

# “Analysis of the Strategic Role of Radio Okapi in United Nations Peace Keeping Operations in the DRC”

MICHEL KIFINDA NGOY

**Abstract:-** In this article, we analyse the strategic work carried out by Radio Okapi in the Democratic Republic of Congo between 2002 and 2022, as part of the International Mission peace operations in this country in the heart of Africa. Created in 2002, UN Radio has, thanks to the expertise of Fondation Hirondelle, played an important role in the process of reunification, pacification, democratization, stability and development of the DRC. Our qualitative and quantitative survey on Surveymankey reveals that Radio Okapi is the MONUSCO service that has had the greatest impact on the daily lives of Congolese.

Through his journalistic production, Radio Okapi has shown himself as a symbol of national unity and proof of Congolese cultural identity for the past 20 years. Even if at one point, by talking about armed groups and rape in the east, it seemed to develop a paradoxical communication, Radio Okapi has, through its information and broadcasts, contributed a lot to the advent of a democratic culture in the DRC. This justifies the opinion in favor of its perpetuation after the departure of MONUSCO.

## I. INTRODUCTION

To understand the usefulness of Radio Okapi's work in the search for peace, stability and development in the DRC, we must start from the Rwandan genocide which caused about 80 thousand deaths. This genocide was provoked mainly by the media campaign of praise for animosity and human cruelty, regularly carried out on the antennas of the Radio Libre des mille collines.<sup>2</sup>

In October 1996, in eastern DRC, fighting broke out between the Zairian armed forces and the Banyamulenge rebels. This war allowed Laurent-Désiré Kabila to take power on May 17, 1997 by overthrowing President Mobutu. Since August 2, 1998, a second war of liberation has been declared in Goma, a neighboring Congolese city in Rwanda

and<sup>3</sup> plunges the Congolese population into indescribable misery with thousands of refugees and multiple cases of human rights violations.

And it is in this context that the UN Security Council set up, in 2000, a peacekeeping operation mission. The challenge being immense for MONUC, it was necessary to have an appropriate strategy to make the UN mission closer to the population and avoid the failure of UNAMIR during the Rwandan Genocide. At the heart of this strategy, Radio Okapi was therefore created very appropriately, thanks to the partnership between the UN and Fondation Hirondelle. It should play a strategic role in the reunification, pacification, democratization and development of the DRC.

- What role has Radio Okapi played for nearly 20 years in the DRC and what is the impact on the principles and practice of journalism?

## II. PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

### A. STUDY FRAMEWORK: RADIO OKAPI

- a) Strategic triangle in the creation of Radio Okapi  
Radio Okapi stems from an agreement signed between the United Nations and Fondation Hirondelle. Its creation in the DRC as a local media was defined in the agreement signed by the UN and the Congolese Government, the SOFA. This agreement is in line with the Charter of the United Nations signed in 1945 at the San Francisco Conference.

According to Mr. Julian Harston, this Charter assigns four purposes to the United Nations:<sup>4</sup>

- The maintenance of international peace and security;
- The development of friendly relations between nations;
- Cooperation in order to solve problems and guarantee human rights;
- The establishment of a centre to harmonize the actions of nations.

<sup>1</sup>El Hadji Touré, "Beyond the political foundations of the Rwandan genocide: a historical-socio-cultural construction of ethnicism", In *Deviance and Society* 2013/4 (Vol. 37), pages 463 to 485

<sup>2</sup>TIRTHANKAR, Chanda, *Rwanda: the origins of the genocide*, RFI, Published : 06/04/2014 - 11 : 53 Modified on: 17/04/2014 - 12 : 28, consulted on 22 January 2021 on <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20140406-rwanda-origines-genocide-habyarimana-kagame-tutsis-hutus-france>

<sup>3</sup>Navanethem Pillay, Report of the Mapping Project concerning the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed between March 1993 and June 2003 on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Geneva, UNJHRO, 2010, p.9.

<sup>4</sup>HARSTON, M. Julian, *Introduction to the United Nations System: A Guide to Service on a United Nations Field Mission*, Williamsburg, Peace Operations Training Institute, 2016, p.14.

In view of the multiple threats to peace in several countries, the UN has deployed peacekeeping missions, whose origin has sometimes been traced back to the fifth century BC. The 1st generation OMPs, such as the one deployed in 1956 to respond to the Suez crisis, are missions of interposition after a ceasefire or border surveillance. Only the Congo crisis, in 1961, had led to the use of force with ONUC in 1960,<sup>56</sup> after the death of Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the UN<sup>7</sup>.

Forty years later, the UN deploys a new mission in the DRC to face a war that has divided the country into three administrations. Compared to Afghanistan, where NATO deployed more than 100,000 well-trained and well-equipped troops in 2010, MONUC has deployed barely 20,000 troops to a territory three times the size of Afghanistan. How do you expect that with 20,000 soldiers less trained than the 100,000 deployed in Afghanistan can completely restore peace in a subcontinent country that is the DRC?

In 2012, Martin Kobler, head of MONUSCO after serving in Afghanistan, immediately understood that he could not rely too much exclusively on MONUSCO soldiers. He therefore reinforced his attention on the Joint Human Rights Office, BCNDH, and Radio Okapi, a media strategically created with the expertise of Fondation Hirondelle created in 1994 by three Swiss journalists during the Rwandan genocide, says Jean Marie Etter.<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, Radio Okapi being essentially designed and executed by the expertise of Fondation Hirondelle, thanks to UN funding, its editorial model obeys that of the FH whose rigorous processing of information involves the obligation to report only facts as experienced, accurately, objectively and balanced; and above all with respect for the dignity of the other.<sup>9</sup>

And it was in the context of the war unleashed on August 2, 1998 that divided the DRC into three administrations that Radio Okapi was born in 2002 to play a strategic role in the process initiated by President Joseph Kabila to reunify, pacify, democratize and stabilize the country.

#### b) Birth of the UN Republic in the DRC

On the eve of the creation of Radio Okapi, the country was divided into several administrations. To reunify and pacify it, a ceasefire agreement was signed in July 1999 in Lusaka, Zambia. This led the Security Council to demand the withdrawal of foreign forces and to establish, by its resolution 1279 of 30 November 1999, the Peace Mission in the DRC, MONUC.<sup>10</sup>

Convinced of the strategic role that this radio station should play in the implementation of MONUC's mandate, the UN called on the expertise of Fondation Hirondelle, which set up in 2011 the concept of a radio station, organized as a network across the country with a network head in Kinshasa<sup>11</sup>. And it was on 25 February 2002 that Radio Okapi began broadcasting for the first time from its studios in Kinshasa and throughout the Congolese territory. Since then, it has remained the only radio station to broadcast throughout the DRC until the eve of the 2006 elections.<sup>12</sup>

Although Radio Okapi remains the initiative of the United Nations, Patrick Busquet stresses that it is a proven historical fact that Fondation Hirondelle created Radio Okapi, which continues to operate on the editorial model of this Swiss Organization. But radio unquestionably belongs to the United Nations. It broadcasts<sup>13</sup> in the five languages spoken in the DRC (Swahili, Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba and French. Today, it has five regional stations and 41 FM transmitters as well as one Internet broadcast ([www.radiookapi.net](http://www.radiookapi.net)). The website welcomes more than 2 million Internet users per month.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>5</sup> SUNIL V. Ram, *History of United Nations peacekeeping operations during the Cold War : 1945 à 1987*, United Nations, Cours, July 2006, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> DAVID, Charles-Philippe, *War and Peace: Contemporary Approaches to Security and Strategy*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2006, p. 311.

<sup>7</sup> MARCIN PERRIN DE BRICHAMBAUT and Ali, *Leçons du droit international public*, Paris, Presses des Sciences Po et Dalloz, 2002, p.248.

