



*"We are about people
having a voice."*

GENERAL EDITION | MAY 2025

NEWSLETTER

Voices of the Asia-Pacific:
Community Radio News & Stories

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Exciting news!
AMARC-AP is proud to co-host
APriGF 2025
Join us in Kathmandu!

THE 16th ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM
APriGF 2025 Kathmandu
The Future of Multistakeholder Digital Governance in Asia Pacific
© 11TH-14TH OCTOBER | KATHMANDU NEPAL (HYBRID)

Community Voices in Digital Governance: AMARC Asia-Pacific to Champion Community Media at APriGF 2025

The *Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APriGF)* is a regional platform for dialogue, collaboration, and exchange on internet governance. This edition of *APriGF* aims to foster dialogue and collaboration among key stakeholders, providing a platform for discussing and advancing internet governance in the Asia Pacific region. The forum will include various sessions, workshops, and networking opportunities, focusing on current and emerging issues in Internet governance.

As a co-host of the event, *AMARC Asia-Pacific* will ensure that community media voices, especially from rural and marginalized communities, are recognized in regional digital governance

policies, including access to affordable internet, digital safety, and freedom of expression. It will aim at building strategic partnerships with digital rights organizations, tech platforms, and policy institutions to enhance the digital literacy and online presence of community radio stations, including training, content distribution, and cyber-security awareness.

The event is expected to bring together 500 participants, including 300 international delegates.

APriGF is chiefly organized by the *Internet Governance Institute* (internet.org.np) in collaboration with the *Internet Society Nepal Chapter* (openinternet.org.np). In addition to *AMARC Asia-Pacific*, co-hosts include the *Department of Information Technology*, *Internet Exchange Nepal*, and *UNESCO Nepal*.

For further information, please visit: <https://aprigf.org.np>

ADVANCING COMMUNITY MEDIA VOICES IN DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

Affordable internet • Digital safety • Freedom of expression

AMARC Asia-Pacific is co-hosting the 16th Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APriGF) 2025, to be held in Kathmandu from 11-14 October 2025, with the overarching theme of 'the Future of Multistakeholder Digital Governance in Asia Pacific'.



From the Archives: Tackling Conflict and Building Peace – Insights from Bush Radio



Adrian Louw

Bush Radio was established in the early 1990s during the apartheid regime. For several years, it operated 'illegally' and supported the movement for equality, human dignity, and human rights. AMARC Asia-Pacific interacted with Adrian Louw, Program Integrator for *Bush Radio*, and discussed how the station addresses conflict & peace issues today.



AMARC-AP: What are the steps that community radio stations (CR) should undertake to identify conflicts in the community, considering that not all conflicts are visible?

Adrian Louw: The key for community radio and a station like *Bush Radio* is that it is strongly rooted in the community it services - the volunteers, staff, trainees and board members are all drawn from that very community. Hence, all issues that are dealt with by the station's programming are drawn from the very same audience it services. The station also makes various platforms available to engage with the community. Those who are directly involved in the

radio station are merely the facilitators to bring those issues to a broader platform - using the FM frequency, and now its significant social media presence.

AMARC-AP: Three priorities that every CR station should consider to effectively foster dialogue in a community?

Adrian Louw: Firstly, those involved at every level of the community radio station must be drawn from the community it proposes to service. Next, ensuring that all policies created within the station do not exclude the community it services, but rather create spaces for meaningful and constructive engagement. Finally, clear platforms for engagement must be created to facilitate dialogue. This goes beyond just broadcasting. Physical and other platforms, such as social media, need to be created and also managed.

AMARC-AP: What kind of capacity building do community broadcasters need to consider addressing conflicts and to foster peace in the communities?

Adrian Louw: Conflicts take various forms. For us, the issues range from socio-economic challenges to the effects of apartheid (which remain till today). We have developed a regular 'staff development' session at the station, which could include drawing in experts to help the presenters develop a better understanding of the challenges and the complex interactions that our history and political

environment operate under.

We are not experts. Our role is to facilitate dialogue, and any conflict can only be addressed through dialogue to create understanding and practical solutions.

