

STARTING A LOCAL RADIO STATION



A MANUAL FOR

AFGHANISTAN



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JULY 2011

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to “Starting a Local Radio Station: A Manual for Afghanistan”. Each year, more and more Afghans enjoy the benefits of independent radio stations in their communities. Since 2001, the establishment and growth of local, independent media across Afghanistan has been remarkable; this achievement is part of the growth of the whole media sector that also includes commercial media, government media and community media.

In this manual we use the word ‘independent’ to describe media that:

- 1) give communities the information they need to be informed and to make decisions about issues that affect them,
- and,
- 2) make editorial decisions to choose and cover stories without allowing the radio station owners, powerful people or anyone else to influence those decisions.

This definition comes from the idea of the media as the Fourth Estate, whereby financial and editorial independence allows the media to balance the other three estates or branches of power—the legislative (parliamentarian), executive (all government officials including security officials), and judicial (judges). Local independent media give citizens opportunities to learn about what is happening in their communities, to discuss issues and to let their views be known to their governments, civil society organizations and the international community. Worldwide, there is recognition that local independent media can help communities make progress in education and health, and toward economic stability and peace.

By local media we usually mean smaller media organizations that have one radio station that serves a city or town and areas nearby. Some smaller media organizations have grown into larger organizations that serve more than one place (sometimes with repeater transmitters and sometimes by adding new stations). This manual may be helpful for new and smaller organizations as well as those that are expanding or have expanded already. In this manual we discuss how local independent media are more successful when they have the support of their communities and when they meet the needs of those communities. Local independent media speak with a truly local voice when they are open to participation from all community members, regardless of ethnicity, tribal background, social status, gender and age. In some cases the broadcast license for the radio station may be held by a community organization and in other cases the license may be held by an individual. In both instances, stations can speak with a local voice and bring their communities together through practical means, and through policies and programming. Once an independent radio station establishes itself as part of a community, it becomes part of that community’s culture. How to achieve all of this differs from community to community and radio station to radio station, but this manual describes the main elements of that process simply and precisely.

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual describes the process for starting a local radio station—the organization of community support and planning, equipment needs, programming strategies, business growth and sustainability and journalistic ethics and standards. This manual does not insist that you follow a set of rules to start and operate a station. But it does offer important guidelines about what things you might think about, why they are important and how you can learn from the experiences of other communities in other parts of Afghanistan and the world. There's information in this manual for community supporters, station managers, reporters, technicians and other workers, and you can give copies of this manual to them.

You might choose to read every page of this manual, to become an expert on its contents, guidelines and tips. OR, you may consult this manual from time to time when necessary. Whatever your style, and no matter where you live in Afghanistan, this manual can guide you through the basic steps of creating and maintaining a radio station that will become part of your community's culture. Of course, you and your community are unique, and your station will be new and unique. Best wishes for success on your journey.

This manual is divided into seven sections:

Section one covers the first steps for establishing a radio station, such as developing the station's mission, creating an organizational structure, the roles and responsibilities of people essential to operating a station, and getting your broadcasting and frequency licenses.

Section two is a guide for choosing the location of your station, designing a studio and selecting equipment.

Section three offers tips on the recruitment and placement of staff and volunteers, how to discuss work performance and negotiate conflicts among workers.

Section four focuses entirely on understanding community radio—what it is, its advantages for the community and how it can be organized.

Section five describes how to create interesting and informative radio programs. This section includes a discussion of radio as a medium, programming ideas, and tips on how to decide whether your programs meet the needs of your community.

Section six explains good financial management, gives guidelines for creating a business plan, offers marketing tips, and templates that can be used for financial reporting.

Section seven has two parts. The first part outlines crucial topics in ethics, including principles for ethical programming and conduct. The second part gives important information on Afghanistan's Mass Media Law.



SECTION ONE: GETTING STARTED

Different radio stations have different purposes or reasons for existing, and it's important to remember the purpose of your station when you think about management, programming and other issues.

There are three different types of radio stations and they all have different interests.

State/Government Radio Stations are funded, operated or owned by the government. In some cases government radio exists to represent the views of the government and in other cases government radio operates as an independent or “public service”.

Commercial Radio Stations are privately owned and operated for profit by individuals or commercial groups. Most independent radio in Afghanistan fits into this category.

Community Radio Stations are non-profit broadcasting service stations owned and operated by community organizations or members of communities (see Section 4).

In Afghanistan we have many government and commercial radio stations and a small but growing number of community radio stations.

In this section we'll review how to:

- Create a mission statement
- Develop a station policy and organize your staff
- Apply for a license

CREATING YOUR MISSION STATEMENT

Radio stations have what is called a mission statement—a few sentences that describe why a station exists and what it aims to achieve. A good mission statement guides decisions about radio station activities, helps a community understand the station and makes it easier for people to participate.

To create your mission statement, think about your community. How will the radio station be meaningful to the community? Many stations try to meet the needs of the whole community. Others focus on a part or parts of the community; e.g., women.

Example: Creating a Mission Statement for Radio Our Town.

Imagine that a group in a town in southern Afghanistan wants to create a mission for its new station, Radio Our Town.

Step 1: List Community Challenges

The town has the following challenges:

AREA/SECTOR	SPECIFIC CHALLENGES
Health	Maternal deaths are frequent in our town. We need information on how these deaths can be prevented.
Culture	Local musicians don't get local or national recognition and our folk music is disappearing from the arts and culture scene. All the music we hear is imported from Pakistan. We want more support for our local culture.
Agriculture	We need information on modern agricultural practices and on prices for crops at different markets to improve our productivity and income.

List your own community's challenges in a chart like this one. Try to use simple and direct statements that can be understood by every member of the community.

Step 2: Convert Community Challenges into Radio Station Goals

The station's advisory board or manager converts each challenge from Step 1 into a statement about what the station intends to do to help the community meet that challenge. These are the goals for Radio Our Town:

- I. To improve the lives of our community members by broadcasting accurate information about health services and illness prevention to reduce maternal mortality rates.
- II. To encourage local economic prosperity by providing information on modern agricultural practices and local market prices.
- III. To support and preserve local culture through relationships with local musicians and offering radio airtime for their talents and songs.

Convert your own community's challenges into goals for your radio station.

Step 3: Discuss and Revise Goals with Community

Radio Our Town's advisory board and manager discuss the station's goals in meetings with individuals and groups from different parts of the community who help to finalize the radio station's mission. This important step assures your station that its mission will truly represent the needs of its community, and it prepares the community for future participation in programming.

Step 4: Combine Goals in Mission Statement

Radio Our Town combines its revised goals in a mission statement:

Radio Our Town is a non-profit, community-based and volunteer-operated radio station. We aim to educate, inform and entertain through programming that reflects the diversity of our local community. We aim to create programming, especially in the areas of health and agriculture, for a more informed public. We want to create a space for local musicians underrepresented in other media.

When your own mission statement is ready, be sure to make it available to the community.

WRITING YOUR STATION POLICY GUIDE

A policy guide is one of the most important documents for a radio station. This set of policies explains what the station will or will not do, and includes policies for all major departments of the station. Here is a sample outline for a policy guide (each topic is explained in other sections of this manual).

I. Management

- a. Duties and responsibilities of the advisory board
- b. Duties and responsibilities of management staff
- c. Opportunities for staff and community members to help make decisions

II. Administration and Finance

- a. Personnel policies, including employee and volunteer recruitment, rights and responsibilities, and rules for ending staff contracts
- b. Financial record-keeping guidelines, including procedures for handling money and buying things for the station
- c. Inventory procedures, including how to list the station's equipment
- d. Policies about the kinds of advertising and business agreements your station will use

III. Programming

- a. Code of ethics for radio station reporters
- b. Guidelines for how the station will decide what programs to offer
- c. How to receive and respond to complaints from the community

IV. Business Development

- a. Policies about the kinds of advertising and business agreements your station will use

(See sample policy guide, page 11)

SAMPLE POLICY GUIDE: RADIO OUR TOWN

Radio Our Town is committed to being an independent community radio station where community members can hear their own voices, and where their values, their interests and the issues important to them come to life.

Our most important values are 1) excellence in journalism and 2) accessibility to our community. Community members contribute talents and ideas to the station's programming and development. Ethnic diversity and gender balance are central to our mission and vision.

Management

An advisory board of seven community members administers our station. The advisory board includes three officers (a chairperson, secretary, and treasurer) and four other members. Board members are elected at our Annual General Meeting; all members of the community are invited to attend this meeting. The advisory board decides how our station will raise money and develop business relationships, establishes recruitment and management policies, creates guidelines for program production and review, and prepares our annual financial statement.

Administration and Finance

Radio Our Town's advisory board will establish a fair and transparent process for recruiting paid and volunteer workers, and for hiring and job placement. Recruitment procedures will aim to eliminate any physical, cultural and social workplace characteristics that might exclude minorities and women. Permanent staff positions will be advertised widely. The selection of radio station staff will involve the advisory board, the station manager, and the appropriate department head. Selection will not be based on personal relationships or favoritism.

Annual progress reports and financial reports will be presented at the Annual General Meeting and will be available to the community on request.

Radio Our Town is committed to producing programs:

- a) that protect and strengthen the cultural and social values of our community
- b) that encourage Afghan expression by providing a mix of content that reflects local opinions, ideas and values
- c) that include entertainment for women and children and men of all ages
- d) that provide accurate, impartial and balanced information and analysis about our town, Afghanistan and other countries
- e) that are educational and responsive to the needs of our community
- f) that draw on local, regional, national and (when possible) international sources

Business Development

Radio Our Town will avoid programs and content that give publicity to commercial entities by subverting legitimate program material in favor of commercial interests.

Funds from donors who contribute to equipment purchases and program production will be accepted only with the approval of the advisory board and station manager.

CREATING AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organizational structure of a radio station shows how groups and individuals inside and outside the station interconnect and rely upon one another, including relationships among managers and departments. The size of a radio station affects its organizational structure. However, some job roles are necessary and remain the same, whether the station is small, medium or large. All radio stations, for example, need someone to act as a station manager, a program director, a business manager and an engineer/technical manager.

Sample guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of essential staff in your station:

Station Manager

- Builds community support for the station through locally meaningful programming that is well produced and based on principles of impartiality, independence, balance and fairness.
- Creates station policies in collaboration with an advisory board or the community (in the case of community radio stations) and ensures that policies are followed.
- Works with other media groups to advance and protect the rights of journalists and independent media in Afghanistan.
- Maintains good communications within the station, and between the station and its community.
- Hires staff with strong professional experience, ambition, honesty, enthusiasm, discipline and creativity. Does not hire staff based on personal relationships or for personal benefit. Manages staff fairly and honestly. Encourages all staff and volunteers to respect one another.
- Builds financial stability of the station through business development and good financial management.
- Ensures that the station follows relevant laws and regulations.

Program Director

- Develops programming formats.
- Hires and manages program staff and volunteers.
- Creates and manages staff and volunteer work schedules.
- Monitors trends that affect programming.
- Maintains organized files of program recordings and a music library.

Business Development/Marketing Manager

- Develops and follows a business plan for the station.
- Generates station income by developing rate cards and strategies to sell airtime for advertising, and public service announcements (PSAs). See rate card example below.
- Searches for opportunities for financial support, and responds to donors.
- Ensures that the station meets its obligations to financial supporters, manages business relationships to encourage repeat business, and prepares reports.

SAMPLE RATE CARD

Radio Our Town

LENGTH OF CONTRACT	FIRST MINUTE	ADDITIONAL MINUTES
1 day to 7 days	8.33 AFS / sec	7.50 AFS / sec
8 to 14 days	7.50 AFS / sec	6.66 AFS / sec
15 to 30 days	6.66 AFS / sec	5.83 AFS / sec
31 days & above	5.83 AFS / sec	5.00 AFS/ sec

**** Advertising Rate:** 50 % discount on card rates for 15 – 30 seconds.

Production Services:

Production cost for **15 to 30 minutes** is **15,000 AFS**, which includes script writing, actors, studio use, sound recording and editing.

Radio Our Town can write, produce and edit commercial advertising spots, public service announcements and short radio dramas.

To find out more, please contact:

Radio Our Town

Mr. Najib Najibi, Business Development Manager

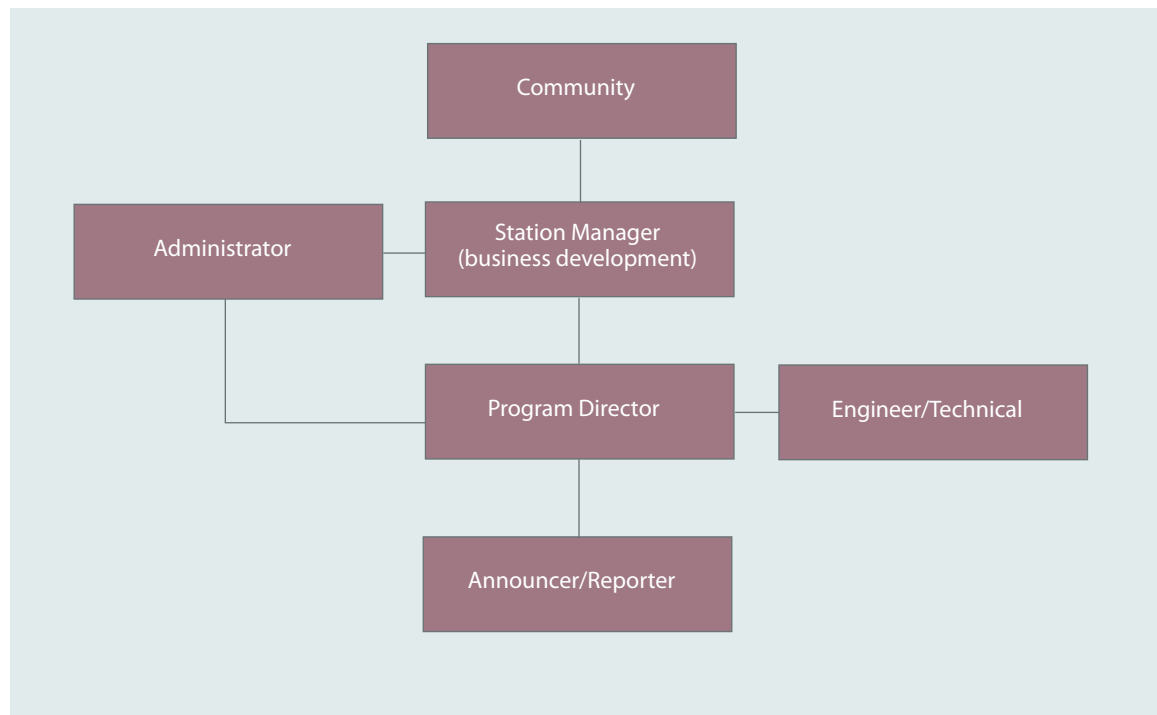
+93 (0) 79 123 4567

Engineer or Technical Manager

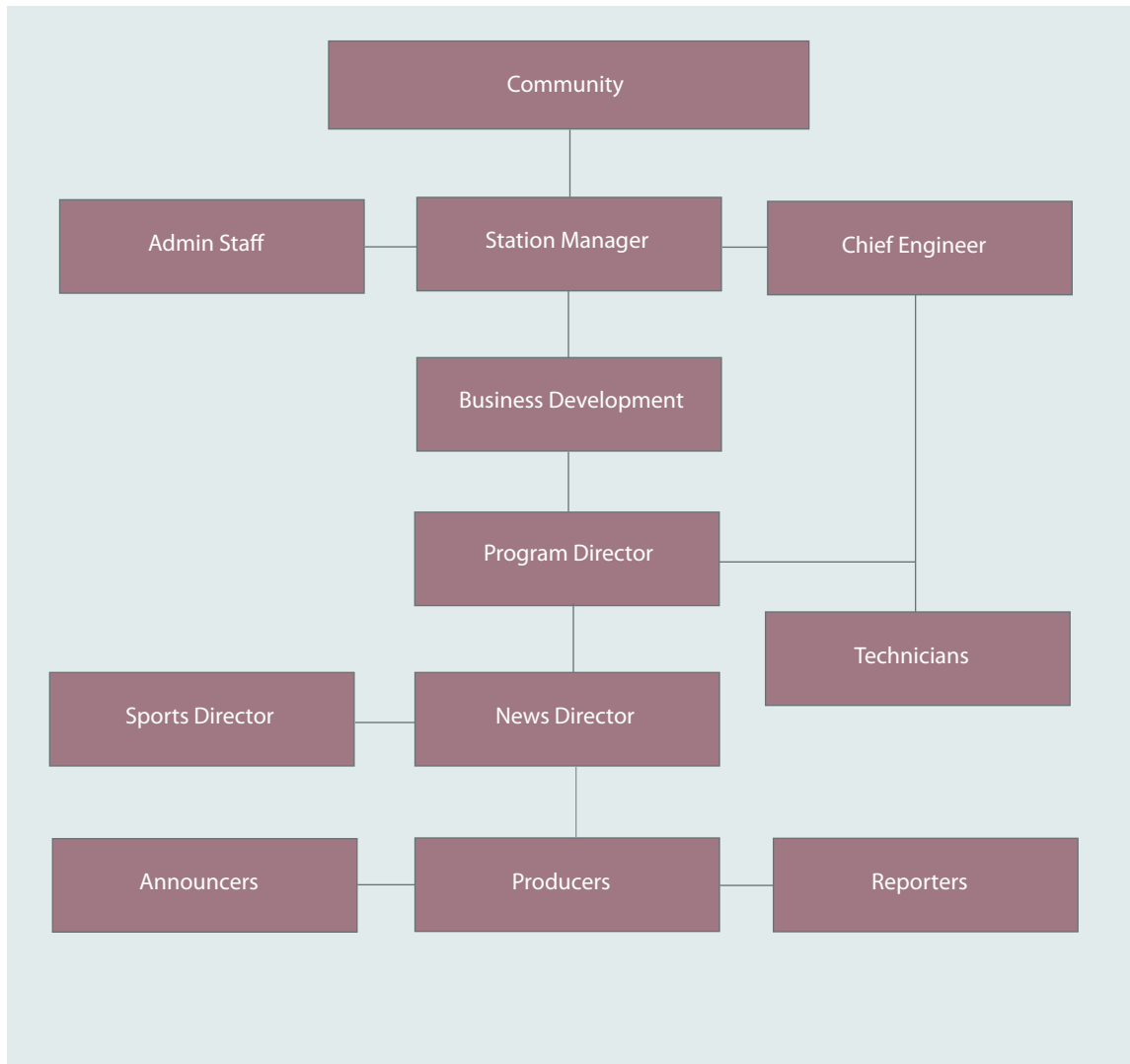
- Purchases, repairs, and maintains equipment.
- Monitors the station's signal and broadcasting quality.
- Provides technical training for staff and volunteers who operate consoles, use studios and recording equipment.
- Supports the programming department's technical needs such as adapting studios for different programs or creating remote recording/broadcast operations.
- Learns about new technologies (such as Short Message Service—SMS and Interactive Voice Response—IVR) that the station can use to improve programming.

Here are two examples of an organizational structure; the first is for a small radio station, the second for a larger station.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF A SMALL RADIO STATION



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF A LARGER RADIO STATION

**APPLYING FOR YOUR LICENSE**

Before a radio station can start broadcasting in Afghanistan, it must have:

- 1) a *license* to broadcast
- 2) a *frequency* license for its broadcast signal

When you apply for a license, you are asking the government for permission to broadcast. The amount of time it takes to get a license depends on many things, including your ability to submit the documents requested in the application and your ability to pay the frequency license fee.

Here are the current and future procedures for getting a broadcast and frequency license in Afghanistan. Please remember that procedures may change, and that *specific steps or policies* listed in procedures may

also change. When you are ready to apply for your station's license, *it is important to ask for information on the most recent procedures*. And, if a community group (rather than an individual) plans to apply for a license, the group must be registered with the Ministry of Justice *before* submitting a license application.

CURRENT LICENSING PROCEDURE

1. Letter of Application

The applicant (individual or community group) submits a letter to the General Director of the Afghanistan National Independent Radio and Television Commission of the Ministry of Information and Culture.

