



# BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Technological Innovations and Content Development for Community Radio



## Project Report "RADIO SAATHI"

Mobile Application for Beginner-level Training in  
Community Radio Stations



## Project Team at MIXORG

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Community Radio Content Expert:	Tej Prakash yadav
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We, at MixORG, have created a Digital Learning Platform for Training of Community Radio Reporters. This is an Android mobile application for multimedia-based training for individuals interested in running a community radio station or already running one. The **Radio Saathi App** is available in public domain ([Google Play Store](#)) for free use with licensing of content as creative commons (CC-SA).

It consists of 6 comprehensive self-learning modules designed for beginners in Community Radio Stations, followed by exercises and quizzes for each module. It further allows for customization at the CR station level by adding / modifying the existing modules and including profiles of members.

Designed with audio-visual features useful for people with low or no literacy skills this mobile application has features like offline access to content, analytics, quizzes, and assignments. It will be helpful in engaging more people in CRS operations, as it will impart training on CR basics to them.

The final deliverable of this project is an Android mobile application called 'RADIO SAATHI', that has been launched on the Google Play Store, and the content for the same is available either by download or through micro-sd cards given to partnering CR-station participants.







# PROJECT PHASE DESIGN



coverage area of approximately 12 kilometers radius. A maximum antenna height of 30 meters is allowed. Community radio stations are expected to produce at least 50% of their programmes locally, as far as possible in the local language or dialect. The stress is on developmental programming, though there is no explicit ban on entertainment. News programmes are banned on community radio in India.

Recently Government of India clarified that certain categories of news would be permitted on radio, including sports news and commentaries, information on traffic and weather conditions, coverage of cultural events and festivals, information on academic events, public announcements pertaining to utilities like electricity and water supply, disaster warnings and health alerts. Five minutes of advertising per hour is allowed on community radio. Sponsored programs are not allowed except when the program is sponsored by the Centre or State Government.

“Activists and community workers from across the country have banded together under the aegis of the ‘Community Radio Forum’ in order to coordinate training and support for community radio stations, as well as to continue to petition for a more proactive community radio policy. The Community Radio Forum, India, was registered as a ‘Society’ and ‘Trust’ on 26 February 2008”.

As of April 2015, latest data on [www.edaa.in](http://www.edaa.in) indicate that there are 195 registered CR stations in India.

“195  
registered CR Stations”





## RESEARCH PHASE

In this phase we partnered with OneWorld South Asia, who provided us enough reading material and also became Content Advisors for the training material to be given in the mobile application.

We collectively came up with a content framework (Annexure 1) and then began our next phase of field research and met the CR team at Gurgaon Ki Awaaz. With their collective inputs we gained further insights into the practical problems at the CR station level, which led us to add another module on CR Station management in our training curriculum. We saw the day-to-day functioning of a CR Station, interacted with the reporters and volunteers, understood their backgrounds and personal aspirations.

We were even able to find out their level of training, duration of training, and challenges involved. We even identified an important part of station management that was call-handling or 'Community Interactions Management' which could differ from station to station.

*Editing and Mixing for Live Program inside the CRS studio*

*Live Program recording with CR reporters taking notes*



*A volunteer handling calls and updating call logs in a register*



## NEED GAP ANALYSIS

Through our interactions with few Community Radio stations we identified the following problem areas, which if dealt with at the systemic level, would drastically improve their efficiency and reach within the community:

- Induction for new members/volunteers
- Training CR reporters/volunteers
- Overburdened staff – few people managing all tasks
- Burden of attending conferences/workshops
- Few and spaced out training programs – for which only 1-2 members can be sent out as the existing work would suffer

We figured that at CR station level, there would be mostly 1 trained/experienced member who would be either/or and

- Someone who has worked with AIR, and has exposure to Radio Programming
- Someone who has worked within the community on a specific agenda (most pertinent problem for that community) like women empowerment, girl education, agro-growth, infrastructural development, etc.
- Someone hired by an NGO to develop a new CR station for the community

Usually this person would be deployed as the station manager and would be the face of the CR station, so other than the initial peer-to-peer learning stage has no time to train the new members in programming and technical aspects in a given time, as most time went in orientation with the NGO's agenda, and how to connect with the community.

Hence we decided to develop an elementary training curriculum for beginners in CR stations, which would induct them with fundamental principles of CR station functioning.

TRAINING CR REPORTERS/VOLUNTEERS

INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

OVERBURDENED STAFF

Few Training programs - non user friendly

Out-dated CRS management tools - manual call logging

Lack Of Funds For Sustainability



# CONTENT

## Framework Development

We did not want our lack of knowledge in CR Training become a limitation for developing a training platform, so with the help of Development Alternatives, project supporter, we partnered with OneWorld Foundation India, who are experts in this field and also the legacy of having established and collaborated with many CR stations across India. They even manage a website ([www.edaa.in](http://www.edaa.in)), which is a centralized portal for CR community to get all information about events and guidelines from the I&B Ministry.

With their help we narrowed upon 6 basic training areas and developed content in Hindi under the following heads:

1. Introduction to Community Radio
2. Topic Selection & Radio Formats
3. Radio Programme Production
4. Post Production (Editing & Mastering)
5. Broadcasting & Narrowcasting
6. Radio Station Management

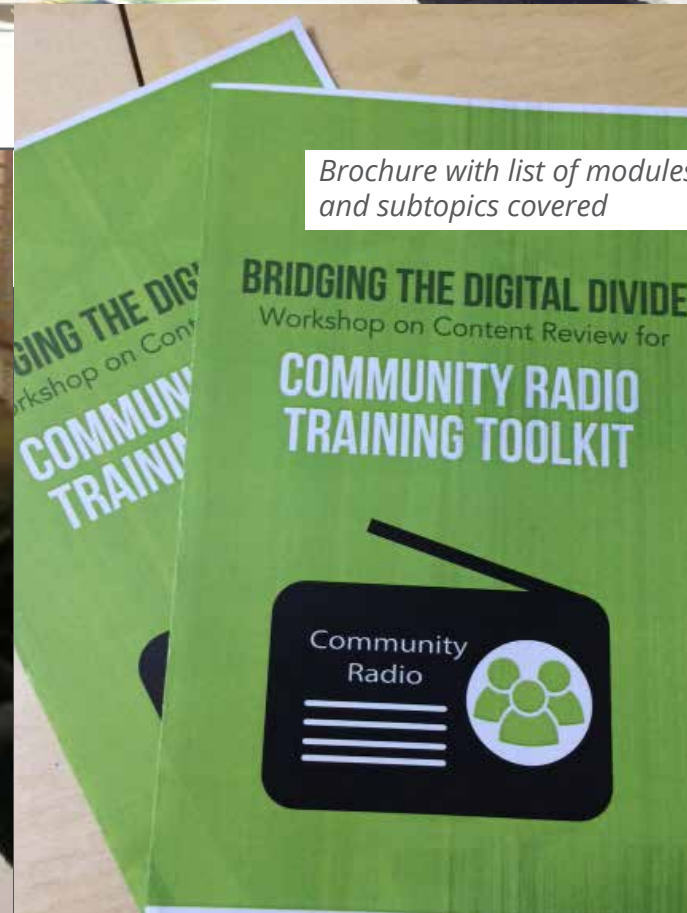
(Refer Annexure 1 for details)



