

Half Yearly Narrative Report of the project
'Ethics of New Communication Technologies from People's Perspectives'
supported by WACC

The Half Yearly Narrative Report of project titled 'Ethics of New Communication Technologies from People's Perspectives' includes the reports of following aspects.

1. Programme Development Workshop held at CISRS Headquarters, Bangalore
2. One Day Preparatory Workshop on New Media Literacy held at SPACE Centre, Trivandrum, Kerala
3. Three Day Workshop of Training of Trainers on New Media Literacy held at Centre for Human Potential Development, Church of North India, Nagpur, Maharashtra
4. Community Radio Action Research - Training and Production phase held at Ottasekharamangalam Gram Panchayat, Trivandrum district, Kerala
5. Half Yearly Financial Statement of the project
6. Newspaper clipping on Community Radio Action Research

1. Report of the Programme Development Workshop

held on 11th August 2007 at Devanandan House, CISRS, Bangalore

The Programme Development Workshop for project titled 'Ethics of New Communication Technologies from People's Perspectives' was held on 11th August 2007 at Devanandan House, CISRS, Bangalore. The project financially supported by WACC includes three workshops, two on Ethical issues 'Digital Divide' and 'Ethical Challenges of Information Society', one on New Media Literacy, followed by publication of booklets and an year long Action Research intended to study the role of New Technologies in the empowerment of people.

The Workshop was intended to get expert opinion regarding the various components of the project. Theological teachers, Development consultant, Researchers, Activists, New Media experts and Students participated in the Workshop. The following persons participated in the Workshop.

Rev. Narmala Vasanthkumar, CISRS, Ibatista Shylla SCM of India, David Selvaraj, Visthar, Dr. T Kannan, ISEC, Vivek Vaidyanathan, ITfC, Dr. Gopakumar K Thampi, Public Affairs Centre, Dr. Sebastian Periannan, St. Peter's Seminary, Dr. Sham P Thomas, United Theological College, Rev. Dr. Godwin Shiri, CISRS, Rev. Arun Kumar Wesley, CISRS, P Robert, CISRS, JL Bernard, CISRS, and Santhosh George, CISRS.

The Workshop began with self-introduction by the participants. It was followed by the introductory remarks by Rev. Dr. Godwin Shiri, Director, CISRS. In his address, he mentioned the legacy, vision and commitment of CISRS in taking up the project on new communication technologies. He also pointed out how WACC take sides in addressing the new communication technologies from People's perspectives.

An overview of the project was presented by Santhosh George, Research Associate, CISRS which carried definitions, issues and a tentative plan of the workshops and the research component. This was followed by the feedback from the participants.

The following are the highlights of the workshop

- Our theological response to New Communication Technologies will have critical solidarity perspective towards a prophetic social intervention by taking sides with the marginalised.
- 'Digital Divide' is a very north centric term. The classic definition of the digital divide is the technology haves and the technology have-nots. But mere presence of technology does not bridge gaps to alleviate poverty. Indian experience is a case in the point. So one really needs to redefine and use another word instead of digital divide. Or use digitisation of the divide rather than digital divide.
- The Action Research Community Radio should address some of the issues which the Kerala civil society and political society are debating. Does the community radio helping them to really understand and politically articulate? How do the values and the ideology of the community radio helping this?

The discussions were moderated by Dr. Sebastian Periannan.

2. Report of the One Day Preparatory Workshop on New Media Literacy

25th November 2007 at SPACE Centre, Trivandrum, Kerala

A One day Preparatory Workshop on New Media Literacy was held on 25th November 2007 at SPACE Centre, Trivandrum, Kerala. The following members were present. Biji Jacob Oommen, Augustine Sebastian, Jain Syriac Babu, Sharat S, Jorro, (Students of Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam) Saji P George, (Computer Engineer) C Gouridasan Nair, (Special Correspondent, The Hindu,) Arun M, (Coordinator, SPACE) Seema KK, (Graphic Designer) Saju K, (Secretary, Mediact) Suresh KS (New Media Expert) and Santhosh George (Research Associate, CISRS). The intention of the Workshop was to scrutinise the curriculum and session plan on New Media Literacy prepared by Santhosh George and Suresh KS for the New Media Literacy Workshop to be held during 5,6,7 December 2007.

The Workshop began with an introduction to the workshop and the modules by Santhosh George followed by the presentation of eight session plans. The participants scrutinized the curriculum and put forward the following suggestions.

- The session on Technology of New Media should be revised simplifying the activities to the minimum needed to introduce the concept of networking and packet switching.
- The two sessions on New Media Forms and Characteristics have the same procedure of comparing New Media and Old Media products. Instead of the existing procedure the comparison can be done from among the different forms of New Media.
- The session on New Media Audiences can be developed into an assignment for the participants to identify a topic and search for information on the net, create an e-group and share the information among the specific interest group.
- The participants from the MG University also urged the organisers to conduct a Trainer's Training Workshop on New Media Literacy in their University.

3 Report of the Three Day Trainers' Training Workshop on New Media Literacy

CISRS in association with Church of North India

5, 6, 7 December 2007, Centre for Human Potential Development, Nagpur.

The Workshop on New Media Literacy was intended to enable young people to make sense of their New Media environment, to enable young people to discern the characteristics, language, technology and ideology of New Media and critically analyse New Media texts. It was also intended to develop the church youth as trainers so that they will be able to impart the New Media Literacy to other youth in their respective areas.

Three Day Workshop for Training of Trainers on New Media Literacy was held during 5,6,7 December 2007 at Centre for Human Potential Development, Nagpur, organized by CISRS in association with Church of North India. The Workshop began with an inaugural worship based on a power point presentation of images of nature, juxtaposed with those of violence and brutality. It evoked concern and commitment to strife for channels of communication that establish justice and peace.

