

# Pack 105, Item 14

Type: Broadcaster-how-to

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**BH2 – Public games (Jeu public)**

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***What is a “public game”?***

A *jeu public* or public game is a community event which brings together the whole community to discuss an important issue. The idea originated in Francophone West Africa, and is extremely popular in Burkina Faso.

In some cases, a radio station broadcasts live from the event. More often, the station records the event, then edits and plays it later as a special program. Sometimes, the station breaks down the recorded event into shorter segments and airs them on different dates.

The public game is an excellent approach for raising public awareness and mobilizing community members around a particular theme.

***How can it help me serve my listeners better?***

* It helps me identify and understand community opinions on important subjects.
* It enables me to publicly recognize local people’s knowledge of important community matters, including local farmers.
* It helps me keep my audience’s interests and opinions in mind in my broadcasts.
* It helps me to better know and understand my audience and feel closer to them.
* It helps me stay in touch with my audience and receive feedback from them.
* It promotes women’s participation in the community and serves to recognize women.

***How can it help me produce better programs?***

* It helps make my programs more engaging and memorable.
* It helps me evaluate how well my audience understands topics presented on the radio, and improve my broadcasts by ensuring that they meet my audience’s needs.
* It uncovers information and produces audio clips from which I can create good radio spots, promos, and other material for my regular farming program.
* It allows me to hear people’s good ideas, opinions, and practices, and feature them on air.
* It enables me to collect local music, quotes, and proverbs to be featured on the radio.

***Stages of the game*** (Learn more about these and other points in the *Details* section below.)

1. Choose a village and a theme (subject) for the game.
2. Make sure that key people are present and know their roles and tasks during the game.
3. Ensure that all necessary equipment is present.
4. Ensure that experts share basic information on the subject of the game with the jury.
5. Ensure that the host knows the rules of the game, his or her role in the game, and how the game is played.
6. Invite the audience and the contestants, and make sure you have adequate security.
7. Make sure that musicians and singers are present.
8. Play the game.
9. Present the prizes.
10. Conclusion

***Details***

1. ***Choose a village and a theme (subject) for the game***

*Choosing a village*

* Choose a village based on these criteria: the number of inhabitants, whether or not the village receives the radio station’s signal, and whether there are enough resource persons, musicians, and storytellers for the game to be successful.
* Choose the site where the game will be played, and the time when people will meet. Choose an accessible place out of direct sun.
* When scheduling the game, avoid conflicts with existing activities and events already scheduled, and consider the availability of the inhabitants, the location of the village, and local habits.

*Choosing the theme (subject)*

Here are three ways to choose a theme:

* It can be chosen at the request of an organization. For example, if the ministry of health discovers that women are not going to clinics to vaccinate their children, they might request a public game to sensitize the population on the need for and benefits of vaccination. The ministry would then help the station to create a riddle for the game and provide written documents to guide the jury. A ministry representative would sit on the jury, and would give a final message to the audience at the end of the game.
* The theme could be chosen as a result of community research on important topics.
* It could be chosen based on observing a behaviour which is particularly detrimental to the community. For example, a broadcaster might visit a village and notice that people are burning their fields, or that there are children with distended bellies and rust-coloured hair. This might prompt the broadcaster to investigate in more depth and then host a public game.
* It can be proposed by an agricultural or other expert.

Once the date, time, and place have been chosen, in consultation with the community, the station announces the game on air, through promos and during the regular farmer program. This is a very special event, so sometimes people from other villages several kilometres away will attend.

One of the benefits of holding a public game is the opportunity for broadcasters to visit communities and get to know community members better and understand their needs. In some cases, broadcasters might even spend a few days in a village. For example, a female broadcaster who spent time with village women and their children and travelled with them to find water could build bonds which enable the villagers to open up to her. Apart from any other benefits, this could help generate themes for the game, and some great interviews. It’s an approach that would require great commitment from a broadcaster, but one that could make a huge difference in the quality of the radio program and to the community.