<sup>8</sup> CHICON, Emmanuel, *a Swallow making peace via radio*, Libération, 06 August 2005, to be consulted on [https://www.liberation.fr/medias/2005/08/06/une-hirondelle-faiseuse-de-paix-via-la-radio\\_528661/](https://www.liberation.fr/medias/2005/08/06/une-hirondelle-faiseuse-de-paix-via-la-radio_528661/)

<sup>9</sup> ETTER, Jean-Marie, *la pratique du journalisme en zone de conflit*, version 1, Fondation Hirondelle, Lausanne 2005, p.4

<sup>10</sup> Security Council 1140, the resolution of the situation in the DRC requires the respect of the Lusaka agreement, press release of 24 January 2000, pp.4 à Find on: <https://www.un.org/press/fr/2000/20000124.cs1140.html>

<sup>11</sup> Presentation by Radio Okapi, from <https://www.radiookapi.net/page/propos>, consulted on 11 October 2021 at 08:30

<sup>12</sup> Aimee Kayembe and others, *Situation of the media in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Paris, Institut Panos Paris, 2004, pp. 76

<sup>13</sup> BUSQUET, Patrick, Representative of Fondation Hirondelle 2013-2015 affirmed this during an interview granted to us in 2014, as part of our scientific research on this work.

<sup>14</sup> ESSOME, Alexandre, Director of Radio Okapi 2019-2022, Radio Okapi, article published on <https://monusco.unmissions.org/radio-okapi>

- c) Radio Okapi's own objectives, values and perspectives  
Created to make a lasting contribution to peace, in particular by accompanying the democratic process in the DRC, Radio Okapi's objective was to contribute to efforts to reunify and pacify the country. For this purpose, it is referred to as the frequency of peace because its staff should develop conflict-sensitive journalism in order to promote peace and development.

According to Fondation Hirondelle, which determined the form and content of this radio, Okapi was created to cover news in the DRC in the most complete and rigorous way possible. Through its programmes, it respects regional pluralism within a national identity. It covers, if necessary, military news, explains the work of MONUC, UN agencies and the main stakeholders in the electoral process.<sup>15</sup>

Radio Okapi endorses the criteria set by UNESCO, including universality, diversity and independence. Working in Congolese society and for it, Radio Okapi<sup>16</sup> wants to defend and protect the values expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The authorities and individuals under attack can speak freely on these facts.<sup>17,18</sup>

Many Congolese and foreign media quote information broadcast by Radio Okapi and praise its credibility<sup>19</sup>. According to Charles Antoine Bambara, the reputation of Radio Okapi is mainly made by journalists who have adhered to an editorial line, based on impartiality, balance of information, objectivity, clarity, accuracy in any treatment of the news. The other caporalized media do not hesitate to relay the information broadcast by Radio Okapi and cover themselves with this source to escape threats and multiple pressures.<sup>20,21</sup>

Through its national network, the provinces listen to the capital and the capital finally hears the provinces. Radio Okapi is an instrument of reunification and national reconciliation. Most of the personalities interviewed say that the radio has opened up the Congo.<sup>22</sup>

Didn't Marie Soleil Frère affirm that Radio Okapi has played an essential role in maintaining national cohesion and a sense of common belonging within a divided geographical and ideological community? In terms of the advent of democracy, Radio Okapi has played a key role in media coverage of the elections of the last three electoral cycles, on the eve of which it is putting in place an electoral charter that sets out the rules that reflect the fundamental principles of the professional practice of journalism as well as the values of the United Nations and Fondation Hirondelle.<sup>23,24</sup>

If the Okapi project can be considered a success, it raises several questions, says Aimée Kayembe. There is in particular the problem of MONUSCO's stranglehold on radio amplified by the departure of Fondation Hirondelle. There is also the integration of the project into the local journalistic landscape that is becoming more and more a reality. Today, apart from the<sup>25</sup> posts of the Radio Directorate, all other supervisory functions are occupied by nationals. There is also the future of the Radio Okapi project, which remains uncertain. However, with the creation of "Ban'Okapi" is one track among many others to perpetuate this project.

## B. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

The analysis of the strategic role played by Radio Okapi in the efforts of reunification, pacification, democratization and stabilization of the DRC required a rigorous methodological approach coupled with qualitative and quantitative approaches.

### a) The qualitative method

Our study focuses completely on the perception of Radio Okapi's work by its listeners and audiences on the internet. To achieve this, we used an ethnographic approach and focus group.

<sup>15</sup> Fondation Hirondelle, *The practice of journalism in conflict zones*, version 1, Kinshasa, Radio Okapi, p.6.

<sup>16</sup> Radio Okapi from the website [www.radiookapi.net](http://www.radiookapi.net)

<sup>17</sup> Fondation Hirondelle, *The practice of journalism in conflict zones* On. Cit. pp.7

<sup>18</sup> Fondation Hirondelle, *Summary of the sustainability study of Consultant Pierre Heuer* Study conducted from April to November 2004 in the DRC

<sup>19</sup> The BBC World Service has asked Radio Okapi for permission to reproduce some of its information for its online site. Several other local media systematically use the information broadcast by Radio Okapi to enrich their editorial offer.

<sup>20</sup> BAMBARA, Charles Antoine, « Radio Okapi : Quinze ans au service de la nation congolaise » in *Echoes de la Monusco, Radio Okapi, special 15 years*, Kinshasa February 2017, pp. 5.

<sup>21</sup> KIFINDA NGOY Michel, *Media and political power in the DRC. Outline for Peace and Development Journalism*, Saarbrücken, Editions Universitaires Européennes, 2019, p.161.

<sup>22</sup> HEUER, Pierre, *Sustainability study of Radio Okapi*, Kinshasa, Study conducted from April to November 2004, p.4.

<sup>23</sup> FRERE, Marie Soleil and Others, *Central Africa, Media and Conflict. Vectors of war or actors of peace*, Bruxelles, Editions complexes, 2005, p.111-112.

<sup>24</sup> SAIKI, Kamal and LAPLUME, Yves, *Electoral Charter*, Kinshasa, Radio Okapi 2005, pp.3-6

<sup>25</sup> KAYEMBE Aimee and Others, *Situation of the media in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Paris, Institut Panos Paris, 2004, p.76.

Ethnography is a qualitative method for carrying out a descriptive and careful study of the habits, customs and mores of specific populations. It makes it possible to assemble the elements of information in a complex system to penetrate the dynamics around objects.<sup>26</sup>

Through ethnography, we studied the behaviour of the population in the east, including armed groups, to see how the information broadcast by Radio Okapi influenced the Congolese, particularly in promoting a culture of peace and development.

To complete and tie up our qualitative research, we used the focus groups thanks to which we carried out group interviews. These are semi-structured discussion groups, moderated by a neutral moderator in the presence of a spectator, which aim to collect information on a pre-developed question.<sup>27</sup> Our focus groups worked thanks to the Club des auditeurs de Radio Okapi created by Fondation Hirondelle a few months after the creation of the Radio.

b) From qualitative to quantitative method

After a good collection of qualitative data through focus groups through our opinion survey questionnaire, the use of quantitative methods has proven to be essential in mathematical and statistical analysis in the description, explanation and prediction of phenomena through historical sources in the form of measurable variables.

According to Agathe COUVREUR and Franck LEHUEDE,<sup>28</sup> quantitative research helps to evaluate opinions or behaviour. It also leads to the characterization of the characteristics of a population with its own opinion or behaviour. Beyond the counting of opinions or behaviors of groups of individuals, quantitative aims to verify hypotheses and illustrate theories by highlighting correlations between variables.

Thus, in light of these methods, we initiated an online survey questionnaire with the mathematical interpretation of the results in order to collect the opinions of the Congolese public on the strategic role of Radio Okapi in UN peacekeeping operations in the DRC.

### III. ANALYSE OF THE PERCEPTION BY THE CONGOLESE OF THE WORK DONE BY RADIO OKAPI

#### A. USE OF THE SURVEY MANKEY SOFTWARE IN CONDUCTING AN OPINION POLL ON THE PERCEPTION OF RADIO OKAPI'S WORK BY THE CONGOLESE POPULATION

What perception does the Congolese population, the main beneficiary of Radio Okapi's work, have?

