

COMMUNITY MEDIA IN ACTION: “WATERWAYS OUR FUTURE”

09 TH JUNE TO 12 TH JUNE 2011

Venue : POLGOLLA NATIONAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
KANDY, SRI LANKA

TEL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CEMCA (COL)

Field Work : TEL STUDIO AND KOTMALE COMMUNITY RADIO



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INTRODUCTION

A three day workshop from 09th to 12th June 2011 on the Topic “COMMUNITY MEDIA IN ACTION : WATERWAYS OUR FUTURE” was organized by Tel Radio, Kandy Sri Lanka, in collaboration with CEMCA/ Commonwealth Of Learning, New Delhi.

The participants numbering 22, were mostly young media personnel from the Central, Uva and North Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, who were working as broadcasters and announcers in Community Radio, Tel Radio and Sri Lanka Broadcasting Cooperation, Communication Officers from NGOs such as Power, Journalists, Reporters, Artists and Graphic designers from NGOs like Arumbugal, and Media personnel from Government Projects such as the Gemi Diriya programme.



CEMCA was represented by Ms. Rukmini Vemraju, Programme Officer, CEMCA New Delhi.



The Venue was the Polgolla National Cooperative Development Institute, Polgolla, Kandy Sri Lanka. A field visit was organized to the Studio of Community Radio, Kotmale, where on the second day of the workshop , the practical work took place, which included a live broadcast relevant to the focus of the workshop, protection of water.

Day 01

The Inaugural session was conducted on the 10 th morning at the Polgolla Cooperative Training Institute. Mr. Sunil Wijesinghe, Director Tel Radio, welcomed the participants and presented the Objectives of the 3 day workshop.

The main purpose of the workshop was on how to develop internet radio with digital stories, drama and posters for community action.

The participants were in the field of media and community development and this workshop was a knowledge enhancement and skills building workshop to help the participants to do better what they were actually doing at the moment.

The Schedule attached herewith was changed on the first day to give space for Journalist Mrs. Viola Abeygunawardena to make her presentation on “ News sources and Water sources”. The presentation was based on a Video Documentary on water sources, a voice recording in the form of a story.

Historical facts on protection of water sources, the problems and issues faced in this regard were discussed. This presentation laid the base for the deliberations of the next few days.

The second presentation for the day was by Mr. K.M Karunaratne, Programme Associate Tel Communication Collective

The objectives of the presentation were to:

- Identify the features, strengths and limitations of community radio and internet radio.
- Identify ways and means of making Tel Radio a means to address the community and of creating a platform for discussion on community needs
- Discuss how Digital Story Telling can be used within Tel Radio

The content of the lecture was presented in a manner to build a discussion on community radio and Tel radio.

It was pointed out that Community Radio speaks to a limited audience, is broadcast from a specific studio, uses only the voice media, limited opportunity for the community to participate, broadcasts through radio waves, addresses only the hearing (audio), needs professionals and a management system, is subject to regulations, needs a technical

