



# Amplify the voices of vulnerable and marginalized groups through Community Radio in Bangladesh

Rural people of Bangladesh entered into an era of community broadcasting to amplify the voices of vulnerable and marginalized groups through 14 community radio stations around the country.

Community Radio provides the local community access to information and through exchange of information, leads them towards empowerment. Empowerment is the process to link them to their rights, good governance and development process.

Community Radio stations are going to full transmission in Bangladesh. 14 stations are pioneering to be on-air, aiming to ensure empowerment and right to information for the rural community.

Community Radio Padma 89.20, Rajshahi district and Community Radio Nalta 89.20 of Satkhira district has started full transmission.

Other nine Stations namely Community Radio Chilmari 99.20 Chilmari Upazila, Kurigram district, Community Radio Radio Mukti 89.20 of Bogra district, Community Radio Barendra 89.20 of Naogaon district, Community Radio Mahananda 98.20 of Chapai-Nawabganj district, Community Radio Jhinuk 89.20 of Jhinedah district, Community Radio Lokobetar 89.20 of Barguna district, Community Rural Radio Krishi Radio 98.8 of Amtali Upazila of Barguna district, Community Radio Sagargiri 89.20 of Sitakunda, Chittagong district, Community Radio Pallykantha 89.20 of Moulvibazar district have started test transmission.

The rest three stations namely Community Radio Naf 89.20 of Teknaf, Cox’s Bazar district, Community Radio Bikrampur 89.20 Munshiganj district and Community Radio Sundarban 98.20 of Koyra, Khulna district have done all the prepare to go on test broadcasting.

It can be mentioned that these Radio Stations will broadcast programs, mostly in local dialect within the people living around 17 kilometers of a Station. The Programs will cover social, economic, cultural and environmental issues.

Besides, rural community will raise their voices and share their concerns to the wider audience. It will create space for public debate, dialogue and action. It will develop initiatives to address the gaps gaps and enhance participation of the marginalized in national development processes and achieve the MDGs. By keeping its non-partisan standing/position, Community Radio will play animator role within government, administrative officials, businessman and civil society members to promote democratic process in the society.

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) is promoting the advocacy with the government in relations to community radio with other organizations since its emergence in 2000 to open-up the Community Radio in Bangladesh to address critical social issues at community level, such as poverty, social exclusion, empowerment of marginalized rural groups and catalyze democratic process in decision making and ongoing development efforts.

As a result, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh acknowledged the importance of community radio and announced the Community Radio Installation, Broadcast & Operation Policy. Bangladesh is the 2nd country in South Asia in formulating policy for Community Radio.

By this time, Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has already provided spectrum to 14 Community Radio Stations. Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) is now involved in strengthening capacity of Community Radio Practitioners, Research and development and technical guidance for community radio operation.

Meanwhile, another 21 Community Radio initiators are waiting for final approval from Ministry of Information.

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