

Proposal for the Promotion of Best Practices from OWSA

1. Summary description of the project, the result and the key message to be promoted:

Projects of OWSA :

Ek Duniya Ek Awaz - Radio programming and production involving organizations who are directly working with communities. Key features are : capacity building on producing programmes addressing MDGs; getting voices from the communities raising their concern and experiences in relation to development; and promoting and using radio as a tool for connecting communities and empowering people and disseminating the knowledge to the communities, who otherwise are not able to read and write.

Ek Duniya Kayee Kahaniyan - This initiative is to promote local voices, local ideas, local knowledge and innovative approaches to help solve local issues and problems using community newspaper, community radio and community web sites.

Summary:

Ek Duniya Ek Awaaz : OWSA considers Radio as one of the powerful mass medium for reaching large numbers. It is an important tool for the rapid diffusion of important messages on various issues and provides a platform for expression of views, concerns and perceptions; develop community cohesion and solidarity. Community involvement is fundamental for the successful use of radio with diversified thinking process on various issues, like health, education, nutrition, socio-cultural taboos and so on.

Keeping the above in view, OneWorld South Asia initiated a Radio Programme "Ek Duniya Ek Awaaz" in March 2005. A network of Non-Government Organisations from various states of India have been built for with the following objectives in view :

- To promote use of radio as an effective tool of communication for development
- To use radio as a participatory method of empowering communities
- To build the capacity among Community Based Organisations in the use of audio tools as means for social and economic empowerment

- To develop a platform for peer to peer exchange of audio programmes
- To build/strengthen grassroots broadcasters' network
- To address various issues which are directly or indirectly related to the Millennium Development Goals through radio

OWSA organizes capacity building workshops for those who are working directly with the community, These workshops are designed to give a comprehensive package, starting from raising the voices from the community to bringing a radio programme at their door-step. ***The three major objectives are achieved through this process, one voicing the voiceless; second, connecting communities and empowering people and third, strengthening the grassroots broadcasters' network.***

The dissemination strategy includes formation of listeners' clubs from the communities itself. The capacity building workshops include sessions on how to make listeners' clubs and how radio could be used by these listeners' clubs for behavioural change communications.

OWSA has a small studio at its office premises where these participants could make their programmes, listen to their own voices and go to the community with a zeal to empower them.

OWSA also provides these grassroots broadcasters a platform to air their voices through mainstream media – All India Radio FM; Mass Communications Institutions, who have been given licenses to run Community Radio Stations.

Ek Duniya Kayee Kahaniyan

Across the world, the power of participatory media is widely recognised. There is a need to provide communities access to all these communication tools so that they are able to use it as a platform for self-expression and debate. This initiative is to promote local voices, local ideas, local knowledge and innovative approaches to help solve local issues and problems using community newspaper, community radio and community web sites.

Under this programme, OneWorld South Asia aims to provide a platform to the communities by establishing urban/rural advocacy centres with the following objectives :

- To make these Centers People-centered with the aim to empower the marginalized to speak for themselves.
- Try to bring social transformation through the realization of human rights to information and knowledge : civil, political, economic, social and cultural.
- To bridge the gap between micro-level activism and macro-level policy change.
- To strengthen people's participation with the bottoms-up approach to social change.
- To provide a forum through which the communities are able to make their voices heard to the authorities on their rights envisioned under UN's millennium development goals.
- To envisage these centres to help people help themselves.

The result: The programme has enabled the grassroots communities to 'voice' their opinion on issues concerning them through different ICTs, such as the radio, internet and the print media. It has provided them a platform to share their experiences, and discuss and debate on various health, social and development issues. Through this process, they are empowered to have public discourses on development issues; with gained knowledge, prepare themselves for public action and create public vigilance for their own development and development of the communities as a whole.

At the same time, it has introduced certain perceptible and visible behavioural changes among the community and the youth. They have realized their potential and are in the process of gaining confidence in contributing to the process of developing and strengthening Communities of Practice (CoPs).

The initiatives of OWSA are helping the communities to sustain the process in the long run and address various components of MDGs with an integrated approach.

The process has enabled OWSA to inculcate the practice of using ICTs for empowering communities; strengthening the process of knowledge sharing mechanism and realizing that self-empowerment is the key issue of development.

Key message to be promoted:

These projects show a way forward to the communities to use 'voice' as a medium of communicating their needs, demands and desires. Simultaneously, it also provides them an opportunity to build and enhance their capacities; thus giving them an opportunity to explore alternative sources of employment that had been, so far, the prerogative of the middle and the higher classes. The use of ICTs enabled them to develop self-esteem among themselves and has enabled them to sit across with other stakeholders to design their own programmes and strategies for their own development.

The audience to be addressed:

As these two initiatives dovetail around People's Advocacy to Policy Advocacy, the audience chosen for these programmes is as follows :

- The Community
- Service Providers
- Policy Makers- Central, State & Local
- Community Based Organisations to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)
- The ICT Specialists
- The Donors
- Mainstream Media
- NRIs & Diaspora

The change that will be brought about in these audiences by this advocacy:

These advocacy initiatives and setting up of best practices would definitely bring about certain changes in the perception of audience towards ICD.

The community would become more empowered on the development aspects. The use of ICTs will help them raise their 'voices' at various platforms. The community togetherness and involvement will enable them to strengthen their 'voice' and joint initiatives will help them to showcase the best practices for replication elsewhere. The collective approach will definitely bring and reflect the changes in Knowledge, Attitude, Practices and Behaviour of the community and may help the research in bringing out that community empowerment with bottom-up approach helps to bring out some tangible changes.

Such advocacy would enable the grassroots communities to influence the decisions of the ***Policy Makers- Central, State & Local*** and would result in the enactment of more pro-poor policies; or, at least, their opinions would be taken into account when framing such policies.

CSOs would learn how ICTs like radio and internet offer opportunities to the poor to have greater voice.

ICT promoters would evidence how ICTs can be mainstreamed in development sectors.

Donors would also appreciate the fact that ICD would indeed result in pro-poor growth and priority setting; thus contributing to poverty alleviation.

Through advocacy of such practices among '***mainstream media***', they would be sensitized about grassroots development problems, and consequently, such issues would get more exposure.

NRIs & Diaspora are showing a keen interest in grassroots story telling to learn more about their achievements, dreams and desires.

The proposed advocacy strategy and outputs (publications, audio-visuals, meetings, etc):

Advocacy strategy and outputs would include publications, development of tool kits and audio-visual productions to substantiate the impact of the project.

The methods that will be used to reach the target audience(s):

Distribution of publications, reports and organization of workshops, meetings to enable the beneficiaries, service providers, CSOs and donors to discuss relevant outcomes of the project, its strengths and weaknesses and suggest ways to further improve the programs.

The promotion of 'alternative media', (used to disseminate grassroots development news and views) such as radio & video narrowcasting/broadcasting, community web through alternative media networks, such as Radio South Asia, PANOS, HIVOS among the target audience

How the impact of the advocacy will be assessed?

The impact of the advocacy can be assessed through all kinds of participatory approaches, such as 'peer to peer appraisals', 'open space methodology', etc.

A deeper understanding of best practices advocacy would require the development of appropriate indicators and measures.

The impact could be assessed by designing the qualitative analysis. A few of the quantitative indicators in some areas would help to measure the impact and the change that the interventions has brought in relation to health, gender, education, livelihood etc.

In nutshell, the impact assessment would be designed in a manner that the community voices themselves speak about the change supported by the qualitative and quantitative assessment. The research would also include the KAPB studies.