Sharing the content framework with Community Radio experts



Discussions amongst the CR experts upon the app content



Brochure with list of modules and subtopics covered

## Validations through REVIEW WORKSHOP

Next we conducted a workshop inviting the below-listed experts in the field to name a few:

- Ankuran Dutta, Deputy Director CEMCA
- Indira Mansingh, Chief Advisor, Development Alternatives
- Ravina Aggarwal, Program Officer, Ford Foundation
- N Ramkrishnan, Director, IdeoSync
- Bijoy Patra, Director, OneWorld Foundation India
- J P Nathani, GM, BESIL

Based on this Workshop conducted on 16th January 2015, we worked upon further refinement of content for the mobile app, and then visited Radio Bundelkhand in Orchha, Madhya Pradesh to validate our existing content framework.

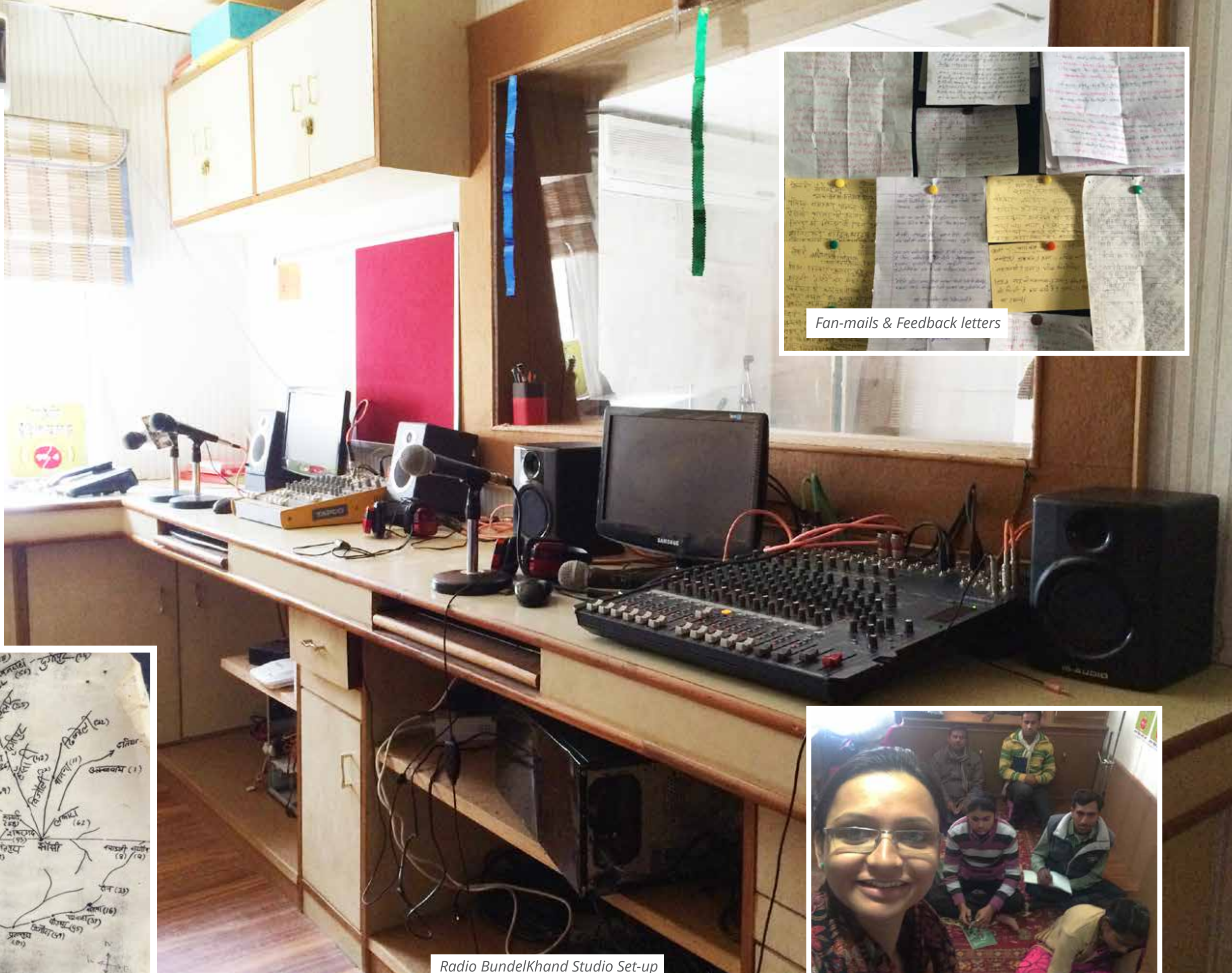


# Field Visit

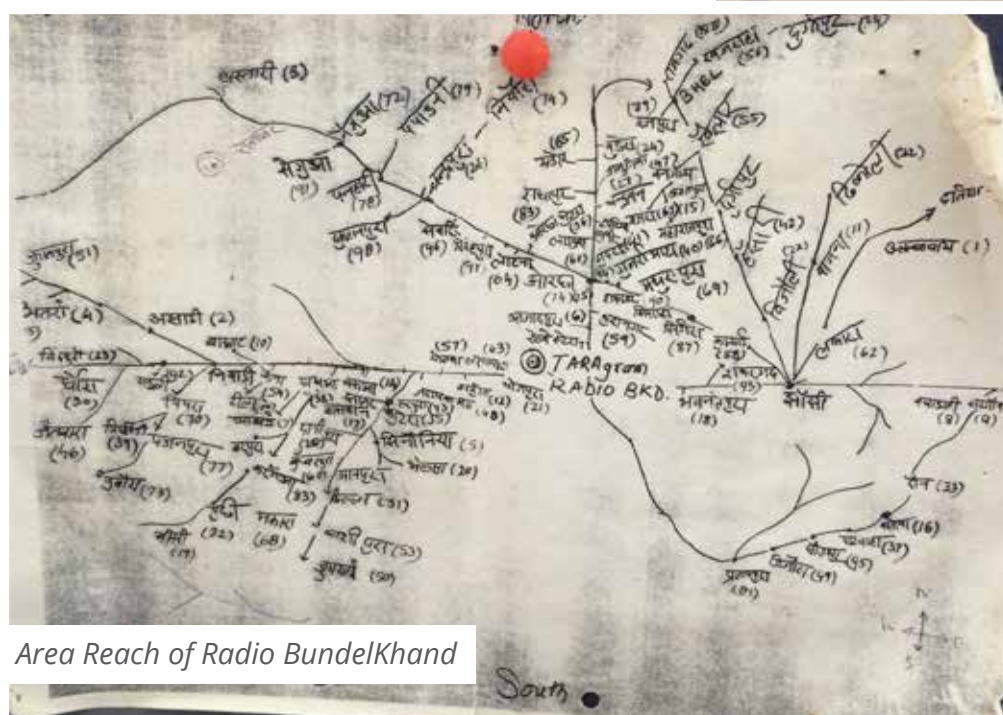
## RADIO BUNDELKHAND

Our visit to Orchha, Madhya Pradesh led us to believe text or audio in itself would not be sufficient in training the reporters and that we needed to bring in more interactivity in the modules. We first distributed text modules among the CR reporters and asked them to re-assemble in a short while for discussion and feedback. We observed that while most participants were not interested in reading the content but once we began discussing the modules, they had valid suggestions and even agreed to most things included in the modules.

