

CR training forum in Bangkok to boost community broadcasting in Asia Pacific



THAILAND December 11-13, 2011
Bangkok
**1st AMARC Asia Pacific
Community Radio Training Forum**

Bangkok will play host to a 'Community Radio Training Forum' from December 11 to 13, 2011. The forum is being organized by the Asia Pacific chapter of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters - AMARC. Primarily envisaged as 'training of trainers' the initiative is designed to address capacity building needs of community radios in the Asia Pacific region.

The Community Radio Training Forum will be hosted by the National

Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission of Thailand (NBTC) and is supported by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP-ROAP), Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), UNESCO, UNICEF, EED/NOVIB, and South East Asia Pres Alliance (SEAPA). Regional and national partners such as the Australian Indigenous Communications Association (AICA), Association of Community Radio Broadcasters of Nepal (ACORAB), FMYY-

Japan, National Federation of Community Radios (NFCR) of Thailand, and the Blue Diamond Society, Nepal will be hosting workshops in the Community Radio Training Forum.

The capacity-building mega event will provide opportunities to community radio broadcasters in the region to network and learn from international trainers and experts about setting up community radio stations, promoting community participation, strengthening program production, adopting suitable production technology, and about advocacy strategies to improve conditions for the development of community broadcasting. The training forum will consist mainly of workshops, discussions and hands on demonstrations.

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UNESCO confirms February 13 as World Radio Day



UNESCO's 36th General Conference adopted on November 3, 2011, the proclamation of the 13th of February as the World Radio Day, as proposed by Spain. February 13th was the day when the UN radio was established in 1946. The date was arrived at through a consultation process that started in June 2011, carried out by UNESCO. It included all stakeholders, i.e. broadcasting associations, public, state, private, community and international broadcasters; UN agencies; funds and programmes; topic-related NGOs; academia, foundations and bilateral development agencies; as well as UNESCO Permanent Delegations and National Commissions.

According to an AMARC report, the main objectives of the World Radio

Day are notably to raise the understanding among the public and the media of the value of radio, including in the context of new media, and the value of actively supporting radio; to encourage decision-makers to support, establish and provide access to radio and to provide a networking focus for radio proponents and practitioners worldwide, to exchange ideas, experiences and resources.

UNESCO has pointed out that "about one billion people (or one in seven of the world's population) still do not have access to radio....World Radio Day would also be used to highlight the need to "empower civil society on the right to communicate," It should help as well enhance networking among broadcasters" and to promote human and citizens' rights."

Source: UNESCO website

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Building capacities - CR training forum in Bangkok



Bangkok forum to offer informal opportunities for learning and practice

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Parallel training workshops will address promoting gender sensitivity through community broadcasting, community broadcasting for poverty reduction, enhancing capacity of community radio stations to address climate change and disaster management, promoting rights of the marginalized including that of sexual minority groups and indigenous people, and using community radios for education.

The sharing of ideas and learning of skills during the sessions have been designed to allow participants to directly apply their learning to address the concerns of the communities in the Asia Pacific region such as food security, good governance, women empowerment, literacy, employment and rights of the marginalized. Training in forms and techniques of content production will be at the centre of the forum.

In six parallel workshops, trainees will learn about radio features, radio formats, interview techniques, feature production, studio operation, digital editing, and web streaming. Radio management skills such as fund raising, volunteer recruitment, training and sustainability, community participation, women's participation, management, organisational evaluation and development, as well as impact assessment will be addressed in specific workshops.

In addition to explaining concepts and principles, the training forum

will include practical subjects such as research techniques, script writing, interviewing, editing, and using digital recording and computer-based editing. It will allow participants to evaluate progress being made by community radios and explore ways to create community radio in countries where it does not exist.

Through networking opportunities participants will exchange knowledge on best practices and receive hands-on training in order to increase the social impact of community radio. For three days, experienced community radio broadcasters and trainers from different parts of the world and specializing in different disciplines of broadcasting and development will interact closely with trainees in a residential setting that will allow formal and informal opportunities for learning and practice.

Local community radio is a proven effective means of communication that provides poor people with an inexpensive and effective way of discussing their problems, developing solutions and organizing for their future. The main goal of the AMARC Asia Pacific Community Radio Training Forum is to provide a collective and creative platform to approximately 150 community radio broadcasters from Asia and Pacific for learning practical skills needed to promote conditions for establishing and running community radio stations in a

sustainable manner.

The Forum will serve as a platform for sharing best practices in the region for adaption to different local contexts in order to increase the social impact of community radio. Most importantly, it will help develop closer linkages between community radios to jointly address thematic areas of development, such as disaster management, climate change, knowledge and information sharing, poverty reduction and inclusion of marginalised – women, LGBTI, Indigenous people, differently-abled.

Comprehensive plans for the development of community broadcasting in the Asia Pacific region were developed during the 2nd AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Conference entitled "Voices for a Sustainable and Sound Future" and held in Bangalore, India in February 2010. Similarly, the AMARC 10 Global Conference entitled "Building for the Future: Community Radio and Poverty Reduction, Social Inclusion, Good Governance and Sustainable Human Development" held in Ciudad de la Plata, Argentina in November 2010 provided important guidelines for activities to be carried out in the region for the promotion of effective community broadcasting in the Asia Pacific region.

