



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF  
COMMUNITY RADIO  
MOVEMENT

Newsletter -

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**For sending news, articles and information please contact:**

AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Office, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Phone: +977 1 5554811; Fax: +977 1 5521714

Email: [suman@wlink.com.np](mailto:suman@wlink.com.np); Website: <http://www.asiapacific.amarc.org>

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## AMARC turns 25: 2008 is the Year of Community Radio

Montreal, 31 December 2008. This year AMARC is 25 years old! The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters activities in 2008 will be marked by the celebration of its 25th Anniversary.

It was in August 1983 that a group of community radio fans met spontaneously in Montreal for the first World Conference of community radio broadcasters, only to realise at the meeting that there was already an embryonic world movement which brought them together. The 2<sup>nd</sup> World Assembly in 1986 in Vancouver, Canada was followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Assembly in Managua in 1988, where the Association acquired the status of an International Non-Governmental Organization. In Dublin, in 1990, the debates taking place at the 4th AMARC World Conference focused on the confirmation of the right to communicate. It was also in Dublin that a group of women proposed the creation of an international network of women working in the field of community radio. However, it was at the Oaxtepec Conference, held in Mexico in 1992, that the International Women's Network (AMARC-WIN) was formally launched, together with AMARC's International Solidarity Network. In Dakar, the 6th AMARC World Conference confirmed the existence of a locally rooted movement, with strong and independent regional offices evolving effectively in a context of world globalisation.

AMARC's 7th Conference, which took place in Milan during the summer of 1998, followed the lines laid down at the Dakar Conference, allowing the organisation to cross three new frontiers: the legal frontier, by discussing new international law's recognition of community media; the technical frontier, by helping members to meet technological challenges and by enabling community radio collaboration with other media with a similar vocation; and, the geographical frontier, by making a breakthrough into Asia and the Arab countries.

The 8th Conference of AMARC in Kathmandu, the largest gathering of community broadcasters to take place in the region, was a milestone in the development of the community radio movement in Asia-Pacific region. Participants of AMARC8 endorsed the organisation's Strategic Plan of Action for the period 2003-2006. The Kathmandu Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly.

AMARC9 World Conference, which was held in November 2006 in Amman, Jordan supported the development of Community Radio in the MENA region. This was followed by the AMARC Africa MENA Conference in Rabat Morocco in November 2007. The conference studied a global evaluation of Community radios' social impact and defined the strategic plan of action for 2007-2010

In 2008, after 9 world conferences, the community radio movement has effectively become a recognized global sector of communication that has an effective social impact in making the world a better place. Community Radio activities in 2008 will be under the sign of the 25th Anniversary of AMARC.

We call upon AMARC members and Community Radio Stakeholders to organize activities to celebrate, reflect on lessons learned on how to strengthen the social impact of Community radio to combat poverty, exclusion and voicelessness and to promote social justice and sustainable, democratic and participatory human development. Please send your reflections on the 25th anniversary of AMARC and communicate your initiatives to [secretariat@si.amarc.org](mailto:secretariat@si.amarc.org) Marcelo Solervicens Secretary General AMARC.

[For further information on AMARC, please visit: <http://www.amarc.org>]

**CALL FOR PARTICIPATION**  
**MARCH 8 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY BROADCAST WORLD CAMPAIGN**

On the occasion of the International Women's Day, March 8, 2008, AMARC-Women's International Network (AMARC-WIN) is organizing an international radio campaign '**Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.**' On that day, AMARC will broadcast for 24 hours radio productions by women community radio journalists from around the globe on March 8, 2008.

AMARC WIN encourages you to participate in this global campaign by sharing your radio productions and appreciating other programmes in different languages through the AMARC website, [www.win.amarc.org](http://www.win.amarc.org). Please send yours and download and rebroadcast other's programmes, so that your listeners can enjoy stories of different women and communities from different parts of the world.

