

Community Women Broadcasters Training – I

Conducted by

**Commonwealth Educational Media Center for
Asia (CEMCA)**

20 – 23 September, 2011



**Hosted at Nila Community Radio Station,
90.4 MHz**

**Sri Manakula Vinayagar Engineering College,
Pudhucherry**

A report by Karthik P

Background

Commonwealth Educational Media Center for Asia (CEMCA) conducted a four-day workshop for women involved in community radio in the southern state of Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Pudhucherry

Accentuating CEMCA's continued support to Community Radio in India, the training program was organized as part of a series of workshops to encourage greater community participation by providing some training inputs to community women.

With the launch of CEMCA's Community Radio Facilitation Center and inspired by the Community Radio Sannelan in April 2011 at New Delhi earlier this year, where community women working with different community radio stations marked their presence and showed an encouraging response; a series of workshops have been planned across four parts of the country to train community women on radio program production. The premier of the series was conducted at Nila Community Radio Station, 90.4 MHz, Sri Manakula Vinayagar College of Engineering, Madagathipet, Pudhucherry.

Titled – “Community Women Broadcasters Training – I” the workshop was spread over four days from 20 – 23, September, 2011 for a small group of seven Community Radio Stations (CRS).

Participating Community Radio Stations (CRS):

The seven participating CRS included in the workshop were:

1. Nila CRS – Puducherry, (Host)
2. Pudevai Vani CRS – Puducherry
3. PARD Vanoli – T.Pudhupatti village, Thirumangalam Tk, Madurai Dist.
4. Sivanthi CRS – Tiruchendur

5. Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli – Nagapattinam

6. Nalamdana CRS – Tambaram, Chennai (CRS in process) and

7. Pudhiya Udhaiyam CRS – SARVAM - Auro Media for Social Change - Puducherry (CRS in process)

Each CRS team of three consisted of one representative from the chosen station and two women from the community who have some experience in producing or participating in radio programmes as well as the time, inclination and willingness to contribute to making radio programs for their local CRS.

Puduvai Vani CRS team of Pondicherry University, Puducherry consisted of Program Executive, Ms. Saleema Rabiya who said that the CRS broadcast programs mainly in Tamil and also in English, Hindi and French. The community members included Ms. Dhanalakshmi who conducted live programs and also did transmission duty and Ms. Jayakanthi who made programs for people in the fisherman areas on HIV, AIDS, local



issues etc.

Ms. Hebi Papa of Sivanti CRS (above) introducing her group

Ms.Dhanalakshmi of Pudukkottai Vani CRS introducing her group (below)



The host team of Nila CRS, Puducherry, consisted of the CRS Deputy Director, Mr. Gnanavel, former announcer at AIR and retired teacher who said the CRS made programs for women on preventive medicines, local health traditions, nomadic tribes etc.

The community women were Ms. Girija and Ms. Varalakshmi who said they made programs on breast feeding, medicinal plants, native medicines and involved their local self help group – Podhigai.

Sivanthi CRS of Adithinar College, Tiruchendur was represented by Prof. I. Sehar who oversaw the running of the CRS and the community women broadcasters were Ms. Muthusundari, who made programs about her women's SHG Sangamam on commodities, nutrition and special programs for fisher folk to influence their dietary habits and Ms. Hebi Papa who had made programs on female foeticide, anemia, health etc.

Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli CRS of Nagapattinam run by an NGO was represented by Ms. Porkodi who handled transmission, field recordings, made women based programs and

coping with aftermath of the tsunami. The community women included Ms. Manimeghalai who made children's programs and Ms. Jency who made programs for the fishing communities.

PARD Vanoli of Madurai Dist. run by the NGO People's Action for Rural Development was represented by Mr. Kalyanasundaram, Program Executive who said the reach of the CRS covered 60 villages and recently completed its third anniversary which was marked by a 24-hour broadcast, and the community women included Ms. M.A. Saroja who has worked a field reporter for three years and Ms. Lakshmikantham.



Kalyanasundaram of PARD Vanoli



Jonah of Nalamdana introducing

her team

NGO Nalamdana of Tambaram, Chennai currently narrowcasting on its radio channel Thendral, will shortly be on air. The CRS was represented by Ms. Jonah who said they make programs on TB, AIDS, health issues etc was accompanied by community women volunteers Ms. Revathi and Ms. Rajalakshmi.

