

Shortwave radio comes to the rescue

Shortwave radio brings smiles to the face of many Zimbabweans with news and information from across the world.

By [Mao Nyikandzino](#) 11 Sep 2007

Since its launch last year in December SW Radio Africa has become an alternative source of news and information using the short message sending (SMS) system directly to mobile phones.

With many Zimbabweans struggling to get basic commodities from the shops, the short message sending system allows them to get news at any given time without having to peruse a newspaper or go to the inter

Despite the frustrating slow speed to connect to the internet the service has however given Zimbabweans relief and an alternative media that can link them to the breaking stories as they unfold.

Asked about how it works, the station manager at SW Radio Africa, Gerry Jackson hailed the facility as a success. "We have a service on the net that keeps our database of all our subscribers' mobile numbers. You log onto that website, write our headline or breaking news, punch our database of numbers and by just clicking the button 'send' all our subscribers automatically receive the news. It is very simple but effective in sending out critical information" she said.

Since its launch the facility now boasts of more than 6500 subscribers. Jackson the number of subscribers is still growing every day.

Asked about how effective this facility is in reaching out to the rural populace, she explained that the facility there to compliment their shortwave radio station that beams across the country.

An expert in Media and Development, Denford Damba described the system as unique and worthwhile.

"One good thing about this facility is that it is not confined to Zimbabwe alone, but to all masses of the world who are concerned about the crisis in Zimbabwe and its manifestations", he said.

SW Radio Africa is one of many Zimbabwean radio stations that broadcast outside the country as a result of lack of media freedom in Zimbabwe.

The shortwave radio service was founded by former owners of Capitol radio that was banned in Zimbabwe by the government of Zimbabwe for speaking against state repression.

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