The introductory remarks were proposed by Sudipta Singh, Director of Programmes, CNI, who affirmed the organisers' concern to promote media literacy as a tool to read and intervene New Media from people's perspective. Santhosh George, Research Associate, CISRS, the main organizer of the programme, introduced the purpose and mentioned that the whole Workshop is shaped as a participatory learning process to foster self enquiry and critical discernment of New Media. Dr. J.H. Anand, Chairman of Asia Region WACC, in his inaugural address ascertained that media are the gift of God and that it must be utilized for God's glory alone. He enable the participants to look at media as an educator, informer and entertainer and at the same time as a money maker and misinformer. He, therefore, called upon the participants to use media especially the New Media to challenge tyranny and oppression, transform the society and build a common humanity.

Dr. Sham P. Thomas, Head of the Department of Communication, United Theological College, Bangalore in his key-note address reflected upon the overall theme of CISRS project, 'Ethics of New Communication Technologies from People's Perspective'. He conceptualized the term 'People' as 'Community', as those who know each other with a common purpose and as those who are marginalized and unprivileged. According to him, Communication Technology from People's Perspective means taking sides with the marginalized and taking a stand of faith for the sake of the community and its well being. He cautioned the participants not to have either technophobia (fear of technology) or technophilia (addiction to technology) but to uphold a critical solidarity approach, or a prophetic approach towards New Media and its technology.

NewMedia Exposure Survey.

During the post-lunch session of the first day, the participants carried out a New Media Exposure Survey using an objective type questionnaire. The attempt was to map the pattern of New Media exposure of the nineteen participants. It was found that among them eighteen people spent daily one hour for checking e-mails either in the morning or evening. Most of them were found to be using Yahoo, Gmail or Rediffmail. Seven of them identified chatting as their second preoccupation with the new media. Three of them revealed that they are part of the friendship community Orkut. Three of them mentioned that they used to search various information using google search engine. Seven of them pointed out that they use computer for academic work for preparing seminar presentations and assignments. Six of them mentioned that they regularly play computer games. Two of them revealed that they spent their entire night browsing the net. One of them works in BPO while the other is a cyber entrepreneur. He also mentioned that he checks e-mails through his mobile phone too. Another person in the group shared that he uses laptop to access Internet using wi-fi connection when he is in his college campus.

Level of Awareness about New Media.

A second exercise was carried out to understand the level of awareness of the participants regarding New Media. The method was to administer a questionnaire to verify the statements given are true or false. Ten of the responses showed that they believe the information they exchange through the Internet is absolutely safe. Ten responses again

showed that they understand convergence as the merging of various old media forms. Half of the people in the group hold that Internet is a centralized network while the other half hold that it is a decentralized one. Fourteen of the opinions show that Internet is owned by private companies. Twelve of them hold that Internet and World Wide Web are one and the same. Twelve of them hold that the information in the Internet is standardized. Fourteen of them believe that they can change the images and texts they work with, whereas only four of them share the view that New Media can be used for political campaigning. Nine of them hold that news available with Google News does not belong to them. The above two exercises brought out the familiarity of New Media among the participants and their level of awareness about the basic concepts and functions of New Media.

Participatory Learning sessions

After the tea time, participatory learning sessions began. participants were led through a series of activities to understand the technology of New Media. During this session, each of them was given a piece of paper and two envelopes. They were asked to write a letter to one friend in the group so that each one will get one letter. After the letter is written as per instructions, they cut the letter into two pieces and put one each in two envelopes. The participants also asked to write down the name of the friend on each envelope. Two ribbons were given to each participant with different colours and they were asked to tie them between the chairs and create a symbolic network among them. Using the network, the participants sent the envelopes through two different routes towards the addressee. The envelopes moved along the network and finally each participant got two envelopes each. They opened the envelopes, put the two pieces together and deciphered the message. This exercise enabled them to discern how Internet functions. The participants were shown the video 'Warriors of the Net' which explains the function of Modem, Internet Service Provider, Router, LAN, WAN etc.

During the post-dinner session the group came together to learn about the ownership of New Media. The participants were divided into three groups and they were assigned to identify the advertisements they come across by browsing the Internet. They were also asked to identify the products, services as well as softwares, brands, companies they come across. Since the computer network was not set up on the first day, the participants

had to depend only on their previous New Media experiences to do the group work. They came out with limited advertisement brands such as ICICI, LIC, Monster.com, Bharatmatrimonial.com etc. They also listed softwares mainly proprietary softwares such as MS Office, Page Maker, Photoshop, Coral Draw etc. The discussion followed brought out the owners of the software companies such as Microsoft Corporation, Google. Inc., Yahoo.Inc. etc. The input regarding the nine media conglomerates who hold monopoly of the global media infrastructure enabled them to see the ownership as a prime factor that control the global media industry. They were also enabled to see the financial, political, ethnical, gender interests which shape the function of the global media. Santhosh George, Research Associate, CISRS and Anil Varghese Tharayath, Programme Associate, National Centre for Advocacy Studies (NCAS) , Pune were the facilitators of the entire Workshop.

The second day began with the Bible study by Rev. Dr. Sham P. Thomas. He chose the theme of the Bible study as 'Good News – Networking for Life'. He enabled the participants to examine the mode and content of communication in the Biblical narratives on women. He focused on the narrative on women who saved Moses' Life and the narrative on the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth. He pointed out that in the context of negation of life these women initiated new networks to affirm new life. The main character of their network is the subversiveness of both form and content of communication. The participants found the Bible study participatory and refreshing.

The first session of the second day focused on the characteristics of New Media. The participants were divided into four groups and were asked to choose an old media product such as Newspaper, VCD or Audio CD and were asked to compare it with the New Media and list out its advantages and disadvantages. The groups presented their reports during the plenary and based on their presentations, the facilitators highlighted the characteristics of New Media such as interactivity, nonlinearity and convergence.

The post-lunch session was set apart to understand and familiarize various New Media forms. The four groups were asked to browse the Internet and do a comparison between various New Media forms such as Websites, Blogs, Online Newspapers, Wikipedia and E-mails. The exercise enabled them to understand the differences between these formats,

their advantages and unique features and match New Media forms with the corresponding Old Media forms.

