

The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance is at its highest level for decades. The effects of conflict, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic are taking a heavy toll on already-vulnerable populations, and in the countries where Fondation Hironnelle operates, food insecurity, extreme poverty and forced displacement are on the rise.

Fondation Hironnelle has been operating in humanitarian crisis contexts since 1995. As well as seeking to provide impartial, reliable news in such environments, the non-profit organisation also delivers public service programming designed specifically to meet the humanitarian information needs of people directly affected by humanitarian emergencies. The objective of such programming is to help communities cope and recover from crises and to ensure they have a voice.

# HUMANITARIAN CRISES : HOW MEDIA CAN HELP



# ► OUR AREAS OF INTERVENTION

We respond to crises with timely, reliable humanitarian information and we support journalists and aid providers to communicate more effectively with communities facing crisis. We do this through...

- The **production and broadcast of local-language media** programmes (radio, TV, web, mobile) addressing humanitarian issues. We focus on solution-oriented content designed to serve those most affected by a crisis, with special consideration for vulnerable groups, such as women, children and people with a disability. Our national production studios and their networks of correspondents create the programmes. Broadcasting is done through our own channels and via partner radio, TV, digital platforms and mobile operators in each country.
- **Information gathering** from communities affected by crises in order to better **understand their needs and priorities** and address them through our programming. This can be done through community focal points, mobile technology and messaging tools such as WhatsApp.
- **Capacity-strengthening** of local media and aid/health actors to help them communicate more effectively with crisis-affected populations, prioritising “information as aid” and two-way community engagement.



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# ► OUR GOALS

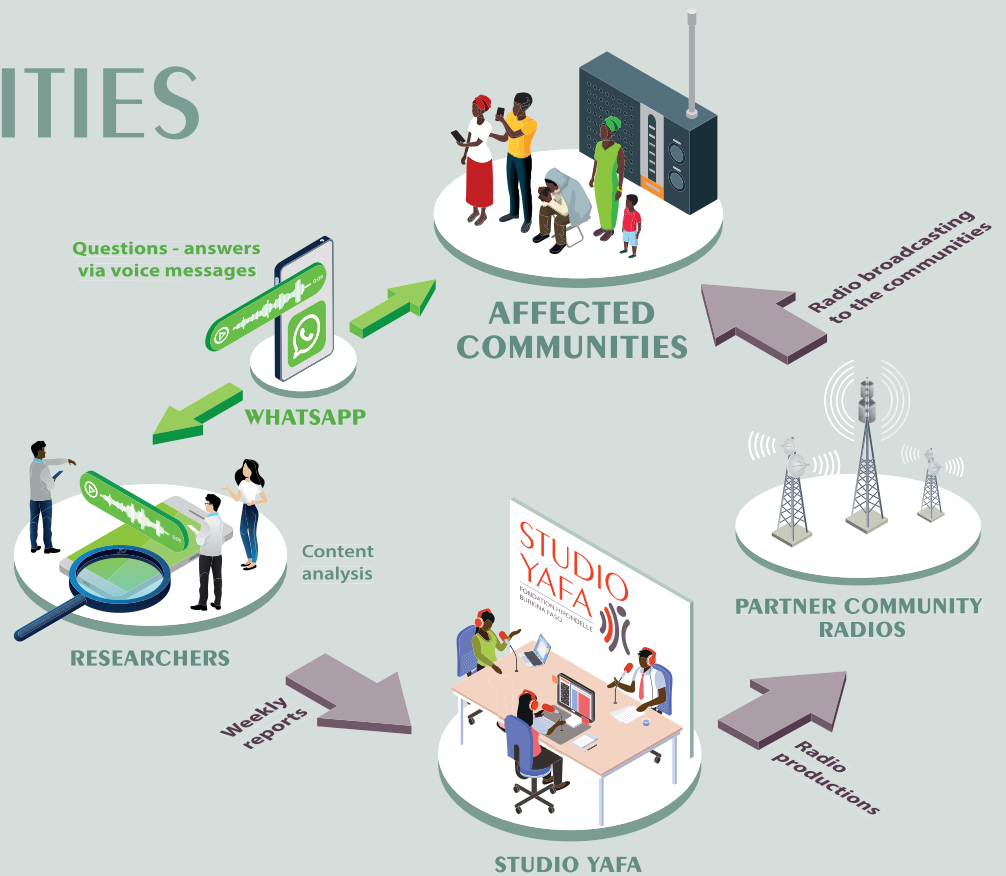
Through our media and capacity-strengthening work we aim to...