1. ***Make sure that key people are present and know their roles and tasks during the game.***

Key people and tasks:

* *The host*: Is responsible for the game. Among other things, he or she introduces, moderates, asks the questions, invites contestants to participate, encourages them by asking the audience to appreciate them with applause, and introduces the musicians.
* *The jury*: Includes three to five people chosen by local leaders. The jury includes a member of the radio team as a consultant. The jury registers the contestants by taking their names and the name of their village, evaluates the performances, deliberates and chooses the winners, presents the correct answer, and announces the results.
* *The technician*: Is responsible for installing the equipment, including the sound system, as well as doing all sounds recording, including recording the musical entertainment.

1. ***Ensure that all necessary equipment is present***

The equipment needed to run the game includes:

* a sound mixer
* microphones and microphone stands
* audio recorders
* a strong amplifier
* loudspeakers
* headsets
* a source of power
* cables for microphones, loudspeakers, and the power source
* a lighting system (optional)
* enough tables and chairs for the jury and the technician

1. ***Ensure that experts share basic information on the subject of the game with the jury.***

* The chairperson of the jury should provide the jury with a document which explains key information about the theme of the game. This will help the jury make informed decisions about the winners of the different rounds of the game.

1. ***Ensure that the host knows the rules of the game, his or her role in the game, and how the game is played.***

* *The host*: The atmosphere of the public game rests on the host’s shoulders. It is the host’s responsibility to:
  + Encourage the public to participate in the game.
  + Create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere and keep the crowd entertained.
  + Encourage reluctant, shy, or hesitant people to participate.
  + Explain the procedures in the different rounds of the game.
  + Seek out talented people to inject energy into the game.
  + Make sure that all social groups in the community have an opportunity to speak into the microphone.
* At the beginning of the event, the host invites the community to say the name of the village all together, and then introduces the village chief, who introduces the village. When the host presents the chief, the chief receives a symbolic gift such as a bag of kola nuts as thanks for hosting the game in the village.
* The co-host: Supports the head host and translates when there is no translator on site or in the team.

1. ***Invite the audience and the contestants, and make sure you have adequate security.***

*The audience*: Before travelling to the village, the radio station makes an on-air announcement that it is hosting a public game. This allow people from surrounding villages time to travel to the game. Hundreds of people may watch the game.

During the first round, the host picks people from the crowd who volunteer an answer to the riddle. For variety and diversity and to show the talents of a wide range of people, the host chooses different kinds of people from the crowd, including men, women, teenagers, children, elderly people, teachers, students, health workers, farmers, and people from all occupations and age groups. Those people then come into the middle to give their answers. These are the participants, some of whom will be eliminated as the game progresses.

*The contestants*: Introduce themselves when chosen by the host by giving their name and the village where they live. Based on their answers during the game, eight contestants are chosen from the approximately 20 contestants in the first round. These eight play the second game, then four are chosen for the final game. In some villages, the chief plays the game, which is especially exciting for the audience.

*Security:* Since hundreds of people may attend, you will need a group of people to manage the crowd and keep everyone safe. This is organized by local authorities. These people are not necessarily police, and could be established youth groups or farmers’ groups who help prevent damage to radio equipment, speakers, and the central area where the game is played, by directing people away from and into the appropriate areas.

1. ***Make sure that musicians and singers are present***

Important events in a village are celebrated through song and dance. A public game is a significant event, and is always accompanied by musicians and singers.

When contestants are thinking about their responses and when the jury is deliberating, musicians can provide dancing music for all.