The letter must include:

- Proposed name of the station
- Location of the station
- Station logo
- Name of senior programs editor
- Organizational Chart
- List of station equipment
- Amount of funding received and names of funding organizations
- Amount of money to be invested (commercial station only)
- Cost of operations
- Letter of reference from existing media outlets and senior editors

2. Application Review

The Commission of the Ministry of Information and Culture reviews and signs the Letter of Application. The Commission returns the signed letter to the applicant.

- a. Applicant takes the signed letter to the Licensing Office of the Planning and International Relations Directorate of Radio Television Afghanistan along with *two new required documents*:
 - i. Proof of applicant's Afghan citizenship (national ID card)
 - ii. An educational certificate from a recognized journalism faculty OR proof of at least three years of work experience in media.
3. The licensing office takes the documents to an Authorization Commission of the Afghanistan National Independent Radio and Television Commission which reviews the applicant's qualifications and requests *two new required documents*:
 - a. The technical design: a detailed list of the specific equipment (studio production, transmitter, antenna, and etc.) the station will use
 - b. A chart of the organizational structure that includes staff positions
4. The Afghanistan Telecom Regulatory Authority (ATRA) must approve the technical design and organizational structure before assigning the frequency and calculating a fee based on the frequency specifications.

5. Applicant pays the frequency fee to ATRA and receives a receipt as proof of payment.
6. The applicant takes the proof of payment receipt to the Radio Monitoring Directorate of the Ministry of Telecommunications. The directorate then writes an approval letter and sends it with the frequency license and the original application (with all of its required documents) to the Licensing office of the Afghanistan National Independent Radio and Television Commission for a broadcast license.
7. The Licensing office of the Afghanistan National Independent Radio and Television Commission requests a credit report on the applicant from the Minister of Finance, and a criminal record report from the National Directorate of Security. [Note: If the applicant wants a commercial license s/he must also get an official letter from the Afghan Investment Support Agency.]
8. Once the applicant has been cleared, the Licensing Office of the Afghanistan National Independent Radio and Television Commission presents a single page broadcast license to the applicant.

Important: The license can be revoked if the registered person or organization does not begin activities within nine months from the registration date.

FUTURE LICENSING PROCEDURE

This procedure is different from the Current Licensing Procedure above. The procedure below will come into effect only after Afghanistan forms a new Mass Media Commission (as specified in the country's Mass Media Law of 2009). For more information on the Mass Media Commission please see Section 7 of this manual.

1. Letter of Application

The applicant (individual or community group) submits a letter to the Minister of Information and Culture for a broadcast license.

The letter must include:

- Name of owner
 - Mission statement
 - Location of station
 - Name of station
 - Objectives and aims of station
 - Station logo and stamp
 - Funding source and amount of capital
 - Type and number of technical equipment
2. The Minister refers the applicant to the Mass Media Commission (MMC).
 3. The Mass Media Commission requests clearance from the following:
 - a. Minister of Finance
 - b. Ministry of Justice
 - c. National Directorate of Security
 - d. ISA (the government agency that registers commercial companies)

4. The Mass Media Commission recommends or does not recommend the application to the Minister of Information and Culture for his approval depending on information from the offices listed in #3 above.
5. If the Minister approves the application, it is referred to the Afghan Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (ATRA) for a frequency allocation and license.
6. If the frequency is available, the applicant completes a frequency application and pays a fee. ATRA then recommends the frequency license for final approval by the Minister of Communications and Information Technology.

Important: The license can be revoked if the registered person or organization does not begin activities within two years from the registration date.



SECTION TWO: BASIC TECHNICAL TOPICS

Compared to other communication technologies like television, radio infrastructure, distribution and operating costs are low. Radio station designs can range from simple to complex. The simplest technical design would include a power source, a low-power transmitter connected to an antenna, a tape recorder and a microphone. Of course, this type of arrangement would limit your program formats, and mixing of voices, music and sound. For a more complex arrangement you could add a mixer, microphones, a CD player, computers and a telephone. Your costs relate directly to your design and the types of equipment you choose to install.

This section discusses how to:

- Create your studio
- Select and position your transmitter, antenna and mast
- Select studio equipment
- Organize a field recording kit

CREATING YOUR STUDIO

When you create your studio, your decisions about where it will be, how large it will be, and how it will be designed will affect your programming options and whether community members are able to participate.

Choose a location for your studio that is:

- *Easy to find* and to get to for program guests, community members and reporters.
- *Quiet*. A building near a crowded market would be too noisy.
- *Safe* for children and women.
- *Accessible* to people with physical disabilities.

Choose studio space in a building that is:

- *Built of high-density materials* that prevent outside noise from coming into the studio. A cement frame building is best.
- *Free of vibrations*. For example, basements can be good places for studios because they are quiet, but street-level vibrations caused by an electrical generator or automobile traffic next to the walls or windows can interfere with recordings.
- *Well-ventilated* for workers and equipment. Studios that are too hot or humid can shorten the life of your equipment and are uncomfortable for staff. An air conditioner or fan may be used to reduce humidity.
- *The right size to fit your design*. A 12 x 12 foot (4 meter x 4 meter) room is large enough for a single room studio (see below).
- *Affordable and without conflicts of interest*. Rent should be as low as possible, but be careful. Avoid rent agreements in buildings associated with political parties or government officials. A private property rental is best, but do not make any agreements with the owner that could interfere with the integrity and independence of your station's journalism and programs.

Design your studio

There are many questions to think about when designing your studio. For example, what kinds of programs will you produce? What soundproofing techniques will you need? How much studio space might you have, and how will you divide it? How much money can your station spend on equipment?

Here is a list of the basic parts of a radio studio. The simplest and least costly choice, a single studio room, is listed first. Other spaces, for example, a sound booth and a production studio, can be added to your design to improve production quality and add flexibility to your station's programming.

- **A Single Studio Room or Broadcast Studio** means that all recording, interviewing and broadcasting happens in one room.
- **A Sound Booth** is a separate room the size of a large closet just big enough for a person to sit inside and record voice tracks. It is outside the room where broadcasting happens, but in a quiet area for recording. A sound booth could be added to a single studio room design.

- **A Control Room** makes your studio more flexible by allowing more things to happen at the same time. A control room eliminates noise in the studio during recording and broadcast. The control room and the recording studio are next to each other, separated by a wall with a soundproof double-glass window. In the control room, a producer or technician operates the recording equipment. The window allows the control room producer and the presenter in the recording studio to communicate with one another using hand signals during a live broadcast or recording.



Control room at Radio Zohra, Kunduz

- **A Production Studio** is a room where radio producers and reporters can edit programs, research topics, write scripts and have editorial meetings. The production studio does not need soundproofing. It is best to place a sound booth close to the production studio for voice track recordings.

Studio equipment can be costly and difficult to repair and replace. Creating a no eating, no drinking (tea included) and no smoking policy is the best way to protect equipment and introduce professional conduct.

Soundproofing and Sound Treatment. There are many ways to soundproof and sound-treat studios. You can find out what kinds of low-cost materials are available in your area.

Soundproofing stops the noise outside from seeping into a studio. For soundproofing, thick walls are a good start. A basement avoids a lot of street noise (see previous discussion on choosing a studio location). It is common to double-layer the doors, windows and walls of a studio room.

Sound treatment controls the sound inside a studio. If you go into a small room like a bathroom, you'll notice that your voice echoes off the walls. In a studio, you can apply materials to prevent that echo, for example:

- Two-inch thick foam, covered with thick fabric such as velvet, on walls, including the ceiling
- Two layers of thick curtains on walls
- Thick carpets on floors

Be careful not to cover all walls with sound treatment material—that will sound unnatural. It's best to check some existing studios to see what they did.

On-Air Lights (usually red) can be switched on as a warning when live broadcasts or recordings are happening. Two lights are necessary, one inside and one outside the broadcasting studio, usually on the wall above or at the side of the door. These lights let people inside the studio know when they're on air, and let people outside the studio know that they should not interrupt broadcasts. These lights benefit radio station workers only if people remember to switch them off and on.

Power Supply

An adequate and reliable power supply is necessary to keep your studio operating during broadcasting and recording, and for protecting costly equipment from surge damage and failure. Your studio will have many wires. Once professional technicians have installed your studio, these wires should not be changed or moved. Here are a few tips for creating sufficient power supply:

- Install many high quality electrical sockets and switches throughout your station, especially in the recording studio and control room.
- Do not overload extension cords and electrical switches.
- Make sure wiring is distributed so that individual wires in certain places in the studio are not overloaded, depending on the power consumption of your equipment.
- **Three-phase wiring** is better than a single-phase connection because it allows you to divide electricity consumption into three phases. It can also protect you from power cuts by allowing you to route one phase to an alternate power supply.
- **Voltage regulators** maintain consistent electrical voltage levels. Regulators protect your equipment from damage caused by voltage surges and drops common to Afghanistan.
- **An uninterrupted power supply (UPS)** is a battery-powered device that provides five to 15 minutes of emergency power when there are voltage cuts or interruptions to your supply. This gives you enough time to switch to a generator or to save your work before your equipment shuts down completely.
- A **back-up power generator** may be a good investment. It will allow your equipment to operate during power cuts. However, a generator can be costly and create a lot of noise.
- A **solar power system** with batteries and an inverter can save your station a lot of money in the long-term. These systems need regular maintenance. Currently, they are expensive to purchase and install, but it may be wise to find out more as prices decline.

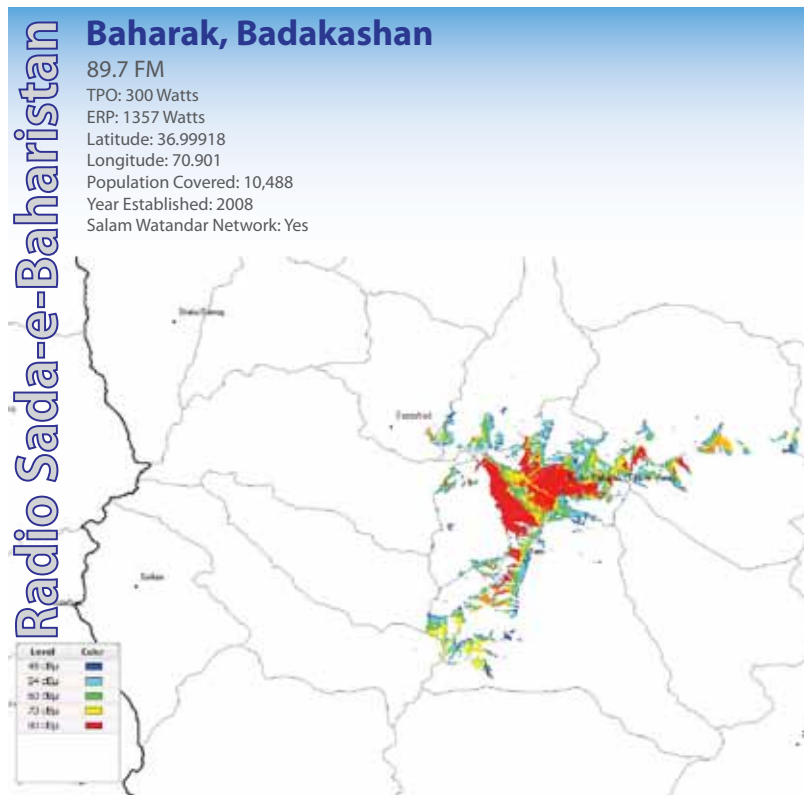


Radio Voice of Kishim, Badakhshan

TRANSMITTER, ANTENNA AND MAST

A transmission system for your radio station will include a transmitter, an antenna, and a mast. Choosing the right transmission system for your station can be complicated. Before buying a transmitter, it is a good idea to ask a qualified technician to survey your site to help you choose the right system. A technician can place your station's tower and transmitter in the best location to reach the most people, and set your transmitter to the station's exact frequency.

The **transmitter** produces radio frequency alternating current that carries an audio signal that is fed to the antenna. The strength of this radio signal gets weaker with distance. In Afghanistan, 300-watt FM transmitters are used for local radio stations; they typically transmit a radio signal a distance of 50 km in flat areas and shorter distances in mountainous areas. FM signals are *line-of-sight*, which means they travel until they reach an obstruction like a mountain or a tall building. Look at the signal coverage (in red) map above—you can see that the mountains stop the radio signal. Sometimes repeat transmitters are used to relay the signal to obstructed areas, but adding repeaters can cost a lot.



Please be careful not to exceed the transmitter power restrictions (maximum number of watts) listed on your station's license. A more powerful transmitter can send a signal further, but the increase is not very much. For example, a 600-watt transmitter does *not* send a signal twice as far as a 300-watt transmitter, and a 1200-watt transmitter may not always send a signal as far as a 600-watt transmitter. A more powerful transmitter will also cost more to buy and to operate. Transmitters are expensive in Afghanistan because they are imported from other countries.

The height of the **antenna** (*tower height*) and its *position* compared with the surrounding terrain are just as important as transmitter power. The antenna catches radio waves from the transmitter and turns them into a radio signal that it emits to its surroundings. *Omni-directional* antennas radiate signals in all directions. *Directional* antennas send signals only in one direction. The optimal location for the antenna is a point that overlooks the largest area of land. Antennas are securely fixed to a tall mast to increase their height. A mast is anchored by a firm foundation to prevent the antenna tower from falling. The antenna must also be grounded to prevent damage to the transmitter and studio equipment during lightening storms. In most cases, the antenna and mast are placed close to the actual radio station.

SELECTING STUDIO EQUIPMENT

There are many types of microphones; they each serve a different purpose and vary in cost. Microphones are often called mics (pronounced mikes). One way to classify microphones is by what's called directionality. This is a microphone's sensitivity to recording sound from different directions or angles. There are various direction patterns on a microphone, so directionality varies from one microphone to another. Here is a general outline of the differences and functions of microphones according to directionality.

1. **Omnidirectional** microphones are sensitive to sounds coming from all directions. They respond to all angles equally. That means they have 360-degree sensitivity. This type of microphone can be useful when you want to capture surrounding or ambient sounds. The balance between direct and ambient sound will depend on the distance of the microphone from the person being interviewed or your main source of sound. For example, when you are interviewing one child in a school field filled with other children, you will capture the voice of that one child clearly, but you will also capture background noise created by the other children. This type of microphone is good for gathering sound and doing interviews outside the studio.
2. **Unidirectional** microphones are more sensitive to sound that comes from one specific direction, and less sensitive to sounds from other directions. They are used to capture a crisp sound from one direction and are less likely to capture surrounding or ambient sounds. There are two types of unidirectional microphones:
 - i. **Cardioid Microphones** are mildly directional and favor sound coming from the direction that the microphone is pointing; they do not absorb sound coming from other sides. For example, Sennheiser 421 Dynamic Cardioid Microphones are used in many radio studios in Afghanistan.
 - ii. **Bidirectional Microphones** capture sounds from two opposite sides, at 0 degrees and 180 degrees. They can be used to record two sound sources. For example, if you only have one microphone, the bidirectional could be shared by two singers or by a radio show host and a guest during an interview, as long as the individuals are facing one another. Behringer B2Pro microphones are useful for this purpose (and they also allow omnidirectional settings).

3. **Condenser Microphones** allow you to switch between cardioid, unidirectional and omnidirectional formats. They are useful in field recording kits (see Field Recording Equipment later in this section.)

The number and type of microphones you have in your studio will depend on the kinds of programs you want to produce. For example, you will need more microphones if you want to have roundtable discussions or produce radio dramas with more than two actors. If you can afford only one microphone in your studio and you want to interview guests, a bidirectional microphone offers more recording options than a cardioid microphone. However, always try to have more than one microphone in your studio.



Bidirectional microphone in use, Radio Saday Jawan, Herat University, Herat

Headphones and speakers are used by producers, presenters and reporters to listen to recordings as they are made. One way to choose the highest quality headphones and speakers that your budget can afford is to listen to their sound. Better quality speakers emit less buzzing sound, and their output is much closer to the original recording quality. Good quality brands commonly used in Afghanistan include TAPCO, MR8 Mackie and Behringer. Your station probably will require more headphones than speakers.

Headphones are crucial because they isolate sound from the rest of the studio. If you use speakers to listen to what is being recorded in the studio, their sound may travel back into the microphone being used for recording, causing a howling noise commonly called *feedback*. If you plan to have a production studio separate from your recording studio, each editing station will need a set of headphones to reduce noise and distractions in the room and allow the producers to edit their programs more accurately.

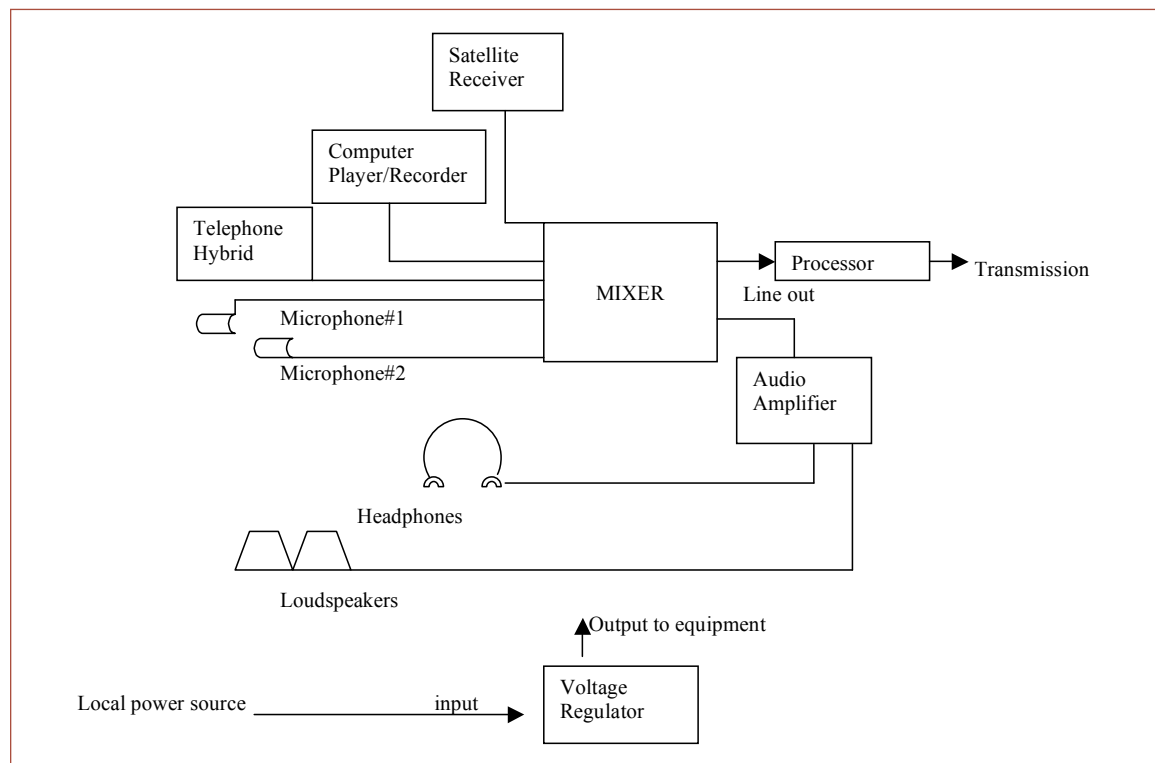
The **audio mixer** is a device that combines the sounds from the microphone, CD player, computer and voice recorders before they are sent to the transmitter or to a recording device or a computer. At first, it can be overwhelming to see all the switches and faders on an audio mixer, but when you understand the mixer's purpose, you may find that it's easy to use. A mixer allows you to have sound coming from two or more sources—such as two people speaking into different microphones during a roundtable discussion, or one person speaking into a microphone while music is playing at low volume on a computer. Each sound source is connected to a different channel on the mixer. This allows you to control each sound individually. All the channels come together in what's called the master channel, which is linked to the final output from the mixer. The mixer also allows you to listen to sound, and to check it before it is transmitted. Some mixers designed for recording music are inexpensive, but are not always a good choice. Many studios in Afghanistan use Mackie mixers. A **console** is a type of mixer designed for radio studios. Consoles cost more, but are simpler to use because they have fewer switches. A few Afghan radio stations use Arrakis radio consoles.

