

# FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

## RADIO FOR PEACEBUILDING NEPAL

*A project implemented by*  
SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

*With support from*  
THE NORWEGIAN ROYAL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

*From JANUARY 2008 to JANUARY 2009*

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*Evaluators:*

Bernardo Monzani – Representative, SFCG European Office  
Keshab Adhikari – Local Consultant

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2009, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) concluded the implementation of a project entitled *Radio for Peacebuilding Nepal* (R4PB Nepal). The project, funded by the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had the overall objective of “developing the capacity of radio producers to foster local-level ownership of the peace process.” It lasted 12 months and included two main activity components: training and coaching for radio producers, and the production and broadcast of regional and local radio talk shows. The latter were done independently by partners, and then aired under a single name: *Farakilo Dharti* (“Wider Earth”).

The present evaluation found R4PB Nepal to have been a largely successful project. The training component provided participants with useful radio production skills and relevant notions of conflict transformation; the coaching sessions, which SFCG’s media team conducted throughout the duration of the project, were also seen as positive by those who participated. Together, they allowed the target group—radio professionals—to internalize new skills and knowledge, positively changing their attitudes regarding the role radio can play to build peace and foster dialogue on social issues. The production and broadcast of the talk shows was also successful, both from a technical point of view (95% of the radio talk shows commissioned to partners were produced) and a content one (the shows had a 16% listenership rate according to an informal survey conducted by SFCG). The development of the talk shows was framed within a common curriculum developed through one national and two regional summits. The format of these events was very participatory, fostering a greater sense of ownership over the content of the radio program. Participating radio producers appreciated the freedom derived from the franchised nature of the project, which allowed them to grow in skills and responsibility over the second half of the project. The evaluators have recorded several instances of behavior changes occurring at the local level following the broadcast of specific episodes of *Farakilo Dharti*, pointing to the long-term potential impact that the project can have on fostering dialogue and solving conflict locally.

The R4PB Project was not without shortcomings. For once, no baseline assessment was conducted prior to the implementation of activities, making it difficult to measure progress over the duration of the project. This is true for both the participants to the trainings as well as the radio stations involved in the production of *Farakilo Dharti*. The selection of participants was also problematic, as the difference in backgrounds, skills and even language abilities influenced the pace of the events. This was also reflected in the time needed to refine the radio curriculum, which forced project staff to cut the production schedule from 26 to 23 episodes. In terms of the radio talk shows, the evaluation highlights variance between the performances of different radio stations: some episodes have not been judged satisfactory (1 out of every 5). Finally, the radio talk shows were not successful in creating a link to national decision-making processes.

The shortcomings of R4PB Nepal do not diminish its positive outcomes. The most obvious recommendation from the present evaluation is to continue the project’s activities, primarily the production and broadcast of *Farakilo Dharti*. The talk shows should be better promoted to the public, however. SFCG should also seek to engage more systematically not only producers, but also station managers, who play an important role as facilitators both within the FM stations and the communities. A contingency plan to address the possibility of trained producers leaving their posts can ensure that no ruptures take place during the production of talk shows. Finally, SFCG should conduct a more regular collection and analysis of information, set clearer production standards and learning objectives for radio producers, and engage in a review of the theory of change underpinning the project, with the aim of defining what impact, if any, R4PB Nepal should have at the national level.

## II. EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

### A. Scope and Methodology

The primary purpose of this evaluation was to examine the results (including output and outcomes) of the project *Radio for Peacebuilding Nepal* (R4PB Nepal), funded by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by SFCG Nepal. The evaluation is meant to inform the funding agency and staff working on the action about what has been achieved through the project; the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies used; and how to move the work forward.

Nepal is undergoing a complex process of political and social transition, currently dominated by the drafting of a new constitution. Radio has been identified by SFCG as a mean to promote more open discussions around the key issues arising during the transitional period, and to make decision-making processes more participatory and fair. In this framework, it is important to identify the specific contributions of the R4PB Nepal project in terms not only of developing the skills of radio journalists, but also in promoting their role as social actors and agents of change. The purpose of the present evaluation was therefore qualified as four-fold:

1. To measure the results of the project on the producers who were trained,
2. To analyze the effectiveness and appropriateness of the training and coaching methodology in the Nepali context,
3. To identify ways of improving the training process so that the project can maximize outcomes,
4. To analyze the effectiveness of the regional and local talkshows produced under this project.

Furthermore, the evaluation had the following specific objectives:

- To evaluate the outputs of the project in quantitative terms;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the project activity components in terms of the methodologies used for implementation;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the training;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the coaching sessions;
- To evaluate the talk shows (*Farakilo Dharti*);
- To explore opportunities created by the project and make recommendations for moving forward.

The SFCG approach to evaluation is grounded in the guiding principles of the organization's work: participatory, culturally sensitive, committed to building capacity, affirming and positive while honest and productively critical, and valuing knowledge and approaches from within the local context. In addition, the evaluation is based on the standards of utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy developed by the American Joint Committee on Standards for Evaluation. The evaluators relied on a mixture of research methods to arrive at their conclusions, including:

- Background and desktop research,
- Personal interviews and Focus Group Discussions,
- Sampling and surveys.

Overall, the evaluation makes use of a blend of qualitative and quantitative types of information, collected at both SFCG's offices in Kathmandu and through field visits. The evaluators travelled in fact to both the East and the West of Nepal, visiting a total of six (6) districts. The field visits generated the bulk of the qualitative data used in the present evaluation. Quantitative information comes primarily from the

listeners' survey, the sample review of talk show episodes, and the analysis of the media outputs. The evaluation's Terms of Reference, along with the evaluation plan, are attached as Annex 1.

## B. Sources of Information

The present evaluation relies on two sources of information—primary and secondary. Primary information has been collected through interviews and Focus Group Discussions conducted during field visits by the evaluators in the six different districts. Secondary information evaluation consists of training reports, guidelines and manuals, coaching reports and other project documents. The main sources of information have been:

### **Interviews with Radio Producers and Station Managers**

– The evaluators conducted sixteen (16) separate interviews with radio producers and station managers in both the East and West of Nepal. A total number of 37 people participated to these events. The interviewees included radio producers, station managers and curriculum development summit participants. All interviews producers had participated to the trainings; some were involved in the production and broadcast of *Farakilo Dharti*. Table 1 summarizes the number of interviews conducted, including their geographical distribution and gender breakdown. The interviews targeted primarily the participants to the trainings, and secondarily the radio staff members (producers and managers) involved in the production and broadcast of *Farakilo Dharti*. Since some of them had participated to the curriculum development summits, the interviews also included specific questions on that project activity.

Location (village, district)	Event	Region	Number of participants		
			Total	Male	Female
Nepalgunj, Banke	1	Mid and Far West	2	1	1
Lamahi, Dang	1		3	3	0
Tulsipur, Dang	1		3	3	0
Gulerya, Bardiya	1		1	1	0
Tikapur, Kailali	2		2	2	0
Ghodahodi, Kailali	1		1	1	0
Khaptad, Kailali	1		1	1	0
Dhanghadi, Kailali	2		6	4	2
<b>Sub-total - West</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>
Biratnagar, Murang	2		East	3	2
Itahari, Sunsari	2	10		6	4
Itahari, Sunsari	2	5		5	0
<b>Sub-total - East</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29 (78%)</b>	<b>8 (22%)</b>

**Focus Group Discussions** – The evaluators conducted six (6) Focus Group Discussions with listeners of *Farakilo Dharti*. A total number of 49 people participated to these events. Participants to the FGDs were chosen from a wide variety of backgrounds, including local communities, associations, youth networks and also district offices. Table 2 summarizes the number of FGDs conducted, including their geographical distribution and gender breakdown. Within FGDs, questions were aimed at measuring what impact (if any) the radio talk shows had on listeners' knowledge, attitudes and behavior.

