
Search for Common Ground - Nepal Key Findings from 2009 External Evaluation Radio For Peacebuilding

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”).

EVALUATION SCOPE

The primary purpose of this evaluation was to examine the results (including output and outcomes) of the 12 month project *Radio for Peacebuilding Nepal* (R4PB 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.

KEY FINDINGS

Training and Coaching

Main Findings

- Most interviewees 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
- Most participants said that the training helped to improve the quality of existing radio shows
- 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.
- 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*

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.
- Participants noted that the trainings were too short and that the content 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.

Radio Production and Broadcast

Main Findings

- 54% of the people listening to FD regularly discuss the issues from the show
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- A sample review of *Farakilo Dharti* episodes, conducted by SFCG's media team, shows the quality of the shows to have been satisfactory overall, but that only a few have achieved high standards

Challenges

- The main challenge was the brief duration of broadcast, which lasted only six months.
- The lack of promotion for the show is another challenge
- Producers and participants interviewed commented that the fixed nature of the curriculum did not provide sufficient flexibility to include new issues

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R4PB Nepal should continue to focus on contributions to sustainable peace at the local level.
- SFCG should seek alternative ways to link project activities at the local level with decision-making processes 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.
- 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.
- Any continuation of the R4PB Nepal project should ensure that radio station managers are more effectively engaged throughout the project activities.
- SFCG should develop a strategy to mitigate the consequences of trained radio producers resigning their posts after the beginning of activities.
- SFCG should also develop a strategy to address the variance in the capacity of partner radio stations to produce radio talk shows.
- Linked to the above, SFCG should engage in more regular analysis of project documents and outputs.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

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 traveled 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 Final Evaluation Report Radio for Peacebuilding Nepal 5 listeners' survey, the sample review of talk show episodes, and the analysis of the media outputs.

Sources of Information

- 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 document

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.

*Source: The majority of this document was taken verbatim from the Evaluation of Search for Common Ground Activities in Nepal in 2009. For the full evaluation o, please refer to:
www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/evaluations.html*