

# 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Promoting  
communication  
technology  
for a  
FAIRER WORLD



**BNNRC**

Bangladesh NGOs Network for  
Radio and Communication  
Special Consultative Status with the UN ECOSOC



- Our Voice Our Power
- Pioneering, Connecting and Empowering voices
- Engage community media for elimination of genderbased violence
- Promoting English Language Through Community Radio
- KHOLA JANALA - a program on legal issues of prisoners
- Interactive, audience-led governance program
- Sushasoner Sanglap-Dialogue on good governance
- Promoting Happy family through community radio

# OUR VOICE OUR POWER

Strengthening BNNRC and Mobilizing Stakeholders for Community Media  
& for Fellowships for Women Journalists

Project implemented under the support of **Free Press Unlimited (FPU)**

**[ Duration: January 2015- June 2015 ]**



BNNRC started its partnership with FPU in 2011 aiming to improve its organizational capacity which it has proposed to continue in 2015 as well. BNNRC believes that a capable and sustainable organization is very much required to work for achieving long-term vision. The objectives of the activities within the reporting period are as follows:

- (1) To strengthen BNNRC so that it is actively engaged and undertake innovative initiatives in lobbying and advocacy for improved legislation and law enforcement with regards to community media ,with special emphasis on CR-Trust Fund and Community TV Policy.*
- (2) To encourage more young skilled women to be enrolled in the media and journalism to work for the rural communities and to facilitate and contribute in creating an enabling environment for the young women to develop as professional community media journalists.*

To achieve the above objectives within the reporting period, BNNRC implemented the following activities through which it has mainly focused and invested FPU supports in organizational development, technical supports, young women fellowship and policy advocacy.

### **Description of results achieved and the activities implemented during the reporting period**

#### **Result Area - Technical Expertise of BNNRC Staffs improved**

One of the priority areas for BNNRC's strategy and development in the coming 5 years is to diversify its donor base. For that, the staff members need professional training and strengthening in fund raising and marketing of its products, services and achievements. Another area for development is planning – due to the increase in its portfolio, BNNRC needs support in improving the planning skill, both operational and financial, as well as long term and strategic. On 11-15 January 2015 all (13) BNNRC staffs received training on “Fund raising, Marketing and Planning” at BNNRC office. The Chief facilitator of the training was Ms. Anna Hristova, an international expert as referred by Free Press Unlimited. Dessi Damianova, FPU Program Manager, South Asia attended in the closing ceremony and handed over certificates to the participants of the training.

#### **The objectives of the training were as follows:**

- a) To improve the staff's understanding of the importance of an overall integrated fund raising & marketing strategy (linked to the overall strategy of the organisation)
- b) To provide skills in successful proposal writing
- c) To improve staff knowledge and skills in identifying appropriate funding opportunities
- d) Understanding the relation between fundraising, networking and marketing;
- e) To provide skills for successful marketing of BNNRC's products, services and achievements
- f) To improve the staff knowledge in operational, financial and long term (strategic) planning

#### **The trainer has covered the following main areas as contents during different sessions in 5-day training.**

- a) Overall strategic planning and development
- b) Successful proposal design and identifying appropriate funding opportunity
- c) Fundraising and acquisition & marketing
- d) Operational and financial planning

Besides this training, the staffs continued the Diploma in Journalism program in which they have been enrolled during the last July-August (2014) session. The objective of the course was to develop capacity of BNNRC staffs in the basic elements of Journalism in line with electronic media. The course has been offered by Bangladesh Institute of Journalism and Electronic Media (BIJEM), one of the reputed institutes of the country. The course content included: brief history of news and Journalism, techniques of writing feature and reports, techniques and methods of news editing, basic elements of reporting and journalism in Radio and Television.



### **Result Area - Govt.is pro-active for formulation of a CR-Trust Fund and undertaking of Community TV Installation Policy.**

Policy advocacy on CR Trust Fund continued during the reporting period and a draft concept note was prepared and submitted to Ministry of Information. As a broadcasting commission member, BNNRC has also been joining the commission meetings and providing effective inputs in finalizing the National Broadcasting Policy. The issues like the undertaking of community TV Installation Policy and formulation of CR-Trust Fund have been emphasized during the meetings.



## **Result Area- Exchange of Knowledge and lessons learned encouraged inclusive and diversified approach**

BNNRC CEO has joined Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum held on 1-3 July, 2015 at Macau University of Science & Technology; Macao. He was accompanying the delegation of honorable Information Minister of Bangladesh. The main Theme of the conference was "Evolution of Internet Governance: Empowering Sustainable Development". Over the 3 days, many interesting sessions have been put together from a diverse stakeholders coming from the Asia Pacific region. The sessions included: Cyber-security and Trust; Internet Economy, Inclusiveness and Diversity, Openness, Enhancing Multistakeholder Cooperation, Internet and Human Rights; Critical Internet Resources.

### ***Result Area: Knowledge materials updated, produced and shared***

During the time BNNRC continued exchange of its publications, findings of the reports with community media experts and practitioners at home and abroad. BNNRC has revised its brochure, updated and produced. 1500 brochures have been printed and distributed. At the same time the gender guideline has also been reviewed and reproduced. 1000 copies of the guideline have been printed.



## **Result area- Increased number of Young women professionals in community media and issues of rural women and children more reflected in journalism**

### ***Fellowship for Youth Women in Community Media and Journalism: 3rd Batch***

#### **Objectives:**

Being inspired by FPU's strategic guidance BNNRC started fellowship program for youth women in community media and journalism in the year 2013. In this reporting period it has completed its third batch. The objectives of the project were-

- To encourage more young women especially unprivileged/Dalit community's women in the media and journalism to work for the development of rural communities.
- To facilitate and contribute in creating an enabling environment for the young women to develop as professional community media journalists.

**A brief account of the Fellowship program implemented during the time 1 march to 30 June 2015 is described below:**

## Recruitment process:

In response to the “Call” through radio announcement and circulated in local college & university, 103 young women submitted their applications from the audience area of 16 CR stations in the country. There were some criteria for the candidates to submit the applications. A joint selection committee was formed by BNNRC representative and the representatives from respective Community Radio Stations. 40 young women were finally selected through a formal interview process. 35 young women have continued their fellowship, only five women could not continue for their personal problems. Please find below the list of the fellows who completed their assignment in 3rd batch:

SL	Radio Station	Name of the fellows	Total
01	Radio Padma	Surti Sing, Chobi Soren, Aduri Mardy	03
02	Radio Nalta	Anima Biswas, Dekha Das	02
03	Lokobetar	Sabrina Nishi, Mst. Lima	02
04	Radio Sagor Giri	Dilshad Gulabandan Nur, Parvin Akter	02
05	Radio Mahananda	Moutusy Chowdhury, Sonia Shil	02
06	Radio Mukti	Jinat Jabeen	01
07	Radio Chilmari	Monira Alam Mimi	01
08	Radio Jhenuk	Shukla Rani Pual, Mina Khatun	02
09	Krishi Radio	Tithi Mitro, Tania Akter	02
10	Radio Sundarban	Sumitra Munda, Shefali Munda, Tania Khatun, Krishna Sarkar	04
11	Radio Naf	Joya Paul Happy, Dagy Das, China Sharma	03
12	Borendra Radio	Rina Horduar, Shipu Murmu, Maria Hembrom, Sheuli Murmu	04
13	Radio Bikrampur	Nasrin Akter Sumi	01
14	Radio Sagar Dwip	Shilpi Rani Karmokar, Pakhi Rani Shil	02
15	Radio Meghna	Sathi Mojumdar, Rinku Rani Das, Anju Rani Das, Kakoli Rani Das	04
			35

## Orientation for fellows and mentors

Each fellow was attached to a senior level staff of community radio station who has been working as a mentor. Before going to start the assignment the fellows and mentors (attached to each fellow, representing the radio station) participated in a day long orientation workshop on “Fellowship for Young women in Community Media” held at each station level from 15 to 19th March 2015 .

The objective of the workshop was to provide orientation and a clear understanding of community media journalism and some technical knowledge regarding basic journalism, reporting formats and development issues. The day long orientation included sessions on basic journalism, radio news, radio reporting, techniques of radio Program presentation, feature for print media, interview techniques and formatting of radio news with special emphasis on women and children issues.



## Date of Orientation and the facilitators [at station level]

In each station, the sessions were facilitated by two prominent journalists/media personnel at local level: one was from electronic media (Radio and TV) –local office and another one from local print media.

SL	Name of the Station	Date of Orientation	No. of Participants	Facilitator
01	Radio Padma	19 March,2015	8	Dr. Prodip Kumar Pandey Lecturer of Mass Communication & Journalism, University of Rajshahi Mr. Shibli Noman, Bureau Chief , Jamuna Television,Rajshahi
02	Radio Nalta	18 March,2015	12	Md. Saheb Ali, City Correspondent, Bangladesh Betar & Sharifullah Kaiser Sumon, Executive Editor, Daily Kaler Chitra
03	Lokobetar	17 March,2015	10	Mr. Sohel Hafiz, District Correspondent, ntv & Daily Kaler Kantho
04	Radio Pollikantho	22 March,2015	10	Mr. Akmol Hossain , District Correspondent,Daily Prothom Alo & ABC Radio, Mr. Saleh Elahi, District Correspondent, Desh TV & Daily Bhorer Kagoj
05	Radio Sagor Giri	18 March,2015	12	Mr. SM Forkan Abu, Local Correspondent Mohona TV & Daily Jugantor and Mr. Sawmittro Chakroborty, local Correspondent, RTV & Daily Purbakon
06	Radio Mahananda	18 March,2015	17	Mr.Rabiul Hasan, District Correspondent,the Daily Star & Radio Today and Mr.Azizur Rahman, District correspondent,The Daily New Nation & Editor, Daily Gowra Bangla
07	Radio Mukti	17 March,2015	12	Mr. Hasibur Rahman, Bogra Bureau Chief, Independent TV & Daily Independent.
08	Radio Chilmari	18 March,2015	10	Md. Sahabuddin, District Correspondent, Bangladesh Betar & Mr. Safi Khan,Staff Reporter, Daily Prothom Alo.
09	Radio Jhenuk	18 March,2015	14	Mr. Saiful Mabud, District Correspondent , daily Kaler Kantho & Ms. Boishakhy Khatun, 1st femal Radio Joursnalist of Jhenidha
10	Krish Radio	17 March,2015	10	Mr. Saifuddin Sabuj, former Representative of Bangladesh of Radio Veritus (Philippine)
11	Radio Sundarban	17 March,2015	10	Mr. Humaun Kabir, President, Upazila Press Club & Mr. Moniruzzaman,Local Correspondent, Daily Kaler Kantho

12	Radio Naf	17 March,2015	12	Mr. Javed Iqbal, Cox'sBazar Correspondent, Channel 9 & Jahida Sultana, Staff Reporter, Daily Cox'sBazar Bani
13	Radio Bikrampur	16 March,2015	10	Mr. Mir Nasir Uddin, Senior Staff Reporter,Daily Janakantho and Mr. Nazrul Hasan, Correspondent, Bangladesh Biter
14	Borendro Radio	16 March,2015	18	Mr. Kais Uddin, Reporter, Channel I and Mr.Shafiq, Reporter, Jamuna TV
15	Radio Megna	15 March,2015	10	Mr. Kais Uddin, Reporter, Channel I and Mr.Shafiq, Reporter, Jamuna TV
16	Radio Sagor Dwip	18 March,2015	10	Mr. Eftekha Hossain, President of Hatia Press Club & Mr. Mahfuz Faruk, Community Radio Journalist

After having the orientation the fellows started work under the guidance of the mentors.

**Fellows Activity:** The fellows (of 3rd batch) broadcasted altogether 420 audio programs and prepared 280 reports for local newspaper within 4 months duration of the fellowship. A large number of the reports were published in local newspaper/print media..These programs and reports covered the issues like education of girl and children, their facilities and access to education, women empowerment, child marriage, mother & child's health, adolescent health, disability, transgender, ethnic, and dalits news and some success stories in local context. These reflected the present situation of the disadvantaged community, especially present lives of rural women and children. The fellows' activities have created some changes that can be mentioned as immediate outcome of the activity.



