

Media Training Trends and Practices in Nepal

A Status Report

by

**Shekhar Parajulee, Devraj Humagain,
Arjun Panthi and Harshaman Maharjan**

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Martin Chautari

PO Box: 13470

Thapathali, Kathmandu

Ph: 977-1-4238050; Fax: 01-4240059

email: chautari@mos.com.np

website: www.martinchautari.org.np

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List of Abbreviations

AAVAS	Academy of Audio-Visual Arts and Sciences
ACORAB	Association of Community Radio Broadcasters
AFHA	Active Forum for Human Rights Awareness
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AMARC	World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters
ANIJ	Association of Nepalese Indigenous Nationalities Journalists
ASD	Alliance for Social Dialogue
BA	Bachelor's Degree in Arts
BASC	Bageshwari Asal Shasan Club
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CC	Communication Corner
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
CIJ	Centre for Investigative Journalism
CWIN	Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center
CJMC	College of Journalism and Mass Communication
CRSC	Community Radio Support Center
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
DSJ	Danish School of Journalism
EJG	Education Journalists' Group
ENG	Electronic News Generation
FM	Frequency Modulation
FMDC	Far West Media Development Center
FNJ	Federation of Nepalese Journalists
FOSI	Foundation Open Society Institute
HEJAN	Health Journalists Association of Nepal
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HUGOU	Human Rights and Good Governance Advisory Unit
IA	Intermediate in Arts
IMMOD	Information and Media Movement for Development
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Center
IRHICON	Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal
JI	Jamaleshwor Institute
JMC	Journalism and Mass Communication
KCC	Kantipur City College

KU	Kathmandu University
M&DG	Media and Democracy Group
MA	Master's Degree in Arts
MCJ	Mass Communication and Journalism
MGEP	Mainstreaming Gender Equity Program
MP	Media Point
MW	Medium Wave
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NEFEJ	Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists
NFPJ	National Forum of Photo Journalists
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NMDC	National Media Development Center
NPI	Nepal Press Institute
NPU	Nepal Press Union
NSJF	Nepal Sports Journalists Forum
OB Van	Outside Broadcasting Van
PCL	Proficiency Certificate Level
PP	Patrakarita Pathashala
PU	Purbanchal University
RJ	Radio Jockey
RMRC	Regional Media Resource Center
RR Campus	Ratna Rajya Laxmi College/Campus
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SEJ Nepal	Society of Environmental Journalists-Nepal
SEJON	Society of Economic Journalists Nepal
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SW	Short Wave
ToT	Training of Trainers
TU	Tribhuvan University
UML	Unified Marxist Leninist
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
US	United States
v.s.	Vikram Sambat
VJ	Video Jockey
WOREC	Women's Rehabilitation Center
WWJ	Working Women Journalists

Preface

The growth of the Nepali mass media sector in the last two decades (particularly since the political change of 1990) has been phenomenal. This growth was first witnessed in the case of the print media during the 1990s. This was followed by a rapid expansion of independent radios across the country during the last decade. The television sector is the latest to grow and there are now more than a dozen Nepali television channels on air, most of whom are less than five years old. Online journalism is also making inroads into the Nepali media scene. This unprecedented growth in media producing institutions has been accompanied by the growth of other institutions that provide training to media workers and do research on media performance.

Institutions dedicated to media training emerged to meet the increased demand for trained human resources in all forms of mass media. Both formal academic institutions—schools and colleges—and non-academic institutions—training institutes that provide short term, crash courses on basic and advanced journalism—are involved in training-related activities. Even organizations which are not directly related to the media sector have been executing some training programs for journalists.

Martin Chautari (MC) has been researching various aspects of Nepali media for almost a decade now. In this study, MC's focus is on one of the major components of the media sector in Nepal, namely, media training, a subject which has so far been neglected by academics and other researchers. In this study, we focus on various aspects of the current practices of media training in Nepal: institutions involved in media training, training curricula, trainers, trainees, as well as the financial aspects of the training business.

