

**2nd REGIONAL
CONFERENCE OF
AMARC ASIA
PACIFIC**

**Community Radio for
Sustainable development
and Good Governance**

**February 20-23, 2010 -
Bangalore, India**

**REGISTRATION
OPENED (page 3)**



e-Newsletter

August, 2009

Year 5 No. 4

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COMMUNITY RADIO MOVEMENT AFOOT IN SOUTH KOREA

- Matsuura Tetsuo

The first AMARC Asia Pacific conference held in Jakarta in 2005 saw the participation of five delegates from South Korea, the biggest delegation from East Asia. But the road since then has not been very smooth. In 2005, preceding the conference, the Government of South Korea initiated a pilot project with eight low power radio stations, which they called “community radio”, which started their operation fully subsidized by the government. Those eight radio stations created the umbrella organization called Korean Association of Community Radio Broadcasting with its president recruited from KBC, the national public broadcaster. This organization has not been active in AMARC initiatives, and neither have most of those pilots “community radio” stations, leaving only two exceptional stations located in Seoul and Daegu still functioning now. They have remained committed in local, national, and international solidarity.

The government ended the pilot project and cut off all financial support to the eight radio stations at the end of last year. And now we see an emergence of a new movement for community radio in its real sense taking shape in Korea. Mediact, which is the Centre of Citizens Media in South Korea, and twenty one local working groups from all over the country are interested in establishing an independent, non-profit, and community-rooted radio stations. They are prepared to organize a new national network to be called the National Association of Congdongche Radio.

“Congdongche” means “community” in Korean language. The decision to use the local name was taken with the hope that the concept of community radio can be better understood by Korean people. The English term “community radio” was used by the pilot project already and its usage would not help interpret what this new initiative really hopes to achieve.

We also hope to welcome the new National Association of Congdongche Radio as AMARC member and look forward to a bigger delegation from South Korea at the AMARC Asia Pacific Second Regional Conference and Assembly in Bangalore in February, 2010.



Kim Ji-Hyun and Park Chae-Eun of Mediact

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AMARC ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE UPDATE

The 2nd AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Conference has been postponed to February 20-23, 2010 from 10-13 October 2009. The location of the conference remains unchanged and will be held in Bangalore, India.

The online registration is open and its deadline is 14th December 2009. Registration form is available at http://asiapacific.amarc.org/asia-pacific_conf-2009/inscription.php.

There are a limited number of sponsorships available for delegates to the regional conference. Participants must indicate on the registration form if they wish to apply for sponsorship. The decision to allot sponsorships will be made by the steering committee of the regional conference.

For applying for sponsorship, please email suman_basnet@asiapacific.amarc.org an article of no more than 1000 words in English language on the main characteristics and challenges faced by the community radio station, association or federation associated with. In this article, the following points are to be addressed:

1. What is the history or background of your community radio station or association or federation?
2. What is the type and level of community participation in your community radio station?
3. What kind of legal structure and management framework does your community radio station or association or federation have?
4. In the case of an association or a federation - please explain its relationship with community radio stations, with the government and with civil society organisations?
5. What are the key challenges faced by your station or association or federation?
6. What is the most important impact that your community radio or association or federation has had in the community?
7. What are the specific objectives of your action plan, and how do you see your association or federation in five year's time?
8. How can AMARC best contribute to the development of Community Radio in your country and what type of intervention do you expect from AMARC?
9. What do you most hope to get from the regional conference and how would you implement it at your home station, association or federation?

The deadline for sending the article is November 30, 2009. Please note that applications for sponsorship without the article will not be considered. These articles will also help to structure discussions in the conference as well as to facilitate the definition of the AMARC Asia Pacific Strategic Plan. There is a possibility of pre-conference publication and selected articles could be included.

The decision to grant scholarship will be based on the merit of the selected applications and also on cost, available finances and on the basis of achieving a gender and geographic balance among conference delegates.

For more information on the registration, scholarships and information on the conference, please email Prativa Chhetri at chhetri_prativa@yahoo.com

- "All happy families resemble one another but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. This is what Tolstoy said. And my family is unhappy because of me." I saw all the pain, agony and sadness in her eyes while she was saying these lines... I was waiting for some more. After a brief silence she spoke. "Like all young children I always wanted to make my parents proud of me. Whenever the teachers or elders asked me what I would be when I grow up, then I always said, doctor, sometimes pilot and sometimes even teacher. But now, more than becoming anyone I have to fight for being just me..." She is Binod by birth and Manisha by choice.
- Rajesh has been staying with his boyfriend in a rented flat for the past three years. He left his wife and a four and a half years old daughter to be with his boyfriend. He does not feel sorry for his family at all and is happy that he dared to break all taboos.
- Sarita's father told her that he has no problem with her girl partners but he would not allow her in the house fearing negative affect on her other siblings. So, Sarita moved to a hostel but fears constantly that exposure of their sexuality may lead to the loss of roof from over their heads. Now after nearly eight months, she has very little contact with her family and is never invited by them for any festivals or family gatherings.