AMARC-AP: What actions (or their absence) can be detrimental to a station's credibility as a dialogue promoter?

Adrian Louw: Any media outlet's greatest asset is its credibility - a station rooted in the challenges, potential, and strengths of the community is merely a reflection of this. So, it is vital that stations maintain this through developing adequate policy and best practices - this applies from music programs to news and current affairs.



AMARC-AP: Since apartheid is officially over, does the *Bush Radio* have any other issues of conflict to deal with?

Adrian Louw: Unfortunately, the legacy of apartheid has impacted every aspect of South African life, and the healing that we have to do is ongoing. We should not deny the impact of this, but at no stage should we let this stall the work that is needed. A key understanding of our past is important, and this affects how we interact and deal with the challenges we face. These challenges range from the huge disparity between the wealthy and the poor and the uneven distribution of the country's resources, to corruption and attacks on our constitution.

AMARC-AP: Please provide a concise overview of one or two recent instances of a peace and conflict crisis, detailing how *Bush Radio* responded to and addressed these crises.

Adrian Louw: There is a major housing and crime challenge in Cape Town. We have developed a series of programs where our audience can engage directly with the officials and departments of local government who are responsible for these areas. Our community is encouraged to participate in these programs by airing their views directly. Any feedback not dealt with directly on air is forwarded to the various departments, and these are followed up on. This has developed a sense of ownership and direct civic engagement with the various challenges that affect our people's lives.

Note: Conducted in 2022, this interview is republished as its theme and content remain pertinent today. Ed.



New Publications from AMARC Asia-Pacific

Community Airwaves for Dialogue: Stories of Change, 2025

Within the *Civil Peace Service*, AMARC Asia-Pacific published *Community Airwaves for Dialogue: Stories of Change*. This publication presents nine narratives that underscore the pivotal role of community radio stations in fostering conflict resolution and peacebuilding endeavors in Nepal.

[The full publication can be downloaded [here](#).]



AMARC ASIA-PACIFIC Community Radio Directory 2024

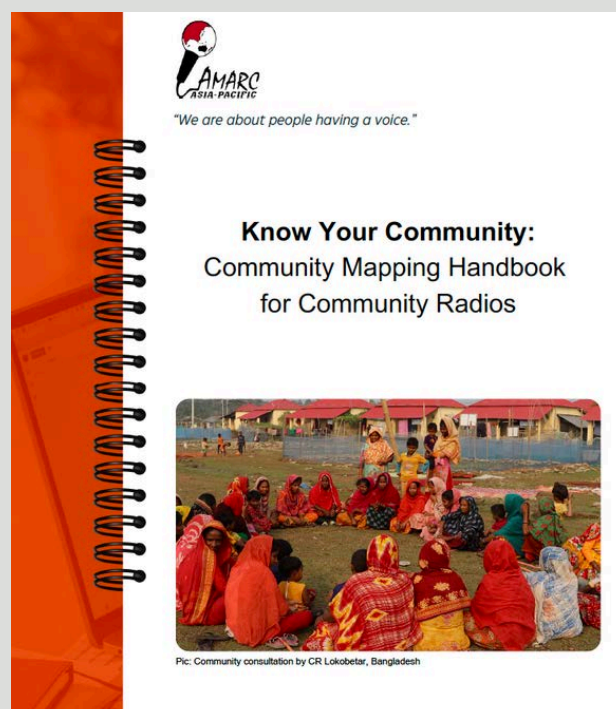
Community Radio Directory, 2024

AMARC Asia-Pacific regularly compiles the *Community Radio Directory*, which is freely available for download. The latest edition encompasses 17 countries within the Asia-Pacific region and provides an exhaustive listing of 357 community radio stations. [The full publication can be downloaded [here](#).]

Know Your Community: Community Mapping Handbook for Community Radios, 2024

The handbook, edited by Ashish Sen, is based on the *AMARC-AP Community Mapping Toolkit* for community radios. It provides a comprehensive overview of the process, methodologies, and necessary materials required for conducting effective community mapping. The handbook offers a clear and sequential guide that empowers community radio program producers to efficiently gather relevant information about the aspirations, requirements, and feedback of their audiences.