**Why this theme?** Financing the women's movements has been set as the priority of this year's session of the [Commission on the Status of Women at the UN](#). It has been noted that while most government express their support to gender equality and women's empowerment, their commitments are hardly translated into action, usually citing budget constraints. The radio programmes would reiterate questions which have long been raised and address them with stories from the ground: How do women demand a gendered budget and programmes? What positive experiences did women obtain when governments concretely support long and short term initiatives geared towards gender equality and women's empowerment?

**How to participate:** Please submit your radio productions on this March 8 theme or other related issues to Gabriela Mayorquin [Gabriela@si.amarc.org](mailto:Gabriela@si.amarc.org) **before March 2**. We recommend that these productions be sent in **MP3 or WAV formats**. You can also upload your audio to an SFTP server. Please write to Gabriela for details.

**Language:** The radio production can be in any language. Please indicate the language and send a short description of the content of your programme in English.

**Picture:** If you have a photo or station logo that can complement your programme, feel free to include it.

For queries and other details, please write to Celine Kohlprath of Isis International-Manila: [celine@isiswomen.org](mailto:celine@isiswomen.org) or visit the March 8 website of AMARC-WIN: <http://www.march8.amarc.org/index.php?l=EN> or log on to [www.win.amarc.org](http://www.win.amarc.org) and follow the links.

AMARC WIN looks forward to a successful and diverse March 8 radio campaign with a strong participation from the Asia Pacific region.

Feature report:

**AMARC ROUND TABLE IN NEW DELHI:  
DISCUSSES DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN INDIA**

On February 15, 2008, AMARC organised a round table meeting in New Delhi to discuss some of the key issues concerning the development of community radio in India. The Round Table, which took place in the meeting hall of UNESCO, was attended by about 30 participants that included representatives of the community radio movement of India, the donor community, and officials of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Government of India. Steve Buckley, President of AMARC International was also present at the Round Table. Ashish Sen, Executive Director of VOICES and Vice President for Asia Pacific in the International Board of AMARC moderated the meeting. Following are the main topics discussed in the round table meeting:

**Overview of CR in India – session facilitated by Ashish Sen; [voices@vsnl.com](mailto:voices@vsnl.com)**

- ◆ Indian community radio (CR) needs to get cracking, and put channels on air. Not a single grassroots channel on air as yet
- ◆ Community Radio Forum (CRF) needs to drive the movement. Should become the public face of community radio
- ◆ CRF has to focus on coordinating policy reform initiatives, providing a knowledge bank and help-desk for CR stations, creating a partnership network (with AMARC as well as other likeminded organisations); it has to be a platform for the development of CR stations
- ◆ There is a need to explore ways to collaborate and work with AMARC

**Discussion 1- “Advocacy on Policy Issues” – session facilitated by Sajan Venniyoor; [venniyoor@gmail.com](mailto:venniyoor@gmail.com)**

- ◆ Awareness of CR dismal; need for Awareness Building initiatives by both government and CR community
- ◆ Ban on news sets bad precedent globally and locally
- ◆ Govt should reconsider ban on Mobile Broadcasting. Mobile transmitters can be used as a tool to build awareness
- ◆ Need for a Technology helpdesk and training for CRs - especially for fixing transmitters.
- ◆ Turnkey technology solutions are bad
- ◆ Spectrum congestion in urban areas. Perhaps reduce watts given to Campus stations? Explore ‘time sharing’ on the same frequency?
- ◆ Eligibility Criteria needs reform. Why do NGOS need three years experience to apply? Exceptions also have to be made in disaster situations like Tsunami.

