



SUMMARY OF APRIL 2'S DEBATE

Good morning!

While discussions are ongoing, the new question today is:

How does your community participate in income generation? How is this organised and managed?

Naturally, in such an opening phase, the theme is explored by raising principal questions.

The April 2 debate and questions focused on the following themes in all three language streams

There is agreement that without community ownership to the station (social sustainability), no financial sustainability can be gained. We have many contributions stressing different ways this is done.

- Yesterday we shared in the summary, the experience from Peru where the community contributes because people understand that the radio supports them.
- In the SAMAD FM in Nepal experience presented by Sofie Jannusch, CAMECO, the station finances its operations and most of the investments through contributions of the community and a strong community ownership seems to be a key to this success – sustained by participatory governance and programme structures. (A short profile of the station together with a description of income generation is available on the CAMECO website in three languages:
<http://www.cameco.org/english/resources/Radio-and-Participation/>)

The magic formula – does not exist

- Important to find ways of funding that matches the local reality: what are the needs and which are the opportunities
- The effective income and financing mix has to be developed
- The importance of having strong programmes to grow the audience
- Using impact assessments to document community change generated by the radio.

In which ways is your community participating in income generation? How is this organised and managed?

- In the SAMAD FM in Nepal experience preferred to above the station finances its operations and most of the investments through contributions of the community – membership fees, charitable donations (some of them “in-kind” payments) which amount to 70 % of the monthly income of the station.
- The Radio Salaki experience in Burkina Faso is based on ‘Cells of faithful listeners’ (FAURS), collecting ideas and funding for programming of special interest to special communities and villages (French version available here, other languages coming:
<http://www.cameco.org/english/resources/Radio-and-Participation/>)

The role of donors in financing of community radios:

- Can a community radio become sustainable when started through financial support from donors?
- Can a community radio in a poor community get started WITHOUT initial support to equipment by donors or other partners?
- How can donors support radios in effective and constructive ways?



The role of state support:

- In some of the Latin American countries the state supports the establishment of the stations, but then the stations have to maintain their running costs
- From Venu Arora, the Director of Projects at Ideosync Media Combine, the question is raised: shouldn't it be a right for poor communities to have a community radio? Shouldn't the access to a community radio be provided just as education and health services?

What kind of income is welcome?

- Do we need income at any cost? Which are the kinds of support a station does not want based on its values?
- How do we stay on track financially?
- How to avoid advertisers / contributors that want to influence programming?
- Are there business practices that are unwelcome (kickback to advertisers for instance).

Group collaboration for income generation:

- Good experiences in Uganda as shared yesterday
- Group buying of advertising / selling of air-time by a collective or network of community radios has been explored and trialled in a few countries (including Australia) but with limited success

Through the coming 10 days we will further explore and get in-depth with these issues. Hoping to learn from successes and failures alike.

- birgitte