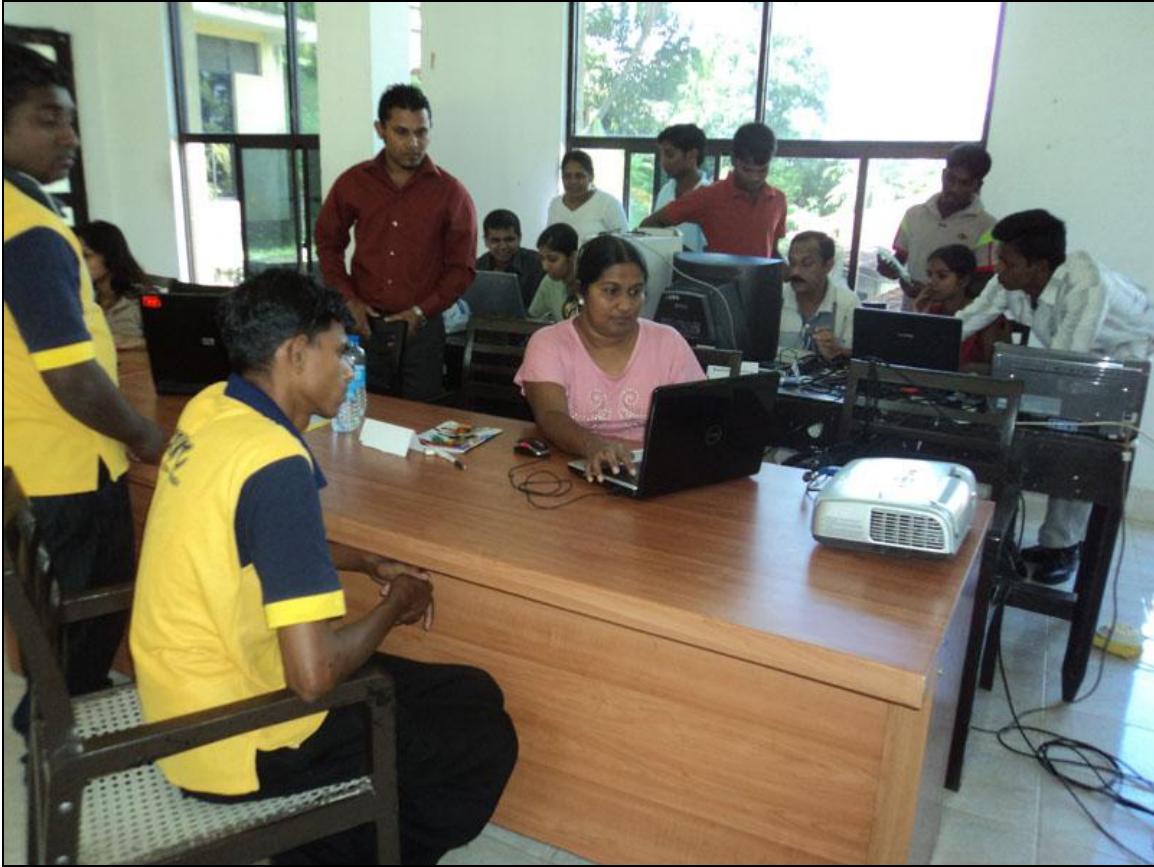
system to function, only a limited number of programmers are presented using audio techniques.

In community radio sound is important and there is a Producer or a Team of producers.

Whereas , Tel radio addresses a non defined audience, is broadcast from a non specific station, uses both audio and visual media, any individual or community group can present ideas, is broadcast through the internet, , do not need professionals or a management system, allows freedom to express ideas, does not come within a technical system, able to use several methods such as song, photo, artwork, short videos and digital stories.

Both sound and pictures are used and production, editing and presentation are all done by the person using Tel Radio.

The discussion that followed focused on areas for further discussion . Identify ways and means and a mechanism to keep or hold the users . Ways and means to make the use of Tel Radio to enable internet browsers to become users of Tel Radio, Building platforms using DST whereby people can discuss their problems, identify access points in different parts of the community of Tel users, suggest ways and means of expanding the use of Tel Radio.



In the actions that followed during the course of the workshop such as the preparation of Posters, Blogs, Digital stories and Live broadcast, it was evident that ideas emanating from this presentation were used by the participants.