Telephone Hybrids let you air the voices of listeners who call the station during live programs. For example, if a radio presenter asks listeners a question and wants to start a discussion about an issue, a telephone hybrid will add whatever is said between the presenter and the caller to the mixer's output. A telephone hybrid allows your studio to connect with people in your community and to include their opinions or questions in your programs. *Single telephone hybrids* are easier to find and cost less than *multi-line hybrids*. A single hybrid is sufficient for a local radio station. If you cannot find a telephone hybrid where you live, an alternative is to connect a phone line to a speakerphone in the recording studio,

with a microphone close to the sound. However, this technique can produce unwanted noise and buzzing, which can reduce the quality of your recording drastically. A telephone **hybrid in your production studio** also allows you to pre-record telephone calls that can be aired later. This is useful when you want to gather responses from the community after a specific show or event.

Audio Amplifiers increase the volume from the various sources of sound in your studio. You can amplify the sound going into your headphones or the speakers in the studio.

The diagram below shows you how all the equipment in a studio links together.



Computers are useful tools for radio production; they are found in most studios in Afghanistan. The programs on your computer are called **software**. Each software program has its own distinct purpose, for example, to write documents, create spreadsheets, access the Internet or edit audio. Make sure that the software you buy for your computer is not a pirated or illegal copy. The **hardware** of the computer is the general name for everything else, like the wiring, the monitor, the keyboard and the drives.

In a radio studio you will use a computer to play sound such as recorded music or programs. In order for your computer to be able to play audio it needs to have a piece of hardware inside it called a **sound card** or **audio card**. If you plan to use your computer for simultaneous playback and recording inside your studio (playing music on a computer while recording a studio program on the same computer), you will need two sound cards. There are many types of sound cards. If you want to connect professional studio microphones to the computer, it's important to make sure the sound card you buy has the correct connectors. The Digigram Vx222e sound card provides good quality audio and is used often in radio studios in Afghanistan.

Audio editing software is used to record, add sound effects, manipulate levels of sound, edit audio from different sources and much more. In Afghanistan most production and broadcast studios use Adobe Audition or Cool Edit software. Both of these software programs display pictures of the sound waves as you edit, and both allow you to save your work in different audio formats including MP3, WAV and others.



Salam Watandar Studio, Kabul

Playout/playback software allows a radio presenter to find and play audio programs quickly from an on-air studio computer. Simple software programs like Windows Media Player can perform these functions. However, if you want to play audio and record other audio at the same time, your computer must have two soundcards. ZaraRadio is free playout software that is also used in Afghanistan.

A **satellite receiver** allows your station to receive radio signals from a satellite. For example, Salam Watandar, an Afghan radio programming service, produces daily live broadcasts of news, current affairs and cultural programs by satellite. Salam Watandar provides programming in both official languages and gathers contributions from all over Afghanistan. With a satellite receiver, your station can choose to use programs from services like Salam Watandar.

FIELD RECORDING EQUIPMENT

Field recording allows your station to record material in locations outside the station. A large amount of your program content will rely on reporters who leave the station to interview people, to cover live events or to gather sound. This type of recording is called *field recording* or *on location recording*. Field recording is a way to connect your station to your community and to include the voices of people who cannot call or come to the station. It also allows you to produce a wider variety of program content.

Reporters carry their recording equipment in a case called a field recording kit.

Field recording kits should contain:

1. A digital voice recorder (see below) or other recording unit with microphone and headphone inputs
2. Headphones
3. One omnidirectional microphone or condenser microphone with selectable cardioid and omnidirectional settings
4. Windshield for the microphone that filters out rumbling noises caused by wind
5. Microphone cables that match the connector on the recorder
6. Spare microphone cables that vary in length for recording at varying distances
7. Spare batteries
8. A carrying case to protect all your field recording equipment from scratches and dust

Choosing a Digital Voice Recorder

Many types of digital voice recorders are available in Afghanistan. Models commonly used in field recording kits include the Marantz PMD660 and Sony PX 312. Your recorder should:

- Be easy to use and program
- Allow you to connect headphones
- Allow you to connect a microphone (digital recorders have built-in microphones, but connecting a separate microphone will allow you to record higher quality sound)
- Allow you to sort, delete and edit recordings
- Have a screen that displays battery life, sound levels, and tracking numbers while you are recording and editing
- Have a dual power supply (batteries and an electrical power adapter)
- Use batteries that are easy to replace

RADIO VOICE OF BAHARESTAN GOES ON AIR

In 2008 Internews Afghanistan's technical team traveled up to the northeast province of Badakhshan to set up a community radio station in the city of Baharak. Mir Khalilullah Sadat was a technical engineer with Internews at the time. He has been working for Internews for more than seven years and is currently the manager of the Technology Department at Internews Afghanistan. He shares this fond memory of Baharak's community radio station on the day it went to air.

When the technical team and I first arrived in the small town of Baharak in Badakhshan province we did not know anyone. We had been sent there to do an assessment for a community radio station. First we started meeting with people in the centre of town and then we traveled to its outskirts. We told everyone we met that we had come to help establish a community radio station.

The locals told us they were thrilled and everyone was incredibly eager to be involved. Young girls and boys volunteered to learn how to use the field recorders and went out to gather voices from the community. It was as though we were there to quench the people's thirst for a radio station. It didn't take long before the station was ready to go on air.

On the first day of Radio Voice of Baharestan's broadcast, we aired many voices and discussed many issues. A village elder came and spoke about the ways this radio would improve people's lives. He spoke about the importance of information and he exclaimed, "This is your radio, the radio of your voice!"

We also had a local doctor who agreed to do a program about prevention and treatment of a contagious skin irritation that was spreading in town.

On my way to get lunch my colleagues and I noticed an elderly man sitting by the mosque. He was holding a small radio close to his ear and was listening to Radio Voice of Baharestan. He recognized us and called us over. "This radio station is a great service to the village," he said. "This radio is like a school for our people and it is a hospital for those people who live far from a doctor."

In the town bazaar, Radio Baharestan was playing in teahouses and kiosks. I was happy to see that people were enjoying their new station. I exchanged warm glances with the locals and I no longer felt like a stranger in their town.



SECTION THREE: THE VALUE OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The creation of local independent radio stations around the country empowers Afghans by allowing their voices to be heard on issues that matter to them and by providing Afghans with greater access to crucial, factual and balanced information. Through their radio stations, communities have been able to learn about and discuss issues that affect their lives. Many radio stations are successful because groups of interested volunteers and staff work together to achieve the station's mission. They may operate the radio station, produce programs, raise money and sell airtime, and maintain the station's building and grounds.

In this section we'll review how to:

- Recruit and select staff and volunteers
- Protect the rights and establish responsibilities of volunteers
- Inspire your staff and volunteers to work effectively

RECRUITING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Your station's success depends on your ability to harness the resources in your community, including the enthusiasm and energy of all workers, whether they are paid or unpaid. The station must effectively supervise volunteers and staff, write job descriptions, organize record keeping, and develop a structure for daily operations.

Important questions to keep in mind when creating jobs for staff or volunteers:

1. How will this volunteer or staff position contribute to the station's mission and goals?
2. What are the specific tasks expected of the individual?
3. How do these responsibilities relate to the responsibilities of others?
4. Who will the staff member or volunteer report to? Who will evaluate this individual's job performance?
5. Do the specific duties of the proposed job allow the individual to contribute ideas and to develop new knowledge or skills?
6. What skills are necessary for the job?
7. What training will the radio station provide for the job?
8. Is this a short-term or long-term assignment? Three months? One year? Is there a probationary period?
9. How many hours per week or per day will the staff member or volunteer be expected to work?
10. What's the start date?
11. What's the salary?

What kind of information should a job description include?

- Purpose and objectives or goals of the job
- Responsibilities
- Qualifications
- Training provided
- Duration of contract

EXAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

Application deadline: September 30, 20XX

Start Date: October 15, 20XX

Position: Radio producer

Location: Kabul

Radio Our Town

Responsibilities:

Radio Our Town is looking for a radio producer for our Current Affairs program. The producer will be responsible for proposing original story ideas, developing program content, organizing interviews, doing research and directing programs as required.

The successful candidate will also be responsible for contacting and scheduling program guests and helping to develop stories for our morning and noon shows. S/he must be able to work variable work hours or shifts, and weekend shifts may be required. The working language is Pashtu and Dari.

Qualifications:

- Strong writing skills
- Strong enthusiasm for work in media, preferably radio
- Familiar with the local community
- Curious, quick and critical thinker
- Innovative programming ideas
- Committed to serving the community
- Experience or education in journalism

Training

Radio Our Town believes in the professional development of its staff. Radio Our Town provides general orientation and specific training in computer skills, editing skills and special reporting courses as necessary.

To obtain an application form please contact Radio Our Town.
#23 Jummah Street (next to the Ministry of Health)
Kabul tel: 079 123 4567

Recruitment Sources

How a radio station finds appropriate people to apply for positions will differ from community to community. The goal is to attract staff members, male and female, from different ethnic backgrounds and/or minority groups, with varying interests and relevant skills.

Here are a few sources of potential staff to consider:

- The radio station's advisory board can help recruit diverse staff or volunteers. See Section 4 on Community Radio for more information on creating a board of advisors.
- Afghan youth represent a large portion of our society. Young people can become high-energy volunteers. Many young people are eager to find opportunities to learn media and communication skills, and your station may be their only opportunity to do so.
- Media training organizations such as Nai Supporting Afghanistan Open Media have contacts with journalists across Afghanistan and job placement seminars that tell journalists about positions available in media.
- Volunteers for advocacy groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) already work in the community. They can enrich existing radio programs with local knowledge and ideas.
- University faculties, especially of literature and journalism, have students who can benefit from internships, volunteer or staff positions that allow them to gain practical broadcasting skills.

Selecting Staff and Volunteers

It's good to ask Afghan journalists and radio station staff to submit a personal resume when they apply for a job. It's equally important for the radio station to have its own *application form* and to ask each applicant or current staff member to complete this form. The application allows the station to gather the same information about each person so that it will be easy for managers to compare applicants. The application form will help the person who interviews the applicant, and will help the hiring committee learn about the applicant's history. When hiring staff, a *skills test* is another helpful technique. As part of the interview, an applicant briefly performs one or more of the skills that would be used by an employee in that specific job. A skills test could include writing, editing, language translation and voice recording sections. For example, you may ask a journalist who wants to be a reporter at your station to rewrite a newspaper article so that it can be presented on radio. Or, you might ask an applicant who wants to be an on-air announcer to read a radio script in the recording studio. A skills test allows you to see the weaknesses and strengths of an applicant's practical skills.

Application forms may include the following:

- Work experience (paid and unpaid/volunteer)
- Education and training
- Affiliations with NGOs or other organizations
- Skills and interests
- When they can work (weekdays, evenings, or weekends)

Here is an example of a form that can be adapted to specific positions and to your station.

EXAMPLE APPLICATION FORM (STAFF/VOLUNTEER)

Radio Our Town

Name: _____ Family Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

LANGUAGES:

Mother Tongue:

Other Languages	Please be precise: fluent, good, fair, not good			
	Speak	Read	Write	Understand

EDUCATION: SECONDARY/ POST SECONDARY/UNIVERSITY/OTHER

Name/City/Country	From	To	Degree/Qualification	Study subject

WORK EXPERIENCE: Starting with your present post, list in REVERSE ORDER

Employer, Address, Contact Name	From Month Year	To Month Year	Duration	Type of work

EXAMPLE APPLICATION FORM PAGE 2 RADIO OUR TOWN

Which days are you available for work? (Circle)

Saturday Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Do you have radio experience? (Circle one)

Yes

No

If yes, what does your experience include?

Do you have computer experience? (Circle one)

Yes

No

Do you have audio editing experience? (Circle one)

Yes

No

If no, would you be interested in learning to use computers? (Circle one)

Yes

No

Please list a few of your hobbies and interests:

Please provide the name and number of two references, not including family or relatives, we can contact.

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Relationship to you: _____

Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Relationship to you: _____

I certify that the above statements made by me are true to the best of my knowledge.

DATE: _____ Signature _____

Remember it's crucial that the radio station follow fair and transparent recruitment procedures whether the position is paid or volunteer. Hiring based on personal relationships or favoritism will harm the station's reputation in the community.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS

To attract a variety of volunteers, a radio station must create volunteer opportunities that match the interests and motivations of community members. Volunteers, like paid staff members at the station, have specific rights and responsibilities. Volunteers should not be valued less or treated differently because they are not paid or don't work full-time hours. To prevent confusion about roles and responsibilities, it's a good idea to establish guidelines for volunteers and the staff members who mentor and supervise them.

Volunteers are entitled to clearly stated rights, including:

- Fair opportunity to become a volunteer without gender or ethnic discrimination
- Proper introduction (orientation) to the station and a clear explanation of their job responsibilities
- Training (by a supervising staff member) in the skills they need to do their job
- Acknowledgment of the value of their time and contribution to the station

In order to excel at their jobs, volunteers must be:

- Clear about the amount of time they can contribute regularly
- Clear about their skills and interests to enable good job placement
- Serious about their job and willing to participate in training and other learning opportunities
- Accept suggestions and discuss their job performance with their supervisor

How are volunteers a vital link between the radio station and its community?

Volunteers can:

- Bring the radio station into the community by producing special programs relevant to the work of an organization they know about, people in their age group or people with similar interests or challenges
- Create links between the radio station, local civic organizations and community leaders
- Bring the community into the radio station by expanding the station's audience through diverse programming

For example, here is a story about how volunteers with disabilities in Kabul created an educational radio program for Salam Watandar to raise awareness of the rights of Afghan people with disabilities.

DISABILITY PROGRAM HELPS AFGHANS OVERCOME BARRIERS

People with disabilities in Afghanistan have a voice through a Salam Watandar program, *Qahir-l Qahraman* (*Qahir* the Champion). The show began when a handful of volunteers working with a disability organization collaborated with Salam Watandar producers to create the educational and advocacy program about Afghanistan's over 1.5 million disabled citizens, most of them victims of war. The program includes news, information, a weekly drama and advice for people with disability.

"It is the voice of the disabled community," says senior producer Haji Nader, 53, who lost an arm in a rocket explosion 30 years ago.

Recently, a man named Majid called the show from Ghazni province. He'd lost both legs in a mine explosion two years ago. "He said he rarely left his home during the first year after the incident," Haji Nader says. "He was afraid people would mock him if he ventured outside."

After listening to the show for several weeks on Radio Ghaznawian, Majid learned about other people living with a disability in Afghanistan who were learning new skills at a training and employment center established by an NGO.

Majid visited the center and enrolled in a tailoring class. After completing the course, he took a job as an assistant tailor at a local tailoring shop. Today, Majid owns his own shop. He earns 800 to 1000 Afghanis a day, the equivalent of \$16 to \$20, well above the national per capita income.

INSPIRING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO WORK EFFECTIVELY

What is an orientation?

When a new person joins the radio station as a paid staff member or unpaid volunteer, it's important to give them an introduction to their workplace. This introduction is commonly referred to as an *orientation*. It doesn't have to take a long time, but here are some suggestions for what to include in an orientation:

- A brief description of the radio station and its mission and goals, organizational structure and reporting structure
- Overview of the station's radio programs and broadcasting schedule
- Formal introduction to co-workers and managers
- A discussion of the staff/volunteer's role including how it relates to the goals and operation of the station
- Printed copy of the radio station's policy guide

Benefits of training

During the past decade, the number of new independent media organizations in the capital and provinces of Afghanistan have expanded quickly. Media training organizations also offer more training in journalism and other skills to enthusiastic Afghan men and women. However, there is always a need for updated skills and specialized training in every job in a radio station.

Good training programs take place in an atmosphere where participants feel welcome to observe and to participate in learning the skills and procedures needed to do their jobs. Training can happen inside a radio station with local staff and volunteers, or in another location with participants from other radio stations. For instance, training allows journalists to compare challenges they experience in their jobs, and to add to their knowledge and skills alongside journalists from other Afghan media.

Essential training for radio station journalists

- Radio Skills (radio reporting and writing techniques, radio program formats such as drama, round-table discussion, documentary)
- Journalism Ethics and Principles of Reporting (responsibility of media, including credibility, accuracy, balance, impartiality, accountability)
- Afghan Media Law and Elections Laws (examination of the legal system as it relates to journalists)
- Voice delivery and Performance
- Technical training (equipment and editing)
- Specialist Reporting (for example, in elections, health, business) related to radio programming areas

Essential training for finance and administration staff

- Leadership and Management skills and methods
- Financial management skills and methods
- Business development (how to write funding proposals, marketing and sales strategy, manage relations with donors)
- Strategic planning and organizational development for radio stations

Managing staff and volunteer relations

All people see the world differently, and all people use and choose words differently. Within a radio station, people need certain things from you as a manager so that they can do their jobs better and meet their responsibilities. People need training, information, equipment and materials, direction and support.

Disagreements among staff can arise from:

- Disputes over resources or equipment
- Unclear responsibilities and/or deadlines
- Power struggles, when people compete for a particular role
- Misunderstandings and poor communication

Creating relationships where communication is open and productive can be a challenge, especially if there has been a tradition of competition rather than cooperation and teamwork. Good communication is the best way to prevent confusion and conflict, but good communication includes much more than words. Communication includes the tone of your voice and your body language when you speak. All of these things together contribute to the meaning of what we are communicating.

Successful radio stations have a spirit of cooperation and an understanding that everyone—volunteer and paid staff alike—makes valuable contributions to the station. If there is a problem between two people or two departments in your station, it is important to find out why there is a conflict. This means you ask them what their interests are in the situation. What will it take to make them happy? How can a common ground or an agreement be reached?

Tips for encouraging teamwork

- Create a supportive environment of mutual respect where everyone has permission to discuss competing views, personal preferences, values and priorities.
- Insist on a blame-free culture by encouraging a focus on solutions instead of problems. Emphasize that reaching an agreement will benefit everyone.
- Establish goals for each department and each job that correspond to the mission of the station.
- Make a work plan so that each department has clearly defined tasks.
- Share success! Ensure that the contributions of each department and everyone at the station are visible and valued by the station as a whole.
- Ensure that you give regular, clear and helpful evaluations of work to department managers and encourage them to provide similar responses to people in their departments.

Encouraging success through constructive feedback

Regular, clear and helpful evaluation of the work of departments or individuals is called *constructive feedback*. What are the experiences of staff and volunteers in their jobs? Learning from these experiences can improve programming and how a station operates. Constructive feedback can stimulate enthusiasm by solving problems, recognizing achievement and setting goals for future progress.

How to give constructive feedback

1. Begin by stating what the staff member/volunteer has achieved!
 - Identify the individual's strengths with specific examples. What have they done that worked well?
 - Choose your words wisely! Try not to follow a positive comment with the word 'BUT', as it would change your positive comment to a negative one.
 - Think carefully! Remember that your goal is not to insult the individual but to encourage them to improve their skills and work performance.
2. Encourage the individual to participate. Ask them what they would do differently in the future. This allows them to choose a different strategy next time. It also gives them a chance to identify their own strengths and weaknesses.

3. Be sincere. Understand how the other person is seeing and hearing; what messages are they trying to convey, what new things they are hoping to achieve?
4. Suggest a maximum of three strategies they can use to improve their work. Be clear and specific by explaining how their improvement will make a difference to them and the station. For example, they might rise to the next level of performance, or get a better result.
5. Always end your conversation positively. Help the individual believe that they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to continue practicing and getting better at a specific ability or task.



SECTION FOUR: COMMUNITY RADIO

In Afghanistan, radio is the most accessible form of mass communication. Radio programs can be produced at relatively low costs, and listeners need only an inexpensive receiver powered by batteries, solar power or a hand crank. Radio can be heard and understood by people of all educational and economic backgrounds. It lets more citizens participate in discussions about decision-making in their communities.

In this chapter we'll discuss how to:

- Define community radio and recognize its benefits
- Get the community involved
- Create an effective advisory board

DEFINING COMMUNITY RADIO

A community is often thought of as a group of people that live in the same geographic area. But a community can also be thought of as people who share common challenges, interests or beliefs, the same profession, common social views or cultural interests.