To arrive at a scientific answer to this question, we used a mixed method, qualitative and quantitative, through a small online opinion survey using the SurveyMonkey software. Our approach was methodical: we<sup>29</sup> first organized an online working session, in a WhatsApp Group, with the coordination of the 26 provinces of the Club des listeners de radio Okapi, CARO, an organization created by Fondation Hirondelle to collect listeners' opinions on the work of Radio Okapi. Based on discussions with CARO members, we received a closed-ended questionnaire consisting of eight main questions that could allow us to understand the perception of Congolese on Radio Okapi's work compared to other MONUSCO services.

To have a representative, quantitative and above all qualitative sample, we had to submit this questionnaire to the Congolese populations of all 26 provinces of the country. Difficulties in accessing the Internet for all have risked limiting this survey to a certain category of the population, whereas it is more listeners from the interior of the country who regularly follow Radio Okapi because of the lack of other local media.

We therefore relied on the Club of Auditors of Radio Okapi, CARO, to organize focus groups. As the Listeners' Club is already a well-organized and representative structure in all provinces and cities of the country, we have ensured that the provincial leaders of all the branches of the Listeners' Club have the questionnaire and organize a group session with the other members to answer it together. Thanks to the listeners' club, which also exists on Facebook's social networks, WhatsApp, we have formed 144 Focus groups for the 144 territorial committees of the Listeners' Club. Each group answered a questionnaire, which gave us already 144 answers obtained, answers reflecting the perception of several hundred people grouped into 144 committees of the Listeners' Club.

<sup>26</sup>DIOP SALL Fatou, "Chapter 8. La méthode ethnographique », in: Françoise Chevalier éd., *The research methods of the DBA*. Caen, EMS Editions, « Business Science Institute », 2018, p. 140-157. DOI: 10.3917/ems.cheva.2018.01.0140. URL : <https://www.cairn.info/--9782376871798-page-140.htm>,

<sup>27</sup> Dr. Pia Touboul, *Qualitative Research: The Focus Groups method Methodological guide for theses in General Medicine*, Department of Public Health CHU of Nice, consulted on [https://nice.cnge.fr/IMG/pdf/Focus\\_Groupes\\_methodologie\\_PTdef.pdf](https://nice.cnge.fr/IMG/pdf/Focus_Groupes_methodologie_PTdef.pdf), February 20, 2022.

<sup>28</sup> Agathe COUVREUR and Franck LEHUEDE, *Essai de comparaison des méthodes quantitatives et qualitatives à partir d'un exemple: le passage à l'Euro vivre par les consommateurs*, Paris, Credoc, 2002, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup>SurveyMonkey is an online survey site founded in 1999 by Ryan Finley. SurveyMonkey offers free, customizable surveys, as well as a series of statistics programs.



As the Listeners' Club was created to enable the population to take ownership of Radio Okapi's work by its listeners, the members of this Club regularly follow Radio Okapi and participate in the regular debate on the editorial content of the Radio. This gave our survey an advantage and a risk. The advantage is that our questionnaire is answered by people who actually listen to Radio Okapi regularly and can give us answers that are very reasonable and close to scientific reality. But the risk was, given their proximity to Radio for more than ten years, the members of the Listeners' Club could be content to give us answers that were a little partisan and not based on an objective perception.

Thus, in addition to these 144 targeted questionnaires, we also shared the link of the questionnaire to about twenty

targeted people who are not members of the Listeners' Club. Among these people are some university professors, students, journalists, political and diplomatic operators. We also shared this questionnaire with strangers through social media. Only about fifty people answered our question completely.

This allowed us to collect more than 200 responses to our questionnaire, but answers that represent the perception of several hundred Congolese from all territories of the DRC including the diaspora. All these responses were methodically processed and interpreted by Surveymankey before presenting the results in diagram and percentage.

## B. SURVEY RESULTS

Q1 What is your perception of the work of MONUSCO and Radio Okapi? Choose all the right assertions.

ANSWER CHOICES	ANSWERS	
MONUSCO has worked hard to secure civilians, especially in the east of the country	15.28%	33
MONUSCO's work is not noticeable as civilians are still being killed in the east	68.98%	149
MONUSCO has mainly contributed to the fight against extreme poverty in conflict-affected areas	7.87%	17
Within MONUSCO, Radio Okapi is one of the services that has helped the Congolese population the most.	62.96%	136
If MONUSCO and Radio Okapi were not in the DRC, the situation in the country would be more dramatic and catastrophic.	25.93%	56
Total number of participants: 216		

Table 1: 216 responses received

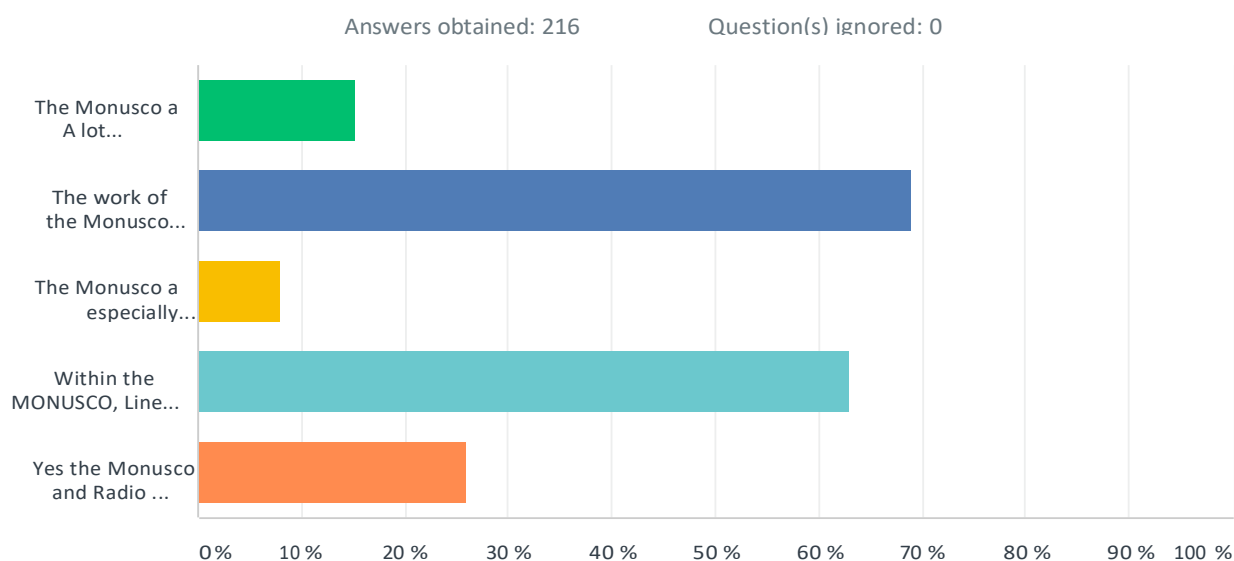


Fig. 1: graphical presentation of the answers to the first question

Q2 Of the following services of MONUSCO, which has had the greatest impact on the daily lives of Congolese? Choose all the right assertions.

ANSWER CHOICES	ANSWERS
a. Thanks to "Civil Affairs", populations affected by conflicts have been assisted by the construction of bridges, villages, health centers, etc.	28.24% 61
b. Thanks to "Political Affairs", political actors have been reconciled and conflicts avoided.	16.20% 35
c. Thanks to the Joint Human Rights Office, Congolese activists have been protected and human rights violations denounced	50.00% 108
d. Thanks to the Aviation Service, many military missions and NGOs have taken place in a country where the infrastructure is almost non-existent.	43.98% 95
e. Thanks to Radio Okapi, the Congolese population is well informed, the country reunified by the same information and the mandate of MONUSCO well understood.	64.81% 140
Other (please specify)	9.26% 20
Total number of participants: 216	

Table 2: 216 responses received.

In order of decrease, Radio Okapi is the service of MONUSCO which has more impact on the Congolese population with more than 64%, followed by the Joint Office for Human Rights with 50%. Aviation Movcon comes third with 43%, followed by Civil Affairs 28%, and Political Affairs 16%.