The third session of the second day, after the tea time, focused on the language of New Media and the distinction between various interfaces and their characteristics. The participants divided into four groups were asked to browse one of the websites among 'Ohmynews', 'Google.com.', 'Wikimapia' or 'Flicker.com' in order to identify the different types of interfaces used. One of the participants, Harshad Sharma, took up the role of the facilitator and enabled the participants to identify the various elements of a Website. The session highlighted, various type of interfaces such as text based interfaces, graphic interfaces, iconic interfaces and symbolic interfaces. It also enabled them to identify the text based language as well as audiovisual language.

The fourth and final session of the second day after the dinner focused on New Media Audiences. During the session the participants in four groups took up an assignment each to create a document on a socially relevant topic based on the information they search and find from the Internet. The topics selected and worked were 'Alcoholic addiction amongst youth in India', 'Women's Rights in Maharashtra on Dowry Harassment', 'Brain Drain (Why the people leave India and go abroad)' and 'Conversion to Christianity in India'. The first group produced a document compiling various aspects of Alcoholic addiction such as Rate of crimes due to Addiction and Rehabilitation of the Addicts. The second group drafted a petition on dowry harassment in Maharashtra and posted it in onlinepetition.com Though the third and fourth groups could identify a number of resource materials related to their topic, they were not able to produce a document. The exercise enabled them to understand the potential of New Media to create and sustain a democratic public sphere and to make meaningful interventions in society as creators, distributors and communicators.

The Third day began with the Bible study by Rev. Paramjyothi, Presbyter, CNI, based on Luke 7:31, 32. According to him, Jesus was comparing the people of his time with children playing a game of weddings and funerals. During the game, according to him, one would begin playing flute a wedding tune and the children would start dancing. Then the tune would change to a funeral dirge and instead of dancing the children would all begin to wail. But here they neither play a game of weddings nor play a game of funerals.

According to him similar to those children we shout when there is need for silence and keep quiet when there is need for an urgent response. We also try to covert worship into businesslike affair and business a faith related affair. Thus he urged the participants to try to find alternatives, to swim against the tide and give purpose and direction to the communication ministry in Church and Society.

The first session of the day was an Analysis of News sites to understand how New Media represents social identities and social issues. The participants in four groups carried out a comparative analysis between a corporate news site and an alternative news site based on the theme 'Climate Change'.

The group one who did the analysis based on CNN and Real News came out with the observation that CNN as a global corporate News Network provided a larger international view of the subject while Real News tried to localise the debate by highlighting views of people such as Human Rights Lawyers. The group two compared CNN with Counter Currents and observed that CNN highlighted the anxiety of the world leaders and scientists giving specific focus to emerging water crisis in America where as Countercurrents ridiculed the stance of the developed countries as that of Uncle Sam, highlighted the perspective of the people of the third world people and provided information needed for an informed debate among the global community in favour of the third world. The group three who compared BBC and Indimedia observed that BBC was able to categorise the theme of climate Change into evidence, impact, adaptation, policies and provide large amount of general information to the people where as Indimedia carried issue based article on Coal-fired power plants funded by the Asian Development Bank that continue to poison local communities and dump huge amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The fourth group compared BBC with Real News and opined that the former is text based while that latter is providing video too. According to them BBC tried to soften the issue by not attacking the European Union stand on Climate Change while Real News upheld the urgency of the issue attacking the US and European Union stands in support of the third world. The session enabled the participants to understand the concept of representation and to discern how and why the representation of the issue of Climate Change differed in Corporate News sites and in Alternative News

sites. Though a session was planned on Representation of Gender in Computer Games, due to lack of time it could not take place.

Evaluation and Valedictory function

The post lunch session of the third day was kept for Evaluation and Valedictory. Based on a descriptive evaluation questionnaire the participants gave written feedback on the workshop. Sunny Aksal in his response remarked that though he daily uses the net he never distinguished the formats. The Workshop enabled him to do so. Amos Massey remarked that the workshop deepened his understanding of the New Media and that we need to know about the information source and its owner before we take information from any website. According to Neha, the workshop was fairly an in-depth orientation to New Media. But she also expressed that at least for some, the technicalities discussed may be too much to comprehend. She also pointed out that the Bible study by Rev. Sham on Communication and Gender issues was very interesting. Harshad Sharma pointed out that the session on New Media and Representation of the Third World was one of the best sessions of the Workshop as everyone took great interest in comparing the information on corporate and alternative websites. Uday remarked that it was a nice to have a blend of Biblical reflections and practical work at the computer lab. Rini shared that the Bible Studies were very effective since it helped her to understand Bible in new ways so she can understand God in a better way.

Kalpesh wrote that using new media anyone can create one's own website and distribute his/her views about any subject, and get other's opinions about the subject. Subhash wrote that the session on the parts of a webpage was interesting and informative. He expressed that more resource persons from North India should have been involved. Jatin wrote that the session on making our own media was an adventurous experience of searching information on a chosen topic and compiling ideas together.

The final session was the valedictory session which began with the closing worship. Neha and Amit compeered the session. They enabled the participants to reflect upon the process and to refresh the insights gained from the workshop. They sang and prayed together thanking and praising God for the opportunity. Reni, Kripa Jatin, Uday and Amos shred their reflections briefly on the workshop. It mainly highlighted the merit of the participatory learning process and at the same time pointed out that the duration was

inadequate for such loaded schedules. They observed that the wavelength of participants was different and thus some of them grasped well while some found difficult to understand the programme. They also requested the organisers to equip them further so that, they can impart training to their friends in the respective places. Harshad proposed that the group could start a website, wiki or blog to share news and views collaboratively, create content from various parts of India and continue to work on it even after the workshop. Kasta Dip, Youth Coordinator, CNI appreciated the participants for their collective work and urged them to share the insights they learned from the workshops with their friends in their respective Dioceses. Raj Bharat Patta, Executive Secretary of NCCI for Dalit and Adivasi Desk, in his Valedictory Address observed that in the present day, Communication is approached from upper class-caste perspective. He ascertained that since Communication is meant for the extension of God's kingdom, it must be approached from people's perspective. He urged the participants to share their concerns, activities and sustain communication network using new media. He further appreciated the organisers for bringing out the trainer's manual on New Media. Anil Varghese Tharayath, Programme Associate, National Centre for Advocacy Studies, Pune who functioned as one of the Facilitators of the workshop called upon the participants to do the follow up action through the New Media and making their presence meaningfully in the emerging media landscape. The Three day workshop came to a close by the Vote of thanks by Santhosh George highlighting the efforts of resource persons and participants to successfully implement the new media literacy curriculum with genuine interest and commitment.