There are two types of community radio stations:

- Geographically-based, serving people living in one place
- Sector-based, serving people with common interests such as farmers in a rural area or university students in a city

What are the fundamental characteristics of community radio?

In a community radio station, the license is owned by the community. The community manages the station (even if there are staff who work for the community) and community members can make programs. This definition is used in many countries.

Some stations that strive to be 'real' community stations may not meet all of these criteria. Other kinds of stations that are owned by individuals or companies can serve and involve their communities, and community participation is often good for their businesses. These kinds of radio stations are also valuable of course.

Community stations rely on the resources and participation of their communities in many ways, including:

- To be a non-profit service (see box, below) that is managed by an advisory board
- To elect advisory board members who reflect the diverse characteristics and views of people in the community (with ethnic diversity, age and gender balance)
- To develop the radio station policy that allows community members to vote or contribute substantially to decision-making
- To create radio programming that responds to a community's challenges and the issues that concern it most, using information, dialogue and analysis
- To enable community members to produce and present programs and ensure that the station's program schedule meets the needs of diverse groups within the community
- To represent the station and its mission to government agencies and external organizations

What is non-profit?

Non-profit does not mean that the radio station cannot have a business development plan or generate revenue from advertising. It means that after the station's expenses are met, any excess income cannot be considered a profit, but rather a surplus that must be re-invested in the development of the station.

Why is community radio powerful?

- It empowers communities to voice their experiences and to examine critically the issues and policies that affect their lives.
- It gives marginalized groups opportunities to be heard.
- It brings local people's needs and concerns to the attention of local, national or even international governments.
- It educates and mobilizes listeners on development initiatives that may affect their lives, such as elections, health, education and peacebuilding.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

There are many ways to encourage community members to contribute to the radio station's mission and success.

How to encourage community participation:

- I. Ask local organizations to give ideas for shows and invite members to participate in radio show production. For example, children from a local school may be energetic and eager to create a weekly children's program. Youth from a local university or organization can provide many ideas for program content and design.
- II. Organize different groups of listeners in your community, such as women, community elders or youth who might get together for a couple of hours per week to listen to your station and to offer ideas on how to improve shows or create new ones.
- III. Create volunteer opportunities for community members to come to the radio station to contribute expertise, help produce programs and propose programming ideas.
- IV. Arrange large community gatherings or forums every six months; advertise the events on the radio several days in advance. Choose a gathering place that is easy to get to, and large enough for many community members to gather. At the gathering, the station manager and the advisory board report the progress of the station, its successes and challenges. Community members then have a chance to propose ideas to the board and management about the present and future of the station.
- V. Hold an annual general meeting focused on the administration of the station, and invite the whole community. The annual meeting usually includes advisory board elections and a discussion on roles and responsibilities of board members, review of the station's mission, and reports on the station's operating budget and future fundraising.
- VI. Encourage advisory board members to act as ambassadors to recruit other members of the community to volunteer or contribute resources to the station.

FORMING AN EFFECTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

Forming an advisory board must be approached with care. The advisory board exists to support the station on behalf of the community. It supports and keeps the station focused on its values and mission. The board also plays an important role in the sustainability of the station. Board members give their time and expertise, and they can help the station manager to obtain funds and other resources from the community.

Characteristics of an effective advisory board

- **Spirit.** All members of the board must share a spirit of service to the community.
- **Size.** The board usually includes seven to nine members. Larger boards will make it more difficult to reach agreement.
- **Balance is crucial.** Membership must reflect the station's community with a balance of:
 - men and women
 - various community organizations and interests
 - different ages, ethnicities

- **Focus.** The purpose of the board should be clearly defined. Efforts must be made to ensure that the radio station or board membership is not used for personal gain.
- **Commitment.** All board members must believe firmly in the mission and goals of the station.
- **Capacity.** They must be willing to share and expand their knowledge and expertise (legal, administrative, financial and etc.) on behalf of the station.
- **Accessibility.** They must have time to attend meetings and work on tasks and issues at other times.
- **Inspiration.** They must be willing to make reasonable suggestions on how the radio station can best achieve its goals.

"An advisory board is helpful because it can help the station understand the community better. Understanding the needs of a community can be a big job for only one person and that's why an advisory board can be very supportive. Our advisory board has eight members, men and women, youth and elders who represent five districts where our station can be heard. All four local languages, Pashto, Dari, Uzbek and Turkmen, are also represented on the board. The members propose new program ideas, they listen to existing shows and provide the station with feedback and offer suggestions on how to improve our programs."

Nooragha Sharifi, station manager, Radio Darman, Aqcha, Jawzjan.

Roles and tasks shared collectively by all board members:

- Create fundraising and business development rules and strategies (including advertising)
- Approve recruitment and management policies
- Create guidelines for program production, provide feedback on content
- Create rules of conduct for the advisory board
- Prepare an annual report about the station's achievements, challenges and lessons learned
- Prepare an annual financial statement to show how income was generated and used
- Attend meetings with donors
- Mediate if necessary to solve conflicts within the station

Suggested roles and tasks of individual board members

Board Chairperson

- Develops the agenda for each board meeting with input from the station manager
- Chairs each board meeting and encourages discussion
- Coordinates between the advisory board and station management
- Regularly visits the station to meet with the station manager
- Initiates evaluation of the station's programs

- Acts as a spokesperson to the community on behalf of the advisory board and the station

Board Secretary

- Types and distributes the agenda for each board meeting
- Creates and maintains an organized filing system for financial and programming documents
- Prepares and distributes board meeting minutes (a typed report on the agenda, discussions and decisions reached at each board meeting)
- Assists the board chairperson with correspondence

Board Treasurer

- Creates and monitors the station's financial records, including operating budgets, daily and monthly transactions
- Ensures that the station observes tax laws and pays licensing fees
- Prepares and proposes future budgets with help from the station manager
- Sets up a bank account as delegated by the board

Board Members

- Attend board meetings on time
- Provide feedback and support
- Pursue, suggest and support fundraising activities
- Review performance of the board and the radio station
- Engage in discussions and take commitments to the board and station seriously

How the advisory board supports the station manager

- **Nurtures the community's trust.** If the advisory board membership is diverse and accurately reflects the community, members of the community will find it easier to believe that the station is working for them. A foundation of trust makes the station manager's job easier.
- **Attracts development agencies and donors.** Most donors set conditions for funding and care about how that money will be spent and managed. An advisory board that insists on transparent management of radio station funds and accurate financial reporting signals responsible management to donors.
- **Acts as a resource.** The advisory board can be available as a group of individuals that the station manager can call on for varied expertise and knowledge.
- **Mediates and solves conflicts within the station:** The advisory board stays away from the daily operation of the station, allowing the station manager, staff and volunteers to work with independence. However, at times, if necessary, the board can offer suggestions toward solving conflicts among management, staff and volunteers.

Board meeting rules of conduct

When the station's advisory board meets, a few standard rules should be followed to organize the meeting and to help the group move through important material.

1. An **agenda** is a written list of topics to be discussed during a meeting. Each topic is assigned a number of minutes. The agenda is written several days before each meeting, using recommendations from board members and the station manager. The agenda for each meeting is approved at the beginning of the meeting.
2. A **chairperson** prepares and follows the agenda, and keeps each meeting orderly. The chairperson makes sure that everyone gets a fair chance to speak and offer opinions.
3. The **minutes** of the meeting are a written record of the discussions and final decisions made in the meeting. Minutes are important records of the history of the radio station. They serve as references for future meetings, but also make the board accountable for its decisions. The board secretary takes notes during meetings and types the minutes afterward. The secretary gives a copy of the previous meeting's minutes to each board member before the next meeting. These minutes must be read and approved by the board to be sure that they accurately represent their discussions and decisions.
4. All board members must behave in a **professional and respectful manner during meetings**. This means using appropriate tones and words, not interrupting others and accepting different viewpoints. It also requires graceful acceptance of group decisions that contradict one's own opinion.

The advisory board and conflict prevention

Although the board can help mediate and solve conflicts at the radio station, advisory board behavior can also *cause* or *contribute* to conflicts at the station. To prevent this kind of conflict, board members can:

1. **Welcome feedback and input from station staff and volunteers.** Radio station staff members (paid and unpaid) must feel that the board values their experience and views on the station's progress and programming. If the board makes decisions exclusive of the staff, this will reduce staff enthusiasm for their work. The staff may stop working toward progress, which has a direct impact on the sustainability of the station.
2. **Realize that the station manager is responsible for the daily operation of the station, not the advisory board.** If the board or an individual board member becomes too involved in the station they will no longer be perceived as neutral or independent. If conflicts arise that require the board's mediation, it is less likely that the board will be able to resolve them successfully.
3. **Avoid conflicts of interest.** It's always a good idea to create a board with members whose skills are useful. For example, an accountant on the board might help manage the budget. But be careful that a board member does not expect the station manager or staff to perform favors in return. The board's purpose is to safeguard the station's independence, not to jeopardize it. The board can create a strict policy against conflicts of interest, favoritism and nepotism.



SECTION FIVE: CREATING POWERFUL PROGRAMS

Afghans believe media can play a positive and powerful role in society by addressing important issues. Afghans want media to promote national unity and Afghan cultural identity. They want media to provide analyses of the country's economy and reconstruction activities, and to celebrate Afghan successes. They want media to act as government watchdogs and to help audiences increase their knowledge.¹ But media do more than inform and analyze. For example, local radio stations also meet listeners' expectations for programs that entertain. When radio stations meet community needs, listeners identify with the station and consider it a valuable part of their homes and lives. Remember! Just because a radio station exists and broadcasts programs doesn't mean that people must listen! People *choose* to listen when stations air useful high-quality programs.

In this section, we discuss how to:

- Define and describe radio as a medium
- Involve your community in programs
- Create program formats
- Survey listeners and listen to audiences

¹ Altai Consulting. "Afghan Media in 2010 Synthesis Report." www.altaiconsulting.com

UNDERSTANDING RADIO

Before we discuss programming ideas and tips, let's get more familiar with the characteristics of radio as a medium.

Radio is intimate. When we open a newspaper to read that an Afghan cricket team won its match, it's not as thrilling as when we switch on a radio to hear fans cheering the team's victory. The ability to deliver sounds, voices and emotions to the ear, as if in conversation with the listener, makes radio an intimate medium.

Radio speaks pictures. Television has images that accompany a story and newspapers sometimes have pictures. When radio programming is well-done, it stimulates the imagination; it paints pictures with careful combinations of words, sounds and silence.

Radio is conversational. The words we use on radio should be conversational, as in everyday speech. Regrettably, many people writing for radio forget this. Often we hear words like "vow" or "state", when we really mean, "say".

Radio is coherent. Unlike newspapers, radio cannot jam stories with facts and statistics or string phrases together in long, complex sentences. To be understood, on air, it's best to speak the way people really do. If the listener doesn't understand something the first time they hear it, there's no chance to go back and listen again. When writing and presenting for radio, remember that people hear a story only once, and that they listen while doing other things like cooking or driving. *Clarity* spells success for radio: clarity of story structure, sentence structure and word choice.

Radio is fast. Radio can react quickly to events, reporting and discussing things as they happen.

INVOLVING YOUR COMMUNITY IN PROGRAMMING

Different people listen to the radio for different reasons. Some listen to learn something new, others listen to be entertained or to hear the news. Some people like a specific program because they can relate to the values of the program. Others may listen to the same program because they disagree, but they're curious to hear another person's point of view.

Guidelines for creating programs

1. Think Local.

- Issues and politics specific to your town or city are important to people in your community.
- Culture comes in different forms, such as local music, dance, poetry, theatre and storytelling. Interviewing local performers and recording performances of music and theatre can be a great way to express local culture.
- Culture is also found in the language of the majority and minorities. What dialects and languages are spoken in your community? Is your programming inclusive? Does it offer variety?



Afghan musicians performing at an outdoor concert in Kabul

2. Unity in Diversity.

- People in your community have many different views and opinions. How can you be sure that programs present many sides of an issue or discussion objectively, without taking sides?
- Airing a variety of voices and opinions requires participation from all sectors, genders, socio-economic backgrounds, tribes and ethnicities in your community. Are you devoting enough airtime to minorities? Women? Youth?

3. Dialogue and democracy go hand in hand.

- Consultation and dialogue are the heart of any democratic process. Does your programming offer community members an independent platform for interactive discussion about matters of importance to the community?
- Every one of us has ideas about how to improve our community, whether in health and hygiene, roads and infrastructure, education or the economy. Radio provides a perfect platform for collective discussion, identification of solutions and mobilization for action!

Encouraging community participation

The people in your community are your station's most important concern, and your biggest resource. Radio allows different forms of community participation:

1. The community makes the programs: volunteers from community organizations devoted to youth, women's groups, or persons with disabilities are just a few great sources for diversifying content. [See Section 3 on the role of volunteers].
2. The station produces programs about the lives of ordinary citizens that humanize and give depth to a social issue in the community. Such narratives can be combined with practical tips, information, and suggested solutions offered by local experts from the community.
 - *Jaan-e Joor ("Good Health") is a weekly health show on **Salam Watandar** that uses a narrative storytelling technique to tell the story of an unwitting victim of traditional healing practices. The show starts with a health news bulletin and a short report on a major medical development. The bulk of the program is devoted to the story of the patient, based on interviews with the person, their family members and their doctor. The show ends with health tips.*
3. The community shares its views through call-in programs: call-in shows can be serious or light-hearted and entertaining. They allow the station to air a variety of voices and opinions and to focus on issues important locally, creating links between the station and its listeners.

- *Gap-e dehqan (Dari) or Deh Bazgar Khabarah (Pashtu) is a 30-minute program on **Salam Watandar**. This program combines humorous discussion between a farmer and an agronomist with audience call-in. The half-hour show features five to six audience questions and a short, funny song about farming and rural life played at mid-program.*
4. The station is proactive and uncovers local issues that affect the lives of local people. Uncovering issues is part of a longer process. Follow-up stories can promote accountability and long-term solutions, and let listeners know that their concerns matter. One vital role of media is to create a bridge for dialogue between community members, local officials, policymakers and other stakeholders. This bridge is necessary to build sustainable social change.
 - *Khalk aw Wakmany ("People and Local Authorities") is a weekly program on **Radio Soley Paygham** in Khost. This program investigates solutions to local problems. Tipped off by callers, the producer travels to a district, interviews local residents and local elders and then gets government officials and community leaders to respond. It often takes more than a few shows to get the authorities to address a problem. One of the program's success stories involved the construction of a bridge linking two communities that were separated by annual floods.*
 - *Fix-It. "Chaarah Joyee" (in Dari) "Laarah Chaarah" (in Pashtu) is a weekly community initiative program linking citizens with local authorities and community leaders. This is a collaborative effort between Salam Watandar and its partner stations to find solutions to community problems. Fix-It highlights the issue and gets the authorities or other stakeholders to pledge to fix it. There are regular follow-ups on the issues until the problem is fixed. Salam Watandar produces a national version of Fix-It; nine local stations produce local versions that are then packaged and aired on the national network.*
 5. The community makes program recommendations and/or provides content such as creative short stories, poetry, jokes or song requests through letters to the station or live or pre-recorded calls.
 - **Radio Amoo** in Badakhshan has a program called *Jawab bah Naamahaa* ("Answer to Letters"). Letters from listeners contain poems, humorous sketches, song requests and personal memories. Roughly 10 letters are read on each show. Letters are dropped in letterboxes placed in various locations around the community and collected by the radio station staff. Sometimes the station invites its most prolific correspondents as guests on the show.
 6. An organized listener group involves the community in programming. This group can offer recommendations on how to improve programming and make it more relevant to the needs of the community.

A RADIO PROGRAM OF OUR OWN

When Radio Amoo in Faizabad first went on air, the people in the community were reluctant to express their opinions on radio and get involved in live program discussions.

“People were afraid of the microphone, they didn’t think it was their right to speak their mind and share their opinions on issues,” said Station Manager, Abdulbaseer Haqjo.

One of the first programs that aired on Radio Amoo was a weekly live call-in show called, “Porsesh as Mardom and Pasekh as Masuleen” (Questions From People, Answers From Representatives). Now the station is overwhelmed by the public’s desire to take part in programming. What started out as a 20-minute radio program is now 90 minutes long because of listeners’ demand.

To encourage dialogue on issues that matter to the local population, the station asks its listeners to offer suggestions for topics. Throughout the years, topics have been varied including maternal health, the place for youth in civil society, women in the workforce, government spending and domestic violence. Government officials and directors from civil society organizations frequent the show as guests and take calls from listeners.

“This show is all about bridging gaps between the locals and the people making policy and decisions,” Haqjo said.

But it’s also about recognizing the pressing social needs and the local challenges. For example, Radio Amoo’s weekly program recently focused on the alarming maternal mortality rates in the province of Badakhshan, the worst in Afghanistan. “We want to hold the government accountable,” Haqjo said. “We need to recognize that not enough has been done for women in our province.”

Programs like this on Radio Amoo have encouraged men, women, young and old to take part in radio programs and discuss the issues that matter to them. “We wanted to give people confidence to speak freely and take part in local dialogue,” Haqjo said.

Radio Amoo was established in 2004 in the city of Faizabad, Badakhshan.

FINDING YOUR PROGRAM FOCUS

When creating a program or choosing content for a show, it is important to identify the program’s focus or objective. One program may aim to prompt a shift in community attitudes about an issue. Another show may want to keep people better informed. The focus of a third show could be to entertain listeners. The facts, information, interviews or stories, songs or poetry that you decide to include in each program should link directly to the focus, deepen your examination of the subject, and improve the overall program.

Keep the focus of your program clear for your audience.

If you are motivated to prompt a change in attitude or raise awareness on an issue, think about what you want to achieve through your program. It's helpful to provide your listeners with relevant information. Access to accurate information and more knowledge about a subject or situation can lead listeners to adopt new attitudes and make behavioral shifts.

It's helpful to think about behavioral change in three steps:

1. **Knowledge** is the information that listeners keep and can use after listening to the program.
2. **Attitude** is what listeners think and/or feel after acquiring knowledge about a subject.
3. **Behavior** is where we measure change that may occur because of new knowledge and attitudes.²

Below is an example from a Salam Watandar program that focused on encouraging more women to run for office during a recent provincial election.

Raising Awareness of Afghan Women in Government

Alarmed by a May 1, 2009 report that not a single female candidate had registered for Afghanistan's provincial council elections in eight provinces, Salam Watandar quickly produced a number of stories, interviews, and an outreach campaign to highlight the issue.

One week later, a total of 342 women had registered for 124 seats on provincial councils around the country.

"We feel the media play an extremely important role in Afghanistan's democratic transition," said Masood Farivar, the manager of Salam Watandar. "Afghanistan has made great strides in the past eight years towards equal representation of women in politics, but the growing insurgency threatens to undermine their status. Elections are about the future leadership and direction of the country, and we felt it was important to encourage women to take part in that process."

Source: Internews website www.internews.org

Target Audience

A radio producer must decide what the target audience will be. A target audience is the group of people that you want to attract as listeners to a program. It's usually people who share similar beliefs and values, face similar challenges and struggles and/or live and work in similar environments.

When designing a program for a target audience, a producer will need to consider:

- Who are the people we want to listen to this program?
- Why do we want them to listen to this program?
- What matters to them?
- How do they speak?

² Michael Shipler. "Youth Radio for Peacebuilding: a guide." Search for Common Ground. Belgium, 2006.

- What will make them laugh?
- What will make them speak? And reflect?

Defining the target audience helps a program producer decide how to speak and what words to use, music to play and subjects to discuss. It helps a station create programs that get attention or a response from a certain group, but it doesn't mean that the station wants to exclude other groups or listeners.



