

SITUATION ANALYSIS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN BANGLADESH

BY



Acronyms

ACLAB	Alliance for Cooperation legal Aid Bangladesh
BNNRC	Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication
CCD	Centre for Communication and Development
CREL	Climate Change Regional eco-sustainability and Livelihood
CRSC	Community Radio Support Centre
DW Akademie	Deutsche Welle Akademie
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LDRO	Landless and Distressed Rehabilitation Organization
MMC	Mass-line Media Centre
MRDI	Management and Resources Development Initiative
NGO	Non Government Organization
NHRDA	Noagaon Human Rights Development Association
RDRS	Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service
RRS	Radio Station
SWOC	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Challenges
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
YPSA	Young Power in Social Action

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Executive Summary

This document details the current situation in seven out of 14 Community Radios in operation in Bangladesh at present. While one of the motives behind this study is to see how these young stations are faring and catering programmes to the target audiences, but definitely the study's scope is not limited to that only. Rather, a major thrust of this whole exercise is to see and explore the sustainability aspects of this community media that Bangladesh is exposed to only in recent years.

The National Strategy for the Implementation of Community Radio policy places the government at the centre, having two pivotal roles: as regulator and facilitator, to enable community radios to become full-fledged partners in the development process of Bangladesh.

In doing so, government laid out rules of the game for operation of the Community Radio and gave licenses to some Community Radios of which 14 are already on air for last three years while a few more are in the pipeline to join the league.

This study appreciates that despite many odds, the Community Radios, if not all - many of them, have succeeded in winning hearts of their target audiences. Some of these stations are quite popular among the communities they serve. And that again against the reality that people, even in the rural Bangladesh today are having well access to national and local newspapers and scores of satellite television channels.

It is well captured from this study that amidst the milieu of so many other interesting and colorful audio-video, print and online media platforms, many of these Community Radio stations have succeeded in eking out a niche for them.

Given the facts that none of the licensees of Community Radio had any prior experience on operation of community-centric media, they are still in process of 'LEARNING BY DOING'. If not anything else, years' of exposures to development works is one asset that they very richly possess. Experience of running non-government development organizations gave them an opportunity to mix with the community, know the poor better; understand the needs of the marginalized ones well.

One must appreciate the challenges the first generation Community Radio entrepreneurs took by venturing into a completely in domain. Community exposure they had, media experience they lacked. And then came in fore the question of developing business model where a Community Radio will serve its purpose, that is, serving the community, but at the same time survive as an independent, financially sustainable entity that can do without handholding, can operate without donors' supports one day.

As regulator, the main role of the government is to implement and opportunely revise the legislation for Community Radios, to create an enabling environment conducive to a strong Community Radio sector. It needs to also ensure that national and local government officials understand the principles of Community Radio and effectively implement the policy, supported by transparent, competent licensing, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

As facilitator, the government needs to take the leadership in promoting collaboration and establishing strategic alliances among all stakeholders to increase the chances of long-term sustainability of the Community Radios.

This study endeavors to presents an assessment of the current situation in the county, in terms of enabling factors and opportunities for the operation and growth of Community Radios, areas for further development and challenges ahead. Based on this assessment, it presents some findings and recommendations with the hope that government as well as other stakeholders - all would do respective parts - in creating environment conducive for a meaningful and sustainable Community Radio sector in Bangladesh.

Introduction

In many parts of the world, Community Radio is recognized as a means of communication that has an important role to play in the advancement of good governance practices and also in the overall development process. In countries and regions where Community Radio operated successfully, it has proven particularly useful as a tool to reach and give voice to the most disadvantaged sectors of society including the poor, women and children.

Movement for establishing Community Radio in Bangladesh dates back to late '90s. Various non-government organizations, development practitioners, media-enthusiasts, aspirants and representatives of the civil society started movement for Community Radio operation.

As records show, the movement got somewhat official recognition through holding of a meeting on Community Radio at the behest of the Information Ministry on 23 July in 2007. After a comprehensive discussion the meeting formed an eight-strong ministerial committee, tasking it to draft concept paper and regulatory framework so that Community Radio could be introduced in Bangladesh on a pilot basis. A government circular was issued in that respect on 22nd May in 2007.

After several meetings the committee submitted the concept paper, draft policy regarding Community Radio on 29th October in 2007. Following an inter-ministerial meeting on Community Radio, government adopted Community Radio Installation, Broadcast and Operation Policy on 8th March 2008. Then the Ministry of Information invited applications for Community Radio installation, broadcast and operation from the interested organizations.

The main thrust of the policy is to open up the radio spectrum to community broadcasting, in order to explore the potential of this unique form of media. The Bangladesh government took the decentralization of media, reflected in the granting of licenses for community broadcasting and the CR Policy, as a way to enable and promote people's empowerment, in order to build a platform for community-driven communication and sustainable development, through the mobilization and channeling of communities' energies, ideas, initiatives, and resources.

The government move to allow introduction of Community Radio got tremendous response and some 450 organizations took application forms from the Ministry and 178 of them ultimately submitted filled-up forms seeking to launch Community Radio.

In the whole process the Government ensured the proper participation and representation from civil society organizations through incorporating representatives in Regulatory Committee, Technical Committee and National Monitoring Committee for the successful operation of the Community Radio.

Eventually, government allowed some of the applicants to operate Community Radio. Now 14 Community Radio Stations are on-air in the country, a few more are in the pipeline.

The stations, which are in operation now, are geographically well distributed so that these are reached out to people of different regions of the country, particularly to those who are living in relatively less advantaged locations and in districts considered to be the most backward in terms of their socio-economic development.

The role of community radio in implementation of right to information, participation of the grassroots people in the development process and democratization of a country is globally acknowledged. Community radio is the mass media of the grassroots population.

Community Radios' aim is to ensure empowerment of the community people and establish right to information for the rural community. They are broadcasting altogether 120 hours program per day on information, education, and local entertainment and development motivation activities. Around 536 people, many of them youth and women, are now working with in these Stations throughout the country as rural broadcasters.

Despite many limitations, the bonding between the community people and local-level Community Radio stations are getting strengthened day by day. Community Radios have now become part of their life. Community Radios have become an instrument for the livelihood battle of the rural people. As a communication media, community radio is close to grassroots people. Therefore, community radio can play an active role in development of the society and the country by ensuring grassroots participation.

Objective of the study

- To analyze and find out current situation of the community radio
- To recommend sustainability options for the radio station

Two prime objectives of this study are to 1) analyze and find out current situation of the Community Radio and 2) recommend sustainability options for the radio stations. In the 'FINDINGS' section a detailed description is presented depicting many of the common scenarios of seven Community Radio stations that the study group visited. Besides, situation analyses of each of these stations are also included separately.

In the 'RECOMMENDATIONS' part, there are descriptions of how people in the trade themselves conceptualize the 'sustainability' aspect. They also feel the urge of moving forward as an independent community voice without depending much on external supports. Besides, there description of other ideas generated through the processes of Focused Group Discussions (FGD), Key Informant Interviews (KII), and Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Challenges (SWOC) analyses etc.

Keeping these objectives in mind the study team visited seven Community Radio stations - Borendro Radio in Naogaon, Radio Chilmari in Kurigram, Radio Mohananda in Chapai Nawabganj, Radio Mukti in Bogra, Radio Naf in Cox's Bazar, Radio Padma in Rajshahi, and Radio Sagargiri in Chittagong.

Methodology

The study team discussed the objectives of the study and decided to apply the following methodologies in conducting the study.

Literature review: Relevant documents were reviewed to collect background information and develop study tools.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD): A total of 14 FGD sessions were conducted in 7 CR locations.

Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) analysis: This exercise was conducted in each of the seven CR stations involving staff and volunteers of the station.

Key Informant Interview (KII): 21 key informants of 7 locations were interviewed. In addition, 4 experts on CR were also interviewed.

Others: Information and comments were also collected from some other sources. The research team took the opportunity of moderating one group work session on challenges in researching community radio in a workshop organized by DW Akademie and Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communications (BNNRC). Participants put valuable comments on the challenges of CR and suggested measures to overcome. Informal discussions with Mr. Eberhard Sucker and Mr. Attila Mong of DW Akademie were also helpful.

Study output

Review of relevant documents, 14 FGD sessions conducted in 7 CR locations, interview of 21 key informants and SWOC analysis of 7 radio stations produced important observations, recommendations and comments. Emphasis was given on the current situation of the station, involvement of stakeholders, future challenges and options for sustainability. Here is a summarized statement of the reviews and interactions.

Literature Review

Some relevant documents were reviewed to get some background information and develop tools for data collection. These include reports on survey conducted by the government and other agencies, policy document, strategy paper and booklets published in Bangladesh and other countries.

Information received from the documents have been used in conceptualizing, planning and designing the tools and exercise for the data collection for "Situation Analysis and Sustainability issue of Community Radio of Bangladesh". In developing the questionnaire for Key Informants Interview we have tried to set questions following the CR Policy, implementation and operation strategy for CR Bangladesh. For Focus Group Discussions with different stakeholders we tried to know the field situation whether community radios are following the guidelines given in the policy. The belated base line survey (done after the CR operation begins) helped us to conceptualize the indexes of social development and community participation. The

documents helped us to find out the development issues the CR should prioritize in designing and broadcasting. The tool kit developed by the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia based in New Delhi has helped us to understand the importance of capacity building of CR operating volunteers and staffs of our country. The CIDA and BNNRC have developed a booklet in sensitizing the CR staff about importance of Right to Information.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD):

14 FGD sessions were organized, two in each of the seven CR stations. A total of 135 participants -- 89 males and 46 females took part in the discussions. The FGD sessions involved mixed group of listeners in 6 sessions, volunteers and staff of the station and initiator NGO in 3 sessions, young listeners in 1 session, representatives of local NGOs in 1 session, representatives of Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 1 session, community leaders in 1 session and advertisement providers in 1 session.

Much enthusiasm and optimism have been observed among the young people and marginalized rural listeners about the community radio. They take interest in listening to the programmes for recreation and practical benefits. Mobile phone, the portable device for tuning CR is considered comfortable for the listeners compared to television and radio set. Level of interest among the urban people including businessmen, professionals and elite groups has been found comparatively low.

Awareness on health and women's issues, information on agriculture, weather forecast and English learning programmes have been found common in most of the radio stations. In addition, climate and environment, disaster preparedness, drug addiction, early marriage, human trafficking and entertainment programmes in local cultural context are broadcast over these CR stations. English learning and musical programmes specifically attract the young listeners. They interact with the programme presenters through SMS. All the CR stations have listeners clubs and most of the members are young people.

The most common problems mentioned by the discussants were financial uncertainty and frequent power failure. The initiator organization is in good terms with other local organizations regarding development programmes. But lack of coordination and communication about operating the CR has been felt during discussions. A gap between the business community and the CR management has also been identified.

The discussants felt the need for taking marketing initiative of the radio for its sustainability. They also sought government's assistance and community donation. The station can initiate income generating activities on its own, as they mentioned.

Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) analysis

Staff and volunteers engaged in programme production and technical operations of seven radio stations took part in the exercise. The participants proactively identified their internal strengths, the weaknesses and limitations that hinder their progress, external opportunities which can be utilized to overcome limitations and the challenges that CR will have to face to sustain.

A common strength mentioned by the participants of the exercise has been the interest of formidable number of participants. Since the CR stations address local issues in their programmes, people eagerly listen to those. Another important strength is the volunteers who work voluntarily almost like full time workers. Production and presentation of programmes depend to a great extent upon these volunteers due to dearth of regular staff in most of the stations. Credibility of the initiator organization, own accommodation, modern equipment, support of local administration and community support have also been identified as strengths.

Talking about weakness, the common issue that came up is financial uncertainty. The stations have hardly any source of income as they are not allowed to broadcast commercial advertisement. Financial support of the initiator organization is the main source of funding. Frequent power failure has been mentioned as a very common problem. Accommodation problem, shortage of equipment, lack of training, volunteer turn over, shortage of vehicle and limited area of coverage have been mentioned as other weaknesses.

Participants of the exercise pointed at the listener base, support of the business community and other organizations as opportunities that need to be utilized properly. Listeners clubs, demand of the community are other opportunities.

The major and foremost challenge is sustaining the CR station without external support. Reducing dependency on the initiator organization, replacing equipment, retaining volunteers are important challenges that have to be addressed for attaining sustainability. Social barrier to women's participation, security of female workers, producing quality programmes have also been mentioned as challenges.

Key Informant Interview (KII)

21 key informants, directly or indirectly involved with 7 CR stations were interviewed using semi-structured sets of questionnaire. Station manager of 7 stations, ED of 7 initiator organizations, 3 government officials, 2 journalists, 1 public representative and Principal of one local college gave their views through these interview sessions.

CR station seems to maintain good linkage with the local upazila administration. But it has gap of communication with district administration. Management of most of the radio stations are concerned about repair and replacement of equipment due to constraint of funds. Uninterrupted power supply at a low rate is a requirement of the radio management. Issues related to the life and livelihood of marginalized people of remote areas should get priority, as they opined.

Lack of quality control mechanism for programmes and compliance with the CR guideline have been mentioned as concerns. The interviewees expressed satisfaction over CR's role in creating awareness on social issues. Most of the interviewees were

found very enthusiastic about the radio programme, its benefits and role of the volunteers. They feel that the station will sustain if people want it to sustain. If academic programmes are include, the community radio can be an alternative to coaching classes for students.