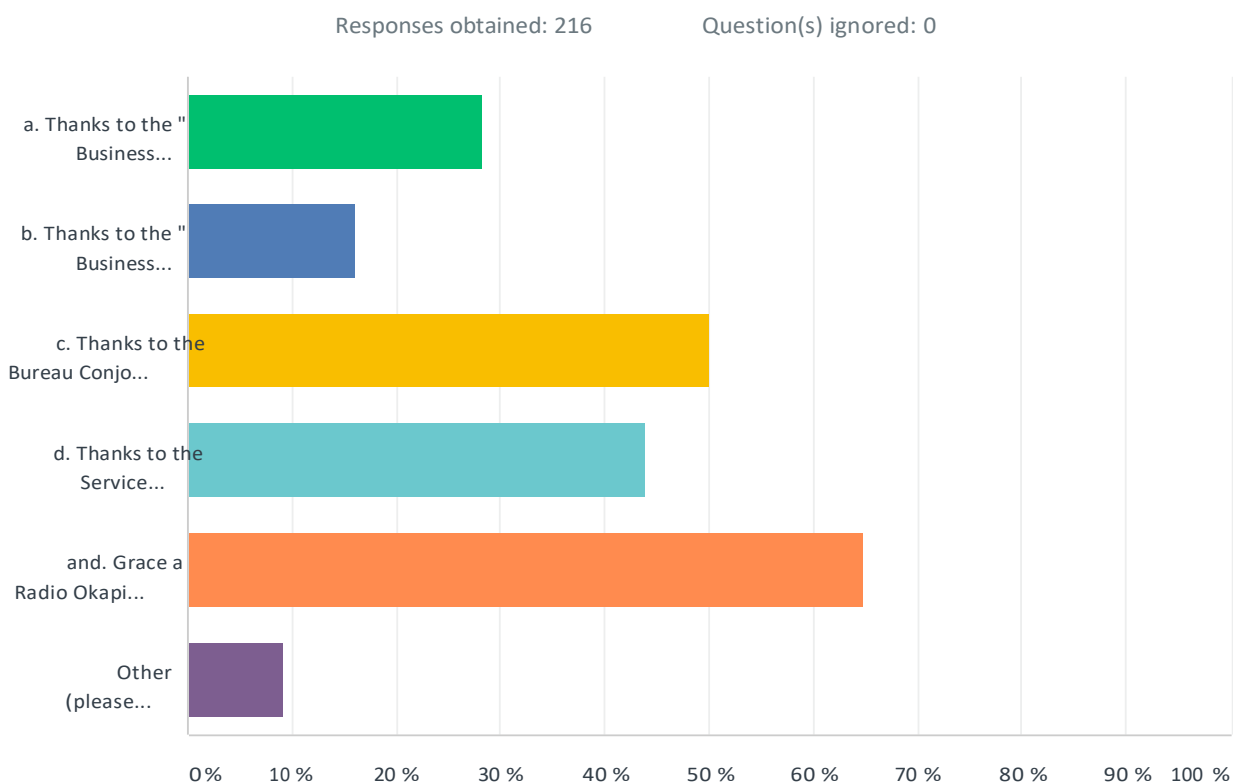


Fig. 2: Graphical presentation of the answers to the first question

Q3 Which Radio Okapi show meets your expectations? List in order of arrival

ANSWER CHOICES	ANSWERS	
a. Newspapers	71.16%	153
b. The DEC	35.81%	77
c. The Editors' Word	71.16%	153
d. Okapi service	24.19%	52
e. Great Interview	32.09%	69
f. Rund Up and Okapi danse (music shows)	6.98%	15
g. Okapi Sports	25.12%	54
h. Okapi miscegenation and cultural events	12.09%	26
i. Okapi employment	21.40%	46
j. Regional newspapers and Lingala info	23.26%	50
Total number of participants: 215		

Table 3: responses from 215 participants

This table illustrates that newspapers and the program word to listeners are the most followed of all Radio Okapi programs with more than 71% of audience each, followed by Dialogue Entre Congolais 35%, Grande Interview 32%, Okapi sport 25%, Okapi Service 24%, Newspapers of the regions and info lingala 23%, Okapi employment 21%, Okapi miscegenation and cultural animation 12%, etc.

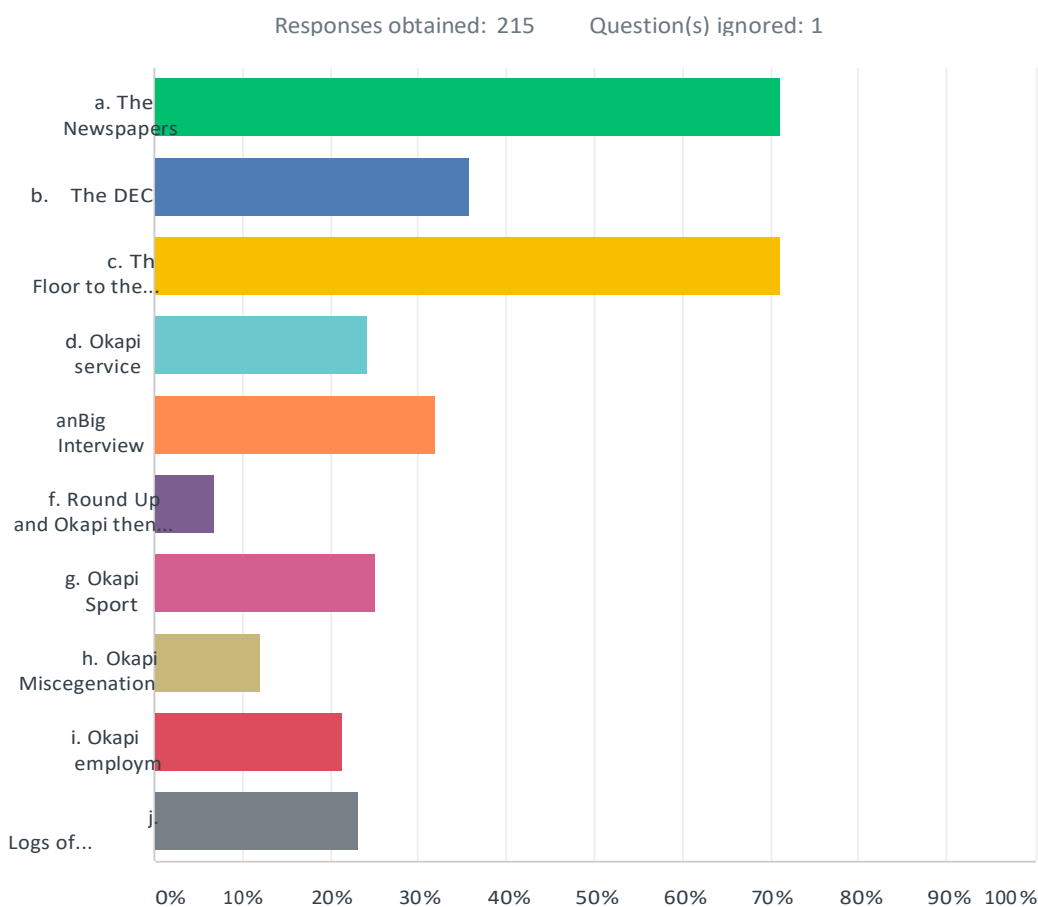


Fig. 3: graphical presentation of the responses to the third question

Q4 Are you satisfied with Radio Okapi's handling of political news? And why?

ANSWER CHOICES	ANSWERS	
a. Yes, Radio Okapi broadcasts impartial, objective, balanced and non-partisan information	63.43%	137
b. No, Radio Okapi's news is partisan and unbalanced	6.48%	14
c. Radio Okapi broadcasts credible but late and in-depth information	3.24%	7
d. Radio Okapi censors all information that offends MONUSCO or the government	8.80%	19
Radio Okapi should focus on journalistic investigations to unearth all the political shenanigans blocking the DRC	18.06%	39
TOTAL		216

Table 4: 216 responses

63% of the Congolese population believe that Radio Okapi broadcasts impartial, objective, balanced and non-partisan information. 18% want Radio Okapi to focus on journalistic investigations to find all the political shenanigans blocking the DRC. 8% accuse Radio Okapi of censoring all information that undermines MONUSCO or the government, 7% think that Radio Okapi's news is partisan and unbalanced and 3% maintain that Radio Okapi broadcasts credible information but late and without going into depth.

