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## Need for Community Radio

### Introduction

*“Human Development is much more than growth in national incomes, governance for human development is about much more than effective institutions and rules. It must also be concerned with whether institutions and rules are fair and whether all people have a say in how they operate.”*

The role played by the media in supporting the "people's say" is an extremely important one. On the other hand, given the way in which the established media structures function, it's possible that the "people's say" concept will never be realised through these institutions. There is no guarantee that they are representative of all demographic subgroups within a country's populace, hence it is necessary to involve all parts of the people in the process of expanding media structures. It is a venture that is run by the people for the people, and it reflects the dreams, aspirations, and worries of a community that are, for the most part, neglected or overlooked by mainstream media.

### Concept and definition

The umbrella term "community radio" refers to radio stations that do not operate for profit but instead serve the communities that they are located in. They form the "fourth pillar" of the media, together with commercial and public broadcasters, and are necessary for voicing the public opinion.

The first step in developing and maintaining a regulatory system that encourages the expansion and success of the community broadcasting industry is to gain an understanding of what is meant by the phrase "community radio." For the purpose of community broadcasting, where it is customary to provide certain benefits, including financial support, it is essential that these benefits and their respective responsibilities be clearly defined. According to Lewis (1995),

"community radio is a kind of local radio that defines itself as an autonomous entity — and relies on the community for its survival without any commercial purposes or objects."

Community radio has an audience that is confined to a particular geographic area. The low-power transmission might have a range of no more than twenty to thirty kilometres at most. Despite the fact that it is focused on a relatively small area, it serves a community that is interdependent on one another due to the existence of shared resources as well as development challenges and worries that have larger regional and national ramifications.

### **Importance of Community Radio**

Community radio has the potential to be an effective instrument for rural development at the grass-roots level. A wide range of social challenges, such as poverty, agriculture, gender inequality, educational disparities, and other social difficulties, could be tackled by various programmes. A study that examined the significance of local information sharing and the opening up of wider information networks for farmers in Northern Ghana with reference to vernacular radio programmes came to the conclusion that rural radio is effective in improving the sharing of agricultural information by remote rural farming communities. In this sense, radio provides a toolbox of participatory communication techniques that can be used to aid in agricultural extension work by speaking directly to groups of farmers and listeners in their native languages.

Communication amongst community members, group relationships, and the exchange of information and experiences are essential components in the process of constructing a community. The communities that are served by community radio stations are often located near the stations. The community has easy access to ownership, decision-making, and the outcome of the programme, all of which are important aspects. Much of the content is produced by members of the community, and it represents the concerns and interests of those people. The listeners of community radio, particularly women, are provided with a forum in which they can voice their thoughts and opinions.

The Bombay Presidency Radio Club, in India was the site of the very first ever scheduled radio transmission in the country. Up to the year 1927, it was the only radio broadcasting station in the Bombay area. After the federal government took control of radio in 1930, the network became known as the Indian Broadcasting Service (IBS).

The Indian Telegraph Act of 1885 was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of India in February 1995, when it held in a landmark judgment that airwaves are a form of public property that must be utilised for the greater interest of society.

At the Bangalore Declaration Community Radio Conference in 1996, a group of communicators and academics announced the beginning of an influential campaign to support community radio in India. This movement is still going strong today. Within this framework, the non-governmental organisation known as the Deccan Development Society was established (DDS).

A community radio station in Pastapur Telangana was established as part of UNESCO's "Women Speaking to Women Community Radio" initiative. About seventy different women's organisations, the most of which were established by Dalit women, were involved in the management of the DDS (Deccan Development Society) as well as the design of the programming for this radio station. Recording and distributing audio cassettes with information about women's rights is one of the current uses of the recording studio.

An experimental project known as Kunjal Pachae Kutch Ji has been developed through a partnership between the Kutch Mahila Vikas Sanghanathan (KMVS) of Bhuj and the Dhrishti Media Collective (DMC) of Ahmedabad. In the Indian state of Gujarat, more specifically in the Kutch District, the work will be carried out. The show originates from the AIR station in Bhuj and is broadcast there. The focal point of this initiative is on the rural women of Kutch, with the major goal being to better prepare these women for participation in Panchayat gatherings.

### **Concluding notes**

The term "community" should be interpreted widely to include both physical locations and shared interests, although in the early stages of recognition, states may prefer to restrict it to physical locations, and in certain cases, rural areas. Community broadcasters should only be officially recognised if they can prove they are owned or governed by the community they serve.

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