In addition to the above, President of the Community Radio Association, President of Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) and Executive Director of Mass-line Media Centre shared their views on current situation and sustainability of community radio in Bangladesh as a whole. Consultant of DW Akademie Mr. Raghu Mainali of Nepal expressed his views on sustainability of community radio in a brief interview.

According to them, initial success of CR is that community people have accepted the concept of community radio. It is too early to assess impact of the radio on the community. Business strategy has to be followed to attain financial sustainability. A good matching between fund flow and programme production has to be ensured. Overflow of funds may have an adverse effect on the radio programme.

FINDINGS

All of the seven Community Radios under the scope of current study are owned by non-government development organizations. This is a common feature. They have strong point as far as working with the grassroots is concerned. One of them has some media and communication programmes while others have years' of development experiences in diverse areas i.e. human rights, legal aids, health, micro-credit etc.

All of these Community Radios have another thing common and that's their area of coverage. Each of these stations is audible only within 17-kilometre radius. Listeners living beyond 17-km radius cannot generally get access to the programmes aired by the Community Radios. But those having access to internet can even listen to their programmes even from beyond the national boundary. Some of the Community Radio programmes, which become hugely popular, attract listeners' phone calls from abroad.

Broadcast hours of these stations have got a wide range of variations. While some air programmes as long as 18-hour a day, there are ones who put programmes on air for three hours only. There are cases where some stations increased their broadcast hours over time and vice versa. Question of financing, human resource availability and eventually, overall sustainability are somewhat linked with this phenomenon. Of the seven, only two stations have pre-noon broadcast hours while the rest mostly remain on air from afternoon to midnight or beyond.

It is found out that the Community Radios have a wide range of programmes to present for their listeners. Almost all of them broadcast not only local and regional news but also some national and international news, which they consider very important. Their programmes cover the issues concerning farming, education, weather forecast, health, women, maternal and child health etc.

Some of these stations run English language learning programmes that many find useful. Some of the stations also air programmes creating awareness about trafficking, early marriage, nutrition, food adulteration, legal supports and also highlights livelihood and rights of poor, marginalized and indigenous people.

They also put on air different musical programmes and programmes related to folk heritage, regional and local development challenges etc.

Majority of the stations are housed in rented facilities while a couple of them have office building owned by licensees' NGOs. There are human resource challenges too - while some are lucky having some trained staffs on payroll, many are banking largely on volunteers, freelancers with very limited number of own staffs.

In many cases listeners living in the command areas of the respective stations voluntarily formed 'Listeners' Clubs', 'Fan Clubs' from their passion for the programmes broadcast by the Community Radios. In all cases the stations are supportive to such clubs and try to encourage such community supports. Some stations also arrange periodic interactive sessions with listeners at large and with listeners' clubs in particular to get feedback.

During the course of current study, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Key Informants' Interview (KII), and Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Challenges (SWOC) analyses were conducted at all the districts where these seven Community Radios are stationed. From all these exercises many other feedback, suggestions and challenges came up.

While some said that listeners prefer radio to cable TV because of its mobility, others also mentioned that the number of listeners is high in case of community radios because they broadcast less commercials/advertisements compared to satellite televisions and FM radios. Some, however, mentioned, many of the FM radio cannot be tuned in all the areas.

They consider that the marginalized people are the main beneficiaries of Community Radio. They say students, youths, women and villagers are principal listeners of Community Radios while working people, job doers and businessman find it difficult to listen to radios managing time out from work. For some the 17-km radius catchment is a barrier as they sometimes get deprived of radio listening due to physical distance.

The staffs of the radio stations identified many of their current strengths and opportunities, which include, among others, team work and skilled workforce, credibility and popularity, programme diversity, online transmission, increasing number of listeners' clubs etc.

However, at the same breath they also spoke of various weaknesses and challenges they face including; financial uncertainty, equipment insufficiency, lacking in technical training, challenge of staff retention, inadequate government supports - particularly policy and regulatory supports etc.

Recommendations on sustainability

One of the principal mandates of this study is to explore possibilities in terms of Community Radios' attaining sustainability. Throughout the whole exercise, the question of sustainability came up again and again and that also very prominently. It appears that the issue of sustainability does not necessarily remains a concern exclusive to the licensees only. Rather a wide spectrum of people is equally empathetic to this concern. This wide range include people who work for these radio stations, people who listen to these stations, beneficiaries, community leaders, development partners, supporters and patrons as well as business community.

Expressing concerns apart, they also did come up with flurry of ideas. The later sections of this report, which contains separate situation cards on each of the seven Community Radios, have details of such ideas. Some of those are very pragmatic, practicable while some others are not.

For records here we give some examples of sustainability ideas in bullet points but would definitely like to delve deep into, at least, three points that everyone related to the trade needs to explore.

- The Community Radios can ask for subscription from the listeners
- Can air more advertisements. Government should ease advertisement policy in Community Radios' favour
- Can think of receiving one-time contribution from rich people
- Can earn some money from the income of the SMS (text messages) by arrangements with the mobile phone companies
- Can sell shares to the community for sustainability
- Can approach local business community, chamber bodies for support
- Government should help the Community Radios in achieving sustainability
- Business community can help increase revenues by providing advertisements
- Radio authorities should make more publicity for earning support from the community for sustainability
- Government can create Trust Fund to support Community Radios. There is example in India.
- Community Radios can partner with organizations in promoting causes, agendas and earn revenues

There are dozens of other ideas and suggestions that we deliberately kept saved for future reference as we present here the seven situation cards on seven radio stations.

But now there is need for elaboration on three particular issues: 1) Ensuring and strengthening community ownership 2) Clarifying regulatory framework on advertisement issue and 3) Devising subscription mechanism.

1) Ensuring and strengthening community ownership:

The first and foremost issue to be taken into account for attaining sustainability is developing and strengthening a sense of ownership of the community radio among the people of the community where the radio station is operating. Mere support of the community is not enough. It has to earn community ownership in true sense of the term. Community has to be convinced why and how the community radio is different from other national and FM media outlets. They need to know that community radio is focused on the needs of that particular community, highlighting problems, hopes and aspirations of the community people -- and not the broader national issues. They have to feel that they are the collective owners of the radio and it is their responsibility to keep it functioning. If the community considers the radio an institute of their own like other social and religious institutes such as school, mosque and temple, it is most likely to sustain amidst all crises and adversities.

Developing this sense of ownership may not be very easy. The radio has to earn confidence of people through regular contact and formal and informal interactions with them. A participatory approach would work here. If mechanism can be devised in such a way where the community radios would plan programmes, implement budgets and take up issues close to public hearts with active participation of community people - it may work well. Effective and proactive listeners club can be a very useful tool to bridge the gap between the community and the radio station. Sense of ownership, partnership among the community people would ultimately help them turn as radio patrons.

2) Clarifying regulatory framework on advertisement issue:

In the rules, regulations guiding the Community Radio, it is mentioned that the programmes aired by the Community Radios should reflect the special interests of the community to be served “on areas of development such as agriculture, both adult and children education, gender, primary health, environment, social welfare, current market prices, demand for agro-products, rural and community development, infant care, maternity health, family planning, income generation etc.”

It is also mandated that the format, subjects, presentation and language of the programs have to reflect the local culture and strengthen identity.

Many mentioned that if compared with the FM radio stations, Community Radios have a huge, responsible, committed role to play. Community Radio, by definition, has got little scope to run commercially. They just cannot put on air music for hours or for that matter they simply cannot "experiment" with Bengali-English 'mixture' language as their FM counterparts do.

Some mentioned that a country where people do little care about singers' royalty, broadcasting music on radios is the cheapest (in terms of operational costs) thing to

do. But making health, education and awareness building programmes and putting those on air requires money.

Against this backdrop, we can refer here what the rules guiding Community Radios say about advertisement policy - "The policy makes advertising possible under certain conditions, which include: a) advertisements have to be linked to development services relevant and limited to the specified area; b) existing government regulations are to be followed."

It is evident from the views of the licensees, operators, managers and media practitioners that there exists a big confusion over amount of airtime a Community Radio can offer for advertisers, which are the advertisements to be considered development related and which are not.

A policy intervention is recommended here for removing the ambiguity over Community Radios' advertisement rule.

3) Devising subscription mechanism:

Community participation can make things different for Community Radios. There exists a tremendous level of public enthusiasm about Community Radio. Voluntary formation of 'Listeners' Club' is just one manifestation of such enthusiasm. During interactions, held as part of this study, community leaders, business people also showed great interests in helping all possible ways so that radio stations of their respective regions do survive and thrive.

It is highly recommended that the operators of Community Radios need to devise subscription mechanism where people in the community would take great pride in patronizing radio station of "their own." Sense of ownership has to be developed. Subscription amount can be really very nominal.

**Situation Cards on
Seven Community Radio Stations**



Borendra Radio

Current situation of the radio station: Strengths and limitations

Borendra Radio is located at Naogaon, a northern district of the country. The station has been initiated by Naogaon Human Rights Development Association (NHRDA), a local NGO. Currently the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for 8 hours a day -- from 3 pm to 11 pm. The station is run by 9 staff members and 20 volunteers. Following strengths and limitations of the station have been identified through this assessment study.

Strengths

- Popularity of the radio programmes.
- Broadcasting of local news.
- Team work of the staff and volunteers.
- Cooperation of press club
- Experienced staff (News & Programme).
- Strong management and administrative support

Limitations

- The Borendra radio station has acute financial crisis
- Lack of training on programme production
- Limited frequency
- Insufficient equipment

Challenges ahead

- Replacement of equipment.
- Survival through competition with other station.
- Sustaining manpower
- Technical support.

Options for sustainability

Speaking on sustainability options, the respondents and participants emphasized on greater coordination and partnership with other organizations working in the area. Review of CR policy was also suggested to allow commercial advertisement for financial sustainability. Borendra Radio should keep in continuous touch with the business community and local government authorities for cooperation and support. Following sustainability options have derived from the study.

- The participants proposed to air advertisement on time table of rail, bus and other transports to earn revenue.
- For sustainability of Borendra Radio the CR Policy should be reviewed so that increased number of advertisement can be broadcast to generate more revenue. It can come forward with trust fund to support in achieving sustainability.
- The local government and the other district level organizations can come forward to help achieve sustainability.
- Regarding sustainability of the CR the listeners should come forward with subscription.
- Business community can be a source of support. They have not been approached yet.
- CR has to take up projects in partnership with other organizations for attaining sustainability.
- Advertisement from municipality can help the CR financially.

Profile of radio station

- Initiator: Naogaon Human Rights Development Association (NHRDA)
- Location and area of coverage: Naogaon, an area of 17 kilometres radius around the station
- Broadcasting hour: 8 hours -- from 3 pm to 11 pm.
- Programme issues: Local news, agriculture, education, weather forecast. Thunder storm is an important issue, because it is a common calamity here.
- Physical facility and equipment: Located in a rented house. Shortage of equipment is there. A back up transmitter is needed.
- Human resources: 9 staff and 20 volunteers

Focus Group Discussion

Date: 25 November, 2014

Two FGD sessions were held - one with a mixed group of listeners and the other with volunteers of radio and staff of NGO. A total of 20 participants took part in the discussions.

FGD-1

Participants: Mixed group of listeners

Venue: Barendra Radio office

Number of participants: Male - 10 Female - 1 Total - 11

Participants proposed to involve community in planning and producing programmes and managing the station. Poor farmers of remote areas and young people are the main beneficiaries of the radio programme. So their feedback should be taken on priority basis.

Findings:

- The main beneficiaries of the radio are marginalized farmers and population of Charland, youths and other mixed population of town and villages.
- 16 to 17 listeners clubs are there. Club members listen to Barebdra Radio regularly and send feedback.
- The CR is listened by mainly the youths using mobile phone because the most family members remain busy to watch TV, cable TV.
- Population of the Char areas is mainly dependent on Borendra Radio as they are physically separated from the mainland.
- The program broadcast from Borendra Radio on drug abuse is very much important in the area. Drug being illegally brought from Indian Territory. The other reason is the opium is produced in this area.
- The CR authority does not involve the community members for program planning, broadcasting and management as per the policy. So, a management committee can be created with the representative of the civil society.
- The participants proposed to air advertisement on time table of rail, bus and other transports to earn revenue.
- For sustainably of Borendra Radio the CR Policy should be reviewed so that increased number of advertisement can be broadcast to generate more revenue.

FGD - 2

Participants: Volunteers of radio and staff of NGO

Venue: Borendra Radio office

Number of participants: Male - 4 Female - 5 Total - 9

Reduction of transmission hours from 13 hours to 8 hours has been expressed as a matter of concern. Volunteers interact with the listeners in monthly meetings. The station needs financial and logistics support to sustain. Uninterrupted power supply has to be ensured. A stand by transmitter is also needed.