Both events were attended by community broadcasters, community leaders, communication rights activists, experts from different developmental disciplines, representatives of governments, NGO's and donors. One of the main outcomes of these conferences was an articulated demand to address capacity development of community broadcasters in a planned and sustainable manner. AMARC will be organising such capacity building forums on a regular basis and the Bangkok Training Forum is the first in a series of such initiatives.

Detail information about the Bangkok Forum is available at: http://www.amarc.org/index.php?p=thailand_Forum_EN.

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FIRST PERSON ACCOUNT

Three years and counting: New paths ahead

Sangham Radio, the first community radio station in rural India, located in Machnoor village of the Zaheerabad mandal in Medak district, Andhra Pradesh, completed three years of being on air on October 15, 2011. General Narsamma and Algole Narsamma, the two dynamic community radio managers, have been with the station from Day One, and even before as the Deccan Development Society (DDS) experimented with narrowcasting during the years of waiting for the CR policy. During their modest yet spirited third anniversary celebration, they took time off to have an informal chat with Vinod Pavarala and Kanchan K. Malik:

On the changes that have come about in the last three years of Sangham Radio:

General & Algole: There has been a change in the nature of participation. Now people call us by themselves and talk to us. Although there is enthusiasm to listen to the programme we broadcast, we would like to see people treat radio with the same eagerness as they treat television. There should be a certain "looking forward to" aspect. We are trying to change programmes that suit audiences' tastes and grab their attention. Some training may come in handy here for us.

Also, the number of participants has increased slowly and gradually. Previously we would carry out a maximum of 10 recordings in a month. But now, it has gone up to 20 or more. There are people who come from surrounding villages to record programmes. Many people come by themselves to talk about agriculture and other issues, while some are invited by us. School children also respond to advertisements on radio and come and participate. We feel they come to know of this radio and how to participate from each other.

If we look at the listenership, earlier, the listeners would only request for songs. But now, they call to ask about farming also. For such questions, we seek information from the KVK (Krishi Vigyan Kendra, run by DDS) and then broadcast it. For example, a couple of days back, a person called up complaining about a problem with his ginger crop.

There were times when we used to wonder, that it is we who talk on the radio, but are people listening? But who ever we ask, they say that the programmes are good, and that they listen to everything. They do advise us to think of something new, but at the same time assure us that they like all the broadcasts.

Listeners also ask us to re-broadcast programmes; if we have it, we play it for them on demand. In the two hours of our transmission, we plan for one and a half hour, and half an hour is left free for listener's demands, be it songs, discussions or dramas. We have 7 to 8 callers every day.

We can share with you stories where after listening to the radio, people have given up the use of chemical pesticides. After a series of radio programmes on pesticides, a person in Madina village has started making his own organic pesticides enough for his small piece of land. To attract a larger audience, we need to make programmes that have a variety of emotions like seriousness, anger, comedy etc. For that, we need to get people who can enact roles. We know of a lot of daughters-in-law who do not feed their elders at home. To make such people realise their mistake, we need to script it into a drama to make it more effective. We are asking our fellow villagers to take part

in making such dramas. It would be good if that happens.

In older days, people used to sit together and talk a lot. When they meet somebody, they would ask the well-being of their relatives and friends. But now, the culture has changed with the advent of mobile phones. They do not bother to sit together and talk. If we take such topics and make them into dramas, they influence people better than just talking out the issue.

People come from other villages and tell stories and narrate skits. Recently we had done a short piece on a lame husband and a stammering wife - the comical dialogues about their silly fights all the time, and then when asked to leave him she says "How can I leave my husband? He is so good". We broadcast this programme twice, because such programmes are enjoyed by people.

On the original vision of Sangham radio:

General & Algole: We are moving in the same direction -- hundred percent. First, we wanted to know what the villagers are saying - a platform to discuss various things like food security, work, agriculture, land situation, health issues, education etc.

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General and Algole Narsamma look on as the winner of 'Participation Award' speaks at the 3rd anniversary celebrations of Sangham radio

EDITORIAL

Can we possibly hope for change?

While one of the priorities of community radio in India aims at giving voice to those who inhabit remote parts of the country and do not have access to media, there is also an increasing relevance for unheard voices within the urban spectrum to have their own media. Urban poverty represents a formidable challenge to India's development. According to NSSO survey reports, "there are over 80 million poor people living in the cities and towns of India." The 2011 Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report ranked India 15th, among "leading countries" with hunger situation. It also places India among the three countries where the Global Hunger Index increased between 1996 and 2011. Even after 65 years of independence, food, education, and health continue to remain challenging issues that stalk both our cities and villages. Community Radio can make (and has made in several parts of the world) a palpable difference. All these issues will take centre-stage at the training of trainer's capacity building workshop organized by AMARC in Bangkok between December 11th and 13th 2011. The workshop will also focus on issues related to climate change, disaster management, rights of indigenous peoples and sexual minorities and gender sensitivity.