Though the research was largely concentrated in the Kathmandu valley (the capital of Nepal) where a majority of the media training providers are located, field research was also carried out in six other urban centers—namely, Nepalgunj and

Dhangadi in western Nepal, Butwal and Pokhara in central Nepal, and Dharan and Biratnagar in eastern Nepal (see appendix 3 for a map of Nepal where the field research sites are shown). Hence major cities for media training in all the five development regions of the country were covered in this study. To assess the quality and availability of the media trainings, our research team visited most of the institutions involved in media training in Nepal and interviewed 166 persons in total (see appendices 1 and 2 for lists of the institutions and individuals) between September and November 2009.

After a study of the relevant documents and the completion of field research, the research team prepared a preliminary draft report in the Nepali language. The draft report was then reviewed by research supervisors and other colleagues at MC. The preliminary findings of the study were also shared in an interaction program—held at MC premises on 26 November 2009—in which quite a number of people involved in the media sector participated. Feedback received from the interaction program and from those who read the early draft report enabled us to revise it thoroughly during the month of December 2009.

We are grateful to all individuals and institutions who have helped us during the course of research. We would like to thank all those who agreed to be interviewed during the course of our study. We are also grateful to those who provided us institutional documents and texts. We would like to thank Hari Sharma, Binod Bhattarai and Shiva Bishankhe of the Alliance for Social Dialogue (ASD) in Kathmandu and Rajendra Dhahal for their help in the formulation of the research concept. The suggestions of journalist Mohan Mainali and MC's Pratyoush Onta and Ramesh Parajuli on the earlier drafts were invaluable. Thanks are also due to the translators who converted the original Nepali text into English: Ramesh Parajuli, Rashmi Dongol, Ram Tiwari, Umesh Regmi and Pratyoush Onta. Finally, we are grateful to the Foundation Open Society Institute (FOSI) for the financial support it provided to MC to cover the expenses of this study.

Chapter 1

Journalism and Mass Communication Education in Nepal

Post 1990 Nepal saw a rapid expansion of the Nepali media sector. This led to an increased demand of trained media persons. This growing demand was met by the products from both formal academic institutions—schools and colleges—and non-academic institutions—training institutes that provided short term, crash courses on basic and advanced journalism. This chapter looks at the formal institutions and appraises current state of journalism and mass communication (JMC) education in Nepal. It also examines the JMC curricula at all levels—from secondary to master’s level—and discusses their shortcomings.

1.1 State of JMC education in Nepal

In Nepal, journalism education was first introduced at the proficiency certificate level (undergraduate level) Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus (RR Campus), Kathmandu in 1976. Prior to that, one learnt journalism by doing, or through on-the-job-training/apprenticeship. Some though got their journalism education from abroad. Initially, journalism was not thought of a subject worthy to be taught as part of the formal education. This was also the case in other parts of the world, when journalism was in its infancy.¹ It is now realized by all that journalism too is an academic subject which can be studied in class rooms (Rai 2043v.s.).²

The curriculum that was prepared in the 1970s was outdated by 1990 for its focus was only on print. So the seminar organized in early 1990 not only revised the journalism curriculum, it also renamed the journalism department as department of journalism and mass communication. And the electronic media also found appropriate space in the revised curriculum (Rai 2007: 30).

In 1997, journalism education was introduced in higher secondary school level (grades 10+2). After this JMC education became available outside the capital, Kathmandu. There were only five higher secondary schools offering journalism courses in 2001 (Pokharel n.d.). By 2009 the number of such institutions that offered journalism courses increased to 210, covering 33 of the 75 political districts of Nepal. More than half (or 130) of such institutions are located inside the Kathmandu valley.

There are very few colleges outside the Kathmandu valley where one can get a bachelor’s degree in JMC. But if one wants to earn a master’s degree in JMC one has to come to Kathmandu, for no other campus outside Kathmandu teaches such a course.

It was only in 2001 that a master’s level JMC education was introduced in Nepal. In the same year three campuses, namely RR Campus, College of Journalism and Mass Communication (CJMC) and Kantipur City College (KCC) began to offer two-year master’s degree (MA) in JMC. RR is affiliated to Tribhuvan University (TU) whereas the other two are affiliated to Purbanchal University (PU). According TU rules, only those students having a bachelor’s degree in JMC are eligible to pursue master’s degree in

¹ In the US, editors and reporters used to think journalism education (JE) as a waste of time when JE began there in 1890s. See Medsger (2005).

