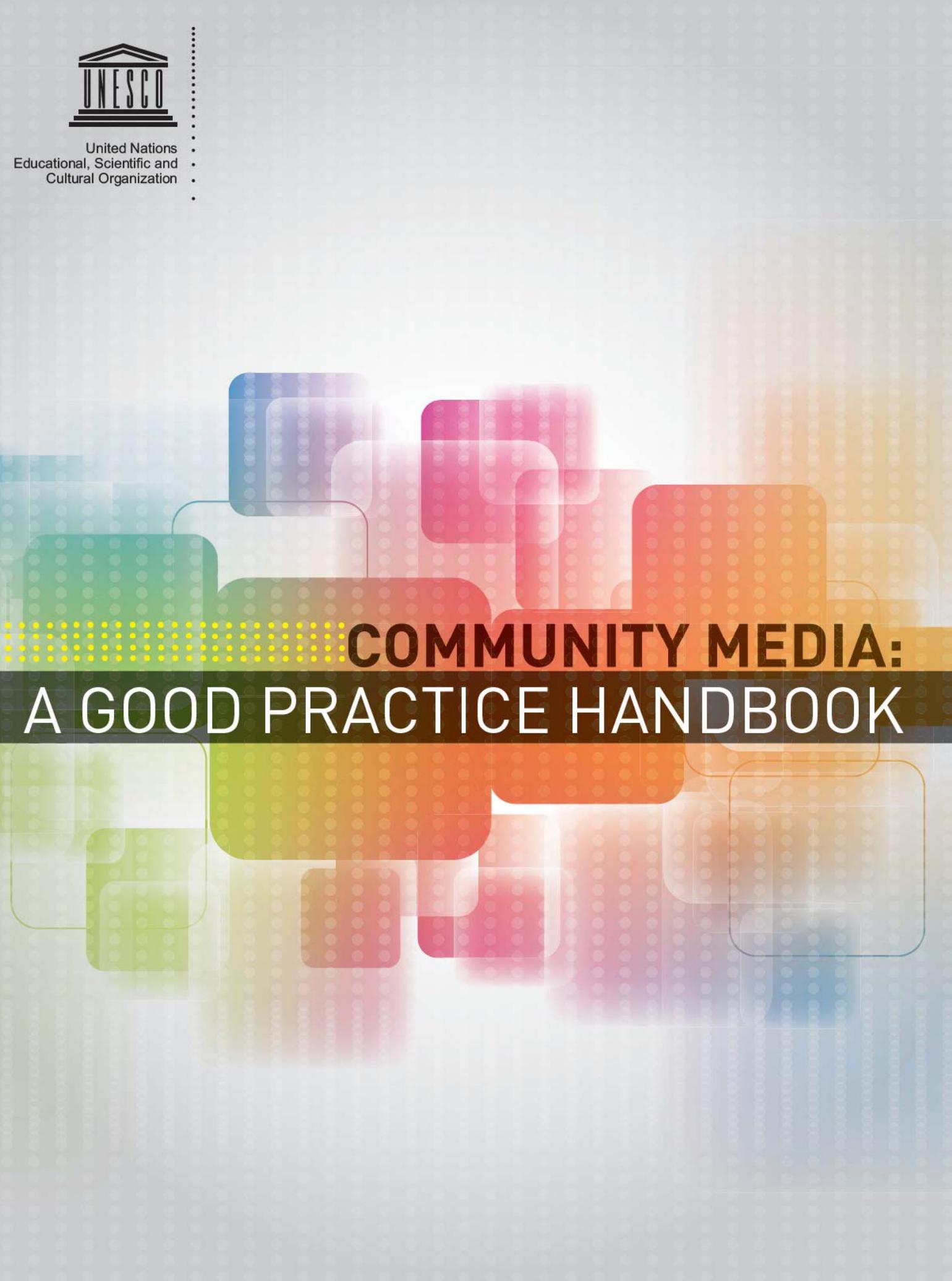




United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



# COMMUNITY MEDIA: A GOOD PRACTICE HANDBOOK

# **COMMUNITY MEDIA:** **A GOOD PRACTICE HANDBOOK**

Compiled and edited by  
Steve Buckley

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Production of the handbook as well as the organization of the expert consultation workshops was managed by Hara Padhy under the guidance of Wijayananda Jayaweera and ably assisted by Claudia Mangels.

Finally we acknowledge and applaud the managers, staff and volunteers of the community media projects and other organizations whose inspiring work is described in the case studies of good practice in this handbook.

# FOREWORD

Community media are a key ingredient of any pluralistic media ecology. As an alternative medium to public and commercial media, they occupy an important space in citizen participation. That they are enlivening civic participation globally is evident in the case studies compiled in this publication.

There is no doubt that community media have a social impact. The case studies are replete with anecdotes of how various initiatives have contributed towards community development and empowerment. Fiji's femLINK is a testament of women's empowerment. Indonesia's Aceh Nias Reconstruction Radio Network (ARRNet) is a clear testimony of community-based rehabilitation and reconstruction in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, rebuilding shattered communities.

Senegal's Radio Ndef Leng is an example of how localized communication can inspire minority groups through active on-air dialogue and discussion, giving them a sense of local and national belonging.

These isolated examples of the social impact of community media, when interwoven with similar illustrations from other parts of the world, reinforce their significance as an alternative form of communication.

But, as the case studies indicate, such an impactful medium requires two important conditions in order to thrive: an enabling policy environment and a model of sustainability that guarantees its continued independence and effectiveness. Again, this publication helps us to draw useful lessons in this regard. An important conclusion is that the policy, legal and regulatory framework remains the single most persistent obstacle to sustaining community media, despite the fact that there is worldwide experience of good practice in this regard.

The value of this publication thus lies in the fact that it highlights problems while at the same time offering possible solutions. It presents a useful empirical basis for replicating time-tested decisions about how community media can become an even more effective element of a free, independent and pluralistic media system of any democratic society.

Against this background, we believe that this book will be a useful reference to community media practitioners, policy-makers, researchers, community organizers, and other media development stakeholders.

Wijayananda Jayaweera  
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# INTRODUCTION

This is a collection of case studies of good practice in community media. Its intention is to provide inspiration and support for those engaged in community media advocacy and to raise awareness and understanding of community media among policy makers and other stakeholders. The collection is focused on electronic media including radio, television, Internet and mobile. It is global in spread, with examples from 30 countries, but primarily drawn from developing countries. This has the additional consequence that radio is predominant in view of its extensive presence today in developing country media environments and its reach into rural as well as urban communities.

Community media are understood in this collection as independent, civil society based media that operate for social benefit and not for profit. They are present in all regions of the world as social movements and community-based organisations have sought a means to express their issues, concerns, cultures and languages. Community media set out to create an alternative both to national public broadcasters, which are often under government control, and to private commercial media. They provide communities with access to information and voice, facilitating community-level debate, information and knowledge sharing and input into public decision-making.

The emergence of community media is often associated with wider political change particular the deepening of democracy and the strengthening of civil society. It also builds on recognition that development goals can be more effectively achieved by empowering and giving voice to people who themselves face poverty and disadvantage. Wherever they have been established it has become clear community media can play a specific and crucial role in encouraging public participation, strengthening cultural and linguistic diversity and giving voice to poor and otherwise marginalised groups.

The first stirrings in the emergence of the modern community media movement can be traced back to the 1940s with the setting up of community radio stations in Bolivia's tin mining communities, educational radio stations of the catholic church in Colombia, and non-commercial FM radio in the United States. Over the last twenty years, across the Americas, there has been a massive increase in the number of popular and community-based radios. These include educational radio stations both within and outside the structures of formal education; indigenous people's radio stations that take account of local languages and traditions; radio

stations run by social movement organisations, women's groups, churches and trade unions.

Community media in Europe is more recent. While print-based community media publications have a much longer history, the first electronic community media was probably the student-led radio station, Radio Student, broadcasting since 1967 in Slovenia. In 1977, Italy opened its airwaves after the Supreme Court declared the state monopoly illegal. France followed in 1983 and today most Western European countries have specific regulatory provision for community broadcasting. Yet Eastern Europe, despite seismic political change in the 1990s, has still very few countries in which civil society has a significant presence on the airwaves. The early movement for community broadcasting in Europe was driven by the emergence of unlicensed FM broadcasting, with regulatory frameworks following later. Today the Internet has become a key entry point for new community media.

In Africa, until the early 1990s, state broadcasting monopolies remained the norm, vestiges of the colonial era, while print media were limited in circulation and targeted educated urban elites. With the end of the cold war, which had kept many autocratic governments in power, in the face of economic decline and increasing social mobilization came a wave of democratisation carrying renewed commitments to political freedom and the emergence of a more plural and democratic media landscape. At the forefront of these developments were Mali and South Africa. In Mali, broadcasting was opened up after the revolution of 1991. Anyone could apply for and obtain a licence. Today there are over a hundred small rural community radios in Mali with considerable public and political support. Other West African countries followed. In post-apartheid South Africa, community radio was seen as a tool to empower the majority, previously excluded from the airwaves. South African community radio has a distinct status as a third tier alongside state and commercial radio and over 100 community radios have been licensed.

In Australia community broadcasting commenced in 1972, with Radio 5UV in Adelaide, and is now firmly embedded in the country's broadcasting policy and law. Elsewhere in the Asia Pacific region community broadcasting is more recent, emerging in South East Asia with the Tambuli project in the Philippines in 1991 which commenced using village loudspeakers systems, but now including many hundreds of community radio stations in Indonesia and Thailand. Radio Sagarmatha in

Nepal, was the first independent community broadcaster in South Asia when it launched in 1997, whereas India waited until 2006 to adopt a community radio policy, now being implemented through the issue of broadcast licences for non-governmental organisations.

The emergence of the Internet as a media platform is having a profound effect on the possibilities and practice of community media, creating opportunities to distribute media content without the need to use the radio frequency spectrum. Internet distribution enabled Radio AlBalad (formerly AmmanNet Community Radio) to commence in 2000 as a web and satellite-based broadcaster in Jordan, only later gaining an FM licence after the introduction of media reforms. More recently, in China, a webcast media platform for people with disability was launched by an independent non-governmental organisation, One Plus One, for the Beijing Paralympics, and has continued to provide a valued service addressing the needs and interests of its target audience.

This collection endeavours to draw from a broad range of geopolitical contexts – different regions, cultures, languages and political systems – including urban and rural examples, small and large countries. The criteria of good practice include the adaptability, relevance and sustainability of the case example; whether it is community-owned and participatory; its uniqueness

or innovative nature; as well as the evidential base and credibility of the source material.

The collection is organized in three sections. The first section addresses the enabling environment for community media, with ten country case studies of good practice in policies, laws, regulations, funding and support structures that enable community media to establish and to flourish. The second section looks at sustainability, with ten case studies of community media practice that demonstrate such characteristics as longevity, consistency and adaptability. The third section is concerned with social impact, with ten case studies of community media contributing to social change, improvement in lives and livelihoods, social cohesion in the face of conflict, humanitarian protection, strengthened governance and accountability, increased participation in democracy and development, reduced discrimination and other benefits.

Each case study has a summary of the good practice, a short description that provides further context, plus highlights of some of the key characteristics. References and links are provided for those who seek further information.

# ENABLING COMMUNITY MEDIA

# ENABLING COMMUNITY MEDIA

Despite the growing recognition of community broadcasting worldwide there remains a need to promote and defend the right of communities to own and to operate their own community media. The policy, legal and regulatory framework, remains the single most persistent obstacle to establishment. There is worldwide experience today of legislating and regulating community media from which can be seen what conditions are needed. But there is still much to be done in many countries to establish policies, laws and regulations that enable and encourage community media to start-up and to flourish.

The enabling environment for community media must also be considered in a wider political context. Community media face particular challenges to establish in conditions where democracy and rule of law is weak or where human rights, including freedom of expression, are not respected. Conditions that favour community media are most likely to be achieved in a context of deepening democracy and the adoption of a public interest approach to the development of free, independent and pluralistic media (Buckley et al. 2008). AMARC has elaborated fourteen principles of good practice for democratic legislation on community broadcasting (AMARC-ALC 2008) which provide further guidance for legislators and activists as a model for development.

Policies, laws and regulations that enable community media development generally include three core characteristics: recognition, access and support. The first consists of clear and explicit recognition of community media as a distinct sector. The character of community media may be summarized as follows: it should not be run for profit but for social gain and community benefit; it should be owned by and accountable to the community that it seeks to serve; and it should provide for participation by the community in content creation and management. The second is a legal and regulatory system that provides straightforward and transparent processes for access to the radio spectrum and distribution platforms necessary for community media to operate. The allocation of spectrum and other resources should be responsive to demand from community-based organisations that meet the essential characteristics; there should be no unnecessary obstacles that would exclude or deter communities from providing community media services; and the process should be managed by a body that is independent of political interference. The third is a policy and legal framework that has regard to sustainability and resourcing of community media.

Spectrum access or licence fees should be free or a nominal charge so as not to exclude communities with few resources. There should be no unreasonable restrictions on sources of revenue. Community broadcasters should be encouraged to develop economic support from within their own community but assistance should also be provided through independently administered public funding mechanisms.

These characteristics can be found in the legal and regulatory framework for community broadcasting in many countries but it is not sufficient simply to have good policies, laws and regulations if they are not effectively implemented. An enabling environment that supports and encourages community media to establish and to grow has two other vital ingredients. The first of these is the existence of civil society based advocacy groups and representative associations that promote community media development; that lobby for improvements in policies, laws, regulations and the distribution of resources; and that provide services and support to assist the community media sector to build sustainability and social impact. The second is the support of elected representatives, civil servants, regulators and others who make or implement appropriate media policies, laws and regulations.