Previous issues of CR News have focused in the main, on the experiences of community radio stations in rural areas. This issue takes a look at experiences of community radio stations (within and outside the country) that are located in urban areas. Galli Galli Sim Sim describes the effort of Gurgaon Ki Awaz community radio station to encourage education through entertainment among migrant workers' children. The Radio Nazaria (still to go on air) update discusses the potential the Community Radio has for promoting multi-cultural dialogue and communal harmony in Ahmedabad. Bajao: Juggling jingles and academics, through a first person account, affirms that the "biggest impact" for Bol Hyderabad campus community radio station has been to "make us (students) aware of our immediate world: our campus and the people in the city." Elizabeth Robinson, advisor to KSCB - FM, University of California strengthens this point in her insights as to how the KSCB campus community radio station model is rooted in a mix of student-community participation with both groups making decisions on programming. While these narratives underline the potential impact that community radio can bring toward urban development, it is ironical that there should be a dearth of available frequencies in some of our cities to translate potential into performance. Can we possibly hope for change?

Ashish Sen

SPECIAL INTERVIEW

University of California's campus radio station: Fifty and Going Strong

Community Radios, across the world, have diverse models of sustainability and management. KCSB-fm is the University of California's community radio station in Santa Barbara funded primarily by students of UCSB and the community at large.

Advisor to the radio station and until recently AMARC treasurer, Elizabeth Robinson talks with Ashish Sen on the occasion of the station's 50th anniversary and shares insights on why community radio is inextricably linked to development and freedom of expression.

Q1. KCSB FM campus radio station is currently celebrating its 50th anniversary. Could you share with us some of the changes, challenges, with which the station reckons? Could you also share with us the role of community participation in the station?

KCSB is celebrating its 50th anniversary. It began as a low power station (10 watts) serving only the University of California at Santa Barbara campus, but now reaches a radius of more than 50 miles. At the beginning there were only students involved and they were primarily students in the sciences interested in the technology, not the content. Most of the content was classical European music with a little bit of news. Through the years, the composition of the programmers began to include community members (non-students including professors but also ordinary people who just wanted to be involved). At this time about 60% of our programmers are students and the

rest community members.

The content has changed dramatically. Now we have a vast variety of music shows (including one that plays classical Indian music as well as contemporary Indian music), approximately 35 hours of news and public affairs programming, and 10 to 15 hours of cultural arts. All programmers are volunteers. While they are on air and must also contribute 8 hours of labour not related to their own programs to the station every 13 weeks (academic quarters). Very few have any interest in the technology and those who do are primarily interested in multimedia applications. Four times a year we start a new training program and add people to the schedule when they satisfactorily complete their training. The challenges are many, changing through time, but they usually are manageable. Many problems occur because people don't know one another. It is in the nature of radio that people come and go one or two at a time.

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VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Women and Community Radio: an opportunity for social change



Ramshree Chandel, community reporter

Community Radio (CR) can be understood as a platform where ordinary people and disadvantaged groups, whose voice is almost unheard in society, become actors of communication and, in so doing, empower themselves.

Some of the sections of women in India, who have been traditionally excluded from the public sphere and discriminated against in terms of access to and participation in mainstream media, are now gradually endeavouring to enter into the CR sector.

Since the 2006 Policy, which opened airwaves to NGOs and CBOs registered for a minimum of three years, several non-profit organizations working with marginalised groups have been applying for establishment of gender-mixed and women-only CR stations.

Are these small media ventures a concrete opportunity for women to get information and produce communicative acts that are relevant to them as well as fully realize their role as agents of social change?

Answers to such questions may be explored and elaborated through qual-

itative studies that closely look at communication processes in young community radios and ascertain to what extent the rhetoric of participation and empowerment is translated into practice.

With the aim to contribute to this understanding, I analysed women's communication needs, factors hindering their participation in content development, and the empowerment process in two newly established CR stations: Radio Namaskar in Konark (Orissa), established in February 2010 by Young India, with the support of UNESCO, and Radio Dhadkan in Shivpuri (Madhya Pradesh), which is run by Sambhav in partnership with UNICEF and went on air in October 2010, after one-year of narrowcasting.

The focus group discussions and in-depth interviews that I conducted brought out the following findings. Women value highly, the possibility to access a vast array of information as well as the opportunity to actively engage in programme production. However, their participation is subordinated by domestic duties and regulated by other family members.

An empowerment process is underway in both the CR stations as programmes facilitate women reporters and listeners to reflect on their own and other women's lives and to get awareness of their rights. They acquire confidence to speak in public, write and use technology. Also, CR helps in expanding their network and possibilities to tap into employment opportunities and their social role as reporters is valued positively. Finally, I observed that forms of auto-organisation and public actions, as well as the desire to contribute to community development are rising.

Some critical aspects also emerged from my exploratory study. Firstly, the programme content seems to reflect CR initiators' core areas of intervention and it was not possible to ascertain whether produced messages really reflect women's priorities.