**Discussion 2- “Process of CR Licensing”—session facilitated by Jayalaxmi Chittoor; [jchittoor@csdms.in](mailto:jchittoor@csdms.in)**

- ◆ Need for more transparency all round
- ◆ Government website slows process down. It has to be clearer and more user-friendly, especially for the SAFCA [Frequency allocation] clearance section. More live, up-to-date info and transparency on website
- ◆ Spectrum allocation map has to be made available in the Ministry’s website. At the moment CR stations have to travel all the way to Delhi only to be told there’s no frequency available.
- ◆ There is a need for help-desk to assist organizations that have an L.O.I. (Letter of Intent of the government) proceed to SAFCA clearance. Also to give technical assistance
- ◆ international bodies could play role of being “hand-holders” or “knowledge base”

- ◆ The role of the Screening Committee – how useful is it? Maybe it should be there only for “questionable applications” and not for all applications. This would speed up the licensing process
- ◆ Screening Committee can be the liaison between CR and ministries. Help clear up blockages.
- ◆ Applications that are rejected should be given reason for rejection and also have a redressal mechanism. Perhaps Screening Committee can play this role.
- ◆ Main issue is not the process, but that NGOs aren’t applying. Ministry only has 200 applications (campus and KVK-Krishi Darshan/agriculture included). Need to build awareness so more NGO applications start coming in. Currently, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry website has only about 90 NGO applications for CR stations.

**Discussion 3- “Funding of CR in India”— session facilitated by Steve Buckley; [sbuckley@gn.apc.org](mailto:sbuckley@gn.apc.org)**

- ◆ Funding has to be determined sector by sector, case by case
- ◆ Funding should not interfere with independence of CR station and community
- ◆ What’s the balance between self-sustenance and public funding?
- ◆ Is seed-money required? And How much? Perhaps can generate a universal fund by levying broadcasters?
- ◆ International examples: France has a pool that goes to CR; South Africa puts a levy on broadcasters that goes to a media development and diversity fund (70% goes to CR); US has govt budget for CR stations and stations also do internal fund-raising
- ◆ In Indian context—should govt funding be part of CR? If so, need a mechanism to ensure funding isn’t used as a way to control CR.
- ◆ Fund should be administered by an independent body. Need for a partner association (like journalists’ associations) that administers fund
- ◆ Idea of donor-driven agencies, with common fund administered by an organization especially created to assist donors.

**Concluding Remarks/Next Steps: -- session facilitated by Ashish Sen**

- ◆ CRF is getting registered
- ◆ CRF to become an official platform for CR community by June 2008
- ◆ CRF in process of building help-desk to assist communities interact with government, answer questions on applications, technology help, etc.
- ◆ Govt has set aside budget for a help-desk on its end. Also for awareness building sessions
- ◆ Explore possibility of AMARC as a partner agency network AMARC interested in more knowledge swapping sessions like this round table. Happy to support Community Radio Forum of India in this way
- ◆ AMARC always available as a “help-desk” for the CRF of India
- ◆ Radio Duniya offered to give two pages of print space in magazine dedicated to CR news and views (awareness building)
- ◆ CRF website in production; all roundtable discussions and conferences can be put on easily downloadable format on site

**Finally, some interesting quotes from the Round Table:**

“Whatever happened to projections of 5000 stations by now? India has the ability to have 10,000...why hasn’t it happened?? We’re doing a lot of talking and we need to stop talking and start doing. Where are we? What is all this talking about? Let’s get going with these models!” – *Jocelyn Josiah, UNESCO, in her opening remarks*

“If we are to go from ‘Ground Zero’ to ‘Step 1’ we have to walk together and pool our efforts and build a partnership network.” – *Ashish Sen, VOICES, on building awareness and CR community*

“Let’s be careful not to be constrained by our histories but see it as a new realm in radio where anything is possible.”—*Steve Buckley, AMARC, on scope of CR in India*

“Let’s take it slow when confronting the government. Let them ease into and ingest this new medium. This is a process change and we have to go with the flow. Let’s sensitively handle recommendations to the government”—*Jaya Chittoor, CSDMS, on pushing for policy reform*

“Let’s take the bull by the horns!”—*N. Ramakrishnan, Ideasync, on confronting government on news ban.*

“We need to push the envelope”—*Danny Varghese, Panos Radio, on the possibility of singing newscasts.*