In this section are highlighted some of the policies, laws and public funding mechanisms that support and encourage community media development, together with examples of sector associations and other bodies whose effective work has contributed significantly to media policy reform or to the development of the community media sector. Benin and Uruguay provide two examples of law and regulation that support community radio development. Benin is notable for having one of the better models of independent regulation in Africa, while Uruguay is one of few countries to have explicitly assured an equitable allocation of frequencies between community, private and public broadcasters. Denmark, France and South Africa provide examples of public funding mechanisms. Denmark's draws on a part of the licence fee collected from households to support the public service broadcasting system. In France, the support fund for non-commercial local radio is based on a levy on the revenue of commercial broadcasters. South Africa's Media Development and Diversity Agency has a mixed model with contributions from both private and public broadcasters to a fund that supports community broadcasting and small scale commercial media. Nepal's Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (ACORAB) has played a key role in defending the

sector in the face of considerable political challenges. In Ecuador, the Coordinating Committee for Popular Educational Radio (CORAPE) has contributed to policy and legal recognition of the sector and has developed a range of support services. In Thailand, the Campaign for Popular Media Reform, a broad-based activist alliance, has played a key role in promoting and defending the reservation of frequencies for community broadcasting,

while in El Salvador, the Association of Participatory Radios and Programmes of El Salvador (ARPAS) made a strategic decision to purchase a nationwide frequency assignment in order to allocate spectrum to its network of community radio stations. In the UK, the Community Media Association (CMA) has assisted its members, through technical support, to adapt quickly to Internet broadcasting.

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# BENIN: West African model for media regulation

## SUMMARY

Community radio in Benin commenced after the liberalization of broadcasting in 1997 which opened the media landscape to private radio and television, including community broadcasting. There are now around 47 licensed community radios and other non-commercial radio services. Benin has an independent regulator which is responsible for the licensing and regulation of community radio services and the management of a media support fund which includes grants for community radio.

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Freedom of speech is recognized and guaranteed in Benin according to the 1990 Constitution, and is protected by the *Haute Autorite de l'Audiovisuel et de la Communication* (HAAC), an independent regulatory body established in 1992. The HAAC is responsible for the application of the Law No 97-010 of 20 August 1997 which provides for the liberalization of the audio-visual sector and opening to the establishment of private radio and television services. The HAAC distinguishes between Commercial Radio and Non-Commercial Radio and it publishes regulatory guidelines (*Cahiers des Charges*) setting out the procedure and criteria for licensing of Non-Commercial Radio services. Community radios are required by HAAC to be organized as non-profit associations, and to invest a management committee with executive powers that is comprised of representatives of the local community. This will generally include members of community organisations, women groups, and other organisations.

In addition to the not-for-profit status, the HAAC identifies Community Radio by its range, its focus on a specific community, its use of specific languages and its programming having a focus on local information and mobilization, cultural development and further education. The licensing process for community radio starts with the HAAC publishing the list of available frequencies based on its frequency map and issuing a published call for applications from all sectors, public, private and commercial. It processes the received applications and allocates the frequencies based on the proposed programme content as well as the viability of the proposed services. Applications for frequencies are examined publicly, in the presence of the HAAC representatives, the applicants and the general public.

The HAAC enforces the Code of Ethics of the Association of Journalists of Benin (*Association des Journalistes du Benin*) and works with the self regulatory body, Observatory on Ethics in the Media (*Observatoire de la Deontologie dans les Medias*), to see that broadcast

content respects professional standards and ethics. It can apply sanctions which can include a warning, suspension for a month, reduction in the licence duration, or withdrawal of the frequency.

Funding of community radio is generally derived from the communities served through announcements, cultural events, and volunteer work. Contributions from

international donors have been a source of support for equipment. A public fund, amounting to around US\$ 200,000 per annum, is available to all the media houses, including community radio. It is managed by HAAC to fund training and small media projects. Proposals for funding are selected according to their content and quality.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Regulatory framework provides for non-commercial radio services
- Open and transparent system for allocating frequencies including public hearings
- Co-regulation of broadcast content with the media sector involved
- Diverse sources of funding including a public funding mechanism



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## CONTACT INFORMATION

La Haute Autorité de l'Audiovisuel et de la Communication – Web: <http://www.haacbenin.org>



# DENMARK: Extended concept of public service broadcasting

## SUMMARY

Denmark has a well established community broadcasting sector with 175 non-commercial local radio stations and 277 non-commercial local television stations (115 carried on cable systems and 164 distributed by terrestrial broadcasting). Community broadcasting development has taken priority over local commercial broadcasting. Since 1997, Government funding has been provided through earmarking part of the licence fee - a tax paid by all households to support public service broadcasting.

Community broadcasting (*ikke-kommercielle lokale radio- og TV-stationer*) in Denmark dates back to early experiments with local cable television in the 1970s and a more comprehensive scheme starting in 1983 when the first non-commercial local radio services were licensed on a trial basis. Community radio was put on a permanent footing in 1986, which was extended to include community television in 1987.

Local commercial broadcasting followed later, with advertising allowed from 1989 and the establishment of networks allowed from 2003. Local radio and television broadcasting remain predominantly non-commercial, while commercial broadcasting competes, at national and regional level, with the public broadcaster, Danmarks Radio and TV2.

The introduction of advertising on commercial radio and television was accompanied by the establishment of a support fund for non-commercial services, based on a tax levied on the commercial broadcasters. In practice

little money came from this scheme as the commercial broadcasters adopted avoidance strategies. In 1991 it was discontinued. From 1994, community radio benefited from access to financial support from the state lottery pools. In 1997 a subsidy scheme was established in law that recognised the non-commercial broadcasters as part of an extended concept of public service. This has continued to the present day. In 2009 it provided a grant-in-aid budget for the year of 52.9 million Danish Kroner (US\$ 10.2 million).

The support fund for non-commercial local radio and television is administered by the Radio and Television Board - an independent regulatory body also responsible for issuing licences to private and community broadcasters, and for monitoring whether broadcasters are fulfilling their legal obligations. Part of the fund is to support core operating costs and part is for programme making, allocated competitively to promote the provision of local information, citizens' access, support for



minority groups and programming quality. The fund is notable both for its size, being, per capita, the largest of its kind in Europe (at around 2 US dollars per adult per annum), and for its mechanism, being drawn from funds collected to support public service broadcasting. It was introduced after other approaches had been tried and has demonstrated its stability through changes of government and over an extended period. The dual emphasis on both core costs and support for programme making has enabled some guarantee of economic

stability to community broadcasters while retaining a competitive element that can reward good practice in programming making. The mechanism is transferable to other countries that collect a television licence fee or other tax in order to support public service broadcasting. While there may be policy objections in some countries to deploying the licence fee in this way, Denmark has demonstrated its use without adverse impact on the main public service broadcaster.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Strategic public funding mechanism for community broadcasting
- Earmarked portion of the household tax for public service broadcasting
- Funding is provided for both operating costs and programme making
- Fund is administered by an independent regulatory body



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# ECUADOR: CORAPE - national alliance for community radio

## SUMMARY

CORAPE, the Coordinating Committee for Popular Educational Radio in Ecuador (*La Coordinadora de Radio Popular Educativa de Ecuador*) groups together community radio stations throughout Ecuador and works to strengthen the popular, community and educational radio sector. It has played an instrumental role in achieving improved legal and regulatory recognition for community radio. Among other activities it provides news and information services, organizes thematic networks, holds consultative events, produces broadcast campaigns and provides training and capacity building support

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CORAPE was formed in 1990 as a national coordinating body to represent, support and strengthen the community radio sector in Ecuador. Until 1995 community radio was not recognised in the Law on Radio and Television (*Ley de Radiodifusión y Televisión*), which was approved twenty years earlier when the country was under military rule. Media law reform in 1995 introduced a concept of community service broadcasters (*estaciones de servicio público las destinadas al servicio de la comunidad*) but this was accompanied by several restrictions prohibiting all commercial activity, limiting transmission power and requiring prior approval by the army for "reasons of national security". CORAPE argued that the new law remained contrary to the



right to freedom of opinion and expression and that further reform was needed to fully recognise community radio and its dynamic role in promoting the rights of people and communities. In 2002 CORAPE presented a constitutional demand for modification of the law which

was supported by the Economic Commission of the National Congress and led to further reform. The amendment (Law 89-2002) to the media law recognises the distinct character of community stations (*estaciones comunitarias*) and affirms that they have the same rights as private commercial broadcasters, including access to channels and frequencies and the right to seek commercial revenue. CORAPE now has 34 community radio stations affiliated, present in 21 of the 24 provinces

of Ecuador, and reaching 30 per cent of Ecuador's urban population and 60 per cent of the rural population.

CORAPE is a democratic association that brings together community radio stations and production groups throughout Ecuador. Its General Assembly, consisting of representatives of all affiliates, elects the Board of Directors who in turn appoints the Executive Secretary, responsible for day-to-day operations and management of the staff team. CORAPE places the democratisation of communication at the centre of its activities and has pursued a participatory approach that has led to

significant legal reform. It has developed a diverse portfolio of projects and services to support community radio in Ecuador that reflects its core commitment to rights and development. With a much improved legal framework, the work of the alliance is increasingly focussed on social development goals with much of its activities organised around a series of thematic networks focussing on the Amazon region, Kichwa speakers, cross-border co-operation (with Peru), migration, children and youth, and environment. The alliance also operates a national news service with three daily bulletins in Spanish and one in Kichwa.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- National alliance of community broadcasters and production centres
- Democratic governance structure with an elected Board
- Demonstrable success in advocacy for media law reform
- Delivering projects and services focused on social development

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# EL SALVADOR:

## ARPAS – a frequency that enabled a network

### SUMMARY

In 1998, the Association of Participatory Radios and Programmes of El Salvador (*Asociación de Radios y Programas Participativos de El Salvador – ARPAS*) purchased the 92.1 FM frequency and redistributed bandwidth to low powered community radio stations threatened with extinction. The purchase was a crucial move after a long battle with the Salvadoran authorities for legislation to reserve frequencies for community based, non-profit broadcasting.

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In 1995 ANTEL, the state agency responsible for telecommunications regulations in El Salvador, ordered the Salvadoran National Civil Police Service to shut down ten community radio stations. All of the targeted stations had common denominators: they were independent, non-government organisations concerned with improving social conditions; they served the poorest residents in their municipalities; they encouraged participatory approaches to making and sharing content and all were members of ARPAS. These ten radios, with Radio Segundo Montes at the forefront, had joined forces the previous year because, in the words of Jose Aleman of ARPAS: "The radios realized a pretty basic principle. If we are not united, if we don't act together, we will miss the opportunity and we will fail."

One such opportunity, to which ARPAS responded quickly in 1998, was the sale of the frequency 92.1FM. After six years of advocacy, including the submission of amendments to El Salvador's draft telecommunications law proposing the reservation of frequencies for



community radio, the government recognized ARPAS in 2000, including its acquisition of broadcasting spectrum for use by its member stations. Since then, the network has expanded to include 28 community radios services and six production centres, facilitated by the organisation's purchase of the 92.1 FM frequency



and its subsequent redistribution to be used by ARPAS community radio station members.

ARPAS stands out as a successful example of how community media can sustain itself through united advocacy, innovative action and long term capacity building. Access to radio spectrum is essential to the establishment and sustainability of community radio

broadcasters. In El Salvador, in the face of political and commercial resistance to the development of community radio, ARPAS successfully negotiated the acquisition of a part of the FM spectrum, sufficient to enable its members to gain protection from closure. Without this intervention it is likely that many of El Salvador's community radios would have disappeared and along with them the opportunity for ordinary citizens to participate in democracy building. ARPAS continues to be engaged in media reform advocacy as part of the civil society Movement for Democratic Communication (*Movimiento para la Comunicación Democrática*), but is also engaged in practical capacity building relating to financial sustainability, organisational and management skills, and support for community radio programme content and cultural expression. In the national election of 2004 ARPAS members were able to create a local and regional news gathering network of election reporters, involving over 150 correspondents providing polling information across El Salvador far surpassing the reach of commercial media.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Association of community radio stations and production groups
- Engaged in advocacy for legal and regulatory recognition
- Collective action to secure part of the FM radio spectrum
- Support for capacity building and content development

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

— Movimiento para la Comunicación Democrática  
<http://www.movimientocomunica.blogspot.com/>

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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# FRANCE: FSER - support fund for non-commercial local radio

## SUMMARY

France was one of the first European countries to introduce a regulatory and funding framework for community radio. Over 500 community radios (*radios associatives*) benefit from a cross-subsidy funding mechanism. Commercial radio and television stations pay a levy on their commercial revenue into the Support Fund for Local Radio Expression (*Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique locale* - FSER). Community radio stations are eligible for support from the fund, amounting to some 50 per cent of their revenue, provided they do not take more than 20 per cent of their revenue from commercial sources.

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Community radio in France dates back to unlicensed "free" radio stations (*radios libres*) in the 1970s, when there was a state broadcasting monopoly. In 1982 the Law on Audio-Visual Communication (No 82-652) was adopted providing for the liberalisation of broadcasting and opening up of the airwaves to private radio operators. The same law provided for the creation of the FSER to support local non-commercial radio services in achieving their social objectives. Funding for the FSER is derived from a levy on the advertising revenue of the commercial broadcasters.

In 1986 the Law on Freedom of Communication (No 86-1067) provided for the creation of the *Conseil Supérieur Audiovisuel* (CSA) tasked with licensing and regulation of private broadcasting services. According to this law the services eligible for support from the FSER are those which receive less than 20 per cent of their

revenue from advertising and sponsorship. In

*Communiqué 34* of 29 August 1989, the CSA defined five categories of private radio service.