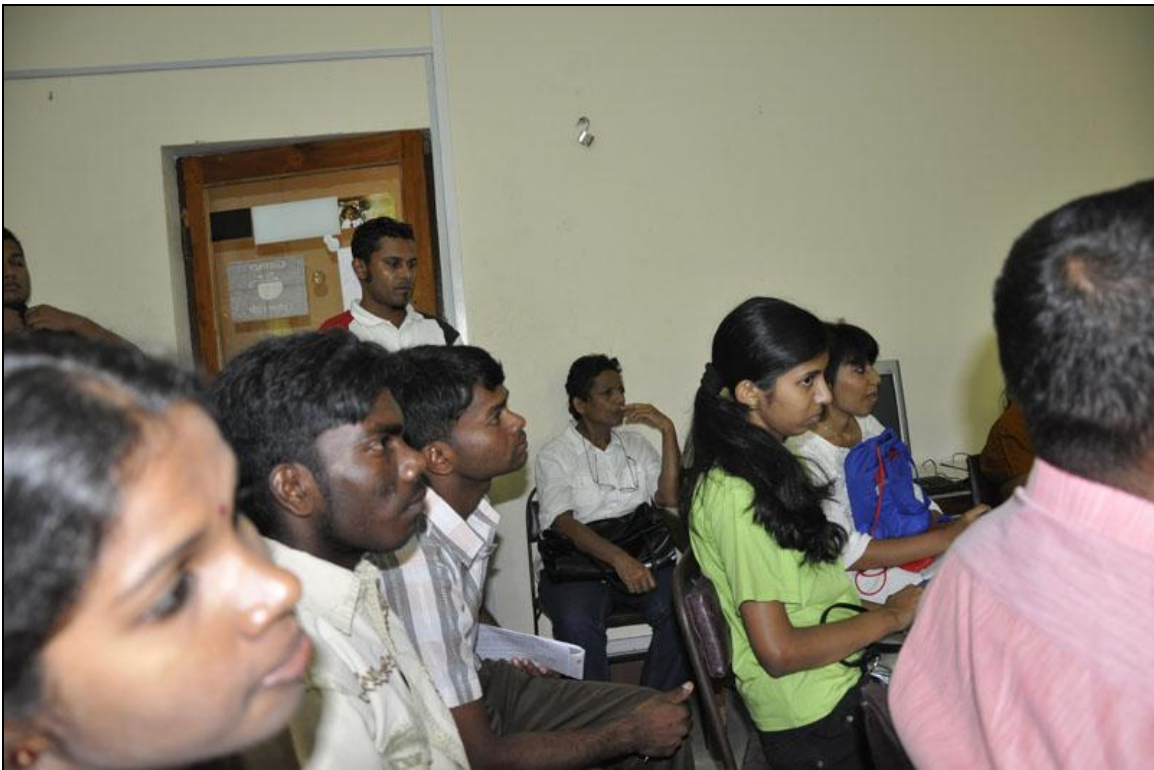
This discussion was followed by Mr. Premalal Wijesinghe, Senior Programme Producer, who spoke on the Tel Interactive Platform.

He mentioned that in maintaining Tel Radio several challenges have to be overcome. The discussion focused on how we can make Tel Radio a platform which gives the users an opportunity to exchange views and ideas, improve their living conditions, impart knowledge whilst also providing entertainment to the users.

The discussion which followed was between the experienced users of community radio and other participants and was focused on how their experiences can be used to enrich

Tel Radio. Those with experience in Tel Radio stated that the knowledge and information at village level can be used to enrich Tel Radio.

The youth from Vahari, a Tamil speaking village in the North East of the country, stated that they had much knowledge on the issues faced by the villagers and were already publishing a local news paper." Arumbugal".They were keen to link with Tel Radio and share their problems with a larger audience. Their issues can thus be brought to the attention of national and international level audiences.



It was pointed out that unlike in community media where the audience is limited, Tel radio addresses the international audience as well, hence the programme has to be planned properly and attention has to be paid to the structure of the presentation.

Popular media like song and music can be used to draw attention, specially that of the youth, where youth issues too can be discussed.

It was also pointed out that at the beginning free advertisements can be done and gradually advertisements on a paid basis can be developed.

Hence, it is important that young people get involved in Tel Radio and use it in their villages. However, it is important to remember that we do not get immediate solutions to our problems but we may be able to reduce the problems we face by broadcasting them. In conclusion of Premalal's presentation, the Tel Radio Web site was shown to the participants.

The presenter also pointed out that the participants from the earlier workshops left with the promise that they will join Tel Radio but unfortunately it has not happened as expected.

Next Mr. Buddhika Sampath made a Power Point Presentation on DST. The importance of digital Story Telling, and ways in which we can use DST, the DST audience, software and the required skills for DST was shown giving examples of digital stories and posters. Different ways in which DST can be used was explained using an example from a wedding function.



Finally the development of a BLOG was explained, the user and the skills required was explained. At this point the participants were divided into 3 groups for the purpose of developing a BLOG on selected topics.