Pudhiya Udhayam CRS which will commence operations shortly in Perambai, Puthurai and Peruvai villages in Pudhucherry along the East Coast Route and in the proximity of Auroville was represented by Ms. Venus Upadhyay of SARVAM, an NGO set up by Sri Aurobindo Society.

Ms. Janaki Rama, Ms. Vasuki and Ms. Dharani, faculty at Sri Manakula Vinayagar Engineering College also participated, reporting and recording the proceedings of the entire workshop.

Workshop Proceedings:

Day 1

After a brief inauguration of the workshop, by Director and Principal of Sri Manakula Vinayagar Engineering College, Dr. V.S.K. Venkatachalapathy who welcomed the participants, the facilitators and trainers of the workshop, Ms. Rukmini Vemraju of CEMCA, Mr. Karthik Panchapakesan and Mr. Ganavel, were introduced to the participants. The participants then introduced themselves individually and briefly shared their experiences in community radio.



Inaugural session (left) and introductory session with workshop participants (right)

Ms. Rukmini Vemraju then explained the purpose, nature and objectives of the workshop and what was to be achieved at the end of the training session and how to develop content for community learning programs.

In the afternoon session the participants were then regrouped into three groups named after flowers namely *Thamarai* (Lotus), *Roja* (Rose), and *Malligai* (Jasmine). Each group was to identify a topic or issue that they would focus upon and produce radio programs on the same.

Thamarai group chose the topic of pre and post natal care; The *Thamarai* group consisted of — Kalayanasundaram of PARD,



Thamarai Group discussion in progress

Prokodi of Kalanjiyam,

Muthusundari and
Hebi Papa of Sivanthi,
Jhona of Nalamdana and
Gnanavel of Nila.

Roja decided on addressing the ills of alcoholism and The ***Roja*** group consisted of —



(Roja group play scripting a program)

Jensy of Kalanjiyam,
Jayakanthi and
Dhanalakshmi of Pudhuvai Vani,
Saroja and
Lakshmikantham of PARD and
I. Sehar of Sivanthi.

Malligai picked the social issue of child/early marriage of girl children. The ***Malligai*** group consisted of

Saleema of Pudhuvai Vani,
Venus of Pudhiya Udhayam,
Rajalakshmi and
Revathi of Nalamdana,



Malligai group in discussion

Girija and

Varalakshmi of Nila,

Manimeghalai and

Vasanthi of Kalanjyam.

The three groups were then split into two factions for a debate with one group speaking for early marriage of girl children and the other speaking against the same issue.

The event was lively and witnessed an excited set of arguments from the opposite sides.

Ms. Vemraju then brought it to the notice of the participants that in radio program production, all sides of the issue must be presented in a balanced manner and then the objective of the program have to be borne in mind while scripting the radio programs and not losing focus of the objective that the program aims to achieve.

Day 2

The second day began with a series of breathing, voice training and yoga exercises for the participants led by Karthik. The participants were told the benefits of practicing these exercises daily to improve the quality of their voice, not running out of breath while talking continuously on air and the ability to have breath control while speaking.



Yoga and Breathing exercises in progress

The participants continued with program ideation in their respective groups when they were introduced to the “*Elements of Sound Design*” that go into creating a radio program by Ms. Vemraju. They were explained the elements of the **spoken word, music, sound effects** and **silence** which has to be critically integrated into the radio program in the right proportion and balance for a program to achieve full efficacy with regard to its impact on the listener. Ms. Vemraju also highlighted the use of emotion and stress using the example of a sentence, where the meaning of the sentence changed completely if the stress was shifted from one word to another in the same sentence with regard to the spoken word. This aided the groups in the play acting of their ideas where they could use these elements of dramatization in their presentations.

Participants were then introduced to the various program formats like drama, skits, interview, narration, asking the expert for right information, vox pop, community members sharing their experiences, opinions on problems and finding solutions, documentary, songs by groups or individuals specially composed for the programs

making it relevant to the message of the program. Other formats included interactive formats like phone-in, phone-out, questions and answers, quizzes and use of humour like jokes and anecdotes which are entertaining and subject relevant.



Ms. Rukmini Vemraju explaining

a prepared message matrix.

Participants were then introduced to the novel concept of the **Message Matrix** by Ms. Vemraju, who explained on how to approach and tackle an issue while creating a radio program.