Category A services are non-commercial services

eligible for support from the FSER. The characteristics of Category A service licensees include that less than 20 per cent of their revenue is drawn from advertising or sponsorship; at least 4 hours of local programming is broadcast between 0600 and 2200; the licence holder is a non profit association; and the programming is made by the licence holder or its member associations.

The rules for distribution of funds from the FSER are set out in decree No 2006-1067 of 25 August 2006,



which also reformed the functioning of the FSER. The 2007 annual report of the FSER indicates total funding receipts of Euro 25.49 million (36.6 million US dollars), of which 80 per cent was applied towards the functioning costs of 588 community radio services (average 49,500 US dollars each), with the remainder being applied to start-up costs, equipment upgrades and discretionary support - through a competitive awards mechanism - for social projects and organisational development.

The FSER is the longest established public funding mechanism for community media in Europe. Funding from the FSER meets around 50 per cent of the

operating costs of community radio stations in France, with the amount provided being based on a formula

that encourages stations to generate funds from other non-commercial sources. The Fund has provided economic stability to the sector over more than 25 years. The historic settlement in which non-commercial stations forego advertising revenue in return for cross-subsidy through

a levy on the commercial sector is largely accepted by private commercial broadcasters and has retained public policy support across changes of government. An eleven person commission that oversees the FSER includes four representatives from the community radio sector.



■ **Ensemble, on est plus fort !** ■

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Strategic cross-subsidy funding mechanism for community broadcasting
- Drawn from an annual levy on commercial broadcasting sector revenue
- Distribution based on match funding to other non-commercial sources
- Administered by a commission that includes sector representatives

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

- Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel  
<http://www.csa.fr>
- Syndicat national des radios libres  
<http://www.snrl.org>
- Confédération Nationale des Radios Associatives  
<http://www.cnra.fr>
- Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique locale: Rapport d'activité 2007  
[http://www.ddm.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Rapport\\_d\\_activite\\_2007\\_FSER\\_HQ.pdf](http://www.ddm.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Rapport_d_activite_2007_FSER_HQ.pdf)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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# NEPAL: ACORAB - defending the community radio sector

## SUMMARY

The mission of ACORAB is to promote, protect and sustained the development of community radios in Nepal. ACORAB aims to provide services to its member organisations through information exchange, knowledge sharing and skills development. It also provides support to community radio stations to get established and to assure their sustainability through capacity building, equipment provision, technical support and assistance with organisational development.

Community radio in Nepal commenced in 1997 with Radio Sagarmatha, based in Kathmandu and established by the Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ). Radio Sagaramatha was the first community radio in South Asia and a pioneer for independent broadcasting in Nepal. Within five years of its launch there were some 15 private FM stations in Nepal, of which a handful were not-for-profit community radio stations including Radio Lumbini, Radio Madhanpokhara and Himchuli FM. To support this embryonic sector NEFEJ established the Community Radio Support Centre and the stations themselves came together to set up a representative body that could advocate for their interests and further community radio development.

The Association of Community Radio Broadcasters of Nepal (ACORAB) was established in 2002 as a common forum for strengthening the capacity of community radios, enabling them to contribute to building democracy, enhancing people's participation in the political process and supporting community-



led development. By promoting solidarity between community radios it has played a key role in defense of the right to freedom of expression of community radio broadcasters and against the suppression of the voices of marginalized people, notably in the face of attacks and threats from both State and non-State actors.

In February 2005, when King Gyanendra dismissed the elected parliament and seized direct rule, independent broadcasters faced an existential threat. Soldiers were deployed to radio studios and station managers were ordered to cease all broadcasting of news and current affairs. Community broadcasters were among the first to rally in defence of democracy, human rights, freedom of expression and access to information. After the success of the People's Movement of 2006 which resulted in a new constitution and later the abolition of the monarchy, FM radio licences were awarded more or less on demand, with some 150 licences issued in the first year alone of the new constitution, of which more than 65 were for not-for-profit stations. Most of the non-for-profit stations are members of ACORAB which continues to advocate for media law reform and strengthened recognition of community radio.

ACORAB is a values-led organisation whose policies and strategies are rooted in the defense of human rights and democratic norms. The organisations

own rules, procedures, operations and governance arrangements strive to reflect these values facilitating the democratic participation of member stations and the periodic election of board members and officials. Since its establishment it has promoted a model of community radio which is not-for-profit and operates in the public interest, promoting respect for freedom of opinion and expression, ensuring a diversity of views and perspectives, facilitating people's access to information and combating discrimination whether on the grounds of class, caste, gender, ethnic or religious background.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- National representative association for community broadcasting
- Democratic governance structure with an elected Board
- Promotes solidarity, mutual support and joint action
- Values rooted in defense of human rights and democracy

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

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# SOUTH AFRICA: MDDA - funding media development and diversity

## SUMMARY

South Africa's Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) was formed to redress historical imbalances in the media environment and to promote media diversity. The agency provides grant funding to community media and small commercial media and also funds training and industry research. The MDDA is a public body governed by an independent board and funded by contributions from mainstream media as well as from government grants.

Community broadcasting emerged rapidly in South Africa in the 1990s after the end of apartheid and as a result of an active civil society campaign for a democratic broadcasting environment. The previous state monopoly of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) was replaced by a three tier system of public, commercial and community broadcasting including a reformed SABC. The licensing of community broadcasting was prioritized over commercial broadcasting as a means to serve the needs of historically disadvantaged communities. There are now over 100 community radio stations. Community broadcasting is not run for profit and is regulated by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) under the terms of the Electronic Communications Act 2005.

In order to support the sustainability and continuing development of the community broadcasting sector and of other media that meet the needs of disadvantaged and under-represented groups, the Media Development and

Diversity Agency (MDDA) was established in 2003. It is a public body whose responsibilities and governance arrangements are set out in the MDDA Act No 14 of 2002. The MDDA is partly funded by government but also by contributions from the private media sector and the SABC. It started providing grants in 2004. Since its inception, according to its Annual Report 2009/10, it has funded over 284 projects and disbursed around R103 million (US\$ 15 million) in grant funding.



The mandate of the MDDA is to create an enabling environment for media development and diversity which reflects the needs and aspirations of all South Africans and, in particular, to redress exclusion and

marginalisation of disadvantaged communities. It does so, primarily, by providing support in the form of project grants to community media and small commercial media, including print, radio and television. The Agency is required not to spend more than 25 per cent of its revenue on administration. At least 60 per cent of grant funding is to be spent on community media; 25 per cent on small commercial media; 5 per cent on research; and the remainder for other initiatives.

The MDDA is overseen by an independent Board which provides leadership and strategic direction. The Chief Executive

heads a staff team of 22 who oversee fundraising and stakeholder relations, grants management, research, capacity building and training delivery. In its seven years of existence the MDDA has contributed to the sustainability and the growth of the community radio sector, it has supported the emergence of community newspapers in indigenous languages and it has assisted in building foundations for community television.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Public body set up by statute to fund media development
- Promotes access for disadvantaged groups and communities
- Focus on community media and small commercial media
- Draws funding from mainstream media and government grants



## REFERENCES AND LINKS

- Media Development and Diversity Agency Act (2002)  
<http://www.mdda.org.za/gifs/MDDA%20Act.pdf>
- Media Development and Diversity Agency Annual Report 2009/10  
[http://www.mdda.org.za/MDDA%20Annual%20Report2009\\_2010%20.pdf](http://www.mdda.org.za/MDDA%20Annual%20Report2009_2010%20.pdf)
- National Community Radio Forum  
<http://www.ncrf.org.za>

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# THAILAND: CPMR - civil society campaign for media reform

## SUMMARY

The Campaign for Popular Media Reform (CPMR) is an alliance of civil society organisations, academics and media professionals working for media and communications reform in Thailand. Combining policy monitoring and public interest advocacy, CPMR has been influential in the development of media and communications law and regulation and has played a central role in promoting and defending the reservation of broadcast frequencies for community radio. The reservation of 20 per cent of the FM spectrum for community radio has enabled more than 5000 community radio services.

The political crisis in Thailand of May 1992, when popular protests were met by a bloody military crackdown, led to demands for media reform that inspired provisions for freedom of expression and media freedom in the Constitution of 1997. Section 40 states that “transmission frequencies for radio or television broadcasting and radio telecommunications are national communication resources for public interest” and provides for the establishment of an independent regulatory body to distribute such frequencies and to supervise media and communication services. The Thai Volunteer Service subsequently set up a monitoring committee on Article 40 to push forward media reform and to promote its practical implementation. This group was later reorganised to become the Campaign for Popular Media Reform.

CPMR advocacy was influential in achieving, in 2000, the Act on Organisation for Allocation of Transmission Frequencies and Regulating Broadcasting and Telecommunication Businesses which reserved 20 per cent of the broadcasting spectrum for non-profit community broadcasting. The law reserving frequencies for community radio was never fully implemented because the independent regulatory body that it proposed was not put in place. Claiming a right to use the reserved spectrum, community radios started without formal authorisation but gained tacit government acceptance in 2005. In 2008 a new Broadcasting Law made it illegal to operate a broadcast



service without a licence. Under temporary regulations, 5500 community radios have registered with the National Telecommunications Commission as part of a process intended to regularise their existence.

Media reform in Thailand has been greatly affected by an unstable and polarised political environment. This in turn has encouraged a proliferation of services, many initiated by commercial or political interest groups. CPMR has maintained consistent advocacy for public participation in the media while recognising that effective media reform requires not only changes in law and regulation but practical policy implementation together

with encouragement and support for community media at the grassroots level. Working with the Federation of Community Radio, academics and broadcasters, CPMR has continued to monitor the development of community radio policies, defending community radio stations threatened with closure and promoting the drafting of legal provisions and regulatory guidelines to recognise and encourage community radio development. CPMR campaigns in parliament and the media have achieved social and political recognition of media and communication rights in Thailand and have contributed to conditions that have enabled thousands of community radio services to establish and operate.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Sustained civil society campaign to deepen media law reform
- Broad alliance of practitioners, civil society activists and academics
- Success in gaining frequency reservation and licences
- Values rooted in people's media and communication rights

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

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# URUGUAY: Equitable access for community broadcasting

## SUMMARY

The Uruguayan Law on Community Broadcasting, approved in December 2007, provides clear recognition and support for the development of community broadcasting in both the analogue and digital environment. The law provides for an equitable allocation of frequencies between public, commercial and community broadcasting services. It also assures a fair and transparent process for the award of licences including oversight by an independent advisory committee involving civil society organisations.

Community broadcasting in Uruguay commenced outside a formal legal framework and stations were vulnerable to closure by the authorities. In 2000 the Uruguayan government indicated it was prepared to legalise community radio activity. AMARC-Uruguay, representing some of the community radio stations, called for government – civil society dialogue on community radio licensing and sought an end to the closures. In 2002 the communications regulator, URSEC (*Unidad Reguladora de Servicios de Comunicaciones*) published a draft bill to regulate community broadcasting. This was rejected by community broadcasters as unacceptable because of the very limited transmission areas, the exclusion of radio stations that were already broadcasting, prison sentences of up to two years for unlicensed broadcasters and the retention of executive discretion in the granting of frequencies.

In 2005, following a change of government, a new draft law on community broadcasting was prepared

by a coalition of community broadcasters, civil society organisations, journalists and academics. The law was tabled in parliament by a group of legislators and gained further momentum following an official mission to Uruguay in 2006 by the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights. The Special Rapporteur, Ignacio Alvarez, urged “immediate consideration” of the draft law and affirmed that the Bill, entitled “Use of the Radioelectric Spectrum and Community Radio Media” was consistent with international standards.

In 2007 a revised Community Broadcasting Law was passed by Uruguayan legislators to formally recognise and regulate community radio and television. The law stipulates that one third of the AM and FM airwaves and television spectrum be reserved for community-based media and set out a transparent and non-discriminatory process for the allocation of frequencies, including oversight by an independent council of which the majority

are to be drawn from media, civil society and academic organisations. In August 2008, URSEC indicated, that of nine channels to be reserved for digital terrestrial television three would be set aside for community television, with their allocation to be decided by open and public competition.