Secondly, although gender norms shape participation of both women listeners and reporters, these affect more the



Helina Sina, Radio Namaskar

former than the latter, who usually live in families where tradition is less rigid. Finally, the fulfilment of ambitions, which younger women identify during their work at the radio, is likely to be hindered once they get married.

These findings suggest that further investigations are needed to assess women's ownership over content production process in CR stations and establish whether the opportunity to participate and empower is equally available to all women. Besides this, an evaluation of the effectiveness of CR projects in enabling women to take control over personal and collective choices throughout their life must also be attempted.

Such studies would enable to understand to what extent CR in India is an authentic voice of the community, a concrete opportunity of long-lasting empowerment for marginalised segments of society and a way forward to bring about a public sphere where women and men participate equally. They would also contribute to identifying the best practices as well as the gaps in the implementation of the AMARC Gender Policy, which was recently adopted by the Community Radio Forum of India.

For more details see: "Women in Community Radio in India: Avenues of research on participation and empowerment," a working paper available at ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/gen/resource/res_info_30091101.pdf

Daniela Bandelli

'Students should maintain political control of campus station'



Elizabeth Robinson

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Consequently, it is important to address problems quickly, to have published rules and regulations, as well as informal conflict resolution policies and capabilities...just like in the rest of the world! Violation of broadcast rules can be a problem, but won't be too difficult if the rules are enforced fairly. If someone repeats an action that could jeopardize our license, we remove them from the air and the station.

Q2. Campus Community Radio is diverse across the world in terms of its structure. Your thoughts on community involvement in management and ownership structures in these radio stations?

I think that it is very important for students to maintain political control of campus stations. One of the most vibrant parts of our stations is their ever-shifting cultural contexts. They are often celebrations of youth culture but also innovative music and cultural arts. In some instances, where students haven't had control, their advisors or faculty members have changed the stations to suit their own tastes or to become more lucrative and in some of those instances, the community nature has died. At KCSB our student governing body makes all decisions about equipment purchases and the like. However, the programming decisions are made by a separate committee that in-

cludes both students and community members. They work very well together providing a balance between innovation, community desires, and fairness. Community members tend to be older and their wisdom is appreciated. On the other hand, it is the students who provide most of our operating funds. Thus, it is fitting that they determine how those funds are expended.

Q3. Share with us examples of how campus community radio stations have contributed to urban/civic development.

The best of campus community radio stations do exactly what the best of community radio stations do. First of all, they give voice to those who are too often marginalized or entirely ignored by the corporate and state media. They change us from consumers to producers of information, arts, and public discourse. And they push us to become media critics rather than gullible empty vessels that will believe anything. That, in turn, potentially makes us more engaged in our communities and the needs that they have.

We hope that we serve as a positive democratizing influence. We know we provide emergency information for our communities and that we are sources of powerful and empowering knowledge. We cover local events and issues that are almost entirely neglected by other media from local government meetings, to public demonstrations, to children's events.

Q4. You've been intimately connected with the community radio movement for many years - and through it with a range of issues from Freedom of Expression to Gender, to Sustainable Development. Your thoughts on the future of community radio in relation to these.

If I may begin from back to front, the issue of sustainable development and community radio is a difficult one. I think it is unreasonable to expect community radio stations to demonstrably alleviate poverty. We can claim to give people a means of expression, perhaps hope, and certainly voice in the face of overwhelming odds against them. One thing that I think we should do more is challenge the notion of development and the idea that there is some inexorable march of progress. What I hope we always champion is human dignity and human rights as partially laid down in the UN Charter on Human Rights (surely there are some additional rights that weren't anticipated 60 years ago!).

As we all know there is still much to be accomplished in the realm of gender parity and basic rights for both women and others who identify as queer or non-heterosexual. I think that radio can be a powerful tool in this regard through providing access to media and information to dispel the most heinous of stereotypes. I hope that AMARC will continue to provide resources for training women and to insist that they have an equal role in the governance of community stations. I think that it must be done if we are to live up to our basic principles.

Finally, Freedom of Expression must be upheld in our work. But I think communication rights are even more important in broadcast media. Neither of these things exists in much of the world; indeed they are actively repressed. As November 24 approaches, I am thinking of the Ampatuan massacre (in the Philippines) of 55 people, 38 of them journalists. However, even where freedom of expression is legally recognized, communication rights often are not. It's great that I can stand on a street corner and shout whatever I like, but my voice - without access to community media - is effectively silenced or shouted down by the corporate media.

Gurgaon Ki Awaaz reaches migrant children through *Galli Galli Sim Sim*



***Galli Galli Sim Sim* connects with children directly inside the classroom**

Migrant families and their children are among the toughest communities to reach, be it for the delivery of education or health services, or even basic social services. And nowhere is this more evident than in Gurgaon.

This mushrooming city attracts hundreds of thousands of migrant families from states like Bihar, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan etc, working often in the construction industry, but also as drivers, rickshaw pullers, security guards, and factory workers.