1. ***Play the game***

*Here’s how the game works*

Introduction (5 min)

* Presentation of village by a noteworthy member of the jury and of the radio team. The chief usually does this—or another respected member of the community. That person gives a brief history of the village, describes its location, what the village is known for, and may speak about, for example, what local farmers grow, artisanal activities, local customs, the state of health care, women’s situation, and the educational system.
* First round: *The riddle* (20-30 minutes, 20 contestants)
  + *Description*: Here is an example of a riddle: I come in different shapes and sizes—big, small, long, and short. My brothers and sisters come in many different colours—white, yellow, and orange—but I am healthier than the others. I taste great. You don’t pay attention to me very much because you think I am dangerous. But in fact, I provide health and can even make you rich. What am I? Answer: An orange-fleshed sweet potato.
* *Stages of the round*:
* The host reads out the riddle three or four times, as many times as needed, to ensure that the contestants and the audience understand it.
* The contestants deliberate on the riddle.
* There is musical entertainment while the contestants deliberate.
* The host reads out the riddle to the audience again.
* The contestants give their responses, and are applauded by the audience.
* The jury deliberates.
* There is musical entertainment while the jury deliberates.
* The jury chooses eight winners to proceed to the next round.
* The contestants can ask the jury questions on the theme. The expert on the jury gives the right answer to the riddle, and explains why the correct responses were chosen—and why the non-winning responses were not as correct. This gives the crowd an opportunity to learn more about the theme and also raise other questions. The host may choose a few questions from the crowd to be answered before moving on to the next round.
* Second round: *The most persuasive contestant* (20 minutes, 8 contestants)
  + *Description*: The eight people who were chosen for the second round make a presentation on the benefits of the chosen theme. They can do this by making a speech—or by pulling someone from the crowd and trying to convince them. It is sometimes easier to do it this way because it helps the contestants focus on one person instead of the whole audience. For example, a contestant might say: “Mousa, you know you have to eat OFSP because it contains a lot of vitamin A. That’s why it is orange. Vitamin A has a lot of benefits. Listen to me: My child was feeling weak and seemed very small for her age. I began feeding her OFSP one year ago and she is feeling much better. She has more energy, her stomach is not as bloated, and her hair and skin is smoother. Pregnant woman can benefit from OFSP—and it even helps babies …”
* *Stages of the round*:
* The host introduces the round.
* There is musical entertainment while the contestants plan their speeches.
* There are speeches from the contestants.
* There is musical entertainment while the jury deliberates.
* The host reminds the audience what the jury is looking for and how they judge the game.
* The jury gives their reasons for choosing four winners, and highlights some of the stronger arguments put forth by the other participants. This reinforces the information that contestants have talked about in the game and the key information needed to encourage changes in behaviour or attitude in the community.
* The jury declares the four winners.
* Third round: *Tribute in song or poem* (4 contestants).
  + *Description*: The four final candidates sing a song or recite a poem praising OFSP, or the people who grow OFSP, or the people who eat OFSP, or the people who provide them in the market, or some other aspect of OFSP. They use their imagination to come up with something very positive, entertaining, and full of good information.
* *Stages of the round*:
* The host introduces the game.
* There is musical entertainment while the contestants create a song or poem about the theme.
* The contestants sing songs or present poetry which features good practices and good results obtained by using those good practices.
* There is musical entertainment while the jury deliberates.
* The jury declares the winner.

1. ***Present the prizes***

It is advisable, though not mandatory, to present awards to the winners. If you choose winners, the jury declares the winners in descending order at the end of the last round: Fourth place gets a small prize; third place gets something a little more valuable; second place, more valuable; and the grand winner gets the biggest prize. The prizes are usually related to the theme discussed in the games, for example, seeds, a radio, a phone, a bag of agricultural produce, etc. Other possibilities include soap, a torch, and sugar. Sometimes, the grand winner is allowed to choose his or her gift first.

1. ***Conclusion*** (5 minutes)

* Speeches by the winners and the village chief, who make closing remarks on the game, their experience, what they learned, how the game might influence behaviours, etc.
* The host closes the game and says goodbye to the audience.
* Musicians’ closing performance.

***Where else can I learn about jeu public?***

Francois Querre, 1991. *Les mille et un mondes.* Rome: FAO. 215 pp.

Note: The version of the public game described in this Broadcaster how-to guide was adapted from the 1991 FAO publication, written in collaboration with the Inter-African Centre for Rural Broadcasting Studies of Ouagadougou (CIERRO), by consultants from an organization called Intermedia after much fieldwork in Burkina Faso.

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