Findings:

- The radio covers 17 Km area with a 100 wt transmitter
- Transmission of the station was 13 hours a day but now it is reduced to 8 hours
- The radio is working to establish right of Harijan and Adibashi -the marginal population of the area including other common peoples.
- The airs program on the issues like Recreation, Health, Education, drug abuse, women and children, talk show on social issues
- The regional news is gets very importance where program on climate change also aired.
- A program on English learning is broadcast with the assistance of BBC trained teachers.
- They organized monthly meeting with listeners
- They received feedback from the listeners mainly through mobile phone call or SMS.
- The Borendra Radio has acute financial crisis
- They have inadequate equipment like microphone to air quality program. They also need an uninterrupted power supply. The present generator frequently goes out of order and needs repairing.
- They also need an extra transmitter to continue the radio program when it goes off air.
- The radio suffers from financial crisis at present to carry on the program regularly.
- They have a few paid staff compared to others. They have to depend on only 3 volunteers to support in program production, presentation and other activities.
- The question of sustainability is very important.
- The local government and the other district level organization can come forward to achieve sustainability.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

Interviews of three informants - Principal of Akhter Mollah Degree College, Naogaon, station manager and General Secretary of NHRDA have been taken. The radio can be an alternative to coaching classes for students. Repair and replacement of equipment is a major concern. Uninterrupted power supply at a low rate is a requirement of the radio management.

Mohammad Murtaza Reza
Principal, Akhter Mollah Degree College, Naogaon
Venue: Principal's Office

Responses

- 1200 students of the college more or less listen to Barebdra radio.
- The radio is very popular among the youngsters.
- The Community Radio can be a strong and easy medium of learning parallel with socio- economic development.
- I can take an important role in education extension.
- The radio can broadcast program based on class lectures which can keep the student away from the coaching classes.
- The CR can invite teachers to take part in educational program. I am sure they will come forward to take part in it. It should be design as it could be an alternative to coaching class done by same teachers. This will bring the teacher popularity among the students of the area.
- In the evening the CR can air program for skill development of different professions.
- It can broadcast program on marketing harvest during season which may help farmers in get cost benefiting price.
- Regarding sustainability of the CR the listeners should come forward
- If GOB is interested then it can come forward with trust fund to support in achieving sustainability.
- The GOB should allow the CR to broadcast limited commercial advertisement like 'Radio Foorty' and 'ABC radio' then the CR can easily achieve sustainability.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

Subrata Sarker

Station Manager, Barendra Radio

Responses

- Programmes of Barendra Radio cover agriculture, health, education, environment issues and entertainment.
- The station has no income of its own. It is run under the funding of NHRDA.
- Power disruption is a major problem.
- Listeners and volunteers are the real strength of the radio.
- Replacement of equipment is essential.
- Business community can be a source of support. We have not yet approached them.
- CR policy modification is needed for sustainability.

Sohel Ahmed

General Secretary

NHRDA and Chairman, Barendra Radio

Responses

- NHRDA works in the field of combating domestic violence in 11 upazilas of Naogaon district.
- NHRDA spent Taka 42 lac to establish the community radio station at Naogaon.
- Barendra Radio emphasizes on programmes on agriculture, environment and disaster. It broadcasts programmes with the participation of disabled persons and Dalit community.
- The station is running with the support of volunteers who work here without any remuneration.
- Volunteers and technical persons are recruited from local educational institutes including polytechnic institute.
- NHRDA provides house rent and utility charges.
- Local administration and the community are very supportive.
- With the expiry of warranty period, most of the equipment need to be replaced. But the organization has no fund to do that. Urgent support is needed for replacing equipment.
- The station received a back up transmitter from BNNRC.
- Policy on commercial advertisement needs to be changed.
- CR has to take up projects in partnership with other organization for attaining sustainability.
- Radius of transmission has to be expanded. Santal community of Naogaon and many farmers remain out of transmission range. The existing transmitter can cover greater areas if it is allowed.

The SWOC exercise

Venue: Office of the Radio station

Date: 25 November, 2014

Staff and volunteers engaged in programme production and technical operations took part in the exercise. Popularity of the programme, efficient management, support of local administration and press club have been identified as strength, whereas financial problem, insufficient equipment, lack of training and sustaining manpower were mentioned as limitations and challenges. The table below shows the result of the exercise.

Strength	Weakness	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listener • Volunteer • Popularity of the programme • Local news • Mutual understanding • Administrative cooperation • Cooperation of press club • Good management • Experienced staff (News & Programme) • Receiving Mina media award • Being awarded fellowship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insecurity of fund • Financial limitations • Frequency problem • Insufficient equipment • Lack of training on producing programme • Lack of training on language proficiency • Earthing problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope of advertisement • Scope of project • Advertisement from Paurasava • Support from UNDP • Advertisement from government and trust fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining manpower • Reduced transmission time • Survival through competition with other stations • Technical Support • Programme Backup problem



Radio Chilmari

Current situation of the radio station: Strengths and limitations

Radio Chilmari is located at Chilmari upazila of Kurigarm, a northern district of the country. This poverty-stricken area is characterized by river erosion, flood and other calamities that make the life and livelihood of people rather difficult. **Yet** the people, particularly the young generation and public representatives take it a pride that they have a radio station in their locality. Radio Chilmari has been initiated by RDRS, an NGO working in this area. Currently the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for 3 hours a day - 4 pm to 7 pm. The station is run by 2 staff members and 20 volunteers. Following strengths and limitations of the station have been identified through this assessment study.

Strengths

- Public representatives and local administration are very supportive to the station.
- Located in its own building constructed by RDRS.
- Committed staff and volunteers.
- Community support and participation
- Interest of the listeners.
- Good number of listeners clubs
- Support of RDRS

Limitations

- Crisis of fund is a major problem
- Transmission hour is too short
- Power disruption
- Shortage of equipment
- Shortage of permanent staff
- Lack of training
- No vehicle for movement

Challenges ahead

- Replacing and repairing equipment is a challenge.
- Shortage of live broadcast equipment.
- Attaining sustainability itself is a big challenge.
- Procuring alternative transmitter.

Options for sustainability

Initiator of Radio Chilmari RDRS is a renowned NGO of the country. Located in a remote area, the radio has earned popularity and credibility in the community. Public representatives and local administration are very supportive. Using this advantage, RDRS can strengthen its coordination and communications with government and non-government agencies to consolidate their support in order to attain sustainability of the station. Following sustainability options have derived from the study.

- Revenue has to be generated through broadcasting adequate advertisements for sustainability
- GOB incentive to be increase. The present advertisement policy should be modified for revenue generation to achieve sustainability.
- Local development organization or NGOs can publicize their project based program from the Radio Chilmari as advertisement.
- Other local organizations should help the radio for sustainability by providing donation.
- Upazila Parishad can provide assistance to convince businessman and GOB to support the radio.
- Commercial advertisement has to be allowed. Payment should be made for broadcasting public service announcement.
- Source of income has to be explored for the radio station by the initiator jointly with
- Communicate with the persons related with radio to avail their support and cooperation

Profile of radio station

- Initiator: RDRS
- Location and area of coverage: Chilmari of Kurigram district. Coverage is an area of 17 kilometres radius around the station.
- Broadcasting hour: 3 hours a day - 4 pm to 7 pm
- Programme issues: Health information, children, women, regional news, songs, folk heritage and Chilmari upazila based radio talk and magazine
- Physical facility and equipment: Located in a two storied building constructed by RDRS for the radio station.
- Human resources: 2 staff members and 20 volunteers

Focus Group Discussion

Date: 26 Nov.2014

Two FGD sessions were held - one with a mixed group of listeners and the other with volunteers of radio and staff of RDRS, the initiator NGO. A total of 20 participants took part in discussions.

FGD -1

The participants seemed very happy about having a radio station in such a remote area. They are benefitted by the programmes and they strongly desire the station's continuation. They want longer transmission hour of the radio.

Participants: Mixed Listeners (House wives, students both girls and boys, farmers, shop owners, NGO leaders. Some are members of radio listeners club.

Venue: Abbasuddin Pathagar, Chilhari

Number of participants: Male - 5 Female - 5 Total - 10

Findings:

- Almost all of the participants know the community Radio Chilhari and regularly listen to it.
- Information for the farmers for how to increase crop production.
- Forecast on preparedness for flooding, thunder-storm, insect attack on crops for the population of char land (shoals).
- The arrival-departure information of bus, railway and launch.
- Community Radio can be listened by mobile phone and due to this mobility the number of mobile use is high compared to radio set.
- Sometimes the home TV set are occupied by the elders for particular channel/program. In that case youngsters prefer to listen to CR.
- The mixed listeners demanded to increase the transmission time.
- As per GOB policy the involvement of community members in program planning and broadcasting is not formally done with a certain interval.
- There is no formal opinion survey system but listeners can give the feedback by the SMS from mobile phone.
- The participants demanded for program on health nutrition of women and children. Child marriage and polygamy
- They also demanded for increase time for songs and news broadcast. There should be more program on awareness on Law and orders.
- The also demanded program on poverty alleviation and control of river erosion or river training.
- The participants said they read daily newspapers namely, Daily Karatoa, Jugantar, Prothom Alo.
- Revenue has to be generated through broadcasting adequate advertisements for sustainability.

FGD - 2

Participants: Volunteers of radio and staff of NGO RDRS

Venue: Radio Chilmari CR building of RDRS, Chilmari, Kurigram

Number of participants: Male - 7 Female - 3 Total - 10

Though located in a rather poverty-stricken area, Radio Chilmari has as many as 85 listeners' clubs in its transmission area. They are happy about support of local administration. They want support of the government and other authorities for sustainability of the station.

1. The Radio Chilmari went on test run on 3 Nov. 2011 and formal broadcasting began from 2 June 2012.
2. The CR broadcasts program on issues like: health, agriculture, disaster management, development news.
3. Upazila officials voluntarily participate in the live programs.
4. The participants identified the most important issue of the CR are disaster management and agricultural information based program
5. There were 85 radio listeners clubs in the Chilmari broadcasting area and the club-member varies from 25- 30 per club.
6. The participants demanded to introduce academic lessons for broadcasting from radio Chilmari.
7. There is a phone-in program for the listeners once in a month for collecting opinion of the listeners.
8. The participants demanded to increase transmission time for inclusion of some more important development issues.
9. For sustainability the participants demanded to allow them to broadcast more advertisements in increased revenue
10. GOB incentive to be increased.
11. Local development organization can publicize their program from the Radio Chilmari as advertisement.
12. The number of workforce should be increased as the radio is operated mainly by volunteers.

Key Informant Interview

Interviews of three informants - Upazila chairman, station-in-charge and ED of RDRS have been taken. They seem to be very enthusiastic about the radio programme, its benefits and role of the volunteers. They want to extend the transmission hour. Erratic supply of power is a major barrier according to them.

Mr. Abdul Quddus Sarkar Acting Upazila Chairman, Chilmari

Responses:

- As per the Chairman, airing time should be increased to cover some more important issues of the Upazila
- The issues covered by the radio are: Family Planning, Health, River Erosion, Agriculture
- Apart from Chilmari the radio covers areas of Gaibanda, Sudergonj, Roumai, Rajibpur etc.
- As per the Chairman the radio should inform local administration about their constraints.
- He assured the local administration will assist the community radio all possible ways.
- RDRS and Chinna Mukul are working for the development activities of Chilmari.
- The NGOs working in the area should use the radio for broadcasting the information of their program for the beneficiaries.
- Local other organization should help the radio for sustainability by donation.
- Upazila Parishad can provide assistance to convince businessman and GOB to support the radio.
- If the doctors, teachers, lawyers join the radio program the community members will be benefitted.
- As public representative I feel GOB donation or sanction fund can help the CR in achieving the sustainability.

Mr. Bashir Ahmed Station in- Charge, Radio Chilmari

Responses:

- The radio Chilmari has no long term plan for sustainability
- The main feed back of the listeners is to increase the airing time.
- Some equipments needed for live broadcast from the field.
- They also need back up transmitter to provide uninterrupted service and extra power generator as it needs some longer time to repair.
- RDRS bears total expenditure of the Chilmari Radio.
- The community radio is passing through a hard time due to fund crisis
- Support from GOB and donor needed

- The present advertisement policy should be modified for revenue generation to achieve sustainability.
- PSA should be broadcast on payment.
- The Chilhari Radio has 5 lacs of regular and irregular listeners
- The listeners are visible and have a close contact with the radio.

Salima Rahman
Executive Director, RDRS

Responses

- The radio station has about 5 lac listeners mostly from remote char areas.
- Climate change, disaster awareness and preparedness, women and child issues, English language teaching and agriculture are the frequently covered issues of programme.
- Only 3 hours' transmission is not enough. It needs to be increased. But power disruption is a barrier to it.
- Sustainability is a challenge. Government has a positive attitude to community radio. Still more enabling policy is needed.
- Commercial advertisement has to be allowed. Payment should be made for broadcasting public service announcement.
- Source of income has to be explored for the radio station.
- Community is supportive. But generating financial resource from the community is difficult.
- Local government bodies can provide support.
- Replacing and repairing equipment is a challenge.
- Community radio, in general, is playing a vital role in social mobilization and awareness creation on development issues.
- There is a bright future of community radio in Bangladesh. As a community focused media, it is very popular among local people.
- Businesses should come up to support CR.
- Partnership with NGOs would help sustain the radio.

Findings of SWOC analysis

Staff and volunteers engaged in programme production and technical operations took part in the exercise. Commitment of workers, support of the community and the listeners have been identified as strength, whereas financial problem, power supply, logistics and other facilities were mentioned as limitations and challenges. The table below shows the result of the exercise.