Participants' List

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Photos of the Trainer's Training Workshop on New Media Literacy
5,6,7 December 2007, Nagpur, Maharashtra
CISRS in association with Church of North India



Participants during the inaugural Worship



Santhosh George, Research Associate, CISRS giving introduction to the workshop



Rev. Dr. JH Anand,
Chairperson, Asia
Region WACC
delivering the
inaugural address



Rev. Dr. Sham P
Thomas, HOD,
Department of
Communication,
UTC, Bangalore
delivering the
Keynote address



Sudipta Singh,
Director,
Programmes, CNI
proposing
felicitations



Participants
carrying out
an exercise to
understand
new media
technology



Dr. Sham P
Thomas
taking Bible
study



Participants
carrying out
assignments
browsing the
net.



Harshad
facilitating
anatomy of
a website



Neha
presenting her
group report



Anil Varghese,
Programme
Associate
National Centre
for Advocacy
Studies (NCAS)
leading plenary
session on
Understanding
New Media
Audiences



Rev. Paramjyothi,
Presbyter, CNI
taking Bible Study



Participants
enjoying a
light moment



Singing and
praising God
at the Closing
Worship



Neha and Amit
Compeering
the Valedictory
session



Reni sharing
her reflections
during the
Valedictory
session



Amos sharing his reflections



Kasta Dip, Youth Coordinator, CNI sharing his observations



Rev. Raj Bharat Patta , Executive Secretary, Dalit Desk, National Council of Churches in India delivering Valedictory address



Participants along with resource persons



Centre for
Human
Potential
Development,
CNI, Nagpur

4. Report of the Community Radio Action Research

21st January 2008 to 29th February 2008

Ottasekharamangalam Gram Panchayath, Trivandrum district, Kerala.

The Action Research on Community Radio is intended to study the potential of Community Radio for people's empowerment at Panchayath level. It is intended to study the transformation among the people who get trained and produce Community Radio programmes and the audiences who receives the programmes at grass root level.

During the month of August 2007 Kottukal Panchayath in Trivandrum district of Kerala was identified for the implementation of the Action Research on Community Radio. A paper titled 'Community Radio for Peoples' Empowerment' was presented to the Panchayth. The Research Associate with help of the NGO named Santhigram held a series of orientation and planning meetings at the Panchayath and visited 12 wards to meet ward members and youth. In spite of this background work, the first Training Workshop organized on 10th October 2007 was boycotted by the Panchayath members. The main reason behind this was the enmity between the NGO and the Panchayath Leadership. Thus we had to withdraw from Kottukal Panchayath.

Thereafter Ottasekharamangalam Panchayath, Trivandrm district, Kerala was identified in November in order to implement the Community Radio Action Research. The paper titled 'Community Radio for Peoples' Empowerment' was presented to the Panchayth on the basis of which the Panchayath Committee approved the proposal to implement Community Radio Action Research in their Panchayath and 15 Community Radio volunteers were identified.

Dr. T Kannan Post Doctoral Fellow, ISEC, Bangalore, Ms. Bineetha Thampi, Researcher, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum and Ms. Maithri Prasad, Researcher, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum have helped the Research Associate to develop the research methodology of the action research.

Report of Phase I Training and Production.

The Training and production phase of Community Radio Action Research was carried out during the period 21st January 2008 to 29th February 2008 at Ottasekharamangalam Gram Panchayath, Trivandrum district, Kerala.

Inauguration:

Community Radio Training and production was inaugurated on 21st January 2008 at the Panchayath Hall. Baiju Chandran, Assistant Station Director, Doordarshan in his inaugural address stressed the role of Communication media in the process of development citing the examples of development communication project SITE (Satellite Instructional Television Experiment) in Indian Villages. Satheesh Babu C.S, Secretary, Computer Society of India, Executive Secretary, SPACE (Society for the Promotion of Alternative computing and Employment) in his felicitation spoke about the uniqueness of free software and 'Alakal' the community radio project they are involved in and assured all support for community Radio Training and Production to be held at Ottasekharamangalam.

Satheesh. I.B the District Panchayath Member, representing the local panchayath ascertained that this is the first Community Radio Initiative by any Local Self Government Institution in Kerala. Adv. K.P. Ranadive, President, Ottasekharamangalam Grampanchayath told in his presidential address that as a Model Gram Panchayath which secured Nirmal Puraskar of Indian President, they are taking of the challenges of experimenting Community Radio for people's empowerment. Santhosh George, Research coordinator Community Radio Action Research Training and Production Phase concluded the inaugural session sharing the objectives and the methodology of the training and production. The session was attended by around hundred people mostly women who are members of the women's collective 'Kudambasree' of the Panchayath. After the inaugural session the guest as well as the participants proceeded to the house taken on rent for the Community Radio Training and Production. Baiju Chandran cut the ribbon and opened the house. Panchayath President as well as the participants of the programme lit the lamp as a gesture of opening the program.

Training 22nd January 2008.

Training began on 22nd January at the house rented for the Community Radio Training and Production. The participants were taken through the process of self introduction, ice breaking and media exposure survey during the first session. The session was felicitated

by Sathosh George. The effort was to establish a free learning environment with a clear knowledge about the participants and their social economic and cultural backgrounds and potentials. The focus group discussion, conducted in the afternoon also brought out their understanding about the Panchayath and the issues of people of Panchayath to be dealt with in the Community Radio Training and Production. The discussion was felicitated by Maithri Prasad Researcher, Center for Development Studies.