The mentors guided and constantly supervised the fellows to complete their tasks to produce audio programs and reports. Generally, the mentors were to support the fellows in some areas like giving them idea to select issues, assist to make weekly work plan, provide help to collect field level information and to contact different information sources at local level (like press club, print media, development organization, local administration, service center etc.) and give support to edit audio clips.

## PUBLICATION

The updated edition of Youth women in community media brochure (500 copies) has been published and distributed among different govt organization , Information ministry, public and private University ,Media Houses and different development organizations .Alongwith the project objectives, activities and outcomes the brochure introduced the fellows and mentors with name and photographs .



### Our voice our power:

12 Profiles of the 1st batch fellows have been captured in the Book. 500 copies have been printed in Bangla and English version. In the preface of the book Dessi Damianova, Program Manager, South Asia described briefly on the book. She wrote- "10 out of the 12 fellows are already employed in media, and some have even become station managers. On a broader level, their reporting brings many important issues and problems to light, acts as inspiration and empowerment and finally helps change a challenge social taboos and patterns that prevents women from flourishing and actively contributing to the overall development of their community, their village or their country."



i.) **Aduri Mardi**, fellow of Radio Padma: "When I worked at Radio Padma's office room with a separate computer then I felt that I was a part of this office! It was a dream to me. At least one media organization owned me where the society neglected us all the time. I am really grateful to fellowship program. I have learnt lot of things like selection of issues, script writing, recording, editing, news presentation, computer operation and even communicating with the others. I am also aware about our rights."



ii) **Rekha Das**, fellow of Radio Nalta, is a married woman from Dalit community. When she has joined the fellowship program she didn't have any support from her family even neighbors commented rough. Therefore she had to fight a long battle to prove that women are also able to be a journalist. Fellowship program gave her the opportunity to do something for her community



iii) **Sonia Shil**, fellow of Radio Mahananda, "Earlier I was an ordinary girl who belonged to an unprivileged community and my identity was limited within family and kith & clan, but now 'Sonia Shil' is familiar as a radio reporter in our community. This fellowship enriched my skill and capability to produce a report both for radio and print media. It also gave me a new identity & honor"



iv) **Kakoli Rani Das**, fellow of Radio Meghna: She wanted to raise awareness in her community through information. To the way of her desire, the fellowship program played a role. The fellowship program gave her an opportunity to come in contact with Radio Meghna and to become a radio broadcaster.



## Mentors

**Selim Shariar, Radio Nalta,** ``Radio Nalta's fellows covered various issues in her reports and programs. Those were women trafficking, dowry, child marriage, education of girl and children, child labor, labor discrimination, reproductive health etc. Those not only increased their acceptance in community radio audience but also played a vital role to change people's thinking and community's livelihood. Really I feel proud to be their mentor. I strongly believe if the program continues and implements properly it will create a certain impact on the status of women in our community.



**Samia Akhter, Radio Mahananda:** The women fellowship program empowers the rural women. I am the living example. I'm now working as a Producer of "Ajker Chapainawabgonj", a news based program of Radio Mahananda. I have started here as a fellow in the 1st batch. My present status/ position has been achieved through my experience and skill that I have earned through 1st batch fellowship program. My role was of a mentor in the 3rd batch. It's a big reward for me. Before joining the fellowship the fellows (3rd batch) were very poor in their knowledge and skill. But now they are good at to produce report both for radio and newspaper. They are now dreaming to work in main stream media.



### Award received:

As a result of continuous support through mentoring and capacity building Community radio stations are now gaining attention and recognitions. They are getting prestigious awards and recognition both at national and local level.

### The Tale of Sumitra Rani Munda describes us how change takes place in the life of a young girl from the Dalit Community near Sundarban

"Being a motherless child I was grown up in a farmer's family without any love or affluence. Yet, I have been trying to lead a better life with my father and younger sister. It was shocking while people around me started ridiculing because of my lower cast identity. Once I asked to the Creator why I was given this life if there was no dignity in it! Possibly God responded to my agony. He gave me patience, if he did not alter my cast. This is why I can continue at the same time, with my family, in caring of my young sister, with my studies, working as a part-time teacher in an NGO school and as a Fellow in Radio Sundarban as well." Sumitra Rani was describing her life over a mobile call, although the electronic voice could not conceal the inner strength of her determination."



Sumitra is the member of a listeners club in Borobari, a remote village of Koyra Upazila under Khulna district. As a club member, she is a regular listener of Radio Sundarban. One day she noticed the advertisements on fellowship. She applied and after successfully completing all the stages became a fellow of the station. But, here she had to face the same disregard! Many of the colleagues undermined me for my Munda identity and they laughed at me. Although, it shocked me but I did not lose my enthusiasm. I have tried to be associated with them and learned as far as possible. Because; journalism is a very new and challenging profession to me. I have learned many things during my fellowship tenure. For example: content selection for Radio news and case study, news collection at field level, interviewing, audio editing, computer operation etc. I have prepared 08 news bulletin, 08 case studies and 08 exclusive report/feature for the local news papers on the issues related to education, health facilities, livelihood options, culture and different rights related to women, children and my Munda Community. At the initial stage, I had to face many problems, villagers and the officials of different agencies did not want to give information, they laughed at me. But since I was continuing with confidence, I won over them. Once they ridiculed me, but now they praised me and appreciated my work. But dignity is much more demanding to Sumitra than praise or appreciation. Sumitra said-"I have no worry that I am poor, but humiliation is very painful to me. My confidence level has been raised through working with fellowship program. I can talk to any people now, can interact with anyone. Man pays their regards for me. My institutional education and educational qualification could not give me what I have gained through 4-month fellowship program. I express my gratitude for BNNRC for the opportunity it has created for me. It has changed my life

Sumitra Rani Munda, Fellow [3rd batch] - Radio Sundarban FM 98.8

## Result Area- BNNRC no more requires rent the studio and office house:



BNNRC has already paid the final installment to the developer for its own studio and office house. The registration has been completed on 24th June which has legally ensured the ownership of BNNRC. The target month to shift to the new building is November 2015.



**Result Area : Active BOT members :** The BOT members met thrice during the last 06 months. They have discussed many important issues and some key policy decisions like reorganization of BNNRC BoT portfolio, review BNNRC Flat deed, strategic planning of BNNRC etc. The BoT members active engagement contributed to governance of the organization.



## Challenged context in which the project took place

Between January and June 2015, the political situation of the country was extremely confrontational. The country-wide blockade and strike called by the BNP led 20-Party Alliance on January 5, 2015, over the controversial January 5, 2014 Parliamentary Elections created a huge political crisis. Incidents of bomb attacks, vandalizing and setting fire to vehicles continued during hartals and blockades. Many ordinary people, including women and children, were killed and injured due to these attacks. The government and the 20-Party Alliance were blaming each other for these incidents. The BNP led 20-Party Alliance withdrew blockades and hartals from March 29, 2015 so that the City Corporation elections in Dhaka and Chittagong could be held on April 28, 2015. On April 28, 2015 elections were held in Dhaka North, Dhaka South and Chittagong City Corporations that were again fraught with ousting polling agents of the opposition political parties, capturing polling centres, casting fake votes, obstructing journalists from entering the polling centres and attacks on them and other forms of violence. Among them, 689 persons were burnt in petrol bombs and arson attacks during blockades and hartals of which 69 persons succumbed to their burn injuries. During the time 161 incidents occurred as Journalists' harassment. 7 journalists on-duty were injured by cocktail blast, three were assaulted, five were arrested and 16 were allegedly harassed by law enforcing agencies. Furthermore, eight local newspapers were shut down. Violence against women was widespread in Bangladesh. Between January –June 2015, a significant number of women were the victims of rape, dowry related violence, acid attacks and sexual harassment.

There were internal challenges for community media growth in the country. Although growing, the sector is yet to suffer numerous challenges and threats. Lack of journalistic skills and having no sufficient knowledge in development issues and Right to Information still keep many journalists and citizens distant from quality and professionalism. Despite the fact on the positive growing of media sector in rural areas, more radio stations and other

community media outlets like community television and community films are needed to fight against the “Media darkness” in rural areas.

The related stakeholders are yet to be sensitized regarding this! The Parliament has passed the Broadcasting Policy and the Broadcasting Commission has been formed. There are criticisms around the Policy and the commission now going on whether it will meet up the demands of the sector! There is a persistent lack of lobby and advocacy on behalf of journalists, and there are few mechanisms for support to those that have become victims of violence (physical or moral). That leads to, among others, increased self-censorship among the journalists, unwillingness to conduct investigative reporting and subsequently low quality of information and quality reporting. Although government, through its Information Commission, is trying hard, the act of RTI is still far from being implemented properly. There is too little awareness among the media and journalists how to use this particular legislation to seek information especially for investigative reporting. The general public also lacks awareness how to use this law to request transparency of government decisions.

Sustainability is also a growing concern for the community radio to retain their staffs and to continue in an uninterrupted way. Therefore, still much to do in supporting the growth of community radio sector.

The project activities have taken place within this turbulent situation.

### **Challenges for fellowship :**

Limited scopes to be engaged in media and journalism for the educated Young women caused a large part [nearly half] of new generation remain excluded from being an effective workforce in rural media sector. This results very minimum or no reflection of the situation of disadvantaged rural women's community in the media and journalism. This crisis has created the context for encouraging the entrance of women in the media with the development agenda.

It was a great challenge to engage the youth women from dalit/unprivileged community with community media through fellowship program. They were not aware of the potentials of this program. There was strong obstruction from the parents and family. But finally, 23 dalit/unprivileged women out of 35 women fellows completed their fellowship successfully. This is the first time initiative in our country to connect the dalit/unprivileged group has been connected with community media for the first time in the country. The experience of facing challenges has been reflected in the following feedbacks of some of the fellows.

# Pioneering, Connecting & Empowering Voices for Change [Strengthening Community Radio in Bangladesh to Fight Poverty and Promote Development]



**FREE  
PRESS  
UNLIMITED**

Promoting  
communication  
technology  
for a  
FAIRER WORLD



**BNNRC**  
Bangladesh NGOs Network for  
Radio and Communication  
NGO in Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic & Social Council

## Pioneering, Connecting & Empowering Voices for Change

### [Strengthening Community Radio in Bangladesh to Fight Poverty and Promote Development]

The contract (DCI-NSAPVD/2012/283-659) between FPU and European Union was signed in December 2012. The contract start date was set as of 1 February 2013 to allow sufficient time for the authorities in Bangladesh to register the project. In February 2013 FPU, BNNRC and representatives of community radio stations held an inception meeting in Dhaka. The actual activities started later than initially planned due to the rapidly deteriorating political situation in the country. Between late February and December 2013 the country was at a standstill due to frequent blockades, strikes and political unrest.

On application at the latter half of the year, in an addendum European Union has extended the period of the project up to May 2015. The calculated total project period was 28 months, with an extension of more 04 months. The extended time was dedicated to complete a bulk of activities, which was rescheduled on the context of conflicting political situation of the country. The activities included: training, awareness raising campaign, publications, and exchange visits among the radio stations. An external consultant-Rehanuddin Raju conducted an assessment of the training activities. Another community radio expert Mr. Ashish Sen has done an evaluation on overall project activities. The closing ceremony of the project was organized on 28th May 2015.

The stakeholders of the project were: Staffs and volunteers of 16 community radio stations, Audiences of community radio stations across Bangladesh—approximately 30 million people and other stakeholders including national and local government actors, national and local level media, non-governmental and development partners.

The narratives of the activities implemented during the year 2014 have been described in earlier reports. Please find below a brief description of the activities implemented in 2015, upto the closing of the project:

#### Follow Up Training for CR stations staff and volunteers (November & December 2014, March 2015):

The follow up training for the 16 CR stations was planned for September 2014. However, due to the unstable political situation, the frequent strikes, blockades and street violence, the training was rescheduled for later in the year. The second reason for the rescheduling was that the Baseline Study was ongoing in September, and findings and recommendations from the study had to be incorporated in the next training program. Before the training program for the follow up was fixed, the results from the Baseline study were considered, as well as separate mid-term training needs assessment was conducted by BNNRC at CR station level and in the field.