Location (village, district)	Event	Region	Number of participants		
			Total	Male	Female
Nepalgunj, Banke	1	Mid and Far West	7	6	1
Lamahi, Dang	1		12	5	7
Tikapur, Kailali	1		6	3	3
Dhanghadi, Kailali	1		7	6	1
<b>Sub-total - West</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>
Biratnagar, Murang	1	East	10	5	5
Itahari, Sunsari	1		7	7	0
<b>Sub-total - East</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>32 (65%)</b>	<b>17 (35%)</b>

**Sample review of talk show episodes** – SFCG's media team conducted a review of thirty-five (35) episodes of *Farakilo Dharti* produced by the different partners. The episodes were chose randomly as a sample (about 9%) of the total number produced (391). The media team evaluated each episode against a set of twenty-nine (29) questions developed by the original trainer, Francis Rolt. The questions were both positive—i.e. measuring the ability of producers—and negative—i.e. measuring their shortcomings and weaknesses. Questions were given a score ranging from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), with 2 considered

as the satisfactory mark. The following formula was developed to determine the score of individual episodes:

$$(Sum\ of\ Scores\ from\ Positive\ Q's) - (Sum\ of\ Scores\ from\ Negative\ Q's) = Total\ Score$$

The satisfactory total score was thus calculated:

$$(2*22) - (2*7) = 44 - 14 = 30$$

TABLE 3: FINDINGS FROM SAMPLE REVIEW OF RADIO TALK SHOWS		
Total No of Review Sheets	35	
Average Score (Positive Q's)	56,43	(110 Max)
Average Score (Negative Q's)	15,66	(35 Max)
Average Score TOTAL	40,77	(103 Max)

Table 3 summarizes the findings from the review. For the complete list of questions, see Annex 2.

The sample review was also used to evaluate the curriculum development summits, specifically by determining how the topics chosen by individual radio producers reflect the key messages and objectives developed in the radio curriculum, which resulted from the summits. A specific tool was developed to track the topics covered by individual *Farakilo Dharti* shows. Table 4 summarizes those findings.

TABLE 4: TOPICS FROM SAMPLE REVIEW OF RADIO TALK SHOWS			
Topics	% of sample	Topics	% of sample
Overall Peace Process	12,5	Education	18,8
Marginalized Communities	56,3	Natural Resources	3,1
Marginalized Groups	31,3	Children's Rights	9,4
Human Rights	25,0	Local Disputes	6,3
Political Participation	28,1	Other Social Issues	37,5

**Informal Listeners' Survey** – SFCG's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team developed an informal survey, which was conducted at the end of the project. The purpose of the survey was to gauge listeners' rates for key radio shows, including *Farakilo Dharti*, in six target districts (Sunsari, Salyan, Dang, Kailali, Accham and Sirah). A total of 490 questionnaires were collected, with data disaggregated according to gender, age and location. The findings from the survey are discussed at length in Section IV. A survey report is also included as Annex 3.

**Interviews with Project Staff** – The evaluators conducted interviews with SFCG staff involved in the oversight and implementation of R4PB Nepal. Staff interviewed included: Pradip Pariyar, Media Coordinator; Yubakar Rajkarnikar, Media Manager; Neelam Sharma, Media Coach; and Michael Shipler, Director of Programs.

**Other Sources** – The evaluators relied on a number of available documents, including: 1) Reports from the trainings, compiled by the original trainer; 2) Reports from coaching sessions, compiled by SFCG's media team; 3) Peer evaluation forms, completed by individual radio producers and collected by SFCG staff; 4) Training manual.

### C. Means of Analysis

In order to provide as accurate an evaluation as possible, the evaluators identified a number of key questions for each project activity. These informed the collection of information and data, as well as their analysis. Conclusions about the individual project activities have been drawn on the basis of a combination of both qualitative and quantitative information; they have been further drawn using multiple sources of information. Table 5 below shows the identified questions, the sources of information and target audience, broken down by project activity.

TABLE 5: EVALUATORS' QUESTIONS, BY PROJECT ACTIVITY			
Project Activity	Questions	Sources of Information	Target
Training	How did participants find the training? How have participants used what they learned during the training? Have the participants shared info/tools from the training with other colleagues? Has the training led to any new programs and/or improved existing ones? Has the training changed the Knowledge, Attitudes and Behavior (KAB) of participants? What were the best elements of the training? What were its weaknesses?	Interviews with participants Interviews with SFCG staff Training reports and manual Sample review of radio talk shows	Training participants SFCG staff
Coaching	Was the coaching effective and/or useful? Was the peer evaluation effective and/or useful? Did they receive and/or use the manual?	Interviews with participants Interviews with station managers Coaching reports	Coaching session participants SFCG staff
Radio Production and Broadcast	How well did the partners produce radio talk show episodes? (Technical and analytical capacity) Did producers receive feedback from listeners? Were the talk shows appropriate and relevant to the local context? How effective were the talk shows in promoting KAB changes in listeners and communities? Was the peer evaluation exercise useful? What were the best elements of the talk shows? What were their weaknesses?	Interviews with producers and station managers Interviews with SFCG staff Focus group discussions Sample review of radio talk shows Listeners' survey Peer evaluations	Participating radio producers and station managers SFCG staff Listeners
Curriculum Development Summits	Was the Summit effective in its objectives? Did the Summit reflect the issues and challenges of the country?	Interviews with summit participants Interviews with SFCG staff Sample review of radio talk shows Radio curriculum	Participants to the Summit SFCG staff

### III. PROJECT OVERVIEW

*Radio for Peacebuilding – Nepal* (R4PB Nepal) was implemented by Search for Common Ground (SFCG) over a 12-month span ended in January 2009. The project, funded by the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, consisted of two activity streams: 1) Capacity Building of Radio Producers, where SFCG provided training and coaching to radio personnel from selected FM stations on how to produce radio talk shows for peacebuilding; and 2) Development of radio content to promote peace and foster dialogue, including the production and broadcast of two (2) regional talk shows and fifteen (15) local franchised shows using local content and languages.

The overarching goal of this project was *to develop the capacity of radio producers to foster local-level ownership of the peace process*. The specific objectives included:

- To mobilize the development and creation of effective radio talk shows for peacebuilding across the nation;
- To encourage the active role of local radio in creating locally relevant, and powerful radio talk shows which promote dialogue and foster peace;
- To increase citizens' belief that the construction of peace is partly a process which takes place at the local level and in which they have a role;
- To increase citizens' knowledge and understanding of the steps needed to build peace and how they can participate in it; and
- To train local FM stations in how to produce programs that foster dialogue.