Name	Age	Gender	Qualification/ Employment	Community	Telephone.
Shirley M	33	F	+2, Unemployed	Dalit Cheramar	9995856684
Sinikumari V	27	F	+2, Unemployed	Dalit	2257812
Sangeetha SV	23	F	Degree Student	Hindu Nair	2118525
Sreekala KI	21	F	+2, Unemployed	Hindu OBC	9947809531
Anoop RS	22	M	+2, Electrician	Hindu Ezhava	2256514
Manjusha C	22	F	Degree Student	Hindu Ezhava	2256338
Sheejakumari C	31	F	+2, Housewife	Hindu Nair	2255624
Abhilash NH	25	M	+2, Private Co.	Christian Nadar	9744155717
Ajmal Khan S	20	M	Degree Student	Muslim OBC	2256456
Santheep S	21	M	Degree Student	Hindu Nair	9995730722
Anoop RS	21	M	Degree Student	Hindu Nair	2257179
Unnidrishnan A	20	M	+2, Unemployed	Hindu Nair	2256879
Sandhya A	27	F	Degree, Housewife	Hindu Nair	2257834
Nizamudheen N	20	M	Degree, Tuition teacher	Muslim	2255506
Gayathri NB	21	F	+2, Unemployed	Hindu OBC	9495038702

23rd and 24th January 2008.

The two days were set apart for understanding various Radio formats. Biju Mathew, programme Executive, All India Radio, Trivandrum who led the session began with their own Radio experience. The participants were made to listen to two documentary features produced by Biju Mathew, one on Social apathy towards elderly and the other on discrimination towards HIV positive which bagged European Union Award on AIDS

reporting. Based on the inputs and interaction, the participants prepared sketches of 3 features on the theme Bullock Carts. When one group tried to highlight the diminishing presence of bullock carts as the sign of diminishing human relationship, the second group projected it as the scapegoat of 'progress and development' and the third group traced the nostalgia of life and culture.

They also sketched two documentaries one on the local Public health Centre which stopped the inpatient faculty. The other documentaries sketched were on the changing agricultural practices highlighting those who survived the agricultural crises with their bold new initiatives. This was followed by inputs by Sathosh George on Radio news, its structure and language. The participants were divided into three groups and the groups were given three different Newspapers each. According to the instructions they worked out a news bulletin script based on five important news items they identified from the front pages and presented the same. The presentations were reviewed and discussed how news is prioritized. The morning session of 24th was set apart for reviewing the documentary and feature scripts prepared by the groups. Based on the analyses of his docu-feature on HIV positive people, Biju Mathew highlighted the need to study the issue in detail, involve the people who are victims, those who are addressing the issue, experts in the field and assimilate their experiences in the productions. He also pointed out the necessity of a style book which documents the ethical stand point of the media group as well as a directory of subject experts, organizations and the like.

During the afternoon session, the participants carried out two assignments one on 'unforgettable childhood memory' and other on 'the color they like most' without mentioning the color. These exercises enabled the participants to learn how they can paint pictures with words.

A panel discussion format was also introduced. The theme 'domestic violence' was given to the three teams and asked them to conduct the discussion based on the theme. They presented the group discussion assuming various roles such as victim of domestic violence, social worker, women activist, journalist and advocate. When the first and second group strived to highlight the need for the entire society to take up the responsibility of resisting domestic violence, the third group lost the point by discussing the men who are domesticated by women in certain households. It was surprising to note

that the moderator of the three groups were men and that the women were hesitant to express their views. The participants were given assignment to prepare the scripts of the feature, news and personal experience narrative.

25th January 2008.

The day was set apart to learn the basics of audio recording software. Paniyadima John and Stalin who are working as community media trainers, SPACE came as the facilitators of the software training. They gave introduction to the concept of Free Software and its advantage over Proprietary Software. They also shared their experience of 'Alakal' Radio which is popular among fisher folk in the costal belt of Trivandrum district run by SPACE. The participants were inspired to listen to title music of Radio 'Alakal' as well as some of their programs.

Subsequently they introduced the various components such as dialogues, narration, music, sound effects etc. as well as the free software 'Audacity' and its tools.

During the afternoon session the participants gained practical experience in using the software 'Audacity' for recording and creating mp3 audio files. The participants were very enthusiastic and they were able to carry out the recording of personal experience sharing, news as well as feature. It was very interesting to see how the participants were trying to build up their three groups by negotiating the distinct skills of each individual.

26th, 27th January 2008.

These two days were set apart for learning the Radio presentation techniques. Sreekumar Mukhathala, Program Executive, All India Radio, Trivandrum led the sessions. Responding to audio recording of the previous day, he convinced the participants the need to train sound through continues efforts. Various techniques such as tonal variations, volume control and emotional rendering were introduced through exercises. He also gave a list of words and asked them to read with clarity, speed control and quality of pronunciation. In the afternoon the participants proceeded to nearby LP school. It was a unique experience for all the people gathered there to take part and witness a special live program of All India Radio on the occasion of the Republic Day from Ottasekharamangalam Gram Panchayath. Around two hundred people were around as it was about to begin the legal literary program of the Panchayath. They all witnessed the live Radio programme production. It involved some of our trainees, trainers and

Panchayath leaders. The programme was in the form of a series of interviews about Ottasekharamangalam Gram Panchayath as well as about the Community Radio training and production. It provided a lot of publicity for Community Radio within and outside Panchayath.

27th January 2008

The day began with the presentation of reports of the live Radio broadcast and the legal literacy programme. Responding to the reports, Sreekumar Mukhathala pointed out the distinctiveness of Radio reports. He then made them listen to a docu-feature on Horticulture therapy for the mentally challenged. The three groups were assigned to practice and present a documentary script based on the life of a departed soldier N.J. Nair. Based on the presentation he advised the participants to take note of clarity in pronunciation, speed of delivery and volume level.

In the afternoon they also practiced reading newspaper reports in different volume levels. Two episodes of a Radio satire, 'Chellappan and Chellamma' scripted by Biju Mathew and a Radio feature 'Mahabharatham' scripted by Sreekumar Mukhathala were also assigned to the participants. These exercises help them to get to know about various Radio presentation techniques. The three working groups were finalized with Sinikumari, Manjusha, Sreekala, Anoop and Ajmal Khan in the group I, Sheeja, Sandhya, Unnikrishnan, Nizam and Gayathri in the group II and Sangeetha, Abhilash, Santheep, Anoop and Sherly in the group III.