Though the information presented to them through mock videos was that caught their attention the most and as per them was the most apt medium for education. Being in the media industry, with whatever limited exposure they had, they understood clearly that entertainment was the clear way to get any kind of message across. They became very excited with our videos and also gave valuable inputs for voice-overs. Some of them even helped us record some parts. Being in that set-up we got first hand experience of a functional CR station and also how programmes are made.



Fan-mails & Feedback letters



Area Reach of Radio BundelKhand

Radio BundelKhand Studio Set-up



Ideating with the CR Team



# CHALLENGES

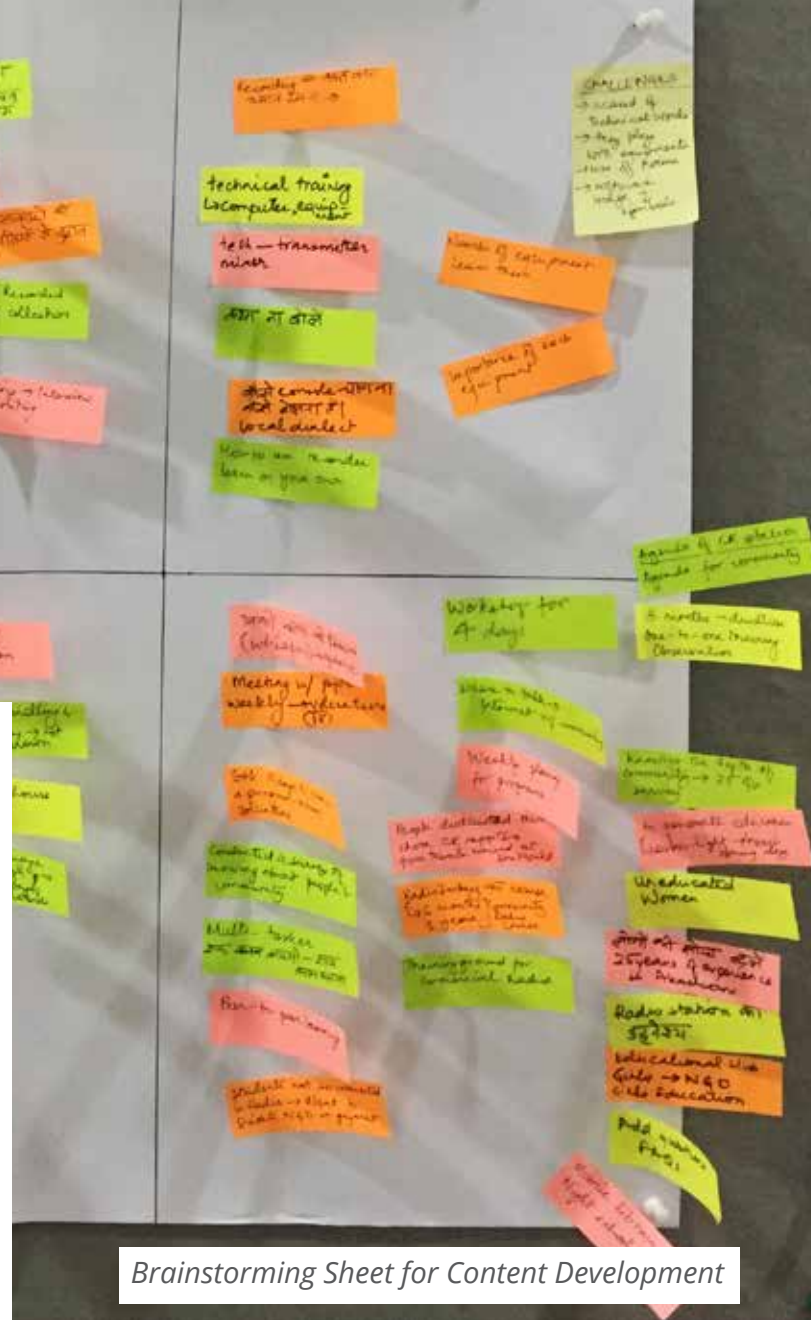
1. The app should be in regional language so that it can be easily understood by one and all
2. We knew that opting to videos would obviously increase the size of the application, and in remote areas internet streaming is not an option
3. We even realized that not every CR reporter could afford an android phone even it was the most basic smartphone
4. People would always have things to add to the content as Community Radio was a very regional medium and also that each CRS usually had a specific agenda like agricultural promotion, girls' education, cultural preservation, etc. so how do we enable them to add this content within their version of the app?
5. Despite our limited knowledge of the CR sector that we knew there was always scope for improvement/modification within the content of the app, given the technological change, availability of open source software for audio editing, and regional communication specifics. So how should we allow such changes to be incorporated from time to time that too at a regional level?
6. We had the content (textual script drafted) but our resources did not add up to the audio input quality of CR professionals so how do we allow that better audios can be added to the videos that too in regional dialects?
7. The should not seem like an external training alternative flung upon the CR stations but should be inclusive and have their views included at whatever level possible

# MITIGATION PLAN

1. The app will be in Hindi for now, as initially we are partnering with Hindi-speaking CR stations
2. The app size should be low so that people can download it easily, even with low internet bandwidth connectivity
3. The app will be available for free download from the Google Play store, although content for the app, primarily videos, would be distributed through micro-sd cards, which can be easily inserted into almost every android phone
4. The app would have an easy mobile number login method so that people could track individual progress within the app
5. We create the videos through powerpoint so that later the CR stations can edit/add/modify it easily
6. We follow a simple folder structure in the sd-card for the content distribution so that files can be easily read through correct names and numbering
7. Include CR stations for designing icons used within the app through a competition and give the community sense of ownership within the app, other than having their views and consensus on the topics included initially
8. We will provide a training video to the CR station on how to edit the content within the app, and also make them do it with us in a workshop. This will also solve the problem of having CRS specific content on the app, as it will be loaded through the sd-card
9. Add a profile section within the app, that is completely editable and which will reflect the names and photographs of the CR station team members, this should enable them to have a sense of belonging and deeper connect with the training provided