SFCG's project builds directly on the experience and expertise that the organization has gained in using media for conflict transformation and peacebuilding, and in particular the development and implementation of the three-year project, *Radio for Peacebuilding Africa* (R4PB Africa). R4PB Africa aimed at increasing the use of peacebuilding radio techniques among radio professionals across Sub-Saharan Africa. Through the project, several guidebooks were produced, including *Radio Talk shows for Peacebuilding* and *Youth Radio for Peacebuilding*, which were distributed to media professionals across the African continent. R4PB Nepal attempted to bring this initiative to Asia for the first time, adapting R4PB materials to make them relevant to the Nepali context. R4PB Nepal also benefited from the piloting and development of R4PB materials conducted as part of a project, which SFCG realized between May 2007 and June 2008 with support from the US Institute for Peace (USIP). This project included trainings of selected radio professionals, as well as the production of exemplary talk shows.

R4PB Nepal was developed with a unique feature. Taking advantage of Nepal's vibrant, dynamic and very diverse media landscape, the project included the production and broadcast of talk shows on the basis of a franchising formula. In this framework, personnel from FM stations were trained in Common Ground methodologies and radio production techniques by SFCG staff; once trained, however, the producers were solely responsible for the production and broadcast of their own talk shows. The franchising formula included a single name and curriculum for all the different radio programs; this was developed through curriculum development summits gathering representatives from civil society and the media from across Nepal. The summits allowed radio producers and FM stations to have a greater sense of ownership over the project and the radio shows in particular, by making them responsible for content development and the choice of issues to be discussed. Finally, participants to the summits also chose the name (*Farakilo Dharti*) under which all the franchised talk shows have been produced.

The project consisted of the following specific activities:

1. Training and Coaching – SFCG conducted a Basic Workshop in Radio for Peacebuilding for 25 FM producers who had not yet been trained in this area. In addition, SFCG conducted two regional Advanced Workshops for those who have participated in the basic program. Following the trainings, coaches from SFCG's media team regularly traveled to FM stations to work with the producers in-house and support them in producing exemplary talk shows.
2. Production of talk shows – SFCG worked with two regional partners, New World in the East and the Far Western Media development Centre (FMDC) in the Far West, and 15 local radio stations to produce regional and local talk shows.
  - a. Curriculum Development Summits – SFCG convened three summits bringing together key members of the peacebuilding community and key actors in the media to develop a message map for the radio program, to be then used by radio producers.
  - b. Regional talk shows – SFCG worked with two local radio production houses, New World in the East and FMDC in the Far West, in order to produce a weekly talk show for 6 months (26 episodes). Each show was then broadcast on approximately 7 radio stations in each region.
  - c. Local talk shows – SFCG worked with 15 local radio stations in both the East and the West to oversee the production and broadcast of local talk shows. Each FM station was expected to produce 23 episodes over a six-month period. The radio program was broadcast under the same name and in similar time slots, while producers were responsible for the content development and the selection of guests.

Search for Common Ground has been working in Nepal since 2006, implementing projects in support of the peace process. The organization has developed a series of radio programs, including the children’s show *Nayaa Batu Nayaa Pailaa* (“New path, new footsteps”), which have become popular throughout the country. It also implements a community peacebuilding project delivering leadership and conflict transformation trainings to youth organizations and networks across the country. To implement the R4PB Nepal project, SFCG worked with two regional partners and 15 local FM stations—see Table 6 for a full list.

<i>Partner</i>	<i>District/Region</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>District/Region</i>
Radio Sagarmatha	Kathmandu	Radio Jagaran	Rupendra
Khandbari FM	Sankhuwashawa	Radio Pyuthan	Pyuthan
Radio Janakpur	Dhanusha	Ramaroshan FM	Achham
Solu FM	Solukhumbu	Synergy FM	Chitawan
Hetauda FM	Makwanpur	Deukhuri FM	Dang
Rupakot FM	Khotang	Shreenagar FM	Palpa
Koshi FM	Morang	FMDC	Far West
Karnali FM	Jumla	New World	East
Bheri FM	Banke	<i>Total</i>	<i>17</i>

The R4PB Nepal project included several commitments to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), specifically:

- To monitor radio broadcasts, conducting focus group discussions with program listeners, and administering ongoing semi-structured interviews with direct beneficiaries;
- To analyze the content of radio programs based on indicators that measure how much and effectively is dialogue set up and the Common Ground Approach used; and
- To incorporate this project into the biennial program-wide evaluation by conducting semi-structured interviews with direct beneficiaries.

## IV. ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

### A. Training and Coaching (including peer evaluations)

#### i. Main Findings

- Two regional trainings were held between March and April 2008, and an additional Training of Trainers (ToT) was held in Kathmandu around the same time. The trainings lasted five days each. They included both theoretical and practical sessions with interactive exercises and role plays. The trainings were conducted in English by Mr. Francis Rolt, expert on using radio for peacebuilding, with SFCG staff translating in Nepali. Participants came from a total of 33 different commercial and community radio stations from across Nepal. See Table 7 for the outputs for the trainings.

<i>Training Location</i>	<i>Total # of Participants</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Biratnagar	29	13	16
Dhangadi	36	20	16
Katmandu	12	11	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>44 (57%)</b>	<b>33 (43%)</b>

- Most of the training participants interviewed said the training to be useful in that it taught them things, which they did not know before, and that it helped them to understand the positive and constructive role they and radio can play in society. The training provided participants with conceptual and practical clarity on the Knowledge, Attitudes and Behavior (KAB) change model and the Common Ground Approach (CGA) in producing radio talk shows, issue selection, and target group and guest identification.
- In general, training participants as well as station managers of the respective stations indicated that sharing of new knowledge and skills with colleagues and co-workers in an informal way is common.

This resulted in non-trained co-workers also being aware of the KAB model and the Common Ground Approach. Sharing is common among news and community-related program producers.

- Most participants said that the training helped to improve the quality of existing radio shows (see Box A). They said improvements included, for example, diversification in issue and guest selection. In addition, a small number of participants said that they started new shows after the training.

**BOX A: IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING SHOWS RESULTING FROM TRAININGS**

Both the radio producer and station manager from Koshi FM in Biratnagar said that the training helped to improve the quality of one existing show, called *Snti Batuwa* (“Peace traveler”). Other participants interviewed claimed to have changed their strategies after the training, so as to give priority to issues of local and deprived or marginalized communities, instead of focusing on the same superficial discussions around conventional political problems at the national level.

A participant from Purwanchal FM, also in Biratnagar, was producing a show called *Sikshya ko Nalibeli* (“Anatomy of Education”) at that time and continued it after the training. She accepted that before the training she was running the show in a superficial way, without investigating enough the depth of a given problem; now, however, she has learned to bring out the perspectives of all stakeholders and reach the root of the problem.

- Interviewed participants agreed that the trainings were sufficiently participatory and practical; they all expressed positive opinions about the events, and most cited the possibility of learning about radio production as a particularly good aspect.
- SFCG organized a total of 27 coaching sessions for the radio producers who participated to the trainings and other relevant radio presenters from the selected 33 radio stations, as well as other partner organizations. Outputs of coaching sessions are presented in Table 8. In general, the two-days coaching sessions covered issues like types and nature of local conflict, how to fit the local conflict within the conceptual framework of analyzing conflict and ways to transform it. Similarly, attention was given to the production of shows based on the KAB approach, including critical listening exercises and SWOT analysis.