Strength	Weakness	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own building • Committed worker • Support in producing programme • Community participation • Listeners' demand • Support of the public representatives and local administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited broadcasting time • Financial constraints • Shortage of permanent staff • Lack of training • Shortage of necessary equipment • Bad physical communication • No live broadcast transmitter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop skilled work force through training • Involve local NGOs with radio network through coordination • Communicate with the persons related with radio to avail their support and cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power disruption • No backup power generator • No alternative transmitter • No vehicle for movement



Radio Mohananda

Current situation of the radio station: Strengths and limitations

Radio Mohananda is located at Chapai Nawabganj, a northern district of the country. It is not far from the international border with India. Though urban people have access to cable TV, the radio is quite popular because it focuses local issues and produces some programmes in local dialect.

Radio Mohananda has been initiated by Proyas Manabik Unnayan Sangstha, a local NGO. Currently the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for 10 hours a day - 3 pm to 1 am. The station is run by 8 staff members and 34 volunteers. Following strengths and limitations of the station have been identified through this assessment study.

Strengths

- The radio is very popular among the listeners.
- Skilled workers and performers are strength of the station.
- Team work of the staff and volunteers.
- Huge work force of the initiator organization -- about 1400 small groups of 30,000 members
- BNNRC and CR Association provide support.
- Strong management and administrative support

Limitations

- Volunteer turn out
- Lack of training
- Financial constraint
- Shortage of equipment
- Lack of long term strategic plan

Challenges ahead

- Unclear guideline of the government.
- Facing disaster like thunder storm.
- Negative attitude about women's working in radio
- Weak reception of programme even within the transmission range.

Options for sustainability

It came out from the discussions that if Radio Mahanada can create demand among the people then it will sustain. Representatives of local NGOs seemed to be cooperative, but lack of their communication with the radio management was visible. Radio Mahananda should keep in continuous touch with the NGOs for cooperation and partnership. Following sustainability options have derived from the study.

- In response to the question about sustainability the participants expect advertisement and extending the broadcasting areas.
- The NGO representatives suggested for fund raising for sustainability.
- The GOB or local administration can support the CR in many ways.
- The CR should strengthen their local networking. They should share their financial problem with NGOs. The local NGO representatives can help in achieving sustainability.
- If Radio Mahanada can create demand among the people then it will sustain.
- In the National Community radio Policy there is a commitment for a Trust Fund to support the CR but it has not been realized yet.
- Local organization's support is insignificant.
- The listeners' club members can play an important role in collecting subscription/fund for sustainability.
- The huge work force of the initiator organization -- about 1400 small groups of 30,000 members which can play an important role in achieving sustainability.

Profile of radio station

- Initiator: Proyas Manabik Unnayan Sangstha
- Location and area of coverage: Chapai Nawabganj, Coverage is an area of 17 kilometres radius around the station.
- Broadcasting hour: 10 hours a day - 3 pm to 1 am
- Programme issues: Local and national news, agriculture, education, women and children, trafficking, early marriage, maternal and child health, indigenous and marginalized population, music and entertainment
- Physical facility and equipment: Located in a rented house. Initiator organization pays the rent.
- Human resources: 8 staff and 34 volunteers

Focus Group Discussion

Date: 24 Nov.2014

Two FGD sessions were held - one with a mixed group of listeners and the other with local NGO officials. A total of 18 participants took part in discussions.

FGD -1

Participants: Listeners (Mixed)

Venue: Chapai Nawabganj Press club

Number of participants: Male - 9 Female - 1 Total - 10

According to the listeners, the station is popular as it addresses local issues. These listeners are linked with the radio mainly through SMS (mobile messaging). They think government should allow commercial ad for sustainability of the radio.

Findings:

- The cable and national TV do not broadcast local news which Radio Mahananda does. So the station is popular among local people.
- The audience expects programs on law, interactive program (question-answer) with patient- doctors where a patient can call for the advice of the doctor. .
- The listeners are housewife (7 pm-10 pm), businessman (after 7 pm) the farmers (during daytime in the field as well as after dusk). Youngsters listen the Mahanada radio mainly through mobile phone and rest by radio set in their suitable time.
- There are listeners' clubs where the number of the members varies from 45 to 53.
- The club needs financial support for functioning.
- Radio Mahananda responds to letter and SMS of the listeners.
- The radio staff members meet the listeners periodically for the feedback on programs they broadcast.
- Farmers are benefitted from the agricultural tips broadcast from the CR.
- There is no advertisement broadcast from the radio.
- In response to the question of sustainability the participants expects advertisement and broadening the broadcasting areas.
- The popularity of the CR Mahanada appears to be very high among the listeners.

FGD -2

Participants: Local NGO officials

Venue: Chapai Nawabganj Press club

Number of participants: Male - 8 Female - 0 Total - 8

The participating NGO representatives mentioned their good relation with the initiator organization. But they also mentioned that there were scopes for better coordination and cooperation between the radio station and local NGOs. The station needs financial support for continuation.

Findings:

- The NGO representatives working in the area have good relations with Proyas Manobik Unnayan Sangstha operating radio Mahananda.
- The issues covered by the CR are river erosion, life of char areas, agriculture, livestock, health, nutrition, local news, women and children, trafficking, Gambhira songs etc.
- Many people listen to the CR in the urban area despite availability of cable and national TV because of its broadcasting in local dialect.
- The information on the border is also a matter of interest covered by the CR.
- About sustainability the NGO representatives suggested for fund raising.
- The CR can go for advertisement broadcasting
- The GOB or local administration can support the CR.
- For sustainability of CR the participating NGO representatives opined that the Mahanada radio authority did not sit with them and shared their problem of financial issue. If they would have shared the issue then they could think the ways and means for that.
- The CR should strengthen their local networking strong.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

Interviews of three informants - District Information Officer, station manager and ED of Proyas have been taken. They feel that the station can sustain if people want it to sustain. Local businessmen are reluctant to give advertisement. The station tries to involve the listeners in its programmes.

Wahiduzzaman

District Information Officer, Chapai Nawabganj

Responses:

- Expressed his satisfaction over the CR Mahanada and have a good relation with the management
- As he joined the office in last year he did not have chance to know their present position.
- He gave a list of ideas of what the program CR should broadcast but he himself do not involve to that extent.
- In town area the CR has to face the challenge of cable and national TV.
- Marginalized population of rural area should be covered by the CR.
- The radio Mahanada broadcast programs on National Immunization Day a played a very effective role.
- He has no idea of Local Advisory Committee for overseeing the activities of the Community Radio.
- The popularity of CR is based on the benefit received by char population

- For sustainability he opined that if CR Mahanada can create demand among the people then it will sustain.
- The GOB should come forward to help sustain the CR for its own interest.
- The donor should help the CR Mahanada by training for capacity building to produce quality program and technical expertise for maintaining the equipment.

Mr. Hasib

Executive Director, Proyas Manobik Unnayan Sangstha

Responses:

- The CR Mahanada covers an area of 17 km of Chapai Nawabgaj sadar with its 100 wt transmitter.
- The main target audience of the radio is Adibasi(aboriginal/marginal population and poorest of the poor population of Charland affected by river erosion.
- They hold a program on letters and SMS of the listeners where the answers are given of the listeners question.
- There is an Advisory Committee to oversee the activities of CR led by Upazila Nirbahi Officer where the school teacher, Public representative are members.
- There is no clear direction regarding advertisement broadcasting.
- The Policy for CR is to regulate the activities but it needs to be updated.
- Local business organization advertisement by only Tk10/- but now it is stopped by vested interested quarter.
- In the National Community radio Policy there is a commitment for a Trust Fund to support the CR but it is never been in reality.
- Local organization's support is insignificant.

Ms. Allaya Ferdousi

Station manager, Radio Mohanada

- The station authorities do not go for community meeting for involving them in planning and implementation of the CR program but take the opinion of the leaders of the listeners club for designing the program.
- The listeners' club members can play an important role in collecting subscription/fund for sustainability.
- No survey has been conducted before launching the CR. (UNICEF sponsored survey was there)
- They strictly follow the CR policy of the government.

The SWOC exercise

Venue: Office of Proyas and the Radio station

24 Nov. 2014

Staff and volunteers engaged in programme production and technical operations took part in the exercise. Credibility of the station, support of the community, the listeners and BNNRC have been identified as strength, whereas financial problem, volunteer turn over, lack of training and strategic plan and limited area coverage were mentioned as limitations and challenges. The table below shows the result of the exercise.

Strength	Weakness	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity • Legal affiliation • Listeners and their clubs • Skilled workers and performers • BNNRC and CR Association • Credibility • Management committee • Advisory committee • Technical skills • Administrative support • Huge work force of the initiator organization -- about 1400 small groups of 30,000 members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CR policy • Financial constraint • Volunteer turn out • Lack of training • Lack of long term strategic plan • Insufficient equipment • Limited transmission range (17 km only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing transmission hours • producing creative programmes • Involve community • Promote local culture and heritage • Involve SME • Broadcast more issues of public interest and importance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear guideline of the government • Facing disaster like thunder storm • Weak reception of programme even within the transmission range • Negative attitude of a portion of the community to women's working in radio • Involving journalists, government and non-government officials



Radio Mukti

Current situation of the radio station: Strengths and limitations

Radio Mukti is located in Bogra, the commercial hub of the northern part of Bangladesh. The station has been initiated by Landless and Distressed Rehabilitation Organization (LDRO), a local NGO. Currently the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for nine hours a day -- from 3 pm to midnight. A total of 16 staff members and 80 volunteers are producing programmes and operating the station. Following strengths and limitations of the station have been identified through this assessment study.

Strengths

- Interested listeners have formed listeners clubs on their own initiative.
- Volunteers of Radio Mukti are committed and dedicated to their work.
- The station is using equipment of high quality.
- Local administration and community people are supportive to the radio.
- Listeners are interested in extending cooperation to the radio.
- Members of listeners clubs give opinion on and participate in radio programmes.

Limitations

- The limited frequency is a barrier for radio listeners on travel.
- A back up transmitter is needed.
- The station is located in a rented house.
- Radio Mukti has hardly any income. The station runs with the funding of LDRO
- Social barrier for the girls to work is a problem.
- Radio Mukti has not taken any marketing initiative on its own.
- Lack of need based training on technical and programme production areas.

Challenges ahead

- Most of the equipment may need to be replaced soon.
- Good numbers of listeners are there, but sustaining them is a challenge.
- Retention of staff is a challenge for Radio Mukti.
- Earning business community's confidence for availing their support.
- Producing creative and attractive programmes.
- Taking initiative for marketing.

Options for sustainability

Bogra is prominent for light engineering and other small and medium enterprises in this part of the country. A good relation between the radio station and the business

community can create a win-win situation and thus benefit both the parties. But lack of linkage and coordination has been found in this regard. The CR management has not taken any marketing initiative on its own. Business people are hardly aware of the kind of support the station may need in future to sustain. Following sustainability options have derived from the study.

- For sustainability the radio can ask for subscription from the listeners, air advertisement, and one time contribution from rich people.
- The CR can earn some money from the income of the SMS (mobile messages) if they have agreement with the phone company.
- They can sell share to the community for sustainability.
- Business community can increase revenue by providing advertisements.
- The radio authority should make more publicity for earning support from the community for sustainability.
- The CR authority should take initiative to meet businessman, be it small or big of the Bogra city, to seek financial help.
- Government should help by reviewing the policy and allow them for commercials in achieving sustainability.
- The radio can sustain with funded projects -- like the current climate change project and another project with EU.

Profile of radio station

- Initiator: Landless and Distressed Rehabilitation Organization (LDRO)
- Location and area of coverage: Bogra, an area of 17 kilometres radius
- Broadcasting hour: Initially transmission time was 7 hours -- from 5 pm to midnight. Adding another two hours, now it airs from 3 pm to midnight.
- Programme issues: Education, agriculture, health, legal advice, women's and children's issues, music and entertainment
- Physical facility and equipment: Located in a rented house. Using modern equipment, but some problems are there about ownership.
- Human resources: 16 staff and 80 volunteers

Focus Group Discussion

Date: 26 November 2014

Two FGD sessions were held - one with a mixed group of listeners and the other with advertisement providers. A total of 14 participants took part in the discussions.

FGD -1

Participants: Mixed group of listeners

Venue: Red Chilies Restaurant, Bogra

Number of participants: Male - 5 Female - 4 Total - 9

Participants of the session told young people and vulnerable communities living in char areas constitute the major listeners' group. They are benefitted by the programmes and the young listeners are enthusiastic about the station's continuation. CR broadcast less number of advertisement compared to TV and FM radio, so number of listeners is high.

Findings:

- Interested listeners have formed listeners clubs on their own initiative.
- The radio airs a popular education program namely 'Campus' with active participation of students, teachers and guardians.
- There is a demand for counseling youngsters for future planning
- Initially it broadcast local news but stopped recently.
- Community participation ensured through mobile phone messaging.
- On 2nd Friday of each month the radio authority listens to the opinion of the community and listeners.
- Listeners prefer radio to cable TV because of its mobility.
- The number of listeners is high in case of community radio because CR broadcast less number of advertisement compared to TV and FM radio.
- The marginalized people are the main beneficiaries.
- For sustainability the radio can ask for subscription from the listeners, air advertisement, and one time contribution from rich people.
- They can earn some money from the income of the SMS if they have agreement with the phone company.
- They can sell share to the community for sustainability.
- Community radio does not share its weaknesses and limitations with community members.
- FM band radio cannot be tuned in the area.