Figure1-9: graphical presentation of responses to the fourth question

Responses obtained: 216 Question(s) ignored: 0

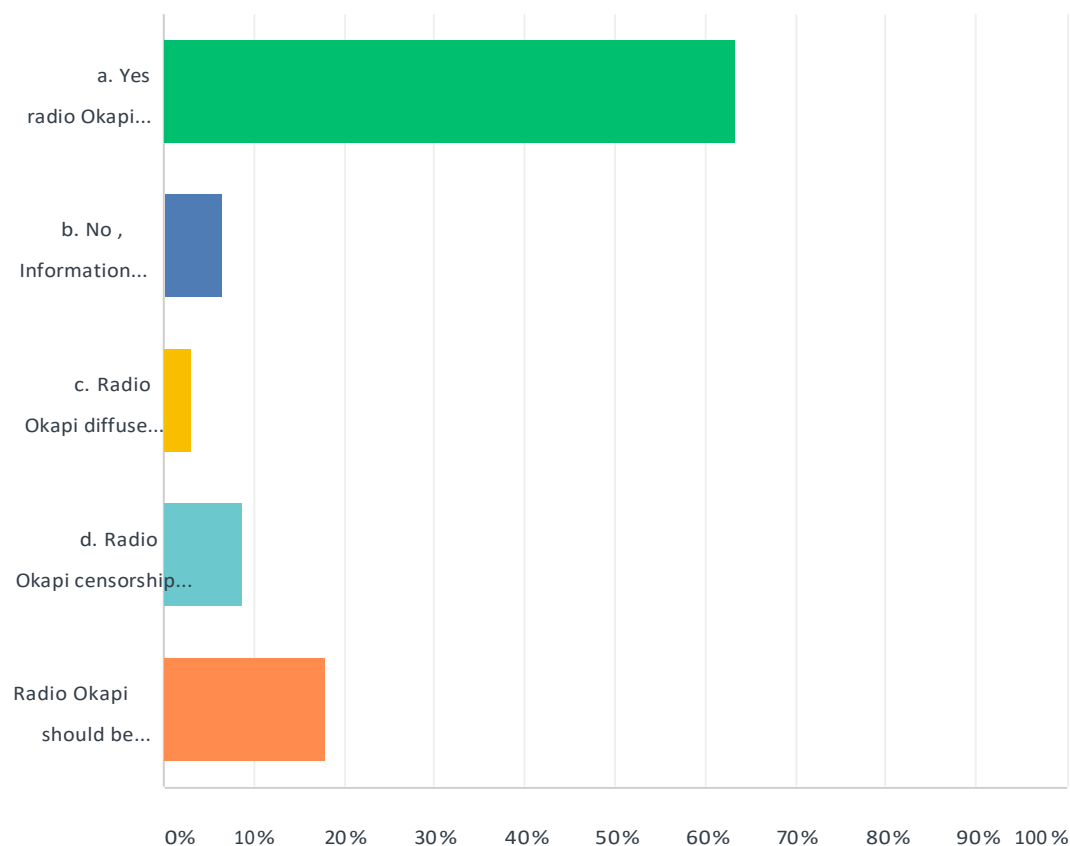


Fig. 4: 216 responses



Q5 How do you assess the impact of the security information broadcast by Radio Okapi? Choose all the right assertions.

ANSWER CHOICES	ANSWERS	
a. Radio Okapi's security information enabled MONUSCO and FARDC to stay ahead of negative forces and fight them effectively.	47.22%	102
b. Thanks to the information broadcast by Radio Okapi, all negative forces were denounced and suppressed.	25.46%	55
c. Radio Okapi has glorified armed groups by amplifying and dramatizing even small attacks instead of focusing on the real problems of the population.	28.24%	61
d. Many belligerents have been rewarded by the government through negotiations following information from Radio Okapi, which gives them more importance.	31.48%	68
e. Many young people have joined armed groups in the hope that Radio Okapi will also talk about them.	14.35%	31
Total number of participants: 216		

Table 5: 216 responses

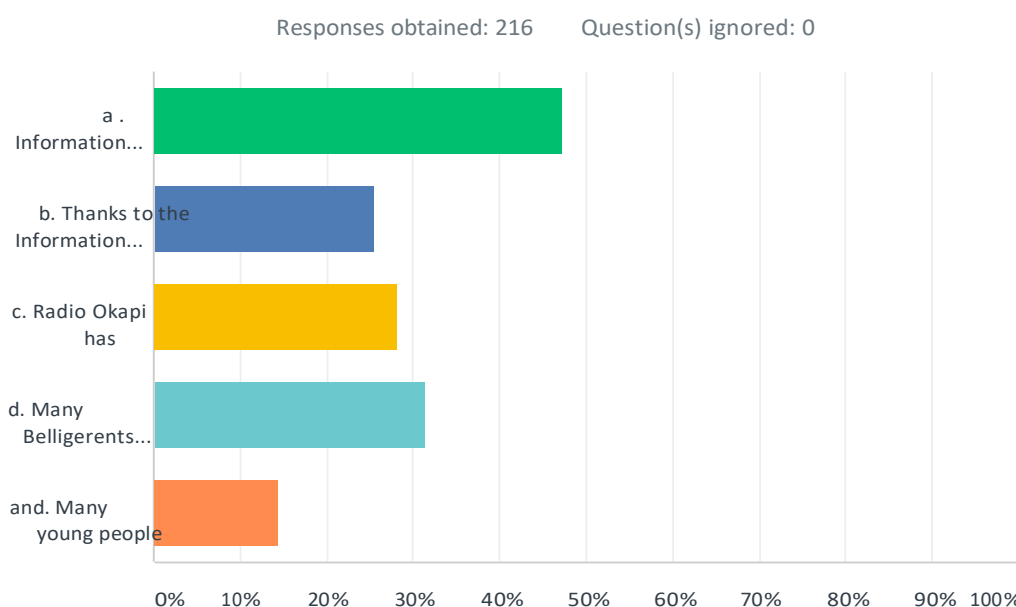


Fig. 5: Graphical presentation of the answers to the fifth question

Q6 Do you think Radio Okapi has contributed to the improvement of your living conditions through the information it broadcasts?

ANSWER CHOICES	ANSWERS	
a. Yes, it is thanks to the information of Radio Okapi that the Snel manages to restore electricity, the Regideso to give water to the population, the government to rehabilitate the roads, etc.	29.63%	64
b. Many bad managers have been dismissed as a result of the dysfunctions denounced by Radio Okapi.	19.91%	43
c. No, despite nearly 20 years since Radio Okapi has existed in the DRC, the population still lives in extreme poverty and the information it broadcasts has no impact.	36.57%	79
d. Radio Okapi does not sufficiently disseminate information relevant to the problems of the population.	13.89%	30
TOTAL	216	