“Let’s first put some CR station on air first. Once we have a body of work, we’ll have a stronger voice”—*Sevanti Narayan, The Hoot, on policy reform*

“Be nice, people!”—*Sajan Venniyoor, Prasar Bharati, upon introducing late-arriving Ministry Officials to round table participants.*

“People are a wealth of knowledge. We should look for home-grown solutions.”—*Jocelyne Jossiah, UNESCO, on technology*

“Remember, for some things you can find local solutions but for some you cannot. We’re looking for something cheap that lasts long.”-- *N. Ramakrishnan, Ideasync, on technology.*

“You’re trying to put a hurdle, instead of encouraging people to apply”—*Vasanti, CMS, on licensing process*

“Stations have to come to Delhi and be told, ‘sorry, there’s no spectrum available.’ Can’t we save them the trip?? And where’s the transparency of the Screening Committee on the website? It causes a lot of confusion.”—*Ram Bhatt, VOICES, on licensing process*

“Actually, we’re so invisible, we’ve become transparent!”—*Sajan Venniyoor, Prasar Bharati, on the Screening Committee*

“Government support should not be confused with government intervention”—*Ashish Sen, VOICES & AMARC, on CR funding*

“Everyone says we need a fund, but it’s not about just giving away money. How do we monitor the funds are being used appropriately?”—*a roundtable participant on issue of common funds*

“It’s not the “what?” It’s the *how*. The CRF has to take tangible shape and begin. We need to get into action.”—*Ashish Sen, VOICES & AMARC, on registration of Community Radio Forum*

“The moment you’re in is absolutely strategic to us... the scale is such that it can be a laboratory for the world about what’s possible.”-- *Steve Buckley, AMARC, on scope of CR in India*

**[Notes: Sanjana Sharma-Radio Duniya, Piya Kochhar-News Radio India]**

### **PARTICIPATE ON MARCH 21 VOICES WITHOUT FRONTIERS, EDITION 2008**

On March 21, UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, community radio stations across North America, Europe, Africa, Latin America, Asia Pacific and the MENA region, will devote a day of broadcast focusing on issues concerning racism, such as discrimination against women, children, refugees, and the disabled. Multilingual programming for this day will be transmitted all around the world using AMARC RVSF Website.

The 2008 edition of the March 21 Voices without Frontiers will strengthen the network of exchanges between community radios around the world. Working with close cooperation with AMARC affiliate networks around the globe, as well as dozens of local stations, AMARC International Secretariat will coordinate this initiative of radio broadcasting in French, English, Spanish and many other languages, including Arabic, Nepali, and Portuguese among others. This project is the only one of its kind in the world, reaching into low income and poverty –stricken communities in many parts of Latin America, Africa, and the Asia Pacific region. To participate please send your news and audio programs to [secretariat@si.amarc.org](mailto:secretariat@si.amarc.org).

For further information visit AMARC RVSF on the web at <http://www.rvsf.amarc.org>

### **INDIA: AMARC PARTNERS WITH VOICES, UNESCO AND UNDP FOR TECHNOLOGY CONSULTATION**

February 5, 2008, Bangalore

More than 100 participants from across India participated in technology consultation organised by VOICES, a media advocacy group, with support from UNESCO, UNDP and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) on February 3rd and 4th 2008 at the United Theological College, Bangalore.

The high turnout of participation underscored the need to demystify relevant technology for community radio: What is the appropriate technology and how much does it cost?

The consultation had presentations on a range of technologies, from *Doko* Radio from Nepal to indigenous transmitters by Nomad India. While community radio technology took centre stage on the first day, day two showcased mixed media models like the Village Information Centre by DHAN Foundation and the Story Bank project in Namma Dhwani, Budikote.

The participants, who had come from all over India, showed a keen interest in the consultation, and there was a fair amount of debates, conversations and discussions during the two day event. While the consultation was fairly successful in addressing the hardware issues in detail, there was not enough time to address the software issues. Even though some Free and Open Source (FOSS) CDs containing the complete audio-video, publishing, and office material were distributed there is a need to address in more detail for practitioners to feel the need to switch to FOSS.