FGD-2

Participants: Advertisement providers

Venue: Red Chilies Restaurant, Bogra

Number of participants: Male - 5 Female - 0 Total - 5

Advertisement providers showed a positive attitude to provide support to the CR to sustain its operations. Corporate houses are willing to cooperate and they expect closer communication by the station authority. They think the CR authority should take initiative to meet businessman and keep in close touch with the Bogra Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Findings:

- The participants listen to Radio Mukti occasionally because they remain in their business place throughout the whole day even late at night.
- The maximum listeners are students and villagers.
- The limited frequency is a barrier to listening to the radio when they are away from the catchment area.
- The listeners send their feedback through SMS
- The radio authority has never contacted Bogra Chamber seeking support.
- GOB should help the radio in achieving sustainability of the CR
- Business community can increase revenue by providing advertisements.
- The radio authority should make more publicity for earning support from the community for sustainability.
- They should increase the advertisement by taking initiative.
- The CR authority should take initiative to meet businessman, be it small or big of the Bogra city, to seek financial help.
- The CR should go for self marketing to achieve support from the community members.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

Interviews of three informants - Additional Deputy Commissioner, station manager, and ED of LDRO have been taken. The district administration is not much aware about the radio programme. The station management is concerned about replacement of equipment. ED of the initiator organization is very optimistic about the future of community radio in Bangladesh.

Md. Khorshed Alam Additional Deputy Commissioner of Bogra

Responses

- Not much aware about the programmes of Radio Mukti
- Students, businessmen and farmers are potential listeners of community radio
- Radio sets need to be distributed among the listeners, particularly in char areas.
- Information on agriculture is an important issue that need to covered in radio programme with priority
- Awareness on and management of disaster should be discussed with specific information.
- Hygienic practice of waste management during Qurbani is an important issue.
- Light engineering, vegetable cultivation, English learning, drug abuse should come up as priority issues in the context of Bogra.

Md. Ziaul Haque, in favour of Jinia Farzana, Station Manager

- Volunteers are the main strength of Radio Mukti. These young volunteers are committed and dedicated to their work.
- Retention of staff and volunteers is a challenge.
- Radio Mukti has hardly any income. The station runs with the funding of LDRO.
- Quality of equipment is good, but they may need to be replaced soon.
- Business community has to be involved in the process of attaining sustainability of the radio station.

Selim Rahmat
Executive Director, LDRO

- Programme on people living in remote char areas is a priority.
- Agriculture, life of distressed people, child marriage, climate change issues are given importance.
- Members of listeners clubs give opinion on and participate in radio programmes.
- The station has equipment of high quality, but there is only one transmitter. A back up transmitter is needed and most of the equipment may need to be replaced soon.
- Very limited numbers of advertisements are aired currently.
- Businessmen of Bogra are least interested in radio advertisement.
- Government assured of allowing commercial ad gradually.
- Local administration and community people are supportive to the radio.
- Local experts and officials take part in radio talk and discussions without any remuneration.
- The radio can sustain with funded projects -- like the current climate change project and another project with EU.
- Community radio has a bright future in Bangladesh. However, it depends upon the policy of the government. Government should carefully consider technical and financial capacity of the initiator before issuing CR license.

Findings of the SWOC exercise

Staff and volunteers engaged in programme production and technical operations took part in the exercise. Commitment of the initiator organization, quality of transmission and the listeners have been identified as strength, whereas accommodation problem, shortage equipment, lack of training and retention of workers were mentioned as limitations and challenges. The table below shows the result of the exercise.

Strength	Weakness	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of LDRO • Committed workers/volunteers • Huge number of listeners • Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No own accommodation • Shortage of necessary equipment • Social barrier for the girls to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize business community for sustainability • Listeners' interest to help • Experience of other radio stations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain listeners • Retain workers • Producing effective and quality programmes

<p>production skill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern and high quality transmission 	<p>work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage of technical person • Lack of training • Weak committee • Lack of marketing initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive professionals • Business associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take marketing initiative • Earn business community's confidence for availing their support
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Radio Naaf

Current situation of the radio station: Strengths and limitations

Radio Naaf is located at Teknaf, the farthest locality in the extreme south-east corner of Bangladesh under the sea beach district of Cox's Bazar. Neighboring Myanmar is situated across the river Naaf. This bordering upazila is vulnerable to two major crimes -- human trafficking and smuggling of drugs, particularly the deadly Yaba. Access to media is very limited for the people of the locality, because other radio stations cannot be tuned and there is hardly any opportunity to watch TV. Religious fundamentalism and conservative attitude of a section of people are two major social barriers.

The CR station has been initiated by Alliance for Cooperation legal Aid Bangladesh (ACLAB), a local NGO. Currently the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for 4 hours a day in two sessions -- 9 - 11 am and 7 - 9 pm. The station is run by 8 staff members and 35 volunteers. Following strengths and limitations of the station have been identified through this assessment study.

Strengths

- Listeners are the main strength of Radio Naaf.
- The station has 20 women listeners clubs with 20 members in each. There are 4 farmers , 3 fishermen and 39 volunteers group who actively listen and provide feedback to the program
- ACLAB provides full support.
- Rural community is very supportive
- Trained volunteers are strength of Radio Naaf.

Limitations

- Frequent power failure
- Volunteer turn out
- Lack of training
- Religious fundamentalism.
- Shortage of quality educational institutes in the area

Challenges ahead

- Family barrier to receiving training.
- Social barrier to women's working in radio.
- Women empowerment
- Financial uncertainty.

Options for sustainability

Long term sustainability plan is needed as the participants and respondents of the study from Radio Naaf felt. The station is located in an international border point which is vulnerable to smuggling and other crimes. It is playing an important role in creating awareness against these hazards and ill practices. The station needs special attention and support of the concerned authorities to sustain its operation. Policy modification allowing commercial advertisements can be helpful. Communication with businessmen can also help. Moreover, it has to explore areas to generate income of its own. Radio Naaf has to come up with these initiatives. Following sustainability options have derived from the study.

- The participants requested to take long term plan to achieve sustainability.
- The CR authority should take initiative to convince the rich members (with their earthen bank) of the community to come forward to help the community radio of their area to continue the broadcasting
- They can include local public representatives like Member of the Parliament, chairman, members of the upazila to help achieve sustainability.
- If the CR can arrange coaching through live radio program on subjects like mathematics and English can help achieve sustainability.
- CR should take initiatives to mobilize business community by broadcasting local problems faced by the businessmen.
- For attaining sustainability higher frequency and wider broadcasting area needed
- They demanded for permission for the commercial advertisement by reviewing CR policy. Trust fund should come into effect to support CR.
- Local banks Insurance, agents of big business house, other GO-NGO organization present in Teknaf should be requested to provide both moral and financial support.
- They should market their own radio to gain more popularity.
- They get Tk.3,00,000/- from ACLAB and BNNRC support them by providing training. They also earn some fund by broadcasting drama serials produced by Marie Stope-INGO. They also work on partnership with Sight savers, Climate Change Regional eco-sustainability and Livelihood (CREL), Womens Awareness Cooperation.
- The acceptability of the Radio among the marginal community like Dalit, Hijra, Rakhine, Fisherman, farmers and local businessman can support them in attaining sustainability.
- For attaining sustainability of the station, they are taking innovative approaches like “Earthen Bank”. They are planning to take out the approach to its 27 groups and develop a future fund for sustainability for CR. They are planning to use the listeners group to collect fund from home to home in the “earthen bank”
- ACLAB expects that the desired change in CR Policy will be visible soon.
- The CR Association will go for advocacy jointly with BNNRC with GOB in achieving sustainability.

- They believe the future approach form community resource mobilization will help the radio Naaf for sustainability. They will explore corporate sector for acquiring social advertisement to achieve sustainability.

Profile of radio station

- Initiator: Alliance for Cooperation legal Aid Bangladesh (ACLAB)
- Location and area of coverage: Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, an area of 17 kilometres radius
- Broadcasting hour: Two sessions -- 9 - 11 am and 7 - 9 pm
- Programme issues: Education, agriculture, health, legal advice, women's and children's issues, music and entertainment
- Physical facility and equipment: Located in a rented house. Using modern equipment, but repair and replacement is a concern.
- Human resources: 8 staff and 35 volunteers

Focus Group Discussion

Date: 07 December 2014

Two FGD sessions were held - one with a mixed group of listeners and the other with the volunteers and staff of CR. A total of 21 participants took part in the discussions of two sessions.

FGD -1

Participants: Mixed Listeners

Venue: Radio Station

Number of participants: Male - 7 Female - 2 Total - 9

The listeners of Radio Naaf identified Yaba (kind of drugs) smuggling and human trafficking as two most vital problems which need to be addressed. CR can play an important role in creating awareness on these issues. English learning programme has a special demand among the young listeners. The participants sought greater cooperation of businessmen for sustainability of the CR station.

Findings:

- Mostly tuned by mobile phone due to its portability. It is also tuned by radio set.
- It broadcasts local news and issues on business, drug abuse, agriculture, games, songs and entertainment. It also broadcasts information on disaster management, early marriage, etc.
- Morning session from 09-11 am covers news and development issues and the evening session from 07 - 09 pm broadcasts entertainment programmes.
- The most important program is on human trafficking and the drug-Yaba. It helps raise awareness of the community members regarding its grave consequences.

- The program on English learning has a demand among the youths. They hope it should be continued.
- The live education program presented by teachers will help students.
- Other than Community radio the listeners also read news papers published from Cox's Bazar. One monthly for youth published from Teknaf is also read.
- The listeners prefer to listen to the CR during 6 to 7 pm. The businessman can listen to sitting in the shop anytime they like. The female participants told they love to listen to program on the issue of health nutrition, early marriage. They also request to repeat the program on early marriage because it creates awareness against early marriage.
- The participants requested to take long term plan to achieve sustainability.
- The CR authority should take initiative to convince the rich members of the community to come forward to help the community radio of their area to continue the broadcasting
- They can include local public representatives like Member of the Parliament, chairman, members of the upazila to help achieve sustainability.
- If the CR can arrange coaching on subjects like mathematics and English can help achieve sustainability.
- CR should take initiatives to mobilize business community by broadcasting local problems of the businessman facing.
- For the sustainability they have kept an earthen bank on the table of station manager as a symbol to collect donation.

FGD -2

Participants: Volunteers and staff of CR

Venue: Radio Station

Number of participants: Male - 6 Female - 6 Total - 12

The discussants felt the need for taking marketing initiative of the radio for its sustainability. They also sought government's assistance and community donation. They need call receiver machine to monitor number of calls of the phone-in programme.

Findings:

- CR Naaf started it broadcasting since 3 years back.
- The CR airs the program in two sessions -- from 9 am to 11 am and 5 pm to 7 pm. As the time is not sufficient the participants requested to increase the airing time.
- The listeners used their mobile phone to listen the program of CR and the radio set limits the mobility and restrict the listening.
- CR broadcasts programmes on issues like awareness raising on drug abuse, human trafficking, disaster management, bad consequence of early marriage, pre-primary education, English learning and entertaining program like songs and music.

- They organize meeting with listeners club to collect feedback on the CR program.
- They also read daily newspaper published from Cox's Bazar and some national dailies online as the national newspaper reach Teknaf late.
- They use local dialect along with standard Bangla in program and news aired from CR.
- The CR broadcast phone in program per week but they have not call receiver machine to identify the number of listeners called. It would help to communicate more with listeners.
- They have aired Meena program which got a good response.
- For attaining sustainability more high frequency and broadcasting area needed
- They demanded for permission for the commercial advertisement.
- Local banks Insurance, agents of big business house, other GO-NGO organization present in Teknaf can be requested to provide both moral and financial support.
- They should market their own radio to gain more popularity.
- They expect the government will come forward to support them in need.
- The CR policy should be modified providing payment for broadcasting PSA and other ads.
- They have supported local BGB in organizing program.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

Interviews of three informants - station manager, one local journalist and ED of ACLAB have been taken. Radio Naaf is popular among fishermen, women and ethnic people. State run radio and TV cannot be tuned. The station is playing a vital role in creating awareness on drug smuggling, human trafficking and early marriage. ED of the initiator organization is very optimistic about the future of community radio in Bangladesh.

Md. Aminul Islam Humaun Station Manager, Radio Naaf

Responses

- The Community Radio is run by Alliance for Cooperation legal Aid Bangladesh (ACLAB).
- They have 8 staff members and 35 volunteers working for the day to day activities of the program
- They have 20 women listeners clubs with 20 members in each. There are 4 farmers , 3 fisherman, 39 volunteers group who actively listen and provide feedback to program.
- They air issues like English language learning, Environment, Weather forecast, disaster management, agriculture, early marriage, human trafficking.
- They have aired 24 hour program during 'Mohasen' cyclone.

- The major problem is power supply. The continuous power failure cast a lot to run the radio. For 4 hours broadcasting each day they buy Tk.1200/- oil everyday including Tk.3500/- electric bill per month.
- To retain volunteer is another problem by which the CR suffers much.
- Bangladesh Betar and BTV cannot be tuned from here. The Radio Naaf is the only radio for the community of the Teknaf upazila.
- They get Tk.3,00,000/- from ACLAB and BNNRC support them by providing training. They also earn some fund by broadcasting drama serials produced by Marie Stope-INGO. They also work on partnership with Sight savers, Climate Change Regional Eco-sustainability and Livelihood (CREL), Women's Awareness Cooperation.
- For sustainability the should communicate with local businessman
- The acceptability of the Radio among the marginal community like Dalit, Hijra, Rakhine, Fisherman, farmers and local businessman can support them in attaining sustainability. Trust fund should come into effect to support CR.