MESSAGE MATRIX

| Issue | Negative behavior | Consequences | Positive behavior | Benefits |
|-------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------|
| | | | | |

Example of a Message Matrix

She explained how any issue has certain negative behaviours and the resulting consequences of the problem and then contrasted it with a positive behaviour approach and the benefits that ensue. She said these factors have to be borne in mind to influence the listener while ideation and scripting for aiming to bringing about a change. Groups were distributed with chart-paper to table the message matrix on their relevant issues and identify it with their program ideation.

The respective groups then individually created a message matrix on their own set of relevant issues which helped them prepare for program ideation for their respective radio program production.

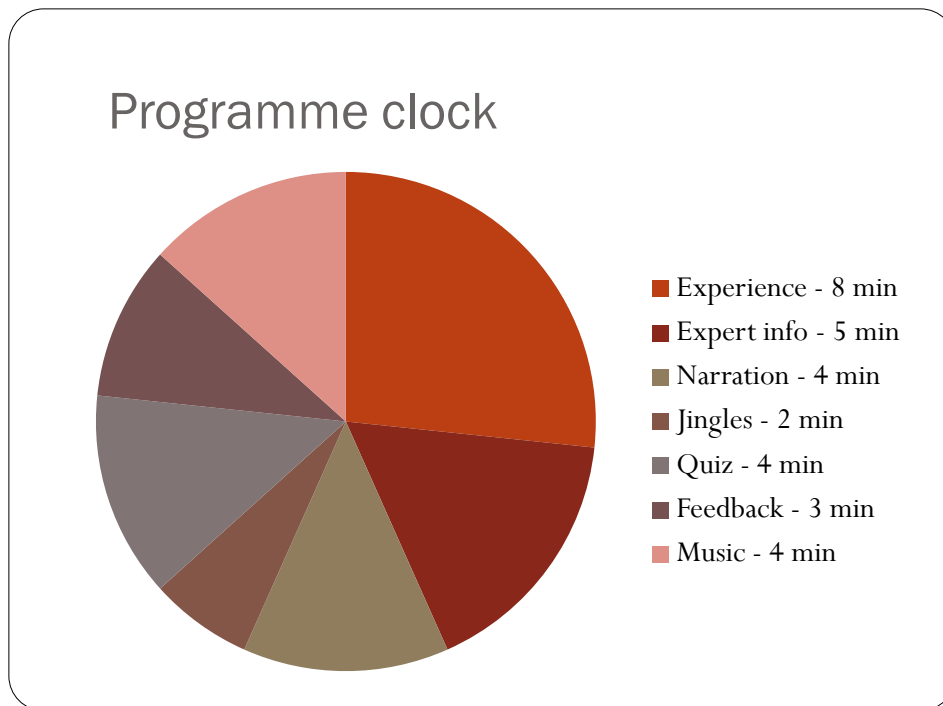
Ms. Vemraju stressed that influencing the listener was a slow and gradual step-by-step process and there were various stages of behavioural change. From giving information in the initial awareness/pre-awareness stage, to persuasion and giving encouragement and support at various stages, making the listener contemplate, then trial, adopt or practise to finally gaining confidence and then influencing others was the objective of every radio program, and every step needed various forms of support, encouragement to praise at

various stages.



Above - Ms.Saleema interpreting the message matrix

The magazine format with the program clock was then introduced to the participants. As a magazine has a lot of variety for its readers, the groups were asked to plan their production for 15 minutes using at least three program formats along with information, music, sound effects etc.



An example of Program Clock (above).

The importance of time and program management encouraged the groups to create a colourful collage in their radio programming. The groups were then given time to script, practice, rewrite, and rehearse before finally giving a live presentation of their programs. The day concluded with vivacious and animated presentations by the respective groups as a live demo which was timed. The three re-grouped teams were very creative and highly talented and demonstrated their individual talents and also proved that they could work collectively indicating team spirit. All participants ingeniously composed and wrote

songs, set tunes, sang in groups or individually, play acted out various roles, anchored and narrated according to the dictates of their scripts.

The *Thamarai* group used the concept of the program clock imaginatively beginning with an anchor presenting the theme in the form of a news format, followed by a short



skit highlighting the plight of mother on her loss of a stillborn due to hypertension and negligence of the same condition and need for regular check-up during pregnancy, followed by an enacted “ask the doctor/expert” in the structure of an interview and advice given followed by a group song and concluding with the anchor’s closing statements.

This variety program was skillfully interspersed and segmented using music ingeniously from the participants’ cell phones starting with a signature tune to sign off.

The *Malligai* team began with a young unmarried girl’s song to the anchor introducing the program, followed by a drama, a counseling session, to another group song culminating in an improvised vox pop and sign out asking for feedback.