Radio Zohra, Kunduz

- *Hawa ("Eve") is **Salam Watandar's** weekly program about Afghan women and young girls. Broadcast in two weekly editions, one in Pashtu and one in Dari, the programs include interviews with successful women, reports from the provinces, tips on home economics, information about basic health care and advice on a range of gender issues, such as services for victims of domestic violence. It seeks to empower women through education and by promoting their inclusion in business and economic arenas.*
- ***Radio Sharq in Jalalabad** has a 30-minute program called Zih Zwaan Yum ("I Am Young"). This program is created for a youth audience and deals with issues from an angle relevant to youth. Topics include unemployment, education, and addiction. The program starts with vox pop on the issue and is paired with interviews with experts and officials who can provide solutions and information.*

PROGRAM FORMATS

While the style of shows remains the same from day to day, the content must change to keep the station original and innovative. Radio stations divide each 24 hours of airtime into slots. Of course most new radio stations cannot produce enough programming to broadcast 24 hours per day. But production capacity will grow as the station trains and hires staff, recruits volunteers, generates enough income and develops programming ideas. Programming slots vary in duration and contain different elements. Some slots may be one hour long and contain elements such as songs, news, in-depth interviews with special guests, or roundtable discussions. Or a program slot may be as short as five minutes and include only one of these elements, like a news bulletin. In this section we will describe some program formats and offer examples from radio stations throughout Afghanistan.

NEWS gives facts and information about current events that take place in your community, your country and in the world. News is information that matters to your listeners, helps them make decisions and stay informed of new things as they happen.

Local news coverage is most important for a local radio station because it focuses on what's happening in your community. Local news can cover many topics such as the opening of a new health center, or the closing of a major road due to construction work. Local news gives importance to matters that affect your listeners.

National news reports focus on what's happening in Afghanistan, for example when parliament passes a new bill.



Radio Ghaznawiyan reporter interviews local, Ghazni

International news concerns what's happening beyond Afghanistan's borders, for example an influenza outbreak in Pakistan or a trade summit for members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Your reporters must search actively for *news ideas*. Ideas can also come from community members. News ideas can be found; for example, by asking local civil society organizations about issues that are important to them, by observing some positive change in your community, or by noticing what people are talking about at the teahouse or in the market. But remember that news must be ***factual***.

To be *newsworthy*, a topic must contain some of these elements:

- It must have some *impact* on the lives of people in your community.
- It should be *timely*, something that just happened or will happen soon.
- *Proximity*: If it happens nearby, it's usually more interesting to listeners than things that happen far away.
- *Prominence*: It involves a well-known person or organization.
- It has an element of *suspense* or *dissonance*.
- It is an *unexpected* or *unusual* event.

Formats for presenting the news:

1. **Newsflash** Use this format when you think your listeners want to know *IMMEDIATELY* about an event; for example, an announcement of the final results of a Presidential election. A newsflash lets you interrupt a regular program on air to give a short summary of the story and to tell your audience to listen for more details in the next news bulletin.
2. **Headlines** are short summaries of two to four important stories. Headlines are read at the beginning of a news bulletin or news program. Headlines should hook your listeners' ears to keep them interested enough to continue listening to the program.
3. **News Bulletin** can be broadcast hourly and contains some of the most important news stories of the day. News bulletins are about five minutes long and focus on local issues but can include one national story depending on its importance and relevance to the people in your community.

Some longer formats are complete and can stand alone. Other formats are intended as parts of a longer program. Both types of program formats are described below. Descriptions of the longer program for-

mats include examples from local radio stations in Afghanistan.

- **Vox pop** is a format named for the Latin expression *vox populi*, or, *the people's voice*. A vox pop adds color and life to your program. It usually contains five to eight short clips of comments from the public, each about 15 to 40 seconds long. It's a way of including your listeners' views on what's happening around them or gathering opinions on a specific subject. A reporter tries to collect responses from a diverse selection of community members (young, old, male, female, ethnically varied). The reporter asks each person the same question, a question that should be easy to understand and provocative. A vox pop usually becomes a part of a longer program like a specialist program or a magazine show (these formats are described later in this section).
- **Package** format adds balance to a program. It is usually two to four minutes long and includes an introduction, voice clips gathered from several sources covering various angles on a story, with a reporter's voice track linking all the items in the package together. This format is not a program on its own but is used within a longer program format like a news program or a current affairs program.
- An **Interview** is a conversation where a reporter asks questions of a source who knows about or is relevant to an issue in the news. An interview source can be someone from your community like a local politician or expert, a member of a civil society organization or a local artist, depending on the issue.
- A **roundtable or panel discussion** is a program format that allows various viewpoints on a single topic to be shared by people who may not have the same experiences or opinions concerning that topic. This format can be a program on its own or it can be part of a longer program. Guests, can range from activists to experts to government officials and include a variety of community members (youth, women, elders). The radio host and producer, by directing questions to particular guests and moderating the discussion, have a strong role in creating a balanced discussion.

A **call-in program** can be live or pre-recorded. This program format provides a platform for community members to express opinions or to ask questions on topics that are important to them.

- *One of the longest running shows at **Radio Sharq** in Jalalabad is a daily call-in program called *Sahar pah Sharq kay* ("Morning in the East"). This program focuses on social issues in the community. Hosted by a male and female presenter, the 45-minute show covers a different topic each day. Listeners call in to offer views on topics ranging from sanitation to health while experts join in to offer solutions. On occasion, an expert may be invited as a guest on the show.*

Some programs are topic-specific or **specialist programs**. A specialist program should have a distinct theme, for example, religion, health, women's rights or agriculture. Each show will include stories, voices, interviews, and information relevant to the theme. If the show takes calls from listeners and includes a studio guest, the presenter also may need to help guide the dialogue between the guest and members of the community in order to keep everyone focused on the topic. The host should prepare for each show by researching background and current information on the topic. The host must be able to recognize and highlight critical points or tension during the discussion. Guests can include an expert on the topic or a government official or representative from a local civil society organization.

- *Rah-I haq ("The Right Path") is a 30-minute **Salam Watandar** program hosted by an influential Islamic scholar. This weekly show invites moderate Islamic scholars to answer listeners' questions and bring a modern and moderate perspective on important social issues. Up to five questions are fielded on each show.*
- *Guftugo baa masoolin ("Conversation with Officials"), is a pre-recorded interview program on **Radio Darman** in **Jowzjan**. The 45-minute weekly program starts with a vox pop and pre-recorded questions about the week's topic. The studio guest provides information about their agency's functions and responds to questions. This program is dedicated to the duties and responsibilities of local government agencies and officials.*

Many stations use **pre-recorded phone calls** as a source for topic ideas and follow-up stories that listeners would like to hear. A program is then produced containing short packages or in-depth interviews that uncover various angles of the issue, provide knowledge and information and respond to the listeners' needs.

- *Sadaye Mardum ("The People's Voice"), is a popular call-in show on **Radio Darman** in **Jowzjan** that invites listeners to call in with any questions and complaints about problems in the community. When a listener calls in to complain about uncollected garbage, the show's producers try to track down the right official for a response to the question.*
- *Porsopal ("Seek and Search") is a popular radio program on **Salam Watandar** that gleans information from the Internet as well as experts in response to general knowledge questions from listeners. **Salam Watandar** receives calls, letters and emails from listeners all over Afghanistan. The program answers up to eight questions daily and the answers are broadcast live.*

Sometimes radio programs are just for fun and **entertainment**. Not all programs have to be serious or news-related. People like variety and your station should try to respond to this need. This means your programs should be in different formats. Creative program formats can add a splash of color and laughter to the day or even create links between members of a community with similar interests.

- *Doostan ("Friends") is an hour-long show on **Radio Soley Paygham** in **Khost**. This is an innovative social networking program targeting the youth. Listeners call into the live program and are introduced to each other by the host and become "friends." Following a 3-4 minute chat, they exchange phone numbers off the air through a producer. About 10 people meet on each show. The hour-long show includes a song at the half-hour mark. Since the show was launched two years ago, the program claims to have connected more than 3,000 people. Some have gone on to create local "social groups" in their districts.*

A **quiz show** is fun program that gets your listeners involved in learning and sharing knowledge. Quiz shows can create excitement by focusing on listeners and giving them an incentive to participate, such as offering a small prize.

- *Lafzoonah aw worandizoonah ("Words and Presentations"), is an hour-long quiz show on **Radio Sharq** in Jalalabad. Listeners call in and pick a letter of the alphabet and are asked a question on a subject of their choice (literature, geography, history). Those that correctly answer the question get prizes such as a radio or phone top-up card. Most community stations in Afghanistan have similar shows. A popular version of the show allows winners to request a song.*

Music is also a form of entertainment for your listeners. A music program can be dedicated to a particular type of music or it can be a general music show that lets listeners call in to request songs. Music can also be a filler between programs. Or, music can help you transition between the elements of a program.

Fillers can cue the end of one segment and the beginning of another. The music you use as filler must be chosen with good judgment. For example, if you have aired a very serious program with a sad theme, playing a fast-paced pop song immediately afterward might startle listeners. Remember that radio is an intimate medium and that good radio can capture your listeners' attention and touch their emotions as well.

Music can also be used as background in radio jingles and program promos. A **radio jingle** announces the station's name and frequency with music in the background. Jingles are only a few seconds long and can be aired throughout the day between programs and songs. A **program promo** is meant to capture your listeners' attention while telling them about a new program. Program promos include the name of the program, the time it will air, and a memorable description of its contents. Promos are like headlines; they should keep your listeners interested in new programming. Here is an example:

- *"Tune in this Sunday at 7 p.m. for Amazing People—a program about local heroes in our town. This week we'll listen to the story of a woman who saved her family from a burning house." Or "Radio Our Town brings you an exclusive interview with the woman who saved her family from a burning house (10-15 second clip from interview). Tune in this Sunday at 7 p.m. to hear her story."*

A **Magazine show** is a longer program, usually one hour, that combines elements in different formats with distinct content. An example of a news magazine is Salam Watandar's Bakhabar.

- ***Bakhabar** is a one-hour current affairs magazine show with two presenters. The program begins with a list of the contents of that day's show, followed by a five-minute news bulletin and weather update. The rest of the show includes news packages, features, live interviews, an occasional panel discussion, and finally a cultural segment that includes light features, interviews with artists and poets, and a sports round-up.*

Here's an example of a program outline for an evening news magazine show. As you can see, it's a combination of program formats and topics.

FORMAT	CONTENT	DURATION (min.)
Local News Bulletin	New seeds available for wheat farmers Gathering in Jalalabad to celebrate new monument Shinwar district gets new development project New Health Clinic in Kargayi district	4.35
Weather Update	The expected weather forecast for the next 48 hours and current temperatures	.30
Sports Round-up	Local cricket results from Jalalabad game and dates for upcoming game	1.25
Package	Local school reopens after recent flood	4.12
Package (including vox pop)	New road in Behsud district built by local youth organization	5.23
Package	Kuchi community in Jalalabad still without proper water supply	4.33
Song	Rock song performed by local youth group	3.35
Roundtable discussion	New law for obtaining national identification cards and its impact on returning refugees	13.0
In-depth Interview	Life of man who has been performing traditional music forms	6.45
Song	Folk song from the interview guest's album.	4.25
Vox Pop with youth	Role of youth in upcoming Peace Day Celebrations	6.0
Interview about Peace Day Preparations	National Youth Directorate for Nangarhar + University student from the faculty of literature at University of Jalalabad	3.35

AUDIENCE SURVEYS AND FEEDBACK

Your audience knows a lot about your radio station that you may not know, and you can collect and use what they know to make decisions. For example, your audience knows where your broadcasts can be heard, and where your signal is blocked. Listeners can tell you something about themselves, what programs they like more than others, and why. They can tell you where and with whom they listen, and what times of the day they can and cannot listen. You can also learn which groups of people do not listen, and the types of programs that might interest them. One low-cost way to collect such information is called an audience survey. An **audience survey** is simply a list of questions asked of community members during individual interviews, either in person or on the telephone. When you put all of the information from these questionnaires together, you can learn a lot about how to improve your station's programming and service to the community.

Audience surveys should be done every year, but do not wait a year to do your first survey! It is best to do your first survey, called a **baseline survey**, as soon as possible after your station goes on the air. The results of your baseline survey will be compared with the results of later surveys to see how your target audience has grown, how its needs are changing and how your programming meets those needs.

Here are some tips for designing and conducting an audience survey:

1. Train surveyors to introduce themselves properly on behalf of your station. Surveyors should explain the purpose of the survey, too. For example, “I am a volunteer for Radio Our Town. The radio station is asking people in our town to answer questions about what they want to hear on the radio. Can I ask you a few questions to help Radio Our Town understand our community?”
2. To get reliable information, surveyors should interview a **random sample** of community members in your broadcast area. To get a random sample, choose surveyors and the people they interview according to this guide:
 - Surveyors should include both males and females so you can have access to community members of both genders.
 - Choose a number of different locations in your broadcast area. Crowded areas such as markets, schools and parks are good places to find a random selection of people.
 - In each location, interview a variety of citizens such as: men, women, youth, adults, elders, people of different ethnicities and people with disabilities.
3. To be able to compare annual surveys to see how things change over time:
 - Each year’s random sample should include the same total number of people.
 - Survey questionnaires must include the date of each interview.
4. Questionnaire design is important.
 - Keep your list of questions short and simple. Each interview should take only a few minutes. You do not want to take too much time from people who agree to participate, and you want to have enough time to collect as many interviews as you need.
 - All questions should be asked of each person interviewed.
 - Print the list of questions, and leave plenty of space on the paper for surveyors to write answers. A paper crowded with answers can lead your surveyor to accidentally skip questions.
 - The survey should be designed to ask questions that give your station specific information that it can use to make decisions, rather than questions that are too general.
 - Ask: Which program do you enjoy listening to?
 - Ask: Do you want to hear more news stories?
 - Ask: Would you listen to a specialized program about health?
 - Not: Do you enjoy listening to our programs?
 - Too many open-ended questions (questions that are not followed by a list of possible answers, or that cannot be answered simply) can cause problems. Open-ended questions take too long to answer, to write down, and to process and analyze.

- Each year, combine the information from paper questionnaires onto a single spreadsheet using Excel software. What does the combined information tell you? Produce a report about your findings. Survey reports can be used in meetings with advertisers if they show that the station is attracting more listeners.

Here is an example of an audience survey.

SAMPLE AUDIENCE SURVEY

Date:

Listener Information

- How old are you? Circle one age group
15 – 24 years old 25 – 40 years old 41 – 55 years old 56 and above
- Gender: Male or Female?
- In which district do you live?
- What language do you speak most of the time?
- What language do you prefer to listen to on radio?
- Do you know how to read?
- What is your job?

Listener Preferences

- Do you listen to (name of your station)? Yes No
- If no, why not?
- If yes, where do you listen to (name of your station)? Home Work
Other (ask for location)
- How often do you listen?
Daily A few times each week Once a week Once a month Less than once a month
- When do you listen the most?
Morning Afternoon Evening
- What are the three programs you enjoy listening to the most?
- What do you enjoy most about these programs?
- What other radio stations do you listen to?
None Station 1 _____ Station 2 _____ Station 3 _____
- What programs do you enjoy listening to on those stations?
- What radio station do you listen to the most?

EXAMPLE AUDIENCE SURVEY CONTINUED...

Listener Preferences continued...

18. Other than radio where else do you get news or information?

Newspaper TV SMS From family and friends

19. Which programs on (radio name) have helped you make decisions in your life?

20. How do these programs help you make decisions?

21. Do you think the amount of news and information you hear about your local community on

(radio name) is too much or not enough or just right?

22. What other types of programs would like to hear on (radio name)?

23. Is there anything more you would like to tell me about (radio name) before we end this survey?

Thank you for sharing your time with (radio name).

Listening groups and other ways to gather audience reactions

Some stations organize listeners into groups to ask for their reactions to programming. These groups meet according to a schedule and can include people who live in a certain place, or who share certain interests. You can have as many listening groups as you like, but remember that you must make time to meet with them.

Listeners' groups can help your station:

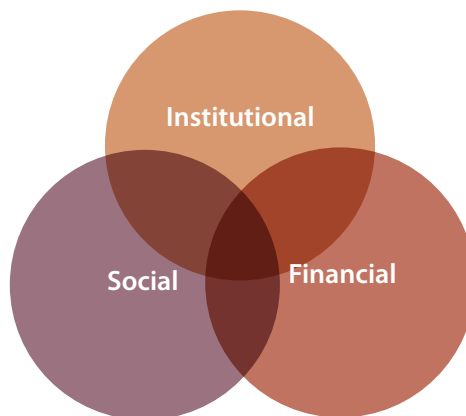
- gather ideas on how to improve specific programs
- keep in touch with your community's views on the station and overall programming
- encourage community participation (see also page 49)
- keep community members informed about the station's plans

There are other ways to gather information about audience reactions, preferences and the popularity of programs and your station. You can set up mailboxes around the city to collect letters from listeners. You can broadcast your station's address so that listeners can write to you. You can produce radio announcements asking for SMS texts about programs.



SECTION SIX: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

When we talk about the success and endurance of a radio station, the idea of sustainability comes up again and again. Financial sustainability is only partly about bringing money into your station. A sole focus on money will not guarantee that your station stays on the air. Remember that in Section 1 of this manual we said that good policies and organizational structure, thoughtful and high quality programming, and being mindful of community diversity all contribute to the sustainability of your station. Sustainability is institutional and social, as well as financial. Here's a visual way of thinking about how all three of these things work together. The small triangle in the center of the diagram, where all three circles overlap, is your sustainability core.³



³ Gumucio-Dagron, Alfonso and Hezekiel Dlamini. (2005). "Sustainability of Community Media Centers." UNESCO.

Whether you are a community station or a commercial station, this core section contains the elements of financial management that contribute to the business development and financial sustainability of your station.

In this section we'll discuss:

- Elements of financial management
- How to create your budget and financial reports
- How to develop a business plan
- Sources of income

DEFINING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Every radio station needs a manager that is committed to responsible and realistic financial planning. Financial planning requires you to think about the survival of the station. Ask yourself:

- 1) Are our future plans for the station, including labor, production and growth realistic?
- 2) Is the station's income being spent efficiently?
- 3) Is money spent responsibly, in ways that contribute to the goals and mission of the station?

What do we mean by **responsible** financial management?

- Only making commitments/agreements that you can honor
- Paying employees and accounts on time
- Keeping accurate and organized records of money that comes in and goes out

What is financial management?

Financial management is planning income and expenditures in a way that permits financial survival. A good starting point is to create a financial policy that identifies procedures for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating your station's budget.

One approach to creating a financial policy is to answer these questions:

- Who will draft the budget?
- Who will be consulted when creating the budget?
- What are the main parts of the budget?
- Who will finalize the budget?
- How will the budget be monitored and evaluated?

CREATING YOUR BUDGET

Many people assume that a budget should consider only the radio station's expenses—what it costs to operate the station, to pay the bills for salaries, rent, utilities, equipment, and transportation. But before you can plan how and when to spend money, you must know how much money you are going to have. Your budget must include income, as well as expenditures.

Income can come from many sources. Here are a few examples:

- Grants from organizations, foundations or government
- Donations from individuals, businesses or groups
- Sales of promotional items
- Sales of programs
- Sales of airtime to advertisers
- Fundraising events

Income is divided into two categories:

1—General Income, also called unrestricted income, comes from sales of advertising or general donations, and is not restricted or tied to any particular use. Therefore, it can be used to pay the station's general or core costs, such as rent.

2—Project Income is restricted because it is given to the station for a particular purpose. It is usually tied to a particular contract or project and can be used only according to the terms of that contract. For example, project income can come from grants, or a donor who wants to sponsor a particular radio program.

Your budget will also include expenditures.

There are two kinds of expenditures:

1—Capital costs are expenditures for buying items that will be owned and used by the station for a long time. For example, when you buy broadcasting and studio equipment, office furniture, a generator, or vehicles for the station, these are capital expenditures. Later, when an antenna or computer must be replaced, this is also a capital cost.

2—Running costs are expenditures for operating the station day-to-day and month-to-month. Examples are employee salaries, station rent, fuel for the generator and electricity bills. These costs recur every month. There are two kinds of running costs:

- Fixed costs are items that cost the same (a fixed amount) every month. Station rent and salaries are fixed costs.
- Variable costs change, depending on the season or the amount of work the station does. The station's electricity bill, and fuel bills can change each month.

The radio station's budget for income and expenditures, when created accurately and responsibly, is a plan for managing financial resources. Financial reports show how this plan is working each month and year. Reports help you to know whether you are bringing enough money into the station (*revenue*) to

meet the station's operating costs (*expenses*). Here are a few reports (*financial statements*) that are necessary for good financial management.