Table 6: 216 responses received

Responses obtained: 216 Question(s) ignored: 0

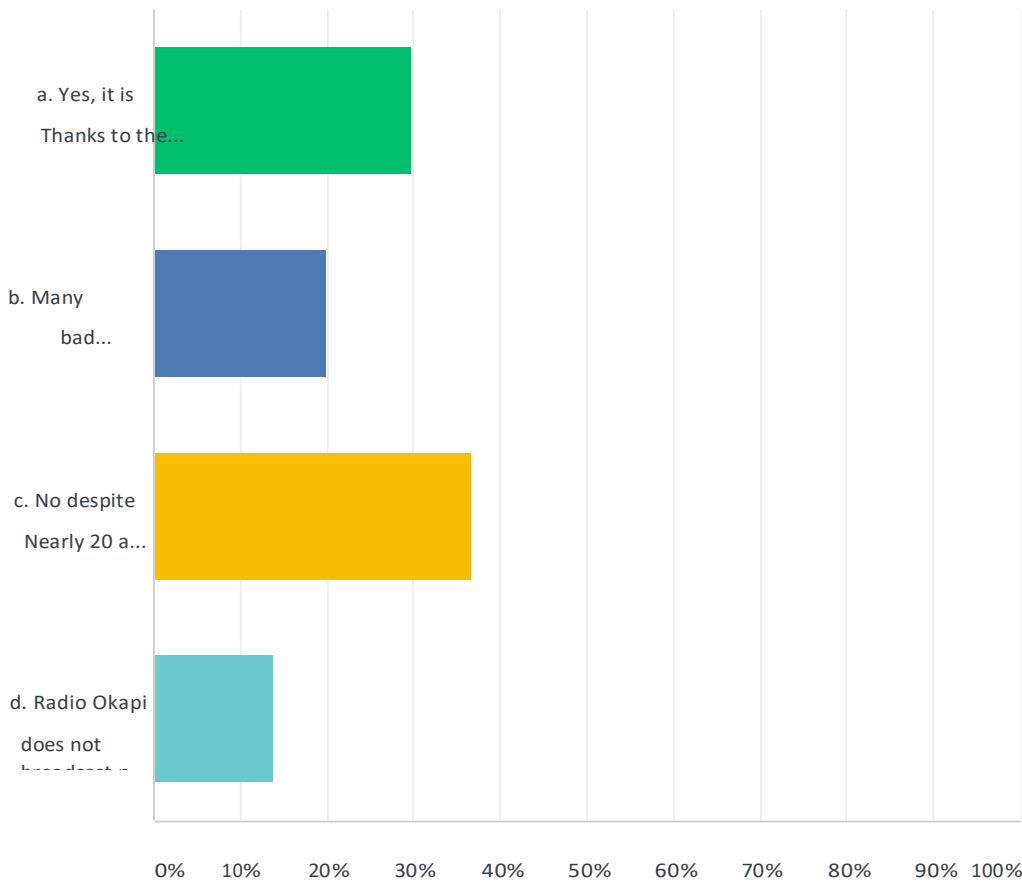


Fig. 6: Graphical presentation of the answers to the sixth question

Q7 What do you recommend about Radio Okapi's work?

ANSWER CHOICES	ANSWERS	
a. That Radio Okapi carry out more journalistic investigations to find all these cases of fraud and embezzlement of public funds.	39.81%	86
b. That Radio Okapi be more interested in the domestic and foreign policy of the DRC	6.48%	14
c. That Radio Okapi attaches the greatest importance to the facts of society to bring to the attention of the decision-makers the real problems of the population.	32.87%	71
d. That Radio Okapi remains a true thematic radio that broadcasts only information corresponding to the mission of MONUSCO (the promotion of peace and security)	16.20%	35
Other (please specify)	4.63%	10
TOTAL		216

Table 7: 216 responses received

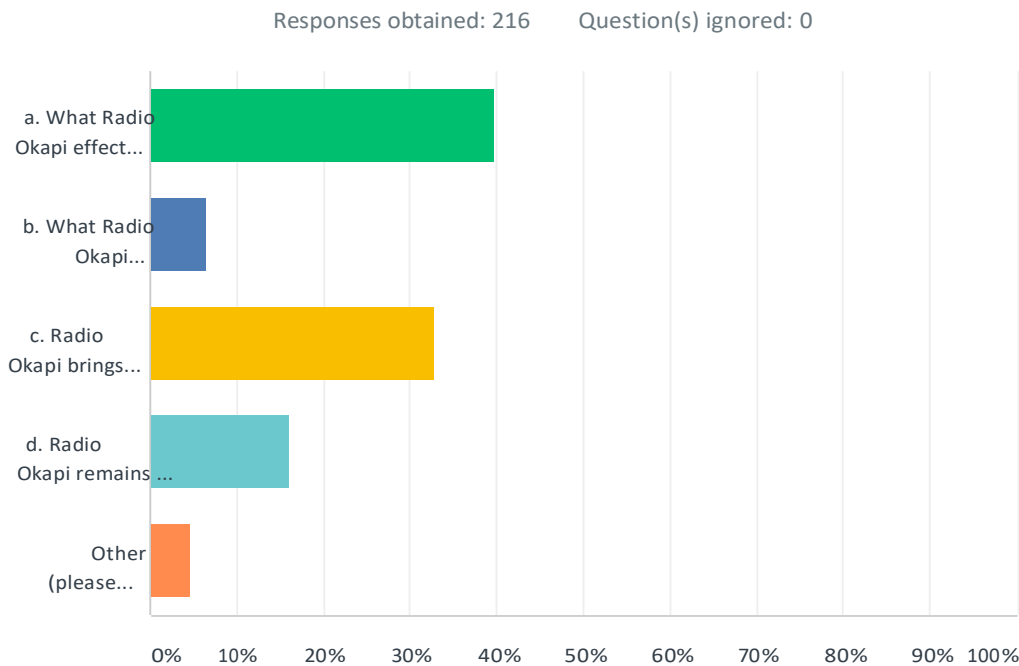


Fig. 7: graphical presentation of responses

Q8 What future do you want for this radio station after the departure of MONUSCO? Choose only one good assertion.

ANSWER CHOICES	ANSWERS	
a. has. Radio Okapi must be closed after the departure of MONUSCO because the object of its existence no longer exists.	7.41%	16
b. Radio Okapi should be bequeathed to its current staff organized in association in order to perpetuate this work of a generalist radio with several sources of funding.	31.48%	68
c. The government should recover Radio Okapi and its staff and fund it after MONUSCO leaves and turn it into a public broadcaster.	16.20%	35
d. Radio Okapi should be bequeathed to United Nations agencies in order to focus on issues of development, the fight against famine, poverty, the emancipation of women, the protection of children as well as the fight against diseases in the DRC.	44.91%	97
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>216</b>	

Table 8: 216 responses received

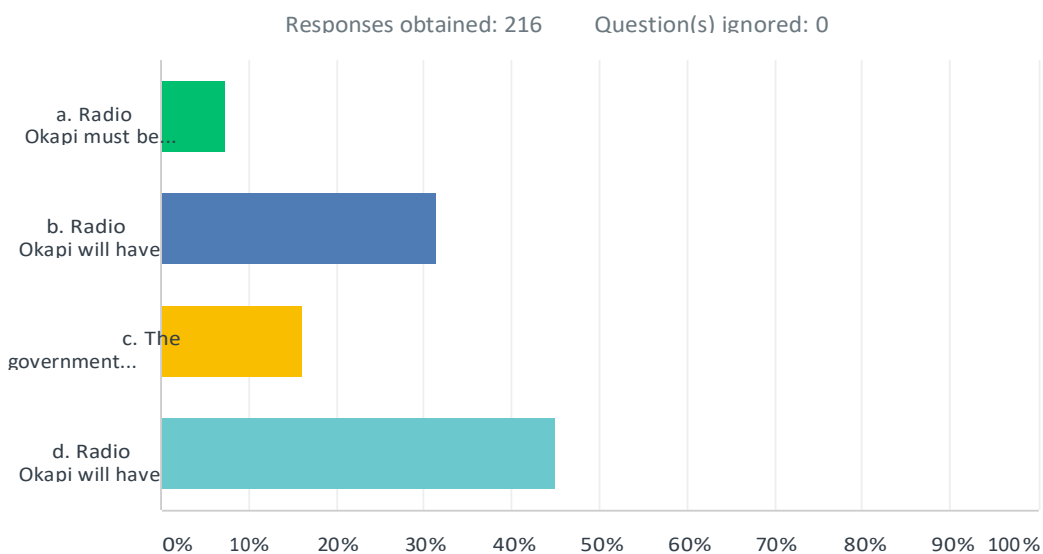


Fig. 8: Graphical presentation of responses

#### IV. INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY ON THE ROLE PLAYED BY RADIO OKAPI WITHIN MONUSCO

##### A. *Radio Okapi is a "jewel" of MONUSCO at the service of the Congolese public*

The results of our poll show that 68.98% of MONUSCO's work is not perceptible because civilian populations are still being killed. Nevertheless, despite this high percentage of a negative perception of the Congolese population on the work of the UN Mission in the DRC, 62.96 of the same population attests that within MONUSCO, Radio Okapi is one of the services that has helped the Congolese population the most. 25.93% of this same population also recognizes that if MONUSCO and Radio Okapi were not in the DRC, the situation of the country would be more dramatic and catastrophic. However, 15.28% of the Congolese population maintain that MONUSCO has worked hard to secure civilians, especially in the east of the country; while 7.87% believe that MONUSCO has mainly contributed to the fight against extreme poverty in conflict-affected areas.