The last session for the day was Mr. Srijith's presentation on Digital Posters. It was a very informative presentation with a practical guide in designing Posters. He stated that the representatives in the workshop are many example Tel Bookshop, Partnerships, CEMCA etc., we all borrow ideas from history. The main ideas in giving information remains the same except for the Tools being different. In a poster we cannot have too many ideas. We need to pass on a message hence the Idea is the most important. A great idea today will definitely change the future. Even a negative idea can bring about change in the world.

The main thing in designing a poster is that it is an art of visualizing ideas.

To make the presentation clearer , Srijith used examples of different posters and also guided the participants to start preparing posters.

A key point to remember is that a poster has only three seconds to grab the viewer then we have the next 30 to 40 seconds to make the viewer visit the poster. Here the idea or message comes through graphics and colour.

The key components are:

- Activating a space ,
- Initiating a proposition – should be a brief and concise message and appealing, should not be distracting
- Readability – be able to read from a distance of 3 to 5 feet

Steps in designing a Poster:

- Idea/overall message/objective
- Define audience – for whom, what age etc
- Content –message, arguments, explanation, items of evidence, conclusion
- Sequence – one message or even a poster series
- Break into sections

- Focus
- Edit
- Check Format

How do we capture and keep the viewer

- Layout – here size is very important (A 3 of 2 A4s) Also keep 50% space for readability
- Title and Key Message
- Add colour to sketches
- Letter styles/different font
- Visuals – Text or pictures(remove extra noises)
- Edit for compatibility and relevance
- Perspective – linear perspective or colour perspective

An important message was CRC – C for clarity, R for Relevance and C for Consition.

The use of colour was explained in answer to a question that was raised , adviced to stay with 4 colours the most including white.

The Film BLUE GOLD was shown depicting that future wars are not for oil but is for the sharing of water sources.

Day two was allocated for a Field Visit to the Kotmale Tel Radio Station. This Radio Station was originally established as a Community Radio Station and is now under the state run NANASALA programme.



Mr. Sunil Wijesinghe welcomed the participants and especially Ms. Rukmini Vemraju .Programme Officer from CEMCA New Delhi, the sponsor of the present workshop.



Ms. Rukmini explained what Commonwealth of Learning is, its origins and how COL/CEMCA has supported programmes in Sri Lanka. COL supports educational activities in the member countries of the commonwealth, with its headquarters in Vancouver Canada. The South Asia Office is based in New Delhi. The Secretariat has a small staff and programme support is based on the needs of the member countries.

Accordingly in Sri Lanka the focus is on Information Technology. Hence CEMCA has been supporting selected organizations and programmes in this regard. The purpose of funding TEL Radio has been to help people do better what they are already doing in the field of development

The present workshop is the second one CEMCA is funding. Rukmini mentioned that it was good to see a number of young participants but was concerned about the absence of those who had participated in the earlier workshops as it is expected, that a fully trained cadre of professionals will be available to take this forward. CEMCA works on a TYP basis (three year plan). As TYP will ensure sustainability of the programmes.

The expectations from this workshop is that the participants will sustain the programme whereby issues such as water pollution, environmental degradation, deforestation, health hazards, can be selected and awareness raised by using inexpensive media such as Face Book, BLOGs, Twitter etc Registration can be done under "Creative Commons".

Thereafter the participants introduced themselves and was followed by the presentation of Mr. Kalinga Athulathmudali on the use of Mobile phones in community media.



He began by asking the participants whether the participants knew about Pod Casting and how many listened to Internet radio. He also mentioned that money and Technology are main concerns. But we can share available resources.

Radio and Television are one way communication where information flows in one direction, and we cannot know who are the users . We may get ratings but they are usually biased. Whereas internet if used creatively , can be a means leading to group discussion. Community Radio, BLOG, Tel Radio are interactive and therefore popular.

Discussion groups can be created. Internet services such as Google music is an inexpensive media. Further, mobile phones can be used creatively. It can be used as a social media – SMS, Facebook, Twitter are some examples. Barriers are broken down and we can improve the quality of the programme immediately to suit the audience. The question of language barriers can be overcome by using UNICODE. Kalinga stressed the importance of learning and using English language as a medium of communication.

Mobile phones are a cheaper mode of communication. The Technical limitations are few and most of the people own mobile phones.