28th and 29th January 2008.

These two days were set apart for recording and editing exercises with the first day for studio and the second day for the field. Panyadima made the participants listen to various Radio programmes produced by 'Alakal Radio' including a talk by Vayalar the poet, an interview with a fisherman Johnson who was stranded in the sea for more than ten days, talk by a Government official regarding the fish worker's welfare fund and announcements regarding safety measures for fish workers. The programme previously recorded by the participants were taken as examples and based on them editing process was demonstrated by Panyadima and Stalin.

On 29th the participants set out to experiment field recording. The group I collected interviews on women's organization 'Kudumbasree', group II on the legal dispute

authority 'Adalath' and group III on the receipt system administered by the Panchayath. Using digital and tape recorders they moved among common people in the market places as well as in the Panchayath Head Quarters. They got positive response from most of the places except from a person who got asset back by the intervention of the legal authority. During the morning session they collected the field recourses. During the afternoon they recorded the narrations, did the editing and finalised the programme. The programme produced by the group III on receipt system kept up the quality both in content as well as production skills. Other two groups also took good effort. During the process group I was assisted by Santhosh, group II by Panyadima and group III by Stalin.

The participants and the trainers briefly evaluated the training process and found it satisfactory. The participants were asked to plan and prepare for the forthcoming production face in the form of news, documentary, feature and panel discussion. They were also advised to work on the themes came up during focus group discussions such as water scarcity, public health, women's concerns local history and development issues.

1st and 2nd February 2008.

From 1st February efforts were taken to produce content for Community Radio of Ottasekharamangalam. The above two days were set apart for the production of Radio News Bulletin. In order to begin the process, the groups were given two different Newspapers of the day and were asked to identify and prioritize news items relevant to the local context. When they came up with the list, it was found that most of the news items they enlisted were irrelevant to the local experience. Thus the groups were reassigned to discover the news items relevant to the local context. Hand outs were also given to them elaborating the structure of Radio news, the potential of voice clips, on-the-spot narrations and the like.

The three groups were able to complete their assignments within the stipulated time. Group I highlighted the forthcoming cultural festival of the Panchayath with voice clip of the Panchayath President. They also brought out a report on MGM High School Poozhanadu, who succeeded in achieving excellence in the field of sports using an interview with the sports instructor. Ajimal Khan and Sinikumari were the news presenters of group II.

The News Bulletin by group II highlighted the water supply system of the Panchayth. They brought out an on-the-spot narration by Sheeja at the Ottasekharamangalam pump house and a voice clip of the pump operator. The news reader of group II was Gayathri. The group III also put the forthcoming cultural fete as the most important news item. They brought out a news exclusive regarding the delay in commissioning the new building for the Office of Sub Registrar of Poozhanadu. The officials were found to be hesitant to speak out regarding the issue. The voice clip by the Panchayath President revealed the current state of affairs. The news presenters were Sangeetha and Abhilash. There was no time to evaluate the News Bulletin in detail. The random field back mainly highlighted the need for more systematic approach in script preparation, field recording, presentation and editing processes.

4th and 5th February 2008.

The above two days were kept for production of documentaries. On 4th morning, Rev. Blysu Varghese, who was a parish priest at Ottasekharamangalam for four years came and spent time with the participants. As a person familiar to the Panchayath he encouraged them delve in to local issues. The group I took water scarcity issued and dealt with the existing water recourses, water supply system, inadequacies of the present system, grievances of people belonging to water scarce regions and remedial measures required. The experiences shared by the members of Vattaparambu ward were more than convincing. Sinikumari and Manjusha work behind the script development and production.

Group II prepared a documentary on 'Adakath' the dispute redressal authority set up by Panchayath to settle local disputes. The documentary carried a narration regarding the redressal authority along with the sharing of experience by local women Kamala Bai and Vasantha who underwent the process of dispute settlement.

The group III focused on the micro credit project for the production of the documentary. They brought out the history of micro credit, the vision behind it and its present functioning in the Panchayath. They highlighted the opinions of the Panchayath officials, members of Kadambara Pournami Kudumbasree and heads of local banks. It was an enquiry in to the process of women empowerment through micro credit system.

Among the three groups, production by group I on water scarcity issue kept up the quality. The random feed back received from the participants revealed that they need more expertise in developing case studies.

6th and 7th February 2008.

The above two days were set apart for producing feature. During sixth Dr. Godwin Shiri, Director, CISRS visited the training programme and interacted with the participants. Philip Mathew, activist, SEWA took a session on how to develop case studies. The President and Vice President of the Panchayath along with the Director of CISRS held discussions with the participants during the forenoon regarding the progress of the ongoing Community Radio Production.

During the afternoon the groups began their productions. Group I focused on impact of Alcoholism on women and children in the production of their feature. They brought out the issue in the form of dramatic sequences in which a father and a son, both drunkards destroying the delicate family relationship and livelihood. They clearly pointed out the way in which liquor is destroying the common people's lives. The women in the group took good effort in developing the script. But the aspects of liquor industry, the experience of the victims and the methods to redeem the addicts were missing links in the production.

The group II focused on the plight of small scale farmers and the exploitation of the middle man in marketing their products. They also brought in the alternative local market initiated by the small scale farmers to overcome the exploitation. They combined both dramatic pieces and the actual experience sharing by the farmers highlighting the alternative local market. The background sound effects caused disruptions to the narration and sound clips causing distortion in communication. But their script as well as presentation both were found to be worth appreciating.

The group III took the theme, plastics and its impact on the ecology. They included the history of plastics, the ill effects of its usage as well as its possible alternatives. The project Director Shibu. S. Nair of zero waste management by the organization called 'Thanal' was interviewed by the team. The dramatic pieces on the onslaught of plastics and the plastic waste interspersed with the reflection by Shibu, gave authenticity to the production.

