



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF COMMUNITY RADIO MOVEMENT



JAPAN UPDATE April 2008

This supplement of AMARC Asia Pacific Newsletter presents an update of the community radio sector in Japan. In 2007, members of AMARC and other stakeholders came together to form the AMARC–Japan Working Group, following which there has been concerted effort by the group to accelerate development of community radio in that country. In this issue, we present interviews of some of the key community radio activists in Japan to provide an overview of the Japanese community radio sector.

Please feel free to contact the AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Office in Kathmandu or any of the individuals featured in this newsletter, should you be interested to receive more information about the community radios sector in Japan.

Content

Japan needs Community Radio Legislation – Interview of Tetsuo Matsuura	Page 2
Radio Forum in Japan	Page 4
My Mission is to Broadcast Peace – Interview of Kim Chiaki	Page 4
FMYY is Creating Cultural Understanding and Peaceful Coexistence – Interview with Junichi Hibino	Page 6
Takatori Community Centre - Bringing cultures together	Page 8
Women Feel Challenged Everyday – Interview of Ms. Kazumi Moriki of AWEP	Page 9

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; Website: <http://www.asiapacific.amarc.org>

[Note: Bibek Paudyal, volunteer in the AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Office helped edit this newsletter. All articles in this newsletter can be freely reprinted or distributed with acknowledgement of the source]

Interview:

JAPAN NEEDS COMMUNITY RADIO LEGISLATION – TETSUO MATSUURA



Tetsuo Matsuura, 31, is one of the key activists of community radio (CR) in Japan. Until recently, he worked with Radio Café, a community radio station in Kyoto. At the moment he is busy establishing an independent community media institution. He also teaches Community Radio at the University of Ryukoku in Kyoto. One of the founding members of the AMARC-Japan Working Group, Tetsuo represents the East-Asia region in the AMARC Asia Pacific regional board.

How many Community Radios (CR) are there in Japan?

Only a few -- Radio FMYY, Kyoto Community Broadcasting, which is also known as Radio-café and FM Pipaushi by the Japanese indigenous people “Ainu”.

I thought there were many more?

We do not have any specific legislation regarding CR in Japan. What we have is legislation for so called ‘low power FM broadcasting.’ The last amendment of that legislation was made in 1992. The problem with that legislation is that the government called it the Community Broadcasting Law. If you agree with the government then you may say that there are about 210 community radio stations in Japan. Radio stations under that category have maximum transmission power of 20 watts. Those radio stations are mostly established jointly by local governments and local business corporations. In that way, they have limited local participation. However, their main objective is to provide information to the local people about the activities of the local governments and to promote local businesses. So from the view point of AMARC or UNESCO those radios are not really CRs.

By calling the ‘low power FM broadcasters’ as CR, the government is simply creating confusion. The ‘low Power FM broadcasting’ legislation is not CR legislation as all radio stations under it do not meet the standards of a CR. So some of the radio stations – out of the 210, may become very interested in AMARC policy or initiative and may even try to be really community oriented. That is the possibility that the AMARC-Japan Working Group would like to pursue. I think it is important that the government comes up with new legislation to regulate the CR sector. However, this issue is still under discussion among the members of the AMARC Japan group. Some of us feel very strongly about the need for a new CR legislation whereas some of our members worry that such an initiative may lead to confrontations with local governments. So it will take some more time for the group to work towards this initiative.

Not many low power radio stations know about AMARC as an institution, or about its mission, principles, and activities. Therefore, one of the AMARC-Japan group’s main tasks is to promote AMARC’s principles and activities among the existing low power radio stations in Japan.

What kind of activities are you planning for the working group in near future?

An important step will be to set up a website in Japanese language within the AMARC domain. There is limited understanding of English language in Japan. Therefore, it becomes a big problem if information is not available in Japanese language. By setting up a website in Japanese language we can help the low powered radios learn about AMARC and the global CR movement. We are also keen to look at other possibilities of increasing discussions and interactions among the AMARC Japan group members on the various issues concerning the development of CR in Japan. In this regard, we would like to start an email list and have some kind of regular publication.

How many members do you have in the group?

There are about twenty. One of the points discussed in the launching meeting of the AMARC-Japan Working Group was about admitting people into the Working Group and what should be done if they are not directly involved in the CR movement. For example people working in other forms of alternative media may want to become members of this group. After some deliberations, we have decided to have two categories of members – voting and associate – just like in AMARC. There are some people who were very interested in becoming voting members even if they were not CR



Participants at the AMARC-Japan Working Group Meeting

practitioners. Before the launching meeting, we had decided that only a representative of an organization that is directly related to CR could become a voting member. We were trying to emulate the AMARC policy regarding membership. However, in order to accommodate the wider interest we may have to review this policy.