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES for Content Development

1. Our main aim was to make this application as a self sustaining training material which could be customised/modified at the CR station level so we chose the powerpoint model assuming that people would be somewhat acquainted with the software and could work on it themselves
2. The decision of choosing videos to educate was a ubiquitous decision one that was backed by validations through field research that it appealed to a larger audience providing some entertainment value
3. We wanted the app to be literacy-neutral and hence the choice of audio and visuals to make videos seemed obvious
4. We wanted the CR reporters to self-learn at their own pace so we added a quiz section at the end of each module so that they could evaluate their learning
5. Through our content review workshop, we learnt from the experts that sometimes, overdose of information becomes a deterrent in the learning process of a beginner, therefore we added additional reading materials as links in each module
6. Other than that there were some dos and don'ts in each section which the CR community suggested that we must include as part of the training curriculum



Brainstorming Sheet for Content Development

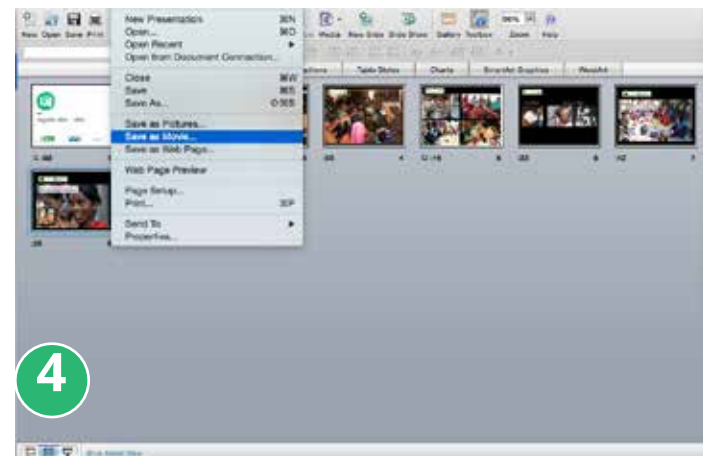


## VIDEO CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

We simultaneously developed videos of our module sub-topics in a comprehensive format that could easily be duplicated at the radio station level.

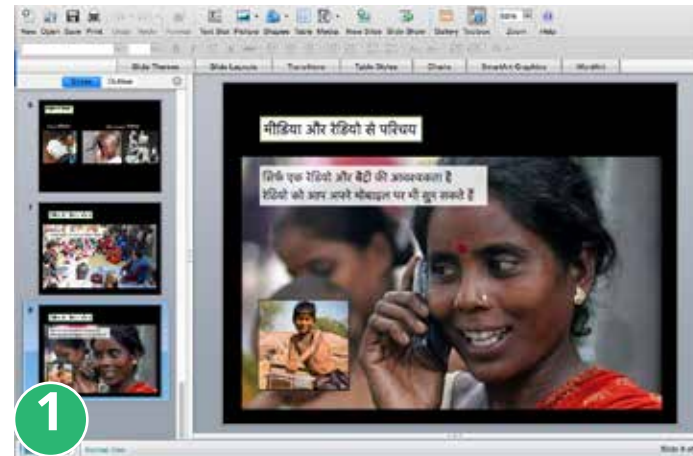
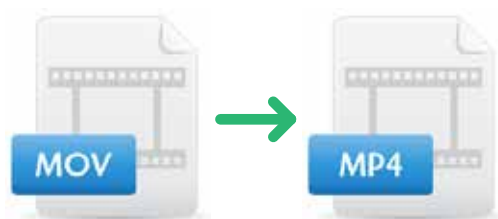
Our technique for the development was as follows:

1. Divide text from the modules into subtopics and create powerpoint presentations for each sub-topic with visuals and minimum textual inputs as JPG screenshots, in order to avoid any compatibility issues
2. Record audios for each subtopic in a simple narrative format
3. Import the audio into the powerpoint presentation and sync the narration with the slide timings
4. Export the synced presentation in a movie format
5. Convert the .mov video file into .mp4 format for it to become readable by the mobile application player

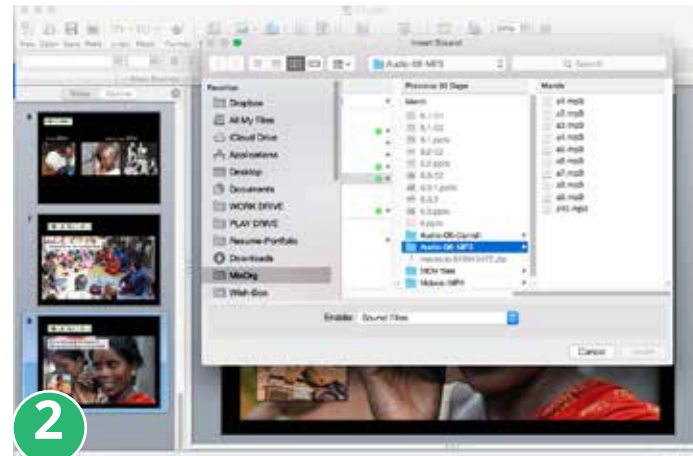


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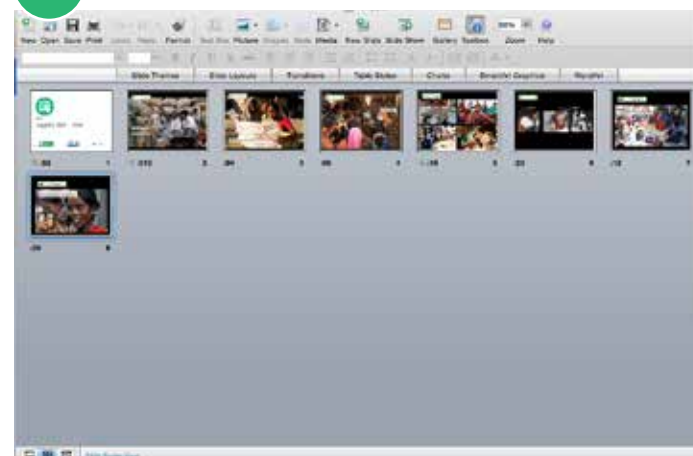
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2



3



## MOBILE APP DEVELOPMENT Through Co-Creation Method

We understood from the very onset that the role of the CR community in the creation of such a learning tool was pivotal, therefore we tried to explore different methods to try and include them in the co-creation of the mobile application.