The consultation was preceded by a one day Community Radio Forum (CRF) meeting, held at the same venue. More than a 100 people participated, and a range of issues about CRF was discussed at this event.



At the end of the three days a range of issues emerged from the stakeholders. These include:

- ❖ While discussions on the scope and potential of community radio stations (CRS) is growing in quality and quantity, the fact remains that a single grass root community radio station remains to get on air yet. The process of getting on air needs to be simplified, and accelerated
- ❖ There is no such thing as a turnkey solution to setting up a CRS. Just as the community needs to participate in the content, management etc., the community also needs to be involved in deciding the appropriate technology and they need to be trained in these technologies, so it can be a participatory process from the beginning.
- ❖ The lowest cost for a CRS given by WEBEL Mediatronics is USD 12,500, but the overall cost of a CRS can be substantially lower than this amount as well.
- ❖ The community radio fraternity needs to speak out now, especially about the spectrum availability and the issues surrounding it. For example: The government of India is citing unavailability of spectrum for CRS in urban areas, and this is restricting freedom of speech and information for marginalized urban communities. We need to ask for a free and fair spectrum allocation plan wherein CRS gets some frequencies reserved for itself. Further, we also need to relook at the present 800 KHz separation as it restricts the number of stations which can be set up in any given area/city. It is possible to set up stations with even 200 KHz separation as is shown by the spectrum allocation in the United States. This would mean more stations and more airspace for the communities.
- ❖ Sustainability is going to be an important issue for all the radio stations involved, and all of us need to start looking at how each CRS can begin to move away from a donor driven model and start looking at independently generating revenue from within the country. A possibility of setting up a consortium of radio stations, which approaches large advertising revenues, and subsequently distributes revenues in proportion, has been discussed, and further research on this model is needed.
- ❖ The policy documents and guidelines from Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, MIB, the SACFA (frequency allocation) and other documents from WPC, etc. all need to be made available in regional languages. In addition, the recently released Technical Manual also needs to be made available in regional languages.
- ❖ As a first step, the Commissioner of the Dept of Information, Government of Karnataka, has offered to bear 50% of the costs for translating the manual in Kannada.
- ❖ The Technical Manual is a useful publication for community radio practitioners, and interested organisations. However, technology evolves almost on a daily basis, and it would be critical for the manual also to be updated as regularly. To achieve this, SPACE, a group from Kerala, has offered to set up a wiki which would contain the soft copy of the manual, and the CR fraternity would take responsibility of updating the technology options regularly.
- ❖ A need for research on CRS has emerged. The movement for opening up the airwaves has just started in India, and this is the best time to track the CR



movement, and assessing its impact on communities. However, at the same time, a fresh look at the methodologies of research, approach to development and approach towards the role of communications in development is needed. CRS demands a more ethnographic way of research, to ensure that impact is looked at in a holistic way.