² v.s. refers to Vikram Sambat, the official calendar used in Nepal and is about 57 years ahead of the common international calendar.

JMC. But PU is not so restrictive, for it allows anybody with a bachelor's degree in any discipline to study master's degree in JMC. The courses that are offered in these two universities vary little.

Of the three colleges, RR campus is the cheapest and KCC is the most expensive one. One has to pay less than NRs. fourty thousand (about US \$ 560) for the MA degree in RR, whereas in CJMC it costs NRs. one hundred and thirty seven thousand (about US \$ 1920). KCC charges around NRs. one hundred and eleven thousand (about US \$ 1600) for a similar course.³

Apart from normal journalism and mass communication courses that are being offered at various levels (from secondary to master's level), few other media related courses are being taught in some formal institutions in Nepal. The department of Language and Mass Communication of Kathmandu University (KU) has been offering a bachelor's degree course on media studies since 2006 (KU 2006). A PU affiliated college, Shepherd College of Media Technology, has been offering a course on media technology since 2001. Likewise, one can earn master's degree in development communication at CJMC. Apart from these full term courses, some basic journalism is also taught as elective papers at various levels. For example, journalism is offered as an optional paper at the secondary level (i.e., grades 9 and 10). Similarly, in the third year of bachelor's degree in TU, students can select a paper called media, journalism and mass communication. The MA English course also includes a paper called media studies (CDC 1999).

1.2 A glance at the JMC curricula

A curriculum is an important tool of education. It tells us both what is to be taught and how it should be taught (Egan 1978: 67). The JMC curricula of Nepal also guide teachers about the issues to be taught at all levels—from secondary to master's level. In this section we look at the curricula of secondary level, proficiency certificate (or higher secondary) level, bachelor's level and master's level of JMC education. JMC is a subject that should be rich both in theory and practice, however, the practical side appears to be in a sorry state at all levels.

1.2.1 Secondary level

In Nepal, secondary level starts from grade nine. Journalism at this level is introduced as an optional paper to provide basic knowledge on some aspects of JMC to students who want to be journalists in the future (Rai 2057v.s., 2059v.s.). But since it is usually the schools who choose what to teach depending upon the availability of the resource person or teacher, one can assume that a significant number of students are being taught journalism at this level. This in turn might attract students to pursue JMC education at higher levels.

The grade nine journalism curriculum provides introduction to journalism. It sketches the development of journalism in the world and in Nepal. It provides basic knowledge about news, news collection and editing. And it also purports to teach basic skills—news writing and editing in Nepali language. The curriculum of grade 10 includes issues such as layout, design and economics as well as technical aspects of journalism, including press freedom.

³ Fee structure available at http://www.cjmc.edu.np/fee_structure.php. Accessed on 4 December 2009.

1.2.2 Proficiency certificate level

Secondary level education means up to 10th grade in Nepal, and the two years' education after the secondary level is called certificate level. The certificate level however is being phased out from the colleges and the 11th and 12th grade, called higher secondary level, is to be taught in schools. Here we only look at the certificate level journalism course.

The certificate level curriculum, especially the first paper, is similar to that of the secondary level. Anyone with a secondary level education can opt for journalism major, that is, two papers in two years. The first year's curriculum introduces basic journalism to the students. It has five units.⁴ The curriculum provides information on news sources such as interviews and public meetings, and on news collection, writing and editing. The second paper, taught in the second year, also has five units.⁵ Apart from introducing students to development journalism and communication theories, the purpose of this paper is to teach how to write and report for newspapers, magazines, radios and televisions and also to make students understand photojournalism better.

