

Science for Women Baseline Study Report

for
GNGC FM
Guru Nanak Girls College, Ludhiana

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1. Project Context

1.1 The Background

The **Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia** (CEMCA) catalysed and supported by **Rashtriya Vigyan Evam Prodyogiki Sanchar Parishad** (RVSP), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, New Delhi, has embarked on a pan-Indian project to evaluate and encourage understanding and application of science in everyday life for women. Entitled ‘Science for Women’ (SFW) this project aims to reach out to the women in the poorly literate as well as literary challenged sections of society both in the urban and rural sectors across the country. Through participatory programmes specially designed with specific issues in focus and using the community participatory form of radio-programming this project will study how best women can be encouraged to the benefits of science in daily life. The project duration is at present two financial years and in the

first phase, it is planned to operate through a selected number of Community Radio Stations (CRs) licensed to educational institutions and reach out to women living in communities covered within the primary and secondary catchment areas of these low power FM radio stations.

A pilot study for the project was conducted at Anna FM, Anna University, Chennai during the year 2004–2005. Eighteen educational institutions which had been granted the license to run community participatory radio stations were invited to a workshop held on March 8 and 9, 2007, under the aegis of RVPSP and at the end of the workshop each of the participating educational institutions were asked to submit proposals suited to develop the Science for Women Programme through the community radio stations run by the institutes.

CEMCA with its expertise in research, community participation and capacity building, was selected as the nodal organization and was asked to submit a comprehensive proposal to RVPSP for implementing and monitoring the project. CEMCA's role in the project is extensive – CEMCA is the focal organization for selection of educational institutions. It has been entrusted with the following responsibility:

1. Help in identifying the communities and conduct a baseline study to profile the communities within the catchment areas of the community radio station
2. Act as facilitator for capacity building within the students and the women from the communities so that the programmes developed can be truly community participatory,
3. Ensure that the programmes are of interesting enough to motivate the women participating/listening to understand the importance of science in everyday life
4. Ensure proper utilization of the funds generated by RVPSP.

CEMCA has designed the implementation programme in two phases:

- The first phase consists of a baseline study conducted under the supervision of a CEMCA appointed expert and using girl students from the educational institution as well as women from communities. Through this study a profile of the community will be mapped, the current practices and knowledge base vis-à-vis a range of issues/subjects in the community documented and assessment made of the needs and shortcomings among the women in the communities. The baseline study is also designed to motivate the students to understand and interact with the community and develop awareness within the community about the FM channel run by the educational institution.
- In the second phase, workshops will be conducted in the educational institutions for a capacity building exercise for the production teams which will be designing and producing the community participatory radio programmes with central theme of Science for Women. Community participatory programmes will be broadcast from the channel daily following the workshop.

Fourteen Educational Institutions granted by I&B Ministry license to set up Community Radio stations have been selected by CEMCA and RVPSP for awarding the SFW Project. The following report is the finding from the baseline study for GNGC FM radio licensed to Guru Nanak Girl's College, Model Town, Ludhiana. The baseline survey for project was conducted by

girl students of the college drawn from various depts. The target areas were the rural population around the campus in Village Gill and the semi-urban communities in Jawahar Nagar Camp. The teaching faculties were involved in the survey and Ms Rukmini Vemraju, Programme Officer in charge of the project from CEMCA supervised the baseline study. The survey was conducted from 2nd – 7th July, 2007. Following the baseline study report the Capacity building workshop was held from 15th –19th September, 2007 under the guidance of CEMCA appointed expert Mr. **Vipin Sharma.**

2. Profile of GNGC FM Radio Station at Ludhiana

The **GNGC FM**, the community radio is run by students of **Guru Nanak Girl's College, Model Town Ludhiana.**

3. Baseline Study Objectives & Design

3.1 Objectives

The baseline study aims to achieve:

- A documentation of the socio-economic and demographic profile of the target listeners
- An in-depth understanding of the media habits of the women, particularly with reference to Radio,
- Identify the issues of concern for the community
- Assess the willingness/interest among women for participation in the community radio initiative
- Build awareness for the Community Radio and SFW programmes

3.2 Study Methodology

3.2a Sample

A thorough study of the catchment pattern of the radio signals of the community radio run by the educational institution was made and thereafter two areas with two distinct communities was selected for sample survey. The villages selected were:

- a) **Gill Village,** (7km from college)
- b) **Jawahar Nagar Camp Area** (2 km from college)

The two communities selected represent the diverse listenership of the GNGC FM radio. Gill Village is essentially rural with the communities engaged in agricultural activities. But the communities are affluent, lifestyles bordering the average upper-middle class standards of urban life. The other village selected was initially a refugee camp for Pujabis displaced from Western Punjab after partition in 1947. The area is now developing as a major wholesale market but as yet the communities were in the low-to middle income bracket and most are paid wage workers.

