"Operationalising Community Radio: The Way Forward"

A short report on the workshop conducted in
Dehradun, Uttarakhand
October 16-17, 2007

**Organised by Ideosync Media Combine
in collaboration with One World South Asia and Mountain Forum Himalayas**
In association with Community Radio Forum (CRF)
Supported by the United Nations

Introduction

As part of a series of regional workshops on community radio organized by the Community Radio Forum with support from the United Nations, Ideosync Media

Combine organized a two-day residential workshop in Dehradun, Uttarakhand on the 16 and 17th October, 2007. The workshop was conducted at the Hotel Akashdeep; and was attended by 27 participants from across Uttarakhand.

Day 1: October 16th

The first day of the workshop began with an introduction to the concept of CR where N Ramakrishnan from Ideosync spoke about the CR Forum, CR interventions in the rest of the country and the new CR policy. Participants were briefed about the codes and guidelines to the new CR policy.

The next session by Anisha Gupta from Ideosync took participants through a step-by-step process of setting up a CR station—needs assessment and mapping, trial production, capacity building, management, action research and planning for sustainability.

Participants were then divided into groups of five to identify their capacity building needs given the process of setting up a CR station. They were also asked to list their organization's primary area of work; and to explain how CR would fit into their existing palette of activities. Most organizations felt that CR was a great and appropriate communication tool for their development messages. However, participants were

unsure about their technical capacity to make radio programs or train the community on these processes, and felt that this would need to be a major area for capacity building support.

The evening session was a Q&A session with Mr. Taneja from the I&B Ministry where the application process was discussed in detail, and various clarifications were made

regarding the eligibility criteria and licensing procedures. Participants were also given handouts in Hindi for the presentations made during the day. They were asked to note down any questions they would want clarified from the I&B Ministry representative.

After the formal workshop sessions, N Ramakrishnan demonstrated the radio production process by recording a short interview with one of the participants and editing it in front of the participants.

Day 2: October 17th

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The second day of the workshop began with a recap of the previous sessions. Participants discussed their questions with Mr. Taneja. A recurring question that was highlighted – and which could not be clarified during the workshop - was whether SHGs registered as societies could apply for a CR license. During the discussion, participants were also walked through the application form in detail. Participants were also shown how to complete the SACFA clearance form online on the WPC website.

The morning session was followed by a short presentation where participants were introduced to the nuances of participatory content creation (and the need to get the community involved in the management processes and overall ownership of the CRS). This presentation was followed by an introduction to CR in Uttarakhand by Ms.Indira Ramesh of Himalaya Trust, who took the participants through a brief history of their work with youth groups in the state. Thereafter, Chitra Rawat and Darmiyan Rana from the community radio groups Mandaakini Ki Awaaz (Bhanaj, Rudraprayag) and Henvalvani CR (Chamba, Tehri Garhwal) shared their experiences in radio programming and community based outreach. Later in the afternoon, Neha Goyal from

One World South Asia spoke about their radio experiments in India and Sri Lanka; and Ruchi from Mountain Forum Himalayas talked about their network's perspective on utilizing CR for disaster relief and livelihood development related work in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

Interestingly, when participants felt that local advertisements for their CR programs would be hard to come by in the initial few months of a CR station's life, Tushara Dharmavickrama from One World South Asia (Sri Lanka) told them about his group's experience with narrow casting, where they were able to generate a large quantity of local advertising without even going on air.

Other participants who had used radio in their outreach work also shared their local experiences.

Post lunch N Ramakrishnan spoke about the process of making radio programmes, going over the stages of pre-production, production and post-production. This was followed by a session on the technology needed to set up a CR station. N Ramakrishnan spoke in detail about studio spaces, acoustic treatment and production and transmission equipment. During the discussion which followed, participants enquired about the appropriate equipment combinations and the costs involved in setting up low cost and mid-range CR stations.

The last session of the workshop addressed an issue that had cropped up repeatedly over the previous two days: Anisha Gupta discussed the challenges involved in running and sustaining a CR station. N Ramakrishnan also shared possible revenue models that could be adopted in order to make CR stations financially self reliant. A key point that was highlighted during this session was that organizations would have to move beyond grants and funds.

The final day of the workshop also wound up with a demo session on the program production process. Some of the participants who missed the demo session on day one stayed back for the session, which was also used to address additional clarifications on the issues covered during the workshop.

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