As workers move from work site to work site, their children suffer the attendant problems of broken education and lack of a stable space in which to develop friendships, learn and play.

In a bid to reach these children, especially primary school age children, of this constantly moving community, Gurgaon Ki Awaaz initiated a partnership with Sesame Workshop India Trust to bring Sesame's award-winning television programme *Galli Galli Sim Sim* to radio. The resulting partnership, supported by Qualcomm and HSBC, resulted in the Radiophone Project.

The main aim of the project is to research the possibility of combining free-to-access community radio broadcasts with low cost but wider access of the same programme over the internet using 3G. The programme also has a component

that connects radio broadcasts and print materials in the classroom to enhance the learning process for primary school-age children, especially children from deprived backgrounds.

Starting September 29, 2011, the *Galli Galli Sim Sim* programme is being broadcast on Gurgaon Ki Awaaz, four times a week. These 20-minute programmes, featuring *Galli Galli Sim Sim* muppets, are coupled with the participation of migrant children, and their teachers and parents through field recordings as well as live studio telephony from Gurgaon.

The programmes highlight the raw, and sometimes disturbing realities of migrant workers' lives be it about constantly being on the move, living in sub-human conditions with limited access to safe drinking water, or being constantly surrounded by a tussle for resources often resulting in violence.

The children and their parents employ the energy and verve of Chamki and Googly and all their muppet friends to talk about the constant search for a way out of poverty and grime that characterizes their lives, for which perhaps, they had migrated to Gurgaon.

To further reach these children directly inside the classroom, and evaluate the actual impact of the audio content, the NGO supporting Gurgaon Ki Awaaz, The Restoring Force (TRF) is also imple-

menting the In-School Program of the Radiophone Project.

With financial support from HSBC, and logistical support by the State Council for Educational Research and Training, Gurgaon, TRF will be partnering with Sesame Workshop India Trust to train government school teachers to use in-classroom learning kits that have been especially designed to supplement the messages being broadcast in the *Galli Galli Sim Sim* show on Gurgaon Ki Awaaz. TRF has already been working for the past 10 years in augmenting basic school infrastructure in government schools in Gurgaon. This project is a logical next step that goes beyond infrastructure to actual learning.

As a media partner, Gurgaon Ki Awaaz Samudayik Radio Station takes these messages of physical, social and emotional health, and hygiene into homes where parents can listen with their children; into classrooms, where teachers can join their students in listening as well as participating in the programme; and into individual mobile handsets through internet streaming.

In this way, a child can stay connected with his or her programme and learning even if the parents are forced to relocate to another location, or even back to their village. A significant chunk of this technology (especially participation through telephony) is enabled by Gramvaani, a not-for-profit organization engaged in the research and development of technology solutions for community media.

As the team of reporters working on the Radiophone Project head out into the by lanes of Gurgaon's villages, interviewing mothers living in crowded tenements, and into government primary schools talking to children and their teachers, what is emerging is a picture of a community desperately attempting to give their children a head-start in life despite the odds.

If technology as simple as community radio and as complex as 3G can come together to support that dream, then, what more can we seek?

Arti Jaiman
Gurgaon Ki Awaaz

Bajao: Juggling jingles and academics



Students and faculty of UoH at the inauguration of Bol Hyderabad 90.4fm

My clearest memory of being a part of a community radio station is: getting up at 7 am, packing toothpaste and sleepwalking to the department, where I would then proceed to wake up my co-jockey and put on the tea while he went and brushed.

Sleepy as we were, the opening jingle of our show would simply transport us to another world where we straightened our backs and addressed hundreds of listeners. Now, we might not have actually had a hundred listeners, but that was the beauty of it: sitting in front of a microphone, addressing an audience, selecting songs to play, and talking about everything I have ever wanted to. All this and more does produce such an adrenaline rush that I would often walk out of the station feeling like a celebrity.

As students of the Department of Communication in the University of Hy-

derabad, my batch-mates and I have had the unique opportunity to participate and contribute to our radio station, Bol Hyderabad, from its very inception. We decided on the name, the schedule, and the shows that would go on air at our station. With the hearty blessings of all our professors, we started brainstorming for ideas, recording shows and spreading awareness about the station. On the day we went on air for the first time, the Department was abuzz with excitement and camera flashes, and there began the journey of running a campus-based community radio station.

It was, of course, not all smooth sailing as one would want to romanticize. We are just over two months into it and are still finding our feet. Juggling academics, deadlines and a constant need to produce shows is no easy task. Learning the rules and keeping up the enthusiasm for

producing more and more shows takes some discipline and force. The radio constantly needs feeding, and we would spend consecutive nights in the Department recording, re-recording and editing shows. All of this, though, brought us closer, to each other and to our professors, who frequently sat in to record with us. The biggest effect, however, has been to make us aware of our immediate world: our campus and the people in the city. I have a classmate who has interviewed more than a thousand people from the campus – people now recognize his figure, carrying a recorder and mike and walking up to anyone and everyone for a voice.