- Ensure audiences have **accurate, up to date and solution-oriented information** on the humanitarian situation, allowing them to make informed decisions
- **Counter the spread of misinformation**
- **Give communities a voice** to ensure their needs are understood
- Increase **understanding of the roles and activities of aid providers**, as well as aid services and how to access them
- Contribute to **psychosocial well-being**
- Contribute to **social cohesion**, in particular between displaced people and the communities which host them
- **Hold aid providers and governments accountable** for their actions in a humanitarian response
- **Strengthen the capacity of media and aid providers** to meet the communication needs of crisis-affected populations
- **Improve coordination and working relationships** between media and aid providers in emergencies

# AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

## RADIO AND COVID-RELATED (MIS)INFORMATION IN BURKINA-FASO : A PILOT STUDY

Radio is the most accessible and trusted channel for vulnerable people in emergency situations: 76% radio vs 8% TV and 3% social networks, according to results from a study conducted with IDPs in Burkina Faso by researchers from the Universities of Sheffield and Ouagadougou, with support from the Global charity ELRHA.



## ► OUR WORK ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CRISES - SOME EXAMPLES

### CORONAVIRUS CRISIS RESPONSE

Fondation Hironnelle has been working across 18 countries to help media and audiences cope with the coronavirus crisis. Our projects sought to provide reliable, accurate, useful information on the virus and its wider humanitarian impacts, as well as offering editorial, financial and technical support to media to help them deliver high-quality programming throughout the crisis. Countering dangerous mis- and dis-information was also a fundamental part of this work.

Fondation Hironnelle's Editorial Teams in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Myanmar and Bangladesh have been producing content for broadcast in multiple languages. Meanwhile, we have supported media partners in Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Cameroon, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Uganda.

A partnership with the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) and the Centre for the Analysis of Social Media (CASM) provided insights into (dis)information trends on Facebook in 6 African countries (Mali, Niger, Burkina, CAR, DRC, Cameroon). A partnership with the social enterprise Viamo has enabled us to reach and interact with audiences via mobile networks in innovative ways, using SMS and Interactive Voice Response services. It allowed us to share potentially life-saving information through audio with hundreds of thousands of people using Viamo's 3-2-1 Service, where users dial into a country-specific toll-free number to access relevant, credible information on demand, using a basic phone.



“ As a journalist myself, at first I did not believe in the virus. But when I took part in a training course on covid-19, I understood that it was a real disease, I was able to know the symptoms and the preventive measures and from then on, I started to raise awareness among the population ”

Testimony of a manager of a Fondation Hironnelle Radio partner in Niger, April 2021

# BURKINA FASO



In 2021 our team in Burkina Faso launched Faso Yafa, a 30-minute weekly radio programme to help the 1.5 million internally displaced people. As well as sharing practical information, such as helpline numbers for humanitarian assistance and advice from a psychologist on dealing with stress and trauma, the programme seeks to entertain, including storytelling and musicians, in recognition that many audiences also need respite from their difficult situation. The programmes are broadcast throughout the country via 36 radio partners and are available in four languages - Mòoré, Fula, Gourmanché and French.

Fifty five displaced people from different regions, including 45 young women, have been integrated into the project as correspondents. Meanwhile, a network of focal points enables the programs to be broadcast in listening groups, which also allows the team to collect feedback on the programme as well as to better understand the interests and concerns of listeners in relation to the humanitarian crisis.

“ The programmes produced by Studio Yafa are of great interest to us. Often, it is about social cohesion and living together: I like it very much!” ”

Testimony of a young displaced woman interviewed in a refugee camp in Burkina Faso in January 2022



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# BANGLADESH

Mass displacement of people can often lead to tensions with those communities that end up hosting the displaced. A major influx of vulnerable people can result in anger, stigmatisation, disputes over resources and sometimes violence. This has been the case in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, where some 900 000 Rohingya people remain in camps, having fled a wave of persecution which began in Myanmar in 2017. The camps were established in places where local communities were already facing precarious living conditions, adding a huge strain on host populations. The following year Fondation Hironnelle began a programme whose objectives included increasing social cohesion between refugees and host communities, using radio as a space for dialogue to increase mutual understanding and acceptance. The programmes also provided refugees with practical information on how to access aid services and steps they could take to stay healthy and safe in the camp.



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**An external assessment was carried out in 2021 to assess the overall impact of the project. It found :**

- an increase from 21% to 65% of refugees surveyed who feel that they have enough information to improve their lives in the camp.
- 60% of respondents said the programmes increased their tolerance towards the refugee community.

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