Amanullah Aman

Local correspondent, Manabzamin

Responses

- The Community Radio Naaf is playing important role for this marginal population of remote area with its 100 wt transmitter covering 17 km area of the Teknaf upazila.
- They are broadcasting program for a very short period to address so many issues.
- BTV and Bangladesh Betar cannot be tuned due to the barrier of the hills. On the other hand national newspapers from the capital reach here late. They have to depend on the daily published from district city of Cox's Bazar.
- The CR has most important responsibility is to broadcast program on weather forecast and disaster management. Because Upazila Teknaf is surrounded by sea and hills and vulnerable in terms of geographically position.
- Majority of the community members mostly depend on the sea. A good number fisherman community lives here and goes for fishing into deep sea almost every day.
- It is the gate way to Saint Martin Island -a popular tourism spot.
- On the other hand a small port is situated in this Upazila for import-export trade with Myanmar.
- This area also suffers from the unauthorized infiltration of the Rohingya people from Myanmar.
- This area is also vulnerable to drug and human trafficking. Now a days the trafficking issue is taking a gravies turn to national problem. The drug 'Yaba' trafficking in from the neighboring country Nayanmar. On the other hand the

human trafficking for slavery to Thailand and Malaysia in the name of manpower export.

- Deforestation by destroying the forest and hills by land grabbers ultimate threat to environment.
- One can't understand how much important but difficult job is on the shoulder of Radio Naaf. They have to raise awareness of the community beyond its territory (from deep sea to the bordering upazila too)
- So, the Radio Naaf needs special attention not only from the community members but also from the local administration and also of capital.
- The immediate need is to increase the transmitter power and the coverage area.
- The next is to train the volunteer youth of socially backward area to develop effective radio program to improve the youths.
- For sustainability, ACLAB has to play its role by marketing themselves.
- They have to make the people understand the danger of drug abuse and human trafficking for the local youth.
- To create influence on local administration they can use local journalist
- They have to include more professional people with radio for financial, technical and other support
- The meeting of Community Radio local Advisory Committee is held on 5th of each month.
- The CR Policy should be changed to help the m survive. Quickly implement the pledges given in the policy.
- They should have a piece of land for the Community Radio station by pressuring local administration.
- The journalist should write to their respective dailies on the important role of Community Radio Naaf.

Tarikul Islam
Executive Director, ACLAB
Responses

- The most important challenge of the community Radio Naaf is technical. They installed radio station equipment 2-3 years back. The lifetime of those are almost at the end. Now replacement of equipment in this financial crisis is a major challenge.
- The next important challenge is power supply. In Teknaf frequent power failure is a hindrance to the continued transmission of CR. They have to spend a big amount of money each month for the electric generator for keep broadcasting continued. The use of generator is also damaging the highly electronic equipment because of drop cycle in electric power flow. The generator use is not environment friendly.
- The solar panel is an effective alternative to power supply. We have approached the authority for support in solar panel installation, but not received positive response yet.
- Government is very positive towards CR. They inspire the initiative for community welfare.
- The pledges stated in the Community Radio Policy are not at present being implemented. The GOB is supposed to support the CR by social advertisements but in practice it is not done.
- One Trust Fund was supposed to be created according to the CR policy This could be treated as a strong back up for the CR.
- As expected in the CR Policy we still cannot include a substantial part of the community due to the financial limitation.
- We have to increase the frequency and area of CR for inclusion of the rest of the members of the society.
- They are working for a difficult area of the country from many approaches. They are not being well covered by national radio and tv network due to the hills.
- CR is broadcasting program on many issues. Among those the program entitled “Ekharzar diner Maa o shisur Pusty” (1000 days of maternal and child nutrition) is expected to be a very popular program with interactive approach of women of the community.
- Regarding sustainability of CR, they are taking innovative approaches like “Earthen Bank”. They are planning to take out the approach to its 27 branches and develop a future fund for sustainability for CR. They are planning to use the listeners' group to collect fund from home to home in the “ earthen Bank”
- Till now they have not faced any opposition from the society instead found very cooperative with full support.
- Their collection of advertisement from the society put then in another fixation. It is difficult to differentiate between social and commercial advertisement.

Some community people raise objection on it. So, have to drop the initiative like it.

- The GOB is working to solve the CR problem cordial approach. ACLAB expect after few months expected change in CR Policy will be visible.
- The forum will go for advocacy jointly with BNNRC with GOB in achieving sustainability.
- They believe the future approach of CR Naaf will be community resource mobilization. They will explore corporate sector for acquiring social advertisement to achieve sustainability.
- ACLAB is planning to go for donation from the local rich people to create funds. But we are waiting for the announcement of the Policy change.
- ACLAB together with other CR owner created a forum entitled “Community Radio Association” to work on behalf of the 14 CR. ACLAB ED has been elected as General secretary.

FINDINGS OF THE SWOC EXERCISE

Staff and volunteers engaged in programme production and technical operations took part in the exercise. Support of the initiator organization, trained volunteers, listeners' club, support of local administration and professional groups have been identified as strength, whereas volunteer turn out, religious fundamentalism, lack of training, financial crisis, interrupted power supply and social barrier to women's participation were mentioned as limitations and challenges. The table below shows the result of the exercise.

Strength	Weakness	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listener • ACLAB • Trained volunteers • 20 listeners club • Rural community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer turn out • Limitations in pronunciation skills of volunteers • Lack of training for the volunteers • Insufficient conveyance allowance for the volunteers • Social backwardness • Religious fundamentalism • Shortage of quality educational institutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local administration • Municipality • Public representative • Local business community • Professional groups • Civil society representative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial crisis • Electricity crisis • Crisis of IPS • Social barrier to women's working in radio • Family barrier to receiving training • Salary crisis for staff • Women empowerment



Radio Padma

Current situation of the radio station: Strengths and limitations

Radio Padma is located in Rajshahi City Corporation area in the northern part of Bangladesh. Named after the river Padma, the station covers a mixed group of listeners of the metropolitan city and adjacent villages, even across the river. The CR station has been initiated by Centre for Communication and Development (CCD), a local NGO. Currently the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for 18 hours a day - 9 am to 3 am, longest daily transmission hour among the CR stations. It can be tuned on-line, thus covering interested listeners living in far off areas, even in other countries. The station is run by 22 staff members and 62 volunteers, most of whom are students and young in age. Following strengths and limitations of the station have been identified through this assessment study.

Strengths

- Listeners are the main strength of Radio Padma.
- Skilled workers and team work
- Volunteers are playing a vital role in running the station.
- Popularity and long broadcasting hour.
- On-line transmission facility.
- Diverse programmes
- It has an efficient management committee.
- Cooperation of local administration.

Limitations

- Financial uncertainty
- Inadequate equipment.
- Lack of higher and technical training and ToT.
- Limited space.
- No outdoor broadcasting equipment
- Small number of listeners club
- No internship facility.

Challenges ahead

- Expansion of transmission area.
- Quality control mechanism of programmes.

- Inadequate support from people's representative.
- Retention of staff
- Bureaucratic procedure.

Options for sustainability

An organization has to plan its sustainability at its point of inception. Radio Padma is located in the metropolitan area of Rajshahi. It is one of the seven divisional cities of the country. The station has the scope of seeking support of the business community in running the CR by keeping in close touch with the Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Members of the chamber opined in one of the FGD sessions that they were least aware about the need of the CR station. The management of the station had hardly made any communication seeking their cooperation. Effective communication between the radio station and the business community can benefit both the parties. Radio Padma has to take the initiative. Following sustainability options have derived from the study.

- A share of income from SMS (mobile messaging) can be collected from mobile phone operator through agreement.
- Local administration can come forward with funding support. Ministry of Information can give a circular to all of them for the support.
- They should continuously be in contact with the local chamber of commerce for fund and advertisement.
- They should broadcast program on problems of the Rajshahi's business and industries that will attract the business community.
- Provision of commercial advertisement has to be made by modifying the CR policy.
- Utilize NGOs funds by broadcasting radio program based on their project interest
- Cooperation of the city corporation and the relation with local administration should be used in fund raising though publicity from the radio station
- Event management capacity of handling the different national days and events can also help in earning sustainability.

Profile of radio station

- Initiator: Centre for Communication and Development (CCD)
- Location and area of coverage: Rajshahi Sadar. Coverage is an area of 17 kilometres radius around the station.
- Broadcasting hour: 18 hours a day - 9 am to 3 am (next morning). Some interested listeners even tune Padma Radio through internet connection from abroad.
- Programme issues: Life and livelihood of marginalized community, health and nutrition, food adulteration, English learning and entertainment

- Physical facility and equipment: Located in a rented house. Using modern equipment, but need devices for live broadcasting from the field.
- Human resources: 22 staff and 62 volunteers
- Cooperation: Upazila parisad and the local administration are very cooperative. Local community has feeling of ownership to the station.

Focus Group Discussion

Date: 25 November 2014

Two FGD sessions were held - one with young listeners and the other with the members of Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industry. A total of 21 participants took part in the discussions.

FGD -1

Participants: Young Listeners

Venue: Prothom Alo office, Rajshahi

Number of participants: Male - 5 Female - 5 Total - 10

The participants of the session suggested creating scope of commercial advertisements, earning from SMS through agreement with telecommunication companies. Young listeners have been found much interested and enthusiastic about English learning programme. They are eager to participate in the programme as volunteers. They expect funding support of the local administration to sustain the station.

Findings:

- It has 17 km range of transmission with 100 wt transmitter. But it can be tuned from wider area, even from across the Bangladesh- India border.
- The station needs adequate equipment for broadcasting live programme from the source location.
- The radio operates with the earning from advertisement and rest of the fund is provided by CCD.
- The issues covered are livelihood of char land, river erosion, health population and nutrition, formalin in food, reproductive health of youths through question-answers, interactive program in presence of marriage registrar on early marriage, English learning program, celebration of national days and events. Local news bulletins are broadcast thrice daily. A proposal is there for English learning programme (let's learn English and win the show "Asun Engrejy shikhi abong baji maat kori"). It is yet to be materialized.
- Program on admission in educational institution like college -university, preparation for the competitive exams for job can help youths.
- A program supported by British Council for youths for encouraging social development is broadcast.

- If the Annual Development Plan is broadcast from the CR the listeners can be benefitted.
- Traditional songs like Gombhira and other folk songs can entertain listeners.
- Coordination of the radio listeners club needed for greater voluntary participation
- The radio management does not involve community for opinion collection.
- Senior people are also members of the listeners club.
- The youths use mobile phone for listening the CR. They also share their feeling with other fellow youths or members of the club.
- About sustainability, the participating youths are in favor of more local advertisement.
- A share of income from SMS can be collected from mobile phone operator through agreement.
- Local administration can come forward with funding support. Ministry of Information can give a circular to all of them for the support.

FGD -2

Participants: Members of Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Venue: Chamber Building, Rajshahi

Number of participants: Male - 7 Female - 4 Total - 11

The participating business leaders expressed their concern about low level of communication between the CR station and the business community. They recommended proactive contact of Radio Padma with businessmen for attaining sustainability. They also suggested airing classified programmes addressing the demand of different segments of population like elder, women and businessmen.

Findings:

- The CR covers only 17 km area only which is very limited. Business community can not listen CR Padma because of this limitation as they are away from the coverage area during their industrial or business activities. The area of frequency should be increased up to 40-50 Km.
- Some of the participants have no knowledge about the Radio Padma
- They listen to the local news broadcast from CR Padma. It should deal with the local commercial and industrial sectors.
- The CR Padma is raising some level of awareness of community members
- A ghost program 'Bhoot FM' attracts children and young listeners.
- Young generation is very much interested in songs, not in development program
- The station should air talk show program
- They should have contact with music department of Charukala Academy of the city.

- The radio should air classified program addressing the needs of the different segments of population like elder, women, and businessman.
- If the variety in program can be increased people automatically will support
- The radio Padma did not sit with the chamber about their sustainability issue, their needs.
- They should continuously be in contact with the chamber.
- One organization should plan its sustainability since its inception.
- They should broadcast program on problems of the Rajshai's business and industries, that will attract the business community.
- They should air program on agriculture in the morning as the farmers remain in the field at that time.
- They can use archive of Rajshahi Betar (Radio) for program, they can air old drama, songs from there. But one opposed the idea.
- To get support the radio Padma should create an advisory committee and raise their problems to them can help solve the barriers

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

25 November 2014

Interviews of three informants - Staff reporter of The Prothom Alo, station manager and ED of CCD have been taken. Covering problems of the city corporation was given importance since the station is located in the city. However, issues related to the life and livelihoods of marginalized people of char area are also very important, as they mentioned. Volunteers play a vital role in running the station. The journalist was a bit critical of the station. He expressed his concern about lack of quality control and compliance with the guideline.

Abul Kalam Azad
Staff reporter of Prothom Alo
Venue: Prothom Alo Office, Rajshahi

Responses:

- Radio Padma is known but hardly listen to it.
- They are supposed to air program on social issue but they put less importance on it. They put emphasis on songs and entertaining program
- The program on problems of the city corporation can attract the citizen.
- There is no quality control mechanism of the program aired by the CR.
- The Guideline for the CR set by the GOB is not followed properly.
- More than 90% youths listen to the program aired by CR.
- There is mobile phone set now with the farmers. Program on agriculture would attract them
- Local advertisement can help achieve sustainability in absence of donors.