The passing of the Community Broadcasting Law in Uruguay represents the culmination of a process of advocacy and coalition building by community broadcasters over many years and across changes of

government. Civil society involvement in the drafting of the law is mirrored in the provisions that embed civil society oversight in its implementation. The new law contains no *a priori* limits on coverage area or sources of income and is considered an important legal precedent for the Latin American region. The explicit commitment to one third of the broadcast frequency spectrum has been applied to future development of digital television. In doing so it sets an international precedent in spectrum planning for digital television services.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Legal provision for community radio and television
- Reservation of one third of analogue and digital spectrum
- Open and transparent process for frequency allocation
- Independent advisory committee involving civil society

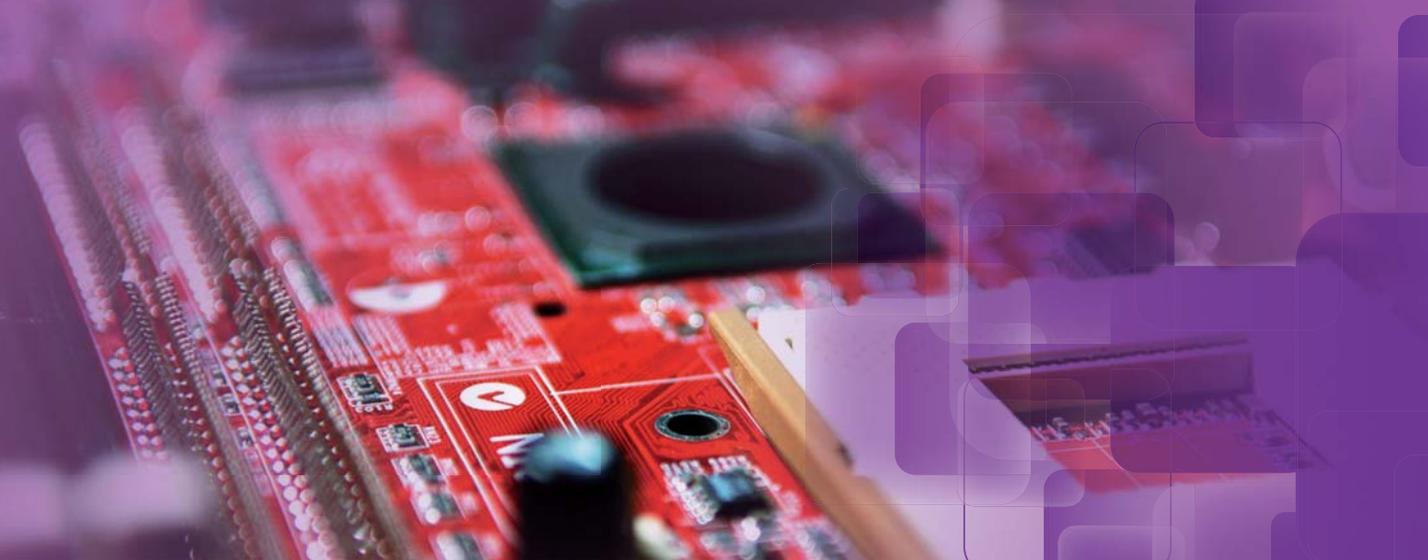
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<http://200.40.229.134/leyes/AccesoTextoLey.asp?Ley=18232>

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# UNITED KINGDOM:

## Canstream - Internet broadcasting made easy

### SUMMARY

Canstream is a project of the Community Media Association (CMA), the UK membership association for community media. It provides easy and affordable access to live-streaming and podcasting services. Initially launched as a free service for members, and backed by public funding support, Canstream has built a substantial user base to the point where it is now a self-financing service through charges for access and bandwidth. Canstream has contributed to the rapid adoption in the UK of the Internet as a new distribution platform for community media content.

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canstream

The CMA was established in 1983 (then as the Community Radio Association) to campaign for community radio through policy and legal reform. In 1996, in response to new opportunities for local and community television and the emergence of the Internet as a platform for community media, it adopted a broader remit, and changed its name to Community Media Association. With a focus on the challenge of the digital divide and new media opportunities, the CMA launched a programme of research, development and capacity building called 'Adapting to Digital'.

Among the ideas that emerged from this work was the concept for a shared server platform to facilitate live media streaming and online media archiving. Funding was secured in 2001 from the European Union and the Regional Development Agency for Yorkshire and

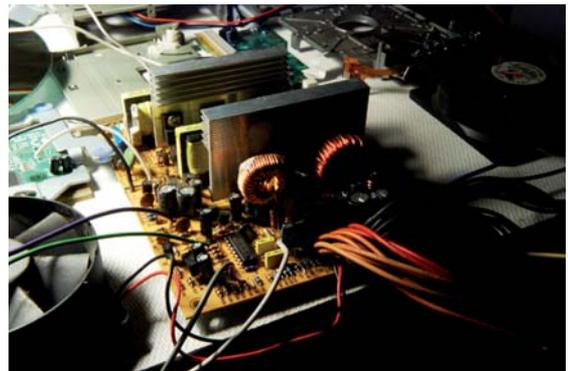
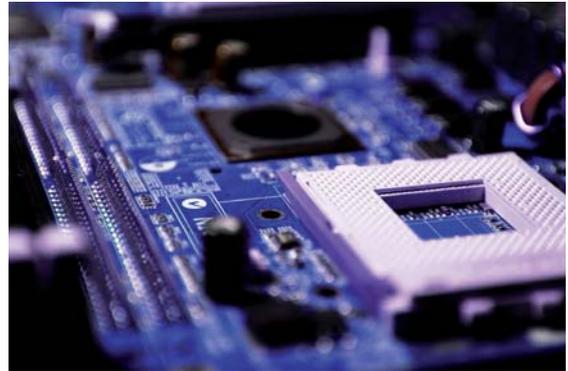
The Humber. This enabled investment in infrastructure and technical support, and the Internet Media Service (IMS) was launched in 2002. Free access was provided to CMA members with additional support available to groups located in the Yorkshire region. The project commenced using proprietary software but was later migrated to an open source solution using the Linux operating system and the Icecast streaming media server. Additional investment was secured to develop an 'on-demand' audio and video publishing system using an open source content management system and a customised metadata set based on the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI) standard. This was launched as 'The Showcase' community media online archive in 2003, the first of its

kind for the UK community media sector and two years before the creation of YouTube.

Since 2006, and responding to the growth of RSS formats and podcasting (media file distribution using web syndication), the on-demand service was moved to the Loudblog platform, an open source content management system for hosting podcast media. This has enabled the dynamic delivery of media content, including archiving and podcasting of live broadcast programmes 'on the fly'. In 2007, the project was relaunched as 'Canstream' and became a paid for service. Within two years, Canstream has become self-financing through charges to users, with around 150 community media groups using the service. Revenue from user charges is supplemented by additional services such as website development and hosting, and online media support for events.

Canstream enables community broadcasters with an Internet connection to provide an online stream of their media content and provides a means for new community

media groups to set up as Internet only projects if they wish. It also enables media content archiving and the delivery of online on-demand media. It is based, as far as possible, on free and open source software and, for speed, reliability and scalability it runs on servers co-located at the main London Internet exchange. The project has accelerated the adoption of the Internet for community media content delivery.



### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Sector led investment in digital media infrastructure
- Provides specialist Internet service for community media
- Based primarily on free and open source software
- Self-financing through fees paid by service users

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

— Community Media Association  
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# STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

# STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Community media organisations frequently operate at the very margins of economic viability. It is one of the characteristics of the sector that it is able to reach and engage people and communities who face disadvantage and marginalisation. It does so through social and economic models of operation and sustainability that would often not be viable on a commercial basis alone. Where commercial media generate revenue by targeting audiences with spending power, community media often build an audience around those who do not have spending power. This is precisely because these are the people who are excluded from mainstream media and most in need of alternative access to voice and information, whether it is because they are in remote rural communities, marginalised urban populations or disadvantaged minorities.

Community media are forms of social enterprise. They seek to build an economic model of sustainability in order to achieve success in the pursuit of their social objectives. At the same, just like any enterprise, they have to make financial ends meet, by engaging in economic activity that can generate revenue at least sufficient to cover their operational costs.

The models of economic sustainability are as diverse as the community media sector itself but there are some characteristics that are commonly found in the most durable organisations. These include strategies for raising support from within the community itself – donations, membership schemes, payment for broadcast announcements, charges for the provision of services etc; they include a preparedness to seek out and mobilise support from other sources such as public development agencies and non governmental organisations, by offering a platform for social communication and popular engagement; and they include an ability to control costs and to operate on very low margins. People working in community media often donate freely of their time or work on very low remuneration because they value the social benefit of community media and gain reward from contributing to a community service.

As Dagron (2004) and others have pointed out, however, sustainability extends beyond simple economic considerations to include questions of social and institutional sustainability. In addition, community media need to consider the challenges of assuring technical and environmental sustainability.

Social sustainability refers to relations between a media organisation and the community or audience it

serves. For community broadcasters such relations are of critical importance since they draw their mandate and purpose from their relation to and role in serving the interests of their social base. Many community media organisations have sprung from broader social movements and continue to be sustained by their tangible and intangible support.

Institutional sustainability refers to the structural arrangements for operational management and governance including accountability to a suitably constituted and representative governing body. For community media, engagement of the community in management as well as in content making is important, contributing to a broader sense of community ownership and involvement.

Technical sustainability requires technical support and know-how together with the selection of appropriate technologies that are robust, have low operating costs, are easy to maintain and are replaceable, if necessary. Community media that lack reliable technical systems risk losing their audiences, staff and supporters. With the pace of development of communication technologies, technical sustainability also requires the ability to appropriate new tools and applications such as mobile and the Internet.

The relevance of environmental sustainability has become increasingly clear as communities face the challenges of climate change. For community media, environmental sustainability strategies can also contribute to economic and technical sustainability, for example through the use of renewable energy sources such as solar power. Other important environmental considerations include re-use and recycling strategies, and the disposal of electronic waste.

In this section are highlighted some strategies for community media sustainability in a diversity of contexts. Several of the examples, such as Radio Tierra of Santiago, Chile and Radio Ndef Leng of Dakar, Senegal, are strongly rooted in social movements. Others, such as Radio Student of Ljubljana, Slovenia, on air since 1969, and 3CR of Melbourne, Australia, on air since 1976, demonstrate a strongly defended independence that has undoubtedly contributed to their longevity. Conditions of social and political conflict present particularly challenges as is exemplified by the AREDMAG network of community radios in the region of Magdalena Medio, Colombia and by Radio Apac in Northern Uganda. Giheta Community Media Centre, in Burundi, combines

telecentre technologies with broadcast radio to achieve its rural development objectives, while Radio Al Balad of Amman, Jordan, demonstrates that the Internet can be an entry point to broadcasting in the Middle East, where radio and television licensing remains strictly controlled. For Sangham Radio of Pastapur, India's first community radio station, a network of self-help groups that support the radio project are part of a broader strategy for community autonomy and environmental sustainability. La Primerisima, Nicaragua's leading news and current affairs radio station, based in Managua, established a membership association of workers, listeners and supporters, to assure its independence as a community-owned initiative.

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# AUSTRALIA: 3CR - powered by the people

## SUMMARY

**3CR is a community radio based in Melbourne, Australia. It was established to provide a voice for those who lacked access to the mainstream media, particularly working class people, women and indigenous people as well as local community groups and the issues they represent. 3CR has been broadcasting since 1976. Despite limited funding and a policy not to carry advertising it has sustained a dynamic alternative broadcasting service that provides a platform for over 130 programmes every week produced by and for a diversity of social and cultural interest groups.**

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Community broadcasting commenced in Australia in 1972, with the university-based radio, 5UV, in Adelaide and accelerated with the opening up of the FM band in 1974. The earliest FM stations were set up by classical music enthusiasts who had formed Music Broadcasting Societies in Sydney (2MBS, which launched in December 2004) and Melbourne (3MBS, which launched in July 1975). 3CR, which commenced broadcasting in July 1976, was radically different, with a focus on giving voice through community radio to social groups who had traditionally faced marginalisation by the mainstream media, particularly working class people, indigenous people and women.

3CR broadcasts for both a general audience and for specific interest groups including programming in around 20 different languages and covering themes such

as social justice, environment, culture and music, and trade unions. Many of 3CR's broadcasters are community activists engaged in social movements and well placed to provide alternative perspectives on news and current affairs. Programmes such as 'Girls on Air', 'Disability Day' and 'Beyond the Bars', which looks at the lives of indigenous men and women in Australia's prisons, have won national awards.

3CR fiercely guards its independence through a policy of not carrying advertising or commercial sponsorship and through a broad-based community ownership structure. The station is financially independent, relying primarily on membership and donations, including an annual 'radiothon' which is the station's major fundraiser and provides around one-third of the station's total annual operating budget of Aus\$ 500,000 (US\$ 500,000). The



station also receives one-off grants for specific projects or programmes through the Community Broadcasting Foundation.

Ownership of 3CR is through the Community Radio Federation (CRF), a membership body set up when the station launched in 1976 and consisting of representatives of affiliate members, station workers and



supporting subscribers. The CRF is the highest decision making body at the station and meets four times a year. Day-to-day operations are the responsibility of a team of seven staff led by the Station Manager and overseen by a Committee of Management. Around 400 volunteers are involved on a regular basis, presenting programmes and assisting station operations.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Community radio providing a voice for marginalized groups
- Programming reflects social, cultural and linguistic diversity
- Independently financed through membership and donations
- Community-based ownership and management



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<http://www.cbaa.org.au>
- Community Broadcasting Foundation  
<http://www.cbf.com.au>
- Lobato, H. (2010) *Community radio: the independent alternative*  
<http://www.upstart.net.au/2010/06/07/community-radio-the-independent-alternative/>

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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# BURUNDI: Giheta CMC - promoting peace and development

## SUMMARY

**Giheta Community Media Centre, a project of Dushirehamwe, a local development NGO in Burundi, employs telecommunications and broadcast media to promote rural and women's development. Combining a rural telecentre, with training courses in computer skills, and a community radio station - Radio Ijwi ry'Umukemyezi - operated by rural women, the project has played a leading role in post conflict reconciliation and peace building. Dushirehamwe uses a system of participatory needs assessment to maintain a clear focus on development outcomes.**

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Giheta is a rural district situated in Gitega Province, in the heart of Burundi. It is about 100 km from the capital, Bujumbura. In common with most other rural areas of Burundi, in which more than 90 per cent of the rural population are smallholders, it is a predominantly agricultural community. The Giheta Community Media Centre (CMC) was established by Dushirehamwe, a local development NGO in Burundi, with support from UNESCO. Dushirehamwe is a network of community foundations in thirteen provinces of the country which seeks to empower rural women to play a leading role in post conflict reconciliation, peace building and development. Its projects focus on issues such as gender equality and women's rights, conflict mediation and reconciliation, and combating violence against women.