- ❖ There is a strong need for capacity building for community radio stations, in the area of production, reporting, editing, and other field based work. However, it is even more critical that some kind of best practices or some kind of model be made available for communities to manage their own radio station, so as to move away from the NGO radio model. This would mean that we need to map out what exactly management involves, what are the key factors involved in sustaining a radio station, crisis management techniques etc. However, we have to be careful not to impose a certain way of thinking on our communities. There needs to be a fine balance between skill transfer and imposition of so called knowledge.
- ❖ In terms of hardware for Community Radio station, there is a possibility of overload of information for practitioners, and potential applicants. In this confusing situation, the fraternity needs to take the onus upon itself and provide the best two three options, which can then be adapted and changed to suit the local conditions and needs. However, it must be kept in mind that these two or three options must be addressed not to NGOs (who have access to funding agencies etc) but to community based groups, who will or might be looking to raise the funds from the community. For example, if an option for Indian rupees 200,000 or USD 5,000 (for complete set up) is offered by the CRF, and then a community based group with a community of 5000 people can raise this money by donations of Rs. 40 or one USD from each person. This can ensure community ownership and sustainability.
- ❖ To take the previous point forward, we must have people and resources ready so that supply can meet demand. At present, Nomad India can supply a 100 watt transmitter at roughly USD 1750. However, if a CRS is looking at 1+1 transmitter set up, plus tower, and other production equipment, then it is almost impossible to keep the total cost below USD 5,000. Therefore, we are faced with two three options to improve this situation:
  - Get a large amount of funds from a big donor, who will enable the manufacturer to buy components in bulk, manufacture transmitters in bulk, to push down costs, or the donor could subsidize the first 100 transmitters, so the manufacturer is not taking a massive risk by investing.
  - We encourage further R&D, and other manufacturers to come up with still lower cost models for a transmitter.
  - We network with every agency which applies or will apply for a CRS license, and request them to purchase a transmitter from the same manufacturer so as to push the costs down
  - Wherever, there is more than one CRS present in a given area, the stations must coordinate between themselves to share the tower costs. Everything else can be separate and independent, except the tower.
  - This point should be taken up irrespective of everything else, and that is to have a country
  - Fund (either from taxation structure or from existing schemes and programs), for supporting CRS across the country.

There is a strong need to address software, particularly Free and Open Source Software for community radio stations. This is particularly relevant as all community radio stations

are just on the verge of starting their work, and this is the best time to start using FOSS. It will be much tougher to switch to other Operating systems at a later stage.

Schemes like the Namma Banuli subsidy announced by the Government of Karnataka and similar efforts by the other state governments need to take cognizance of community radio fundamentals. While independent community radio should not be compromised, community management and ownership are key principles that need to be ensured.

A cross media and multiple platform approach to community radio needs to be nurtured to ensure the collective voice of community.

*Reported by Divya Wesley, Ashish Sen, and Ramnath Bhat, VOICES. For more information, please contact: [voices@vsnl.com](mailto:voices@vsnl.com).*

## INDIA: POLICY ON COMMUNITY RADIO CRITICISED

### Nothing reaches out like radio

By Deepa Kurup

11 Feb 2008, The Hindu

*Policy on community radio criticised / People are recognising radio as a key medium*

Bangalore: It is easy to get carried away by the policies formulated by the Indian Government which favour the growth of community radio. However, it takes some level of objectivity to realise its limitations and point out the existing anomalies.

Even as civil society organisations celebrate and pontificate over new strategies to adopt, Steve Buckley of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) points out that the policy itself leaves much to be desired.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on his visit to India to assess and understand the community radio scene here, Mr. Buckley says that the policy is restrictive in nature.



"The fact that any organisation starting a station needs to be at least three years old does not provide a conducive atmosphere for the growth of new concepts," he explains. He draws attention to the fact that these stations are not allowed to broadcast news, which, he says, is a concept not prevalent anywhere in the world. "In recent years, owing to the dotcom boom and bust, somehow people have started recognising radio as a key medium," he asserts. He uses examples from well networked and technologically advanced countries such as South Korea which have taken to community radio in a big way, and Mozambique where over a 100 community radio stations have sprung up after the end of civil war. He believes in the power of radio and more so in the prospects of it as a tool to bridge barriers.

For most of us, the concept of community radio — with stations such as Namma Dhwani in Budhikote and Kalanjiam in Nagapattinam — largely belongs to the rural realm. Mr. Buckley thinks that there is enormous potential for it in the urban context as well.

The Sheffield Radio station which he runs caters to refugees, migrants, artists and provides a forum for everyone to interact.

So, is community radio comparable to the trend in commercial radio programmes which are turning more participatory? Mr. Buckley disagrees. He feels that all said and done, commercial stations are motivated only by commercial imperatives which do not have any development value.

