



Safaricom Foundation Lifeline radio project unveiled

16/5/2005...Safaricom Foundation, Kenya's premier corporate charitable trust has embarked on a project geared at distributing more than 10,000 self-powered radio sets among rural communities.

Working in partnership with the South African based charity – the Freeplay Foundation, communities living in remote parts of Kenya will receive the custom made radio sets geared at promoting access to information in rural Kenya.

The Safaricom Foundation Lifeline Radio set is a self-powered radio designed specifically for long distance school broadcasts and other humanitarian projects and is robustly constructed to operate in the harshest of conditions and climates.

In Kenya, the Safaricom Foundation Lifeline radio sets will also be used as a launch pad for scheduled radio service broadcasts by the Kenya Meteorological department.

Speaking during a launch ceremony presided by Vice President Moody Awori, Safaricom Foundation board of Trustees chairman Mr. Les Baillie disclosed that the Ministry of Education and the Kenya Meteorological department are some of the government agencies earmarked to receive the unique radio sets valued at more than Kshs 38million.

Other recipients include the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Green Belt Movement and a leading medical charity, PATH Kenya.

While addressing guests at the launch ceremony, Baillie noted that the unique radio sets developed by the Freeplay Foundation would come in handy in bridging the progressing digital divide among rural communities.

"The obvious scarcity of newspapers and television as well as the "digital divide" among rural Kenyan communities, reinforces the importance of radio in Kenya," Baillie noted.

He added that Safaricom Foundation had been inspired to support the project as part of the organization's commitment to facilitate rural development and poverty alleviation.

Ultimately, the project he explained is geared at empowering rural communities by providing them with a cost effective avenue to access information.

Said he: 'Knowledge and information skills are essential for people to successfully respond to the opportunities and challenges of social, economic and technological changes.'

Following the launch, the Freeplay Foundation will work with partner institutions Unilever Kenya and Coca Cola Africa Foundation to distribute the radios.

Ends.