The only barrier is using video on mobile phones. However, most of the latest Mobile phones are available in Sri Lanka and is affordable to many . Even 4G Technology is being experimented in Sri Lanka and will be available soon.

The use of Blue Tooth is popular and in this way we can share a lot of information. Also can use Creative Commons it is a recognized licensing system. The license can be shared as long as you acknowledge the source.

Kalinga went on to explain a BLOG - A Blog Post is to share information. A good example is the music industry. When restrictions were many people started using illegal measures to copy. Now Google has a Blog for over 20 000 songs.. People can upload from this site free of charge.

A demonstration on developing a BLOG was presented

In writing a Blog be clear of the Objectives (why)

Identify the audience (Who)

What should they do after reading the BLOG and what should be your approach and thereafter the groups got engaged in their selected group work.

- 1) Tamil speaking group: Developing a BLOG. Script will be used for DST.
- 2) Developing a DST –
- 3) Poster group – slogans were given and art work once completed will be coloured

A Live broadcast took place over Kotmale Radio on Waterways - our future, and was organised by the Studio Group. The focus was on Water, its different uses and the safety and protection of water. The main ideas that were presented were on the importance water plays in our lives from survival, to religious beliefs and rituals which are still practiced by Sri Lankan society. All this proves that from the time of our ancient rulers homage was paid to water and the kings who built tanks to preserve water in the olden days are still worshipped and are considered as diety An example is King Mahasen is still worshipped as 'Minneriya Deviyo'. Hence it is the duty of each and every one of us to protect water sources, prevent pollution and deforestation and where

possible lend a hand to reforestation and prevent people from felling down trees near water sources and polluting the surroundings near water ways.

Audio link : <http://telradio.wordpress.com/2011/06/19/kothmale-radio-live-program/>

A short drama on protection of the environment and prevention of Dengue was performed by the staff of Nanasala.

A woman whose five year old child died 3 months back due to Dengue Fever shouts at the people in a Tri Shaw who litter the surroundings with used cups and bottles. She accuses the man responsible for this and it results in a clean up of the environment. It was a short and clear message on protecting and maintaining a clean environment.

On the return to the Cooperative Development Training Institute , the evening was spent viewing a short film on a pilgrimage from Jaffna in the North to Kataragama in the South of Sri Lanka. A social evening followed which was enjoyed by all. Present.

The morning of the final day of the workshop was spent on completing the assignments.

Ms. Rukmini made a very clear and concise power point presentation on behaviour change communication.

The importance of seeing a benefit (positive) or seeing the repercussions of not doing something will change behaviour. Awareness has to be created

The different stages of behavioural change was presented using slides.

- Pre-awareness,
- knowledge,
- contemplation,
- intention,
- trial,
- adoption
- telling others .

Message design has several rules of communication . The 7 C's of communication as developed by John Hopkins School of Public Health. Was presented

- Command attention
- Clarify the message
- Cater to the heart and head
- Create Trust
- Communicate benefits
- Call for action
- Consistency



Group presentations followed although only around 70 % of the work was completed by this time, as practical work takes time to be completed. However, presentations were made of what was ready by this time.

Mr. MJR David came on skype at this stage and the group work was presented to him . He commented on this work and thanked the participants, Mr. Sunil, Ms. Rukmini , Ms. Sujatha and others. He stated that the challenge we face is that of continuity and sustainability.

Group 01 - Ancient Irrigation System in Sri Lanka -



The Text was in Sinhala language.



Group 3: DST Video

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzBseDZuBkE&feature=player_embedded

With blog – <http://telradio.wordpress.com>

Conclusions

The session on **'what next'** focused mainly on the continuity of the programme.



- Ms. Rukmini appreciated the presence of young blood in this programme but was concerned about seeing mostly new faces. This hinders the Tree Year Programme (TYP) as over the 3 year period new people keep participating and that hinders sustainability of the programme.

- Mr. Sunil requested the participants to come up with suggestions for sustainability of the programme. New ideas such as Digital posters that were started at this workshop shows we can use more media now and also more interaction could be seen. He stressed that We all have a responsibility to take this forward.

Recommendations

➤ **Ms. Rukmini - CEMCA**

- recommended that a group of people be identified who could take this forward and take them through the process so that they can do better what they are doing now.