The *Roja* group began with a theatrical drama of a habitual drunkard and the consequences it has on family life, followed by a narration, vox pop, a song concluding with a call for phone-ins and opinions.

After the presentation by each group, a feedback was given by Ms. Rukmini Vemraju and Mr. Karthik with a critical appraisal of how the programs could be improved or altered to bring out the message better which set the stage for rethinking, re-planning and review by the groups to modify the approach and setting the stage for final recording.

Day 3

The day commenced with voice, breath and yoga exercises, followed by a hectic day of rehearsals and recordings. How to handle the mike, tips and techniques was briefed to the participants for better recording quality and clarity was provided by Karthik. Commonly made errors, wrongful placement of the mike and other details were imparted to the workshop associates, which helped them correct the errors that followed during their individual recordings.

Field work:



Workshop participants interacting with Nettipakkam village women on a live broadcast

A pre-afternoon live broadcast was organized by the host Nila CRS in the village of Nettipakkam, located six km south of the CRS. The community women from the village shared how they benefited by programs broadcast by Nila which was broadcast live

through a phone-in program using a cell phone. Recordings by the groups continued till closure at Nila CRS and participants benefited with a hands-on experience using studio equipment.

Hands-on Practical work



Recording session of Malligai group in progress

Day 4

Commencing with breathing, voice and yoga exercises the final day saw the eager anticipation of the participants who waited to listen to their programs which was broadcast live by Nila CRS and played on the speaker system of the workshop hall.

Each team's programs witnessed a variety of change and drastic improvement from the demonstration to a professional quality production. The recorded programs which were broadcast noticed a marked and scaled up difference and improvement from the second day's live presentation with precise mixing of content, music, reworked and improved and additional content presented, balanced timing to signing off. The drastic

improvement was clearly effected by lessons learnt at the workshop, feedback, critical appraisal and the need to increase resources and inputs into the production of radio programming.

The three magazines programs by the groups that were broadcast drew both appreciation and applause.

The participants then shared their individual experience in writing and then with the entire team as a form of valuable feedback. I. Sehar of Sivanthi CRS said the workshop was a first time learning experience, the need for documentation and how the message matrix provided a balanced view, “the training provided will help make better programs with community women and I will now encourage greater community participation in the CRS. I am thankful to CEMCA for showing me how to use the CRS more effectively.”

Muthusundari said she would use her learning experience with her Sangamam group.

Jhona of Nalamdana said the workshop opened her eyes to host of new issues, various types of programs, the workshop moved from interaction to implementation. The message matrix was a helpful and systematic method to produce radio programs and added that she would organize meetings with SHGs in Tambaram and surrounding areas and provide training. Kalyanasundaram of PARD CRS said the program clock, use of sound design, the importance of the spoken word and how to produce a drama was valuable. The message matrix was specially useful and helpful for his field reporters.

Porkodi of Kalanjiam said she learnt how to shorten programs and utilize the magazine format variety and found the voice and breathing; mike handling techniques particularly useful. Gnanavel of Nila CRS said that trained women will now prepare at least 30 more women from the community and this will involve in increased participation in

community radio which is why the importance to train women. Venus of Pudhiya Udhayam said their NGO aspired to bring social change and their objectives of “how to?” was attended to through CRS. The workshop was a useful insight on how to plan things for a station, the content to be aired, program varieties and functioning of a CRS was learnt as she had no prior experience or agenda. The schema was useful, inclusive and for integral development using community radio. She was sure that the training would spur enthusiasm from community women. Saleema of Pudhuvai Vani said she learnt so many basics despite being a seasoned radio professional starting from how to write a script, implement it and produce better quality radio programs. She enthusiastically supplemented that she would immediately conducted the same training for her CRS staff along with five community members.



Ms. Vemraju sharing her experiences (left) . Saroja of PARD receiving her certificate.

Conclusion

In a brief closing ceremony all the participants were thanked for their active participation and awarded certificates of participation and souvenirs distributed to everyone. The workshop was an overall success as it achieved and surpassed the objectives that it aspired to do in providing quality training for radio program production for community

women broadcasters. The planning, execution, adaptability, improvisation helped achieve the goals set out by the organizers in conducting the workshop.

Below – Participants receiving their certificates and also sharing their experiences on what they learnt in the workshop.