1.2.3 Bachelor's level

Bachelor's degree in humanities is in general a three-year program. A JMC major in bachelor's level comprises of five papers (100 marks each) on various aspects of journalism (CDC 1996). The aim of the curriculum is to produce human resources with adequate knowledge and skills required in the media job market. JMC curriculum has outlined the following objectives:

- To acquaint the students with knowledge of recent development in different fields of general and technical studies and equip them with skill.
- To make the students able to cope with new situations and to function as well informed educated citizens.
- To make the standard of education higher and more qualitative.
- To generate knowledge and skills required for the job market.
- To develop broad-based background for specialization in definite discipline (Rai and Khanal 1998).

In the first year, a journalism major student takes the paper called 'Introduction to journalism and mass communication.'⁶ It has a total of ten units, five of which are theory focused and five have practical components.⁷ The first unit discusses journalism and

⁴ Of the five, the first unit is introduction to mass communication, second is history of the development of journalism and mass media in Nepal, third is ethics of journalism, fourth is introduction to journalism and fifth is sources of news.

⁵ They are: development journalism; communication theories; writing and reporting; photo journalism; and practical work.

⁶ The aim of this paper is: "To enable the students to appropriate and discuss the importance of studying journalism in reaction to the mass communication and the mass media in historical as well as theoretical perspectives as well as perceive the different areas of mass media aspects" (CDC 1996).

⁷ They are: introduction to mass communication, mass media and journalism; journalism and society; functions of mass media and their roles in national development; principles and practice of journalism; models of the communication process; exercises for media reporting of all types in the print and electronic area; practice exercises for news and feature editing for the print as well as electronic media; publication design and layout basic concepts; practical exercises for radio and television program products; practice exercises for newspaper design and layout.

mass communication in national and global context whereas the second unit is about the role of journalism in today's world. The third unit focuses on theories of press, media content analysis, and media audiences. Specialized reporting such as parliamentary reporting, court reporting and investigative reporting are the focus of the fourth unit. In the fifth unit students are informed about the concept of development, development communication, development journalism, etc, and so on.

In the second year, one has to take up two papers, namely media research and history, laws, ethics and management of mass media. The paper on media research has four units,⁸ of which two are related to theory and two are practice exercises.⁹ There are seven units in the second paper. Of the seven only three are related to theory.¹⁰

In the third and final year of bachelor's degree in journalism, the students are required to take up two papers. Of which one—advertisement, public relation and media issues—is compulsory and the other is elective. Students, or better say colleges, can choose from the following three papers: photo journalism, advanced news reporting and editing, television journalism and radio journalism. The advertisement, public relation and media issues paper has five units.¹¹ The other papers photo journalism, advanced news reporting and editing each have eight units. The main objective of this paper is to provide a thorough knowledge of photography, photojournalism, advanced reporting and editing. In photography and photojournalism paper students are taught various aspects of photojournalism that are related to print and electronic media. In advanced news reporting paper, students are taught advanced reporting on various beats such as investigative reporting, environment, science, etc. Students are taught how to prepare dummy issues, special issues, and advanced reporting in the latter.

1.2.4 Master's level

Only two universities (TU and PU) of Nepal have designed curricula of JMC education for the master's degree. Both are two year long courses, but PU follows a semester system whereas TU has an annual examination system. The master's level JMC curriculum of TU has outlined the following two objectives:

- To impart advanced and adequate knowledge and training about Journalism and Mass Communication theories and research practices.
- To prepare the students intellectually to meet new and greater challenges in the field of journalism and mass communication of the 21st Century (CDC 2002: 1).

⁸ The first unit is: introduction to mass media research in terms of its history, procedures, approaches, applications. The second unit is process and media effects; media and culture; role of media in national development, and media policy-needs and inputs; the third unit is: practical exercises in the use of computers for research purposes; and the fourth one is: field visit.

⁹ The main objective of this paper is: To enable students to apply basic mass media research principles with or without the aid of computer; to learn the basics of desk-top publishing, and have insight into communication issues and their impact on political, social, cultural and educational progress and development of the nation (CDC 1996: 118)

¹⁰ They are: history and evaluation of journalism and mass media in Nepal, organizational structure of mass media in Nepal, laws and ethics of the press in Nepal and SAARC countries.

¹¹ They are: introduction to advertising; introduction to public relations, introduction to media support services; media issues in the global village; and practical training.