➤ **The participants -**

- Pledged that they will continue the work started at this workshop.
- The participants from Vaharai stated that they can organize a studio link to their Newspaper and also do at least one DST per week .
- It was agreed to build a platform to bring the issues of the Vaharai community through Tel Radio.
- Also to share Arumbugal , their newspaper and have a link in the website, to be broadcast on Tel Radio.
- Mr. Krishna stated that there are many children with special needs in Vaharai . Also as many are illiterate in their village and the news letter cannot be read by many, but having Tel Radio can reach many people and requested support to set it up in Vaharai. It was also pointed out that Community Radio can be beneficial to many such as the fishermen.
- Mr. Pavithran will help them to do at least one DST per month.

- They will show it to the community, get feed back and then finalise the product.
- The group agreed to continue working as one group and it will be one Tel Radio Group.
- Once a week a Blog on water will be updated on a continuous basis. It was agreed to create a BLOG where the selected topics will have a structure so that the BLOG will be meaningful. People will have to know why we have to change behaviour which is the end result of learning.
- There was a general request for Technical skills improvement in using computer etc. This has to be done in a separate workshop.

The support and contribution made by CEMCA was greatly valued by all present and the participants appreciated this opportunity they received and the workshop concluded on a positive note that the Sinhala and Tamil community can live harmoniously and enjoy the benefits of the freedom now gained by the people of Sri Lanka. And share their problems and concerns with a larger audience nationally and internationally using Tel Radio, Community Radio, Blogs, Mobile phones and DST .

Annexe 1

Community media in Action: Waterways are our Future – Associated and Participants

Person associated

1. Sunil Wijesinghe – Lead trainer, Director Tel
2. Premalal Wijesinghe – Audio production / online writing
3. Budhika Sampath – Digital story telling – Trainer / web editor
4. Kaling Athulathmudali – Mobile technologies – Technology consultant
5. K.M. Karunarathne – Former lecture university of Colombo- Radio Formats
6. Viala abegunawardane – News sources and water sources – Journalist
7. Srijith – Artist – technology consultant
8. Chandrasoma pananwala – Accountant – tel
9. Dr. Sujatha Wijethilake – Report on the workshop
10. A.G. Wijesinghe – Office assistant

Participants

1. Miss Nishani Deepashika – Community Multimedia center – Kothmale
2. Mr. Sajith Bowala – CMC – Kothmale
3. Manoj Siriwardana – IT Programmer – Tel
4. Miss. Lochani Ekanayake – Volunteer English Announcer
5. Mr. Darren S.R. Ryle – Volunteer English Announcer
6. Miss Gayathri Yasodara – Artist
7. Mr. Migara Wijesinghe – Graphic Designer
8. Miss Samanmalee Swarnalatha – Programme officer – Gami Diriya (G.N.G.O)
9. Mr. Indika Sampath – Gami Diriya – North Central Province
10. Mr. Kapila Ariyawansa – Gami Diriya – North Central Province

11. Mr. Preethiraj Pavithran – Tamil Announcer – Kothmale Community Radio
12. Mr. Annadurei Baskaran – “Arumbugal” journal – Reporter
13. Mr. Punyamurthi Kanagaraj – “Arumbugal” journal Reporter
14. Miss Sanjiwika Manohari – Journalist
15. Mr. Sarath Abesundara – School teacher – Tel Announcer
16. Miss Thanuja Samarakoon – Announcer Kadurata sewaya SLBC – Kandy
17. Mr. Prasanna Jayampathi – Announcer SLBC Kandy
18. Mr. Anura Pradeep Darmasena – Graphic designer Uva Province
19. Miss Anushka Edamsedara – Wijaya Graphics
20. Mr. Bandula Bandara – Announcer cum Technical officer – Rhythm F.M.
21. Miss R. Sailaja – Power Foundation – Medea co-ordinator Uva Province
22. Mr. Dhanushka Siriwardana – Artist

Annexe 2 – Links

<http://telradio.wordpress.com/>

<http://telradio.wordpress.com/2011/06/19/kothmale-radio-live-program/>

<http://telradio.wordpress.com/2011/06/19/workshop-dst/>