The feature production was incomplete during the two days. Thus the participants asked for more time to complete the remaining task. It was decided to provide two more days for the completion of the features after the planned schedule.

8th and 9th February 2008.

The above two days were set apart for producing panel discussions. The common theme selected by the participants was 'Violence against women'. Prior to the production the group did an exercise animated by Santhosh to discover the differences between those which are biologically inherent in human beings and those which are socially constructed. This enabled them to understand the social construction of gender and to look at the dignity and selfhood of women and the violence that victimizes them.

Group I focused on dowry issue. They brought in the discussants as advocate, social worker, college student and house wife. The group was able to bring out the impact of dowry among the poorest of the poor victimizing both men and women. The women in the group raise the question, 'why can't we have a system of giving dowry to women?' The advocate highlighted that it is a punishable to take dowry. The interventions of men in the discussion were almost neutral. There was no attempt to seek how they can prevent dowry as a social issue through social mobilization. Thus they were effective in identifying the issue but the attempt to address the issue was not effective.

Group II choose their specific focus as 'eve teasing'. Lack of planning was evident in the dull beginning of the discussion. But it got ignited when one of the male discussants pointed out that the women are responsible for eve teasing. The women discussants countered him immediately. Though he defended his stand further, the women were vehement enough to established that in most of the cases women are harassed due to the indecent attitude of men. The discussant was found to be more subjective. The objectivity was lacking through out the discussion.

Group III took the specific focus of 'discrimination women in terms of labour'. The roles assigned to the discussants were Social worker, University Professor and Construction worker. The discussion was convincing was enough to establish that women are discriminated in terms if labour. The sharing of experience by the construction worker was very convincing. The moderator further explored the conditions of women who are belonging to middle classes as well as the women who are employed in gulf countries.

But in the conclusion, the moderator stated that a part from the lower income groups most of the other sections of women are free from discrimination in terms of labour. Though the moderator didn't emphasize the above finding it stood as the outcome of discussion. Group III was clear about the topic and about the process of panel discussion. Their approach was very objective. But their sweeping generalization diluted the grave situations of various sections of women and their struggles for equal wages.

Evaluation

On 9th February after completing the production our panel discussion the participants carried out an evaluation based on an objective as well as descriptive questionnaire to introspect the process of training and production they underwent during the sixteen days. The objective questionnaire survey revealed that the participants were able to get a good grasp of the theoretical and practical aspects of Community Radio during workshop. All the groups expressed satisfaction regarding the choice of resource persons, resource materials, exercises, equipments etc. They expressed that the duration was too limited to accomplish quality productions. They pointed out that they need more training in software and acquire better skills in audio editing. Most of them expressed willingness to take up Community Radio as major concern for the coming days. They shared the experience of interacting with Panchayath officials, social workers as well as common people and learning from them regarding various social issues and people potential to create a better society.

Visit to All India Radio and the conduct of press conference.

On 26th February the participants paid a visit to the All India Radio Trivandrum station and witnessed the studio production. They also interacted with the artists, technicians and the producers and get to know about the functioning of the Radio station. The participants along with the coordinator Santhosh, Arun .M, Panyadiama, Stalin(SPAC) and I.B. Sathesh (District Panchayath Member) conducted a press conference at Trivandrum Press Club. The Press conference was very informal and thus we were able to share the concept and functioning of Community Radio in India and its relevance for local self governments in Kerala. The event was covered with photographs in the New India Express, Desabhimani and Janayugam.

During the afternoon the participant spent time visiting the SPACE center and held discussions with its members regarding the possibilities of future corporation. The members at the SPACE centre assured all support if the group is taking the Community Radio forward.

Valedictory Function

The valedictory function for the Community Radio Training – Production phase was held on 29th February 2008 at the auditorium near Ottasekharamangalam Gram Panchayath. Muraleedaran, Director, All India Radio, Trivandrum was the chief guest of that function. Arun. M, Panyadima, Stalin (SPACE), Adv. K.P. Ranadive (Panchayath President) and various Panchayath leaders participated in the function along with the participants. Muraleedaran appreciated the Panchayath and its president for taking up Community Radio which is both visionary and challenging. He also highlighted the social development potential of Community Radio. Arun. M highlighted the importance of group media in the context of the onslaught of mass media which refuses to represent local people and local issues. He also ensured support to all the endeavors of the Panchayath in the regard. Muraleedaran later distributed merit certificate to all the participants. The report of the training and production phase was presented by Santheep and Gayathri.

The Community Radio Training and Production phase to a greater extent was a successful experiment at Ottasekharamangalam Gram Panchayath. The participants were able to acquire skills of Radio scripting, presentation, production and they were able to produce News Bulletins, Documentaries, Features, Panel discussions based on local issues and concerns such as violence against women, water scarcity, plight of marginal farmers, plastics and its alternatives etc. This has created a good pool of content for the Community Radio. The next phase is taking the productions to the local level, to the various wards of the Panchayath, play back the programs and get the assessment of the local people. This will further bring out the level of effectiveness and relevance with regard to the life of common people of Ottasekharamangalam and their struggles.

**Photographs of the Community Radio Action Research:
Training and Production Phase
Held during 21 January to 29 February 2008**



Adv. K P Ranadive,
Panchayath
President giving
opening remarks
during the inaugural
session



Santhosh George,
Research Associate,
CISRS explaining
the process of
Community Radio
Action Research
during the inaugural
session



Baiju Chandran,
Assistant Station
Director,
Doordarshan is
cutting the ribbon to
open the Training
and Production
House



Sreekala, one of the
volunteers lighting
the lamp at the
Training and
Production House
while Satheesh Babu
C.S, Secretary,
Computer Society of
India, Executive
Secretary, SPACE
looks on.



Biju Mathew,
Programme
Executive, All India
Radio, Trivandrum
introducing various
Radio formats.



Paniyadima John,
Trainer, SPACE
instructing the
volunteers on how to
use Audacity, the
audio software



Sreekumar, Mukhathala, Programme Executive, All India Radio, Trivandrum giving exercises on Radio presentation techniques.