The painful and complicated stories of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community of Nepal are unending. But the satisfactory part is, if not enough, we have at least started talking about the rights of gays and lesbians, the social rejection and the pain that this group go through. People are slowly becoming aware of this new group in the society.

"Like all young children I always wanted to make my parents proud of me. Whenever the teachers or elders asked me what I would be when I grow up, and then I always said, doctor, pilot and sometimes even teacher. But now, more than becoming anyone I have to fight for being just me..."

According to the Blue Diamond Society, an organization working for the rights of LGBTI, there are around 900,000 members in this community and most of them come from the rural parts of Nepal. Our social structure is such that the concept of a different type of sexuality is not easily acceptable.

I was talking to this young couple in their mid 20s, few days back. I asked the man his views on sexual minorities. The answer came, "Sexual minorities? Of course! They are the ones who are under aged people." The women added, "We can also include old people who are rejected by the families and the government should do something about the rights of sexual minorities". The answer took me by surprise. A young, outgoing couple like themselves had no information about this group in the society. What was alarming - almost fourteen more couples of the age group of 25-30 had no idea about the differences between gays, lesbians, transgender and transsexuals.

Then in this scenario will the marriage of a daughter with another girl be acceptable for a Nepali mother? Or will it be readily accepted in a family if a brother or uncle marries another man? Isn't it obvious for the mother or father to act in a subdued manner towards their son or daughter's sexual preference? We cannot overlook the pain, agony and hardship; the family goes through after the exposure of the unusual sexual preference of a member of the family.

There is a need for raising awareness through dialogue which will help in the establishment of rights and acceptance of this group in the society. What is missing here is the counselling between the two groups and the sad part is no organization or media or any other concerned groups are intervening in this sector. Community media like radio could be of good help in starting the dialogue. In a country with very complicated transportation and communication services, media can touch the sensitive part of the issue and help start the process of dialogue.

Nepal is on the verge of drafting a new constitution and the recent changes in the political scenario have made people more aware of their rights. The sexual minorities too, are now becoming more assertive about their rights. Recent changes in policies in Nepal in favour of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community have emboldened their position. As recently as on December 21, 2007 Nepal's Supreme Court declared that all discriminatory laws against LGBTI people must be repealed by the government, and provision must be made for recognition of the 'third gender' in government documents. Still there is much more to be done in this context. By just advocating for the liberation of the LGBTI community, projecting the members as victims and their family as suppressor will not solve this problem in the society.

Pramila Manandhar is a co-producer at Radio Sagarmatha, Kathmandu, Nepal and can be contacted at pramila_online@yahoo.com

Women Making Airwaves for Peace

16 - 20 October 2009, Manila
by Isis International and AMARC-WIN Asia Pacific



The date and venue for the WMAP seminar has changed following the postponement of the Second AMARC Regional Conference. The seminar will take place from October 16-20, 2009 at the Isis House in Manila, Philippines. This will be in conjunction with the Asia Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing+15 which is on October 22-24, 2009 also being organised in Manila.

Two WMAP Seminars October 2009 and February 2010

Isis received almost 80 applications for the WMAP seminar. Since only a maximum of 30 participants can be accommodated in one WMAP seminar, Isis International has decided to hold two WMAP seminars, provided necessary funding support is obtained:

- **WMAP Manila Seminar for Southeast Asia and the Pacific** in conjunction with the Asia Pacific NGO-Forum on Beijing+15 in October 2009 in Manila, Philippines.
- **WMAP Bangalore Seminar for South and Central Asia** in conjunction with the 2nd regional conference of AMARC Asia Pacific in February 2010 in Bangalore, India.

For information on WMAP please contact Bianca Miglioretto at bianca@isiswomen.org

RADIOMOST IGNITES COMMUNITY MEDIA MOVEMENT IN KYRGYZSTAN

- Bettina Ruigies

Radiomost located in Talas - Kyrgyzstan is so far Central Asia's only Community Radio – but this may soon change with more community radio initiatives under way.