Participation is certainly the key. "When you put ownership in the hands of the listener you get a very unique dynamic," he explains animatedly. Mr. Buckley is aware of the countless hurdles faced by community radio in India. "Namma Banuli," the Karnataka State Government's initiative which allocated funds worth Rs. 1 crore to prop up community radio has not had many takers. "For this to take off the cost factor needs to be worked out and we must move towards making equipment and infrastructure affordable," he added.

Source: <http://www.hinduonnet.com/2008/02/11/stories/2008021158270200.htm>

#### **INDIAN WOMEN IN COMMUNITY BROADCASTING: AMARC AND VOICES ORGANISE TRAINING FOR MEMBERS OF SEWA ACADEMY**

February 18, 2007. AMARC and VOICES collaborated to organise a training workshop for members of the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Bangalore from 1-5 February 2008. SEWA Academy, one of India's leading women's self help group has applied for a community radio license. Trainers from the Philippines, India and Nepal guided sisters from SEWA on various issues concerning the designing of programs of a community radio station. They discussed various issues such as introducing programmes, determining lengths of programs, anchoring, making live interviews, speaking the local language, involving the local arts and culture in programming, attracting various age-groups of listeners, etc. They also discussed the various ways a community radio station can involve the community in the activities of the station. The training also discussed volunteer involvement and management in a community radio station.

The training also covered areas like building programmes structures, programme planning, making programmes interesting and lively, programming on different subjects, etc. As SEWA has been producing programmes for broadcasting by the All India Radio, AIR (State owned broadcasters), the training workshop also discussed the key difference between programming for AIR and programming for a community radio station. SEWA sisters also learned about using the Audacity software for recording and editing. The training also included information on legal issues vis-à-vis programming. Some of the sessions of the training focused on technical aspects of radio programme production.



The trainers of the workshop came with high degree of expertise and experience and their method of training was very participatory using group discussion, presentation, practical and questionnaires. The training was very interactive because the trainees also had an experience of working in Rudi no Radio. Even the participants found the training to be highly beneficial, the trainees would have preferred more time for field visits and practical demonstrations.

As part of the feedback, trainees have mentioned that future training programmes should include field visits to community radio stations and hands on training on running a community radio station.

[As reported by Ms. Shanta Khosti, SEWA Academy. Shantaben and nine others from SEWA participated in the training program in Bangalore]

### **A brief overview of the training by Bianca Miglioretto, chief trainer of the training workshop:**

#### **What was the training about mainly?**

The training was on the principles of community radio and technical skills in radio production. It was a three day long training programme. Jaya Luintel from Nepal carried out the training program on the first day. She focussed mainly on the daily activities in a community radio station including programme planning. I was assisted by Divya Wesley of VOICES on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the training.

#### **Some of the key issues covered by the on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> day:**

##### **Transformative Potential of Community Radio for Women's Empowerment:**

An introduction to Radio and the principles of community radio and what opportunities it offers to women.

##### **Media Portrayal of Women: Gender Sensitive Reporting:**

Looking at the Mainstream (Malestream) Media and analysing women's portrayal and develop ideas on how to make a difference and give women a strong voice in media.

##### **101 on Radio Studio Operation:**

How to operate a radio studio with hands on for all the participants and their first recording.



##### **Digital Sound Editing with Audacity:**

Short introduction into FOSS (Free and Open Source Software) and instructions how to install Audacity and how to edit sound with it. They installed Audacity on the computers available and edited the recordings they did the previous day. They even went to the stage of experimenting.

##### **Radio Format:**

How to conceptualize a one hour magazine style radio programme and how to conceptualize a 10-15 min radio feature or radio documentary on a certain topic, making use of the creativity of the medium radio.

##### **Community Participation:**

Discuss the different ways of community participation. How can women and men from the different walks of life and from the different sectors in the community be involved in the actual programme productions. So that from objects of radio reports they become to subjects of their own radio stories. We also discussed the different concepts of volunteers and trainings for volunteers.

**Who participated:**

There were altogether ten sisters from SEWA that participated in the training workshop.

