



## **CR REPORT**

### **CR2.0 – Community Radio and Digital Empowerment**

“CR2.0 – Community Radio and Digital Empowerment” was a workshop organized by Digital Empowerment Foundation in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The first of its kind in India, this workshop was exclusively designed for Community Radios run by Non-Government Organizations across the country.

The initiative aimed to bring together all Community Radio functionaries and introduce them to new media and digital tools orientation conducted by a team of invited experts and technical resource persons. The long term goal is to develop capacities for the CR functionaries to understand, deploy and support existing CR operations using such tools and platforms.

The workshop was held in New Delhi from December 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> at the YMCA. It brought together a diverse group of participants from across India, a few of whom already had limited knowledge of digital tools. The rest were introduced to the subject for the first time at the workshop.

The panelists for the introductory session at the workshop were Supriya Sahu, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Osama Manzar, Founder and Director, Digital Empowerment Foundation.

Access to technology, digital tools and social media was the theme of the workshop. Supriya Sahu, emphasized the need to integrate social media in all CR functionaries. “To reach out the voices of the community to a larger audience, it is also very important to know what others are thinking about you and also important to know what is happening everywhere in the rest of the world,” she said. According to her, social media “is a very powerful tool, not only to reach out to the entire world but also to know what the rest of the world is doing”.

Osama Manzar emphasized that along with a strong social media presence, it is equally important to have a strong and distinguished online identity, in the form of a website that distinguishes the Community Radio stations and their content from the organizations that runs them. He said, “One is a legal entity and other is an activity. It is important to know about the radio stations, who runs it, who produces the content and what it is about”. He emphasized the need to have separate websites and identities for the organizations and the radio stations in India so that the content is not lost and has a platform that can be accessed by a larger group and audience.



Keeping these aims in mind, the workshop focused on the following objectives:

- Inviting fifty NGO-run Community Stations from across India, and introducing and giving hands-on training on using new media and digital tools.
- Conducting the workshop in an interactive manner with hands-on experience in using new media tools such as – how to build a website, introduction to web 2.0, Facebook and YouTube.
- Introducing the concept of using social media platforms to scale up and diversify Community Radio operations and reach.
- Capacity building on how digital media and ICT tools could be learnt and leveraged by the community station members.
- Providing free websites to each of the CRs run by NGOs and continuing to explore the possibility of working towards digital empowerment in community radios.

### **Agenda of the workshop:**

Some of the major points discussed at the workshop were to map the requirements and needs of the participants, address the challenges that are currently faced by Community Radios and use interactive sessions to train, discuss and find productive solutions. To introduce CR2.0, how to build a website, introduction to Facebook and YouTube, introduce and discuss how these can be integrated by CRs for their content production and connectivity to a larger audience.

The workshop began with the first session - *Mapping the requirements, needs of the participants*. Osama Manzar initiated the discussion by mapping the requirements of each of the participants – the Community Radio stations who already have a website, the ones who use social media on a regular basis, the ones who did not have a website, who did not know how to use or integrate social media and the challenges faced by CRs in content production and integration.

Out of the 31 Community Radio stations present at the workshop, the statistics were as follows:

- The number of organizations that had a website: 21
- The number of Community Radio stations that had website: 11
- The number of Community Radio stations that used Social Media: 15
- The number of Community Radio stations that did not use Social Media: 10
- The number of Community Radio stations that had a website and Social Media page but did not update it regularly: 8

Based on the gathered data, it can be seen that out of the 31 Community Radio stations present at the workshop, ninety per cent of the total participants have websites for the organizations, but only 35 per cent have CR websites. The number of CRs that use social media is fifty per cent. However a majority of them do not update them regularly. The pattern can be



seen in all, with overlapping aspects such as lack of knowledge on how to use technology, software, web content and tips to update and produce content.

One of the biggest challenges faced by majority of Community Radio stations were resource people with knowledge of how to use digital tools and social media. A few of the CRs that already had separate CR websites and social media pages were either under construction or not updated regularly. The understanding that emerged from the mapping of the participants pointed towards an overall lack of knowledge about digital tools and knowing how to integrate them with CR-generated content.

This was followed by a session called *Introduction to Web2.0* by Devendra Singh, Programme Manager, ENGO, Digital Empowerment Foundation.

Devendra Singh asked the participants if they knew what a website was and what type of content Community Radios is uploading on their website. He introduced the concept of Web2.0 –the next level of online presence, marked by collaborative interactions using social media, blogs, podcasts, chat rooms, video sharing and using various other web applications. He emphasized the need to build a strong online community – in order to connect to millions of users. He said it is important for Community Radios to stay connected not only with each other but also with their audiences. To this end, they should use technology such as web2.0.

Devendra Singh, along with the ENGO team, will be providing free websites to all the participating Community Radio stations. Using the ENGO platform, each CR will be given a domain name along with a link to the website that they wish to have for their stations. The content has to be generated by the CRs, which the ENGO team will help upload. This would be a year-long hand holding programme, enabling each of the CRs to have the opportunity to have a web presence along with knowledge in generating content for the web.