3.2b Instrument

CEMCA designed a detailed questionnaire comprising of more than 50 questions for the baseline study. The questionnaire was sent to the educational institution well in advance so that the questions can be translated in the local language and modified to suit the local profile. The translated questionnaire was rechecked and finalized in consultation with CEMCA before the baseline study workshop commenced. 1100 copies of the questionnaire were prepared by the institution along with an equal number of stickers advertising the FM channel through which the SFW programmes will be broadcast in the future months. The institute selected a requisite number of student volunteers among the girls for conducting the baseline study. The entire programme was guided and supervised by officers of CEMCA. The questionnaire consisted of five distinct sections:

1. Information on socio-economic and demographic profile of the listeners of the FM station
2. Media habits of the listeners- ownership, frequency of listening, interest, utility
3. Current information sources and nature of solution for problems on issues like health hazards, family planning, social hygiene, childcare
4. Issues of local importance
5. Issues that community women would like to hear as well as participate on radio

3.3 Data Collection

A field team was created for data collection. It comprised of:

- i) 20 Student volunteers who had some exposure to programme production at the Community Radio Station of the institute
 - ii. Community representatives who were trained by CEMCA expert at the preliminary workshop on how to conduct a survey. They community volunteers also helped the students identify the households where women could be asked questions for the survey
 - ii. Staff coordinators from the GNGC College associated with the FM Radio

In addition a team was selected to process the data immediately after collection so that at the end of the five day data-collection schedule, a detailed report can be prepared about the demographic nature of the target audience/participants. A one-day workshop was held prior to the data collection process to explain the entire project, methodology of data-collection, precautions to be observed during visiting the village households, and the procedure for tabulation. Training during the workshop included mock-interviews and tips on how to ask questions so that the exact information can be obtained. The students were encouraged to carry their cameras and photograph the interviewees. The pictures offer a visual presentation of the community, its economic status, the warmth and cooperation that the student volunteers received from the community and the reaction of men in the houses during the question-answer sessions.

To ensure that the student volunteers are able to collect a truly representative data of the women in the two selected communities, supervisors occasionally accompanied them. They also interacted with the community independently to understand the community from the perspective of the SFW project.

The complete data, duly tabulated was sent to Delhi for comprehensive report and analysis by the CEMCA expert in accordance with the pre-designed framework developed by CEMCA.

4. Data Analysis - Community Profile

4.1 The overall picture

Over 80% of the women interviewed were married and about 6% widowed. Only 4% of all the respondents were above 60 years of age. Majority of the women interviewed were in the age range of 21–50 years. The community comprises of Hindu (53%) and Sikh (45%) religious groups with a very small percentage of Muslim families (0.7%) living in the villages. Over 90% of the houses showed presence of male members as the head of the household.

Ref: Charts No. 65, 66, 67, 68, 75, 86

4.2 Socio-economic profile of community

The community selected is predominantly rural, with over 70% of the households having puuca constructed house. More than 50% of the respondents belonged to households with monthly income above Rs. 20,000. One –third of all the households selected were in the middle economic strata, i.e. income between than Rs. 5000–Rs.7000per month. While majority of the women were homemakers (73%) 4.2% were daily wage workers and another 7% self employed or petty traders. Around 57% of the respondents felt that women did not have enough employment opportunities but they were not very concerned about earning through non–conventional ways. Electricity was available to all the houses and LPG gas for cooking in nearly 89% of the households. Private toilet facilities were found in 90% of the households visited. Tap water for drinking is used in 60% houses but 40% reported water scarcity. Mosquitoes, snakes, flies were reported to be excessive in the area and awareness about environment pollution was very high (80%)