Ms. Shahana Parvin
Station Manager, Radio Padma

Responses:

- Listeners are the main strength of the CR.
- Volunteers have the most important role in running the station.
- Provision of commercial ad has to be made modifying the CR policy.
- Regular power supply is needed.

G M Mourtoza
Executive Director
Communication for Community Development

Responses:

- CDD is providing financial support to Radio Padma.
- The station has become very popular, particularly among young people and farmers.
- Uninterrupted power supply is very important

Findings of the SWOC exercise

Staff and volunteers engaged in programme production and technical operations took part in the exercise. Popularity of the station, long broadcasting hour, on-line transmission facility, support of local administration and optimum use of equipment have been identified as strength, whereas financial uncertainty, shortage of vehicle, lack of training, absence of internship facility, lack of awareness on RTI and retention of workers were mentioned as limitations and challenges. The table below shows the result of the exercise.

Strength	Weakness	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilled workers and team work • Popularity and credibility • Long broadcasting hour -- 18 hours • Strong news team • On-line transmission facility • Optimum use of equipment • Diverse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial uncertainty • Insufficient equipment • Limited space • Lack of higher and technical training and ToT • Insufficient publicity • Shortage of vehicle • No outdoor broadcasting equipment • Small number of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of listeners club • Utilize NGOs and relation with local administration • Cooperation of the city corporation • Publication from the radio station • Event management capacity • Branding of the radio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of staff • Inadequate support from people's representatives • Expansion of transmission areas • Insufficient communication with management committee • Bureaucratic procedure • Quality control

<p>programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listeners • Multi-tasking ability • Relation with local administration • Strong management 	<p>listeners club</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guideline obligations • No internship facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio operating skills 	<p>mechanism of programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness on RTI
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Radio Sagargiri

Current situation of the radio station: Strengths and limitations

Radio Sagargiri is located in Sitakunda of Chittagong district in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh. Sitakunda is an industrial zone characterized by ship breaking, clinkers and other industries.

Environmental pollution is a prime concern here. It is also prone to natural disasters like cyclone and tidal upsurge. The CR station has been initiated by Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), a local NGO. Currently the station broadcasts development and entertainment programmes for 5 hours a day -- from 3 pm to 8 pm. The station is run by only 3 full time staff members and 5 volunteers. However, more part time staff and volunteers are involved. Following strengths and limitations of the station have been identified through this assessment study.

Strengths

- The station is located in the training centre of YPSA.
- Volunteers of Radio Sagargiri are committed and dedicated to their work.
- The station receives full support of YPSA, which is a credible organization.
- Local administration and community people are supportive to the radio.
- Enabling environment for producing programme.
- The station uses modern equipment.
- It has an efficient management committee.
- Cooperation of local artists.
- Listener friends club is major strength of the station

Limitations

- Inadequate equipment and limited repairing facilities.
- Ignorance of the community people about the radio.
- No source of income.
- No back-up equipment
- Shortage of skilled personnel
- Lack of required training.
- Power disruption is a big problem.
- CR reporters are not recognized as journalist so the volunteers working for CR do not feel encouraged to work.

Challenges ahead

- Existing policies are not radio friendly.
- Dependency on YPSA.
- Interference of local political leaders.
- Negative attitude of vested interest groups.
- Negative and conservative attitude of a portion of the community.
- Retention of volunteers
- Personal safety of female volunteer.

Options for sustainability

As Sitakunda is an industrial belt, Radio Sagargiri has great prospect for earning financial and institutional support from the business and corporate community. Effective communication between the radio station and the business community can benefit both the parties. The radio can produce development programmes on issues like environment, disaster preparedness, industrial waste management, trade and economy etc. in partnership with the companies and business houses. The initiative has to be taken by the radio station management. Following sustainability options have derived from the study.

- Regarding sustainability the government should allow the CR to broadcast advertisement for a certain period of time to earn the required expenditure.
- The rich persons of the community should come forward with donation to support the CR to achieve the sustainability.
- The industry based area is very much suitable for earning financial and institutional support for achieving sustainability.
- To earn money the CR can also arrange broadcasting interactive and participatory educational programme live by popular teachers on subject like English, math, Physics etc. to which students have interest and will contribute.
- The irregular power supply , they have to use generator to continue the broadcasting which is expensive too if power supply could be ensured this will reduce broadcasting cost and help in achieving sustainability
- Earning by selling CD of education program to student.
- For future sustainability the CR Sagargiri should take initiative to increase their own popularity. They should take steps for their own marketing.
- Income can be generated from the public announcement of Local Government, Municipality, NGOs. They have to convince them for advertisement even at a reduced rate.
- The CR can help local Municipality by raising awareness of the tax payers and mobilize them to pay taxes regularly. This will build confidence among the public representative towards the CR.
- The Local Government can involve the CR for observance of different national days and help them with the fund.

- Income generation can be done by selling CD on English learning, other content development and marketing, fees from teaching music from the radio.
- Regarding sustainability of CR, emphasis has to be given on attaining self-sufficiency.
- A change in National Policy for the Community Radio is indeed equally important to uphold the national objectives of launching community radio.

Profile of radio station

- Initiator: Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)
- Location and area of coverage: Sitakunda of Chittagong, an area of 17 kilometres radius
- Broadcasting hour: 5 hours -- from 3 pm to 8 pm
- Programme issues: Agriculture, health, English learning, women's and children's issues, weather forecast, music and entertainment
- Physical facility and equipment: Located at the YPSA Training and Resource Centre. Using modern equipment, but some problems are there about ownership.
- Human resources: 3 full time staff members and 5 volunteers. In addition, 3 part time staff members and 15 more volunteers are involved.

Focus Group Discussion

Date: 06 December, 2014

Two FGD sessions were held - one with a mixed group of listeners and the other with community leaders. A total of 16 participants took part in the discussions.

FGD -1

Participants: Mixed group of listeners

Venue: YPSA Training and Resource Centre

Number of participants: Male - 5 Female - 4 Total - 9

Participants mentioned effectiveness of awareness programmes of the radio on English learning, early marriage and vegetable cultivation. Good liaison and communications with the industrialists can help the radio station sustain without external assistance. The station can initiate income generating activities on its own.

Findings

- YPSA support the Community Radio in Sitakundu in its training Centre situated in Sitakunda, Chittagong.
- The CR Sagargiri started 3 years back on 99.2 FM band in 17 km area and broadcast from 3 pm to 8 pm
- Radio Sagargiri is operated by 3 staff members and 5 community volunteers.
- It airs program on the issues on awareness building on different issues. Weather forecast for fisherman and other community members, early marriage, English language learning, women empowerment, health of children and women, agriculture and others
- The community 'Radio Sagargiri' is listened by the community member after 3 pm, farmers after 6 pm and the fisherman when they feel convenient.
- The English learning and awareness against early marriage are found very effective recently. The English language program helps the student/youth in development of their English speaking ability. The awareness raising against early marriage has successfully stopped many cases in the area.
- The program on marketing of agricultural product, particularly vegetables supported by agricultural department broadcast and found helpful. The experienced officer, farmers participated in live program and shared their experiences and quiz program.
- They listen the CR using the mobile phone set, they have also distributed radio set among the community members.
- There are radio listeners clubs in the area. Some of them are also members of the club.
- The enter education program on eve teasing, behavior of adolescent has created a remarkable awareness among the community members. Teachers of girls college conducted the program

- The Community Radio authority sits with the community members and takes their feedback and suggestion regarding the CR program. The listeners also send their SMS and call and give their feedback during program.
- Regarding sustainability GOB should allow the CR to broadcast advertisement for a certain period of time to earn the required expenditure.
- After the foreign support only the voluntary service of the community youths cannot help achieve the sustainability. Rich people should come forward with donation to support the CR.
- The industry based area is very much suitable for earning financial and institutional support for achieving sustainability
- They can also arrange broadcasting interactive education programme live by a popular teachers on subjects like English, mathematics, physics etc. in which students are interested.
- The listeners love the entertaining program of songs of famous artist of the area like Kumar Biswajit.
- Income could be generated from live broadcasting music teaching from the studio with the help of a famous teacher.
- The irregular power supply , they have to use generator to continue the broadcasting which is expensive too
- Earning by selling CD of education program to student.

FGD-2

Participants: Community leaders

Venue: YPSA Training and Resource Centre

Number of participants: Male - 6 Female - 1 Total - 7

Community leaders have good contact with the management of Radio Sagargiri and YPSA. They share their ideas on the programmes. Programmes on disabled people have been mentioned as very useful. They expressed their thoughts on generating income to sustain the radio station.

Findings:

- The CR has been broadcasting program everyday from 3 pm to 8 pm.
- The percentage of educated population is very low so the time of broadcasting should be increased for more program. Transmission area should be extended from present 17 km radius with greater frequency option.
- The program on issues like disability, youths, agriculture, cyclone preparedness should be given priority. Program on human resource development, forestation, youth are also important.
- There are many radio listeners youth clubs in the area. They should be provided radio set to facilitate the radio listening

- The station organizes workshop with community members for their feedback on the current program and suggestions for the new ones.
- The program from community Radio is helping the mental advancement of the family members for change in quality of life.
- For future sustainability the CR Sagargiri should take initiative to increase its popularity. They should take steps for their own marketing.
- Income can be generated from the public announcement of Local Government, Municipality, NGOs. They have to convince them for advertisement even at a reduced rate.
- The CR can help local Municipality by raising awareness of the tax payers and mobilize them to pay taxes regularly. This will build confidence among the public representative towards the CR.
- The Local Government can involve the CR for observance of different national days and help them with the fund.
- The CR Sagargiri should broadcast programs in standard Bangla language along with local dialect.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

Interviews of three informants - UNO of Sitakunda, station manager, and ED of YPSA have been taken. The station maintains good linkage with the local administration and the community. Repair and replacement of equipment is a major concern. Uninterrupted power supply at a low rate is a requirement of the radio management.

Md. Sha Sultan Shameem Station Manager

Responses:

- The radio Sagargiri covers 8 unions of Sitakunda, 2 of Mirersarai and 3 unions of Sandwip by its 100 wt transmission for 17 km area of population covering 6 lac (0.6 million) listeners broadcasting programs for 5 hours from 3 to 8 pm. Initially it was 2 hours at the beginning on 24 March 2012.
- They have 3 full time 3 part time staff including 20 volunteers
- They have 805 Radio listeners' clubs. They cover YPSA's different beneficiaries group of coastal population including fisherman. Disadvantage group, women right group, group through who awareness on right to information increase, groups of micro credits as fisherman being oppressed deviating from the livelihood. The fisherman community is changing.
- They have annual budget of Taka 24 lac, major source is YPSA's projects motivational work, awareness raising on HIV-AIDS, women's development, Mass literacy. YPSA provide their motivation advertisement in CR.
- The basic difference of FM radio and the CR is that in CR the community participation is program is important not as for FM radio.

- Income generation can be done selling CD on English learning, other content development and marketing, fees from teaching music from the radio.
- Power supply is a big problem for continued broadcasting of programs. On the other hand power generator damages high tech electronic equipment.
- The transmitter power will be increased from 100 to 250 wt and area of transmission as well.
- Equipment replacement is very difficult amid limited options. The price is very high and it's a monopoly business
- Live transmission and controlling phone-in calls is needed
- CR reporters are not recognized as journalist so the volunteers working for CR do not feel encouraged to work.

Shaheen Imran
UNO, Sitakunda

Responses:

- As per National Policy for community radio, a local advisory committee is there headed by Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) to oversee the activities of the Community Radio.
- The issues like weather forecast for the fisherman community, early marriage should be given priority.
- Priority should be given on awareness raising on environment, ship breaking, hill cutting and forestation.
- In case of agro products important to be given in on vegetables productions.
- The station manager of the CR regularly meet the UNO for suggestion and advice.
- YPSA is a leading NGO in the area and run the CR Sagargiri, which has a visible positive impact in the society.
- Priority should be given in airing program with correct message.
- The CR is giving correct message on different services with a priority on Right to Information.
- Regarding sustainability of CR emphasis to be given on to earn self sufficiency.
- The commercial advertisement will have two in puts one for the radio and other for the business which will lead to increased listenership.
- In that case the a change in National Policy for thr Community Radio is needed and it is equally important to uphold the national objectives of launching community radio the Policy must be followed properly by the radio authority.
- As YPSA has a credibility in the community the Community Radio has good link with community.
- The Bangladesh Betar- the national radio , can be linked with CR for technical support to ease the radio management.

Arifur Rahman
Executive Director, YPSA

Responses:

- Climate change and disaster preparedness are two vital issues covered by the radio programme. Another important issue is ship breaking and its consequence on labour safety and environment.
- The station plans to extend its broadcasting time from existing 5 hours to 12 hours.
- It also plans to increase its transmission capacity and geographical area of coverage.
- Sitakunda is an industrial area. Radio Sagargiri has a plan to produce programmes on safety of labourers and broadcast regular news bulletin.
- Power disruption is a big problem.
- YPSA allocates annual budget for Sagargiri. Loan received from PKSF has been re-imbursed.
- Listener friends club is major strength of the station. Members of the club suggest and participate in programmes.
- Community radio volunteers are being developed who will contribute to sustainability.
- Radio Sagargiri has its own accommodation. This is a strength.
- Fixed deposit of Taka 10 lac will be made within 2015 for bearing expenses of radio station.
- Joint programmes with other organizations can help generate resources.
- Proposed Trust Fund for community radio should be materialized soon.
- PKSF can grant annual fund to its partners for radio operations in exchange of programmes on PKSF activities.
- Uninterrupted power supply at a low rate should be ensured for the community radio stations.
- Initiating organizations have to ensure funding to run radio stations.
- Commercial ad for 10% transmission time should be introduced.
- Local administration is supportive to the radio station.