The Giheta CMC consists of a telecentre that provides local people with access to telephone and the Internet, a computer skills training facility, and a community radio station. Radio Ijwi ry'Umukemyezi (RIU) serves

a community that has been severely impoverished by the civil war that occurred in the early 1990s. It means 'Voice of Women' and it is operated by rural women from the local community. The community radio station was installed at the time of the signing of peace agreements between Burundi and the various rebel movements. RIU programme content was designed to contribute to the revival of agricultural activity, fostering of peaceful cohabitation among groups that were formerly in conflict, instilling respect for human rights, and promoting local democracy, health and education.

The Dushirehamwe network has a mature governance structure, with provincial and municipal committees for each of its community foundations, and a clear organisational vision, focused on development outcomes rather than the technological platforms. A system of participatory community-based needs assessment is used to identify local development priorities and to assure local ownership in the implementation of

development projects. Local and international financial and technical assistance have followed, enabling Dushirehamwe to achieve its objectives.

The Giheta CMC demonstrates the benefits of combining telecentre technologies with community radio to achieve development goals. In a country recovering

from conflict, dialogue through local community-based communications, is a vital part of the process of rapprochement, reconciliation and peace building. In Giheta, women have been at the forefront of this process, leading a community media initiative that has achieved broad impact on local development.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Community media centre combining telecommunications and community radio
- Focus on post conflict reconciliation, peace building and development
- Mature governance structure and clear organisational vision
- Objectives defined through participatory community-based needs assessment

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

— Nkurunziza, J.P. (2009) *Radio Ijwi ry'Umukenyazi (Voice of the woman) of Giheta*  
<http://www.telecentre.org/profiles/blogs/radio-ijwi-ry-umukenyazi-voice>

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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# CHILE: Radio Tierra – rooted in social movements

## SUMMARY

Radio Tierra is a community media project located in Santiago (Chile) which is grounded in the political orientation and practical experience of La Morada - a non-profit association for women's development with 25 years of engagement in action for democracy and social change. Drawing on gender-based perspectives and a focus on women's communication, health and citizenship, Radio Tierra has achieved a national and international profile, both as a proponent of rights and social justice, and as a platform for social activism.

Launched the year after the restoration of democracy in Chile, Radio Tierra has been operating since 1991 as an independent, community-based broadcaster serving the city of Santiago (Chile) with four hours per day of radio programming on the medium wave (AM) band. Since 2004 it has also maintained an Internet platform enabling new forms of media content as well as the broadcast of the radio signal to national and international audiences. Radio Tierra describes its values as being rooted in citizenship and view the promotion of human rights and the exercise of the right to freedom of expression and communication as an essential basis of any democratic society. It seeks to reflect the distinct interests of civil society, to strengthen citizens' communication and to promote women's participation.

Radio Tierra was established by Corporación Feminista La Morada, a Santiago-based women's organisation, with the support of KULU (*Kvindernes U-landsudvalg*) a Danish non-governmental organisation for women

and development. La Morada provided the management experience and the ability to mobilise resources needed to develop and to sustain Radio Tierra. It also brought a feminist political orientation that informed the direction and content of the station as well as its processes for management, self-reflection and development.

Radio Tierra has itself been a terrain for contesting views of social communication, with the station seen by some as a means to articulate a feminist vision for social change and by others as providing a platform for direct communication by social movements. In recent years the station has aligned itself with the resurgence of Chilean social organisations and the growth of new social movements in Latin America. A core programme strand, 'Voces de la Ciudadanía', is a space for citizens' association and communication in which, over the last ten years, hundreds of people, social organisations, collectives and networks have participated.



Radio Tierra has its roots in a time of great political change in Chile. It has demonstrated tenacity in holding to the social and political values on which it was founded while, at the same time, being able to engage in critical self-reflection on its role and functioning as a platform for social communication. The sustainability of Radio Tierra lies in its strong social base in the feminist and

broader social movements, the collective commitment and experience of its members, and a diverse economic model which includes training delivery; production and broadcast of social action campaigns; and development co-operation projects; as well as advertising and commercial sponsorship.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Social base in civil society and the women's movement
- Values rooted in citizenship, human rights and democracy
- Participatory and self-reflective management model
- Diversification of activities and economic base



### REFERENCES AND LINKS

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<http://www.caraysenal.agenciapulsar.org/0.php?cys=5&s=5&n=1>

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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# COLOMBIA: AREDMAG - defending media in the face of conflict

## SUMMARY

Colombia is among the first countries in Latin America to provide specific legal and regulatory provision for community broadcasting, but access is not always guaranteed. In the region of Magdalena Medio, which has faced intractable armed conflict, community voices have struggled to be heard. The Network Association of Community Radios of Magdalena Medio (*La Asociación Red de Emisoras Comunitarias del Magdalena Medio* – AREDMAG) has played a vital role in advocating their right to establish and in building local capacity.

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Community broadcasting is recognized and promoted by policies, laws and regulation in Colombia that have enabled over 1000 community radio stations to be established, but in regions affected by armed conflict and the influence of paramilitary groups such broadcasting laws and regulations have carried little weight. The Network Association of Community Radios of Magdalena Medio (*La Asociación Red de Emisoras Comunitarias del Magdalena Medio* - AREDMAG) has emerged as a vital support for social institutions and movements in this conflict-ridden region.

AREDMAG is a civil society association that mobilizes participatory community building including local development projects through support for community radio stations. The network is an off-spring of the Communication and Cultural Strategy of the Programme of Development and Peace for Magdalena Medio, which

focuses on reducing armed conflict in the region. Within this framework AREDMAG's main objective is to develop forms of social communication that enhance the peace process and sustainable development by empowering community radios with tools to create cultural and information based programmes. The network supports content production and technological development, and works with local community broadcasters to develop skills for self-management, promote cultural identity and co-create financially sustainability mechanisms for stations within the network.

Among the successes of the AREDMAG network is its contribution to promoting and building recognition for community radio through advocacy for the rights of access to information of the people of Magdalena Medio. On a practical level the network also enables media spaces for children by supporting thematic programmes

that address the rights of children and outlets for children's expression. AREDMAG demonstrates that network support is a crucial link to enabling and sustaining community media. It places emphasis on training and content sharing to raise production levels and collaboration among the associated radio stations. AREDMAG is unique in its approach to the role of

community radio as a facilitator in peace-building. This goes beyond the instrumental approach of transmitting persuasive messages, instead viewing each community entity as a peace zone in its own right that can encourage tolerance of opposing views by strengthening citizen dialogue and participation in decision making.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Civil society association and network of community radios
- Commitment to peace, conflict reduction and development
- Engaged in advocacy for people's communication rights
- Provides training, content production and technical support

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

— The Communication Initiative Network Community Radio Network Association of Magdalena Medio (Asociación Red de Emisoras Comunitarias del Magdalena Medio - AREDMAG)  
<http://www.comminet.com/es/node/127870/306>

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# INDIA: Sangham Radio – giving voice to the excluded

## SUMMARY

**Sangham Radio is the first community radio station to go on air in India and follows the approval of India's Community Radio Policy in 2006. It is also notable as the first radio station in the country to be led by women and the first Dalit (socially marginalized castes) radio station. Located in Machnoor village, Pastapur, in the Medak district of Andhra Pradesh, it broadcasts on 90.4 FM for one and a half hours daily, and reaches a cluster of about 75 villages.**

The launch, on 15 October 2008, of Sangham Radio as an independent community radio service on the FM waveband was a historic day for the development of community radio in India and the culmination of nearly ten years development work in the community of Pastapur, supported by the Deccan Development Society (DDS), a non-governmental organisation that has been working in the villages with Dalit women for more than 20 years.

In 1999, DDS had initiated a programme of video and audio production training in the local community. The project built on a tradition of self-organisation and self-help centred on the women's village level *sanghams* (women's self-help groups). The Community Media Trust (of which Sangham Radio is a part) was formed in 2001 under the management of seven non literate Dalit women. The first audio productions of the Trust were distributed on audio cassettes. Later, with the support of UNESCO and other agencies, the infrastructure for a radio station including studios and transmitter was



completed. By the time India's Community Radio Policy was approved in November 2006, there was a community radio facility in place with a bank of 600 hours of programmes. All that was needed was permission to on the air. A licence application was submitted to the Indian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting by DDS in early 2007. Some 18 months later the application completed its final stages of regulatory approval.



Although Sangham Radio has benefited from external support its sustainability is firmly rooted in the social and economic support of the local community. A recent plan to provide financial support to Sangham Radio was formalized in July 2009. According to this plan, each of the 5000 Sangham members will contribute Rs 50 every month towards the radio station resulting in an annual contribution of Rs 250,000 (approx US\$ 5,000).

Medak is one of the least developed and arid regions of the country. Poverty levels are high. Sangham Radio was the culmination of a long felt need by local Dalit women that community media of their own could be a critical ingredient for poverty eradication. The community radio voices the perspectives and needs of the marginalized. Its success is linked to the larger goal of the Dalit women in Pastapur to have their own media. Its sustainability is linked to a vision of community autonomy as being critical for sustainable development. For the women



involved in Sangham Radio, autonomy means not only self sufficiency in food production but also media autonomy. The project has been a pioneer for community radio at the national level while being firmly rooted in local self-help and mutual aid.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- First community radio station to launch in India
- Centred on Dalit women's self-help groups (*sanghams*)
- Building on a vision of community autonomy
- Sustained by the support of community members

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

— Pavarala, V, and Malik, K (2007) *Other Voices: The struggle for community radio in India* New Delhi: Sage Publications

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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 Web: <http://www.ddsindia.com>



# JORDAN: Radio Al-Balad - the Internet as an entry point

## SUMMARY

**Radio Al-Balad, formerly Radio AmmanNet FM, is Jordan's first community radio station. It has also been described as the Arab world's first Internet radio station. It started as an Internet broadcaster and website in 2000 to circumvent restrictive legislation. In July 2005 it began terrestrial broadcasting on 92.4 FM frequency after private radio stations received formal regulatory approval. It has gained a reputation as a pioneer for community radio in the region.**

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Radio AmmanNet was launched in 2000 by journalist Daoud Kuttab and a group of independent media practitioners, inspired by the opportunity to use the Internet as a means to commence broadcasting in a country where the terrestrial airwaves remained under State monopoly control. The station was initially supported by UNESCO and the Greater Amman municipality. It has played a catalytic role in persuading the Jordanian government to open up the broadcasting environment and, in 2005, became the first community broadcaster to be licensed in Jordan.

Following its acquisition of an FM broadcast licence, the station was renamed Radio Al-Balad and continued to develop its distinctive focus on local news and current affairs. Operating in a highly centralized media environment, where local issues tend to remain on the back burner, the station's coverage of parliamentary and municipal affairs initially met resistance in some official quarters. Despite this, the radio station stood its ground and was ultimately successful in gaining a licence to

carry news and political programming. This emphasis on news has paid dividends in terms of listenership. In the 2009 Jordan Media Survey, Radio Al Balad rated top among local news websites.

Radio Al-Balad has an impressive range of programming. Apart from local news and current affairs, the station encourages local musicians and provides extensive sports coverage. Interactive phone-in programming is used to facilitate community participation and feedback. A high priority is given to promoting women's perspectives and to carrying programming that address issues of particular concern to women. The station is also popular for its work with schools. Students are trained and supported to run weekly broadcasts covering young people's interests.

Lines between public, private and community media remain blurred in Jordan. Radio Al Balad has had to reckon with often being treated like a commercial radio while its tenets and practices are community

driven. It has addressed this by developing a mixed economic model - combining donor support with income generation mechanisms like advertisements, studio hire/rental and SMS feedback from listeners. The programming and management structure have deepened community ownership and local participation as well as providing for staff representation in the board of management. Formal governance arrangements have been complemented by the setting up of listener clubs.

Radio Al-Balad has contributed to media democratization in the region through effective advocacy and innovative use of the Internet in the face of considerable political, legal and regulatory obstacles. In doing so it has paved the way for other community radio stations to be set up in Jordan and other countries of the Middle East. The AmmanNet training centre has contributed to the development of journalists from Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Palestine.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Pioneer for Internet and FM community radio in the Middle East
- Emphasis on local news, current affairs and political reporting
- Mixed economic model of donor support and earned income
- Developing a regional support centre for community media

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

- AmmanNet  
<http://en.ammannet.net/>
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[http://www.amarc.org/documents/articles/Community\\_radio\\_in\\_Jordan.pdf](http://www.amarc.org/documents/articles/Community_radio_in_Jordan.pdf)

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# NICARAGUA: La Primerisima - people's news radio

## SUMMARY

In 1990 the workers of Radio La Primerisima, both past and present, formed the Association of Nicaraguan Radio Broadcasting Professionals (APRANIC). The main objective of the group was to secure the independence of the station as an authentic community based initiative by taking steps to own it themselves. APRANIC was successful in its bid to secure legal ownership of the station. Over the following two decades, La Primerisima has evolved a participatory management and programming framework that sustains its socio-cultural and institutional objectives.

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APRANIC (*La Asociación de Profesionales de la Radiodifusión*) is an association of journalists, staff members, listeners and sympathizers from international rights groups, formed to secure the independence of Radio La Primerisima, Nicaragua's leading news and current affairs radio service. The group successfully petitioned the former state ownership to donate the technical and other assets of the station to the Association.

The group's activities are based on the principle that participatory mechanisms, management transparency, democracy and worker ownership are the essential pillars of La Primerisima. All members attend a General Assembly which determines operational guidelines and where any changes to policies or programmes must be ratified. Decisions taken are communicated to the station management through an executive board nominated by the General Assembly. APRANIC preserves its commitment to participatory media by identifying clear

indicators of its relationship with the communities it serves. The members ensure that the station maintains its reputation for fairness and honest reporting despite its history of political association with the FSLN (*Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional*). Policy decisions ensure that the station stays clear of government and private attempts to control its editorial content, while the editorial itself maintains balance through frequent interaction with the listeners.