Sheker Radio Trainee being interviewed after reading her first news on air

Last week the team of Radiomost held the first CR session in Sheker in Talas province. “Sheker Radio” is an initiative of the local community wishing to close the information gap. Due to its location next to the Kyrgyz-Kazakh border the community is blocked from most broadcasting signals, except for one state radio and TV channel. Sheker is also the birthplace of the famous Soviet author Chingiz

Aitmatov, who portrayed many of the villagers in his books. Interestingly the Sheker radio initiative is located right inside the newly renovated Chingiz Aitmatov museum. As a tribute, the trainees prepared their first news items about the museum. Radio Sheker so far does not have a license, so the team is broadcasting community news via loudspeakers and also reporting their news to Radiomost.

Some of this news will be shared with the Talas community living abroad. During an in-house training conducted by the Deutsche Welle Academy, Radiomost launched its own Blog

www.talasmost.kg. This blog contains news from the region, traditional songs by local artists and pictures from the old times found while researching for Talas' history by the journalists. The blog aims to share information on Talas for all interested readers and especially for those living abroad. During Kyrgyzstan's transition from being a Soviet Republic to an independent state many ethnic groups moved from Talas to other countries. Still the former Talas citizens maintain strong ties with their homeland. Via the blog people can look for relatives or order pictures of their houses.



Recording of Talas traditional songs for the community radio and blog

Radiomost team will research into what is of interest to this group. A special service will be the online greeting that is aired via the Community Radio. This service will be helpful especially to the elderly Talas citizens with no internet or telephone connection to be reached by their former friends from abroad. Hopefully this online service provided to the expat community will help generate some funding for Radiomost.

Bettina Ruigies is a Journalism Expert working with Radiomost in Kyrgyzstan and can be contacted at bettina.ruigies@web.de or bettina.ruigies@cimonline.de.

COMMUNITY RADIO MANAGEMENT AND ADVANCED RADIO PRODUCTION TRAINING IN AHMADABAD, INDIA

The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, AMARC Asia Pacific conducted 2nd training program on Community Radio Management and Advanced Radio Production Training for the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), India. The ten days long program began on the 17th of August 2009. Trainers Bianca Miglioretto, Isis International, Manila and Divya Wesley, Voices, India, conducted the training for members of the SEWA community radio team at the SEWA Academy in Ahmadabad, India. SEWA received its community radio permit in June, 2009.



Participants learnt how to develop a democratic structure of the radio, programme schedule, code of conduct, including gender policy and editorial guidelines as well as the drafting of action plans. Sessions included rooting the radio in the community with focus on community participation in the broadcasts. Participants

discussed issues related to financial sustainability and promotion of community radio station. The training program included three days of advanced training on production techniques, with focus on radio jingle and radio drama production, including digital editing with FOSS software Audacity.

In addition to the training on setting up and running of a community radio station, a training of trainers program (ToT) was organised for a select group of trainers from SEWA. It covered topics ranging from Effective Learning Methods to Preparing and Conducting Radio Trainings.



The Community Radio Management and Advanced Radio Production Training program is part of AMARC's continued commitment towards supporting capacity development of its members as well as growth of the community broadcasting sector in India. The first training on technical radio production was conducted by AMARC for SEWA in February 2007 in Bangalore. The current training will enable the participants to start operation of the SEWA community radio by the last week of September 2009. Both trainings were possible thanks to the financial support from the Indian Academy for Self Employed Women (SEWA Academy) and Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and were organized in collaboration



with Isis International, Manila and Voices, India.

Training materials and documents from the SEWA training will soon be available in the AMARC website (<http://asiapacific.amarc.org>).

WOMEN VOICE OUT ON VAW THROUGH AUDIO PROGRAMMES

- S. Thanam

The Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia held their Third Community Audio Fest in July, 2009. CIJ conducts trainings for communities on audio production, using open source software for sound editing like Audacity. During the event an annual competition on the theme "Men and women unite to end violence against women" was held.

A total of 13 groups from Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Perak, Johor and Kedah submitted their entries. With newly learnt skills on recording voices and sound editing, these women showed that they can present and share problems they face with a bigger audience. The participants were a mix of housewives, students and working women ranging from the age of sixteen to fifty-five.

"Community media is not a luxury, it is a necessity"

"Women need a platform to express their everyday issues such as violence against them. It is even more crucial for women from the lower income class because the availability of a platform allows them to learn to express themselves articulately," said S. Govindammah from the Kindergarten Teachers Association (Persatuan Guru Tadika- PGT).