With the help of Development Alternatives, we partnered with 5 (primarily Hindi-speaking) CR stations, namely,

1. Hamara Radio MSPCIM, Solan, Himanchal Pradesh
2. Waqt Ki Awaaz, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh
3. Voice of Azamgarh, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh
4. Tilonia Radio, Tilonia, Rajasthan
5. Kissanvani, Sironj, Madhya Pradesh

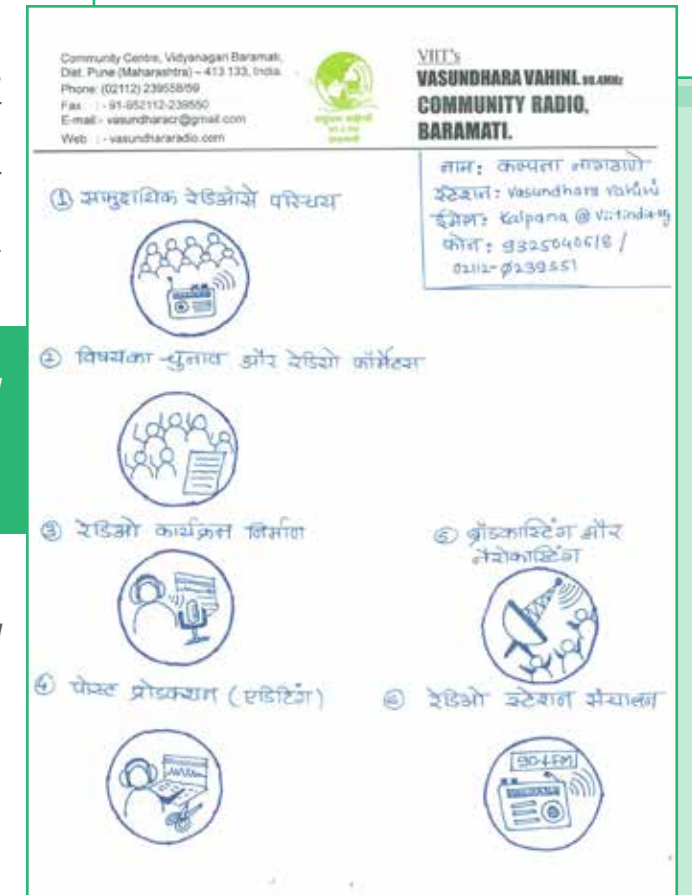
Another thing that we learnt from our field visits to the CR stations was that the iconography within the application, needed to reflect the sentiment of the CR community regarding the topics being addressed. In order to address this need we held an Icon Design Contest. With the help of OneWorld, we reached out to the various CR stations across India, and invited icon ideas from everyone for our 6 modules.

We finally narrowed down to 2 entries as our winners, that we announced during the 5th National Community Radio Sammelan held from March 16-18, 2015 in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

The winners for this contest were:

- **Sumant Padhera - Radio Solan, Hamara MSPCIM (90.4)**
- **Kalpana Nagdhane - Vasundhara Vahini, Community Radio, Baramati (90.4)**

Note: All entries and Icon Design brochure and certificates attached in Annexure 2





## CO-CREATION WORKSHOP with 5 partnering CR Stations

With the help of Development Alternatives, we invited participants from the 5 CR stations, listed below for a workshop on 19th March 2015:

1. Dr. Brijendra Panwar from Hamara Radio, MSPCIM, Solan
2. NoratMal from Tilonia Radio, Tilonia, Rajasthan
3. Mrs. Radha Shukla from Waqt ki Awaaz, Kanpur
4. Mrs. Seema Bharti from Voice of Azamgarh, Azamgarh, U.P.
5. Mr. Jitender Sharma from KissanVani, Sironj, M.P.

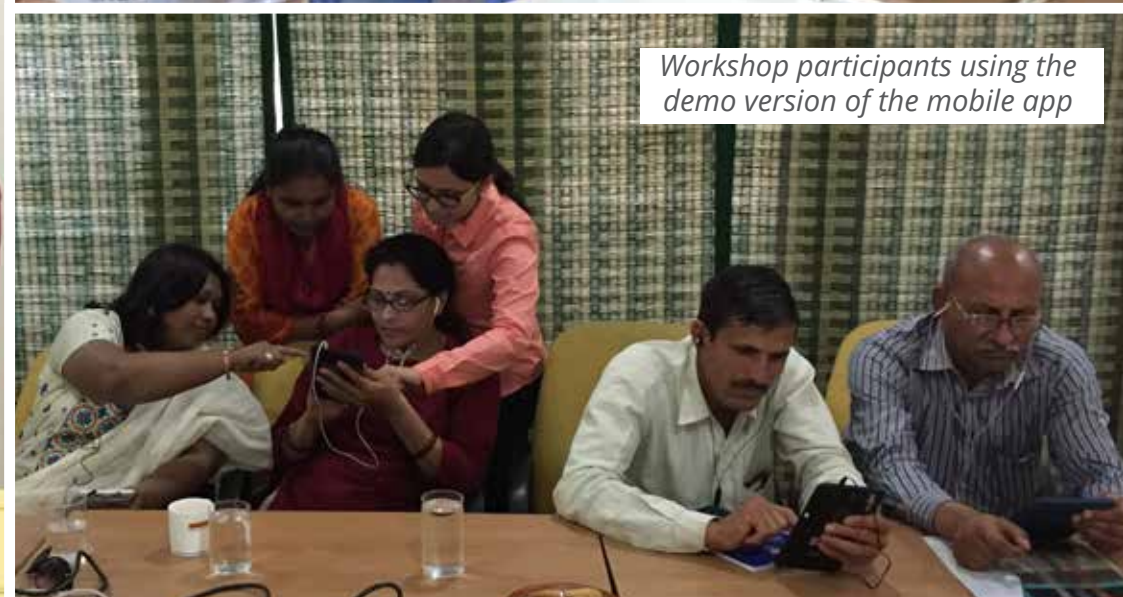
We asked the CR stations about their existing training methods – which were a matter of great concern to all of them, and then demonstrated the mobile application to them. We mapped each of their suggestions and even asked them to poll for app icons between the existing options and those selected through the Icon Design Contest.



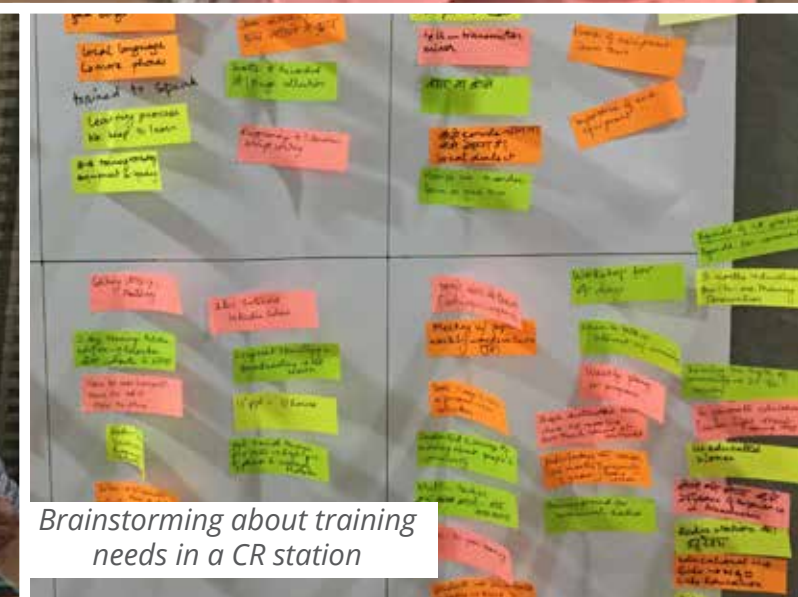
Voting session for Icon selection with workshop participants



