

# Bringing back the missing link in community radios in Sri Lanka – voices of community

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# How do we understand community radio

Harnesses the tremendous potentials media can offer to engage people and change their lives

Ordinary people have a stake in broadcasting

# A blue print for other South Asian countries

## **Mahaweli communitty radio :**

Set up alongside the river diversion project

### **Concept**

To facilitate the socio economic development for the settlers

A modified version of the experience of Bandvaerkstedet - the Tape workshop, (a public access radio programme of Radio Denmark).

# Important achievements & lessons learnt from MCR

Remaining as an a political body at least for a while in a country where broadcasting was highly politicized

Gaining acceptance for the fact that listeners participation is vital.

Community involvement in the decision making of programme contents, formats

Programme formats applied features the traditional communication methods

# Important achievements & lessons learnt from MCR

Participatory mechanism to obtain listener feedback

Role of a social service organisation

# Did MCR fail if so why?

Not having a proper withdrawal plan

Failing to obtain long lasting support from Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation

Inadequate evaluation & monitoring from the donor agencies

Lack of community ownership

Inadequate lobbying efforts to revive MCR

No legal framework to support its existence

# Some other CR systems that evolved and continue to date

Location based community radio stations

Griandurkotte, Mahalluppallama

Uva community radio a different model

CR approach applied in SLBC New education service

Kotmale Community radio + convergence into other modes

# Some other CR systems that evolved and continue to date

School radios

E tuk tuk

Regional radios applying CR approach



# Why do we need to revive CRs in Sri Lanka?

## Because

Facilitates proper representation and participation of people in development

Addresses the unmet needs of communities pertaining to – job opportunities, vocational training

Facilitate in having responsible and accountable citizens

New ways of entertainment

# Why do we need to revive CRs in Sri Lanka?

At present even the existing CRs are faced with severe competition

Boost the existing CRs

Will help give guidance to the many FM channels

# Why do we need to revive CRs in Sri Lanka?

Broadcasting rights remains in the hands of a few from elite areas

FM channels bulldoze the sub cultures

Can facilitate to create a media literate society

# Can we revive the same MCR model?

Contextual differences need to be taken into account

Need to converge

Inclusion of marginalised communities

# The process envisaged

Creating awareness

Connecting with all key players

Identifying problems and issues

A study on the CRs

Meeting to identify the way forward

Lobbying & advocacy

— THEN

— LETS WORK TOGETHER TOWARDS A CR FORUM IN SRI LANKA

# THANK YOU