By the way, we have also made it very clear that becoming a member of the AMARC-Japan Working Group doesn't entitle you to AMARC membership. For that you have to follow the AMARC membership application procedure.

What kind of support do you need from AMARC?

Firstly, we are looking forward to the development of the Japanese language website within the AMARC domain. We have also requested AMARC to setup the mailing list. Secondly, I am interested in developing joint projects in collaboration between the AMARC-Japan Working Groups and similar groups or AMARC members in developing countries. For this, we need AMARC to send delegations from developing countries to Japan because that will help a lot in our fund raising process. For example when we go to an organization like JICA, they want to make sure that there is a need for Japan to support the developing countries in the area of CR. They are very conscious about that. Usually they say that they are not sure if there is a real need from local people when we go and meet them only as a Japanese group. It's really important to show them that the real need is in the developing countries. If the donors see a real need in developing countries they will help to develop joint projects between AMARC-Japan Working Group and other CRs in different parts of the world. You may have seen a book in Japan that lists all donors and subsidies that are available for carrying out activities not only in Japan but in other parts of the Asia Pacific region too. I would like to tell the readers that I will be very happy to share my views on proposals from the CRs from the region and if they need subsidy - I will be very happy to think together with them.

Finally, do you have any message for the readers?

Once we are successful at getting CR legislation in Japan, I would like to start to ask the government to invest in the development of CR a portion of the license fee that it receives from the people. This license fee or the reception fee is the tax you pay for using broadcasts of NHK, which is a stat owned radio and TV broadcaster. At the moment all of this money goes to support NHK's, which calls itself a public broadcaster. As Japanese you have to pay a reception fee whether you watch NHK or not. It is a kind of compulsory tax. So if we can have CR legislation, we can ask for a percentage of that license fee to be used by CR stations because we are also public broadcasters.

Tetsuo Matsuura can be contacted at matsuura@soc.ryukoku.ac.jp and matfitc@gmail.com

Radio Forum in Japan

AMARC Japan working group is planning to organize a 'Radio Forum' around the G8 conference, which is scheduled to take place in Japan in July 2008. Community Radio reporters from Asia Pacific as well as other continents will be at the Radio Forum and report to their community radio stations directly from the G8. Please contact Tetsuo Matsuura at matfitc@gmail.com for more information.

Interview:

MY MISSION IS TO BROADCAST PEACE –KIM CHIAKI



Ms. Kim Chiaki, 52, is one of the key members of the community radio station FMYY in Kobe, Japan. She serves as the community volunteer coordinator at the station and also hosts a regular radio program in Japanese & Korean language. She was born and brought up in Kobe. She spoke to Suman Basnet about her work in community radio FMYY. Following are the excerpts:

How long have you worked in a community radio station?

I started by working as a volunteer in the FM YOBOSSEYO community radio station in Kobe, which was established in January 30, 1995. I worked in that station for 12 years.

YOBOSSEYO means hello in the Korean language. Similarly, another radio station called YUMEN FM was established in March 1995. YUMEN means the love of Friends in Vietnamese. There were two multi language radio stations in Kobe – YOBOSSEYO FM and YUMEN FM. Later the two radio stations got combined and became FMYY – taking the first letters of their names. It was the love of the Korean and Vietnamese friends that had become one. I have been working with FMYY since its inception.

How did you get attracted to radio?

I joined YOBOSSEYO community radio in 1995 when the locality of Kobe was completely burnt down due to an earthquake. In the beginning I was a volunteer. I worked there as an announcer. We used to broadcast from the second floor of the Korean Community Building, which is still there near the railway station in Kobe.

In 1995, after the earth quake, we didn't have any water, gas, telephone or electricity for the first three months. There was very limited information about who had died and who had survived. Luckily I was among the survivors. I wanted to know where my friends were and how they were doing. So I went to the YOBOSSEYO station and made an announcement asking all Koreans to come to the Korean Community Building. Many Koreans were living in Osaka where there is a fairly large Korean settlement. Osaka is quite close to Kobe. People came to the Korean Community Building in motorcycles and brought food with them. They also presented us a radio transmitter so that we could make announcements in Korean and Japanese languages. In this area in Kobe there are many Asian people living together. Even though most of the Koreans can understand Japanese, many Vietnamese and other Asian people cannot. Therefore, the Korean people from Osaka presented this transmitter to broadcast in Tagalog, English, Vietnamese, Spanish and Japanese languages. The existing transmitter at YOBOSSEYO as well as the new transmitter was very small in terms of their transmission power.