Training Location	Total	Male	Female	Training Location	Total	Male	Female
Mahakali	5	3	2	Janakpur	1	0	1
Suklaphata	8	3	5	Lahan	2	1	1
Achham	9	7	2	Saptakoshi	2	1	1
Dhangadi	5	4	1	Jhapa	2	1	1
Nepalgunj	6	4	2	Biratnagar	2	1	1
Bardiya	8	4	4	Ilam	7	4	3
Surkhet	8	3	5	Taplejung	7	4	3
Jumla	9	4	5	Khotang	16	12	4
Dang	4	3	1	Sankhuwasabha	11	6	5
Pyuthan	9	4	5	Solukhumbu	3	2	1
Butwal	7	2	5	Kathmandu	4	2	2
Palpa	6	5	1	Sindhuli	6	2	4
Pokhara	2	1	1	New World	6	3	3
Chitwan	1	0	1	FMDC	4	3	1
Makwanpur	7	4	3	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>93 (56%)</b>	<b>74 (44%)</b>

- Interviewed radio producers said that the coaching sessions were helpful and effective for them to refresh some of the topics covered in the trainings. Participants also had the opportunity to ask questions and receive clarifications about the production of *Farakilo Dharti*. Coaching helped them to use the skills and tools learned during the trainings, they said, and increased producers’ confidence to keep the discussions focused on the chosen topic, and come to concrete conclusions.

This finding is supported by the coaching reports compiled by SFCG staff. Furthermore, interviews indicated that coaching served as a mean for producers to keep in touch, and to feel that there was something beyond the training and the production of the show.

- All producers participating in the production of *Farakilo Dharti* completed peer evaluation exercises, reviewing two episodes done by a fellow producer. Interviewed producers indicated that the peer evaluation was useful to get new ideas, and to notice strengths and weaknesses in both their own shows as well as those of other producers.

### ii. Results and Achievements

The trainings have certainly changed the knowledge of participants, primarily in terms of practical radio producing skills, but also in terms of what radio can do to promote peace and resolve conflict. The training seems to have had a distinct effect on participants, changing the attitudes that they have vis-à-vis what radio can do for peacebuilding. The degree of this change in attitudes is difficult to assess, but most respondents showed an awareness of both the means and objectives of R4PB that is positive and hopeful. Interviews have highlighted several individual cases of behavior change, where radio producers have sought to apply the skills from the trainings to existing radio shows, or even start new ones. Nevertheless, it is yet impossible to tell whether the training had long-term impact on the behavior of participants. Changes in attitudes and behavior are linked to practice—it is no surprise then that those who showed more attitudinal and behavioral changes are those who produced *Farakilo Dharti*.

The coaching sessions were definitely one of the strongest and most positive elements of the R4PB Nepal project, as they served multiple purposes. First, they were effective in refreshing the key lessons from the trainings, and also to clarify questions that producers had about how to put in practice the KAB methodology and the Common Ground Approach. Secondly, they allowed radio producers to develop a relationship with SFCG staff working on the project. The relationship appeared to be a key element in determining many producers’ professional growth during the project period. Finally, the coaching sessions allowed producers to stay in touch with each other, and share experiences and lessons learned.

The peer evaluation forms collected by SFCG staff show the degree to which producers were able to produce effective talk shows. The information is largely positive, in particular when it comes to the relevance of the chosen topics and the questions asked by producers (see Table 9). The peer evaluations were generally successful in getting producers to look critically both at their colleagues’ work as well as their own. Many indicated having taken ideas and suggestions about what others were doing.

Issues of Evaluation	Positive	Negative
Relevance of topic	66,7%	33,3%
Coherence between subject matter and guest on the show	44,4%	55,6%
Attempt to apply Common Ground Approach in the Show	66,7%	33,3%
Relevance and effectiveness of the questions	77,8%	33,3%
Application of KAB in production of the Show	44,4%	55,6%

\*Total evaluations: 9

### iii. Challenges

One of the biggest challenges in determining the results of the R4PB Nepal project, including the effectiveness of the training, is the lack of initial indicators. Project staff did not conduct an initial baseline prior to the start of activities, failing to identify an initial baseline that could have been useful to measure changes during and at the end of the project. In the case of the trainings, no specific assessment of participants’ capacities or knowledge was made, making it impossible to map their progress. This is particularly unfortunate, as interviews clearly show the existence of a learning curve

among participants, which, if more accurately mapped, could have revealed more about the potential of R4PB Nepal to bring about change.

Participants interviewed as part of this evaluation highlighted a number of challenges in the trainings, primarily in the length of the events, which was considered too short, and to a lesser extent on the content, which some thought was not practical enough for them to gain the necessary skills for the production of talk shows. Language was also a problem, as the trainings, which were originally designed to be in English, had to allow for translation into Nepali, which was necessary for many of the participants. Cross-referencing the comments from the interviews with the reports and evaluations from the trainings, it becomes clear that the biggest challenge of the trainings was in the selection of participants, who presented various levels of qualification, knowledge and experience. This resulted in the trainings having a slower pace than originally intended; they also led to differences in the changes in knowledge that participants gained as a result of their attendance. Since the training participants were selected through an open call process, they also presented differences in their programmatic background. Many were news presenters rather than talk show hosts or reporters. This limited their ability to use the methodologies learned during the training in their regular posts. Many also came from commercial, rather than community, radio stations. As such, they returned to radio stations that did not seek to play a stronger role in their communities and districts, and had fewer opportunities to put into practice the skills acquired.

Another challenge highlighted by the evaluators is that several radio producers who participated in the training eventually resigned their posts. A few station managers interviewed claimed that this was due to the producers' increased skills, which allowed them to look for better paying jobs; others left because of problems with the management of their FM stations; several women radio producers married and left their jobs. Whatever the reasons, the departure of trainees meant that the skills and knowledge regarding the KAB methodology and the CGA could no longer be transferred to their colleagues, or influence in any way the production of radio programmes.

The coaching sessions presented some of the same challenges as the trainings. In addition, due to the attendance by radio producers who did not participate in the original trainings, the sessions could not be as effective as they were expected to be. In response to this, the coaching sessions seem to have become much longer and time-intensive than it was originally expected, as staff members from SFCG would often organize two separate sessions, one for producers from the trainings and the other for other radio personnel. Coaching also showed that participants were not giving equal importance to all components of producing talk shows, especially at the beginning. Although generally positive, the peer evaluation exercise seems not to have been sufficiently owned by the producers participating in it. As a result, while all producers of *Farakilo Dharti* completed it, many did not share the information adequately or critically enough.

## **B. Radio Production and Broadcast (including curriculum development summit)**

### *i. Main findings*

- A total of 391 episodes of the franchised talk show *Farakilo Dharti* were produced (23 episodes by each of the 15 local FM stations, and 23 by each of the two regional production houses), for a total of 2040 minutes of broadcasting per month over six months.
- An informal survey conducted in six districts in both the East and the West revealed that the overall listenership rate for *Farakilo Dharti* is 16%. Equally interesting and important, 56% of the people who stated that they knew the program also said to have listened to half or more of the total shows

produced. Disaggregated data from the survey shows that the listenership rate increases to 24% among youth and 20% among women.