The table below shows a summary of the adjusted training needs per radio station:

CR Station	Training Needs			Recommendations/ Suggestions
	Area (of Skill)	Specific Needs	Example	
Radio Padma	news collection, interviewing, producing feature and magazine	-News Focus -Interview Techniques -Production of feature and magazine	-Which aspect should be emphasized if we prepare a report on public toilet situation of Rajshahi? -How to take interview of Important Personalities/-public figure? -How to produce good features on the lives of persons with disabilities?	How to produce good drama? Why: It fulfils the audience demand in a better way. How to do better field work and group work? Why: In that way the station will get more skilled staff and quality of the program will be Improved.

			-How to produce awareness raising magazine programs to prevent overuse of formalin in vegetables and fruit?	
Radio Nalta	News collection, interviewing, editing, participation of grassroots community people, integration of persons with disabilities	-Which news to be picked up for community (on community interest) - How to integrate the grassroots community and persons with disabilities -How to do good recording and editing	-News selection, interviewing, recording and editing seem difficult to me. - Audience does not want to be mobilized.	-Issue based program production and editing techniques -Office Management
Loko betar	news selection, gathering opinion, mainstreaming the marginalized community, issue-based reporting, editing	What are the elements of good News? Techniques to produce issue-based reporting How to focus on main theme during audio recording and editing?		Script writing skill and produce quality program to address the appropriate issue within an affordable time frame.
Radio Pollikantha	spot news/direct program, interview techniques, program production and presentation, technical editing, audience research	news and present directly from the spot. -What are the interview techniques? -How to mix sound and music(to make it more entertaining) with the program - To know how to present program catering the audience demands		More attractive news Presentation. Technical aspects of editing
Radio Sagargiri	editing, trouble shooting, presentation techniques, participation of grassroot people in programming	-Technical skill for sound editing - Trouble shooting and small level maintenance of equipment	-Sometimes program producer cannot match with technical producer in editing of a program, they differ. -The whole team becomes dependent	Hands on training to know more about the structure of a more creative program format.

		<p>-Techniques of presentation for special types of programs.</p> <p>-Techniques to include the ethnic and other minority community in programmes</p>	<p>on technical producer even in the case of small level repairing and maintenance.</p> <p>-Sometimes traditional presentation is boring to the audience.</p> <p>-Ethnic Community does not show interest to participate.</p>	
Radio Mahananda	program, news, technical skills and media marketing	<p>Editing,Recording,- Mixing skills,Media marketing strategy and skills</p> <p>-how to collect advertisement</p>	Media management, marketing, financing of radio station	Develop Master Trainer for trouble shooting in each station. Development of Advertisement Policy proper use of advertisement in radio stations.
Radio Mukti	script writing, sound editing, interviewing, trouble shooting ,audience mobilization, participation of ethnic community and persons with disabilities in the program	Script writing skill focusing on particular theme/issue, interview techniques, sound editing and mixing, computer skills		Equipment and Training Support
Radio Chilmari	script writing, news preparation and increase the audience	How to attract the listeners by informative news and attractive programs		To know more on quality news and program production and their technical aspects.
Radio Jhenuk	sound editing and mixing techniques (appropriate software use)	<p>How to upload content to website?</p> <p>How to produce development news and program?</p> <p>How to make the radio stations financially viable?</p>		To get an idea on modern and updated version of software and equipment for community radio station.
Krishi Radio	news selection, prepare attractive interview, technical repairing/trouble shooting, produce news reflecting the lives of ethnic community	News selection, Interview Techniques, Technical skills on installation and operation of radio equipment, how to research the audience needs viable?	<p>How to prepare News on delicate topics like Hartal (strike), blockade, violence, killing, rising of commodity price etc.</p> <p>Interview skills</p> <p>How to handle the essential equipment.</p> <p>How to start programs with the Rakhaine community-an ethnic community nearby to the Radio station</p>	Improve the quality of sound and editing. Arrange training for every staff in the Radio station.

Radio Naf	Concept and techniques on making new programs, Editing, Presentation and interviewing	How to develop new programs, edit and broadcast? How to make good presentation of a program? How to deal with the persons who are nonresponsive to the interview?	Sometimes important persons do not want to give interview	Making Programs on contemporary issues New and advanced level system on sound recording and adjustment
Radio Bikrampur	Program Production Editing Presentation Fact findings from the spot/field Reporting Voice modulation	program and broadcast live from the spot? Sound, Music mixing Techniques to ask questions during interview Script writing, collecting photographs Coordination Variation in voice use (modulation)	Cannot identify which component should get the priority during making a magazine program. Sometimes the respondents are not inspired to give answers to the questions of an interview.	Organize training on trouble shooting to solve small problems (repairing and maintenance). Organize Training on Photography
Borendra Radio	Sound Editing Interviewing	How to link one segment with the other by using sound. How to select appropriate question for an interview		Increase the number of participants,so that this professional sector will grow rapidly.
Radio Sagardwip	Program production, Editing,Reporting, Interviewing	(The station is) under process to go on-air		Hands-onTraining, Training on Archive Management
Radio Meghna	Program production, news making, presentation and technical aspects of radio including editing software handling.			(The station is) under process to go on-air

The above mid-term training needs assessment helped to make the follow up capacity building program more practical and hands-on. The assessment was conducted in consultation with the international trainer/expert Hans Noortman, and the findings were used to prepare the follow up training schedule and program accordingly.

The follow up training was organised in 3 clusters for 5 CR stations each, as one of the main recommendations of the mid-term training assessment, as well as the reports of the trainers, was to have smaller groups to allow for more practical assignments.

Cluster 1 and cluster 2 trainings were organised in November and December 2014. Cluster 3 training (for (Radio Bikrampur, Radio Sagorgiri, Radio Pollikontho and Radio Naf) was rescheduled for March 2015 in Munshiganj (after permission was received for budget-neutral contract extension of the project activities until 31 May 2015).

The main objective of the objectives of the training workshop is to improve the radio producer skills in gathering and selecting information, producing program, news and development drama and engaging the audience in journalism and educational programming in line with the needs they have expressed during need assessment.



The main objective of the follow up training was to improve the radio producers' skills in gathering and selecting information, producing programs, news and development drama and engaging the audience in journalism and educational programming in line with the needs they have expressed during need assessment.

The trainer was again Hans Noortman, as he has conducted the previous skills enhancement workshops. He was strongly appreciated by the participants for his commitment and expertise, as well as training approach and style.

The choice to work with him again, also in combination with the local co-trainer Manjur Ahmed, was in line with the continuity of the training approach and the recommendations and observations of the training participants during previous trainings. Even though the advantages of working with international experts are many, translation proved to be a challenge, especially when it comes to hands-on training and many practical assignments (including recording of dummy programs). Language and building local training capacity were also some of the reasons to work continuously with local experts as co-trainers.

The follow-up training program was identical in terms of concept for each cluster, but specific parts were tailor-made to ensure the training needs of the participating stations in each different cluster are met. It was not always possible to group stations on the basis of their level of capacity, as the location also needed to be considered when forming the clusters. One recurring challenge, also expressed repeatedly in the trainers' reports, was the different level of participants in one group, which makes it difficult to work with the group as a whole. This necessitated breaking the groups into smaller sub-groups, which required a lot of extra time and efforts. The difference in the level of participants results mainly from the fact that most of the CR stations have relatively high turnover and work primarily with volunteers. As the stations are not strongly financially independent, the number of fixed staff is limited, and many work with more volunteers (which change frequently) than with permanent staff.

In terms of topics covered, the follow up training in skills enhancement included sessions on radio news, interview techniques, storytelling (local stories), script writing, balanced reporting, problems in involving listeners, radio drama, use of sound & music and how to make programs attractive. The workshop also discussed the challenges of radio producers and their performance.

### **Follow up Training Contents Outline**

Theory & Practice: What is news? What is relevant news for CR? Challenges/problems in news collection. Prepare interview, going outside, recording interview

#### **EDUCATION-TELL A STORY**

- Exercise: 'radio is not good at transferring information' - news stories attract your listener
- watch videos story telling
- Emotional component - main character(s) / central question - examples
- scripting: how to build a story, using central question

#### **PROBLEMS IN COLLECTING AND SELECTING INFORMATION**

- Balanced reporting
- Problems in involving listeners - listeners' groups/call inn/diaries.....
- Advice on structure, storytelling, sound design, etc...

## RADIO DRAMA

- When to use drama / weaknesses and strengths, main character, plots, basic 'rules', use of sound and music Involving your listeners, local stories, local recording, local actors, influencing story line. (sharing experiences)

## MAKING THE PROGRAM ATTRACTIVE

- Presentation - where do you put what info?, presenter as story teller
- Presenter/reporter- how to use your voice
- Assignment presentation
- teasing your audience

The training approach was highly interactive and hands-on, giving emphasis on practical demonstration and ways to make theory into practice.

## Training and Skill Enhancement for CR stations at Station Level (February – May 2015)

Considering the results of the cluster trainings from 2013 and 2014, the recommendations and observations of the participants during the evaluations sessions, remarks from trainers, as well as BNNRC and FPU observations, the extension period from February to May 2015 was used for intensive on-the spot trainings at the locations of different community radios stations. The deteriorating political situation also prevented the remaining trainings to be clustered at central level, as many participants found it increasingly difficult to move during the frequent blockades and insecurity.

The table below shows a summary of the general trainings at central conducted by international and local trainers, that took place between February and May 2015, including location, topic of training, number of participants and participating stations.

Title	Content	Date & Location	Participants & stations	Experts/Trainers
Orientation course on "Basic Accounting at Community Radio Stations"	General guideline provided to the facilitators who will work as trainer for accounting at CR stations: general CR principles, CR management and financial aspects, relationship of CR with BNNRC, fund flow etc.	14 March, Dhaka	6	Safiqur Rahman Chowdhury Chartered Accountant
Gender Responsive & Gender Sensitive Communication	What are gender-different dimensions of gender, gender discrimination, role of CR in gender responsive communication-gender in different levels – management of CR station, the program and news production.	4-9 April, Dhaka	22 representatives from 16 community radio stations	Svetlana Dimitrova, international expert Gender Equality and Communication skills
Orientation on 'Gender Responsive Communication for Community Radios'	General guideline provided to the Facilitators who will work as trainer for gender sensitive communication at CR stations: What are Gender-different dimensions of gender, gender discrimination, role of Community Radio in gender responsive communication gender in different levels – management of CR station, the program and news production.	22 April, Dhaka	18 (Female-5 and Male-13) gender specialist and trainers from different nongovernment organizations	Ranjan Karmaker, Steps Towards Development -Knowledge Center and the renowned Gender Expert Rekha Saha, Gender expert and women human rights Activist.

	Content	Date & Location	Participants & stations	Experts/Trainers
Training workshop for the trainers on "Community Radio Drama in Social Transformation"	Role of community radio as community media, coverage and limitations of CR ,drama, radio drama and daily soap,community radio drama and daily soap for social transformation,difference between drama and daily soap, developing script, production,casting ,recording,editing,stand by post production,finalization of drama audio	25 April, Dhaka	11 trainers from Community Radio stations	Renowned drama personalities of the country- Solaiman Khoka and Pantho Shahriar

A total of 116 training workshops at station level (on-the job trainings) were conducted for 1668 participants from 16 community radio stations. Below some photo impression of the different trainings and training topics:



Equipment Provided to CR Stations: One of the important aspects of support to community radio stations is providing necessary equipment according to

their needs and demands. Equipment support aimed to increase the efficiency of the station and thus improve the quality of the program produced and broadcast. The equipment included desktop, laptop, console machine, printer, modem, camera and voice recorder.