La Primerisima exemplifies a culturally appropriate and holistic approach to transferring state broadcasting assets into community ownership. Its focus as "the people's station" is at the core of all its activities and it is in turn the people who make the station sustainable. Significantly, La Primerisima's coverage now extends to all of Nicaragua and the station does not define a geographical community, but a community of the poor wherever they exist in the country. It is this community

that makes the station among the top three most influential media in the country.

Not all Nicaraguans support the voice of the station and independence has had its price. In its early years the station's transmitters and installations in Santa Clara were set fire to by thugs and burned to the ground. La Primerisima was able to call on local and international

solidarity to restore the infrastructure and to return to the airwaves – an impressive demonstration of the resilience of its social base and community involvement. In lean economic times APRANIC has developed creative solutions to financial challenges. One example is the unconventional structure of operating each programme as a “mini-enterprise”, with producers responsible for covering their own costs.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Independent news and current affairs radio service
- Serving a nationwide community of interest
- Owned by its workers, listeners and supporters
- Participatory and transparent governance structure

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

— Dragon, Alfonso Gumucio. *CFSC Case Study: La Primerisima*. Communication for Social Change Consortium. <http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/mazi-articles.php?id=241>

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# SENEGAL: Radio Ndef Leng - letting the listener speak

## SUMMARY

Radio Ndef Leng is a radio station for the Sérère community in Dakar, one of the largest minority groups in the Senegalese capital. It is predominantly a talk radio, broadcasting in 14 languages. With strong roots in its target community, the station is financed in large part by its own listeners through their active participation in on-air dialogue and discussion, as well as membership and donations scheme. Through a telecommunications service provider, the station generates revenue from calls received and billed to the listener's telephone account.

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*Union des associations culturelles Sérère* was created in 1994 and recognised as a non-governmental organisation in 1996. Its purpose is to promote the language and culture of the Sérère speaking community and to assist their integration through a network of 43 groups and associations engaged in cultural and socio-economic development. The Union realised that lack of access to the means of communication was a weakness for these associations and in 1999 they took the decision to start a community radio station. Following a request to the Ministry of Information for a licence, in April 2001 they received a letter of agreement and took to the air on 19 July 2001.

Radio Ndef Leng broadcasts a mixture of on air debate, discussion and educational programmes in Sérère languages and in other languages including French and Wolof. It has organised a listeners club which has 3,500 members and has over 100 people involved in programme making. The radio is run on a voluntary basis

although the regular volunteers receive allowances. The radio station has a very active listenership and emphasises interactive broadcasts in which listeners are encouraged to phone-in to comment on issues and current affairs. It receives around 5,000 calls per month and estimates around 150,000 listeners tuning tune-in from the target population.

The radio is financed in large part by the listeners who pay a telephone call charge to take part in live phone-ins and who are also encouraged to make a regular voluntary donation. The telephone call-charges are collected by the telecommunications service provider and remitted to the radio on a monthly basis. In addition to listener support, the radio raises funds from sponsored public service announcements and from national and international development organisations, for example, for the production of an HIV/AIDS prevention campaign. It also receives a contribution from the *Fonds d'appui de*

*la presse*, a support fund for independent broadcast and print media in Senegal.

Radio Ndef Leng has maintained the leading broadcast service for the Sérère speaking community in Dakar since 2001 and has been authorised to establish a second station in Fatick. Its sustainability is linked closely to its

roots in a respected Sérère cultural association and the interest in the Sérère speaking community of having a community radio that reflects their language and culture. Radio Ndef Leng has been able to translate that support into an economic model that generates revenue from listener participation in a predominantly speech-based radio format.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Established and operated by a Sérère cultural association
- Participatory, speech-based programme format
- Listener supported through fees, donations and call charges
- Managed and operated by volunteers

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

- Buckley, S. (2004) Community Radio in Senegal. AMARC-Africa
- Diouf, B. (2009) Sénégal: Une radio pour défendre l'identité de la minorité seereer <http://www.panos-ao.org/ipao/spip.php?article15403&lang=fr>

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# SLOVENIA: Radio Student - independent and non-conformist

## SUMMARY

Radio Student is a non-profit, urban community radio station operated by the student's association of the University of Ljubljana. It is one of the oldest European non-commercial radio stations. It started broadcasting in 1969 and has operated continuously since then. The station gained prominence for its political coverage and non-conformist stand in the last years of Yugoslavian communism and in the 10 day war leading to Slovenian independence in 1991.

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Radio Student was founded in 1969 by the Association of Students of the University of Ljubljana, after the "student awakening" of 1968. It was, from its beginning, a home for independent journalism and alternative music. During the period of civil war in Croatia and Bosnia, Radio Student retained links with other independent broadcasters across former Yugoslavia and carried a regular weekly programme in the Serbo-Croatian language focusing especially on the plight of refugees. Later, with the growth of private commercial broadcasting in Slovenia, Radio Student reinvented itself as an alternative cultural and educational radio station, taking the side of the disadvantaged and promoting media freedom and diversity. Radio Student places an emphasis on the education of its young contributors - future journalists, sound engineers, DJs and announcers. It has four full-time employees and over 200 regular

contributors. Most are students, but they also include intellectuals, journalists, artists and university lecturers.

Radio Student editorial policy is to present items of information, art forms, music and culture overlooked or ignored by other media. Its music content avoids global corporate music industry trends and seeks to present fresh, non-conformist sounds in alternative musical genres: post hard-core, techno, hip hop, blues, jazz, world music, experimental and contemporary music. The station maintains a similarly non-conformist approach





on socio-political issues. It covers events related to civil society, state and politics, culture, music, the humanities, the University and activities of the student organisation. In doing so, it has sought to keep a critical distance with respect to the dominant sources of power (political, ideological, religious, financial) promoting human rights and democracy; speaking for the principles of free speech, tolerance and solidarity; and supporting the right of minorities and marginalized groups

Radio Student is a radio station whose own historical trajectory has become a part of its sustainability and

resilience. It is an institution in its own right within the Association of Students of the University of Ljubljana. It has arisen from the student movements of the sixties, lived through the 10 day war and the conflict in former Yugoslavia, and now stands as an exemplar for freedom of speech in the first country of former Yugoslavia to have joined the European Union. Its longevity alone assures its unique position while at the same demonstrating that a community radio station with a vigorously independent philosophy can, over time, create the cultural necessity for its own survival.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Student owned and led radio station since 1969
- Focus on alternative music and independent journalism
- Promoting human rights, democracy and free speech
- Critical, independent and non-conformist philosophy

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

— Culture.si. Radio Študent (RŠ) (October 2010)  
[http://www.culture.si/en/Radio\\_%C5%A0tudent\\_\[R%C5%A0\]](http://www.culture.si/en/Radio_%C5%A0tudent_[R%C5%A0])

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# UGANDA: Radio Apac - promoting social and economic improvement

## SUMMARY

**Radio Apac is a community radio station based in Northern Uganda, a region impoverished by eighteen years of civil war. The station has shown great resilience in the face of conflict. It has built a strong base of support within the local community reflected both in its audience reach and its partnerships with community-based organisations. It is now extending its community media provision to include telecentre facilities, sound recording and business services.**

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Radio Apac is a community radio station established in July 1999 by members of the community in the district of Apac, in Northern Uganda. The region has experienced over 18 years of conflict and civil war which has decimated the local, predominantly agricultural economy. Since its launch, Radio Apac has geared its content and operations firmly towards peace building and improving the livelihoods of the local community of Apac and neighbouring districts.

The station is guided by strong social principles. In its pursuit of the twin goals of social and economic improvement it concentrates mainly on educational programming. In doing so, it emphasizes grassroots participation and partnership with community-based organisations. Its audience success and high programming standards have attracted growing interest in partnership from non-governmental organisations, development agencies and government departments. Local businesses also recognise the station's success in gaining audience and are keen to buy advertising space.

Radio Apac reaches out to its target community through live events, door to door campaigns using bicycles for transport and mobile radio transmission. The station is evolving into a community media centre providing multi-media services to the community and local businesses. The Radio Apac community media centre offers public access to telephone, fax and Internet services, audio recording and editing, secretarial services and desktop publishing. By providing secondary services the station has improved community life and diversified its revenue streams.

Radio Apac has demonstrated the vital role radio can play in the provision of information, education and community building in a region with limited telecommunications infrastructure. Operating in a subsistence economy and in the face of ongoing conflict, it has shown considerable resilience. Its success derives not only from the quality of its programming which has gained a substantial local audience, but also through its community outreach and emphasis on grassroots

participation, its strong partnerships with community-based organisations including representation within its

governance structure, and its willingness to innovate and to diversify its services to the community.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Community radio with a strong educational focus
- Promoting local social and economic improvement
- Emphasis on partnership and grassroots participation
- Diversity of funding including secondary services

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

— The Communication Initiative Network. *Radio Apac* (January 2009)  
<http://www.cominit.com/en/node/132280/376>

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# STRENGTHENING SOCIAL IMPACT

# STRENGTHENING SOCIAL IMPACT

Few would disagree with the view that broadcast media and telecommunications have had profound impact on human development, yet the nature of that impact is complex and multi-layered. This presents challenges both to the assessment of the social impact of community media and to the development of strategies to strengthen its role and functioning. Much evidence of the difference that community media has made is anecdotal, being based, as in this study, on local stories and case examples. Taken together, however a pattern emerges in which community media is seen to have both intrinsic value – meeting the basic human need to communicate and extending the capability to do so – and instrumental value – facilitating access to information, contributing to value formation and social cohesion, and enabling people to assert their rights and hold decision makers to account. The effects of community media are thus to be found at multiple and inter-related levels – psychological, social, economic and political.

Much of the early work on communications and development reflected a psychological perspective - one still to be found in the language of marketing - in which media and communications is understood in one way terms, as the dissemination of messages and information that can lead to changes in understanding and behaviour. With the emergence and growth of community media have come new perspectives rooted in a social model of communications, in which the media are a means not only to access information but also to take voice and to be heard. In this perspective social impact lies in processes of dialogue that lead to value formation and knowledge development, and that contribute to social change. As community media has grown in presence and assertiveness it has been further seen to have significant socio-political impact, contributing to the transparency of elections and the accountability of public servants and decision makers.

The social impact of community media, taken as a whole, has been considerable and widely acknowledged. This is reflected in the number of countries which have now made specific public policy provision to promote and encourage the development of community media, as well as in international declarations and in scholarly works on

media freedom and media development. AMARC (2007) has surveyed the social impact of community radio and observed that its main achievement is intrinsic to its distinctive character as a medium – it gives voice to the poor and marginalized who otherwise lack the means to speak out and be heard. The survey also concludes that community radio contributes to poverty reduction and the achievement of development goals; good governance and public accountability; the empowerment of women and the inclusion of marginalized groups; conflict resolution and peace building; and disaster response and preparedness. It is equally clear that the extent and the nature of the impact of community media vary enormously. Not all community media are as effective as they could be in, for example, promoting gender equality, combating discrimination, or assuring the full participation of their community in the management of the service as well as the making of media content.

In this section are highlighted examples that demonstrate the social impact of community media and its contribution to social change. Women's participation and ownership is central to many community media projects, for example, Femlink Pacific in Fiji runs a mobile radio broadcast project for rural women, while Radio Wiñay Jatha, provides a voice for the Aymara women of the Bolivian Altiplano. On the Caribbean coast of Belize, Radio Hamalali Garinagu protects the unique culture of the Garifuna communities. One Plus One is a Beijing-based media project using an Internet-based platform to provide a voice for people with disability in China. FREE FM of Kingston, Jamaica goes behind prison walls to engage prisoners and their warders in community media production. Radio FMYY of Kobe, Japan, was born in the aftermath of earthquake and brings together diverse groups of all ages, abilities and cultures. The role of community media in rebuilding communities after natural disaster or human conflict is highlighted, in very different contexts, by the Aceh Reconstruction Radio Network in Indonesia, by Radio Dange Nwe promoting peace and dialogue in Halabja, Iraq, by Radio Rakambia, run by the young people of Dili, Timor-Leste working to build a new country, and by the community radios of Mozambique in promoting free and fair elections.

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

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## **BELIZE:** Radio Hamalali Garinagu - protecting the Garifuna culture

### **SUMMARY**

Radio Hamalali Garinagu broadcasts to the Garifuna communities along the Caribbean coast of Belize. Its aim is to protect and promote the unique music and cultural traditions of the Garinagu. The station broadcasts in the Garifuna language and carries traditional and contemporary Garifuna music. Radio Hamalali Garinagu also runs an audio-visual recording studio for Garifuna musicians and is building a unique archive of Garifuna music from the region.

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The National Garifuna Council of Belize was formed in 1981 and advocates for the rights, development and culture of the Garifuna communities. The Garifuna have a unique cultural history which arose in the island of St Vincent from the marriage of indigenous people of the Caribbean with Africans brought in by the slave trade in 1635. This gave rise to a new group called the Garifuna or the Garinagu, with a distinct language and culture. After many years of resistance to the European colonial powers the group was exiled to Central America in 1797. The Garifuna language today is spoken in communities scattered along the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize.

Radio Hamalali Garinagu was set up in 2002 by the National Garifuna Council as a means to protect and promote the Garifuna culture in Belize. The growth of commercial music and entertainment radio in Belize was perceived to be one of the contributing factors to the cultural marginalization of the Garifuna people's music and traditions. Radio Hamalali Garinagu received initial

support from Commonwealth of Learning who donated a portable radio transmission facility. The station now broadcasts along the entire Caribbean coast of Belize reaching ten Garifuna communities with a service in the Garifuna language and a mix of traditional and contemporary indigenous music.