An **Income Statement** shows how your station has performed over a specific period of time (one month, six months or a year). The income statement measures revenue versus expenses. If revenue is more than expenses, you have money left over after you pay all bills, and you can record a **net profit** (or surplus). If your expenses exceed your revenue you will record a **net loss**. Repeated monthly net losses signal that the station may lack financial sustainability. Immediate changes should be made to increase income and/or decrease expenses to improve the situation.

Here is an example of a monthly income statement:

RADIO OUR TOWN MONTHLY INCOME STATEMENT	
<i>For the month ending Asad 1388 (AFS)</i>	
Revenues	In AFS
Mobile Phone Company Commercials	30,000
Public Service Announcements	135,000
Salam Watandar Income Distribution	45,000
Other Commercials	4,500
Total Revenue (Sum of revenue)	255,000
Operating Expenses	
Rent	30,000
Wages (salaries)	150,000
Diesel fuel for generator	60,000
Staff lunch	10,500
Office supplies	1500
*Add additional expense items as required for your station	
Total Expenses (Sum of expenses)	252,000
Net income = Total Revenue - Total Expenses	3,000

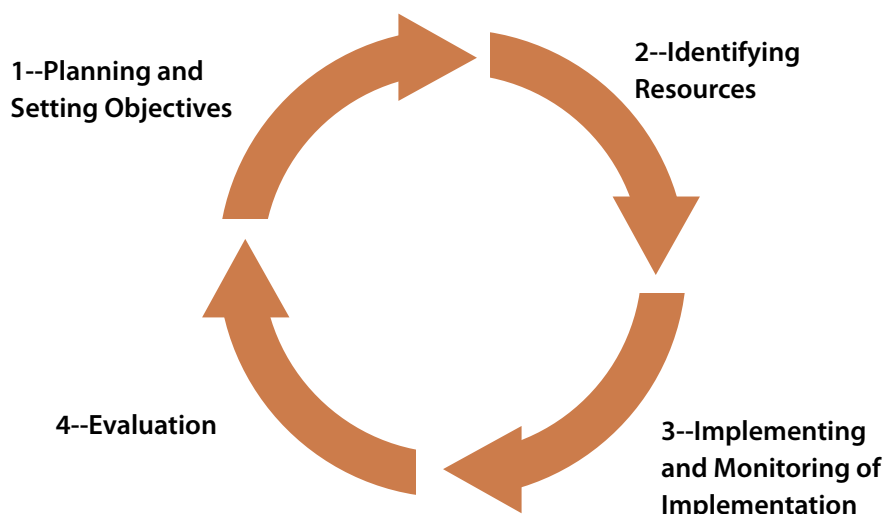
A **Cash Flow Statement** is a monthly report showing incoming cash (receipts or revenue received) and outgoing cash (expenses). A proper cash flow statement helps you to predict future cash needs. Look at the example of a monthly cash flow statement below. Notice that the first number is called *receipts from customers*. This is the station's total revenue (255, 000 AFS), taken from the monthly income statement above. The cash flow statement also shows your total monthly revenue as an average daily cash flow (of 8,500 x 30 days). Your total monthly expenses are subtracted from your monthly revenue. This

subtraction is shown by the minus sign (-) preceding all of your expenses. When total monthly expenses are subtracted from total monthly revenue, the difference is called *net cash flow*. In this example, the net cash flow is 2,160 AFS per month. (The bracketed information in the chart is not normally included in a cash flow statement.)

See example of cash flow statement below:

RADIO OUR TOWN MONTHLY CASH FLOW STATEMENT	
<i>Year 1388 (AFS)</i>	
Cash flow from operating activities	
Cash receipts from customers (i.e. revenue from advertising)	8,500x30=255,000
Cash paid to suppliers and employees (i.e. salaries paid or equipment purchased)	-8,400x30=252,000
Banker Profit Participation	-20x30=600
Daily Income Tax	<u>-8x30=240</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities per month	2,160 AFS
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents per year (2160 x 12)	25,920
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of year	<u>10,000</u>
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year (25,920 + 10,000)	35,920

The **budget cycle** is composed of four major elements:



Checklist for preparing and monitoring a budget

- 1) Compare your budget for the coming year against your statement of income and expenditure for last year. Is your new budget realistic? Does it acknowledge the station's true needs?
- 2) Does the budget allow you to reach your goals? Does it allow you to produce the programs you plan to produce? Will you be able to maintain your staff?
- 3) Do you need new staff members? Did you include their salaries?
- 5) Does your station generate income? Has this been calculated properly? Is it realistic?
- 6) Have you budgeted the station's tax payments?
- 7) Have all of the people in the organization who are responsible for managing resources reviewed the budget? Do they understand its contents and what is expected of them?
- 8) Have you carefully considered how the budget is going to be funded? Have you minimized the risks? What are the timing implications?
- 9) How do you plan to monitor and control your budget? Have you considered what to do if something unexpected happens? For instance, if a source of income is lost?
- 10) Have you considered the long-term endurance of your station? How will it sustain itself? Is this reflected in your budget?

DEVELOPING YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

A business plan is a thorough description of the radio station and its goals for the next two or three years. It explains who you are, what you do, how you do it, how you generate income and why your radio station is an important part of the community. It should specify how much money the station already has, and how much more money it will need to accomplish each of its goals. A concise, well-researched, convincing and honest business plan helps your station keep moving toward its goals. It can convince income sources, such as advertisers and donors, that the station is prepared to do what it proposes to do, and that it will manage income and contributions responsibly.

A basic business plan for your community radio station has three main sections:

1. Executive Summary
 2. Business Model
 3. Marketing Strategy
1. The **Executive Summary** is the first page of your business plan. It gives a snapshot of how the radio station operates, and summarizes the main points of the rest of the business plan. Although the executive summary appears at the beginning, it should be written only after you have completed all other sections of your plan.
 2. The **Business Model** of your station is the foundation of your business plan. It explains what is happening *now*, rather than what you expect (plan) to do. Your business model explains how you make your money.

There is no single business model that works for all radio stations. Each model differs because of the characteristics of your community and the size of the local economy. Radio stations in Afghanistan are turning more often to *mixed* business models that promote sustainability. For example, a station that was created with the expectation that all of its income would come from sales of local advertising may find that model does not meet all its needs. It could adopt a *mixed model*, generating income from donor contributions and program sponsorships or Public Service Announcements, as well as advertising.

What should a business model contain?

A) Product of Service

- The radio station's **mission** statement (see Section 1 of this manual).
- The **service** that your station provides to the community is your product: It includes distribution of important news and cultural and social information, and community development or empowerment.

B) Organization and Management Structure

- The **ownership** of the station (whether it's a community station managed by an elected advisory board or a commercial station owned by an individual or company).
- The station's **organizational chart** (see Section 1 of this manual).

C) Strategy and Implementation

- Details of **partnerships** with other local organizations and the value to the organizations and the community from such cooperation. Partners might include donors, local community organizations, university faculties, and etc.
- The station's **skills capacity** is a list of the skills necessary to continue the work of the station, including management, program production, financial, technical, research, outreach, and etc.

D) Financial Management

- The **cost** of maintaining the station including capital cost and running cost.
- What are the main operating costs?
- How much money is needed to meet these costs?
- A list of **income** sources, the station's **income statement** and **cash flow statement**.
- **Balance Sheet** — a statement of your station's financial position or *net worth* at a particular point in time, usually the last day of the station's financial year. The following equation summarizes the balance sheet: $\text{Assets} - \text{Liabilities} = \text{Net Worth}$.

Key balance sheet definitions:

Asset: anything of value the station owns that can be converted to cash, (including money that others owe to the station, and the re-sale value of equipment).

Liability: money that the station owes to others.

Owner's Equity:

- *Capital stock:* the capital or initial amount invested in the station.
- *Retained earnings:* income set aside to re-invest in the station (rather than payouts to employees or manager).

Here's an example of a balance sheet.

RADIO OUR TOWN BALANCE SHEET	
<i>For the year ending 1388 (AFS)</i>	
Assets	
Cash	50,000
Accounts Receivable	10,000
Tools and equipment	<u>20,000</u>
Total Assets	<u>80,000</u>
Liabilities and Owners' Equity	
Liabilities	
Bank Loan	30,000
Accounts Payable	<u>10,000</u>
Total liabilities	40,000
Owners' equity	
Capital Stock	35,000
Retained Earnings	<u>5,000</u>
Total owners' equity	<u>40,000</u>
Total Liabilities and Owners' Equity	<u>80,000</u>

3. Marketing Strategy

Your marketing strategy builds partnerships with businesses and organizations that are willing to pay for airtime to advertise on your station. But remember that clients will place advertisements only if they believe that the station has enough listeners.

A good marketing strategy considers these four areas:

- **Pricing** – How much should your radio station charge for airtime? Should for-profit (commercial) and non-profit organizations pay the same rate? Will you offer discounts to clients that sign multi-month advertising contracts? How much do your competitors charge?
- **Promotion** – The goal of any promotion is to attract listeners. Promotions also show potential advertising clients how your station can inform local people about their products, services or development projects. Radio stations use two types of promotions: “on air” and “off air”. On air promotions are most common; they can include contests or a series of radio spots that highlight your station’s ability to reach local people. Off air promotions include visits to potential clients by radio station staff/volunteers who describe the benefits of advertising on your station. Printed materials such as stickers, posters, brochures and business cards always should be available and distributed widely in your community.
- **Products** – What products does your radio station offer potential clients? Advertising airtime can be sold in different forms. These include jingles, program sponsorships, or call-in shows with prizes donated by clients. Be creative!
- **Place** – Where do clients purchase advertising time? Should they visit the station? Or will a radio station staff member/volunteer visit the client?

What’s the difference between marketing and sales?

Marketing and sales work together to build the station’s sustainability. Marketing informs the public, including audiences and advertisers, about the station’s mission, its programming and services. Strong marketing must be an everyday activity shared by many staff and volunteers, and it costs money. Marketing prepares the ground for sales. The more listeners a station has, the more it can charge for sales of advertising products. Potential clients who know about the station and listen to its programs are more likely to become advertisers.

Sales are one of the station’s main sources of money. The station sends full-time staff members to meet with clients (advertisers), bring back signed contracts, and then collect the money according to the due dates in client contracts. Station managers also may encounter potential clients and should always encourage them to meet with the station’s sales representatives. Sales people are paid a small salary plus a commission (percentage) based on the amount of money (revenue) they collect for the station. Sales people work best when their commission is stated in a transparent, written agreement, and when the commission percentage is same for all sales representatives. Sales people also work best when their income is not limited; the more money they bring into the station, the higher their total commissions.

SOURCES OF REVENUE

Revenue (all categories of money coming into the station) is generated from a mix of sources. A station should not rely on any one source of money, whether that is advertising or another type of funding. A

balanced or diversified approach — money earned in equal parts from different sources — gives greater financial stability to the station. The amount of money from some income sources will increase while others may decrease or disappear. A balanced approach makes it unlikely that all sources will decrease or end at the same time.

Advertising and Sponsorship

Advertising culture in Afghanistan is not as prominent as it is in the West. Large banks, telecommunications companies and construction companies see advertising as a big part of their business strategy. However, smaller businesses may have to be convinced about the benefits of advertising. That means that sales representatives have to be extra creative and confident when meeting with local businesses or organizations.

Step 1: Do your research.

A local radio station can exist without competitors, but under most circumstances, a radio station cannot exist for long without clients. Begin by noticing which companies and organizations already pay to distribute their messages or advertisements in other media. You can scan newspapers for ads, listen to advertisements on other local radio stations and watch for advertisements on TV. All of these companies and organizations that pay to distribute their message are your potential clients. Your station must decide what kind of products it will advertise.

Step 2: Understand your client.

What do you think your clients would be interested in? If you are going to convince people to buy air-time, you have to understand your potential clients. You have to know their needs and what they are trying to achieve, and to show that you can satisfy those needs.

Step 3: Develop your pitch.

Imagine that you are a local company that has a small amount of money to spend on advertising. What criteria would you use to decide where your money would get the best results?

In some instances, a local or international NGO will sponsor a radio program because the program's content is in harmony with the organization's goals. Make a list of any health, education or other development initiatives in your community. You can approach the organizations that manage these initiatives as potential clients. You can make suggestions for creating public service announcements, interactive educational programming, or radio sketches (short dialogues) to raise awareness on their initiatives.

Step 4: Protect the station's integrity.

It is very important to develop a fair and legal contract that protects your radio station's authority so that you avoid taking a passive role with advertisers. Include mechanisms that preserve your ability to make decisions in the interests of your mission and your listeners. Contracts should be written so that advertisers cannot control program content or program schedules.

Other funding sources

Throughout Afghanistan many radio stations have received business development grants, program funding and program sponsorships. Some organizations will provide your station with guidelines to help

you to develop a project proposal or grant application. Others will require your station to develop a project and a proposal independently.

Tips for Writing Proposals

1. Don't just ask for something! Make your project an investment opportunity for your potential funder.
2. Focus on the station's achievements and the great role it plays already in the community. This is a good place to include audience survey results or listener responses (e.g. letters and other individual responses or suggestions, results of listener group critiques) that show your station's popularity and positive impact in the community, and also your station's ability to listen to the community.
3. Humanize the station and tell its story. Explain a specific need in the community, how the station plans to address that need, and how the donor's contribution fits that vision.

Information to include in a proposal, not necessarily in this order:

- Your radio station's history: who founded the station, when and why. If possible request a few letters of support from local or international organizations and include them with your proposal.
- Mission statement and a list of your station's specific objectives/goals.
- Programming content and programming schedules.
- Describe your target community with facts and statistics that highlight your radio station's impact.
- Describe past and current activities and achievements inspired by your mission.
- Explain the management structure and list the policies of the radio station. Include an organizational chart with a list of names and duties.
- What partnerships and affiliations has the station built in the community? Who are your partners and supporters?
- What are your long-term and short-term goals? What new activities does the station want to fund?
- What are the expected results or impact of the proposed or new activities?
- How long will the project take? What's your work plan? How will you schedule and complete the work during the weeks or months of the project?
- How will you monitor and evaluate the project?
- What is your business plan?
- Include a budget for this proposal. What is the cost of the project? What parts do you want the potential donor to fund? What parts of the project are funded by other income or contributions?

Managing funding

When your proposal succeeds, it's important to prepare to manage donor funds properly. How will you manage the money in a transparent and honest way? How will you avoid doubt in the donor about your fiscal discipline?

Here are a few tips:

- 1) Appoint one person to maintain an official record of your station's spending. The accounting books should always be up-to-date, accurate and presentable.
- 2) Make sure the person in charge of the accounting or finances, records ALL transactions on the day they are made, with a clear description of the expense, amount and name of the person receiving the payment.
- 3) ALL payments should be accompanied by a receipt and a duplicate receipt (kept by the radio station's finance section), even if receipts must be handwritten. Receipts should include the signatures of the persons who paid and received the money.
- 4) Create proper financial statements and reports, as specified by the donor. Check the accounting for the project and the donation at brief intervals during the project timeline.



SECTION SEVEN: ETHICS AND MEDIA LAW

This section is divided into two parts: Ethics and Media Law.

Part I will discuss:

- The benefits of a code of conduct for journalists
- Crucial ethical considerations

PART I: ETHICS

BENEFITS OF A CODE OF CONDUCT

Codes of conduct guide our moral behaviour, whether they are tribal or written for certain professions such as doctors or lawyers. There is also a code of conduct for journalists. No code of ethics can answer every question. Many people will have different opinions about how an ethical standard applies to a particular situation; nevertheless, ethical standards are useful guidelines that prevent us from misconduct.

This manual has acknowledged that journalists must serve the public good. Journalists contribute greatly to society by investigating and reflecting the concerns of the people in their community and country. They can hold government accountable for actions and decisions, provide information and enable social development. Your radio station's programs and reports can influence the reactions and feelings of people in your community toward important issues. Most people believe what they hear on the radio. This means that journalists and your station have the power to affect people's lives. Journalists working for your station should be entrusted with this power only if they accept the responsibilities that go with it. A code of ethics helps journalists focus on their responsibilities and guides their conduct.

Afghan code of ethics for journalists

A code of ethics asks tough questions about the decisions we make. The ethical concepts discussed in this section require you to consider how your station's program content affects others. Adopting an ethi-

cal code helps you and the station's team of journalists to do the best job possible. A code of ethics also requires journalists to act independently when seeking the truth.

In 2007 media professionals in Afghanistan gathered to create a code of ethics for journalists. The code was drafted by a working group of academics and journalists inspired to provide ethical guidelines for media professionals. Like other ethical guidelines for journalists around the world, the Afghan code agrees to impartiality, accuracy and fairness as fundamental guidelines. This code is a set of principles that ensure responsible and moral behavior to strengthen the quality of your programming and the credibility of your radio station.

You may already have a code of ethics at your station. However, do your journalists and program producers know its importance and content? Is it posted in a place where all staff will see it? Perhaps some of your program producers are volunteers from your community who are not trained in journalism. They may not know that a code of conduct exists at your station! It's important to review this code during orientations for new staff and volunteers. Be sure that everyone knows where the code is kept so that they can easily refer to it when they have questions or need a gentle reminder.

If you don't have a code of ethics, it's crucial that you adopt one without delay. The code below is used widely in Afghanistan.

The Code of Ethics for Afghan journalists has been developed with the aim of guiding and encouraging journalists to comply with values of professional ethics, and various ethical questions they face in their work. Taking into account international standards of professionalism, this Code of Ethics raises the issues specific to Afghan culture and beliefs, and guides journalists in how to deal with individuals and events.

1. Journalist shall avoid discrimination on grounds of race, religion, gender, tribe, language and culture in his/her professional activities.
2. Journalist shall employ accuracy in his/her professional activities and dissemination of facts, and avoid distortion, defamation, baseless accusation, menace, gossip and willful withholding of facts.
3. Journalist shall respect people's right to information for obtaining an accurate picture of the realities, and considers it as part of his/her social responsibility.
4. Journalist shall consider respect to human dignity, cultural diversity and accepted global values as part of his/her professional ethics and shall have good will towards the public.
5. Journalist has a professional responsibility to participate through his professional work in elimination of war, hatred, violence, distrust, poverty, ignorance and other social diseases.
6. Journalist shall consider national interests in accordance with current laws of the country in his/her professional activities.
7. Journalist shall observe balance, and instill fairness and impartiality in his/her professional activities.

8. Journalist shall not surrender to pressure from governmental and/or nongovernmental officials and shall not commit self-censorship.
9. Journalist shall avoid revealing the sources that want to remain anonymous, and shall equally avoid using information obtained from unreliable sources. Journalist shall not publish/broadcast off the record information unless release of such information serves national interests.
10. Journalists shall not accept bribes and/or gifts for publishing/broadcasting and/or not publishing/broadcasting.
11. During an interview, journalist shall have polite behavior with the interviewee and shall never ridicule or make fun of others.
12. When a journalist makes a mistake in his/her work and later on perceives it, he/she should correct the mistake through possible ways as soon as possible.
13. Journalist shall not use freedom of expression as a tool to insult, humiliate, accuse and defame others or use abusive language against others.
14. Journalist shall respect intellectual rights of others and avoid plagiarism in particular.
15. Journalist shall respect individuals' privacy and shall not disclose their secrets.
16. The identity of media outlets should be transparent, and their name and values should not be misused.
17. Media outlets shall produce and broadcast educational programs as a practice of fulfilling their social responsibility.
18. Advertisements and announcements shall be presented in a way that will not leave any room for doubt regarding their actual nature.
19. It is solely up to the discretion of the journalists to commit themselves to fulfilling the ethical responsibilities that concern the process of their journalistic work. These principles should by no means serve as a tool for government interference.

CRUCIAL ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Your radio station serves its local community, but the station is also a member of another community: the *independent journalism* community. All staff, volunteers and advisory board members should understand and respect the definitions of acceptable conduct for your station's journalists. Here is a suggested guide to the ethical conduct of your station's journalists and program producers.