Ref: Charts 69, 77, 78, 79, 80, 84, 76, 25, 22

4.3 Lifestyle Indicators

This was an affluent society by average Indian standards and all luxury goods were commonly available in the houses visited. 96% houses had colour TV sets, with cable/DTH connection, but only 10% possesses a radio. However only under 60% women possessed a mixer–grinder though 100% had a refrigerator at home and 63% also had air–coolers. About 40% houses reported owning a washing machine and 21% also had music system including CD player. A very small percent (below 7%) reported owning car/tractor but two–wheeler was common in every home (72%). Computer was also a very rare possession (Only 2.5%) even among the affluent. 10% of the women owned mobile phone. Despite being an agricultural community tractor was found in only 2% houses.

Ref: Charts 4, 7, 85, 78, 63

4.4 Condition of Women - literacy, education, status within family

Overall condition of women in these two villages was comfortable. Average education was school level upto 6–9years though 23% reported studying till SSC level. Nearly 17% were illiterate. 65% wanted to avail vocational training to become financially self–sufficient. More than 40% also

reported lack of employment opportunities for women in the villages but most of the women (over 60%) also admitted that they suffered from lower status in the household and accepted an imbalance in male/female ratio. There was not much interest in information on agricultural but interest was shown in computer training and starting business at home. While SHG activities were lauded once again enthusiasm in direct participation was limited.

Ref: Charts 47, 39, 40, 68, 50, 48, 28, 29

4.5 Primary issues of concern in community

An imbalance in the male/female ratio is a primary concern and needs to be addressed seriously. The other concern is drinking habits of men and growing menace of drug and other addictions. The average social sanitary conditions are good though mosquitoes and flies are reported as community menace by over 80% of respondents. The felt that they need more health and hygiene guidance and knowledge about personal health.

Ref: Charts 18, 19, 38, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 44, 83

4.6 Primary issues of concern in household

Awareness regarding nutrition and healthcare seemed poor among the women interviewed. More than 45% were superstitious without realizing that lack of information could be the cause for such blind adherence to traditional behaviour. Nearly 35% of all information was hearsay or elders advice though occasionally they pick up health related advice from radio/TV. Care during pregnancy also suffered from inadequate information. Adolescence care and hygiene during menstruation and pregnancy are two important areas where information flow needs to be stepped up.

Ref: Charts 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37

4.7 Media Profile -ownership, consumption, needs

The women reported that over 51% did not get any newspaper at home and 95% did not read any magazines and their source of information was limited to word of mouth or information through television programmes or advertisements. Most houses had a television set (over 96% colour sets) but only 10% of homes owned a radio set and out of them only around 60% owned radio sets with FM bands. Most of the women were familiar with the concept of DTH/cable connection as cable connection was available with nearly 70% of the households owning TV sets. Households with younger members in the age range of 21-30 years had greater number of TV sets with cable connection while households with predominantly older people were more attuned to radio programmes. On TV sets women preferred to watch entertainment programmes especially ETV-Punjabi or music channels. The thrust of viewing was on good music (30%) and even radio listeners mostly enjoy music and entertainment programmes.

There was a general awareness of the GNGC FM station. As many as 18.7% of households owning radio sets with FM channels have listened to the GNGC FM programmes. The bulk of the listenership was for the programmes that were broadcast during the early hours of the evening (5-8pm) and majority listened to radio at home while engaged in household chores.

More than 70% of the women interviewed were eager to participate in organized group listening but were not sure how radio programmes can be useful in finding solution to the community

needs and less than 10% women reported to have been benefited with information via radio. Their information outflow has been more through traditional systems like elders guiding with experience (about 40%) and doctors and local health workers (around 50%).

Ref: Charts 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 49, 51, 52

4.8 Community participation in CR programmes

The present status of community participation in GNGC FM programmes is negligible but nearly 50% of the women interviewed showed readiness to participate in community radio programmes. While more than 25% of the elderly women, both literate and illiterate, opted to be community representative in the radio participatory programmes, the trend among the younger women was towards radio jockey roles. Women in the age range of 31-40 preferred to be participants in useful programmes..

The general impression the sample is that the women in these two selected villages were aware of radio programmes, were enthusiastic about radio/TV programmes and could afford the basic necessities of everyday living. They seemed responsive to new ideas and information. There was an overall progressive attitude among the women which the surveyors felt will be useful for the science for woman project.