Since its inception the station has evolved to include a multi-media centre and an audio visual recording studio which is active in producing and recording local musicians who would previously have travelled to the United States at great expense to secure the same services. The development of the multi-media centre was assisted by UNESCO as part of a programme to reduce the isolation of indigenous Caribbean communities by providing access to information and communication technologies and training opportunities that could lead to income generation and enterprise. The centre also provides desktop publishing and other services as part of its strategy for enterprise and sustainability.

The Hamalali Garinagu community multi-media centre also provides training and social development workshops with a focus on building knowledge and capacity among the Garinagu people especially women and young people. The workshops are linked



to programme content on the radio station, such as promoting HIV/AIDS awareness. They contribute to further strengthening the relation between the broadcast service and the local community.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Community radio and multi-media centre
- Serving Garifuna communities of Belize
- Promoting rights, culture and development
- Supporting Garifuna music and musicians

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

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<http://www.nichbelize.org/iscr-featured-organisation/the-national-garifuna-council-its-achievements.html>

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## BOLIVIA: Radio Wiñay Jatha - voice of Aymara women

### SUMMARY

The Radio Wiñay Jatha communications network serves the indigenous Aymara communities of the Bolivian Altiplano with community radio stations operating on the AM waveband in the municipality of Comanche and in the city of El Alto. The network was established by the Centre for Integral Development of Aymara Women (CDIMA), to promote the rights of women and indigenous people and to strengthen the Aymara culture and language.

Community broadcasting in Bolivia dates back to the 1940s when miners' radio stations were established in several of Bolivia's tin mining communities, among the first known examples of community radio worldwide. From the end of the 1980s there has been significant growth of community radio in Bolivia particularly across the rural communities of the Andean region. Community radio has proven an important tool for indigenous communities seeking to protect and promote their culture and language and to assert their social and political rights. Radio Wiñay Jatha is part of a broader initiative led by Aymara women to strengthen the indigenous Aymara communities of the Bolivian Altiplano.

The Centre for Integral Development of Aymara Women, CDIMA (*Centro de Desarrollo Integral de la Mujer Aymara*), is a non-profit social organisation established in 1989 to promote the empowerment of Aymara women through the assertion of their rights and cultural identity. CDIMA seeks the transformation of social, political

and economic structures in Bolivia through the active participation of Aymara women and young people in public decision making at local, regional and



national level. Its objectives include greater participation of women in the political, social and cultural life of the Aymara people and the country; strengthening Aymara women's organisations and those of other indigenous nations; promoting the perspectives of Aymara women through the media and coordination with other social organisations; strengthening the status and respect for the rights of indigenous nations and peoples.

The development of communication systems was recognized by CDIMA as essential to reaching the

Aymara communities and radio was seen as the most effective means to do so. CDIMA began by negotiating radio spots on existing local radio leading, in 1992, to the production of a weekly programme of 15 to 30 minutes that was carried on the catholic radio station, Radio San Gabriel. In 1999, together with women's organisation, CPFOMAT, and the municipal authorities of Comanche, in Pacajes province, CDIMA installed Wiñay Jatha community radio on the frequency 1490 AM. In 2008 a second station, Radio Wiñay Jatha 740 AM was launched in the city of El Alto.

Radio Wiñay Jatha is today part of a multimedia communications strategy developed by CDIMA, including print publications, visual material and educational initiatives. The radio provides a voice for the Aymara women with a vision of strengthening the Aymara culture and promoting the rights of women and the Aymara people. Through dissemination by other community radio stations of programmes produced by CDIMA, the radio project has played a leading role in raising awareness of women's rights and the rights of indigenous peoples in the Andean region.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Community radio network serving Bolivia's Aymara communities
- Established and operated by a women's social organisation
- Promoting the culture, language and rights of Aymara people
- Linked to a broader communications and education strategy



### REFERENCES AND LINKS

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<http://www.apracbolivia.es.tl/>

Aguirre Alvis, J.L. (2006) La radiodifusion comunitaria en Bolivia: un signo de esperanza por un pluralismo desde la palabra  
[http://www.amarc.org/documents/articles/Radio\\_comunitaria\\_en\\_Bolivia.pdf](http://www.amarc.org/documents/articles/Radio_comunitaria_en_Bolivia.pdf)

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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# CHINA: One Plus One - nothing about us, without us

## SUMMARY

One Plus One is a Beijing-based community radio production group and Internet broadcaster that started in 2006 and is managed by and for people with disability. Taking advantage of opportunities afforded by the Beijing Paralympics in 2008, the group has gained commissions on State media and set up its own Internet platform.



Beijing One Plus One Cultural Centre was established in 2006 with support from the BBC World Service Trust and China Vision, a UK-based charity. It is an independent, non-governmental organisation run by and for people with disability. It has sought to build a model of good civil society practice and to provide a strong, independent voice for people with disability and other marginalized groups. In a South Beijing tower block the group has built a broadcast quality radio production and training centre for its operations. More than half of

In a country where the media is closely controlled by the State and the Internet is strictly monitored, One Plus One has created an authentic and independent voice for a section of society that has traditionally faced marginalization and discrimination.

its thirteen staff are either visually impaired or have a physical disability and its facilities incorporate a range of specialist accessibility adaptations.

One Plus One has established itself as an independent production centre, gaining commissions on State media that have enabled it to achieve a nearly country-wide footprint. Its productions, which include China Disability Observed, Bangyang Advice and One Sound One World, have been broadcast on over 75 regional and local radio stations. At the time of the Beijing Paralympics 2008, two of the One Plus One team members became the first disabled Chinese journalists to gain press accreditation as Paralympics reporters. To mark the Beijing Paralympics, the group started an independent

online radio service broadcasting three hours a day. It is now developing an Internet-based platform for media content exchange to involve a wider network of disabled and other radio producers and reporters.

In addition to its broadcast productions, One Plus One has organized regular Mobile Advice Clinics to reach people with disability in poor, remote and rural areas of the country. Team members along with experienced legal, health and personal counselors work with local community based groups to provide relevant information, advice and support.

One plus One is significant both in terms of its contribution freedom of expression and its championing of the rights of people with disability. Some 6.3 per

cent of China's population or 82 million people have some form of disability. Key issues of concern include abandonment at birth or at a young age, homelessness and livelihood deprivation. People with disability face social and economic discrimination and are rarely visible in the mainstream media. According to Gao Shan, co-founder of One Plus One, a visit to a typical orphanage in China would reveal a majority of children to be disabled. Job opportunities are scarce and the visually impaired are especially vulnerable to exploitation, often having little choice in employment other than working as a masseur. One plus One not only aims to give voice to the concerns of people with disability, but to build their capacity and to promote integration and equality of opportunity.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Independent production group run by and for people with disability
- Promoting the voices and rights of people with disability
- Working with State media to gain national reach and impact
- Using the Internet as an independent distribution platform



### REFERENCES AND LINKS

- Buckley, S. (2009) Disability no barrier for One Plus One <http://asiapacific.amarc.org/blog/?p=70>

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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# FIJI: femTALK - mobile radio for women's empowerment

## SUMMARY

femTALK is the Pacific's first and only mobile community radio station. Launched in 2004 by femLINK pacific, a Fiji-based non-governmental organisation promoting women's empowerment, the mobile radio has enabled women in semi-urban areas and rural communities to engage in communications for peace building, education and gender equality. The project provides training, production support and an FM broadcast transmission facility.



femLINK pacific is a women's non-governmental organisation based in Suva, the Fijian capital, whose focus is community media for development and women's empowerment. The organisation combines advocacy for women's rights and access to voice, with practical initiatives to build the communication skills and capacity of rural women. In May 2004 femLINK Pacific launched femTALK 89.2 FM, the country's first and only mobile community radio. With a broadcast range from Suva of 10km and a mobile studio and transmission facility, femTALK has reached out to women in the semi-urban and rural communities of Nausori, Nadi, Ba and Labasa. Over a period of five years of training and broadcasting,

femTALK has become a unique platform for promoting peace and gender equality.

Media deregulation in Fiji and the growing commercialization of the public-owned broadcaster have resulted in diminishing media access for local communities and civil society groups. femLINK pacific has been a consistent voice for legal and regulatory recognition for community broadcasting as it sought to strengthen women's voices. It was in this context that the idea for the mobile radio station emerged as part of a project to start a 'Women's Weekend Radio'. femTALK 89.2 FM quickly developed as a platform enabling women

to challenge existing decision making structures and to engage in dialogue with other women as well as with their communities. More than 50 young women have been trained in broadcasting skills and have participated in the Weekend Radio productions.

As a result of the project women have become more informed about their rights. New networks have been set up such as the Nausori Rural Women's Association. Women involved have played a more prominent role in campaigns, and issues that affect their lives such as International Women's Day celebrations, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 awareness raising, and the Trade and Aid Parade / Women's Learning-Sharing Circle. The 'Generation Next' project involves young

women making vox pops and producing reports from the marketplace, strengthening community content and participation, and building radio reporting, production and broadcasting skills.

femTALKradio station has striven to address the participation of women from marginalized groups, such as women with disability, and from minority cultures, encouraging cross-cultural dialogue and respect for diversity. The unstable political climate and shifting donor priorities have presented challenges for femLINK pacific and for the femTALK project but the Weekend Radio broadcast schedule has increased to around 16 hours across Saturday and Sunday.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Women's mobile radio production and broadcast project
- Producing a weekend broadcast from different locations
- Focus on strengthening the voices of rural women
- Promoting rights, community dialogue and peace building

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

- femLINK pacific (2008) Empowering communities, informing policy: the potential of community radio  
[http://www.femlinkpacific.org.fj/\\_resources/main/pdf/Empowering-Communities-InformingPolicyThePotentialofCommunityRadio.pdf](http://www.femlinkpacific.org.fj/_resources/main/pdf/Empowering-Communities-InformingPolicyThePotentialofCommunityRadio.pdf)
- femTALK: Women's community radio initiative  
<http://www.comminit.com/en/node/131265/2754>

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# INDONESIA: ARRNet - rebuilding shattered communities

## SUMMARY

**Aceh Nias Reconstruction Radio Network (ARRNet) consists of 46 community radio stations in Aceh and North Sumatra dedicated to community-based rehabilitation and reconstruction in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. Building on the effectiveness of an emergency radio network set-up in the weeks after the tsunami struck, ARRNet has combined radio with Internet and telecommunications to connect coastal and rural communities.**

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Among the first responders in Indonesia to the tsunami that devastated Aceh on 26 December 2004, were activists from Indonesia's vibrant community radio sector and the community media support organisation, Combine. The media in Aceh lacked independence or diversity even before the tsunami struck. The region was under a state of emergency with government forces pitted against the secessionist Free Aceh Movement. The tsunami destroyed many existing broadcasting facilities leaving the shattered population without access to news or information. Outside of Banda Aceh, the capital, rural and coastal communities were particularly affected by the media blackout.

Responding to the communication needs of affected communities, the Aceh Emergency Radio Network set up five community radio stations, with government co-operation to secure broadcasting permission. The community radio stations were part of a wider response

by Indonesian communications activists and engineers that included setting up of a wireless Internet access network. ARRNet built on this emergency response with a project to scale-up the presence of community radio in Aceh and to shift its focus to rehabilitation and reconstruction. Funding was secured from the Japan Social Development Fund, a World Bank managed funding mechanism, and Combine Resource Institution was contracted to manage the project which ran from November 2005 until early 2009.

ARRNet used a mixed media model that combined rural community radio stations with telephone and fax lines and a centrally managed news and content exchange website in Banda Aceh. The impact of ARRNet was immediate and palpable, enabling communities to directly interact with each other. Where previously communication had been aid agency and government driven, ARRNet brought community needs and concerns

to the fore. The two-way community level dialogue enabled by ARRNet brought other dividends. It has served as a monitoring system and accountability mechanism to ensure complaints and grievances were being addressed. It has enabled communities to exchange experiences in reconstruction of housing, livelihoods, health and education. Many of the volunteers involved have themselves lost homes, family and friends. The community radios have also paid particular attention to on-air trauma counseling, and to ensuring the conditions and needs of the relief camps are reported accurately.

ARRNet was a time limited project, but the radio stations continue and are now supported by their own regional association in Aceh, the Community Radio Network in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (JRK-NAD). As the tsunami and its aftermath recede from public memory the community radio stations have taken on other priorities. Prior to completion, ARRnet provided 'core capital' to facilitate continuity among the members.



While some used this to deepen community engagement and link it with income generation activities, others have invested directly in economic activity like agriculture or cattle breeding as part of a strategy to build sustainable livelihoods.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Post-disaster radio network linked by Internet and telecommunications
- Responding to the communication needs of disaster affected communities
- Facilitating dialogue, community ownership and reconstruction monitoring
- Supported by international aid and country level expertise and activism

## REFERENCES AND LINKS

— Birowo, Mario Antonius. *The Use of Community Radio in Managing Natural Disaster in Indonesia* at Prato CIRN Community Informatics Conference 2009. (Refereed Paper)  
<http://www.ccnr.net/pratoconf2009/pdfs/Birowo-.pdf>

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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# IRAQ: Radio Dange Nwe - a voice for peace and dialogue

## SUMMARY

Radio Dange Nwe, located in Halabja, is the first independent community radio in Northern Iraq. With a focus primarily on women and young people, the radio has been a voice for peace and dialogue. It has assisted the Halabja community to come to terms with the effects of a prolonged period of conflict and war including the notorious and devastating chemical gas attack on the village in 1988, survivors of which include all of the station's staff team.