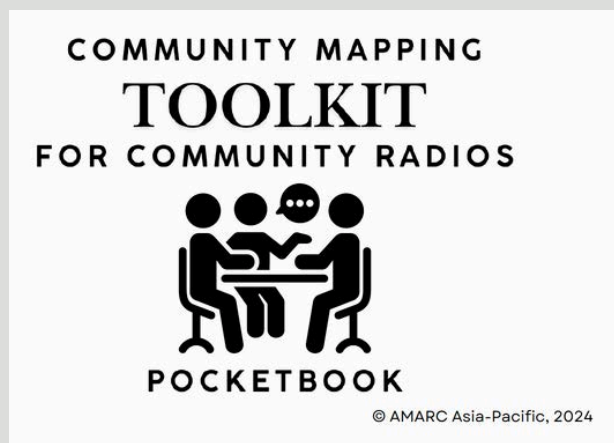
[The full publication can be downloaded [here](#).]



Community Mapping Pocketbook, 2024

The *Community Mapping Pocketbook* is based on the AMARC Asia-Pacific *Community Mapping Toolkit* and offers a concise summary of all key steps in the community mapping process. Designed as a practical companion, it serves as a handy reference for fieldwork.

[The full publication can be downloaded [here](#).]



News from the AMARC Asia-Pacific Newtwork

Australia's New Community Radio Codes of Practice Set for July 2025 Implementation

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), in collaboration with the community broadcasting sector of Australia, is set to implement the Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice (2025) from 1 July 2025. The new codes reflect a shared commitment to high standards and meaningful community representation. They cover key areas such as access, independence, governance, diversity, emergency broadcasting, sponsorship, news, and First Nations engagement.

These Codes are vital for community radio stations as they provide a structured framework to ensure content is ethical, inclusive, and reflective of community values.



By adhering to these standards, stations can build trust with their audiences, promote diverse voices, and contribute meaningfully to the media landscape.

[Source: <https://www.cbaa.org.au/community-broadcasting/codes#codes-of-practice-listing>]

Ueda FM, Japan Tunes into Community: Grassroots Radio Initiative Sparks Local Buzz

Amid cherry blossoms and spring rain, a bold new voice is emerging in Ueda City, Nagano Prefecture, Japan. Community radio Ueda FM held its first experimental broadcasts on 13 April 2025, blending the charm of mini-FM with the reach of YouTube Live.

The broadcast marked a powerful first step in creating Ueda's first community radio station. The radio ensures an accessible, hyperlocal media platform powered by a mobile delivery studio and a permanent town hub, all designed to connect, energize, and amplify the voices of Ueda residents.

All Smiling Radio – Ueda FM is on the air!

[Contributed by Asuka Hashizume, Japan]



Gentara FM, Indonesia has won the Best Community Radio Award at the 2024 KPID Central Java Broadcasting Awards

Gentara FM, based in Pracimantoro, Wonogiri, was honored with the title of Best Community Radio Organization (LPK) at the 2024 Central Java KPID Broadcasting Awards. The prestigious award was presented at the awards ceremony held at TATV Studio in Solo on 25 November 2024.

Gentara FM's manager, Argi Noor Hidayat, expressed his gratitude and pride at this achievement. "This is the best gift for *Gentara FM*'s nine-year journey. We dedicate this award to all *Gentara* listeners and the community that has grown alongside us", he said. He emphasized that this award clearly proves *Gentara FM*'s strategic role as relevant and adaptive community media that continues to contribute positively to society. He also expressed hope that *Gentara FM* can continue to serve as a source of pride and an information center for Pracimantoro and Wonogiri, setting an example for other community radio stations in the face of the challenges posed by the digital era.

[Contributed by Sinam M Sutarno, Indonesia]

Let's celebrate the Upcoming International Day of Friendship, July 30, 2025!

