

Khoun Community Radio for Development

Bringing local news to local people in Xieng Khouang

Description

This project supported the establishment of the first community radio station of the Lao PDR in Khoun District, Xieng Khouang Province, one of the poorest districts in Laos. Khoun Radio broadcasts development and entertainment programmes in the three local languages, produced, edited and presented by volunteers from all sections of the Khoun District community. The project is implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC), which plans to introduce community radios in all of the 47 poorest districts of the country.

By providing a forum for the community to discuss issues of local interest, the radio aims to increase the voice of local people and in turn, improve access to information for the wider community. These issues include information about markets and prices, job opportunities, UXO, agriculture, health, education and law. By empowering local people to have a voice, and to participate in their own development, Khoun Radio has piloted an innovative approach to grassroots development in Laos.

A recent impact assessment has shown that Khoun Radio has brought concrete benefits to the people of Khoun District – including an increase in vaccination rates and medically-attended births after radio shows discussing these issues.

Main Objectives and Activities in 2009

The project's emphasis is currently on sustainability. This includes developing a strategy for Khoun Radio, re-organizing the station management team, and updating and implementing the strategic plan, including working with more partners.

Sustainability also includes working on programme quality through coaching and training of volunteer broadcasters and village correspondents, to include more voices from communities. Volunteers are being trained in interview skills, news writing, documentary making, panel discussions and drama production to broaden the coverage of topics relevant to the community's development needs and interests. In addition to journalistic skills, ongoing coaching and training on usage and maintenance of sound equipment and software has been provided.

In 2009, further efforts will be made to share the experience of the pilot community radio with senior officials and development partners, and to strengthen a technical cooperation with other radio initiatives in Lao PDR and the region. With the results from the 'Communication for Empowerment' study and other analysis of this successful pilot, a second phase will be formulated which will concentrate on assisting the Government of Lao PDR to introduce community radios in other poor districts of the Lao PDR.

Agreement signed with Government

<http://www.undplao.org/whatwedo/programmesdemgov.php#khoun>
(available in Lao and English, send e-mail to: khounradio@gmail.com)

Key Results, Reports and Publications to date

Khoun Radio Support Project has been highly successful in its first phase:

- Fully functioning radio station, reaching large parts of the population in Khoun District (and beyond)
- Committed and responsible station board and volunteer broadcasters
- Daily broadcasts, 7 ½ hours, in Lao Loum, Hmong and Khmu

Duration

Ongoing: 2006 - 2009 (4 years)

Location

Xieng Khouang Province, Khoun District

Budget

Total budget: USD 417,499.00

2009 budget: USD 147,000.00

Partners

Implementing Partner: Department of Information and Culture, Xiengkhouang Province

Responsible Parties: Department of Information and Culture, Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC), UNESCO

Other Partners: UNDP

Contributing donor(s)

UNDP DGTTF USD 120,000.00

UNDP core: USD 297,499.00

Delivery

Expenditure from project start date till end of last fiscal year: (current year not included)

USD 339,499

Funding Shortfall

None

- Received over 7266 phone calls and 3430 letters from communities in first year of operations
- Volunteers trained in computer and broadcasting skills including paneling, recording, audio-editing, media law and editing, interviewing skills, panel discussions and news/script-writing
- The strategic plan, including sustainability strategy, revised and utilized
- Outreach activities regularly organized to promote Khoun Radio and increase contribution/participation from communities
- Provincial Community Radio Workshop held to promote community radio in Lao PDR
- 'Review and Impact Assessment of Khoun Radio' and 'Communication for Empowerment' study conducted
- A dormitory built for volunteers when working for the station
- Developed user guides on how to establish community radio in Lao PDR
- Developed user manuals on how to use the various sound equipment and software used by the station

Evaluations

- 2007: <http://www.undplao.org/whatwedo/Projectdocs/Khoun%20Radio%20evaluation%20report%2007.pdf>
- 2009: Review and Impact Assessment of Khoun Radio (send e-mail to: khounradio@gmail.com)

Publications and media reports:

- Khoun Community Radio blog <http://khouncommunityradio-xiengkhouang.blogspot.com/>
- Laos' first community radio station goes to air
<http://www.undplao.org/newsroom/2007/Khoun%20Radio%20Launch.php>
- Surfing the Waves: Lao's First Community Radio Seminar
<http://www.undplao.org/newsroom/2007/Khoun%20Radio%20Conference.php>
- Pioneering Community-run Radio in Laos: The Khoun Community Radio Station by Birgitte Jallof with support by Laurence Mach
<http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/photogallery.php?id=363>
- Guide to establishing community radios in Lao PDR (send e-mail to: khounradio@gmail.com)

Thematic Area

Corporate Thematic Area: Democratic Governance

UNDAF Outcome: Outcome 3.1: Greater individual and community participation in, and contribution to, public policy, local development and nation building

Millennium Development Goal

Goal 1-7: through improved governance and multidirectional information flow about policy and development issues between and within local communities and government

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women (and ethnic minorities)

Contact

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