FINDINGS OF THE SWOC EXERCISE

Staff and volunteers engaged in programme production and technical operations took part in the exercise. Credibility of the initiator organization, own accommodation, modern equipment, support of local administration and the listeners have been identified as strength, whereas lack of income source, shortage of skilled personnel, lack of training and retention of workers were mentioned as limitations and challenges. The table below shows the result of the exercise.

Strength	Weakness	Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own building and management • Credibility of YPSA • Modern equipment • Listeners Club • Efficient management committee • Enabling environment for producing programme • Networking • Volunteer • Physical communication • Development projects of local NGOs • Local people and professional communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage of skilled personnel • Ignorance of the community people about the radio • Financial problem • No source of income • Inadequate equipment and limited repairing facilities • Drop out of volunteers • Lack of required training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listeners' interest for information • Interest of partner and donor agencies • Industry and business house • Positive relation with local government/non-government organizations • School/College/ • University students • Cooperation of local artists • Scope of government announcement • Announcement and publicity of upazilla/ municipality programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing policies are not radio friendly • Absence of support and staff for producing quality programme • No back up equipment • Interference of local political leaders • Political change over • Dependency on YPSA • Negative and conservative attitude of a portion of the community • Personal safety of female volunteers • Retention of volunteers • Negative attitude of vested interest groups

Literature Review

Some relevant documents were reviewed to get some background information and develop tools for data collection. These include reports on survey conducted by the government and other agencies, policy document, strategy paper and booklets published in Bangladesh and other countries. The study team reviewed the following documents.

1. Community Radio Installation, broadcasting and operating policy-2008; Bangladesh Gazette; published and printed by AKM Rafiqul Islam, Deputy Secretary, Deputy Controller, Bangladesh Government Press.

This GOB policy document includes the definition of Community Radio; basic principles, qualification to get the license of Community Radio installation and operation; process of licensing; condition to be fulfilled by the applicant; What is CR License and its procurement fees; technical structure; other conditions for the Policy; other directions to be followed and monitoring of the community radio broadcasting.

2. Community Radio Baseline Survey, A study on 14 Radio Station (RRS) Areas in Bangladesh; Ministry of Information, GOB year 2012, Dhaka supported by UNICEF

This document looks into the different parameters of the community in which the Community Radio are operated as the operators were not clear about the nature and kind as well as modality of CR program. The survey was undertaken based on MOI project "Advocacy and Communication for Children and women (3RD PHASE) to make the community radio initiative more effective to the community people of Bangladesh. As part of the project activities this base line survey was conducted to identify the situation as -health, nutrition, education, women empowerment etc where radio station will be operated.

3. National Strategy for the Implementation of Community Radio Installation, Broadcast and Operation Policy in Bangladesh, Ministry of Information, GOB supported by UNICEF, May 2012. This document details out the main steps for the GOB to implement the Community Radio Implementation, Broadcast and Operation Policy of 2008. The national Strategy for the Implementation of CR policy has two important roles.

- a. To regulate and facilitate CR operations
- b. To enable community radios to become full-fledged partners in development process.

The salient features of the strategy are community participation and inclusion of disadvantaged groups; programming content guidelines; capacity building; advertising; independence; monitoring; evaluation; implementation of government's development agenda through CR and supports of CRs.

4. Baseline Survey on “ Consciousness and Viewpoint of listeners of Radio Namobudhha, Karve, 2009 by Community Radio Support Centre(CRSC) Nepal, Forum of Environment al Journalist supported by Free Voice The Netherlands.

The survey covered the information of the area “Kavrepalanchok” where Radio Namobudhha with the objectives to find out the consciousness and attitude on various social issue specifically the trust of the community on the CR, attitudes towards education , attitude to their ethnic and interclass relation, various traditional beliefs, superstition, role of mass communication in promotion of economic activities ,knowledge of food and health practice, political participation and gender equality.

5. An advocacy booklet on “ The Right to information , good governance and human rights of the rural community” was published by BNNRC supported by Canadian International Development Agency.

To ensure the right to information and access to other facilities of the society of the rural community what role Community Radio can play were highlighted in the booklet. The booklet tried to identify the utility of Community Radio in achieving the Millennium Development Goal of Eradication of abject poverty and hunger, universal primary education, gender equality, reduction of IMR, development of mothers health, reduce the HIV/AIDS and Malaria, environment and international partnership.

6. A booklet entitled “Community Radio Continuous Improvement Toolkit (version 2.0)” ; Commonwealth Education Media Centre for the Asia , New Delhi, Published by Mr. R. Thyagarajan. The booklet deals with the technical capacity building of the CR for improvement of the content generation and programming; policies and guidelines; volunteers; technology ; access and management ; on air standards of broadcasting governance; feedback and grievances; content sharing and networking, revenue generation and financial accountability
7. A project support booklet of plan Bangladesh on “ Engage Community Media for Elimination of Gender Based Violence jointly published by BNNRC and Plan . This booklet assists the Volunteer and staff in conceptualization of the gender violence and helps develop program on the same.

We have used the information from the above listed documents in conceptualizing, planning and designing the tools and exercise for the data collection for ”Situation Analysis and Sustainability issue of Community Radio of Bangladesh”. In developing the questionnaire for Key Informants Interview we have tried to set those questions following the CR Policy, implementation and operation strategy for CR Bangladesh. For Focus Group Discussions with different stakeholders we tried to know the field situation whether community radios are following the guidelines given in the policy. The belated base line survey (done after the CR operation begins) helped us to conceptualize the indexes of social development and community participation. The documents

helped us to find out the development issues the CR should prioritize in designing and broadcasting. The Tool kit developed by the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia based in New Delhi has helped us to understand the importance of capacity building of CR operating volunteers and staffs of our country. The CIDA and BNNRC has developed a booklet in sensitizing the CR staff about importance of Right to Information.

Annex 2

Responses of other key informants and findings of CR workshop group work

Key Informant Interview taken in Dhaka

In addition to the persons linked with individual CR stations, we interviewed four key informants to know their views on overall situation of CR in Bangladesh and its prospect of sustainability.

Mr. Bazlul Hoque

President

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC)

Responses:

- BNNRC is not a networking organization. It is a support organization providing training
- It contributed to developing the national policy for community radio through advocacy with GOB
- BNNRC is currently working in three following areas
 - Capacity building of Community Radio
 - Research and development
 - Support for hands on training on technical aspects of community radio.
- There is no quality control mechanism, but quality script developed by the professionals is provided.
- No impact assessment has been done yet. It is too early to do so.
- The CR has given opportunity for skill development of the local youth, that is our achievement
- We are encouraging now to develop program on disability
- Radio talk and discussion based program are aired
- Community radio is not a priority sector of the government. It has to survive by struggling.
- The question of sustainability is too early to ask. Sustainability in terms of financial, political, social and institutional aspects should be considered. Foundation of the desired sustainability is that people of the area have accepted the CR concept.
- Only social development advertisement can be broadcast. There is a code of advertisement.
- The advertisement issue is unclear in National policy for CR
- Language and dialect of broadcasting of the CR program depends on community's need.
- The major challenges of community Radio are -- uninterrupted power supply, community mobilization, transport for CR and financial pressure.
- CR sometimes face pressure of local government

- The municipality can use the CR for collection of revenue and the CR can earn a good amount from them.
- Strategic partnership should be developed with local NGOs, government organizations, business community

Mr. Kamrul Hasan Monju

Executive Director
Mass-line Media Centre

Responses:

- Mass-line Media Centre has been working for the strengthening voice of coastal areas of the country. In this regard they published local newspaper to bring the voice of the local marginal population in the mainstream. During this work they felt the need for Community Radio and started to communicate with respective ministries.
- In this move they together with BNNRC and other interested NGOs and personalities formed a body to work with GOB. After years struggle they convinced the government and a National Community Radio Policy was developed.
- No baseline survey was conducted before starting the CR.
- Those who installed the station with donor's assistance are facing the challenge of continuation.
- The community volunteers are playing positive role in developing program and presentation.
- There are on average 100- 150 community radio listeners clubs which are working as the strength of the CR.
- They are trying to raise awareness of the community on their surrounding issue like landless farmers, agriculture, fisheries, use of water bodies, women and child health, rights of women etc.
- There is a local advisory body headed by UNO involving the local professional representatives, public representatives.
- There are many challenges before the CR e.g. uninterrupted power supply, back up transmitter and necessary equipment.
- The NGOs have form a body to represent entitled the "Bangladesh Community Radio Association" where owners of 14 community radios have become members. The objective of the association is to raise issues and challenges to respective authority and represent the CR owners to respective ministries of GOB.
- The mindset of the ministry is changing and we are hopeful about their support.
- They are jointly working to bring amendments in advertisement policy which will ultimately lead us to sustainability.
- The business community and local NGOs together can work for achieving sustainability of CR.

- There is no mechanism for quality control of the CR program
- NIMCO has taken initiative to train CR volunteers and staff to make quality program.
- Broadcasting the weather forecast throughout the night has helped in reducing the damage after the cyclone Sidr. Following that they are broadcasting weather forecast regularly from the CR.
- The issues of Commercial advertisement, increasing the broadcasting area and trust fund allocation and distribution should in priority to achieve sustainability.

Ms. Anna Minj,
 President
 Bangladesh Community Radio Association

Responses:

- Bangladesh Community Radio Association has been established for better networking/ coordination among the Community Radios. A nine member executive committee runs the association.
- Some of the CR stations are now running properly, whereas the rest are facing different challenges.
- CR is playing a very commendable role in mobilizing community for awareness raising and participation in different development initiatives.
- This initiative of CR is quite new in Bangladesh. Even within this short period it has been able to earn reputation in the community.
- The program in local dialect has drawn attention of the community people. The local news, program on early marriage, women and child health, nutrition program, agriculture have created interest about the Community Radio.
- Some of the CR broadcast programmes have received the national award like Family Planning and Meena competing with national radio and TV.
- Financial sustainability depends on mobilizing fund or local resource.
- A major problem for running CR is disruption in power supply.
- CR Policy needs to be reviewed. The meager income from proposed social advertisement cannot meet the expenditure.
- Local government's budget for advertisement can be allocated to CR which can be a source of income to bring the sustainability.
- BRAC is thinking to link its community mobilization budget with the CR.
- BRAC's Community Radio Palli Kantha is now earning approximately 25% of its budget.
- Materialization of the Trust Fund for CR would substantially help achieve sustainability.
- In the CR program the local women are participating which indirectly empower them.

- The Local Advisory Committee provides good support to them.

Raghu Mainali (Nepal)
Consultant, DW Akademie

Comments on sustainability of community radio

- Business strategy has to be followed to attain financial sustainability. Businessmen use social and religious festivals for marketing their products and services. CR can use festivals and certain occasions to generate income from the community and the business entities.
- CR has to earn trust of and maintain a good relation with the community. Bearing the heritage and following the essence of the community, it has to be always with the community.
- CR has to broadcast community's voice and earn confidence of the government and other stakeholders of the society.
- Community has to be approached with a purpose. Instead of cash, donation in kind can also be sought taking the situation into account.
- Only financial solvency is not enough to attain sustainability. Overflow of funds may have an adverse effect on the radio programme. A good matching between fund flow and programme production has to be ensured.

Workshop on

Voices of the Rural People Through Community Radio in Bangladesh

ACHIEVEMENT, CHALLENGES & WAY FORWARD

Challenges in Researching the Community Radio

Following findings surfaced from the group work discussions on the challenges of researching the community radio.

- The CRs have no technical device to record the number of listeners tuned to the community radio.
- We should have a statistics on the radio listening devices being used by the community members.
- The ministry of Information should do a survey on the Community Radio stations working in the rural areas.
- After broadcasting the program, feedback of the community listeners is not recorded and consequently the follow-up action is not taken. Listeners expect not only information from the CR, but also the means of solution of problems.
- The CRs have poor communication with listeners club. We have to give importance to increase the relation.

- We do not go to community to assess the demand of the community due to shortage of man power.
- We can arrange a listeners meeting in bigger platform annually or six monthly.
- For sustainability the GOB should allow CR some percentage of commercials along with social advertisements.
- The GOB should allow all other ministries to work with Community Radio like MOI. This will help the CRs to use their PSA fund for social advertisement on way to achieve sustainability.
- From the beginning the CR should develop its own sustainability plan. It should have a contingency fund for lean period.
- In many cases, one or two stations are brought under piloting for an issue. But during that period rest of CRs do not get proper attention by the INGO/Donors.
- The different ministries should come forward with their own program slot to broadcast through CR.
- We can examine the possibilities of taking subscription from the listeners for achieving sustainability.

Reflections from the plenary:

- To achieve financial sustainability fund flow is not the only solution. The effective management and financial system should be there to handle the fund. Otherwise the effort will jeopardize the total effort and corrupt the initiatives.
- We should ensure that we have an effective community mobilization plan. That will give us long term sustainability in future not for a year or two.
- To have feedback we can arrange a courtyard meeting instead of a formal survey.