



Community Radio: An Overview

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Introduction and summary



- ⌘ Characteristics and background
- ⌘ CR in the context of poverty reduction
- ⌘ Key stages in CR development
- ⌘ Public policy and intervention

Characteristics of CR



- ⌘ Facilitate popular access and participation
- ⌘ Express aspirations of civil society
- ⌘ Give voice to the most disadvantaged
- ⌘ Community owned and accountable

A story of uneven development



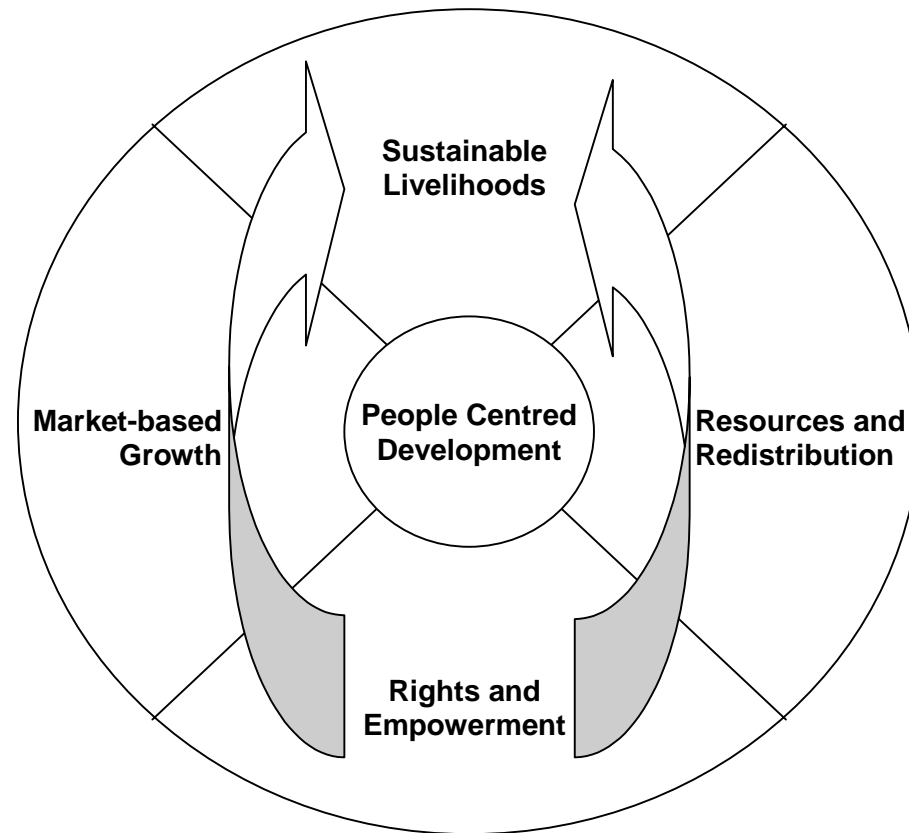
- ⌘ Americas: Unplanned child of the market
- ⌘ Europe: When state monopoly ends
- ⌘ Africa: The new waves of democracy
- ⌘ Asia: The next generation?

Contemporary drivers of change



- ⌘ Convergence and the knowledge economy
- ⌘ Privatization of communications markets
- ⌘ Growth of civil society voices
- ⌘ New anti-poverty consensus

Poverty reduction and CR



Rights and empowerment



- ⌘ A source of information and opinion
- ⌘ A means for dialogue and consultation
- ⌘ A driver of accountability and transparency
- ⌘ A platform for expression and taking voice

Market-based growth



- ⌘ An outlet for market information
- ⌘ A promoter of local enterprise
- ⌘ A productive sector in its own right
- ⌘ A training ground for ICT skills