Community Radio Training App - Usability Workshop  
19th March 2015



Workshop participants using the demo version of the mobile app



Brainstorming about training needs in a CR station



## CO-CREATION WORKSHOP with 5 partnering CR Stations

As per the suggestions of the CRS members we made changes to the icons and redesigned them to look like part of one family. We even brought certain other usability changes within the application like launch screen, reducing use of colour from the inner screens, and certain other bug fixes. We even took a poll between all the stakeholders to decide the name of the mobile application. The 3 options we had were:

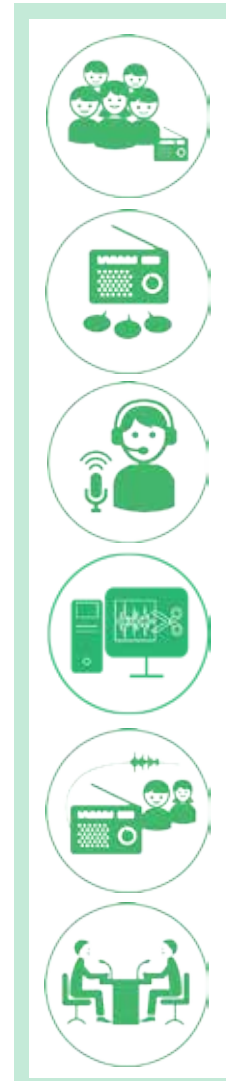
1. Radio Saathi
2. FM Mitr
3. Radio Guru

And after the voting we decided on the name "Radio Saathi"

MODULES	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
सामुदायिक रेडियो से परिचय			
विषयसूची वृत्त और रेडियो कार्यक्रम			
रेडियो कार्यक्रम निर्माण			
पोस्ट प्रोडक्शन एक्टिविटी			
ऑडिओ और वीडियो रेकॉर्डिंग			
रेडियो स्टेशन संचालन			



### Redesigned Icons

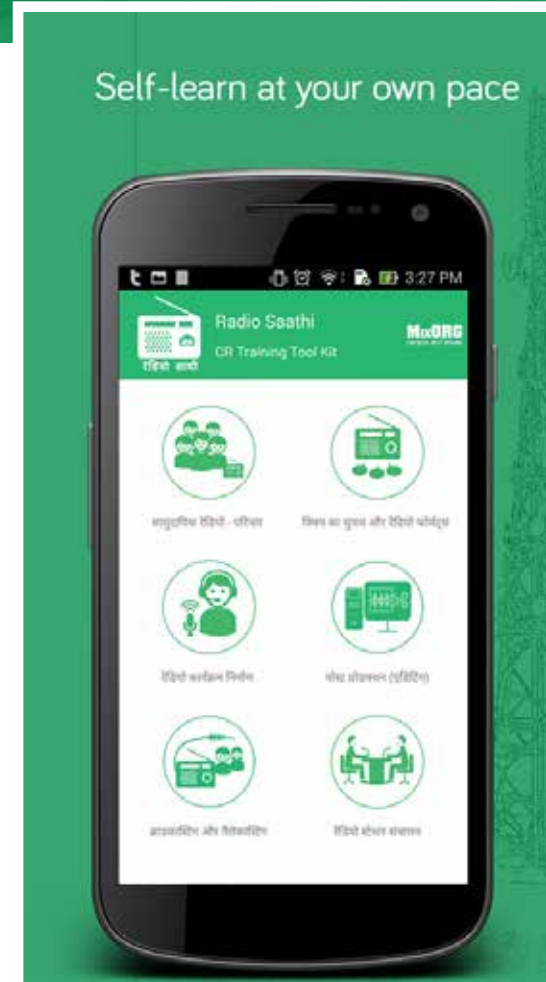


# रेडियो साथी

## RADIO SAATHI APP Launch on Google Play

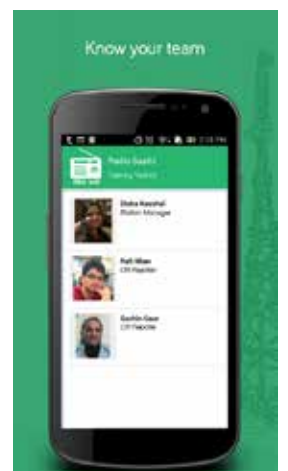
After several rounds of video editing, sound syncs, and text updates, we finally completed the content development and our developers were able to incorporate the changes within the app with all the new icons, and visual language.

On 17th April 2015, we published the Radio Saathi app on the Google Play Store. These are the images submitted on the play store.