Financial and political impartiality are core values of any independent radio station. They are the key to protecting your station's credibility and earning trust from your listeners. For example, this means the station would not favor one political group over another. Unfortunately, some media organizations in Afghanistan fall short on this principle because they serve the interests of political groups or accept

money from groups that want their personal interests to be served by the media. At other times, we might include our personal opinions in reports that listeners expect to be impartial. Be aware and critical of individual prejudices you might have based on your upbringing, background, gender and religion. Listeners should be able to distinguish easily that a report is impartial and independent, and serves the interests of the community rather than any particular individual or group.

Every journalist code should emphasize **accuracy**.

- Research the subject of your story or program. Leave the comfort of the radio station, talk to people relevant to each subject, visit places that are related to the topic and separate the facts from the rumors.
- Make sure you have at least two independent and unrelated sources.
- Take good notes and recordings during interviews. Keep notes in a safe place for future reference.
- Don't mislead listeners and don't lie to them.

Journalists can influence the way people think and behave. **Fairness** in reporting means remembering that there are two or more sides to every story.

- Include a range of views in reports and programs.
- Multi-source. If only one person has been interviewed, that's a single-source story—and that's *not* journalism.
- Don't limit reports to what you think your listener wants to hear. Also include what they might need to know, and what they have the right to know.

Be culturally sensitive. Remember that you are gathering and reporting information and encouraging discussion. If there are cultural practices that you don't agree with, don't ridicule local culture. At the same time, don't feel that you have to encourage such cultural customs. Instead, use radio to help community members expand their knowledge about alternative practices and to discuss solutions to conflicts related to group differences. Information and discussion can lead to solutions that help stop people from harming others, endangering lives or violating fundamental human rights.

Avoid conflict of interest. Journalists don't take payments or accept gifts from sources. Be sure to maintain a separation between the station's editorial functions and advertising functions. Advertisers and politicians seeking personal gain must not influence or interfere with your reporting or programming.

Do No Harm. Before broadcasting, always consider whether a report is genuinely newsworthy (see "Program Formats" in Section 5 of this manual). Examine your motivations for presenting the material. Be conscious of your reporting and production methods. Treat your colleagues, story subjects and sources with respect. Show compassion for those who will be affected by your news or programs; for example, victims of crime or war, and their families.

Be respectful. Afghans expect radio stations to show good taste. Use suitable language in your programs. Do not insult your listeners or use foul language. Don't underestimate the impressions you make.

Make diversity a team effort. The people of your community, regardless of their ethnic background, gender or socioeconomic status, must feel represented and heard. Involve marginalized groups such as women and children in your programs. The voices you choose to broadcast in your reports should reflect

different values and languages. Your local radio station belongs to everyone in your community.

Know your rights. You are a journalist and like all other citizens you must respect the law. Make sure you understand your rights. Be informed about changes in legislation that affect the media.

Here are a few questions to guide ethical decision-making:

1. What do I know? What do I need to know?
2. What is my journalistic purpose?
3. What are my ethical concerns?
4. What organizational policies and professional guidelines should I consider?
5. How can I include other people with different perspectives and diverse ideas?
6. What are the possible consequences of my actions? Short term? Long term?
7. What are my alternatives?
8. Can I clearly and fully justify my thinking and my decision to the public?

PART II: MEDIA LAW

Part II will review:

- Important institutional structures of Afghanistan's Media Law
- What the law permits and does not permit

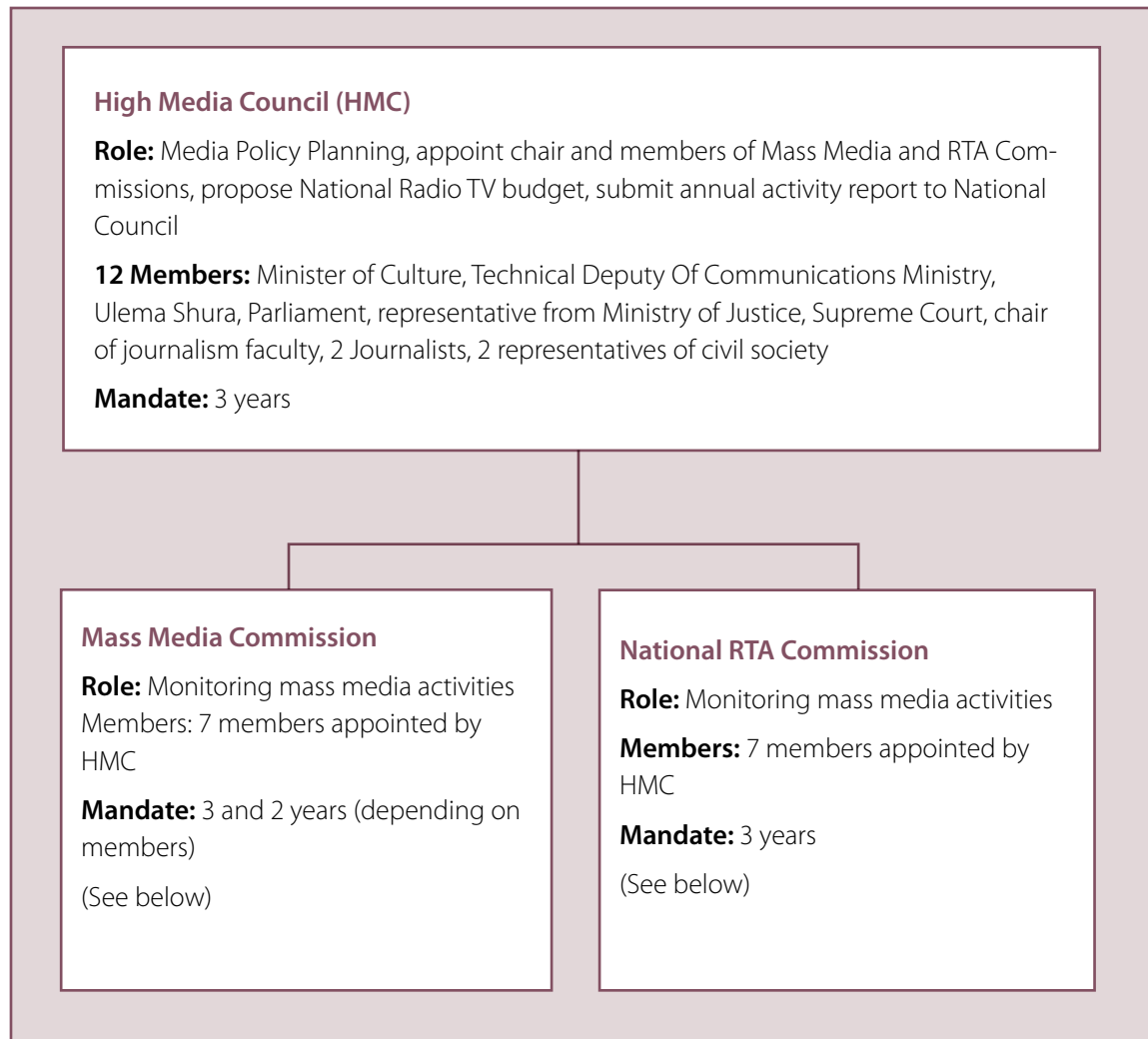
Since 2001, the Media Law has been revised four times; the most recent Media Law was passed in 2009. There is also mention of the media sector in the Constitution of Afghanistan and several Afghan laws including the Telecommunications Law, Copyright Law and Commercial Law.

What's in the Media Law?

In Afghanistan, legislation such as the Afghan Media Law is created to encourage the professional development of the media, to protect freedom of expression and to define poor quality reporting. The law consists of 54 articles divided into 11 chapters. In this section of the manual, we do not discuss every chapter of the law; instead, we review important elements that might help you think about how the law applies to you, your staff and your media organization.

IMPORTANT INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

Chapter nine of the Media Law describes the institutional structure of the main authorities that regulate media policy, complaints and financial development.



The **Mass Media Commission** serves the following functions:

- Makes recommendations regarding broadcasting licenses and the licensing of printed media and relevant organizations
- Deals with media complaints and offences and refers infringements of the law to the relevant court
- Monitors the performance of the media and provides technical assistance
- Refers media violations of a criminal nature to court
- Supervises the financial, administrative and broadcasting affairs of National Radio TV

National Radio Television Afghanistan Commission serves the following functions:

- Upholds and protects the ethical standards and reputation of the NRTA
- Monitors and implements NRTA's budget
- Implements broadcasting policy as established by the High Media Council
- Produces an annual activity report of RTA for the Mass Media Commission

PROHIBITIONS AND PROVISIONS

The Media Law consists of provisions and prohibitions for Afghan journalists and managers of media organizations that guide financial management, licensing procedure, programming content, and complaints procedures.

What is freedom of speech?

The Constitution of Afghanistan declares the Afghan Media Law as a separate legislation; nevertheless, the Constitution contains articles important to freedom of speech and the media. These include:

- Article 34—The right to freedom of expression and the right to express opinions without prior submission to state authorities.
- Article 7—Obliges Afghanistan to abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which it is a signatory.

Freedom of expression supports a functioning democracy through the pursuit of truth and the freedom for members of society to express opinions and views. Freedom of expression also includes the freedom of the media to receive and disseminate information and encourage public dialogue. *Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* recognizes the principle of press freedom as the right to seek, receive and impart information.

Article 4 of the Media Law states:

"Every person has the right to freedom of thought and speech, which includes the right to seek, obtain and disseminate information and views within the limit of law, without any interference, restriction and threat by the government or officials. The right also includes free activity of means of publication, distribution, and reception of information."

Are there limitations to freedom of expression in Afghanistan?

There are eight "prohibited" materials specified in **Article 45 of the Media Law**, which place boundaries on what can be produced or broadcast in Afghanistan:

1. Works and materials which are contrary to the principles and provisions of the holy religion of Islam.
2. Works and materials which are offensive to other religions and sects.
3. Works and materials which are defamatory, insulting and offensive to real or legal persons.
4. Works and materials which are considered libelous/defamatory to real and legal persons and cause damage to their personality and credibility.

5. Works and materials which are contrary to the Constitution and are considered a crime by the Penal Code.
6. Publicizing and dissemination (promoting) of religions other than the holy religion of Islam.
7. Disclosure identity and broadcasting of pictures of the victims of violence and rape in a way to damage their social dignity.
8. Works and material that harm the psychological security and moral well-being of people, especially children and adolescents.

Access to information

There is currently no legislation in Afghanistan that provides specific rules and procedures for access to information. The Constitution of Afghanistan says, however, that Afghan citizens have the right to access information from state institutions. **Article 50 of the Constitution of Afghanistan states:** *“The citizens of Afghanistan have the right of access to the information from the government offices in accordance with the provisions of law.”*

Access to information also appears in Afghanistan’s Media Law; however, few elaborations have been added since its mention in the Constitution.

Article 5 of the Media Law reads: *“Every person has the right to request and receive information from the state. Government shall provide the information sought by the citizens, unless the information sought is confidential and its disclosure endangers the security, national interests and territorial integrity of the country, or damages the rights of other people.”*

Since rules and procedures for accessing information have not been elaborated, there is continual ambiguity on how Article 5 of the Media Law can be enforced. The creation of legislation that establishes a process for accessing information can help media meet their responsibilities to hold public institutions to standards of accountability and transparency.

Defamation

Defamation is broadly defined as a false, insulting or offensive statement made about a person with the potential to harm that person’s reputation, credibility or personality.

What are some examples of defamatory statements?

- A claim that an individual is a criminal or has committed a criminal offence
- A suggestion of immoral behavior or conduct
- A claim that a person is insane or suffers from a stigmatizing illness
- A suggestion that a person is unfit for his/her job

In Afghanistan, a person found guilty of defaming someone can face a cash penalty and a jail term of up to two years. **According to Article 438 in Afghanistan’s Penal Code:** *“If the defamer proves the truth of the act or incident which he has attributed to the defamed, he shall not be sentenced to any punishment.”*

How can you avoid defaming someone?

1. Establish a code of conduct for your radio station and make sure everyone understands the Media Law.
2. Ensure that your programs and reports have legitimacy and purpose. Focus on the event/issue rather than on characterizing the people involved. Don't use your personal differences or opinions as inspiration for a story.
3. Don't base your reports on rumors. Check facts and sources, and use multiple sources. Accuracy and fairness in a report will minimize complaints.
4. Keep your reporting notes and recordings organized and in a safe location.
 - **According to Article 23 of the Media Law:** *"Private radio and televisions shall keep their recorded programs in the respective archives for at least three years."*
5. When in doubt, delay the story, speak to your news editor or consult a lawyer.
6. Investigate and verify information before your broadcast. Is the information credible? Are your sources – the people who gave you the information – reliable? If someone has given you information, verify it with at least two other independent sources.
7. Attribute. Journalists must always attribute facts and opinion to sources in order to maintain their neutrality.

Protection of confidential sources

If you choose not to name a source or you have agreed that a source will remain confidential, you may be able to offer a reasonable justification for your decision. However, if your report is challenged, this does not guarantee that a court will rule in your favor.

Article 6 of the Media Law states: *"Journalists shall have the right to avoid disclosing their source of information, except that a competent court orders the disclosure."*

Here are some tips on how to reduce the need to have confidential sources:

1. It is always best to get information **on the record** during interviews. Confidentiality is a last resort.
 - a. Is it absolutely necessary that the source insist that the interview be confidential? Can you do anything to convince them to go "on the record"?
 - b. If you and the source agree to a confidential interview, you must also agree on the meanings of **off the record**.
 - i. Not for attribution—the information can be used in your report, but it may not be attributed to the source.
 - ii. Not for use—the information may not be used or reported.
2. Always introduce yourself as a journalist and make sure the person you are interviewing is aware of your intentions.
 - a. The terms of the interview should be clear before you begin.
3. If you agree to a confidential interview, make sure you discuss this with your newsroom editor before airing your program.

4. If one of your sources insists on confidentiality try to find someone else who can be a second source and can confirm the same information for your story.
5. Provide some background in your story that could justify why a source would like to go unnamed.

Revocation of license

In the first section of this manual we reviewed the procedures for obtaining your broadcast license and frequency. However, the Media Law explains instances in which this license can be taken away. **Article 47 of the Media Law** gives examples that justify the revocation of a broadcast license:

1. If the license holder does not start activities within two years of obtaining the license. (Note: the two-year limit applies only to the Future Licensing Procedure. See “Applying for a License” in Section 1 of this manual.)
2. If the license holder stops operations they must restart within two years and resubmit an application for a broadcast license.
3. If a relevant court holds the license holder accountable for violating the provisions of the Media law.

For more information on licensing procedures please refer to section one of this manual.

*See appendix for a copy of the Media Law.

The Gazette

Mass Media Law

General Provisions

Chapter 1

Preamble

Article 1:

This Law has been enacted, taking into account the principles of the holy religion of Islam, pursuant to Article 34 of the Constitution and Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to ensure the protection of freedom of thought and speech and regulate activities of mass media in the country.

Objectives:

Article 2:

1. Promote and guarantee the right to freedom of thought and speech;
2. Protect the rights of journalists and safeguard conditions for the free operations of the mass media;
3. Promote and develop free, independent and pluralistic mass media.
4. Provide a suitable environment for free expression of views and feelings of the citizens, and for fair reflection of truth through speech, writing, drawing, picture, recording, acting, movement and other scientific, artistic and literary phenomena as well as printing and broadcasting.
5. Observe the right to freedom of speech and mass media as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, observing the provisions of principles of the sacred religion of Islam.
6. Support the sound development of the mass media in a manner to become effective means for broadcasting of accurate news, information, learning, promoting of knowledge, culture in the country and reflect the public opinions in accordance with journalistic standards, principles and values (honesty, impartiality and balance).

Definitions:

Article 3:

The terms shall have the following meanings in this law:

1. Media: means the instrument of disseminating messages, news and information using the following tools:

- Electronic Media: radio, television, cable network, and the Internet;
- Print Media: newspaper, magazine (weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly, annual), gazette, poster and bulletin;

2. Mass media: is divided into the following categories in this law:

- Public Media: is the media that belongs to the general public and is funded by government and through advertisement.
- Private Media: is the media that belongs to individuals, political, economic, social and cultural organizations and are funded and equipped by them.

3. Journalist: is a professional person who produces and presents content of materials for publishing/broadcasting through media.

4. Printing House (Printing press): is an economical and technical apparatus that offers printing services.

5. Printer: is a real or legal person who by ownership or representation is in charge of printing house.

6. Publisher: is a real or legal person who is authorized to print and publish non-periodical (i.e. martial that is not time-bound) works.

7. Publishing: is the practice of disseminating messages and news through mass media.

8. Movie Production Institution: is an organization, which produces documentaries and movies, pictures and slides in accordance with its charter and objectives.

9. Publishing Institution: is a legal entity established pursuant to a charter and engages in publication and dissemination of works of electronic and print media, periodical or on periodical in line with its objectives.

10. Journalism Training Institute: is an institute that provides short-term or long-term professional trainings in journalism.

11. Translation Center: is a legal entity authorized to translate texts and materials from one language into another in accordance with its charter.

12. News Agency: is a legal person, which works in the field of communications, collecting and dissemination of information.

13. Advertising Company: is a commercial incorporeal entity engaged in advertising and publicity in accordance with its charter.

14. Copyright: means the intellectual property right and privilege of published materials, which will be regulated in accordance with accepted norms by a separate Law.

15. Proprietor: is a real or legal person who sets up and establishes electronic or print medium, news agency, journalism training institutes, printing house, publishing

institution, translation center, news agency, film production institution and advertising company.

16. Editor-in-Chief: is a person responsible for managing the publishing affairs related to institutions as stated in paragraph 15 of this article.

17. Radio: is a means for audio mass media.

18. Television: is a means for audio-visual mass media.

19. Cable Network: is audio and visual mass media instrument that broadcasts various national and international informational, educational, cultural, and entertainment programs to its subscribers.

20. Advertisement: is supply of audio-visual services to real or legal persons in return for money or other similar considerations in the electronic and print mass media.

21. Donation: is provision of any types of assistance by real or legal persons for material or moral strengthening of mass media.

Chapter Two

Rights and Obligations

Freedom of Thought and Expression

Article 4:

1. Every person has the right to freedom of thought and speech, which includes the right to seek, obtain and disseminate information and views within the limit of law without any interference, restriction and threat by the government or officials. The right also includes free activity of means of publication, distribution, and reception of information.

2. Government shall support, strengthen, and guarantee the freedom of mass media. Except as authorized under this law, no real or legal person including government and government offices may ban, prohibit, censor or limit the informational activities of mass media or otherwise interfere in their affairs.

Seeking Information

Article 5:

Every person has the right to request and receive information from the state. Government shall provide the information sought by the citizens, unless the information sought is confidential and its disclosure endangers the security, national interests and territorial integrity of the country, or damages the rights of other people.

Legal Protection

Article 6:

1. Journalists shall enjoy legal protection in carrying out their professional activities, including publishing reports and critical views.
2. Journalists shall have the right to avoid disclosing their source of information, except that a competent court orders the disclosure.

Right to Respond**Article 7:**

1. Every real or legal person who is attacked by mass media, and his personality, good standing or material interests are damaged, has the right to refute it in the same media.
2. The concerned media shall, without delay and free of charge, publish the response in the upcoming edition or broadcast of the same media outlet.
3. The response provided shall have no criminal nature and refers exclusively to the allegation in the media, and it shall be in written form signed by the affected person or his lawyer and presented to the editor in chief.
4. Any complaints about non-publishing of response shall be referred to the relevant Commission.
5. The right to respond shall not apply to the reports from the sessions of National Assembly and open trials unless the reports from the sessions mentioned above are transposed by media.

Non-publication of Response**Article 8:**

Mass media may refrain from publishing a response in the following cases:

1. The response is outside the point of discussion.
2. The response is received more than ninety days later by the media.

Establishment of Union**Article 9:**

In order to defend their guild's rights, journalists and other members of mass media may establish associations, unions, or other independent guilds in accordance with the provisions of law.