16	Financial support by European Union and Technical Support by Free Press Unlimited, provided by BNNRC													
	Equip	No	Equip	No	Equip	No	Equip	No	Equip	No	Equip	No	Equip	No
	Desktop	4	Laptop	18	Console	11	Printer	16	Modem	16	Camera	16	Voice Recorder	68



**Program Production and Distribution:** Under constant guidance and intensified supervision the target of producing and broadcasting more than 1200 radio programs have been achieved. From February 2014 to January 2015 the station staff and volunteers produced nearly 900 programs (more specifically, 907 programs were produced).

The general program formats are news and current affairs, informative programs, talk shows, magazine-type programs, local entertainment and music. Specific program formats are public service announcements, personal life stories, village debates, weekly forum (weekly phone with panel discussions).

The program topics included disaster prevention and management, impact of climate change, women rights (including education, women health, child care and employment), local governance, land rights, food production and security, farming and fishing, opportunities for starting small businesses etc.

The programs produced by the community radio stations are designed to meet the information needs of the target audiences, and using the skills acquired during the first series of trainings.

Each of the radio stations customized their programs to fit the interests of the general and specific audiences in each region, taking into account the area-specific context, experience and dialect. BNNRC officials provided guidance to the program producers by continuous field visit and follow up.

**Capacity Building of BNNRC staff:** In the project period (February 2014 to May 2015), a number of capacity building trainings and coaching for BNNRC staff took place, ranging from training on Gender Sensitive Reporting and Governance, to Financial Management & Accounting, Fundraising, Marketing and Planning, Radio News Formats and Production, Story Telling and Financial Sustainability for Community Media. Both BNNRC and FPU partners agreed to invest even more efforts and resources (and use some of the under expenditure on different budget items) to strengthen BNNRC staff and management in different areas in view of the general sustainability of the organization, as well as of the activities and very positive results achieved with this particular project. The table below provides details of the training efforts undertaken (during 2015, up to May) to strengthen the capacities of BNNRC staff:

Sl #	Name of the course (Training/Orientation)	Date	Duration	Facilitating organization/Trainer	Results
1.	Fund Raising, Marketing and Planning	All(13) BNNRC staffs Marketing and Planning	11-15 January 2015 at BNNRC office	Ms. Anna Hristova, an international expert + Dessi Damianova, FPU Program Manager, South Asia	Theory and practical tools are in place to apply in program development and progress monitoring.
2.	Sustainability strategy for Community Radio Stations in Bangladesh	2 BNNRC staff + participants from 14 CR stations	17 th February – 20 February 2015 YWCA Auditorium in Dhaka	N. Ramakrishnan, Nitesh Anand, Venu Arora, Leonea Fernandez	Theoretical considerations are better known, tools and methods are available to monitor progress in achieving sustainability of the station
3.	Gender Responsive and Gender Sensitive Communication for Community Media	04 BNNRC staffs+ participants from 14 community radio stations in Bangladesh	04-08 April 2015 YWCA Auditorium in Dhaka	Svetlana Dimitrova, international expert in Gender Equality and Communication skills	Knowledge on critical aspects of gender analysis – initiatives taken for achieving gender sensitivity and responsiveness within the program and the organization.

Additionally to the capacity building trainings, workshops and intense mentoring and coaching, BNNRC received some equipment support – laptops, combined scanner, printer and copy machine, as well as some digital recorders.

**Financial Sustainability Strategy for Community Media:** The process of developing a comprehensive sustainability strategy for community media started already in October 2014 with a thorough selection procedure of a competent international organisation in the field of community media, which could be involved in working with CR stations in Bangladesh to develop a common sustainability strategy. A Terms of Reference was developed by FPU and BNNRC and the Indian organisation Ideosync, specialised in community media development and communication for social change and working for more than 10 years on capacity building in the CR sector, was selected. The first phase of developing the strategy started with a 4-day workshop in Dhaka from 17 to 20 February 2015. Participants included community radio staff from 14 community radio stations in Bangladesh. The workshop was held to help CR stations in Bangladesh develop an actionable sustainability plan addressing the key challenges faced by them in sustaining their operations.

In order to help stations develop an operational sustainability plan, trainers introduced a self assessment guide and work plan template wherein stations could assess themselves, discuss and decide activities to be undertaken to improve current practices. Participants worked in groups, attempting different sections of the self-assessment tool and made presentations regarding their areas for improvement. In the months March to April, each station presented a sustainability plan tailored to the specific needs and context. After intensive coaching, communication and support, Ideosync developed a comprehensive strategy.

The strategy document is the result of an intensive five day training workshop with fourteen operational community radio stations in Bangladesh, a rigorous mentorship program that lasted four months and in collaboration with the Bangladesh NGO Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC). The document is also based on an in depth desk research of existing international work on indicators and parameters for sustainability of Community Radio.

**Awareness Raising Campaigns:** In May BNNRC conducted an intensive awareness raising campaign at station level with at least 4 information events (debates, discussions and seminars) at the location of each of the 14 (operational) radio stations. A total of 81 awareness raising events were organized where 3043 participants attended. The main topics focused on the use by citizens and the general public of Right to Information Act when requesting more information on distribution of local budgets, delivery of services, countering corruption practices, local governance etc.



**Closing Conference:** The project closing conference was organised on 28 May 2015 at the IDB Conference Room in Dhaka. More than 150 guests were present, including government agencies and ministries, media, NGOs, CR stations, BNNRC, FPU, EU Delegation in Dhaka, Dutch Embassy in Dhaka etc. Special guests were the Information Minister Mr. Hasanul Haq Inu, Mr. Martuza Ahmed (Secretary at the Ministry of Information), the Director General of Bangladesh National Radio Kazi Akhtar Uddin Ahmed, Mr. Frédéric Maduraud, Minister Counselor, Head of Political, Economic, Trade, Press and Information Section at the European Union Delegation to Bangladesh and Mr. Henrick van Asch van Wijck, First Secretary of Political and Economic Affairs at the Dutch Embassy in Dhaka. In their speeches, both the EU Minister Counselor Mr. Frédéric Maduraud and the First Secretary of the Dutch Embassy Mr. Henrick van Asch called on the Bangladesh government to do more to protect freedom of expression and take measure to punish the perpetrators of violence and brutal attacks against media and journalists in the country.

On his part, the Minister of Information Mr. Hasanul Haq Inu announced that the Bangladesh government will consider allowing limited commercial advertising for the CR stations and will establish a community radio fund as steps towards ensuring financial sustainability of the sector. He also announced the intent to have community radio stations in each of the 488 upazilla's of the country.

A photography exhibition was also organized at the program premise highlighting the achievements of the project. Every radio stations highlighted their achievement through three photos. The achievement includes technical assistance to explore young women for taking and shaping journalism profession, highlighting voices of voiceless and marginalized like Dalit, rural women, children, disaster affected peoples etc. in terms of listeners and producers.

The closing conference was widely covered by the national broadcast and print media, including the TV stations ATN Bangla, Bangla Vision, BTV, Channel I, Mohona TV and the newspapers Prothom alo, New Nation, Alokito Bangladesh and Natunbarta.

### **Materials Produced:**

The following materials were produced during the project period:

1. A Handbook on Community Radio: 1500
2. Accounts Guideline-for community radio financial management: 500
3. Guideline for community radio drama: 500
4. Curricula for Training in different aspects of community radio: 1000
5. Handbook on Community Radio & RTI: 1000
6. Community Radio Continuous Improvement Toolkit: A toolkit for Internal Governance-and Self-monitoring :1000
7. Achieving Sustainability in community radio-self Assessment Tool: 600
8. Newsletter on Community Media: 14000
9. Dedicated website

The materials have been published as pdf files on the dedicated website ([www.communitymediabd.net](http://www.communitymediabd.net)), as well as distributed as hard copies to different and various stakeholders – CR stations, general public, government institutions and ministries, experts, students and lecturers, intentional organization, local and central government officials, media and journalists, local trainers and resources persons etc.

Additionally, during the 28-months implementation period, BNNRC has collected 140 case studies of outcome and impact on target groups from all 16 CR locations. The stories have been printed in Bangla

**External Evaluation of EU-FPU-BNNRC Partnership Project:** In February 2015, FPU and BNNRC started the process of selecting an external evaluator to conduct the final evaluation of the action. An international consultant and expert on community media from India was chosen to perform the final evaluation. The objectives of the evaluation were:

- a) to measure and document the results and impact achieved by the project—both intended within the project framework and unintended
- b) to gain an understanding of what strategies were most effective in achieving the project results and contributing to impact
- c) to measure the sustainability and likelihood of replicability of the project interventions
- d) to provide recommendations for improvement of future similar actions

The evaluation was performed in April and May and included desk study and field visit. The consultant Mr. Ashish Sen was also invited to the final conference on 28 May 2015 in Dhaka to present his (then) preliminary findings. The evaluation was conducted following a participatory, inclusive and evidence-based approach, and using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The instruments administered in collecting data included structured questionnaires. Interviews were carried out allowing for flexibility in modifying the questions depending on the responses.

Below is a summary of some the main findings and recommendations

## Findings: Effectiveness

### Training

In substantial measure, the effectiveness of training activities lay in its mixed approach combining both top-down and bottom-up processes and its participative design. While the initial training in 2013-2014 was more centralized and structured by the implementing partners, the period between February and May 2015 saw training responding to the needs as articulated by the community radio stations. This was effective in building local resources, management and ownership. The training was comprehensive and covered all aspects related to program and management of production, program formats, new media as well as the philosophy and measurement of community radio and deepening the sustainability of the sector. The training would also appear to have been effective in promoting awareness related to audience feedback and listening habits.

Notwithstanding the effectiveness of the training in terms of increase in awareness, the workshops also specified the critical need for urgently overcoming these shortcomings. There remains a need for a more detailed study on mapping audiences, listening habits and engagement with the community radio stations.

### Programs

Secondary data confirms that the programs produced by the community radio stations met the information needs of the target audience. The topics of the programs covered a wide range of issues including development and poverty eradications in keeping with the specifications of the project outcomes. They also included disaster prevention and management, impact of climate change, women's rights to education, health, childcare and employment, local governance, land rights, food production and security, farming and fishing, opportunities of starting small businesses, etc.

### Participation of Women and the Marginalized

The training and program productions efforts along with the awareness campaign initiatives had positive fallouts in terms of participation of the women and the marginalized sections of the society. However, substantial work remains to be done before parity is achieved.

### Role of BNNRC: Strengthening BNNRC's Capacity

The BNNRC's organizational and functional capacities were substantially strengthened by the training on Project Management, Monitoring & Evaluation, Effective Report Writing, Learning Need Assessment, Financial Management, and Office Management. Its credible and demonstrable credentials effectively contributed towards providing the specified services to the target groups in a timely and efficient manner. The data on sustainability would reinforce that the project was also effective in consolidating sustainability. Finally, the effectiveness of the project was also rooted in the collaborative and close working relationship between the implementing partners - the BNNRC and the FPU. While both partners have long associational relationship built on strengthening community radio in Bangladesh, their respective competencies and skill sets worked well complementing to each other. While the FPU provided access to professional and financial resources, the BNNRC used the strength of its local networks. The BNNRC's strength of networking with community radio stakeholders inside and outside Bangladesh was also leveraged as a result of the project. This, in turn, contributed to its effectiveness.

## Findings: Efficiency

Despite a short timeline of only 28 months, the project was successful in delivering its target outputs in terms of training and program production. The outputs included:

**Program Production:** 1,264 programs against a target of 1,200 were produced and broadcast across the community radio stations.

**Capacity Building:** A total of 1,980 participants attended 115 programs at central, regional and radio station levels during the project period from February 2013 to May 2015.

**Equipment Support:** All 16 community radio stations were provided with appropriate equipment support based on their needs to ensure that they improved their program production and broadcast standards. The BNNRC was also provided with high configuration laptops, digital broadcasting camera, and photocopy cum- scanner machine.

•**Raising Awareness of Key Advocacy Issues:** Fourteen community radio stations individually conducted seminars and discussions at their stations to promote awareness of access to information, transparency and accountability.

**Raising Awareness of Key Advocacy Issues:** Fourteen community radio stations individually conducted seminars and discussions at their stations to promote awareness of access to information, transparency and accountability.