Please tell me about your work in FMYY?

I am a producer. I broadcast a programme every Tuesday afternoon from 12 noon till 1:30 PM in Japanese (mixed with a little bit of Korean Language). It is in collaboration with the Town Management Organization of KOBE, Nagata Volunteer Centre of Kobe, and the Kwansei Gakuin University. During the program, from 12:10 to 12:25, I provide information about festival, bargain sale, and events in our area where it is possible to listen to our radio in the cooperation with the Town Management Organization of KOBE. The segment between 12:30 to 12:45 belongs to the Nagata Volunteer Centre. In this segment, I and a staff of the Nagata Volunteer Centre talk about various volunteer works in this our town. In that segment we also broadcast "Universal Design" to make our town 'liveable' for everyone. "Universal design" is a mental concept for all of people – physically challenged people of foreign and Japanese origins. From 1:00 - 1:20 is the segment of the Yamanaka library. This segment is similar to the previous segments. We talk about diversity of culture in Kobe. It is very important to know that there are people from different cultural backgrounds (food, movies, lifestyle, etc.) in your town and that you should make an effort to learn about them.

In the radio station, I am also responsible for facilitating coordination and exchange of information among staff members of the radio station. I am also a technician, which means I help others to record their programs.

Every week, once or twice I attend the meeting at the local shopping centre or at the office of the local government, or meetings at the universities about various local issues. For instance tomorrow from 8:30 pm till mid night I will go to a meeting at the shopping centre and will produce many kinds of information programs about the events of that area. The meeting is organized by small shopkeepers to address their problem of declining business, to make the community aware of the problem and to make the area livelier. People are focusing more on Sannomiya (large shopping complex in Kobe) where there is a lot of entertainment and shopping possibilities. From our station we are trying to tell people that a lot is happening in our community itself. We broadcast from a makeshift studio in the shopping area. It's a mobile studio.



Kim Chiaki in her studio at FMYY studio

What is your future plan?

My hope is keeping peace in Japan and contributing peace to other parts of the world. The Japanese constitution is called the peace constitution. Most of the Japanese people tend to forget that. Luckily, I am a producer in a community radio station. My mission is to broadcast this peace in Japan, to defend it in the constitution of Japan. And we broadcast that very often.

We want the people in Japan to notice it and to begin to move for the peace of the world. We have to make use of this constitution for world peace. We want to keep peace so that everyone can live happily.

Kim Chiaki Can be contacted at: yym1@tcc117.org

Interview:

FMYY IS CREATING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE - JUNICHI HIBINO



Mr. Junichi Hibino, Representative Director of Radio FMYY in Kobe is also the founder of the station. He remains the main coordinator of the station. Junichi is one of the key members of the AMARC-Japan Working Group and is active in promoting the concept of community broadcasting in Japan. The following are excerpts of his interview:

How big is the transmitter of FMYY?

10 watts

How many people do you cover?

300,000 and these are people living in a radius of about 5 km from the station.

In how many languages does FMYY broadcast?

Eleven -- Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Thai, Indonesian, English, Spanish, Portuguese and Ainu (Japanese aborigines from Hokkaido)

How many hours do you broadcast every day?

On an average - 11 AM to 9 or 10 PM

How many people work in the station?

We have three paid staff and about 150 volunteers.

What is the main mission of FMYY?

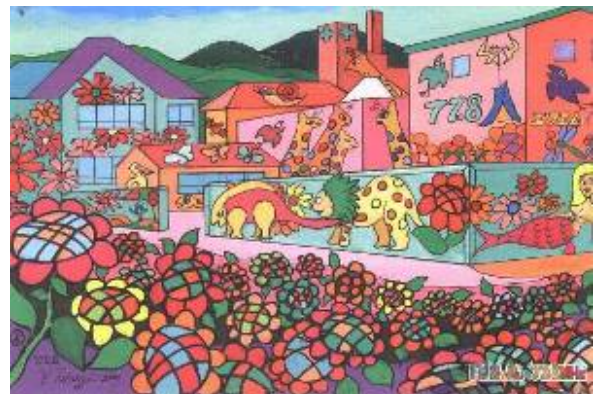
The main objective of the station is to create a multi cultural community - a community where people with different languages, cultural backgrounds, and nationalities live together as equals. We aim to empower the minority people – this is the main mission of FMYY.

Who owns Radio FMYY?

The main owner is the NGO group – Takatori Community Centre. There are several NGOs within this centre and the representatives from the NGOs are represented in FMYY board. This includes minority people as well.

What is the main challenge faced by FMYY?

