

GRASSROOT

Role of Community Radio in Disaster Management and Climate-change Communication

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Community radio specialises in providing local information to the local people. Thus, it can play an important role in disaster risk reduction, especially in pre-disaster preparedness and mitigation through awareness raising that targets different community groups. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India is committed to develop a vibrant Community Radio movement through participation, involvement and ownership of the local community for greater information dissemination and further empowerment of people.

Community Radio in India

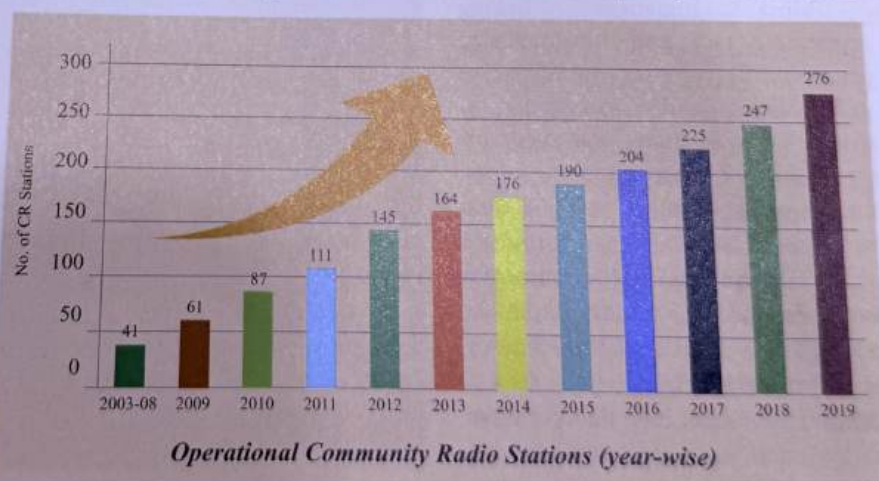
Community Radio provides an opportunity to the community to speak about issues concerning their lives. In December 2002, the Government released a policy that allowed well-established educational institutions to set up Community Radio Stations. In order to promote development and social change, the Government in November 2006 implemented new Community Radio Guidelines permitting non-profit organisations to own and operate community radio stations. With the new policy in place, it opened doors for community radio as a platform for development, social change, and voice of the community in concern.

At present, 276 functional Community Radio Stations are operating in India. Out of these 276 stations, 129 are run by educational institutions, 132 by community-based organisations, and 15 by Krishi Vigyan Kendra/State Agriculture Institutions. At present there are 78 coastal districts in the country. However, all coastal districts do not have operational

community radio stations. There are 51 operational community radio stations in 26 districts. Community radios are also prominently being used in Nepal, Bangladesh, and Philippines for rural development. They are equally popular in Canada, America, Australia, and South Africa.

Community Radio is useful in:

- Speaking to communities in local languages using terms and phrases that are easily and locally understood;
- Providing two-way interactive
- social learning through listening clubs, call-in shows, and other forms of exchange;
- Communicating local knowledge, needs, and demands beyond the community to inform policy, research, and other communities;
- Providing the only media available to communities that have little or no access to other methods of conveying information and knowledge;
- Bringing together people from frequently disconnected



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