**How are the trainees going to benefit?**

As SEWA has applied for their own community radio station, they will soon be involved in running their own station. Up to now SEWA has a 15 minutes weekly radio programme on All India Radio. So most of the participants have some knowledge about radio but if they have to run a whole radio station many more women need all rounder knowledge in radio production and how to run a CR. Many of the women will be broadcasters and some of them trainers for volunteers and other SEWA members.

**Evaluation of the training:**

We did an oral and a written evaluation at the end of the two days. Most of the participants were very happy with the training. They learned a lot and they feel more confident in using the computer and the studio. They also realized that studio operation and sound editing with audacity is not that difficult. They also got a clearer picture about what is community radio and what it involves to run a community radio.



They specially liked the session on radio format. Most of them agreed that the training was too short. They would have liked fieldwork and more practical exercises. Here some quotes from the participants:

“Now I have a clear understanding of the difference between All India Radio and Community Radio.”

“I learned the importance of the headphone while doing field interviews and in the studio.”

“I learned how to use the cassette player for background music.”

“I liked the radio clock as a tool to plan a radio programme.”

“I learned so much in just two days but I am sure there is a lot more to learn.”

“I learned how to work with the computer and that it is not so difficult. But I would have liked to learn also script writing and radio drama production.”

**[For more information on the training in Bangalore, please contact Bianca Miglioretto, [bianca@isiswomen.org](mailto:bianca@isiswomen.org).]**

**UNESCO ANNOUNCES “COMMUNITY RADIO: A USER’S GUIDE TO THE TECHNOLOGY”**

January 7, 2008, New Delhi

UNESCO, New Delhi has announced the release of the publication “Community Radio: A user’s guide to the technology.” This technical manual is produced for potential CR operators in keeping with the Government of India’s intention to establish 4000 community radio stations by 2008.



The technical manual aims to accompany interested organizations in the demystification of each piece of equipment usually found in community radio stations; its role and function within a wider social context; advantages and disadvantages of its usage. For others who dare to be technically more adventurous detailed notes on equipment are also provided.

In November 2006, the Government of India notified a new Community Radio Policy which permits NGOs and other civil society organizations to own and operate community radio stations. The new policy has brought a flood of questions from prospective Community Radio applicants/operators and in particular: what equipment do you need to set up a community radio, and how much would it cost? While there are many solutions that are available off the shelf, the main line of advice that this manual provides is *“Costs depend on the context of the Community Radio Station you are trying to build”*.

The technical manual has been designed keeping the knowledge levels of the end user in mind and is packed with illustrations, photographs, cross references and a list of organizations who can further assist in technical and social aspects of CR.

The manual was reviewed online by members of the Solution Exchange - ICT for Development Community in India

**Community Radio”: A user’s guide to the technology is authored by N Ramakrishnan and is available online at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001561/156197E.pdf>**

#### NEW BOOK 'UNDERSTANDING ALTERNATIVE MEDIA' AVAILABLE

##### **Understanding Alternative Media**

By Olga Bailey, Bart Cammaerts, and Nico Carpentier

Published by: Open University/McGraw&Hill (Maidenhead, UK)

From blogs, flyers, fanzines and neighbourhood newspapers, to podcasts, streaming clips on YouTube and My Space and community radio and TV, we live in a world where we can access a huge source and range of alternative media. They provide an opportunity for ordinary people to air different perspectives, complementary discourses and ideologies to those presented in mainstream media; a platform for citizens to participate in public spaces and exercise their right to communicate.

'Understanding Alternative Media' provides the reader with a comprehensive overview of how the field of alternative media can be theorized. Combing diverse case studies from countries including the UK, Belgium, North America and Brazil, which emphasize the different approaches and interconnections, the authors thus propose an original multi-theoretical framework to help understand the subject. Looking at both 'old' and 'new' media, the book argues for the importance of alternative media and suggests a political agenda as a way of broadening its scope.

Understanding Alternative Media is valuable reading for students in media, journalism and communications studies, researchers, academics, and journalists.

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