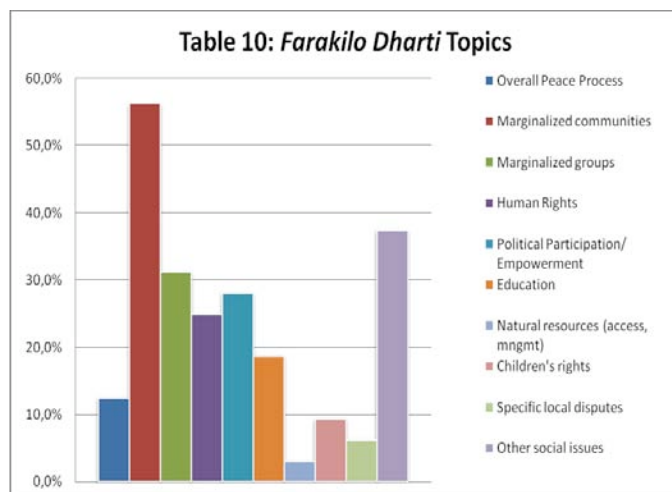
- The survey further showed that 54% of the people listening to FD regularly discuss the issues from the show, although disaggregated data shows considerable variance between the children and youth respondents (43% and 33% respectively) and adults (65%).
- The survey showed that of the people who listened to the show, 56% thought that it reflected relevant issues in their society well or very well. Nevertheless, limited to adults, that figures drops to 42%.
- Interviews conducted in both the East and the West with radio producers involved in the production of *Farakilo Dharti* showed that nearly all were satisfied with the project. Nevertheless, the interviews revealed differences between the FM stations producing the talk shows. Some showed a greater understanding of the objectives and the R4PB methodology than others. Some radio producers interviewed lamented the lack of equipment, and mentioned difficulties with the production schedule and requirements, including the production of the reports used to introduce the topic of discussion, or managing guests.
- The interviews provided important insight into the relationship between radio producers responsible for *Farakilo Dharti* and their Station managers. Some seemed aligned with the show's objectives, others less so.
- Producers and managers in the interviews indicated that they received considerable feedback from listeners to the show, and that most of it had been positive. This is also supported by the focus groups discussions. Nevertheless, the feedback seems to have been collected informally, and has not been analyzed systematically.
- Overall, interviewed producers demonstrated significant change in knowledge resulting from participating in the project. To a similar but lesser extent, they also demonstrate changes in attitudes vis-à-vis the role that the media and radio in particular can play in resolving social issues in their communities.
- By its very nature, the project imposed changes in behavior on the producers, in that it committed them to the production of the show. Interviews showed, however, differences in the way producers chose to develop and produce their versions of *Farakilo Dharti*. Some proved much more active and capable; others were constrained by the environment of their FM stations. In general, interviews revealed a positive learning curve for most of the producers.
- Interviewed radio producers said that they were satisfied with the choice of topics covered in *Farakilo Dharti*, and that the shows that they produced reflected their communities and what people thought relevant. This is corroborated by the survey.
- A sample review of *Farakilo Dharti* episodes, conducted by SFCG's media team, provides further indication of the variance between the different shows produced. The sample review shows the quality of the shows to have been satisfactory overall, but that only a few have achieved high standards. The review further showed that nearly 20% of the sampled transcripts scored below the satisfactory score, while 37% fell within the satisfactory range and only 9% earned top marks. For a more detailed explanation of the grading system, please see Annex 2.

#### ii. Results and achievements

Based on the findings listed above, the production and broadcast of *Farakilo Dharti* can be said to have been successful, in that it has achieved most of the objectives that SFCG had set for it. The production and broadcast of the franchised radio shows, both regionally and locally, were essential in order for radio producers to translate the skills and concepts learned during the training into practice. In addition, the survey and focus groups discussions indicate that *Farakilo Dharti* was relevant to the local communities

that made up the show’s main target audience, and that it contributed to changes in knowledge and attitudes. Some instances of behavioral change have also been recorded.

SFCG successfully organized two regional curriculum development summits, and a national one in Kathmandu. The Summits were attended by radio producers who participated to the training and leaders from civil society and the media. The radio curriculum that resulted from the process was deemed useful and relevant by all the participants interviewed. Furthermore, the ability not only to choose what the show should focus on, but also its name, gave participants a strong sense of ownership over *Farakilo Dharti*. This must be seen as a success not only for the summits themselves, but also for providing many radio producers with a strong sense of purpose that motivated them throughout the production and broadcast of the show. Another indication of the success of the curriculum development summit process is given by the topics chosen by producers for *Farakilo Dharti*. Table 9 shows how 56% of all the episodes reviewed were about marginalized communities (Dalit, Kemal, Sarki, etc.), and 31% about marginalized groups (handicapped, sex workers, poor, etc.). Both were key objectives of the curriculum.



The production and broadcast of the radio talk shows was very successful. Participating local FM stations and regional partners, produced on average 95% of the shows commissioned. All the local shows were broadcast by the local FM stations at least once at the agreed time; all the regional shows were distributed to partner FM stations in the selected districts and broadcasted by them. Any reported problem in the distribution and broadcast of *Farakilo Dharti*, such as delays, has to be seen as unavoidable given the difficulties of moving within Nepal; however, they do not appear to have influenced the project’s outcomes. The sample review revealed that

the quality of the radio programs has been satisfactory on average, with close to 80% achieving satisfactory standards or higher. This is a particularly positive achievement, given how all of the selected FM stations had not been exposed to the Common Ground methodology before their involvement in the R4PB Nepal project, and how few of them had any experience in producing talk shows.

In general, the producers and radio station managers involved in the production and broadcast of the radio program showed significant changes in knowledge and attitudes. None of them had been previously exposed to the Common Ground Approach; very few had backgrounds in journalism, let alone experience in producing talk shows. Interviews with some of them, and the sample review, suggest that the production of *Farakilo Dharti* was a learning process, which allowed producers to gain confidence in their skills and in the show’s relevance for local communities. The evaluation found tangible and significant changes in the knowledge that producers have of conflict transformation and radio production. During the interviews, radio producers were able to cite specific tools and skills learned during the trainings, such as the KAB method and guest identification; these findings are also supported by the review of the reports from the trainings and the coaching sessions. The evaluators also found considerable shifts in attitudes, specifically relating to the role radio can play in contributing to conflict resolution within and among communities. The bulk of evidence in this regard also comes from

interviews, where producers cited specific examples of how they tried to use radio for peacebuilding, highlighting both achievements and shortcomings.

The informal survey shows that in the six months in which it was broadcast *Farakilo Dharti* was able to muster a listenership rate of 16%. In particular, the show seems to have catered well to youth and women, whose listenership rates are 24% and 20% respectively. These figures are encouraging, especially given how little promotion was done for the show and the relatively short time during which it was broadcast. Also positive is the fact that more than half of the people who follow the show (54%) identified themselves as more than occasional listeners. Focus group discussions in both the East and the West support the findings from the survey, and suggest that listeners have benefited from the show, which has increased their knowledge about issues relevant to their communities and also contributed to changing their attitudes towards the resolution of social disputes. The extent to which this is the case can, however, only be approximated, as information from the focus groups has not been collected systematically.

Most surprisingly is the evidence of how *Farakilo Dharti* has led to behavioral changes at the local level. Most of the information about this is anecdotal, but it is nevertheless revealing (see Box C). Radio producers agree about the potential for the show to tackle social issues, and have witnessed many initiatives stemming from their engagement on a particular topic.