Ref: Charts 54, 55, 56,

5. Implications for GNGC FM

In the door-to-door survey, the students and staff got an opportunity to meet over 1000 women face-to-face to build an audience for the CR station in general and also explain SFW and its objectives. Thus a valuable asset was created for the CR station that can be tapped both for SFW and beyond as the database contains unique identification for the respondents, identifying those who are willing and ready to participate. During the course of the year, on different issues, where direct community participation is possible, these women can be invited to participate. Their presence in the programme will make the radio more relevant to its listeners.

Further, each of the surveyed household carries a sticker, proclaiming the name of the programme SFW in Punjabi that will serve as a constant reminder to the community to tune in to GNGC FM. After the basic study survey GNGC FM has become a household name among 1000 households interviewed. To utilize the awareness and popularize the channel the GNGC FM planners need to address the following:

1. Television at present scores over radio in engaging the community but as a source of information there is a general awareness and interest about GNGC FM. If programmes are made in the local dialect listenership will immediately increase. But some devices will have to be put in place so that there is more number of radios available for listening, more community listening habits need to be developed and Self Help Groups harnessed for improving FM-community interaction.
2. This is the target audience can be motivated with exposure through radio. Linkages need to be built so that GNGC become relevant to the community as a source of useful information.

3. Most of the women are home makers. They will be interested in issues that will help solve their household problems and group discussion seems to be a suitable format to encourage women to participate and learn through radio
4. The GNGC FM radio team need to build linkages with the women's groups and NGOs so that the requirements of the community are regularly monitored
5. The survey showed most women prefer to listen to radio in the early hours i.e. in the 6-8am. The radio station needs to keep this in perspective and build programmes to extend interest in radio for longer duration.
6. Currently only about 18 percent (282 households) are listening to GNGC FM Radio. The CR station needs to motivate the community to listen and the best way to achieve this target is participation in radio programmes. Efforts will have to be made to continuously involve the community members in the radio programmes to expand the listenership.
7. Music interspaced with useful is one of the most convenient ways of information dissemination in radio. As indicated earlier, there are not many offerings by way of FM radio. Myths and beliefs abound in the community-this creates a good entry point for SFW to understand the myths, local beliefs and taboos practiced in the community. A listening culture has to be built through SFW, by making programmes using these local forms which can help make a programme relevant, participatory and interactive while imparting correct, factual and useful information, especially in the present context of science for women.

6. Findings & Gap Areas

For CEMCA and RVPSP, this survey threw up interesting contrasts in information.

1. This community is looking at electronic media as a source of entertainment and there is need motivate the communities to accept media as a source of information
2. It is an agricultural community and information on agri-marketing, and ago-related information will be useful.
3. Campaign on superstition as a detriment to development needs to start with immediate effect. But programmes have to be designed carefully with innovative ideas and styles of presentation
4. The community also needs information on child health, pregnancy and vaccination
5. The community though affluent is not educated or informative and can be motivated to participate in programmes and gradually geared to use the media as a source of information
6. The women will benefit if they can be given simple household tips on electricity consumption, judicious management of household finance, vocational training that can result in improvement of lifestyle

7. Across the economic strata and education levels the women showed low level of awareness on health issue –importance of vaccination, child–nutrition, care for elders, in every sphere there appeared dependence on hearsay or local experience. This is both a cause for concern as well as an area where attention is urgently required.
8. Participatory style of programme planning is the best way to reach out to these communities

7. Recommendations of CEMCA

1. This is an affluent social segment where media is essentially a source of entertainment. To motivate them to listen to useful information is a challenge by itself. The baseline study has helped to create an awareness of purposeful radio in the communities. As the next step frequent participation in the GNGC FM programmes is essential along with innovative methods that will inspire the women to listen to purchase radio. Health concerns need to be addressed as the primary issues in programme planning along with importance of maintaining a balance in male/female ratio. CEMA– RSVPSP Project should act as a public awareness programme for the women against female feticide and care for the girl child.
2. Environment pollution and mosquito seemed to be two hazards that are causing concern among the women. Correct and sustained information on these two environmental issues will be of interest.

This report has summarised only the broad findings .Detailed tables in the appendix may be looked at for cross tabulations of habits and preferences with independent variables.