## Findings: Impacts

Given that the project period has been completed recently in May 2015, it would be premature to determine its long-term impact. However, the findings from available data and field interactions confirm that the project outcomes have impacted the sector across all levels.

### Impact at Policy Level

The government has already approved 16 more licenses to set up community radio across Bangladesh. These community radio stations are expected to start operations by the end of 2015. The government is also considering appropriate policy reform to strengthen the institutional framework for community radio and the merits of a community radio support fund.

BNNRC has been playing active role as a member [only civil society member] of Community Radio Central Monitoring Committee. It has been encouraging Ministry of Information (MOI) official to take Community Media related interventions. It is influencing Ministry of Information (MOI) in policy review and formulation process. The close collaboration with the Ministries made BNNRC's presence essential to be the part of drafting National Broadcasting Policy. BNNRC is providing inputs in formulation of National Broadcasting Act, and is a member of the National Broadcasting Act and National Broadcasting Regulation drafting Committee formed by the Government.

### Impact at Community Radio Station Level

**Awards:** The period under review saw four community radio stations in Bangladesh being given the prestigious UNICEF Meena Award for their "valuable contribution in news and creative media programs on child rights issues."

### Community Radio as a Platform for Dialogue between Government and Citizenry

The training also enabled the CRS to appropriately review their broadcast formats and strengthen good governance, especially in the areas of child marriages, disaster mitigation, women's issues, child rights, rights of persons with disabilities, right to information, and family planning.

### Quality of Reporting and Journalism

The emphasis of the project on capacity has visibly impacted the journalism and broadcasting skills of the community radio staff. All the radio staff members who the evaluator interacted with were unanimous in their appreciation of the training.

## Increase in Participation of Women and Marginalized Communities

The impact of the project on gender relations has been palpable. According to available data from project reports, there are more than 64 women currently working as producers or community radio journalists in radio stations. Likewise, there has been an increase in the participation of the marginalized communities like dalits as staff and volunteers. However, their increased presence remains well below parity, and the community radio stations need to give due cognizance to bridging this gap.

## Impact on Networking and Knowledge

The project has also been acknowledged outside Bangladesh at forums such as SAARC Information Centre, and by apex bodies like UNESCO Chair on Community Media, Asian Institute of Broadcast Development, Asian Broadcasting Union, and World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. The impact of the project has also been appreciated in global fora. BNNRC CEO, Mr AHM Bazlur Rahman, was honored as “Press Freedom Hero 2015” by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**On Coordination:** BNNRC coordinates and collaborates with the Ministry in implementation of different programs like observation of World Radio day. BNNRC is maintaining close collaboration with Bangladesh Tele Communication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) in spectrum allocation process within community radio stations.

**On Capacity Building:** BNNRC has been educating the Ministry officials to take community media related intervention. In capacity building of the rural community broadcasters there are joint/collaborative efforts of BNNRC with different institutions of the government like National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMC), Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB), Bangladesh Betar etc.

**On Research & development:** Research findings of BNNRC are taken into consideration by the Ministry and used in further planning for community broadcasting sector. The baseline survey conducted during the project is also used by government official for formulating policies.

## Findings: Sustainability

### Sectoral Sustainability (at Community Radio Station Level)

The sustainability workshop and strategy reports reveal a dual scenario. In the immediate context, the reports point to efforts which have yielded positive dividends in terms of social and institutional sustainability. However, it has long-term implications on sustainability as indicated by the workshop findings and the strategy which merit substantial and urgent consideration. These raise fundamental questions pertinent to policy reform, community participation and management, revenue generation, and donor dependency.

### Social and Institutional Sustainability

The findings on the effectiveness and impact of the program, training and production have indicated the deepening of community awareness and participation with regard to the functioning of the community radio stations. The data on the overall volunteer strength across community radio stations indicates that most community radio stations have a growing and substantial volunteer bank. There would also appear to be an increased awareness of issues related to gender equity at the station level and also the participation of the marginalized and minority people at the staff and volunteers level. Another positive development was evident in the fact that all community radio stations have their own bank accounts.

However, the increased awareness is far from being adequate or proportionate in terms of field realities and implementation at the ground level. Presently, many stations do not represent the marginalized communities as a part of their staff or management committees. Further, the quantitative data do not guarantee increased community participation and/or management in the radio station. It is not enough to increase the participation of community members as voice or talent on the radio programs. They need to be actively engaged in the overall programming and broadcast strategy, development of ethical policies and guidelines, and in budgetary and resources planning of the community radio stations.

## **Institutional and Policy Sustainability**

In the immediate context, community radio stations would appear to have benefited from the government efforts at promoting an enabling environment for the sector. This may be measured by the numerical growth of community radio stations in the country. While another 16 community radio stations are likely to be operational by the end of 2015, Minister for Information, Mr Hasanul Huq Inu, has gone on record affirming his ministry's efforts at setting up community radio stations in each upazilla (sub-district) of the country.

The long-term challenges, however, run deeper and point to the structural issues warranting policy reform. The current policy which is substantially modelled on the Indian community radio guidelines, however, does not entirely conform to internationally acknowledged principles of community radio. For instance, the policy remains ambivalent on news. It allows broadcasting development news, but it prohibits any kind of "political, sectarian and doctrinal programs". It also emphasizes that the programs must not go beyond the community's 'cultural and political heritage, and provides a general content guideline for broadcasts. Moreover, as the sustainability strategy has asserted, the policy stipulates "establishing an advisory committee, which includes local heads of government, local police, and representatives of local nation building departments of the Government. This kind of a mandated advisory cripples any attempts at raising voices of dissent or discussing issues of corruption at the local level."

## **Financial Sustainability**

Independent surveys were jointly designed and carried out in coordination with the BNNRC to determine the state of financial sustainability. These indicate an overwhelming bias towards donor dependency. The findings reveal that the income of 94% of the stations was dependent on funding underscoring an urgent need to re-examine revenue generation and funding strategies. These figures corroborate and further substantiate the findings of the sustainability strategy and the workshop report. Both these highlight a marked preoccupation with financial sustainability by most CR practitioners and reporters. The sustainability workshop report noted that the managers of the stations were extremely concerned about resource mobilization especially for paying the CR staff and volunteers. If these concerns are inevitable in an NGO driven model, they also underscore the case for diversified models of ownership promoting greater community participation and management.

At the same time, the current reliance on donor grants and support necessitates the relevance of policy reform. The absence of an independent community radio fund needs to be rectified. The current policy needs to broaden and recast its provisions enabling local advertising. Presently, only development related sponsorship/advertising is allowed.

## **Technological (Equipment) Sustainability**

Interactions with the community radio stations indicated that the project support in terms of equipment had addressed an urgent need. However, a cross-cutting need that emerged across all field interactions was linked to increasing transport facilities.

## **Sustainability at BNNRC Level**

The evaluation study noted an overall growth in BNNRC's stature, organizational capacities, and subject matter knowledge and project management ability. These argue well in terms of its human, institutional and financial sustainability. The relevant staff members of the BNNRC were always present or participated in the training organized at the community radio station and community levels.

Below are 2 case stories (published in the Daily Observer) that illustrate some of the results of the project and their influence on the daily life of listeners:

### **Case Study 1:**

#### **Silent roles of Community Radio make huge impact on climate change preparedness**

On a dark windy and cloudy evening, just as the sun sets, an appealing voice on the radio calls for preparing to take shelter.

In the island district of Bhola in Charfasson in Bay of Bengal, Radio Meghna broadcasts live and repeats warnings to local listeners to take shelters in concrete cyclone shelters where hundreds of people can be accommodated to survive during a strong cyclone.

The messages on the air are loud and clear. Residents must reach cyclone shelters within the shortest possible time, with the most vulnerable inhabitants like, old women and children first to get space inside the building facing the Bay.

"In the months of April and May the sea gets rough and windy storms are very common in coastal Bangladesh," said Rashida Begum, Station Manager of Radio Meghna, located some 250 km south-east of Patuakhali in the Bay of Bengal.

Taniaya Khatun, a programme producer at Radio Sundarban, says, "We live with natural disasters and we have to be prepared for such mega disasters like, cyclones and storm surges which have frequently hit Bangladesh coast in the recent years."

Taniya explains, "We design our programmes to reach maximum audience and our priority is on disaster preparedness due to climate change. So our focus is on mass awareness on climate change and the consequences."

Anamika Dhanuki, a fellow producer in the same radio station said, "By the location of our radio station I believe one can understand the significance of our programmes. Certainly we focus our programmes on the Sundarbans or the largest mangrove forest in the world. We prepare our programme on how to protect the forest and prepare for shelters during the cyclones."

Radio Sundarban in Koira just at the mouth of the vast forest - the Sundarbans, is just 30 kilometers from the Bay and the entire forest of the some 10,000 square kms is highly vulnerable to cyclones.

The Station Manager of Radio Sundarban Palash Chandra Dhali says, "We have to focus our programmes on survival because most of the inhabitants around the forest here in Koyra are extremely vulnerable to extreme weathers and with climate change we have to prepare ourselves through awareness."

Apart from its efforts to adapt to the changes in climate community radio, especially across the coastal zones, have launched special drives to aware the climate vulnerable people.

"Our goals are to give informed choices to those who are at risk. So the programmes we run are often specially designed so that audience participates to understand the vulnerabilities themselves," said Harun-ur-Rashid, a producer of Radio Naf. Radio Naf is located at the tip of south-eastern coastal district of Cox's Bazar where people largely depend on for mainly fishing and producing salt from sea water.

Majed Ali, a local fisherman said, "We listen to Radio Naf programmes which give a lot of useful information on weather patterns, fishing trawlers going missing, and most importantly on preparing for climate changes."

Radio Lokobetar broadcast from southern district of Barguna is another important radio station which is also has a key role in adaptation to climate change. The Station Manager, Munir Hossain Kamal said, "Climate change can be visibly sensed here. If you ask the elderly villagers they would share how the environment changed in last few years. We are very worried about such fast changes but our goals are to keep the local listeners informed about what to do." Kamal said, "Most of our live discussion programmes include focusing on issues like, food security, best practices in agriculture, overcoming salinity and alternative crops. We also have regular programmes inviting guests like experts in climate change who share experiences."

Many of the radio stations have also introduced disaster risk reduction programmes to aware people on emergency preparedness. Radio Sagar Dwip in Hatiya Island, located about 70 km from the nearest city in Chittagong at the confluence of the Bay of Bengal, runs such programmes on priority basis. Mohammad Ashrafuddin, Director for programmes on disaster risk reduction or DRR said, "We have daily programmes on how to survive and how to avoid disasters. Hatiya is a small island and most of the people live on fishing. So the spotlight is on how fishermen can survive during the disasters and also adapt to the climate changes."

Ashrafuddin explained, “We fear that many of the fishermen may migrate for survival. It is noticed that fishermen are not getting catch of fish like they used to before. The fishing business is hard to sustain as profits are gradually shrinking.” He said, “We have programmes accustomed to the needs of our audience of mostly fishing community. The best we can offer is to influence people on quality adaptation measures so that they would not think of settling elsewhere.”

The radio programmes have rightly targeted the community and because of the regular awareness programmes and lively interactions the vulnerable people are gradually learning to adapt to the climate changes.

***By Naimul Haq -Special Correspondent, Daily Observer (Bangladesh)***

## **Case Study 2:**

### **Gender equality comes on the airwaves/Lifting the voices of rural women**

Momena Ferdousi, a 24-year-old student hailing from Bangladesh’s northwestern Chapai Nawabganj District, is one of the country’s up-and-coming radio professionals.

She is the senior programme producer for Radio Mahananda, a community radio station launched in 2011 that caters primarily to the thousands of farming families in this agricultural region that comprises part of the 7,780-square-km Barind Tract. She tells this correspondent she would not be where she is today without the support and training she, and scores of other aspiring female radio workers, received from the Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC).

Fellowship to the correspondent and capacity-building initiatives sponsored by BNNRC have resulted in a flood of women filling the posts of producers, anchors, newscasters, reporters and station managers in 14 regional community radio stations around the country.