**BOX B: EXAMPLE OF CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR FOLLOWING BROADCAST OF *FARAKILO DHARTI***

Bheri FM in Nepalgunj produced an episode of *Farakilo Dharti* on the issue of disabled children, most of who, although entitled to scholarships, were not receiving them. The radio producer went to some schools in the district and talked to the students directly. She also went to the associations for the handicapped and found out from them that although there were legal provisions, the award of scholarships was in fact not monitored, so that mostly children from rich people would get them. The schools administrators were not doing anything about this. She therefore invited the chief of the District Education Office and one of the association leaders. The discussion was very heated at the beginning, but eventually it was possible to look for solutions. Some communities listening to the show were made aware of the problem and possible solutions found out.

After the show, the District Education Office started sending officials to gather information directly from the schools, and also started monitoring how many scholarships were being given out and to whom. The producer eventually received some calls from some of the people she spoke to, who had indeed started receiving their scholarships. Following the show, senior journalists also started focusing on the issue.

*iii. Challenges*

The main challenge hampering the effectiveness of *Farakilo Dharti* was the brief duration of broadcast, which lasted only six months. Nearly all producers interviewed mentioned it as a problem, which, coupled with the lack of promotional efforts, apparently led to a difficult start-up period. This is supported by the findings from the survey and the overall listenership rate, which although encouraging given the short period the show was on the air, is still to be considered low. As with the trainings, the production and broadcast of *Farakilo Dharti* also suffered from the absence of a baseline study providing initial indicators about the capacities of participating radio stations and the quality of programs.

The lack of promotion for the show is a challenge worth highlighting; it was lamented by many of the producers interviewed during this evaluation. Although initially there were plans to develop radio advertisements for the show, these were never done, and producers effectively became the only means for promotion through the broadcasting period. Traveling to gather information on the issues they had selected for discussion, they would make local communities aware of *Farakilo Dharti*, allowing them to tune in to the show. Focus group discussions revealed that when this was the case, listenership among community members was highest.

Although generally successful, the curriculum development summit was not without challenges. Specifically, producers and participants interviewed as part of this evaluation commented that the fixed nature of the curriculum did not provide sufficient flexibility to include new issues, which might have flared up following the summit. Furthermore, additional time had to be invested in making sure that the radio producers understood the role and content of the curriculum, which resulted in a shorter production schedule and fewer episodes (23 instead of the original 26).

Radio producers identified a number of challenges linked to content development. Getting guests to come on to the shows was mentioned as particularly problematic, both because of logistics linked to having people come in from remote areas as well as personality—many cases were cited of guests cancelling at the last minute or asking for money to be on the show. Some also mentioned having problems in choosing an appropriate topic, or managing the guests on the show. The transcript review suggests that producers had indeed a difficult time with some of the aspects of identifying and analyzing issues, and getting guests to remain focused. Of the sample shows, some 20% were found to be unsatisfactory for example; all of them suggested that the producers had problems addressing stereotyping and in leading guests towards common ground.

Another challenge was the variance between the different FM stations involved in the production and broadcast of the radio program. Some of them produced exemplary shows, displaying their capacity to both choose topics in line with the curriculum's objectives and produce shows to a high technical standard. Others, however, proved less capable to do so, choosing topics that were too broad and not sufficiently focused on the local context. This compromises the overall impact of the project and creates the risk of undermining the reputation and contribution of the entire franchise.

## V. REFLECTING ON RESULTS

The purpose of this section is to take stock of the overall implementation of the R4PB Nepal project, and to reflect on its achievements holistically. A first level of analysis must therefore focus on the success of the project in terms of outputs, outcomes, impact and process. This section will then present a second level of analysis, which will look at key questions to determine how the project can be made more effective in the future. This second level is in nature more reflective, compared to the summative format of the first one, and will form the basis for the recommendations developed in section VI.

### A. Outputs, Outcomes, Impact and Process

As the findings presented in the previous section show, the R4PB Nepal project has successfully delivered on all the *outputs* it promised. The total number of participants to the trainings (three events in total) actually exceeded the number originally envisioned by 54% (77 instead of 50). While no figures were given for the coaching sessions, it is possible to say that they also exceeded expectations, both in terms of number of events (27) and participants (167). Three curriculum development summits were successfully held, in Dhangadi (Far West), Biratnagar (East) and Kathmandu. Finally, FM stations responsible for the production of *Farakilo Dharti* (15 local partners and 2 regional production houses) were able to produce and broadcast 95% of the shows commissioned.

**Table 11 – R4PB Nepal Objectives**

<b>Specific Objectives</b>	To mobilize the development and creation of effective radio talkshows for peacebuilding across the nation
	To encourage the active role of local radio in creating locally relevant and powerful radio talkshows which promote dialogue and foster peace
	To increase citizens’ belief that the construction of peace is partly a process which takes place at the local level and in which they have a role
	To increase citizens’ knowledge and understanding of the steps needed to build peace and how they can participate in it
	To train local FM stations in how to produce programs that foster dialogue

The present evaluation offers clear indication of the positive direct *outcomes* achieved by the project. Participants to the trainings clearly internalized the skills and knowledge acquired during the trainings and successfully put them into practice, whether in the production of *Farakilo Dharti* or already existing radio programs. Even though there exist clearly visible differences in the ability of individual producers to use the new skills and methodology, interviews and other information collected for this evaluation show that there was a learning curve for nearly all of them—a positive progression in producers’ ability and confidence to develop better shows. There are also indications of some indirect outcomes stemming from the project. In some instances, the work done by the producers on a specific issue has led other media professionals (like print journalists or fellow radio producers) to also focus on the same issue. More generally, radio producers who participated to the trainings were able to share their new skills and knowledge with their colleagues, and they also successfully managed to raise the curiosity of producers and managers from stations

in the same district. This was reported in many of the interviews conducted for this evaluation, and is supported by the reports from the coaching sessions, which were often attended by people from other radio stations, who, having heard about the events and interested in the contents, decided to attend. All the aforementioned outcomes are in line with the project’s original objectives (see Table 11), which can as such be said to have been generally and successfully achieved.

In terms of *impact*, what the R4PB Nepal project managed to achieve is more ambiguous. To begin with, the project’s duration was too short to say whether it had any long-term influence over conflict dynamics at the local or national level. Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that there is great potential for such an impact (see Box C below and also Box B in previous section), depending on how the project activities will be continued. Much, however, also depends on the intended results of R4PB Nepal. Table 12 lists what the original proposal reported as its expected results. To the extent that these refer to the promotion of radio as a tool to address local conflict and foster dialogue, the present evaluation finds that they have indeed been successfully achieved. The second and third of the original expected results, however, also point to a link between what the project wanted to achieve at the local level and what it wanted to do nationally. This intention is additionally reflected in the project’s overall goal “to develop the capacity of radio producers to foster local-level ownership of the peace process”; it has informed many of the project’s activities, most notably the curriculum development

**Table 12 – R4PB Nepal Expected Results**

<b>Expected Results</b>	FM radio program hosts will have increased access to peacebuilding tools; they will increase their capacities to use radio to build peace; and they will increase the use of their radio shows to foster dialogue among conflicting parties.
	Producers will use the program to address local issues of conflict in relation to the overall peace process that is underway in the country, and to foster dialogue among local stakeholders.
	Programs will seek to link the local challenges with the unfolding political situation at the national level by bringing people together from across dividing lines for dialogue and promoting common ground.

summits. Interviews further show that it is an important factor among project staff and implementing partners. How then, has this link been tackled by the R4PB Nepal project?