As a community radio, you have the access and focus that make you an ideal platform for promoting the values of the upcoming International Day of Friendship. By tailoring your content to reflect the unique experiences and cultures of your audiences, you can effectively foster a sense of unity and shared purpose.

Here are a few suggested activities for you to celebrate friendships in your communities:



- *Broadcast Stories of Local Friendships:* Encourage listeners to share personal stories about friendship's power to overcome challenges, bridge cultural divides, and foster community development. These narratives, whether pre-recorded or live, can resonate with the local audience.
- *Host Intergenerational Dialogues:* Organize discussions between youths and elders to explore the evolution of friendships over time and the role they play in community cohesion. Such dialogues can offer valuable insights and strengthen intergenerational bonds.
- *Facilitate Cultural Exchange Segments:* Invite members from diverse cultural or ethnic backgrounds within the community to share traditions, music, or stories that celebrate friendship. This promotes inclusivity and appreciation of cultural diversity.
- *Launch a 'Friendship Dedication Hour':* Allocate a specific time slot where listeners can dedicate songs, messages, or poems to friends, expressing gratitude and strengthening social ties.
- *Collaborate with Local Schools:* Partner with educational institutions to have students create content such as essays, skits, or songs centered on the theme of friendship. Broadcasting these creations can engage younger audiences and encourage community participation.
- *Organize Community Events:* Coordinate small gatherings or events, such as community clean-ups or tree-planting activities, that encourage collaboration and foster new friendships among participants.
- *Promote Messages of Unity and Peace:* Develop and air short public service announcements that emphasize the importance of friendship in building peaceful and resilient communities, aligning with the UN's objectives for the day.

Filipino Broadcaster's Imprisonment in Global List of World's Worst Press Freedom Violations

Filipino community broadcaster Frenchie Mae Cumpio's imprisonment is included in this year's '10 Most Urgent List' of press freedom violations in the world by global media outlets. Announced last May 3 on the occasion of *World Press Freedom Day*, the *One Free Press Coalition*'s annual list brings attention to journalists imprisoned "for seeking to tell the truth". "These ten cases illuminate governments' efforts at criminalizing journalism, silencing the media, and withholding information from the public", the Coalition said.



The list is compiled in collaboration with the *Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)*, *International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF)*, and *Reporters Without Borders (RSF)*.

According to CPJ data, 361 journalists were behind bars worldwide at the end of 2024, up from 320 in 2023.

"Given the increasing number of journalists detained for simply doing their jobs and seeking to tell the truth, and given the successful 2024 campaign to free Gershkovich and Kurmasheva, the *One Free Press Coalition* crucially and emphatically unites our collective voices in support of the following individuals and their urgent cases of press persecution", it said.

Tacloban-based Cumpio, 26, has been in detention for five years. She was manager-in-training of *Radyo Tacloban*, a disaster preparedness community radio station project of the *International Association of Women in Radio and Television* and *AMARC Asia-Pacific* member *Kodao Productions*, at the time of her arrest.

Arrested in February 2020 and later accused of illegal possession of firearms and explosives as well as terrorism financing, Cumpio has denied the charges in her ongoing court trial.

Cumpio also testified to having been subjected to months of surveillance and harassment prior to her arrest with four other human rights defenders.

If convicted, she faces up to 40 years in prison.

Various local and international media organizations have been calling on the Ferdinand Marcos Jr. government to drop the “trumped-up” charges against Cumpio.

United Nations special rapporteur on freedom of expression Irene Khan called on the Philippine government to conduct speedy trials to enable Cumpio to be freed from imprisonment should she be found innocent of the charges.

A Philippine Roman Catholic Bishop, San Carlos Bishop Gerardo Alminaza, called for the freedom of Frenchie Mae Cumpio and other political prisoners in Negros Island and throughout the country, following Pope Leo XIV’s call to release journalists imprisoned for seeking and reporting the truth. Pope Leo XIV, who was elected last May 13, reiterated the Church’s solidarity with imprisoned journalists and asked for their release.

AMARC-AP since 2020 had repeatedly condemned Cumpio’s arrest and imprisonment.

[Reported by Raymund Villanueva, the Philippines]



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