

SAMAD FM, NEPAL



Situated in	Laha, Siraha District, South-Eastern Nepal
Transmitter power	100 W
Range	40 km
Potential listeners	200,000
Audience	data not available
Transmission hours	from 5 am to 10 pm, with a break between 10 am and 1:30 pm
Staff:	8 producers/journalists / 2 technicians; 1 administrator; 1 marketing officer / 1 accountant / 1 receptionist / 1 security / 1 cleaner / 1 Station Manager
No. of volunteers	7 - programme hosts, presenters and local reporters
Licence holder	Friends of Nature (http://www.fonnepal.org), NGO

Mission / Vision / Objectives

Samad FM will work for the establishment of a progressive and inclusive society. It supports the economic, cultural, religious, linguistic, educational, and health development and the public awareness of social development providing accurate information within its transmission area. Samad FM stands up for the establishment of a creative society and the co-operation of the local population.

It is oriented towards the following principles:

- (I) Preservation of nature and ecological resource management (i.e. use of smokeless ovens, accessible toilets, and arsenic free clean drinking water).
- (II) End up social discrimination and set up human rights.
- (III) Cultural Appreciation; (IV) Establishment of social equality;
- (V) Adoption of republican norms and values;
- (VI) Shareholder of peace and development;
- (VII) Samad FM will share and co-operate with social actors on all levels of society.

Community Specification

The community of Samad FM consists of the people living in the coverage area. The population of Siraha and the neighbouring Saptari district is a mix of ethnic groups - predominantly Tharu, Madhesi

and Dalit communities. The major challenges faced in the region are poverty-related: Limited access to education, high unemployment, no access to proper medical resources; and a high crime rate.

Governance / Management Structure

* Community Radio Support Center (CRSC)/ Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ):
Community MHz: Assessing Community Radio Performance in Nepal.

A mix of individual and organizational membership: All interested listeners can apply for membership; organizational membership is only permitted to local NGOs with an agenda similar to the radio station's mission, vision and objectives; businessmen and politicians are not accepted, on the assumption that they would place their own interests above the welfare of the community. Likewise, the radio board and council are formed by democratically elected, individual members, as well as representatives of local NGOs, the local forestry group, and "Friends of Nature", the licence-holder NGO based in Kathmandu (and hardly involved in the radio station's work). In the 2011 assessment of Community Radio performance in Nepal, Samad FM achieved the highest score in participation and ownership.*

Programming

The radio station broadcasts most of its programmes in the local language mix, but there are also daily news programmes in Nepali (twice), Tharu (once) and Maithili (once). The majority of programmes are produced locally: local/national news, music shows for song requests, magazines, programmes on agriculture, social development, human rights and conflicts, as well as health and women rights, and radio dramas. Important and popular are the market-based programmes about vegetable rates.

Media Environment

There are no local newspapers, and Samad FM was the first (community) radio station in the Siraha district. In the last couple of years, three more community radio stations have been set up.

Income Generation

Although Samad FM is located in one of the country's less-developed areas, the station manages to cover 70% of its expenses (per month NPR 115,000 / US-\$ 1,150) by community contributions, another 10% by local NGO advertisements, 10% from business ads, and 10% from donors/partners.

Bartering crops for membership fees and charitable donations

Samad FM receives a number of community contributions. Most important are monthly and annual membership fees. So far, 2,000 community members have applied for personal/general radio membership, which amounts to NPR 30,000 per months (approx. 303 US-\$). Apart from these monthly fees, there is also a registration fee of NPR 15 for individual members, and NPR 500 for organizational members. Most of the radio station's members are farmers, and many

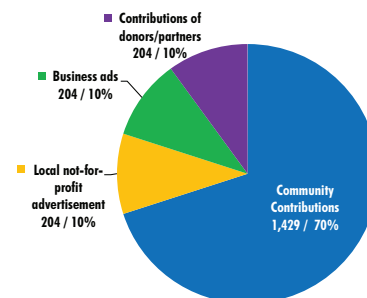
are not able to pay membership fees in cash. So the radio team's elected village level executive members (usually 9 form one group) collect farmers' produce, mainly paddy, rice, dal, potatoes, onions, for sale at the market. They receive a 40 percent commission from the selling price. Usually, the responsible persons cycle around, following a self-made list of farmers in their own district, and carry/store the vegetables and rice in large jute bags. Therefore, necessary resources are: A means of transportation, in this case a bike; large jute bags, and a plan of the radio members. These "payments in kind" are additionally collected during harvest time (which falls together with some major festivals).

Additional monthly income is generated by broadcasting farmers' advertisements – in Nepal regarded as "social business". The marketing officer targets farmers with bigger fields and higher income. During our visit, there were no fixed-price charts or forms available. The prices are bargained on a monthly rate (broadcast four times daily), and amounted to NPR 3,000-5,000 (\$ 23-37), depending on the time of the year and other factors like duration of the spot, broadcasting time, etc. Currently, ten farmers advertise their products in this manner, each paying NPR 3,000 (per month/farm).

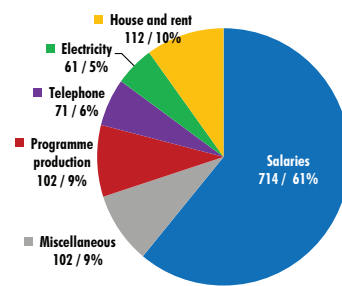
The 10% income from business ads come from local shops. Even more important is the charge for the notice announcements of the Village Development Committees (V.D.C.). Currently, 25 V.D.C.s broadcast their messages via Samad FM, each paying an annual fee of NPR 15,000.

Additionally, Samad FM raises some money from the sale of song cards for Rs. 5 each, distributed via village level executive members and several shops all over the region. These cards are used to submit song requests, greetings, etc. About 25-30 song cards reach the radio station every day. Furthermore, song cards are sold by „Samad Sathi“, a youth group consisting of nine members. Of the profit, 40% may be kept by the students for their own purposes – buying books – and 60% goes to the radio station. Besides, the radio station sells "welcome cards" during festival times, for listeners to submit greetings, good wishes for the New Year, etc. These welcome cards cost NPR 100/500/1,000 depending on the length of the message.

MONTHLY INCOME (US-\$)



MONTHLY EXPENDITURES (US-\$)



Social, business and public advertisement

Selling song and "welcome cards"

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