**BOX C: EXAMPLE OF IMPACT FROM R4PB NEPAL PROJECT**

The Far West Media Development Centre (FMDC) in Dhangadi dedicated one of its episodes to a specific event regarding the Tharu community. The leader of the Tharu Independent Council, a group active in Nepal's Far West to protect Tharu rights, had made a very incendiary statement about how the Council would form an army and kick out all the non-Tharu people from the region. While the issue of Tharu nationalism had been around for a while, this was a new and potentially very destabilizing event for the region. The statement was reported in several local newspapers. FMDC producers thus decided to build the episode in such a way as to address this statement.

One of FMDC's producers contacted the President of the Tharu Independent Council and invited him to participate to the show. He also invited the president of the District committee of the Maoist party, given how Dhangadi had in the past been a Maoist stronghold. A third guest was the leader of the Kamaya, a community of ex-bonded laborers. The topic of discussion was the demands of the Tharu Council. On the show, the leader of the Tharu Council actually said that he had never made such a statement, and explained in more detail the position of the Tharu community, which hoped for a greater role in political decisions, but was fully committed to peace. Another achievement was getting the Maoist and Tharu leaders to talk together, since they didn't have a good relationship and hadn't talked to each other for quite some time. After the program, many listeners called in saying that they were happy to have heard that what was reported in the statement wasn't true. Focus group discussions also showed how this episode was helpful in changing some listeners' attitudes towards the Tharu community and its demands.

The information gathered for this evaluation indicates that the *actual* results of the project did not address the relationship between local and national processes as expected. The sample review of *Farakilo Dharti* episodes shows that only 12.5% of them covered the overall peace process (see Table 4 in Section IV). Focus groups discussions suggest that it was the episodes covering local issues that were the most listened and well remembered by listeners. Furthermore, broadcasting of *Farakilo Dharti* remained genuinely local throughout the project's duration; there is no indication that discussions on any of the shows had any consequence on national debates. Interviews with radio producers highlighted their increased knowledge and skills, but did not reveal any clearer understanding on their part about how local challenges and disputes relate to national ones. This is an important conclusion, as it suggests that the impact of R4PB Nepal was more limited than originally intended—although, it is important to emphasize, no less positive. Whereas the link between the local and national contexts suggests the idea of a bridge, R4PB Nepal should then be considered more as a mirror, which enabled local communities to look at their own problems and solve them. The implications of this are further discussed below.

Finally, a few words should be spent on the implementation process of the R4PB project, looking specifically at the internal management by SFCG. The judgment in this respect cannot be but positive, given the project's achievements in terms of outputs and outcomes. Interviewed participants were generally happy with the level of communication with the project staff, and clearly felt that a good relationship existed with them—a feeling reciprocated on the part of SFCG. Many producers also benefited from the presence of SFCG field staff in several of the districts. One important shortcoming, however, was the fact that information on the progress of the project was not analyzed until its completion. SFCG staff clearly collected information on project outputs, and kept records of events such as the peer evaluations and coaching sessions. Nevertheless, this information was only consolidated and properly analyzed once the project was over—mostly for the purposes of the present evaluation. Instead, it could have been very useful to identify problems earlier on and develop corrective measures for greater impact during the production of *Farakilo Dharti*. The fact that information analysis was not systematically conducted prior to this evaluation has also affected the ability of the evaluators to make more focused statements about the project's results.

## B. Key Questions

*What kind of impact should the R4PB Nepal project aim for?*

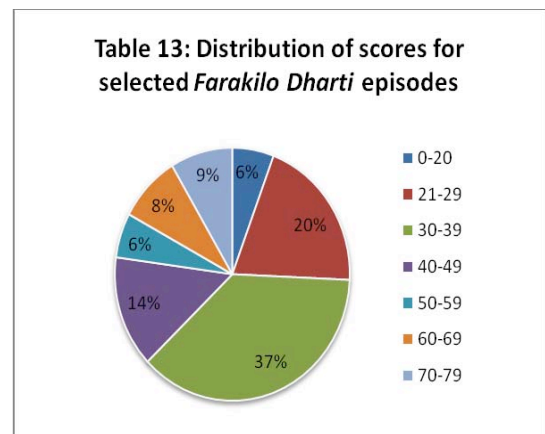
As previously discussed, the project failed to influence the relationship between local and national processes. Instead, the impact of R4PB Nepal was entirely local—a result that was limited compared to what originally envisioned, but no less powerful or positive. In view of this conclusion, the question becomes whether the project should be changed in order to achieve its original impact, or preserved in order to have it continue fostering changes at the local level.

Many of the debates and conflicts taking place in Nepal are tied to national political processes, mainly the continuous implementation of the peace process and the ongoing efforts of the Constituent Assembly. This often means that the solution of conflicts and disputes, even at the local level, is linked to decisions taken in Kathmandu. The original design of the R4PB Nepal project recognized this and hoped to create a bridge between the local and national levels. Stakeholders have appreciated these efforts on the part of SFCG and its partners, and even helped shaping them as in the case of the curriculum development summits. As a consequence, abandoning the link between local and national realities could lead to the risk of the project losing its overall logic and identity. On the other hand, the present evaluation shows that the most positive outcomes and impact achieved by the project (listeners' interest, actual changes in attitudes and behavior) occurred at the local level.

A possible solution could be to look at the theory of change underpinning the R4PB Nepal project: a greater definition of the conflict dynamics, which SFCG and partners want to influence, could lead to more nuanced expectations about results and impact. In practical terms, this would mean focusing on a more detailed definition of what constitutes "local-level ownership of the peace process." If this entails more information and increased awareness on the part of communities about the national-level peace process, with a view to creating greater accountability, then R4PB Nepal should expand its activities and exercise greater oversight on the content of the radio talk shows. If, however, ownership is intended as creating the pre-requisites for peace to take root at the local level, allowing communities to understand the principles of dialogue and conflict transformation and put them into practice, then SFCG and partners should preserve and even expand the franchised nature of the project.

*What response should be sought for under-performing radio stations?*

One of the strongest findings of the present evaluation is the existence of variance between the performances of the different radio stations involved in the production of *Farakilo Dharti*. SFCG's project staff developed the tool used to evaluate the episodes, according to which scores of 30 and higher were considered satisfactory. Table 13 shows how although the vast majority of reviewed episodes scored within the satisfactory range or higher, 20% were deemed below it. The review also showed that the quality of *Farakilo Dharti* episodes varies both by FM station and by topic discussed. Overall, this points to a difference between the capacities of radio stations to produce a show as demanding as *Farakilo Dharti*. The question then becomes how these differences should be taken into account.



Producing and broadcasting unsatisfactory radio talks shows has clear risks. It could, for example, hurt listenership rates; but it could also negatively affect the knowledge and attitudes of listeners. For example, the sample transcript review shows that radio producers have a difficult time addressing stereotyping by guests—which opens the possibility that some of them, if unsupervised, might actually be reinforcing dividing lines and undermining efforts to create dialogue between communities. On the other hand, the present evaluation revealed the existence of a learning curve among radio producers; nearly all those interviewed genuinely acknowledged the initial difficulties they had in producing the talk shows, but also how they eventually grew more capable and confident. This growth was supported by SFCG project staff, who maintained regular contacts with the producers by phone and through the coaching sessions. Finally, looking at the opposite end of the spectrum, the evaluation suggests that there are a number of FM stations that are producing exemplary shows—a finding corroborated by the transcript review, where 9% of episodes scored above 70. Should these producers be receiving the same attention as the under-performing ones, or should they be allowed even greater control over the content and production of *Farakilo Dharti*?