This session was the first step towards introducing digital tools and social media to Community Radio stations present at the workshop. The introduction raised numerous questions on why it was important to integrate digital tools, queries on how the reach could be made stronger, technical questions on how to involve the audience in social media interactions and also the benefits of the ENGO programme.

This was followed by an interactive session on *how to build a website from scratch* by Devendra Singh and his team of technical experts. This included explaining what a website is, the various sections, the technical terms and descriptions used in the website, the different types of content that get uploaded – in the form of text, image and video clips, to live streaming and how to schedule radio shows on the website.

One of the challenges faced right at the beginning of the session was a disparity between the language preferences of the participants. Since this workshop had a diverse group of participants from across India, not all were comfortable with using just English or Hindi. However, the session's experts decided to speak in both the languages to keep the participants comfortable and well-guided throughout the sessions.



At the time of mapping the participants, a keen interest was shown in using social media by a majority of CR functionaries. Over a series of discussions, a lot of the participants said that they were aware of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, but had no idea of how to utilize them for CR-related content.

One of the much-awaited sessions of the workshop was *Introduction to Facebook*, by Anjan Awasthi of Facebook. Initiating the session, he said "If searching the news was the most important development in the last decade, sharing the news is the most important of the next". He said that social media is not just about consuming news – there is a definitive call to action in sharing. It is especially important for CRs to engage, reach out, network and maintain a strong online presence using social media, as it allows users to comment, like, dislike and interact directly. He said that "Social media is not just about pushing content but also pulling content".

This was also an interactive session which kept the participants engaged and involved. A series of questions included why the CRs were on Facebook or why they were interested in having a Facebook account or page, who were they targeting through this medium, what was the demographic like in each of the regions and how Facebook could be used to promote content.

This was followed by a step-by-step guided session on how to create a Facebook page and how to use each of the settings and tabs on the page. Anjan explained how to drive and promote the content so that the followers would constantly remain connected and keep visiting the page. He said the goal of having a strong Facebook presence lies in giving a voice and space to the viewers, audience and all those who interact.

One of the other major concerns raised by the CRs present at the workshop was live streaming of their shows. They were interested in knowing how that could be incorporated to their websites, social media links etc. That brought to the next session, which was not initially a part of the workshop agenda. But due to persistence and a keen interest in knowing and learning about this subject was added - *how to integrate live broadcasting and how to use Soundcloud for Community Radio production* was organized. Satyendra from the ENGO team took a quick session on how live broadcasting is programmed and incorporated in radio shows. This was followed by a step-by-step guide starting from downloading the right software to explaining how to schedule programs. A quick lesson on how to upload content on SoundCloud and link it to websites and social media platforms was also conducted.

Rohit Dhall from Digital Empowerment Foundation took the next session on *Introduction to YouTube*. He began the session by stating facts on the number of users on YouTube. According to the figures stated by him, eight hundred hours of video is uploaded on YouTube, there are fifty five million unique users on YouTube who watch videos and in a week a YouTube viewer watches a minimum of 48 hours of video on YouTube. Giving these statistics, he said the online presence through YouTube had a lot of scope for reaching out to a larger set of audience and building a regular set of followers. He asked the participants if any of them produced video content for CR shows and if they did what platforms they used to upload the content. A majority of participants were interested in learning how to upload content on YouTube.



This was followed by a step-by-step guide on how to open a YouTube account, how to build channels on YouTube and how to have a Community Radio station page on YouTube. A quick session on monetization using YouTube was taken by Sania Farooqui from Digital Empowerment Foundation. An introduction to building a channel on YouTube for NGOs was also conducted.

This brought the workshop to a close. There was the individual one on one feedback and review sessions. Most of the participants felt the workshop not only introduced them to new concepts of radio content production and generation but also enlightened them on the right manner towards terms, technology and the correct usage of social media and digital tools.

#### Recommendations:

- To conduct more workshops across India. The participants were happy to organize such workshops in their local regions and areas. Atleast ten participants have shown an eagerness to organize such workshops in their areas.
- The participants would like to have a Gmail group account, a Whatsapp group, along with a social media page (FACEBOOK) developed by the DEF team, so that they can use it as a networking platform, to share and stay connected with each other.
- The participants would like to have more in depth sessions on live streaming and how to incorporate live streaming to their websites and web pages.
- The participants would also like a few session on Closed Circuit Broadcasting
- The participants would like to have another workshop once the website is designed and uploaded with their content.
- Language was one of the biggest challenges for the participants, therefore it was suggested to group participants in a manner in which using a local language or speaking in English would be a comfortable medium of communication for all.
- In an effort to provide and continue the learning process, participants suggested they required hand-holding and continuous review of everything they were taught at the workshop.
- In terms of using technology, participants suggested having such workshops, which also included live streaming, podcasting and other audio/video content generation learning software.
- Another major recommendation was the venue. The participants suggested that it be organized in a different location, as the YMCA did not accommodate the challenges that the participants faced during the workshop.