Under TU, students are required to take five papers each year. In the first year, all five papers—mass communication theories, principles of journalism, historical development of mass communication, research methodology, and global systems and international journalism—are compulsory. But in the second year only two papers, including thesis, are compulsory. The other compulsory paper is international and intercultural communication. Students can select the remaining three from eight elective papers: comparative press laws and media system, newspaper management and business, public relations, electronic media and technology, Nepalese media system and journalism, science and environment journalism, development communication and journalism, and advertising studies. The only TU affiliate campus that offers master's degree in JMC, RR, has chosen the following three elective papers to teach its students: comparative press laws and media system; development communication; and electronic media and technology.

As mentioned above, PU follows a semester system, and each semester is of six months duration. A total of thirty papers are included in the master's level JMC curriculum of PU. There are seven papers in the first semester: mass communication theories and practices, modern journalism principles and trends, reporting/editing, electronic media history and modern trends, media laws, fundamentals of information system, and a project based on reporting/ editing. The second semester's curriculum also contains seven papers: mass media industry and society; news products and marketing; research in mass communication; advanced electronic media; comparative study of Nepalese journalism; advanced concepts in electronic media and project work.¹²

In the third semester, there are six papers: mass communication and advertisement; mass media and public relations; multi-media application practical; internship project work 1; SAARC media and print journalism or broadcasting journalism.¹³ And in the final semester there are ten papers, of which dissertation and media management paper are compulsory. Of the remaining eight papers—media and gender, development journalism, science and environmental journalism, court reporting, public communication practices, international communication and comparative journalism, alternative media practices and cyber publishing—the students or colleges can choose two papers.¹⁴

¹² The objectives of this semester's curriculum are: 1. To enable students have a comprehensive tool to analyze the media and society from the perspective of mass communication, 2. To enhance students' knowledge of marketing and enable them to use it in relation to media market, 3. To provide students with knowledge and skills of communication research, 4. To disseminate information about photojournalism and develop skills of using the visual media from the broad perspectives of mass communication, 5. To make students acquainted with the media scenario of the country in a comparative way and enable them to relate the present to the past, 6. To make students familiar with the advanced concepts of electronic publication, 7. To enable students undertake project work independently (PU n.d.).

¹³ This semester's curriculum has the following objectives: 1. Make students familiar with the advertisement sector and enable them to make the maximum use of the same for the media, 2. Inform students about public relations and make them capable of using their skills for promotion of the cause of both media and public relations, 3. Impart skills and knowledge of application of multi-media discipline, 4. Expose students to the realities of job environment, 5. Introduce the media scenario of SAARC countries, 6. Allow students to have practical knowledge of the print or broadcast media, 7. Encourage students to have project work on problem solving techniques through case-studies (PU n.d.).

¹⁴ The following are the objectives of this semester's curriculum: 1. Import knowledge and skills of managing the media sector, 2. Enable students to undertake independent research, 3. Make students familiar with some contemporary issues and studies) gender, development journalism, science and

The objectives of PU's curriculum are similar to those of TU. There are more papers offered in the PU MA degree program. But TU's master's degree syllabus is the continuation of JMC education in the previous or lower level (i.e., BA level), and in the TU, as mentioned earlier, only those who have a BA in journalism are eligible for the master's degree program in JMC. Since PU accepts students from all disciplines, some papers are included in its curriculum as bridge course.¹⁵

1.3 Shortcomings of JMC curricula

JMC is a practical subject. And it is a craft. The more students practice, the more they learn. There is a huge difference between theory and practice. What students learn in the classrooms may not actually be applicable in the newsroom. So, journalism students should practically be involved in all aspects of news production: collecting information, processing them, and finally editing them. However, this very aspect is largely neglected in the JMC education that is currently being taught in Nepal, even though there is some provision of practical exercises in the curricula.

This lack of practical aspect in the curricula was identified as early as 1981. The Royal Press Commission of 2038v.s. (1981) found the journalism education provided by RR Campus relatively theory-heavy and recommended that it should be more vocational and practical (HMG 2038v.s.: 15-16). The situation has not changed much in the three decades. In the first year of certificate level there is no provision for practical work. It is only in the second year that students have to prepare some samples of news, editorials, and feature articles.