In looking for the right answer to the question above, it is important to underline the effective role of the coaching sessions as a tool to both monitor the quality of the talk shows, and also promote growth and learning among radio producers. The present evaluation suggests that there exists a very positive relationship between FM stations personnel and SFCG staff. This relationship can account, at least partially, for the learning curve; it also mitigates the risk associated with producing and broadcasting unsatisfactory talk shows.

#### *What role should radio stations play in their communities?*

The evaluation suggests that the differences described above are linked to the overall management of partner radio stations, as well as the relationship which they have with their communities. Project staff made the conscious decision to open the trainings to radio personnel from all types of radios—community or commercial. They also decided that only community radio stations would be chosen to produce and broadcast *Farakilo Dharti*. The rationale for this decision was that commercial radio stations do not necessarily operate under the same principles of community service than those of community radio stations—and that they therefore would make a less effective vehicle for the kind of community-oriented programs envisioned by SFCG. While this seems to hold true, the present evaluation shows that there exist differences also among community radio stations: some of these played positive roles within their communities already before participating in R4PB Nepal; others less so. The question is then, what role should radio stations play in their communities and how can R4PB Nepal contribute to it.

The R4PB trainings and the production and broadcast of *Farakilo Dharti* have already pushed several radio stations to take on unprecedented roles—many cited engaging on social issues for the first time, and a few of them have even admitted of trying to resolve local disputes following their engagement on specific issues. This notwithstanding, there seems to be a gap between what radio stations can do to address and resolve social issues, and how willing they are to play that role. The gap seems to be in part due to the capacity of FM stations: many of producers interviewed indicated that they felt more awareness to be necessary to really create change about certain topics, but that they simply didn't have the manpower to do it. Others lamented the role of station managers, citing them as obstacles rather than enablers for a wider use of the Common Ground Approach and KAB methods. Whatever the case may be, the present evaluation shows that the R4PB Nepal project has focused its attention much more on the producers than it has on station managers. To the extent that this approach carries the risk of limiting the achievement of the project's goals, it should be revised in light of the present findings.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and analysis presented in the previous sections, the evaluators would like to make the following general recommendations:

- R4PB Nepal should continue to focus on contributions to sustainable peace at the local level. As such, the franchising aspect of the project should be preserved and supported by other project activities, such as the trainings and coaching sessions. This will allow project staff to improve the monitoring of the radio talk shows without enforcing content on to producers.
- SFCG should seek alternative ways to link project activities at the local level with decision-making processes at the national level. One option could be to develop a national version of *Farakilo Dharti*; alternatively, SFCG should identify synergies with other organisations already producing similar shows on either radio or TV at the national level.
- Much more attention should be paid to the promotion of the franchised radio talk shows. SFCG should consider investing in a full promotional campaign, much the same way it did with its other radio programs (posters, public service announcements, t-shirts, etc.).
- Linked to the above, SFCG should devote resources to increase the awareness of listeners beyond the radio show. The present evaluation shows that this is already taking place to a certain extent: radio producers visiting communities to gather information for the talk shows effectively raise awareness about specific social issues among those communities. It is in these instances that, the information collected suggests, listenership is highest. Greater awareness before and after the radio shows will make R4PB Nepal more effective in changing knowledge, attitudes and behavior.
- R4PB Nepal should be better integrated with SFCG's other projects. Specifically, clear synergies exist between this project and what the organization is doing with youth networks in selected districts across Nepal. Already trained in conflict transformation and active in their communities, youth networks could be ideal vehicles both for promotional as well as awareness-raising initiatives. Their engagement would also influence the relationship between radio stations and communities, allowing the latter to play a greater and more positive role in promoting dialogue and peaceful change.
- Any continuation of the R4PB Nepal project should ensure that radio station managers are more effectively engaged throughout the project activities. They should also benefit from the trainings, so that they can be familiar with the Common Ground Approach and KAB methods.
- SFCG should develop a strategy to mitigate the consequences of trained radio producers resigning their posts after the beginning of activities. The evaluators believe that one way to do is to structure the coaching sessions so that they can also serve the purpose of training new producers.
- SFCG should also develop a strategy to address the variance in the capacity of partner radio stations to produce radio talk shows. SFCG should develop minimal standards that all participating radio producers should meet; it should then put in place a system whereby over-performing producers can be rewarded (through, for example, greater control over content and production), while under-performing ones can be identified and specially assisted through targeted coaching sessions. The goal should be to promote growth and learning among *all* participating producers.
- Linked to the above, SFCG should engage in more regular analysis of project documents and outputs. This should be done every four months at least and include a sample review of talk show episodes, focus group discussions with listeners and interviews with producers and station managers. SFCG should also continue to conduct listeners' surveys so as to have more accurate and

consistent data—this should be done every six months. Finally, these exercises should always lead to a written report highlighting which stations are doing well, which are under-performing, the overall quality of the radio talk shows and corrective measures to be taken in the following four months.

In the hope that R4PB activities will continue from support from international donors, the evaluation also includes the following recommendations specific to individual project components:

#### *On the training*

- The quantity of training participants should be manageable and time sufficient to cover all issues and contents from the R4PB Nepal manual. The trainings should have enough exercises in both the conceptual and practical aspects of KAB and CG approaches in producing talkshows.
- Future trainings should be primarily in Nepali (with explanation in local languages as appropriate), so that participants weak in English can follow the conceptual and practical aspects of the training.
- The trainings should include a session on developing skills on positive criticism and appreciative inquiry so that participants develop the sense and skills to properly conduct peer evaluations.

#### *On coaching*

- A distinction should be made between producers who participated in the trainings and other radio personnel. Coaching sessions should cater primarily to trained participants. For other radio producers and personnel, additional sessions could be arranged for them beforehand. This will help to increase a station's capacity for using the Common Ground Approach and KAB methods, also in the case where trained producers decided to leave the station.
- Reports from the coaching sessions should be dutifully compiled and collected by SFCG staff. They can be a valuable source to monitor the growth of radio producers and progress towards the project's objectives.

#### *On the production and broadcast of Farakilo Dharti*

- Clearer guidelines should be given to producers about the selection and management of guests on the talk shows, addressing the specific problems identified by them. These should also be regularly updated.
- A curriculum development summit should be held prior to the production of talk shows. Furthermore, an additional summit should be convened mid-way during the scheduled production and broadcast of *Farakilo Dharti*, in order for participants to review the key messages and objectives defined in the original curriculum and update them as relevant to Nepal's changing context.
- Focus Group Discussions should be held regularly during the broadcast of the radio talk shows, either by SFCG project staff or by local radio producers, given they are adequately trained. FGDs will complement quantitative information from listeners' surveys and provide better indications about eventual changes in listeners' knowledge, attitudes and behavior.

## **VII. ANNEXES**

Annex 1 – Evaluation Terms of Reference (TORs) and Plan

Annex 2 – Report on the Sample Review of Radio Talk Show Episodes

Annex 3 – Report on Listeners' Survey