night outside of regular broadcasting hours, the radios are being used as torches or for listening to other shortwave radio stations. So, to overcome this problem, BnB has launched an appeal for support from organisations concerned with sustainable natural resource management and who recognize threatened cultures or indigenous traditions. Discussions are underway with an international supplier of simple FM receivers with only a hand-crank and solar panel for distribution to more people dispersed through the great Congo forests. To better protect the forest, forest-dwelling people must be informed of the issues linked to their existence and radio Biso na Biso advocates a respectful attitude towards the environment through all of its programmes.



Mandero interviewing in Ibamba



A semi-nomad shows her broken receiver in Matoto

### PORTRAIT: Lydie Biramani, coordinator

Three women currently work at radio Biso na Biso, among them, Lydie Biramani. Born in Makoua in the central basin, her parents come from the Sangha and are of the Bonguili ethnic group.

She started her studies in Ouessou then continued in Pointe-Noire until secondary school. Back in the Sangha, she trained in Ouessou as a health technician in a paramedical school. Looking for work, Lydie came to live in Pokola hoping to join a local clinic. Unfortunately, she didn't find a position until she heard of the creation of radio Biso na Biso. Being also interested in communications, she attended the local radio training. Today she is a community coordinator at the radio. She takes care of issues related to health, including the programmes « Hello Doctor » et « AIDS Alert ». Presenting sometimes in Lingala, sometimes in Bonguili, Lydie's ambition is one day to become a professional journalist and work or collaborate at a national radio station. While presenting health programmes on the radio, she has the feeling of providing a useful service to others.



Lydie Biramani in the middle of an interview

# IMAGES



Interview of Nicolas Ndjimbi Kala with a semi-nomad in Komo



Open-air recording at a Pygmy camp in Komo



Gift of a radio receiver to a lady member of the Listener Committee in Mbirou



BnB arrives in camp



Awareness campaign in Kabo on the timetable changes at the radio