Financial sustainability of the station is the biggest challenge faced by the station. Managing the station is challenging too because we are trying to manage several people of very diverse backgrounds. It needs time to meet that challenge. It takes time to minimize the gaps and divisions among people of different cultural and financial backgrounds. Some are paid and some are not; some are more active and some are not.



The Takatori Community Centre
by community Children

What is the main source of income of the station?

The radio station does not support all of its expenses by itself. It gets some of its income from selling advertisement spots, by organizing events, and selling audio content. Other than that, FMYY is financial supported by three other NGOs in the Takatori centre.

One of them is FACIL, which is managed by a board member of Takatori Community Centre. The work of that NGO is to promote a multilingual society. They provide interpretation and translations services and donate part of their earnings to our station. The other NGOs do the same – they give some portion of their income to support activities of FMYY. In addition to all of this the station also receives donations from people of the community and supporters all over the country who sympathies with FMYY’s mission. The community people help a lot in terms of kindness too. For instance we have been donated a vehicle, equipment, rent for studio, etc. Private companies such as Real Networks, Macintosh, Panasonic, Microsoft, etc. have also supported us.

How do you plan to improve your income?

Firstly, we want to increase the percentage of donation in our total income from 10 percent to 30 or 35 percent. We are now trying to change our legal status from a private corporate to a nonprofit entity so that we can gather more support from citizens.

What is the main principle that you apply in managing the station?

As a manger, I try to serve my staff members and do not try to boss them or to put up a strong leadership. I do this because I want our staffs to get a feeling of accomplishment, to have ownership of the organization, and find their places in the mission. Different people have different ideas, different cultural background; gathering them and placing them into one mission is very important. For example, providing space or introducing people to a certain type of space – for example Father Kanda (a Catholic Priest) provided space to radio FMYY and to the other NGOs too – that is



A group of physically challenged persons run their show at FMYY

the way to encourage people to take up activities. He doesn’t have to keep too close a track of the different groups’ activities. So I have also learnt that method from Father Kanda and I am trying to implement that in the station as well.

Do you have any message for the readers of AMARC Asia Pacific e-newsletter?

It’s my pleasure to be able to have a network with different CRs in different parts of the world – not only mine but also that of other members of the FMYY – by meeting everyone at the four -yearly assemblies and by emails and other forum. We get the feeling that there are many others throughout the world who share our mission, idea and destination. We feel very encouraged by that in our everyday activities in FMYY.

I can think differently the way a society will change or improve. At the time when I worked in the mainstream media I thought I could change the world through the power of the media. Now I think that a small group of people can be connected through a network like AMARC and that is more effective in changing the societies. They can work together in the same mission of improving our society.

Junichi Hibino’s email addresses are fmyy@tcc117.org and hibino@tcc117.org. Please visit FMYY at <http://www.tcc117.org/fmyy/>

Takatori Community Centre -Bringing cultures together-



Community gatherings are organized at the Takatori Community Centre

Takatori Community Centre, whose predecessor, the "Takatori Kyuen Kichi"(Takatori Support Base), was the centre of Takatori Catholic Church's volunteer work after the great Hanshi-Awaji Earthquake of 1995, is located in an area where 10% of the residents are of foreign nationality. As time passed, the activities of the centre evolved from that of providing emergency support to that of a centre for groups active in multi-cultural coexistence activities. The centre is made up of a network of 7 groups involved in working to create a new community

where people with different languages, cultures, races, nationalities, etc. can live together as equals. While each group works in its specialty area such as providing information in various languages, education, IT related activities, working with the elderly, helping handicapped people, activities in the foreign residents' community (foreign residents' self-help); there has been an increase in the number of projects in which the groups have shared their knowledge and personnel. **The following groups make up the Takatori Community Centre:**

1. Community Radio FM YY: Community Broadcasting
2. Leaf Green: Meal delivery and transport services for the elderly
3. Tour de Communication: Support for local activities using PCs and audio-visual equipment
4. NGO Vietnam in Kobe: Community base for Vietnamese living in Japan
5. Multi-language Centre FACIL: Liaison for translation and interpretation services
6. Asian Women's Empowerment: helping to empower woman throughout Asian countries outside Japan
7. World Kids Community: Education support and reform for foreign children in Japan

Takatori Community Centre, 3-3-8 Kaiun-Cho, Nagata-ku, Kobe 653-0052 Japan

Phone: +81 78 731 8300, Fax: +81 78 731 8305, Email: office@tcc117.org,

<http://www.tccc117.org>/Phone: +81 78 731 8300; Fax: +81 78 731 8305;

Email: office@tcc117.org ; <http://www.tccc117.org/>

Interview:

WOMEN FEEL CHALLENGED EVERYDAY – KAZUMI MORIKI



Ms. Kazumi Moriki, 62, heads the Asian Women's Empowerment project (AWEP). In the following interview, she provides glimpses of Japanese society vis-à-vis women as well as of her work with women from region:

What are the main challenges faced by women in Japan?