“The road to my employment was challenging,” Ferdousi explains, “but BNNRC saw the potential in me and [other] female journalists and I believe we have made substantial changes by addressing gaps in women’s right to information.”

Miles away, the confident voice of Sharmin Sultana on Radio Pollikontho, broadcast in the northeastern district of Moulvibazar, reaches roughly 400,000 people spread over a 17-km radius. With five hours of daily programming that focus largely on issues relevant to rural women, Radio Pollikontho has filled a huge gap in this community. “It is an amazing feeling to conduct a programme, interact live with guests and respond to our audience’s requests to discuss health, women’s rights, social injustice, education and agriculture,” Sultana tells THIS CORRESPONDENT. “When we began we had only one programme on women’s issues, now we run five programmes weekly, exclusively dedicated to women.” “Most of our audiences are poor,” she explains, “and they either don’t have access to television or cannot read newspapers. So FM radio, available even on the cheapest mobile phone, has been very popular and the demand for interactive live programmes is increasing by the day.”

The difficulties facing women here in Bangladesh are legion. Only 16.8 million women are employed in the formal sector, with the vast majority of them performing unpaid domestic labour on top of their duties in the farm or field. A lack of financial independence makes them extremely vulnerable to domestic violence: a recent study by the deputy director of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) found that 87 percent of currently married women have experienced physical violence at the hands of their husbands, while 98 percent say they have been sexually ‘violated’ by their spouses at some point during marriage. The survey also revealed that one-third of all married women faced ‘economic abuse’ – the forcible withholding of a partner’s financial assets for the purpose of maintaining financial dependence on the perpetrator of violence. In 2011, 330 women were killed in dowry-related violence. Other issues, like child marriage, also make pressing news bulletins for community radio stations directed at women: according to United Nations data, some 66 percent of Bangladeshi girls are married before their 18th birthday. The situation is bleak, but experts say that as women become educated and aware of their rights, the tide will inevitably turn for the better.

BNNRC Chief Executive Officer A H M Bazlur Rahman, tells this correspondent, “Issues like budget allocation, lack of appropriate sanitation, violence against women, fighting corruption, [and] education for girls are [often] neglected by policy makers. But if we can give women a voice, these problems [will] gradually disappear.”

It remains to be seen whether or not more women's voices on the air will uplift the half of Bangladesh's population in need of empowerment. But every time a woman's voice crackles to life on a radio show, it means one more woman out there is hearing her story, learning her rights and moving closer to equality.

***By Naimul Haq - Special Correspondent, Daily Observer (Bangladesh)***

# *Engage Community Media for Elimination of Gender Based Violence*



## Objectives

BNNRC has successfully implemented its target activities as the partner of “Girl Power Project”(GPP) starting from June 2011 to December 2015.

The objective of this project was to contribute in efforts of reducing gender based violence of girls and young women in the country through media engagement. GPP as a global project was funded by Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFSII) for promoting equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women. This project was implemented by local civil society organizations in 10 countries of the world. In Bangladesh, under the coordination of Plan International Bangladesh, GPP was implemented through partnership with 10 national NGOs. BNNRC

## Achievements



With the expectation to sensitize media professionals and inspire them to contribute in writing features and broadcast programs on gender and child right issues, BNNRC organized nine (09) trainings, five (05) workshops and three (03) awarding events during the project period.

More than 500 media practitioners including Community Radio Broadcasters have been mobilized and inspired to work on various right based issues on gender, women and children. In fulfilment of this agenda (capacity building of the broadcasters and other media practitioners), BNNRC has produced several IEC materials, such as a sticker, poster, leaf-let, quarterly newsletters (05), books and booklets (05).

BNNRC has published a Story Album named “Wind of Change” by collecting selected stories of best practices and photo from Girl Power project areas. This pictorial album has been produced to give anybody an opportunity to look at a glance on the overall result of the project activities, especially on its achievements and successes.

Another book named as ‘Nareer Proti Drishtibhonge: Gender-bhittik Shohingshota’ has been published focusing on the recent trends of gender based violence (GBV) in Bangladesh. A total of eight (08) articles/features were collected from eight renowned academics/experts on different socio-cultural disciplines. The writers shared their views by analysing the trend and dynamics of GBV trends in Bangladesh. The publications are disseminated to the target community. It has been expected that this book will help the target readers (concerned policy planner, researchers, academia etc.) to become aware about the causes of Gender Based Violence and the steps to address the barriers to overcome the issue.

Besides the nationwide audience of 14 Community Radio Station (CRS), BNNRC has specially targeted the audience (about 0.5 million listeners) of Community Radio Padma at Rajshahi.

BNNRC introduced “Girl Power Award 2015” for awarding media practitioners for their best report and program. A total of 15 winners had received Girl Power Crests and Certificates from three (03) “Girl Power Awarding” events under this project. The contest of this event focused on the successes and achievements of girls and young women issues. A total of 63 radio and television programs have submitted programs in these 3 competitions. These programs reflected important issues like child education, present situation of female child and the children from horizon community, child marriage/early marriage, evolution of children organizations, child marriage in Dalit community, negligence of girl child in the community, life-threatening livelihood of child labors, drug addiction and its effects on family and society.



## Outcomes

Under capacity building efforts, different violence incidents are now being reported by the broadcasters and other media professionals. The target audiences are now responding to any incidence happened at their own respective areas.

At the end of this project, it has been observed that by taking initiatives of the mobilized and motivated Broadcasters, the senior management of 11 community radio stations in the country have increased their total broadcasting schedule (month wise) from one hour to one and a half hours' time on women and child development radio programs since 31 December 2013. Not only the increase in broadcasting hours, in producing weekly-based 'Amader Konnya Shishu' (currently named as "Aporajeeta") Radio Padma at Rajshahi has emphasized to produce on 'live' basis program instead of recorded basis keeping in mind the listener's demand. Bikrampur Community Radio has set another exciting example in mobilizing the local community. By taking supports from the local government agencies, the self-motivated staff of this radio station prevented 35 child marriages during 2013 to 2014, which drew attention of the local community. This example inspired the other community radio professionals to mobilize their local community in this regard. Besides the community media, the public service broadcasters of the country also took initiatives in increasing broadcasting time on women and child development radio programs than before.

Several daily newspapers at local level such as the Daily Raj Barta, Amader Rajshahi, Shonali Shongbad and Gour Bangla published articles on different right based issues of women and girl children. In Rajshahi, more than 35 investigative features/articles/case stories had been published during the last one year (January, 2014 to November 2015).

The inspired Community Radio Broadcasters are now receiving many national, international awards on gender, various protection and right based issues on women and children (especially girl children). For example, four community radio stations received 13 awards in radio category in Meena Media Award-2015 for their contribution in innovation in media and protection of child rights in the year 2015.

Bikrampur Community Radio has set another exciting example in mobilizing the local community. By taking supports from the local government agencies, the self-motivated staff of this radio station prevented 35 child marriages during 2013 to 2014, which drew attention of the local community. This example inspired the other community radio professionals to mobilize their local community in this regard.

## Challenges and way forward

The interplay between media and gender norms has long been recognized and a substantial literature explores how media affects girls. As media is a sensitive tool, where the rural broadcaster were not always be concerned about gender responsive communication during design, develop and produce their program. It was ... and still it is a big challenge to address gender responsive radio program in the Community Radios in our country.

2 research studies (held at 2013 and 2015 respectively) conducted at community radio Padma's coverage area (17 kilometres radius) of the radio station. It has been observed that the listeners have received knowledge and information on gender issues and so community's stereotyped attitude towards girls and young women are changing. But still the change is a big challenge. During research it has been observed that still there are gaps in conception and practice level to combat violence against women including girl children and to protect their rights. It has been recommended that Community mobilization through media in this regard should be continued uninterruptedly.





Bangladesh NGOs Network for  
Radio and Communication  
Special Consultative Status with the UN ECOSOC

## Promoting English language through community radio

**Project Title:** American English Radio Project (AERP) in Bangladesh

**Supported by:** American Center, Dhaka

**Project Period:** September 30, 2014 to March 31, 2016 (Phase-III)

### Project Goal

Use community Radio effectively in improving English language skill of the outreach audience



## **Objectives**

- \* To develop and broadcast appropriate radio episodes as English language learning materials for the rural learners through 04 community radio stations of Bangladesh.
- \* To broadcast rural success stories as educational and motivational materials to encourage community people for learning English language.
- \* To encourage the trained local English language teachers to follow the communicative English teaching methods in the classrooms and encourage other potential learners for listening English language radio programs in groups.
- \* To consult and engage radio program experts, veteran teachers and consultants at national level; in content development, evaluation, further improvement and extension of the project in other community radio stations of Bangladesh.

## **Activities implemented:**

During the implementation period of American English radio Project (AERP) 3rd phase, the process “learning by doing” has been followed as the strategy to implement the project activities. Initially, all 14 radio stations were invited to submit their “Expression of Interest (Eoi)” to implement the project. Considering their shared information, 4 radio stations have been selected namely Community Radio Naf, Sagorgiri, Jhenuk and Padma basing on their experiences, coverage areas, population, listeners’ need, quality of management, administration, financial and production skills for implementing the project. The duration of the project was one year.



## **The major activities of the project are as follows:**

- Program Promotional Radio Clips
- Project Briefing Workshop
- Develop Radio Episodes’ Scripts and Audios
- Broadcast Radio episodes and success stories
- Meeting and consultation with American Center TEAM
- Radio Listeners’ Club (RLC) Meeting
- Engage Trained Teachers
- Establish Listeners Corner at Station Level
- Monitoring visit : George Mesthos, Cultural Affair Officer of U. S. Embassy visited Radio Padma
- Distribution of Radio sets
- Produce IEC Materials like AERP Sticker, AERP Leaflet
- Engaging Government officials, veteran Teachers and listeners
- Knowledge Sharing Workshop

## **Major Activities (brief description):**

1. Each radio station broadcasted 26 radio episodes. They repeated the same program in the following day so that those who missed the live program they could join in the rebroadcasting of the same. On the other hand, listeners have had easy access to share their feedback directly to the presenter during program broadcasting by cell phone and internet connectivity. All 4 radio stations have received 5,560 sms, 395 phone calls and 345 emails from the listeners in this phase.

2. To encourage the listeners, a total of 12 rural success stories have been broadcasted during the implementation period. The stories covered education, agricultural, environment, public health initiatives and about returning Bangladeshi participants in USG-funded exchange programs relevant to the rural audience. Language used in these programs was English with Bangla interpretations in local dialect. Success stories were broadcasted on weekly basis. The radio listeners described how English language has become an important factor for their success, shared the scope and process on how to get easy access to learn English and explored the opportunities already available at American Center and corners in Bangladesh.

3. A total of 105 local English language teachers from 4 radio stations were trained up in this phase. Out of 105 there were 56 teachers from local school and madrasahs, the rest were from the local colleges. A teachers' guide-book (developed by BNNRC in cooperation with American Center) was distributed among the English language teachers to encourage them to follow modern teaching method while facilitating the sessions in classroom. The teachers encouraged the students for group listening and kept continuous contact with the stations and listeners' corners as well. Some of them joined in the group listening and provided feedback on effective listening to the learners. As per the stations information, 40,000 students were directly getting support from the trained teachers.



4. One Listeners' corner was established in each of the 4 radio stations where listeners got easy access to enjoy internet services and use options to collect radio episodes' (audios and texts) in CDs and cell phone sets so that they could use it individually and/or in group listening. Each corner was equipped with a laptop, all broadcasted audios, script texts, internet access and blank CDs for poor students. During the broadcasting, listeners were invited to visit listeners' corners by describing the available facilities, time, location of the station situated etc. The listeners collected audios and scripts of AERP and downloaded materials too. Stations provided blank CDs only to the helpless listeners and students. In this phase, we have distributed a total of 600 blank CDs were collected to the listeners at 4 radio stations. Radio staffs helped listeners in searching out other English language programs like VoA.