Chapter Three**Establishment of Print Media**

Article 10:

1. Citizens of the country, political parties, social organizations, non-governmental organizations, foreign refugees and government organizations may establish printing media, in accordance with the provisions of this law.
2. Subject to compliance with diplomatic norms, foreign political agencies based in Afghanistan may publish newsletters.
3. International and inter-governmental agencies may perform academic research, and publish and distribute periodicals and non-periodicals within their area of activity subject to prior approval of concerned ministries and institutions.
4. Reporting and academic research shall be subject to prior approval of concerned ministries and institutions.
5. Foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) established in accordance with the provisions of law, may publish within their specialized area of activity and subject to authorization by Ministry of Information and culture, and under the editorship of an Afghan citizen, periodical and non-periodical.
6. Print media mentioned in paragraph 2 of article 3 of this law may be established and published without prior registration. In case a publication is published without prior registration, the proprietor is obliged to get his/her publication registered within two weeks in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Address and other specifications**Article 11:**

A printed media shall contain the name of the journal, specific address, name and location of the printing center, name of the proprietor and editor and date of publication.

Chapter Four**Establishment of Electronic Mass Media****Establishment of Electronic Media****Article 12:**

Citizens of the country, political parties, social organizations, national non-governmental organizations, private companies, and government institutions can establish electronic mass media in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Public Electronic Media**National Radio Television Afghanistan**

Article 13:

National Radio Television Afghanistan is a mass media that belongs to the Afghan nation and shall perform, as an independent directorate, within the framework of the Executive Branch and its budget shall be provided by the government, and through advertisements and provision of services.*

Article 14:

The Headquarter of National Radio Television Afghanistan (NRTA) shall be located in Kabul city and its local stations shall be located in the provinces.

Duties and Responsibilities:**Article 15:**

National Radio Television Afghanistan is obligated to adjust its programs in the light of the principles and provisions of the holy religion of Islam, national and spiritual values of the Afghan nation and in its programs shall consider dissemination of information, promotion of religious education, science, culture, economy, moral and psychological security (wellbeing).

Religious and National Programs:**Article 16:**

National Radio Television, in compliance with full impartiality in the interest of promoting national unity and strengthening religious and national values of the country, must organize its programs in such a way to reflect the culture, language and religious beliefs of all the ethnic groups residing in the country.

Operation of RTA in the Cases of Emergency:**Article 17:**

In case of emergency, National Radio Television shall operate under full supervision of the President.

Keeping of Programs:**Article 18:**

National Radio Television is obligated to keep all its recorded programs in the archive of National Radio Television.

Non-governmental Electronic Media:**Article 19:**

* The High Council of Supreme Court through its judicial ruling No. 6 dated April 15, 2009 considered paragraph 2 of Article 13 which reads “Director of RTA shall be appointed by the President and approved by Lower House of parliament,” as ‘inconsistent with the Afghan Constitution’.

Private radio and televisions shall carry out their activities in light of the provisions of this law.

Observation of Principles:

Article 20:

Private radio and televisions are obligated to observe the principles and provisions of the holly religion of Islam, and national, spiritual and moral values and the psychological security of the Afghan nation in their programming.

Freedom of Private Radio and Televisions:

Article 21:

Private radio and televisions shall have freedom in production and compiling of their programs, in compliance with the provisions of this law.

Maintaining Balance:

Article 22:

Private radio and televisions shall maintain balance relating to the adversary positions taken by political groups and personalities against each other, and broadcast the views of the parties involved impartially.

Maintaining Recorded Programs:

Article 23:

Private radio and televisions shall keep their recorded programs in the respective archives for at least three years.

Right to Claim:

Article 24:

If a real or legal person claims in writing that his rights have been affected by a mass medium's program, he may take a copy from the archive of that media at his own expenses and use it.

Obligations of the Editor-in-Chief of the Electronic Media:

Article 25:

(1) Editor-in-chiefs of electronic mass Medias shall include issues of religion and moral, health, environment, importance of education, harms of cultivation, production and consumption of drugs and narcotics in their educational programs.

(2) Editor-in-chiefs of the electronic Mass Media are obligated to broadcast five times Azan (Call for prayer), through their networks and should observe the sacred Islamic religious days and the holy month of Ramazan, in their programs.

Chapter Five

Financial Sources of the Mass Media

Financial Sources:

Article 26:

(1) Mass media can finance based on the provisions of this law as follows:

A- The private mass media may publish the advertisements, messages, and political, religious and social programs of real and legal persons, national and international manufacturing and trading companies, political and cultural entities, and political parties.

B- Receiving contributions from or real legal persons and national and international donor organizations, who work for development of mass media.

(2) Editors-in-chiefs of mass media are obligated to report their annual financial report to the High Media Council and Ministry of finance.

(3) The source and amount of contribution shall be clear and transparent.

(4) Providing professional and specialized services to the real or legal persons in return to money.

Establishing of printing houses and cultural Institutions

Right to Establish:

Article 27:

Citizens of the country, political parties, social organizations, national and international nongovernmental organizations, national and international private and personal companies, and government institutions have the right to establish printing houses, film production centers, publishing entity, journalism training institute, translation centre, news agency and companies for publicity and advertisements, in accordance with the provisions of this law.

License:

Article 28:

If citizens of the country, political parties, social organizations, national and international non-governmental organizations, national and international private and personal

companies, and government institutions wanting to establish the organizations set forth in Article 27 of this Law shall obtain license from the Ministry of Information and Culture.

Chapter Seven

Proprietor, Qualifications and Obligations

Proprietor:

Article 29:

The mass media and organizations set forth in article (27) of this law shall have proprietors.

Qualifications of Proprietor:

Article 30:

The proprietors of mass media and organizations set forth in article (27) of this law shall meet the following qualifications:

a. Real persons shall:

1. Hold a national identity card
2. Having completed age 18
3. Not been deprived of civil rights by ruling of competent court.

b. Legal persons shall:

1. Be registered with the relevant government institutions
2. Have their Afghan identity verified by the relevant institutions. Persons and institutions mentioned in the paragraph 2 and 3 of article 10 are exempted from this provision.
3. Not been deprived of civil rights by ruling of competent court. Foreign persons and agencies shall have the national identity of their relevant countries.

Article of Association:

Article 31:

Proprietors of mass media and organizations set forth in article (27) of this law are obligated to organize the required information on the activities of their media or institution in their respective articles of association, including the objectives, structure, authorities, duties, amount of capital and financial source.

Registration of Private Media and Cultural Organizations:

Article 32:

The proprietors of mass media and organizations set forth in article (27) of this law shall register their media and organizations in accordance with the provisions of this law.

**Provision of information for Media
Registration and Cultural Organizations:**

Article 33:

The proprietors of mass media and organizations set forth in article (27) of this law shall submit a statement containing the following information for registration purpose to Ministry of Information and Culture:

- 1- Full names of proprietor.
- 2- Type of activity.
- 3- Name of media
- 4- Location of activity
- 5- Objectives and aim of activity
- 6- Funding source and amount of capital
- 7- For printed specifying the quantity, language, type of contents, period of printing, and print layout.
- 8- For electronic media and organizations set forth in article 27 of this law specifying the quantity and quality of the machineries and equipments.

Address and Logo:

Article 34:

The mass media and organizations set forth in article (27) of this law shall have specific address, stamp and logo.

Right to Court Referral

Article 35:

In case a proprietor finds the decision of the ministry of information and culture regarding non-registration or issuance of license contrary to the provisions of law, he may refer to the relevant commission. If not satisfied, the proprietor may file a lawsuit before court.

Article 36:

1. Transfer of ownership and rights (sale, gift and inheritance) of the mass media and organizations set forth in article (27) of this law is permissible.
2. The ownership and rights may be transferred to a person who meets the criteria established by this law.
3. In case of sale or gift of assets or right of the mass media and above-mentioned organizations to another person, the procedure established by this law shall be reapplied.
4. In case a proprietor dies or ceases to have the required legal qualifications, the material and intellectual ownership shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of the

Civil Code and this law, and shall be transferred to the person agreed upon by the heirs and meeting the criteria established by this law.

Chapter Eight

Qualification and Obligation of Editor-in-Chief

Having an Editor-in-Chief

Article 37:

Mass media and the institutions mentioned in article (27) of this law shall have editors-in-chief.

Qualifications of Editor-in-Chief:

Article 38:

Person who is appointed, as editor-in-chief shall meet the following requirements:

1. Have a national identification card
2. Have completed age 21
3. Holds a professional degree or three years of professional experience
4. Not been deprived of civil rights by ruling of competent court

Responsibility for Published Material:

Article 39:

Editor-in-chief shall be responsible for published articles, contents of the programs, production of artistic, educational and advertising programs in mass media or the agencies mentioned in article 27 of this law.

Observe the Right of the Critic and the Recipient of Criticism:

Article 40:

Editor-in-Chief is obligated to observe the right of the critic and the criticized in the printing and electronic media.

Chapter Nine

High Media Council

Article 41:

(1) For purpose of developing media policy, a High Media Council comprising of Culture

Minister, Technical Deputy of Communication Ministry, one representative from the Supreme Court, one representative from the ministry of justice, two representatives from MJ, two representatives from WJ, one religious scholar from the Ulema Shura, two experienced professionals in the field of Journalism and two representatives of the civil society, proposed by them, shall be established for a period of (3) years.

(2) One person shall be chosen through free election from amongst the members of the HMC as chairperson.

(3) The mechanism for the election of four people, 2 journalists and 2 civil society reps, as members of the HMC and the functions of the council shall be regulated by separate rules of procedure [*or code of conduct*].

(4) High Media Council shall have the following duties and authorities:

1. Planning and approving of long-term media policy;
2. Propose appointment of chair and members of the Mass Media Commission and Commission of National Radio Television from amongst the professional, independent, and reputable personalities to the President.
3. Proposing National Radio TV's budget to the government and submitting annual activities report to National Council.

Mass Media Commission:

Article 42:

(1) For the purpose of appropriate regulating of activities of the mass media, a Mass Media Commission shall be established comprising of (7) members selected from amongst professional people, with higher education and experienced in the field of journalism taking into account the ethnic and gender balance.

(2) Four members of the commission shall be elected for a period of (3) year and 5 others for a period of (2) year.

(3) Members of the commission shall not be elected for more than two rounds.

(4) The salary of the commission members shall be paid in accordance with the law from the budget of Ministry of Information and Culture.

(5) Method of work and activities of the commission shall be regulated by separate bylaw.

Duties of Mass Media Commission:**Article 43:**

The Commission under Article (42) of this law shall have the following duties and authorities:

1. Review application for print media and agencies set forth in article 27 of this law, and proposing their registration and issuance of license to Ministry of Information and Culture.
2. Review application for electronic media and propose to the Ministry of Information and Culture for approval after assigning of frequency in agreement with Ministry of Communications.
3. Monitor the activities of the mass media.
4. Review the complaints by the mass media and solve their legal disputes.
5. Refer mass media violations with criminal nature to justice institutions.
6. Provide technical consultations to the officials of mass media.
7. Supervise the financial, administrative and broadcasting affairs of the National Radio TV.
8. Scrutinize annual budget of the National Radio TV and submit it to the HMC.
9. Submit annual report to the High Media Council.

National Radio Television Afghanistan Commission:**Article 44:**

(1) For better regulating of administrative affairs of the National Radio Television, a National Radio Television Commission shall be established composing of seven members for a period of 3 years.

(2) The commission set forth in paragraph 1 of this Article shall include one religious personality, one lawyer, one engineer, one journalist, one professional artist, one representative of the civil society and one representative of NRTV taking into account the ethnic and gender balance.

(3) The Commission set forth in paragraph (2) of this Article shall have the following duties and authorities:

1. Protect the independence, impartiality, and professional reputation of NRTA.
 2. Monitor implementation of NRTA budget.
 3. Submit annual activities report of the RTA to the Mass Media Commission.
 4. Attract internal and external assistance for the strengthening of the RTA.
 5. Monitor implementation of the rules of the RTA's bylaw and other relevant laws.
 6. Monitor implementation of the broadcasting policy set forth by the HMC in a manner to reflect the ethnic, language and cultural diversities of all people of Afghanistan.
- (4) Members of the NRTA Commission in accordance with the law shall be entitled to appropriate wage which will be paid from the budget of NRTA.

Chapter 10

Works and Materials Prohibited to be Produced, Printed and Published/Broadcast

Materials prohibited to be broadcast:

Article 45:

Production, reproduction, print and publishing of the following reports and material in mass media, and agencies mentioned in article (27) of this law are not permissible:

1. Works and materials those are contrary to the principles and provisions of the holy religion of Islam.
2. Works and materials which are offensive to other religions and sects.
3. Works and materials which are defamatory, insulting and offensive to the real or legal persons.
4. Works and materials which are considered libelous/defamatory to real and legal persons, and cause damage to their personality and credibility.
5. Works and materials which are contrary to the Constitution and are considered crime by the Penal Code.
6. Publicizing and dissemination (promoting) of religions other than the holy religion of Islam.
7. Disclosure identity and broadcasting of pictures of the victims of violence and rape in a way to damage their social dignity.
8. Works and material that harm psychological security and moral wellbeing of people, especially children and adolescent.

Bakhtar News Agency:**Article 46:**

It is a mass media agency, working within the Ministry of Information and Culture to communicate, collect and deliver information, being funded by the same ministry.

Revocation of License:**Article 47:**

1- The license of real or legal person who register a media or institution with Ministry of Information and Culture, shall be revoked if the print media does not start its activity within one year from registration date, and the electronic media and institutions set forth in article (27) of this law does not start its activity within two years from registration date.

(2) A proprietor of media or institution, who stops its activity after a period of operation, shall resume the activity of print media within one year and the electronic media and institutions set forth in article 27 of this within two years otherwise their license shall be revoked. In case of resuming activities, the person shall obliged to go through the procedures set forth in the articles (31) and (34) of this Law.

(3) In case of violation of the provisions set forth in this law by the proprietor the relevant Court can order the revocation of the license.

Chapter 11**Miscellaneous Provisions****Right of Film Production of Foreign Citizens:****Article 48:**

Foreign citizens may produce documentaries and feature films in Afghanistan provided they have obtained an introductory letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a prior permission from Ministry of Information and Culture.

Article of association amendment:**Article 49:**

1- Managers and directors of mass media and institutions mentioned in Article (27) of this Law are obliged to notify the Ministry of Information and Culture of any changes in

their activity or cessation of activity, address and charter and other requirements set forth in this law.

2- Managers and director of mass media and institutions mentioned in Article (27) of this Law shall notify, for statistical information purposes, Ministry of Information and Culture of the continuation or cessation of activities at the beginning of each year.

Obligation of Foreign Media and News

Agencies:

Article 50:

1- Representatives of foreign media and news agencies intending to operate inside Afghanistan shall obtain introductory letter from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and inform, in writing, the Ministry of Information and Culture of their country of origin, and the type, duration and place of activities, and obtain special press card.

2- Representatives of foreign media and news agencies set forth in paragraph (1) of this Article shall abide by the provision of Article (45) of this law.

Registration of Books and Booklets:

Article 51:

Book or booklet shall be registered with Ministry of Information and Culture after publication and the proprietor shall provide two copies each of the book, booklet or publication to the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Public Library.

Laws Enactment:

Article 52:

Laws regarding the copyright, establishment of unions, punitive rules for media violations, advertisements, and seeking [access to] information shall be enacted in separate laws.

Payment of Tax:

Article 53:

Tax shall be levied on the profits of mass media and other institutions mentioned in Article (27) of this Law, in accordance with the provisions of Law.

Periodical and non-periodical Print publications are exempted from this provision.

Date of Entry into Force:

Article 54:

This law shall enter into force after publishing in the Official Gazette, following which the Mass Media Law published in the Official Gazette No. 871 on 15 Jady 1384 shall be nullified.

THE FOLLOWING WORKS WERE CONSULTED DURING THE WRITING OF THIS MANUAL:

Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron and Hezekiel Dlamini. (2005) "Sustainability of Community Media Centers." Published by UNESCO.

Altai Consulting. (2010) "Afghan Media in 2010 Synthesis Report." www.altaiconsulting.com

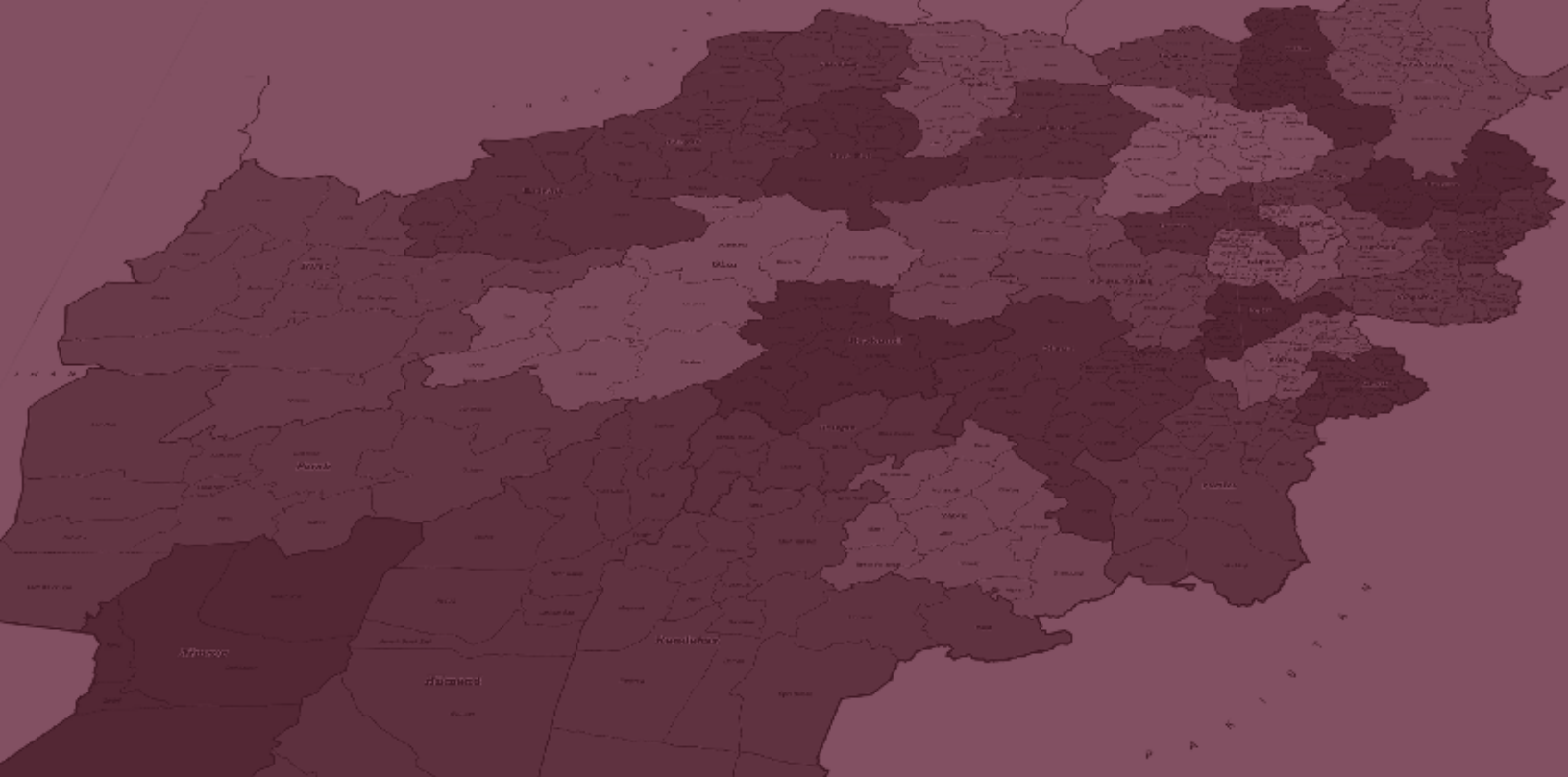
AMARC Africa. (2007) "The African Community Radio Manager's Handbook: A Guide to Sustainable Radio."

Ayobami Ojebode. (2010) "Doing Community Radio: A toolkit for Nigerian Communities." Published by the Institute for Media and Society and Panos Institute West Africa.

Colin Fraser and Sonia Restrepo Estrada. (2001) "Community Radio Handbook." Published by UNESCO.

Jean Fairbairn. (2009) "Community Media Sustainability Guide: The Business of Changing Lives." Published by Internews.

Michael Shipler. (2006) "Youth Radio for Peacebuilding: a guide." Published by Search for Common Ground Belgium.



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