Now, my batch mates and I, the same people who were so scared of the microphone, are supremely confident and at ease. We now drag our friends and families, and in fact, anyone who visits our department, to the station, and we explain to them that running a community radio station is not rocket science – if we can do it, they can too. It is very empowering to master the hardware and software, and, more importantly, to master our inherent fear of talking to others. One thing I can be certain of – those who go into the radio station come out with an experience they will not easily forget.

Apurva Ayyagari
MA Communication II year
University of Hyderabad (UoH)



I&B Ministry workshop for LOI holders

NEW DELHI: Although the Information and Broadcasting Ministry has issued 349 letters of intent (LOI) for setting up community radios in the country, only 115 organizations have operationalized their radio stations.

Thus, the remaining LOI holders will have to apply for necessary clearance from the WPC for frequency allocation and subsequent SACFA clearance to be able to operationalize their stations.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting considers setting up Community Radio Stations a thrust area and, therefore, wants to help operators.

The Ministry has been informed that there are several communication barriers between LOI holders and WPC, which is preventing many LOI holders to operationalize their community radio stations. In order to remove these barriers, the Ministry in association with UNICEF

and WPC Wing of the Department of Telecommunications is organizing workshops with all those LOI holders who have not been able to make their radio stations operational.

The First Workshop in this direction was organized on 2nd November at the India Habitat Centre in Delhi.

Source: [cr-india]

FIRST PERSON ACCOUNT

Sangham Radio: Programme innovations on the cards



General Narsamma

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It is not just about disseminating information; it is about gathering people's knowledge.

People come up to talk and they can talk about various issues that are being discussed. People have begun feeling like they own the radio. Radio is progressing in the right direction. For people like Ambappa (an elderly man), it is very good. His knowledge is being imparted to people through the radio and we can broadcast this in the future too.

But for young people like me, we need to know what is new? How do we get used to it? How good or bad is that? To make programmes like that, we need to make every show innovative. Ambappa needs one kind of programmes, young people want to listen to something

else and children would prefer different programmes. We need to cater to everyone's tastes.

On women's issues and participation:

General & Algole: In Sangham radio, 95 percent of participation is by women. They are happy that their voice is being recognised. They are very happy if people are asking for re-broadcast of their programmes. One major difference that has come about is that if radio wasn't there, women wouldn't go about telling people what they know, their knowledge wouldn't be recognised. But now, they have got a voice.

We have the knowledge of older people now, they might be gone. But we have recorded their knowledge, which is a priceless asset.

Women also call us up for suggestions regarding various health issues and ask for repeating of programmes also. Domestic violence has considerably gone down in recent times, with radio playing a contributing role. Other than health, we have programmes on communities, languages, songs, environment etc. The participation of women is enormous in all these aspects.

But, now we are thinking of radio dramas. To collect good performers on a single platform is difficult. Every small programme recording takes off a day's



Algole Narsamma

earning. If the radio station would make some payment to participants, many more women as well as men would come forward.

On balancing work and family life:

General & Algole: Sometimes it is stressful managing kids and work, like when we have meetings in the mornings and we need to come in the night for transmission and also go home and cook food. In all this running around, some work will be left out, and if the backlog of chores continues for 2-3 days, then it becomes stressful. But if I feel burdened and talk about leaving work, my family tries to find a solution to the problem but they don't ask me to quit. Even if there is something wrong with the radio programme, they give me feedback.

Waiting in the Wings: Radio Nazariya

For the youth of Ahmedabad, many would say that the last thing which is "discussable" is peace and religious tolerance. It is ten years since the infamous communal riots of 2002, the youth of different communities, from different parts of the city hardly interact.

The city lacks a common platform which can create a space for them to come together, dialogue, share and eventually pave the path for religious tolerance. This need, urged the formation of Radio Nazariya supported and facilitated by Drishti in 2010.

Since then, the unit comprising

seven community producers and almost 70 volunteers and 22 community artists has undergone rigorous training. Many of these volunteers are students or NGO workers. The unit was launched with a signature tune and a feature on Ahmedabad's History of 600 years underlining the culture of religious tolerance of the city.

Radio Nazariya currently produces three radio programs every month on youth issues like cleanliness, domestic violence, road accidents, corruption, etc. These programmes are narrowcast across 10 different areas in the city using an auto

rickshaw and thereby enabling the voices to amplify.

The radio station received the Letter of Intent last year, but continues to wait for SACFA clearance. The moment the green signal comes, Nazariya will go on air as it already has an operational studio.

The radio is supported and driven by a community management team and a sizeable volunteer's base. The big question, however, remains: When will the Nazariya of Ministry change?

**Debarun Dutta
Drishti**

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Bangladesh enters community radio era with launch of Radio Padma FM 99.2



Bangladesh Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad speaks at the inaugural ceremony at Dr Kaiser Memorial Auditorium of Rajshahi Medical College

RAJSHAHI, Oct 7 Information Minister Abul Kalam has said the present government believes in freedom of the mass media and protecting the rights of the media men.

He stated this while inaugurating the broadcasting program of community radio 'Radio Padma' in Rajshahi Medical College auditorium here this evening as the chief guest.