Self-learn at your own pace

Images for promotion on Google Play Store

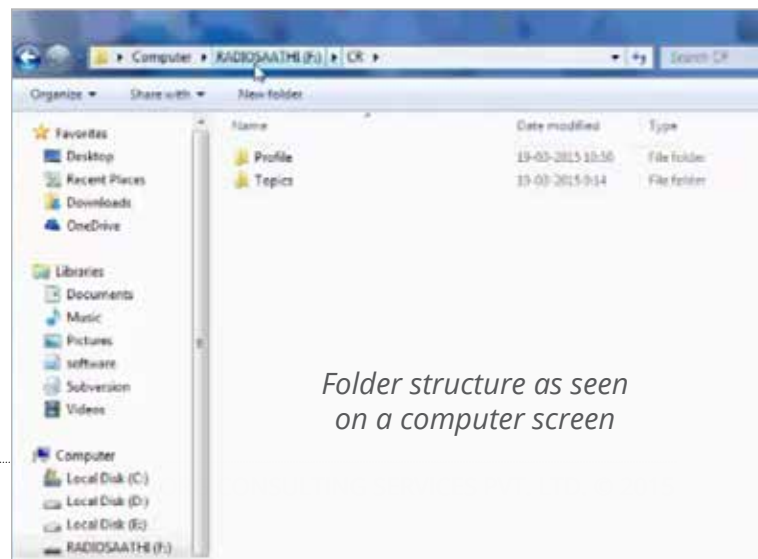
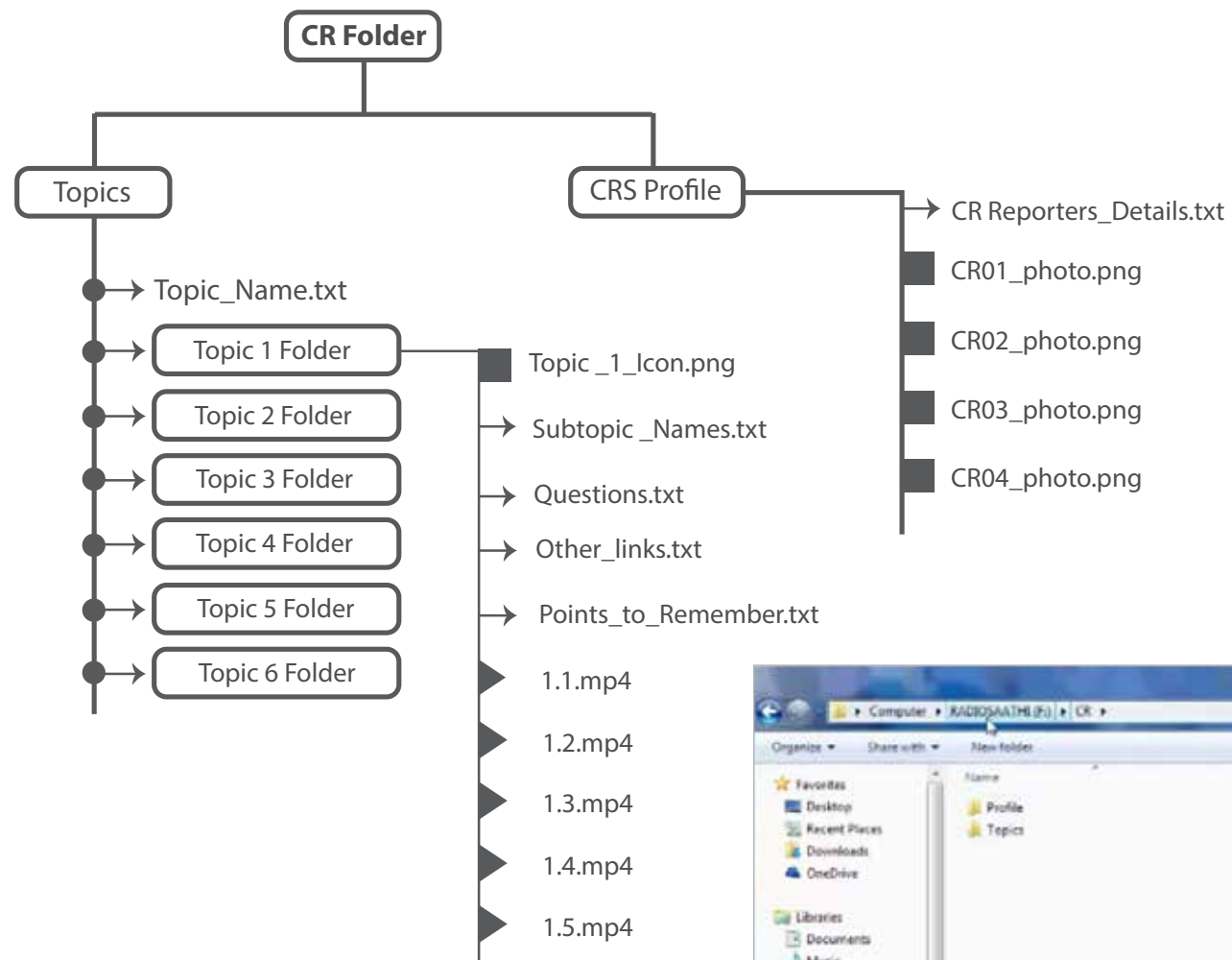




# CONTENT DISTRIBUTION through micro-SD card

We pre-ordered a few micro-sd cards to be distributed to the partnering CR-stations and also the other stakeholders; while also preparing a comprehensive chart and demo video of the folder structure and how it could easily be modified by the CRS members.

## CR MOBILE APP FOLDER STRUCTURE



Folder structure as seen on a computer screen



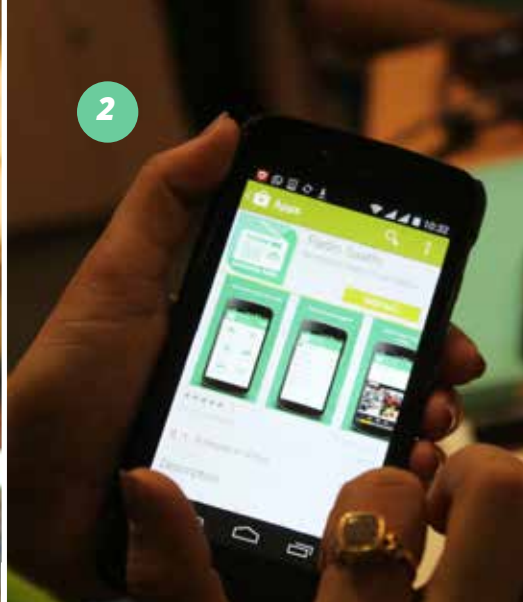
Packaging for Micro-SD cards

Taking the distribution process a little further, we even designed a special packaging for the micro-SD card making sure it had the content folders and also the mobile app apk file. On it we provided a link to the Radio Saathi web-page where people could get more information about the project and even send in their queries. Although the content was available for free download and usage under Creative Commons (CC-SA), we also gave an option for people to write to us, and we could mail them the sd-card.