List of Participants

1. Pudukai Vani CRS – Puducherry

Ms. Saleema Rabiyyath – Programme Executive

Ms. Dhanalakshmi – Community Woman Participant

Ms. Jayakanthi – Community Woman Participant

2. Nila CRS – Puducherry,

Mr. Gnanavel – CRS Deputy Director

Ms. Revathi – Nila CRs Programme Producer

Ms. Girija – Community Woman Participant

Ms. Varalakshmi – Community Woman Participant

3. PARD Vanoli – Madurai Dist.

Mr. Kalayanasundaram – Programme Executive

Ms. M. A. Saroja – Community Woman Field Reporter

Ms. Lakshmikantham – Community Woman Participant

4. Sivanthi CRS – Tiruchendur

Prof. I. Sehar – Station-in-charge

Ms. Muthusundari – Community Woman Participant

Ms. Hebi Papa – Community Woman Participant

5. Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli – Nagapattinam

Ms. Prokodi – Station-in-charge

Ms. Jency – Community Woman Participant

Ms. Manimeghalai – Community Woman Participant

6. Nalamdana CRS – Tambaram, Chennai

Ms. Jonah – Programme Executive

Ms. Revathi – Community Woman Participant

Ms. Rajalakshmi – Community Woman Participant

and

7. Pudhiya Udhaiyam CRS – SARVAM - Auro Media for Social Change -

Puducherry

Ms. Venus Upadhyay – Community Liaison and CRS Coordinator

COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTRE FOR ASIA
 Community Woman Broadcasters Workshop - I
 Through
 NILA CR, SMVEC, PONCICHERRY
 September 20-23, 2011

| DAY 1 - Tuesday September 20, 2011 | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Time | Session | Facilitators |
| 11.00-11.30 | Introduction of Participants | |
| 11.30-11.45 | TEA BREAK | |
| 11.45-12.00 | Introduction to the Workshop | RV |
| 12.00-12.15 | CR Knowledge and Experience Sharing | KP/JK/GnV |
| 12.15-12.30 | Focus - Role of Woman in CR | KP/JK/GnV |
| 12.30-12.35 | About Nila FM | JK/GnV |
| 12.35- 13.15 | Visit to Nila CR | KP/JK/GnV |
| 13.15-14.15 | LUNCH BREAK | |
| 14.15-15.30 | Interactive/participatory session on Programme Ideation | RV/KP/JK/GnV/HP |
| 15.30-15.45 | TEA BREAK | |
| 15.45-16.45 | Creating Content | RV/KP/HP |
| 16.45-17.00 | Recap and Round-up | RV/KP/JK/GnV/HP |
| DAY 2 - Wednesday September 21, 2011 | | |
| 10.30-12.30 | Sound Design: Spoken word, music and effects | RV/KP/JK/GnV/HP |
| 12.30-13.00 | Voice Exercise | KP/JK |
| 13.00-14.00 | LUNCH BREAK | |
| 14.00-15.00 | Shaping & Presenting Content | RV/KP/JK/GnV |
| 15.00-17.00 | Programme formats | RV/KP/JK/GnV |
| 16.00-17.00 | Recap – Group Activity | RV/KP/JK/GnV |
| DAY 3 - Thursday September 22, 2011 | | |
| 10.00-10.30 | Post Production - Introduction | RV/KP/JK/GnV |
| 10.30-12.30 | Field Visit – Indoor/Outdoor recording/mixing/dubbing | RV/KP/JK/GnV |
| 12.30-13.00 | Voice Exercise | KP/JK |
| 13.00-14.00 | LUNCH BREAK | |
| 14.00-15.00 | Programme Planning & Production | RV/KP/JK/GnV/HP |
| 15.00-17.00 | Post Production/Recording of Programmes – Practical | RV/KP/JK/GnV/HP |
| 16.00-17.00 | Listening/ Re-editing/Quality checking | RV/KP/JK/GnV |
| 17.00-17.10 | Brief on ‘Way Forward’ Presentation by CR Representatives | RV/KP |
| DAY 4 - Thursday September 23, 2011 | | |
| 10.00-11.00 | Feedback, Review, Experience Sharing | RV/KP/JK/GnV |
| 11.00-12-00 | Way Forward – Presentation by 7 CR Representatives (5+2 min each) | CR Representatives |
| 12.00-1.00 | Vote of Thanks and Valedictory | RV/GnV |
| 13.00-14.00 | LUNCH BREAK | |
| 14.00-14.30 | Closing | RV/KP/JK/GnV |