5. A total of 62 Radio Listeners' Clubs were directly engaged in this program. The total members engaged in RLCs were 984 where 584 were male and 410 were female members. 80 RLC representatives have been oriented on the goal, objectives and activities of the project during the last phase. More than 600 radio sets, as token from US government and other projects were distributed among the listeners, RLC members and poor students which covered approximately a total of 5000 listeners in the broadcasting areas. This activity encouraged and involved the RLC members and other groups too.

6. An open radio quiz was introduced to encourage the listeners. A good number of listeners have participated in this event. Finally, we have selected one of the quiz winners for awarding by lottery and awarded with a nice radio set. A total of 115 radio sets have been distributed among the winner/listeners during the project period.

7. Five (5) different Behavioral Change Communication (BCC) materials were developed in this phase to attract the attention of the radio listeners. These include promotional radio spots, AERP Leaflet and AERP sticker. The objective of developing the BCC materials was to keep listeners' focus on English language program. As a result, at least 3-4 listeners have visited the radio stations to know about the program details daily, they made phone calls, sent SMS and emails too.



### **Knowledge Sharing and Lessons learned**

At the end of AERP 3rd phase a "Knowledge Sharing Workshop" was organized on March 15, 2016 at EMK Center, Dhaka to share the developed materials, findings, experience, observations and learning with English language experts, academia, radio program experts and other like-minded organizations for their feedback and suggestions. Twenty nine participants included English language experts, American Center representatives, Teachers and radio staffs from all 4 Radio stations and representatives from the organizations like Bangladesh Betar, BRAC, BRAC University, The Daily Prothom Alo and Dhaka language Club. The Participants of the "Knowledge Sharing Workshop" unanimously agreed and remarked that the English language learning by using community radio should be continued and replicated in other upcoming radio stations of the country..

The following recommendations were proposed by the participants:

- I. Develop some new episodes on the local content. The content should include easy and familiar topics for discussion.
- II. The target group of the project should not be limited around the students only, but for the intermediate level listener, which means whose English language skill is at a lower level not at zero level; they also should have elementary knowledge in English.
- III. Radio is playing a vital role in ELT Program like "English for Today" [broadcasted through Bangladesh Betar]. Collaboration could be initiated with Bangladesh Betar and other commercial radio stations and this lesson learned might be shared with them.
- IV. The learning of the project may be shared within other SAARC countries who are implementing this type of English Learning efforts [under USA support] in this region.
- V. All learning materials could be uploaded as web-materials so that the listeners can use the material from everywhere.
- VI. Mobile phone could be an effective tool for disseminating information to the learners.
- VII. The experience of episode development and broadcasting and the interaction with the teachers grew more interests within children and teachers. They should be focused more in next phase.

# KHOLA JANALA

a program of community radio broadcasting under IRSOP Project

**Project Duration:** 20 October 2015- 15 January 2016



## Objectives & Implementing Organizations:

'Improvement of the Real Situation of Overcrowding in Prisons in Bangladesh' (IRSOP) has been undertaken to reduce prison overcrowding and improve legal protection for poor and vulnerable prisoners of the country. IRSOP project was carried out in cooperation with the Bangladesh Ministry of Home Affairs, the Prison Directorate and GIZ. In a part of this project, the information and motivation campaign through community radio was implemented by the seven community radio stations of the country. This campaigning program titled as: *Khola Janala* were implemented by seven community radio stations of the country. The stations were: Radio Padma (Rajshahi), Radio Nalta (Satkhira), Radio Pollikontho (Moulvibazar), Radio Sagar Giri (Chittagong), Radio Chilmari (Kurigram), Radio Jhenuk (Jhenaidha) and Radio Bikrampur (Munsigonj). Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) coordinated the program.

**The objectives of *Khola Janala*** were: (i) to reach the maximum number of listeners with information related to law and justice system and (ii) to make people aware about the services provided by Govt. and non-government organisations to access the justice system.

## Major Achievements:

*Khola Janala: engaging local community people into dialogues on law and justice system:*



The program - '*Khola Janala*' - has given emphasis on the issues like- Over Crowding & Restorative Justice, Legal Assistance, and Training & Rehabilitation of Prisoners, Village Court, Reducing Repeated Crimes and Referral System in case of Drug Addiction. The 45 min. program was designed in two segments: the first was a 25 minutes magazine program. It was a combination of report, vox-pop, interview, promo, public service announcement (PSA), song and drama etc. For this segment the radio broadcasters have to conduct research, prepare outline, collect information, record vox-pop and interview. The second segment in the program was a 20 min. dialogue (recorded), where the two local guests discussed on that broadcasting issue. They were Jailor/ Jail Super/ members of Jail Inspection Committee; District Magistrate, Advocate, and members of Para-Legal, Public Prosecutor, representation of Social Welfare Department, Local government and administration, District Narcotics Control Officer, Civil Society members, local NGOs and development workers, etc. The dialogue session was moderated by a skilled radio presenter. After final editing, the full program was broadcast on their own scheduled time. The radio stations announced the broadcasting date and time in advance. The programs were rebroadcasted two times respectively on the day after broadcasting and first rebroadcasting. That means, the programs were broadcasting total 126 times (6 episodes x 3 times per episode x 7 radio stations) during the project period. Through the broadcasting of magazine program the opportunity was created to initiate the dialogue between 84 (per episode 2 guests x 6 episode x 7 radio stations=84) local resource persons, community radio broadcasters and with community people.

### **Broadcasters oriented and the listeners covered:**

A total of 21 community broadcasters got better understanding, knowledge, and gathered skills on how to produce a fruitful magazine program on the issues through a day long project orientation program. It is most important to mention that 5 million community people of the target areas (07 CR station areas in 07 districts of the country) became aware regarding legal protection and restorative justice through the magazine program which helped to resolve/mediate the conflict in an alternative way at local level. There was a focus on speeding up the release of those detainees whose detention was unlawful or disproportionate, especially women, children and other disadvantaged groups.

### **Quiz Contest:**

There was a quiz contest in the program. In every episode, a question was asked to the audience on issues that broadcasted and three persons were selected through lottery out of the respondents who responded correctly. They were awarded by radio sets.



### **Using Social Media:**

A Facebook Group was opened named as 'Khola Janala' ([www.facebook.com/groups/kholajanalbd/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/kholajanalbd/)) to serve as a web-platform for sharing information and opinion. All of the audio clips and pictures of the program episodes are uploaded in the Facebook group. Already the partner radios became members of the group.

### **Audience engagement:**

Total 15,522 (estimated) listeners gave feedback, opinion and recommendation on the programs through sms, phone call, Facebook link, station visit and interview. Among them there were grassroots people like-day labour, rickshaw-puller, farmer, fisherman including youth, teachers, students, journalists, family members of prisoners and drug addicted persons, advocate, development workers, govt. officials, local governmental officers, local public leader, related NGOs worker etc. All of them appreciated the content of the program and the information on local service centers.

### **Feed backs:**

1. In a recent discussion, Mr. Nazmul Hasan, the district magistrate of Satkhira district mentioned the "Khola Janala" a milestone program broadcast through community radio. He has participated in Radio Nalta (Kaliganj, Satkhira) as a speaker/discussant in one of the episodes. He told that if this type of programs continues, this would reduce the number of prisoners, the disputes would be resolved at local level and the prisoners would get opportunity to come back to the normal life. He expected Radio Nalta to continue the broadcasting of this program.

2. Mr. Prodip kumar Roy, Advocate, Kurigram Judge Court said while he was attending one of the dialogue sessions of Khola Janala at Radio Chilmari as a talker: "Khola Janala is a grate initiative. It is really an urgent issue to inform and aware community people to aware about govt. and non govt. legal assistance services and local service centers, restorative justice through village court, training & rehabilitation of prisoners, and drug addicted persons. I believe that if the community radio can continue with this awareness raising program in such a way, the justice department will gets relief from case jam and the poor and vulnerable people will not face in legal harassment anymore".

## Experience of Santosh Kumar: a case of program impact

Santosh Kumar, the teacher of Kachkol Hat Mohirunnesa High School, Chilmari, Kurigram said ``there was a long-standing conflict between me and my nephew Sudipto Kumar over a piece of land. As a sequel to the dispute, I decided to file a case against him. Meanwhile I listened the Radio Chilmari's magazine program ``Kholo Janala''. The issues of the program attracted me very much. I continued to listen. After listening all the episodes of the program I have changed my decision. I have communicated our local village court and immediately they resolved our dispute peacefully. I'm very pleased with Radio Chilmari to broadcast such type of useful program''.

## Challenge

It was a great challenge to complete the magazine program within a very short time. The gap of production & broadcasting between two episodes was very short. It was not easy to collect information on the topic/theme and to convince the resource persons like Jailor, Jail Super District Magistrate to come to the station. Sometimes they (Jailor, Jail Super District Magistrate) didn't want to provide information due to their limitation. Due to resource persons inability to come to the studio sometimes the radio broadcaster have to record the dialogue session outside of radio station (according resource person's suitable place).

## Lesson learned and Way Forward:

- To achieve better outcomes (reaching the maximum number of listeners with information related to law & justice system) the program should be continued on long- term basis.
- If there was a formal letter from Ministry of Home or GIZ Bangladesh to Jailor, Jail Super and local administration requesting their cooperation then the radio broadcaster would get their cooperation easily.
- A primer or booklet on the concerned issue, some additional knowledge material (with information related to law and justice system and about the services provided by Govt. and non-government organizations to access to the justice system) need to be developed and distributed among the content developers as well as the target communities.



# Building Capacity to produce interactive, audience-led governance program through community radio-supported by BBC Media Action

[ August 2015 to March 2016 ]



Supported by: BBC Media Action  
In partnership with Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC)

Implemented by:



Radio Chilmari

&



Radio SagarGiri

## Project description (Background):

While there is an increasing demand from audiences for the opportunity to question leaders on local issues related to public services, citizens do not have any platform to come face to face, to collaborate and to actively participate in the decision-making process. This has made the rationale to involve community radio stations as the only media platform to play an effective role in governance process at local level. As BNNRC is the only apex organization to coordinate and support all the radio stations, the work has aimed to engage directly with BNNRC and to analyse and strengthen the knowledge and skills within the network to allow member stations to be assisted in working on local governance issues. BBC Media Action and BNNRC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during the month of August 2015 to work jointly with two community radio stations to produce pilots of interactive, audience-led governance programme. This MOU has been accomplished to trial techniques that build on the experience of the existing national Sanglap programme which BBC Media Action has been producing through a national-level television debate programme since 2005.

At the beginning of the project, BBC Media Action selected two community radio stations in consultation with BNNRC senior level staffs. Considering the geographical spread one station i.e. Radio Chilmari has been selected from the northern region. Another station-Radio Sagargiri was selected from the southern region of the country. Two interactive discussions with two selected stations helped the BBC Team to assess the level of skills and to identify the gaps of the producers which eventually helped them to make appropriate plan for future capacity building interventions for them. Responding to various queries from the facilitators, the participants discussed comprehensively about their present understanding on development and skill regarding program production, selection of program formats, scripting, outdoor recording, editing, presentation and feedback management received from the listeners after broadcasting. Basing on their feedbacks training on program development skill and editorial guideline has been organized in two stations in 02 phases.




The 1st Phase concentrated mostly on theoretical aspects of Program Production. The expert trainers of BBC Media Action discussed elaborately on the importance and techniques of audience-engagement in a program. While the 1st Phase of capacity building was conducted on the theoretical part of Radio Program Production skill and in an indoor manner, the 2nd phase concentrated on the practical aspect and in an outdoor setting. In the 2nd phase Radio Chilmari produced 02 programs on performance of local governance in Union Parishads titled as Jago Bahe [Brother, please wake up] and "Janatar Mukhomukhi" in Radio Sagorgiri. The programs were prepared in talk-show format.

In the talk show, the local elected representatives were presented face-to-face to the community people who responded to their queries. For example, during recording of the talk show –Jago Baho at Chilmari, the community people directly asked to the Chairman about the quality and progress in embankment works in their area. The people, on behalf of 250 river-eroded families asked for a permanent solution (rehabilitation) for river-erosion. Principal Mohammad Azizur Rahman, one of the panel discussants accused the chairman for his negligence on repairing of the roads and culverts of the union. Other panelist Farida Yasmin gave importance on appropriate planning for solving problems of roads, embankment, housing and related issues.