Sreekumar, Mukhathala, Programme Executive, All India Radio, Trivandrum conducting a Special Live Radio broadcast from Ottasekharamangalam on 26th January, the Republic day of India



Volunteers engaged in general Group discussion



Volunteers observing the demonstration of the software



Group I
conducting audio
recording in the
field



Group I preparing
script



Group II carrying out editing using Audacity, the free software



Group II conducting the recording of Panel discussion



Group III planning their production



Group III while recording their panel discussion



Santhosh George, Research Coordinator speaking on the occasion of the Press Conference held at the Press Club, Trivandrum
Arun M, Coordinator, SPACE is on the left



Dr. Godwin Shiri, Director, CISRS (extreme left) interacting with the Panchayath President and Volunteers during his visit to the Training and Production House



Gayathri, one of the Volunteers presenting report during Valedictory function



Santheep, one of the Volunteers presenting report during Valedictory function



KA Muralidharan,
Director, All India
Radio, Trivandrum
delivering the
Valedictory address.



Audience of the
Valedictory function



Audience of the
Valedictory function



Sheeja, one of the
Volunteers receiving
certificate



Abhilash, one of the Volunteers receiving certificate



Community Radio Volunteers along with the Panchayath Officials and Director, All India Radio, Trivandrum

**5 Financial Statement for the period
August 2007 to March 2008
Project: Ethics of New Communication Technologies
from People's Perspectives
CISRS supported by WACC**

Month	Item	Expenses	Total
Aug-07	Establishment expenses	2535.35	
	Honorarium	6000.00	
	Bank Charges	34.00	
	Preparatory Expenses	3443.83	
	Programme Development Workshop	3127.00	
	Office Rent	2500.00	
	Research Assistant	2500.00	
			20140.18
Sep-07	Honorarium	6000.00	
	Bank Charges	34.00	
	Establishment expenses	4312.62	
	Office Rent	2500.00	
	Research Assistant	2500.00	
			15346.62
Oct-07	Honorarium	6000.00	
	Bank Charges	34.00	
	Establishment expenses	4201.00	
	Office Rent	2500.00	
	Research Assistant	2500.00	15235.00
Nov-07	Honorarium	6000.00	
	Bank Charges	34.00	
	Establishment expenses	4055.00	
	Office Rent	2500.00	
	Research Assistant	2500.00	15089.00
Dec-07	Honorarium	6000.00	
	Bank Charges	34.00	
	Establishment expenses	3505.00	
	Festival Allowance	2000.00	
	Nagpur Workshop	78114.73	
	Office Rent	2500.00	
	Research Assistant	2500.00	94653.73

Jan-08	Honorarium	6000.00	
	Bank Charges	34.00	
	Establishment expenses	2572.00	
	Office Rent	2500.00	
	expenditure reimbursement	3560.00	
	Part time Office Assistant	2500.00	17166.00
Feb-08	Honorarium	6000.00	
	Bank Charges	34.00	
	Establishment expenses	1507.00	
	Action Research	22212.50	
	Action Research	28850.00	
	Office Rent	2500.00	
	Part time Office Assistant	2500.00	63603.50
Mar-08	Honorarium	6000.00	
	Bank Charges	34.00	
	Establishment expenses	3749.00	
	Office Rent	2500.00	
	Part time Office Assistant	2500.00	14783.00
		256017.03	256017.03

Rupees Two Lakh Fifty Six Thousand Seventeen paise three only

Prepared by

Santhosh George
Research Associate, CISRS

2nd May 2008
Trivandrum, Kerala

A radio of, by and for the community



The youngsters of Ottasekharamangalam recording for their community radio initiative: Express

6 Newspaper Clip: The New Indian Express February 26, 2008

The youngsters of Ottasekharamangalam recording for their community radio initiative: Express

Express News Service

February 26

In this age of fastidious FM banter and FDI investments in radio, what significance can a community radio station of a small grama panchayat have? Ask this question to the youngsters of Ottasekharamangalam, near Kattakkada in the district, and what you will get in return would be an avalanche of explanations in favour of the latter.

The youngsters of the locality, who until a month ago were just passive radio listeners like others, have now turned radio jockeys, thanks to the community radio initiative of their grama panchayat.

As many as 15 youngsters of the grama panchayat were selected and trained in radio programming under this community radio project from January 21. The programme, which is being done as an action research, is being implemented with the support of the Society for Promotion of Alternative Computing and Employment (SPACE). "This is probably the first time that a community radio is being experimented under the aegis of a panchayat in Kerala. This is basically a feasibility test to find out how effective community radio can be as an interface between the administration and the people," said Santhosh George, co-ordinator of the programme. Santhosh is doing the programme as an action research for CISRS (Christian Institute for Study of Religion and Society).

"Although community radio is quite an old concept, it has received new dimensions after the advent of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT). With the availability of audio software, it is now possible to create a community radio station in a small room. This

has greatly expanded the possibility of community radio," Santhosh said.

Most of the youngsters who participated in this programme are college students. The participants were given training in script writing and radio programme production. Professionals in the field of radio broadcasting took classes for the students. "We did radio documentaries, features as well as news bulletins. All of them were exclusively on local issues in and around our panchayat. The themes of our programmes included water scarcity, plastic menace and alcoholism," said Sandeep, an MTA student.

"The best thing about the programme was that we got to know the issues and problems of our village better. We were also able to interact with panchayat officials and authorities as part of our programmes," said Ajmal Khan, a final year BA student.

But, more than anything, it was the sheer joy of having done something fresh and fulfilling that excited the youngsters most.

"We have always been tuned to the radio. We used to wonder how they went about their jobs at the radio station. But now we have an idea about it," said Sandhya, librarian at the village library.

Although the Ottasekharamangalam grama panchayat has expressed its consent for seeking the broadcasting licence for the community radio, the organisers said that it could be a difficult task.

"The Central Government has so far only promoted broadcast licence for community radios of educational institutions. So, it will be difficult to acquire a licence. Anyway, in the next stage, we will be narrowcasting our programmes at junctions and markets," said Santhosh.