This trend is corroborated by the reality on the ground, precisely in the east where people demonstrated in 2020 in Beni for the departure of MONUSCO but at the same time, they did not want the departure of Radio Okapi. The demonstrators began to attack the facilities and other property of MONUSCO when they were unanimous that it was necessary to protect Radio Okapi in view of the service it provides to the population. Some are even reluctant to remove MONUSCO because they fear that at the start of the mission, Radio Okapi will also be closed and that the people will be deprived of balanced, non-partisan, credible information and that their concerns will be permanently ignored by national and international opinion, simply because there is no media that will be interested in it after the closure of Radio Okapi.<sup>30</sup>

This study of the perception of the work of MONUSCO and Radio Okapi by the Congolese population testifies to the strategic role played by Radio Okapi in the DRC and within the UN mission and for its maintenance in the DRC. The answers to the second question corroborate this assertion so well. To the question of knowing: of the various services of MONUSCO, which has had the greatest impact on the daily lives of Congolese, the people we interviewed chose in order of importance all the services they consider to have had a significant impact on the daily lives of Congolese. And here too it is clear that Radio Okapi is at the top of all other MONUSCO services.

Indeed, 64.81% of the Congolese believe that thanks to Radio Okapi, the Congolese population is well informed, the country reunified by the same information and the mandate of MONUSCO well understood. This ranks Radio Okapi at the top of all MONUSCO services even before the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office and the MovCon aviation service. 50% of the population approve that thanks to the Joint Human Rights Office, Congolese activists have been protected and human rights violations denounced. 43.98% of Congolese admit that thanks to the Aviation Service, many military missions and NGOs have taken place in a country where infrastructure is almost non-existent.

28.24% of the population maintain that thanks to the "Civil Affairs of MONUSCO", the populations affected by the conflicts have been assisted by the construction of bridges, villages, health centers, etc. and 16.20% of the same population maintain that thanks to the "Political Affairs", political actors have been reconciled and conflicts avoided. The other services of MONUSCO, the UNPOL for having contributed to the reform of the police as well as the DDR for having helped many children to leave the armed groups, together obtained 9.26% of appreciation of the population.

This ranking in order of importance of the various services of MONUSCO had been made since 2014 by the head of MONUSCO Martin Kobler. He maintained during a strategic meeting with the staff of Radio Okapi that he needed Radio Okapi, the Joint Human Rights Office and Movcon as a priority to continue to fulfill the mandate of MONUSCO. All other services could even close, the three were enough for the UN mission to implement its mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

##### B. *Radio Okapi's strength lies in its newspapers, interactive missions, debate and sport*

According to the ranking of our survey, newspapers and the program Parole aux auditeurs come first with 71.16% each, followed by Dialogue Entre congolais with 35.81%, Grande Interview 32.09%, Okapi sport 25.12%, Okapi service 24.19% as well as music programs like Rund-Up and Okapi danse ensemble with 6.98%. This reveals that Radio Okapi's strength lies in the production and dissemination of national, impartial, credible and verified information. But also and above all by its program word to the listeners which allows the population to express itself freely as in any democratic state. The Dialogue between Congolese, the flagship program of the radio, is also its strength, especially since it puts on the same negotiating table the different belligerents or political opponents in order to address other what divides them. Grande Interview had the merit of offering the population a complete analysis of a situation through a guest who mastered the problem. Other entertainment programs allow the population to forget their misery and have the right to a normal.

Radio Okapi really played a strategic role in reunifying, pacifying and normalizing the life of the nation after years of war. All of his shows have been cleverly designed to allow him to play this role. Even though the country has a hundred media, Radio Okapi stands out from

<sup>30</sup>Monusco, Radio Okapi, the radio station of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), celebrated its 18th anniversary on Tuesday., press article, Kinshasa on the 25th FEBRUARY 2020, a consultee on <https://news.un.org/fr/story/2020/02/1062581>, October 04, 2022.

the others by the quality of its programs and its editorial line. To verify the veracity of this statement, here is how our interviewees answered the fourth question: But is the population satisfied with Radio Okapi's treatment of political news? 63.43% of the population attest that Radio Okapi broadcasts impartial, objective, balanced and non-partisan information, but 18.06% of Congolese believe that Radio Okapi should focus on investigations. Journalists to find all the political shenanigans blocking the DRC.

8.80% of listeners accuse Radio Okapi of censoring all information that harms MONUSCO or the government, while 6.48% outright condemn Radio Okapi for broadcasting partisan and unbalanced information. 3.24% believe that Radio Okapi broadcasts credible information but late and without going deep. This attests to the effectiveness of Radio Okapi's work while recognizing that there is still some way to go to make it a radio station indisputably at the service of peace, stability and development in the DRC.

#### *C. Radio Okapi has a positive and effective impact on the daily lives of Congolese*

To gauge more closely how the population judges the impact of security information, let's see how the survey reveals to the fifth question.

47.22% of Congolese believe that Radio Okapi's security information has allowed MONUSCO and FARDC to be one step ahead of negative forces and fight them effectively. However, another 31.48% believe that many belligerents have been rewarded by the government through negotiations following information from Radio Okapi which has given them more importance. This has led some analysts to think that by dint of wanting to denounce any activism of armed groups in the east, Radio Okapi has unknowingly fallen into the promotion of its armed groups that have multiplied in the hundreds in the region. This position is also confirmed by our poll which reveals that 28.24% of the population accuse Radio Okapi of having praised armed groups by amplifying and dramatizing even small attacks instead of focusing on the real problems of the population. However, 25.46% of this population maintain that thanks to the information broadcast by Radio Okapi, all negative forces have been denounced and stifled.

What is certain, Radio Okapi has remained on the front line for the past 20 years to denounce any activism of armed groups and to lead the Congolese army and the United Nations to pull the soil by its horns. Let us therefore see in the sixth question what the Congolese think of the impact of the information broadcast by Radio Okapi in improving the living conditions of the population. On this question, the opinions are really diverse. 36.57% of the population believe that despite nearly 20 years since Radio Okapi exists in the DRC, the population still lives in extreme poverty and the information it disseminates has no impact.

On the other hand, 29.63% of the same population recognize that it is thanks to the information of Radio Okapi that SNEL manages to restore electricity, Regideso to give water to the population, the government to rehabilitate

roads, etc. the other 19.91% add that many bad managers have been dismissed from their positions as a result of the dysfunctions denounced by Radio Okapi. While 13.89% of Congolese criticize Radio Okapi for not having sufficiently broadcast information corresponding to the problems of the population. From what is happening, he clarifies that Radio Okapi is making improving the living conditions of the Congolese its hobbyhorse. It provides the information needed to push governments to look into it. But only, Radio Okapi has no power of action on the ground. It is up to the government to do its job. The challenge is therefore enormous and the work of this radio should be rethought for more efficiency.

39.81% of Congolese recommend that Radio Okapi carry out more journalistic investigations to find all these cases of fraud and embezzlement of public funds. 32.87% expect Radio Okapi to bring the greatest importance to the facts of society to bring to the attention of decision-makers the real problems of the population. 16.20% plead for Radio Okapi to remain a true thematic radio that broadcasts only information corresponding to the mission of MONUSCO. And finally 6.48% of listeners want Radio Okapi to be more interested in the domestic and foreign policy of the DRC.