Centre for Communication and

Development (CCD), Rajshahi, Bangladesh organized the inaugural ceremony in collaboration with Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) UNESCO-Bangladesh and World Association of Christian Communication (WACC).

"We have enacted the Right to Information Act-2009 aimed at ensuring people's access to information," the minister told the audience.

He said Radio Padma, the first community radio station among the 14 allocated so far in the country, started its broadcasting in Rajshahi from today. He said the rest 13 stations will go for airing very soon.

The minister said that the community radio would play the most vital role in awakening the marginalized people living in the remote areas to ensure their overall empowerment and development.

Highlighting the aspects of the mass media, he hoped that the newly launched community radio will play its due role in elevating the livelihood and socio-economic development of the region's people together with imbuing the future generation with spirit of liberation war and patriotism.

Besides, he said it will focus on issues of agriculture, gender inequality, education, trade and commerce, disaster, weather, natural calamities, poverty and social problems and contribute a lot to building a disparity-free digital Bangladesh.

Source: [cr-india]/ Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC)

First Cordillera CR station launched in Sagada

SAGADA, Mountain Province — Radio Sagada 104.7 FM was successfully launched last Friday [11 November 2011] as the first-ever community radio station in the Cordilleras. After five months of test broadcasts, the people of Sagada converged at the town center to end almost a decade of hard work and anticipation.

Friends and supporters from Baguio, Manila and even abroad made the long trip to this famous tourist town to celebrate with the community and participate in the event.

"With this launching, Sagada proved once more its leadership in pushing for the people's communication rights," Kathleen Okubo, Radyo Sagada director said. Okubo, Baguio-based North-



Radio Sagada

ern Dispatch Weekly editor in chief, recalled that Sagada published the first newsweeklies in the Cordilleras with a letterpress printing machine that also gave birth to the country's oldest existing

community newspaper; the Baguio Midland Courier. Radyo Sagada station manager Mary Carling for her part urged Sagadans and all Cordillerans to claim the community radio station as theirs.

"We will welcome anyone who wish to broadcast programs on Radyo Sagada, because it is owned, managed and operated by the people," she said. The radio station Radio Sagada, launched in Sagada town centre, is expected to unite the community and give a voice to citizens ignored by the larger commercial and governmental radio stations.

Source: <http://www.unpo.org/article/13497> & Bulatlat.com

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Radio at the crossroads

Nepal's community radios risk alienating the communities they claims to serve

Community radio in Nepal is frequently celebrated as a model for radio broadcasting in South Asia. There are almost 200 licensed community stations on air across the country, often broadcasting to impoverished and remote areas. In theory, community radio props up grassroots democracy but there is a growing gap between the promise and reality of community radio in Nepal.

The phenomenal growth of community radio in Nepal has been without oversight. Ownership is increasingly dominated by local elite who start stations in the name of the community. Privileged class and castes and politically well-connected males hold licenses through cooperatives or NGOs, whose limited objectives are often politically motivated, may be out of touch with the communities they serve.

Publicity is the lifeblood of politicians, and the widespread ownership of radio sets has naturally made community radio a targeted publicity tool for politicians. The Community Radio Support Center estimates that political parties directly or indirectly operate up to 60 per cent of community radios currently on air. A look at a map of community radios shows clusters of three or more stations in many areas across the country, an indication of counterbalancing efforts among the three main parties. Beyond the problem of the manipulation of news and views that may come with the politicisation of community media, competition means a push towards larger transmitters. Increased overhead costs lead to heavier reliance on commercial sources of revenue and a reorientation of community stations towards the market.

In a market-based model of media sustainability, the sponsors and advertisers are the buyers while the readers, listeners, and viewers are the consumers. Buyer demands usually overrule consumer demands, at least as long as they don't hamper the credibility of a media outlet to the extent that it turns off the media consumer. But the sustainability of community radio lies not in com-



mercial sources but in the creation of social capital.

When community stations rely on the market, they risk alienating the community. Other than profit or non-profit status, there is nothing to distinguish a community station from a commercial station in Nepal. Even though many stations broadcast in several languages, the actual amount of time devoted to local language programming is small. Many programs in Nepali may not be fully relatable to local language speakers. Where stations increasingly rely on commercial sources of revenue, this situation is unlikely to change. Local language programming may have little attractiveness to advertisers due to a lack of purchasing power among local language listeners, exposing the market's limitations.

Syndicated programming centrally produced by NGOs and private production houses comprises a large percentage of community radio airtime. While this is a way for stations to cut costs and broadcast quality programming, it does reinforce traditional Kathmandu-centrism, eroding local orientation. Stations outside of Kathmandu have been shown to have more news programs than stations established inside the Valley, primarily sourced from content providers based in Kathmandu and dominated by national politics. As such, community stations can be said to be as national in outlook as any commercial station.