CIJ executive director Gayathry Venkiteswaran said, "Women in many countries make use of community media to communicate local issues as the national media is not adequately attuned to their voices. Community media is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Developing countries have it, such as Thailand and India, so do first world nations such as Denmark," Gayathry said.

The 1st prize winner was K. Malathi and her team from Segamat. They produced a 10-minute program using a talk show and call in format to discuss the theme.



Thanam (left) and Gayathri (right) with the winners

R. Puvaneswary and her team from Kepong came in second with their entry on a wife's double misfortune when her husband who is infected with HIV dies and she comes to know that he had been secretly married to a Muslim woman.

The third prize winner presented the issue in form of a drama, the cultural stigma associated with infertility that can be construed as a form of mental violence on women. Winners received a set of recording equipment and hampers. The audio training and competition programmes were supported by funds from the Global Fund for Women and partly supported by the Foundation Open Society Institute (Zug).

The article can be read online at <http://www.cijmalaysia.org/content/view/486/6/>. For more information or to request for the participants' audio program, please contact S. Thanam at thanamsubramaniam@yahoo.co.uk

COMMUNITY RADIO'S RESPONSE TO THE DIARRHOEA OUTBREAK IN WESTERN NEPAL

- Prativa Chhetri

Diarrhoea outbreak in Nepal was first reported in the mid western region of the country in April 2009 and since then the disease has spread to the far western region resulting in a death toll of over 300 people. Remote, isolated communities are the hardest hit and the main cause for the outbreak is lack of clean water, poor sanitation and hygiene.

The relief effort has been slow due to the remote location of the affected areas, poor government coordination, few health posts, and lack of medicines, few doctors and assistants to treat the ill. The problem has been compounded by the lack of information on the disease among the local people. Superstitious beliefs like taking the ill to Shamans (local witchdoctors) rather than the health posts have not helped either.

Why is a treatable disease like diarrhoea taken so many lives in Nepal even in the 21st century? The country emerging from its decade long civil war is still in transition. Poor governance, lack of accountability and corruption has made matters worse. The Human Development Index (HDI) for Nepal is 142 out of a total of 177 countries as per the Human Development Report 2007/2008. The HDI provides a composite measure of three dimensions of human development: living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy), being educated (measured by adult literacy and enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary level) and having a decent standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity (PPP), income).

Despite such grave shortcomings, community radios located in west Nepal rose to the occasion. They tried and filled in the information gap to a certain extent. As soon as the news of the disease was first reported, Radio Tulsipur and Himal FM among others began broadcasting the information. Special programmes on the disease and methods of prevention were broadcasted. District health offices, political parties and local committees were contacted for information sharing and gathering. Local reporters were sent around to check ground realities and the same was broadcasted. Radio Tulsipur mobilized the district Chamber of Commerce and Industries and local NGOs to distribute medicines in the affected areas. As soon as the disease was reported in Dang district, the radio station with inputs from health officials broadcasted information on disease prevention and treatment which contributed towards limiting the rapid spread of the disease in the district. A delegation of grateful community members came to thank Radio Tulsipur for the role it played in sharing information and creating awareness.

Community radios like Radio Tulsipur and others believe that the reason behind the outbreak is the grave negligence of the state, poor quality of food distributed by the INGOs, poor hygiene, lack of proper sanitation, untreated drinking water and acute poverty that is prevalent in this part of the country. Though the road to development for Nepal seems long and challenging, the community radios are filling in the much needed information gap and providing vital support mechanism to their respective communities.

Prativa is a Program Officer in the AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Office and can be contacted at chhetri_prativa@yahoo.com.



Achieving Food Security in Times of Crisis: Global Broadcast by AMARC on the World Food Day

On the 16th of October, 2009, AMARC will organize 24 hours of internet broadcast to mark the World Food Day. All the radio programs will be available in the podcast section of the AMARC website for free download following the broadcast.

This year's theme is "Achieving Food Security in Times of Crisis." Participating radios can localize the theme in the way think best. Please send the programs by the October 9, 2009 via «send it global» <https://www.senditglobal.com>. It's a web based transfer system for large files directly over the Internet. On recipient write: secretariat@si.amarc.org <<mailto:secretariat@si.amarc.org>>. Please visit the AMARC website at http://www.amarc.org/index.php?p=World_Food_Day_2009 for resources. For any question or assistance, please contact chhetri_prativa@yahoo.com.