Resources and redistribution



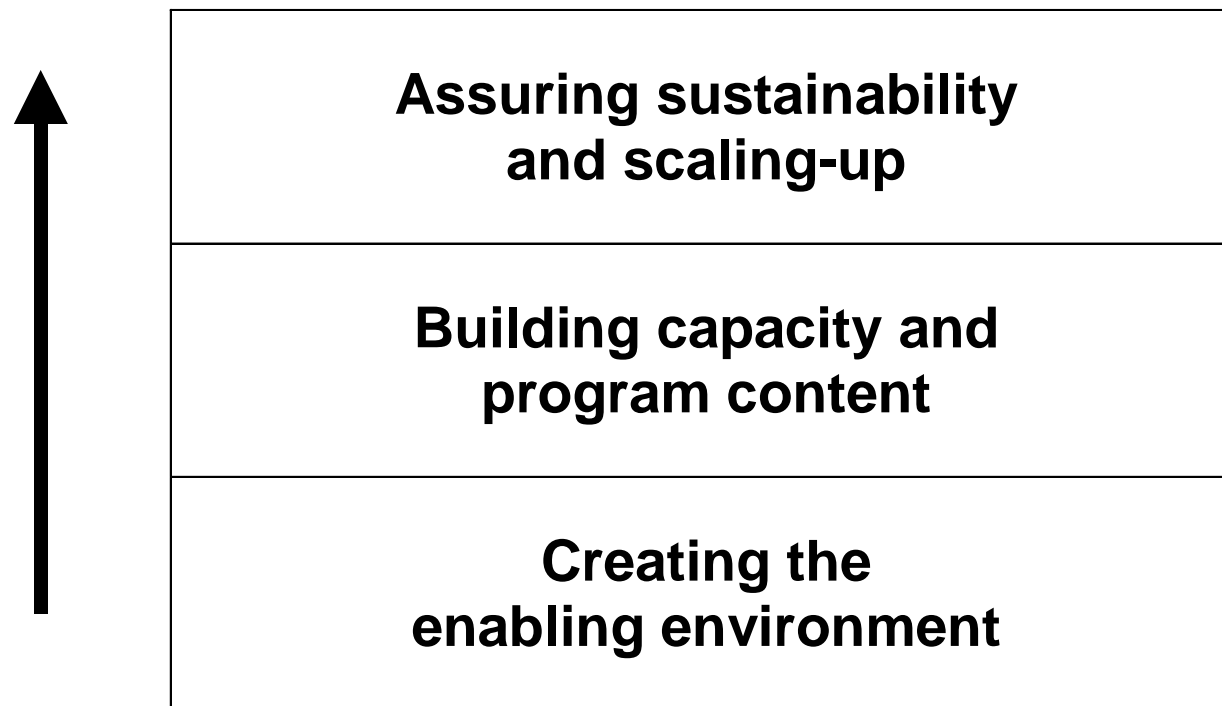
- ⌘ An alternative to state and private media
- ⌘ A civil society user of radio spectrum
- ⌘ A vehicle for pro-poor social investment
- ⌘ A means of influencing resource allocation

Sustainable livelihoods



- ⌘ A means of maintaining local knowledge
- ⌘ A source of learning and education
- ⌘ A conduit for local communication needs
- ⌘ A support for local culture and identity

Key stages in CR development



The enabling environment



- ⌘ Awareness raising with key stakeholders
- ⌘ Pilot production and broadcast projects
- ⌘ Legal and regulatory reform
- ⌘ Spectrum planning and allocation

MassLine Media, Bangladesh



"[We] hope that the policy makers in the government would come to realise the beauty and power of the community radio and take positive initiative to open up the air and be the friend and admirer of the rural poor."

--Riaz Uddin Khan

Building capacity and content



- ⌘ Access to technology and resources
- ⌘ Training and skills development
- ⌘ Networking and information sharing
- ⌘ Investment in program making

Radio Lumbini, Nepal



“We were the first to start a radio station outside Kathmandu, so we did not have a lot of experience. We learnt as we faced the challenges of technology and equipment.

After this comes the question of programming. Every time we think of a new program...we have to face the scarcity of human resources. So we have started training on a regular basis.” --Bharat Bhusal

Sustainability and scaling-up



- ⌘ Strengthening management and staffing
- ⌘ Building audience and social capital
- ⌘ Revenue generation and economic base
- ⌘ Network and supplier infrastructure

Tambuli Network, Philippines



“There are many community radios in the Philippines. The northern indigenous community as well as the urban-poor have their own community radio stations. These radio stations are very much owned by the communities. They generally seek the cooperation of Churches and community head people to raise funds and develop their own community radio stations and programs.”

--Marilou Angolloan

Donor policy and intervention



- ⌘ Developing the strategic fit
- ⌘ Macro or micro level intervention?
- ⌘ Legal and regulatory frameworks
- ⌘ Financial investment and support

Recommendation 1



CDD and micro level investment must be complemented by macro level support in the context of PRSPs and policy-based lending, including strengthening the public service dimension of the communications environment through licensing and resource allocation, including spectrum planning.

Recommendation 2



An empowerment-driven approach must respect the autonomy of community radio and not seek to instrumentalize the sector. There is a need for constant vigilance on this issue and the development of arms-length funding principles.

Recommendation 3



There is significant and growing investment in the community radio sector and a strong tradition of self reliance and self funding.

The Bank could play a key role in scaling up and mainstreaming this provision; but in doing so, it is essential that: (1) Bank intervention is able to demonstrate positive added value; and (2) the impact of Bank intervention is closely and independently monitored, particularly at the pilot stages.