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Radio Dange Nwe (New Voice) was launched in June 2005, following steps to open the media environment in Northern Iraq. While most of the new broadcasting services have been driven by political or commercial interests, Radio Dange Nwe was set up with the support of the US-based non-governmental development agency Agricultural Cooperative Development International/ Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA), the German non-governmental women's development organisation WADI e.V. and Radio Gladys Palmera, a Barcelona-based radio station - with the goal of providing a voice for women and young people. It is the first independent community radio in the region and broadcasts six hours a day in Kurdish, Arabic, Persian and other languages.

Halabja, located close to the Iranian border, was the site of a devastating chemical weapons attack on the population by Iraqi government forces in 1988, that left many dead and others injured for life. The region experienced further trauma during the Gulf War of 1990/1991. Recovery from the trauma of war, conflict and oppression has been hampered by a culture of silence rooted in fear and a reluctance to re-open old wounds. By creating a space where young people, women and men, work together in reporting on local issues and concerns, the radio station has changed the ground rules of social interaction. Significantly, all twelve staff of the radio station were victims of the poison gas attack and lived for a long period in refugee camps. Most of them did not complete their education.



Among a population with low levels of literacy and formal education, radio takes on a particular importance as an accessible source of information and a means of dialogue and community empowerment. Almost 50 per cent of women in the area are illiterate. Political and social conflict has impeded access to primary and secondary education, and there is a paucity of public spaces to meet, especially for young people. Radio Dange Nwe addresses such concerns through broadcasts on education and health, and exploring the consequences of violence and war. The long term effects of violence have been the subject of discussion programmes like 'History Workshop' that involve young people, their parents and their grandparents recovering historical memory and reflecting on past trauma. The radio also contributes to promoting the accountability of local public officials through live interviews that focus on citizens' rights and practical concerns such as the state of sanitation, water or the shortage of electric supply.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- First independent community radio in Northern Iraq
- Providing a voice for women and young people
- Contributing to participation and local accountability
- Promoting peace and post-conflict dialogue and recovery

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

— WADI (2007) Radio "New Voice": First community radio in Iraq  
[http://www.wadi-online.de/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=24&Itemid=25](http://www.wadi-online.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=24&Itemid=25)

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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Radio Dange Nwe has a democratic organisational structure. It is owned and managed by the women and young people who make up its staff. Every three months the staff elects an administration board to oversee day to day operations. Volunteer participation is encouraged and remains relatively stable, between ten and 30 volunteers a month. Thematic groups and clubs are also encouraged to form, such as groups for young environmental activists.





# JAMAICA: FREE FM - radio from behind prison walls

## SUMMARY

FREE FM is a community multi-media centre that operates from the Tower Street adult correctional centre in Jamaica. Warders and inmates collaborate to make educational content and to share their side of the story. The project is a joint venture of the inmate rehabilitation group Students Expressing Truth working with the Department of Correctional Service, and supported by UNESCO and the Canadian International Development Agency.

FREE FM is a prison radio station and computer lab. The acronym stands for 'Fostering Rehabilitation Education and Entertainment'. The idea became an intention during a meeting of Students Expressing Truth, a prison group founded in 1998. While listening to a recording of American broadcaster and former inmate Ray Hill, hosting his weekly Friday night radio programme 'The Prison Show' on KPFT 90.1 in Houston, the group was moved by the voices of family and friends of inmates using the medium to send messages of love and encouragement to their incarcerated loved ones. This spawned the idea for the 'Society Interaction' programme and ultimately the setting up of a radio station.

FREE FM has been on air since 2007 broadcasting from the Tower Street maximum security adult correctional centre, the pilot site for the project located in Kingston, Jamaica. It is a joint venture with the Department of Correctional Service, and supported by UNESCO and the Canadian International Development Agency. Since its



inception, warders and prisoners have developed several innovative approaches. 'Society Interaction' is a popular programme where officers conduct brief recordings with family members and friends of the inmates who send messages of encouragement and greetings to their loved ones in lock-up. Participatory programmes such as these are extremely popular as this is often the only contact inmates have with their loved ones on the outside.

In order to establish the programming needs of the prison community, a group of inmates were trained in

action research methods. They discovered that inmates wanted to know more about their rights as prisoners and protocols regarding parole. This information led to the creation of 'Corrections Corner', a weekly segment hosted by prison officers who share information in these areas and respond to questions. The officers have since extended the programme to include common lifestyle health complaints of inmates and useful preventative information. The action research helped build community support as the inmates experienced, perhaps for the first time, a horizontal flow of communications between officialdom and themselves and began to see the station as an important lifeline.

FREE FM has brought together prisoners and warders, traditionally hostile to one another, in media production that can assist rehabilitation. As much of the content is created jointly, it is in these moments of interaction between the two groups that one of the most valuable assets of the project becomes clear and it is the transformed relationships between the two sectors who now share a common goal. Both groups benefited from

intensive training in basic radio skills including recording and digital editing; collecting research, presentation skills and broadcast etiquette. Since the inception of the project, prison officials have noted a 50 per cent decline in crime inside the Tower Street prison. They attribute this to the community multimedia centre where aside from making programmes inmates learn a range of software applications including music production, graphic design, video recording and editing. One of the challenges observed was the high illiteracy rate of inmates and as a result literacy education has become a programme focus.



### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Prison radio project for education and rehabilitation
- Joint venture between prisoners' group, government and aid agencies
- Involves prisoners and warders working together on media production
- Results have included measurable reduction in crime inside the prison



### REFERENCES AND LINKS

— UNESCO (2008) Prison community radio: FREE FM streams live online  
[http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=26640&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=26640&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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# JAPAN: Radio FMYY - celebrating human diversity

## SUMMARY

Radio FMYY was born from the merger of two Japanese community radio stations in Kobe City, who came together after the Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake of 1995. The radio has sought to unite the community and to dispel prejudice by providing a voice for people of all ages, abilities and cultures. The station is hosted by the Takatori Community Centre, which brings together diverse groups united in their commitment to community improvement.

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Up until 1995, community radio in Japan was limited to very low power coverage that inhibited its potential role in community development. The Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake of 17 January 1995 took the lives of more than 6400 people of which the majority were from Kobe, the closest city to the earthquake epicenter. Among those directly affected, a high proportion were migrant workers, mainly from Korea and the Philippines, and refugees, mainly from Vietnam. As economically marginalized groups, they were particularly vulnerable after the earthquake. It became clear there was a need for accurate information and advice to be made available in their community languages.

Within two weeks of the earthquake, a low power community radio station for the Korean community in Osaka, FM Saran, relocated their broadcasting equipment to a location close to the epicenter, and started broadcasting in Korean and Japanese under the name FM Yoboseyo ("hello" in Korean). A few weeks later, with the help of FM Saran and FM Yoboseyo, a



second low power station was established to serve the Vietnamese community, many of whom lost not only their homes but also their jobs as a result of the earthquake destroying the local shoe factories. FM Yumen ("friendship" in Vietnamese) broadcast not only in Vietnamese, but also in Tagalog and English for the Filipino community. The main content was

earthquake information, music from their homeland, and entertainment.

The two mini-stations had a similar philosophy and, six months after the earthquake, they decided to join forces to form Radio FMYY as a place in which diverse communities could connect and minority voices could be heard. The two stations had been born from necessity in the aftermath of the earthquake, but to establish a long term operation they had to acquire a broadcasting licence and to build a permanent studio. One year after the earthquake struck, Radio FMYY was officially opened, located in the Takatori Relief Base, in the grounds of the Takatori Church. By this time Chinese had been added to the languages carried and, later, Portuguese for migrants from South America.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Multi-cultural and multi-language community radio
- Developed as a response to humanitarian disaster
- Serving migrants, refugees and marginalized groups
- Hosted by a multi-purpose community centre

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

— Takatori Community Centre (Center)  
<http://www.tcc117.org/en/>

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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Radio FMYY now broadcasts in eleven languages - Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Thai, Indonesian, Spanish, Portuguese, Ainu and English. There are around 150 volunteers involved and three paid staff. Ownership lies with the Takatori Community Centre, a non-profit organisation which developed out of the Relief Base, and whose mix of activities strengthens the station's social impact. The Centre comprises seven groups that are united by the goal to create a better community for all. Each group has a particular focus - senior citizens, people with disabilities, migrant workers and refugees. The station's programming policies encourage participation from other not-for-profit community-based organisations, some of whom have representation on the FMYY board.





# MOZAMBIQUE: community radio and election reporting

## SUMMARY

The community radio sector in Mozambique responded to political tensions on media reporting in the run up to elections in 2003 and 2004 by developing a Code of Conduct for Election Coverage. The Code was the result of extensive consultation within the community radio sector to build ownership and consensus. It sets an example of effective self-regulation and has contributed to fair and balanced election coverage of the main political parties.

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In the years preceding the 2003 municipal elections, the community radio sector in Mozambique grew rapidly, in part as a result of an active programme of development support and investment initiated by UNESCO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) within a broader initiative called the Media Development Project. The absence of legal or regulatory provisions on the role and responsibilities of community radio at election time became a subject of heated debate in parliament as politicians recognised that the new radio stations had quickly gained a strong following and had become a powerful voice of the people in both rural and urban communities. With presidential and national elections planned for 2004 there was a risk that political interference could roll back the gains made in community radio development unless the issue of election reporting was effectively addressed.

In response, the community radio sector 'Coordination Group', a forerunner to the community radio sector body, FORCOM, initiated a series of national consultations with all community radio actors. These consist of independent co-operative and community-based radio stations, church owned radio stations that are predominantly religious in character, and community-oriented stations owned by a public body, the Institution for Social Communication (ICS). The result was agreement on the ten rules that make up the Code of Conduct for Election Coverage, a code for self-regulation of the community radio sector during election periods. The rules were launched nationally with the involvement of the Director of the Government



Press Office (GABINFO), and provincially by the radios themselves.

During the 2003 local election campaign, the Media Development Project carried out a study on the application of the Code of Conduct for Election Coverage, and of the general climate surrounding community radio stations in three particular municipalities covered by the elections: Dondo, Chimoio and Cuamba. In practice, most of the radios followed the rules laid down in the Code with the exception of the state-owned stations which tended to comply with demands from the national political leadership to include additional coverage of the ruling FRELIMO party. According to the authors of the study, besides showing the strength of community

radio as a tool of social construction and thus a focus for attention of the contending forces in local elections, the initiative to develop the Code was well-timed and useful, as community radio stations were often caught between demands of opposing parties standing for election.

The content of the Code could be adapted for use in other African countries, however the study also argues for the importance of reflection and debate upon the existence of rules and/or other provisions that regulate the participation of community radio in electoral processes. The adoption and implementation of the Code in Mozambique as a self-regulatory instrument is in part a result of the process of consultation that built consensus and sector ownership.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Code of conduct for self-regulation of election reporting
- Developed through consultation within the community radio sector
- Assisted community radio stations to resist political pressure
- Strengthened fairness in coverage of main political parties

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

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# TIMOR-LESTE: Radio Rakambia - youth voices building a new country

## SUMMARY

Radio Rakambia is a student and youth led community radio station based in Dili, the capital of Timor-Leste. With a focus on peace, education and development, Radio Rakambia has assured young people's voices a central place in post-conflict reconstruction following Timorese independence in 1999. The station places particular emphasis on the promotion of literacy and multi-culturalism. Radio Rakambia has played a key role in the setting up of the Association of Community Radios of Timor-Leste (ARKTL) which represents the sector on issues of media law and regulation.

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The community radio stations of Timor-Leste have played a key role in the process of nation building and post-conflict reconstruction, none more so than Radio Rakambia, the voice of students and youth in Dili, the nation's capital.

Timor-Leste experienced violent conflict in the aftermath of the popular vote for independence from Indonesia in 1999 as anti-independence militias, backed by Indonesian forces, carried out a scorched earth campaign that destroyed lives and infrastructure and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. In the reconstruction process that followed, under United Nations administration, community radio development was given a priority in a country which had previously had no tradition of independent media. Radio Rakambia was established in 2001, with the support of APHEDA (Australian People for Health Education and Development Abroad), a trade union based aid agency.

Radio Rakambia emerged from recognition of the critical role of young people as a catalyst for change. Young people, particularly students are central in the radio station's management and have substantially contributed to its sustainability. Students are encouraged to join the radio station training courses and to get involved as volunteers, but the young people involved in Radio Rakambia also include those who have dropped out of schools and colleges, and for whom the radio station provides a means to re-engage. Youth activists and students are on the board and play a significant role in fundraising, organizing activities, such as special screenings of films to raise money for the station, and building a team of youth supporters through discussions on peace and conflict, music and sports. Although the station is partly funded by government and donor agencies, it also solicits advertising and charges for broadcasting community announcements as well as renting its studio, sound systems and music equipment.

In a country with over 50 per cent illiteracy, Radio Rakambia has placed a strong emphasis on education. It has also sought to ease racial tension and to promote cross-cultural understanding in the regions of Loro Munu and Loro Sae. Although its daily broadcasts of 15-16 hours are focused on Dili, the station also uses a mobile radio facility to reach out and cover community events in more remote parts of the country. This has

enabled it to build a community base in the rural villages, where it has been successful in promoting access to education and reducing conflict by providing accurate news and information as they did, following disturbances in 2006. Radio Rakambia has also developed a network with 15 other community radio stations to ensure a national voice for the sector on issues of media policy.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Student and youth led community radio station
- Voice for young people in nation building and development
- Focus on literacy, education, peace and conflict resolution
- Supported by government, donor agencies and self-financing

### REFERENCES AND LINKS

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