Jago Bahe (04 episodes) goes on-air 1st Sunday of every month at 4-10 P.M. Janatar Mukhomukhi is also broadcasting 04 episodes regularly.

### Feedback:



One elected representative, **M.Tajul Islam,Chairman**, Sitakunda Union Parishad from Radio Sagargiri audience area told: "Our community is informed now about the services of Union Parishads and also of their rights.The program has also identified the problems which helped me to take appropriate steps for the solution."

One local journalist in the area told: "broadcasting of such a program made our chairmen more active, responsive and accountable to the people. They are now taking effective steps in local development. Local journalists can also help in the process of establishing good governance at local level through reporting and supplying authentic information."

### Guideline developed on producing people-led content (in Bangla & English) :

Finally BNNRC.in cooperation with BBC Media Action Team has developed a guideline on producing people-led content. The skill acquired by the training and producing programs with practical experience at two community radio stations can be replicated in other stations. For that purpose, "Producing People's-led governance –A Guideline" can be helpful as a common effective tool for all. BNNRC may coordinate in this process to engage, orient and supervise the rest of the community radio stations of the country.

Both the community and the local elected representatives will require some more awareness regarding right and access to information. They can be motivated more.

# *Sushasoner Sanglap*

[DIALOGUE ON GOOD GOVERNANCE]

Discussion session on  
'The importance of  
political economy  
analysis for setting  
long-term plans, and of  
conducting ward shavas  
in preparing pro-poor  
Union Parishad  
budgets' through  
Community Radio

**[ December 01 2015 to January 31, 2016 ]**

Broadcasting good practices of inclusive governance in interactive programs  
through Community Radio stations

## Background:

During the end of last October 2015 BNNRC has signed an agreement with Care Bangladesh to implement “Broadcasting good practices of inclusive governance in interactive programs through Community Radio stations”. In this partnership, BNNRC is assisting CARE Bangladesh on developing community radio program of best practices of citizen engagement in budgetary process, access to information, and social accountability to make local authority responsive to more allocation of resources and services on poverty alleviation following Union Parishad Act 2009 and Right to Information Act. The collaboration began in 1 November, 2015 and will remain valid till October 31, 2017 as part of JATRA project of CARE Bangladesh funded by GPSA /WB.

Under this agreement BNNRC has signed an MOU with 05 community radio stations of the country to produce and broadcast interactive dialogue on good governance with a combination of other activities within the **duration from December 01 2015 to January 31, 2016**. These community radio stations are: Radio Nalta 99.2 FM, Radio Lokobetar 99.2 FM, Radio Pollikontha 99.2 FM, Radio Chilmari 99.2 FM and Radio Mahananda 98.8 FM. About 3 million people in 05 districts of the country are the target listeners to reach through the programs.

**Objectives:** The objectives of the program were to engage marginalized citizen, local government and service provider in interactive community radio programs based on learning and best practices in social accountability, constructive citizen engagement, union Parishad Act 2009, transparent budgeting and Right to information Act across country.

## Achievements:

**Development of a Primer-Sushasoner Sanglap:** A primer on the theme and content of the radio programs has been developed through consultative process between BNNRC and CARE. Later 1000 copies of the primer were printed and distributed among all relevant stakeholders of community radio and Care project area.

CARE team has selected two themes for discussion in 02 Radio episodes and the experience of implementation of those themes at field level in its working area of JATRA project. The selected themes were: i. Importance of “political economy analysis” in setting the long-term plans of Ups and ii. Importance of conducting “Ward shavas” in preparing pro-poor UP budgets. Along with some description on the themes the primer has made an outline of the 25-30 minutes program of mentioning the duration, probable participants and the content of 02 episodes.



## Orientation:

A day-long orientation workshop was held on 15 December '15 at YWCA Conference Room, Dhaka as part of initiating BNNRC-CARE - Bangladesh Partnership program on good governance titled: “Sushasoner Sanglap” [Dialogue on good governance]. A total of 10 participants from 05 selected CR stations participated in the orientation. The objective of the orientation was to provide relevant information and a clear understanding of broadcasting good practices of inclusive governance in CARE implemented JATRA (Journey for Advancement in Transparency, Representation and Accountability) Project, through interactive programs of five community radio stations of the country. Mr. Murad Bin Aziz, Governance Coordinator, Extreme Rural Poverty Program of Care Bangladesh, Ms. Rwashan Rahman, Technical Coordinator, Knowledge Management, JATRA project, Mr. Golam Rabbani, Project Manager, JATRA project and Syed Kamrul Hasan, Coordinator, Knowledge Management for Development of BNNRC talked in the sessions.



They discussed on the themes, objectives, experience of field –practices [in Kishoriganj (Nilphamari), Syedpur and Palashbari] and the methodology to utilize these in program production and broadcasting through community radio. Three district correspondents of Daily Jajaidin, Daily Kaler kantho and ournewsBD.com who has been linked with the project since the beginning participated in the workshop as observers. The sessions became lively and interactive through

questions and answers of the community radio broadcasters who joined in the workshop. They mentioned that this broadcasting initiative would create positive impact and contribute a lot for ensuring transparency in local government institutions.

### **Recording of best practices in good governance implemented in CARE- JATRA Project area**

As per the decision taken in Dhaka orientation, on 24th December producer Polash Mahmud and the Station Manager Bashir Ahmed of Radio Chilmari visited the JATRA project area in Botolgari union of Syedpur upazila under Nilphamari district. They took interviews and opinion of UP Chairman, UP members, citizen forum member and the local community people regarding political economy analysis. On 25th December the team visited Hari-nathpur union of Polashbari upazila under Gaibandha district.



They discussed on importance of ward shava, with UP Chairman, UP member, Gaibandha district official of LGSP-11, member of citizen forum and community people. Later the producers edited the audio clips at Radio Chilmari studio and prepared 02 reports (of 10-miniute duration each).The reports were distributed among the rest (4) radio stations so that they would incorporate the reports on best practices in their programs during their productions.

### **Script reviewed, program produced and broadcast: quiz, awarding**

After receiving the recorded report on best practices in local governance the radio stations started to write down the script of the program. The report on best practices was common to incorporate in the script. However, along with this common part, each of the radio stations has applied its own innovation during script writing. It includes sing song, drama, question and answer session. Also, local dialects have been used in the script to make the program lively and interactive. A panel of discussants comprising the local elected representatives, civil society members, government officials and representatives of the community discussed on the issue and practices.

After preparing the script, the draft was sent to BNNRC and Care project team for reviewing the relevance of the issue. Basing on the reviewed script, 05 radio stations produced their programs. Accordingly the radio stations broadcast the programs. Each radio station re-broadcast the program on 02 consecutive days. At the end of the discussion by the panel discussants on the case (report) of the best practice, listeners have been asked for the questions. To make the program interesting to the listeners, there was a quiz contest in each episode. For each station 02 winners received the 02 radio sets as awards.



**Sharing through Social Media:** A page has been created on Facebook to share the content and other materials of the project. Find attached the link.



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sushasonersanglap/>





Promoting  
“Happy Family”  
through community radio



স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর



## ***Promoting “Happy Family” through community radio***

BNNRC has implemented a project titled as: Capacity Building on Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC) Method through Community Radio from the period October 2015 to June 2016. The project was supported by Ipas Bangladesh. Five community radio stations located at 04 districts of the country collaborated as implementing partners in the project. The collaborating radio stations are Community Radio Pollikontho 99.2 (Moulvibazar), Community Radio SagarGiri 99.2 (Sitakunda, Chittagong), Radio Naf 99.2 (Teknaf, Coxesbazar), Community Radio Lokobetar 99.2 (Sadar Upazila, Barguna) and Krishi Radio 98.8 (Amtali, Barguna).

**The Objectives of the Project** is to build and increase the community awareness and understanding of modern Family Planning (FP) methods, particularly LARC (Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives) and availability of these services in local facilities, in general, as well as after MR (Menstrual Regulation), MRM (Menstrual Regulation with Medication), PAC (Post abortion Care), and delivery of a child, thereby reducing unwanted fertility and MR/unsafe abortion.

At the outset the planning process of the project involved the stakeholders like Directorate General of Family Planning, Directorate General of Health Services, Ipas Bangladesh, BNNRC and Five Community Radio stations in the selected three divisions of the country.



Under the project the following activities have been implemented within the period:

- One primer/booklet on modern FP methods designed and printed and distributed among community radio (CR) people and important stakeholders
- Built the capacity of Community Radio Station Managers, selected producers, and anchors on modern FP methods, including LARC in the context of Bangladesh for production of radio magazine serials, facilitation and organization of talk shows and community listening circles meeting with accurate information
- A day long orientation on modern family planning (FP) issues in the context of Bangladesh conducted for selected five CR broadcasters
- Sukhi Sangsar: Radio magazine program produced and broadcasted (40).
- 40 'Talk Show' episodes produced and broadcasted in presence of FP experts and FP users
- 15 Listener circle group meeting organized
- 40 radio sets distributed among the radio quiz winners.

## A Filed Visit CR Sagor Giri



## Sukhi Sangshar: Radio Magazine and Talk Show

40 Radio Magazine Programs, including live talk show, have been produced and broadcasted. Some basic facts regarding the program can be mentioned as follows:

- Duration: 25 minutes magazine, 25 minutes talk show
- Frequency of Broadcasting: One magazine per month, One 'Talk Show' per month
- Rebroadcasted the same two times per month
- Frequency of Listeners Circle (LC) Group meeting: One meeting per each CR, Total 15 LC meeting



## Major topics discussed in talk show:

- a. Broader sense on meaning of family planning and its importance
- b. Advantages and disadvantages of different FP methods
- c. Addressing myths and misconceptions of FP methods
- d. Information on local level service centers
- e. Responses to direct phone calls of listeners and users

The experts joined in the live 'Talk Show' were local level doctors and family planning officers, local Level Gov't field workers (FWV, FWA, FPI), Family Planning method users (Total 40 eligible couples participated), respective Government Officials from the Central Level (Line Director, CCSDP and Program Manager, CCSDP, DGFP), Ipas Bangladesh officials (Country Director, Program Advisor, LARC and Advisor-Community Access).

Some impacts can be observed at station and the audience level which we can mention as follows:

## Achievement at Station level

- Family Planning becomes one of the priority issues in Community Radio program schedule
- Broadcasters have all the information on Family Planning service centers in the area to provide information to the communities and specifically to the eligible couples. CR Broadcasters assembled knowledge, information and for producing Family Planning related Radio programs with right information.
- All selected CR broadcasters developed skills of facilitating the live talk show on Family Planning issues.
- Introduced new topics from community radio which have created interest and increased acceptance among the listeners
- All selected CR broadcasters developed a good working relation with local level doctors, officials and field workers of Government health facilities
- All selected CR broadcasters developed a local level network of LC of LARC users and prospecting LARC users

## Achievement at Users level

The number of listeners, particularly listeners within the eligible couples has been increased. The number of questions by asking through mobile phone and SMS, make opinion through Vox Pop by community listeners and express interest from the eligible couples to take part in the program –all have increased. The eligible couples got specific and authentic information which may help to remove misconception from their traditional mindset. Specific information regarding methods, service centers from local and central level doctors, family planning officers and field workers provided trustworthy support for eligible couples to contact directly at the service points. It has been learnt from the Government source at local level that the number of eligible couples visiting the service centers and adopting Family Planning methods (especially LARC method) has been increased.

## Lessons Learned and way forward

Community may have misconception and lack of information, therefore, Community Media (Radio) can be a useful tool for raising awareness through providing information on priority national issues like family planning and can change traditional beliefs, behavior and practices of the rural community and contribute in shaping their lives towards desired level. The achievement of the project need to be considered to continue the program through community radio, by including all the community radio stations of the country, for achieving wider targets of development.

More Innovative and inclusive program planning is demanding and funding support is required.