The generation after the war began to receive modern education. Until I was in the university I didn't have any problem. But when I went to seek job I faced my first problem. Nowadays, the situation has improved but traces of that problem remains.

There are many laws to challenge any opposition to women equality but the laws are not effective as the violators are not punished often.

After finishing university I didn't get a job so I went to Belgium, got married, had kids, and later followed my husband to the US. My husband was Brazilian. He went to Brazil so I followed him there too. I did this for 20 years. After we separated I returned to Japan. This is the story of my generation. However, I can tell you that my daughter also has faced some of these problems.

Before getting divorced, I had already started an NGO to support Japanese women that had married foreigners. At that time the nationality law of Japan gave us problem. Our foreigner husbands and children could not get Japanese nationality. It was around 1984 that the nationality law changed after we carried out a campaign against the discriminatory law. Around the same time the United Nations had a movement for women facing this problem. Actually, this problem was being faced by many women across the world so there were many meetings and UN came up with an International law to protect women's right and the Japanese government signed the law and the nationality law was changed consequently. After returning from Japan I got completely involved in the women's movement because as a woman I felt challenged all the time.

Is it difficult for women in Japan to get jobs?

We have a law that guarantees equality but in reality during job interviews most of the time women are discriminated against. Therefore, you can see that it's mostly men that have jobs in Japan – in companies, in businesses, etc. So women workforce is not very highly employed.

After the changing of the nationality law, I organized another NGO in Osaka to take care of foreigner women who came to Japan to work as entertainers. They came mostly from Thailand and Philippines. They were brought to work as entertainers in night clubs. Actually, they had been trafficked. The name of that organization was RINK. The organization is still active and now looks after issues related to all foreign workers – men and women.

Thereafter, in 1994 I established AWEP, which aims at empowering women not only in Japan but across the continent.

What are the biggest challenges faced by women in Asia?

I have an impression that women have survival problems – they do not have jobs, they do not have money or savings; they have to go abroad to work where they risk exploitation. So I think they suffer from poverty.

On the other hand, they have their families and friends. Sometimes they have education. Some women who have education have organized NGOs and they network with Japanese and European women to do activities together. I learn a lot about this through my work in the fair-trade sector.

There is also the difficulty in ensuring that the help we provide. Let's say from Japan, is actually received by the poor women in developing nations. We haven't had very good experience working with some large NGOs. It seems that sometimes, with large NGOs, money is lost in administrative activities and very little reaches the hands of those who really need it. We have a group in Manila, a very small group who are making fair trade goods. For example, we had such experience working with a very large NGO in the Philippines. We were trying to help a group of women who had come to Japan, got kids from Japanese men and were later abandoned. So they were forced to return to Philippines and had to work very hard to support themselves and their kids. Eventually, they contacted us through that large NGO asking us for help in locating their husbands or boy friends in Japan. This NGO received money from European and Japanese organizations but we later learnt that very little of that was received by the women. It is very difficult to explain. Women who need help appeal to us that the Big NGOs are not helping them. But we are in Japan and therefore have limited influence or there is not much we can do. Now, the women have stopped contacting the big NGOs and started their own NGOs and now are trying to help themselves.

There are so many women who need help. For instance, in Nepal there are many women's NGOs that care for women so that is very good to have a protection system for women. Many European countries, the US and Japan help them. However, out of the many only a few are effective, I think.

Does AWEP have any relationship with FMYY?

Personally, I have a program in FMYY. I speak Portuguese because I lived in Brazil. I have a Brazilian friend and together we have a radio show. Our members from Thailand, Philippines, and Indonesian get Japanese language lesson organized by our organization. So we have good relationship with women from these countries and we ask them to participate in FMYY and the station gives them the chance to do programs. So our members participate in the radio.



How do you think can a community radio help women?

Even when women are very busy they participate in FMYY. This shows that they find the station useful for them. Maybe, they are enjoying doing programs, they find something useful in this.

However, I wish to say that lots of community radios are using internet but women do not have so much access to internet. They do not even have phones. I have to wait for a long time to get response to my partners in other countries. Access to communication is a problem for women and we must be mindful of that.

Ms. Kazumi Moriki can be contacted at: awep@tcc117.org. Please visit AWEP at <http://www.tcc117.org/awep/>