Investigative pieces probing local corruption are seldom carried out, perhaps a result of safety concerns or pandering to political or financial patrons. While centrally produced pro-

grams on crucial issues such as constitution-making and federalism do incorporate local voices and offer quality analysis on complex subject matter to resource-strapped stations, it is clear that some of the most important decisions facing Nepalis are largely out of the reach of real grassroots participation.

A true community station requires local orientation and community accountability. Ownership by traditionally dominant local groups and political parties goes contrary to this ethic. There are numerous community radios which do exhibit excellent practices, but in many cases the word "community" has been captured for self-serving ends.

The Community Radio Performance Assessment System, a point-based method of scoring the "health" of community stations, is now identifying model community stations while providing incentives and support for stations with lower scores. Almost half of the total score is devoted to the local orientation of programming and community ownership and participation. The results should offer a good baseline from which an appropriate system of classification, development guidelines, and regulation can evolve in a sector emerging from its infancy. It is in the effort to reclaim the title of "community" that democratic processes in community radio can flourish and community radio can endure as a principal agent of democratisation.

Anthony Wille, 28 Oct - 03 Nov 2011
<http://nepalitimes.com/issue/2011/10/28/Nation/18658>

Disclaimer: CR News is a not-for-profit publication supported by UNESCO and distributed free of cost with a view to disseminate information about community radio that may be beneficial for those in the social sector interested in using CR for development. We have therefore borrowed a few articles from online publications giving all due credit to them, as these write-ups would be useful for the CR fraternity. The intention is wider circulation of the articles only with appropriate acknowledgement.
 - CR News team

Making waves

Atikh Rashid, Indian Express

Pune, 23 Sept 2011: Santosh Jadhav, 35, of Mothegaon village in Resode taluka would always spray pesticides thrice in his soyabean fields. But this time Jadhav changed the decades-old schedule — he has cut it down to just one spray — following the advice of experts.

And he isn't regretting taking the risk. "With just one spray, the money spent on pesticides is saved and the growth of the crop has remained unaffected so far."

Likewise, Shyamrao Deshmukh of Tandalwadi village of the same taluka says he was inspired to grow tomatoes — a not-so-common crop in Vidarbha — after listening to the interview of a farmer. "I thought if he can do it in a similar soil and climate, then why can't I? This season I grew tomatoes on two acres and had a good yield."

Both Jadhav and Deshmukh are avid listeners of a community radio service that was launched in June 2010 at Karda at Resode taluka of Washim in Maharashtra's suicide-affected Vidarbha region.

The service, christened 'Swaranant', is disseminating information about latest farm technology and practices, and is run by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK).

"While we are making advances in agricultural research, its dissemination is comparatively laggard. We thought a

radio station can help tide over this time gap," said S K Deshmukh, convener, KVK, Karda.

The infrastructure for the radio station, including transmitters, studio, antennas, came from the Rs 22 lakh grant that the KVK got from the agricultural department under ATMA (Agricultural Technology Management Agency) scheme. The station has recently been approached by NABARD for holding awareness programme for its Financial Inclusion Scheme.

Recently, the station has also signed a deal with the Hyderabad-based Nagarjuna Fertiliser Pvt Ltd for broadcasting its advertisements.

'Majha Vavar Majha Shivar' (My Farm, My Village), Shetachya Bandhavar (On the Farmgate), Pashudhan and Krishi Sandesh are among the 33 different programmes the station broadcasts in a week.

'Majha Vavar Majha Shivar' deals with the recent technologies or practices recommended by experts to increase productivity and lower cost of production. It also involves interviews with agricultural experts and innovative farmers.

"Pashudhan, which deals with livestock management, is also popular. Many farmers say they went for livestock rearing after they got information about government schemes on the radio," said Deshmukh.

"As phone-in programmes are usually popular, we have one named

'Jhalkiyan' where audience can request to replay a piece of the programme which they liked during the last week," says A R Parvez, the station in charge.

At present, the service could be tuned at 90.4 MHz in about 100 villages that lie within the a radius of 20 km around Karda.

Source : [cr-india]/ <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/making-waves/850391/>

Feedback: Farm radio is one of the three categories of low-power FM under India's 'community radio' policy, and it's been largely unsuccessful. This is a pity, because farm radio is a powerful tool for agricultural extension. Success stories... are the exception rather than the rule. If only the govt. would give up the pretense that KVK radio run by govt. officers under a fabulously funded Ministry of Agriculture scheme is, by a mysterious process of reification, 'community radio', the farm radio scheme would work rather well.

Asking a bunch of tenured agricultural scientists to learn radio broadcasting and forthwith embrace the local community and attend to their 'social and cultural needs' is probably not the right way to go about it.

Sajan Venniyoor
Source: [cr-india]

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Call for Contributions

The editorial team seeks contributions by way of news reports, features, announcements and opinions on recent community radio activities in your organization/region/nation. Voices/Stories from the field, including interviews with community members (listeners and producers) are especially welcome.

Please note:

- Contact address and details of authors/organization should accompany the contributions.
- Electronic submission of contributions is recommended. Please email your articles/reports/features to: crnews2010@gmail.com
- Please also send us your feedback about this issue to make CR News bolder and better as we go along.