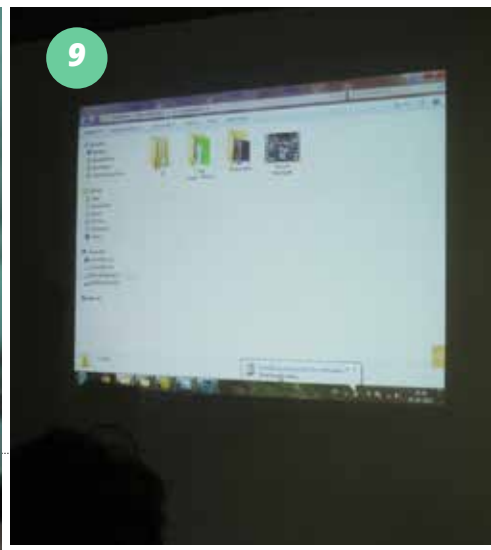
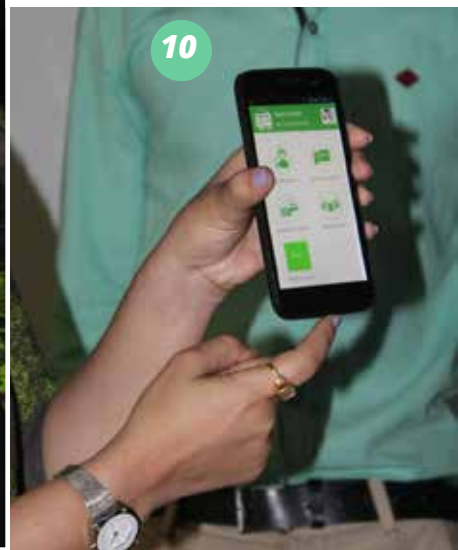
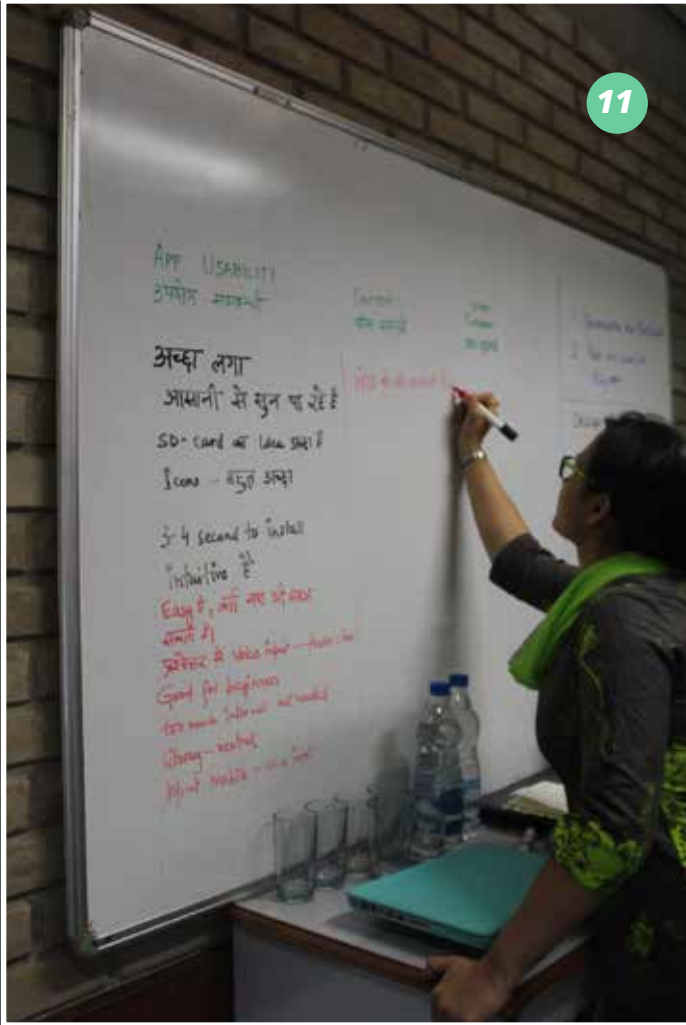
Clockwise from left: 1. Users downloading the app from Play Store, 2. User installing the app on phone, 3. Presenting sd-cards to the users, 4 & 5. User watching the videos on their mobiles, 6. User rating the app on play store, 7, 8 & 9.. CR participants learning how to edit content within the sd-card by connecting their mobiles to a computer, 10. Changes being reflected on the App home-screen, 11. Gathering feedback on the App.



# APPLICATION USABILITY & feedback workshop

As a round-up to our entire project, we organized an application usability & feedback workshop with the 5 partnering CR stations and even requested them to bring in the modules as promised in the previous workshop. Our main agenda was that if even one of them created the videos to be added as an extra module, then it would be a huge encouragement to others to add/modify the app to suit their CRS-specific needs. To our good fortune, Voice of Azamgarh and Radio Solan participants got the desired videos/modules that they wanted to add to the app content. In this workshop first we made them download the app for free from Google Play store, and handed the content through the micro-SD card, which they

could completely customize to suit the needs of their station then and there. We gave them a live demo as to how they could change the CR station logo and profile of members and also check their individual progress within the app. Then we had a feedback session primarily about the usability of the app and people had valid suggestions which are completely possible to implement at the CRS level given the open-source nature of the application. The general feedback was very positive and the reporters were overwhelmed that they themselves were able to make changes on the computer and see them directly reflect in the application without any bit of coding or programming.





## CONCLUDING REMARKS & FUTURE PROSPECTS

As team MixORG we would like to share our experiences from the ground visits and meeting CR sector experts and practitioners. The remarks are covering the gaps we could observe and technical solutions that we anticipate that can fill the gap in near future.

One big gap we see for the CR stations is having access to quality and quantity of advertisers. This directly affects their livelihood and we believe that any intervention in aggregation of advertisement through technology can empower CR stations to do their work better and also pay their staff. As most of the CR stations are in remote areas and working with marginalized communities with very low budget they do not have time and resources like a professional media outfit to identify and follow up the advertisers from the marketplace.

The other gap is also complementary to the first gap which is of monitoring CR stations. Currently, the donors/funders of many of the CR stations have no transparent mechanism to monitor their CR stations for actual airing of the program. We anticipate that any such centralized intervention will improve the quality of programming at the CR stations and also instill confidence in the stakeholders who are working in the CR space.

Translation work & Documentation in Hindi

## REFERENCES & Acknowledgements

1. *The Future of Community Radio in India: Some Observations* - by Shalini Raghaviah & Binod C. Agrawal/ May 2010
2. *Community Radio in India: Step by Step. A Resource Guide for Community Radio.* Edited by Bandana Mukhopadhyay. New Delhi: UNDP India - VOICES-UNDP 2004
3. *Other Voices: The Struggle for Community Radio in India.* New Delhi: Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd. - Pavarala, Vinod and Malik, Kanchan K. 2007

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- Bijoy Patra, Director, OneWorld South Asia
- Ankuran Dutta, CEMCA
- Ravina Aggarwal, Ford Foundation
- N Ramakrishnan, IdeoSync
- Arti Jaiman, Station Director, Gurgaon Ki Awaaz, CR Station
- Rakesh Kumar, Station Manager, Gurgaon Ki Awaaz, CR Station
- Pooja Murada, Alfaz-e-Mewat, Centre for Innovations in Public Systems
- Indira Mansingh, Development Alternatives
- Soumya Jha, Apna Radio, IIMC
- Naheda Shaikh, Station Manager, Radio Bundelkhand
- Manish Samadhiya, CR Reporter, Radio Bundelkhand
- Gauri, Ekta, Kamal, Ranjeet, Kaushalya - Radio Bundelkhand
- Dr. Brijendra Panwar, Hamara MSPICM, Radio Solan, Himanchal Pradesh
- Saloni Gautam, Hamara MSPICM, Radio Solan, Himanchal Pradesh
- Radha Shukla, Waqt Ki Awaaz, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh
- Harindra, Waqt Ki Awaaz, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh
- Seema Bharti, Voice of Azamgarh, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh
- NoratMal, Tilonia Radio, Tilonia, Rajasthan
- Jitender Sharma, Kissanvani, Sironj, Madhya Pradesh
- Danish Parvez, MixORG
- Alpesh Upadhyaya, MixORG
- Shyam Kishor, MixORG





This document is a record of the research and process for the development of the **Radio Saathi App**.

Content for the app is available through a micro-SD card and is licensed under Creative Commons (CC-SA).

For more information on this project, further queries, or ordering this sd-card please visit: <https://www.mixorg.com/radio-saathi/> or write to : [info@mixorg.com](mailto:info@mixorg.com)