All its recommendations testify to the full will of the population to see Radio Okapi be sustained after the closure of MONUSCO. But how should it be managed after the departure of MONUSCO? 44.91% of Congolese propose that Radio Okapi be bequeathed to United Nations agencies in order to focus on issues of development, the fight against famine, poverty, the emancipation of women, the protection of children and the fight against diseases in the DRC. 31.48% believe that Radio Okapi should be bequeathed to its current staff organized in association. 16.20% of Congolese plead for the government to recover this radio station. Only 7.41% think that Radio Okapi should be closed after the departure of MONUSCO.

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the combination of the qualitative and quantitative approach led us to analyse the Congolese population's perception of the strategic importance of Radio Okapi's work in the DRC. The conclusions of our study show that this UN media is the service of the UN Mission that has served the Congolese the most, even before the Human Rights, Aviation, Movcon and Civil Affairs departments.

Over the past 20 years, peace radio has shown itself to be the true vector of Congolese values, culture and identity. Son offre editorial has allowed it to establish itself in the Congolese media landscape as the only media that has contributed to the reunification of the country. Radio Okapi has contributed greatly to the promotion of peace by denouncing any activism of negative forces. Even if at a certain point, by talking about armed groups and rape in the east, she was perceived as a vector of an apology for violence and the militia by her paradoxical communication.

Through its programs Parole aux Auditeurs, Okapi Service, Dialogue entre Congolais, Radio Okapi has



contributed to the advent of democratic culture through freedom of expression in the DRC. Shows like Grande Interview and invite du jour have reinforced the culture of accountability of governments. Field reports and programs such as Eco de l'Economie, Maisha etc. have contributed a lot to the process of stability and development of the DRC.

The importance of Radio Okapi's work in Congolese society leads the public to wish and encourage the survival of this broadcasting after the end of the UN Mission in the DRC.

## REFERENCES

- [1.] Agathe COUVREUR and Franck LEHUEDE, *Essai de comparaison des méthodes quantitatives et qualitatives à partir d'un exemple: le passage à l'Euro vivre par les consommateurs*, Paris, Credoc, 2002, p. 7.
- [2.] Aimee Kayembe et al., *Situation des médias en République démocratique du Congo*, Paris, Institut Panos Paris, 2004, pp. 76
- [3.] BAMBARA, Charles Antoine, « Radio Okapi : Quinze ans au service de la nation congolaise » in *Echos de la Monusco*, Radio Okapi, spécial 15 ans, Kinshasa février 2017, pp. 5.
- [4.] BUSQUET, Patrick, Representative of Fondation Hirondelle 2013-2015 affirmed this during an interview granted to us in 2014, as part of our scientific research on this work.
- [5.] CHICON, Emmanuel, une Hirondelle faiseuse de paix via radio, *Libération*, August 06, 2005, to be consulted on [https://www.liberation.fr/medias/2005/08/06/une-hirondelle-faiseuse-de-paix-via-la-radio\\_528661/](https://www.liberation.fr/medias/2005/08/06/une-hirondelle-faiseuse-de-paix-via-la-radio_528661/)
- [6.] Security Council 1140, the resolution of the situation in the DRC requires compliance with the Lusaka Agreement, press release of 24 January 2000, pp.4 to be found on: <https://www.un.org/press/fr/2000/20000124.cs1140.html>
- [7.] DAVID, Charles-Philippe, *La guerre et la paix: Approches contemporaines de la sécurité et de la stratégie*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2006, p. 311.
- [8.] DIOP SALL Fatou, "Chapter 8. La méthode ethnographique », in: Françoise Chevalier éd., *Les méthodes de recherche du DBA*. Caen, EMS Editions, "Business Science Institute", 2018, p. 140-157. DOI: 10.3917/ems.cheva.2018.01.0140. URL: <https://www.cairn.info/--9782376871798-page-140.htm>,
- [9.] Dr Pia Touboul, *Qualitative Research: The Focus Groups Method Methodological guide for theses in General Medicine*, Department of Public Health CHU of Nice, consulted on [https://nice.cnge.fr/IMG/pdf/Focus\\_Groupes\\_methodologie\\_PTdef.pdf](https://nice.cnge.fr/IMG/pdf/Focus_Groupes_methodologie_PTdef.pdf), February 20, 2022.
- [10.] El Hadji Touré, "Beyond the political foundations of the Rwandan genocide: a historical-sociocultural construction of ethnicism", In *Déviance et Société* 2013/4 (Vol. 37), pages 463 to 485
- [11.] ESSOME, Alexandre, Director of Radio Okapi 2019-2022, Radio Okapi, article published on <https://monusco.unmissions.org/radio-okapi>
- [12.] ETTER, Jean-Marie, *La pratique du journalisme en zone de conflit*, version 1, Fondation Hirondelle, Lausanne 2005, p.4
- [13.] Fondation Hirondelle, *La pratique du journalisme en zone de conflit*, version 1, Kinshasa, Radio Okapi, p.6.
- [14.] Fondation Hirondelle, *La pratique du journalisme en zone de conflit*, Op. cit. Cit. pp.7
- [15.] Fondation Hirondelle, Summary of the sustainability study of Consultant Pierre Heuer Study conducted from April to November 2004 in the DRC
- [16.] FRERE, Marie Soleil and Others, *Central Africa, Media and Conflict. Vecteurs de guerre ou acteurs de paix*, Brussels, Editions complexes, 2005, p.111-112.
- [17.] HARSTON, M. Julian, *Introduction to the United Nations System: A Guide to Service on a United Nations Field Mission*, Williamsburg, Peace Operations Training Institute, 2016, p.14.
- [18.] HEUER, Pierre, *Etude de pérennisation de radio Okapi*, Kinshasa, Etude menée d'avril à novembre 2004, p.4.
- [19.] KAYEMBE Aimee et Autres, *Situation des médias en République démocratique du Congo*, Paris, Institut Panos Paris, 2004, p. 76.
- [20.] KIFINDA NGOY Michel, *Media and political power in the DRC. Sketch for a journalism of peace and development*, Saarbrücken, Editions Universitaires Européennes, 2019, p.161.
- [21.] The BBC World Service has asked Radio Okapi for permission to reproduce some of its information for its online site. Several other local media systematically use the information broadcast by Radio Okapi to enrich their editorial offer.
- [22.] MARCIN PERRIN DE BRICHAMBAUT and Ali, *Leçons du droit international public*, Paris, Presses des Sciences pô et Dalloz, 2002, p. 248.
- [23.] MONUSCO, Radio Okapi, the radio of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), celebrated Tuesday its 18th anniversary, press article, Kinshasa on February 25, 2020, accessed on <https://news.un.org/fr/story/2020/02/1062581>, October 04, 2022.
- [24.] Navanethem Pillay, Report of the Mapping Project concerning the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed between March 1993 and June 2003 on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Geneva, UNJHRO, 2010, p.9.
- [25.] Presentation of Radio Okapi, taken from <https://www.radiookapi.net/page/propos>, consulted on October 11, 2021 at 08:30
- [26.] Radio Okapi from the [www.radiookapi.net](http://www.radiookapi.net) website
- [27.] SAIKI, Kamal and LAPLUME, Yves, *Charte électorale*, Kinshasa, Radio Okapi 2005, pp.3-6
- [28.] SUNIL V. Ram, *History of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations during the Cold War : 1945 to 1987*, United Nations, Course, July 2006, p. 3.



- [29.] SurveyMonkey is an online survey site founded in 1999 by Ryan Finley. SurveyMonkey offers free, customizable surveys, as well as a series of statistics programs.
- [30.] TIRTHANKAR, Chanda, Rwanda: at the origins of the genocide, RFI, Published : 06/04/2014 - 11 : 53  
Modified on: 17/04/2014 – 12: 28, consulted on 22 January 2021 on  
<https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20140406-rwanda-origines-genocide-habyarimana-kagame-tutsis-hutus-france>