Compared with the certificate and master's level curricula, bachelor's level curriculum is more practice-oriented. In this level students are required to do both journalistic activities, and conduct a small research. In the first year's curriculum, of the ten units of the introduction to journalism and mass communication paper, five units are related to practical activities. They are related to reporting, editing and layout designing of print media and program production of electronic media. However, for various reasons, these practical activities are not properly pursued. In the second year, the students are required to do internship training for six-eight weeks in a media house. But due to lack of coordination between the department and the media houses, this program too is not doing well. Shreeram Khanal, who teaches journalism, blames it on media houses for paying no interest in the program.¹⁶ "Internship is a must for students of journalism," says Lal Deosa Rai, another teacher. Rai claimed that he and his colleagues had thought of providing a token amount to the person responsible for coordinating internees in the media houses. But this idea could not be implemented due to the large number of students and the limited fund available.¹⁷

Thus, even though the curricula of both certificate and bachelor's level JMC education have some room for practice, it is not actually implemented. Chiranjivi Khanal of the department of JMC, TU says, "If students get certificates without doing practical

environment journalism) and their relations to media, 4. Inform students about some modern sectors such as public communication practices, international communication, alternative media and cyber publishing (PU n.d.).

¹⁵ Interview with Ram Krishna Regmee.

¹⁶ Interview with Khanal.

¹⁷ Interview with Rai.

work of journalism, they cannot be competitive in the job market” (Khanal 2066v.s.). Ram Krishna Regmee of KCC opined that a college cannot produce a student who is fit in media houses. That student, he argued, will be fit only after s/he works in a newsroom for a few months. And media houses must provide this opportunity.¹⁸

Master’s level curriculum of TU also has provision for two types of practical activities. But research work is dominant at this level. The electronic media and technology paper contains some practical activities of program production. Students are not required to do internship in the media houses at this level. The MA curriculum of PU has the provision of practical activities in every semester. For the third semester students are required to do internship for just a month in a media house, which one can say is not enough. In the rest of the semesters students have to write term papers on various aspects of media or media related issues. Tilak Pathak, a practicing journalist, who completed an MA in JMC from RR, holds the view that the focus of the master’s level education should be on teaching students write critical papers on various issues related to the media.¹⁹ And in fact, the objective of MA curriculum of JMC/MCJ is not just to produce good journalists but also to produce media critics, media researchers, and media analysts.

So far, around 190 students have earned their MA in JMC. It is difficult to say how many of them are actually engaged in journalism. But we can safely say that a good proportion of recent MAs in JMC from the above mentioned three colleges are engaged in big media houses of Nepal. In a report published in the magazine *Patrakarita*, Manju Mishra of CJMC is quoted as saying 80 percent of her students are engaged in the media sector (Basnet 2064v.s.: 4). Suresh Achayra, who got his MA in JMC, opined that the JMC education added self confidence in him and more opportunities became available to him after the MA degree. Another graduate Kundan Aryal told that the theoretical knowledge of JMC does benefit working journalists (Basnet 2064v.s.: 4).

1.4 Conclusion

Journalism and mass communication education in Nepal has come a long way since its introduction in the 1970s. The number of educational institutions that provide JMC education has increased considerably. And it is no more Kathmandu-centric. The increase in quantity however has not resulted in improved quality; it is still far from satisfactory. Though JMC is a practical subject, the JMC curriculum is mostly theory-oriented. These formal degree programs provide students with much needed knowledge on various aspects of media, and other media related issues. But there is sheer lack of practical components in the JMC curricula. In addition, the colleges have not been able to arrange internships for the students in media houses for various reasons. Due to these factors the JMC graduates that the Nepali colleges are currently producing have limited journalistic skills.

¹⁸ Views expressed in an interaction program on ‘Journalism Training and its Practices in Nepal’ organized by Martin Chautari in Kathmandu on 29 October 2009.

¹⁹ Interview with Pathak.

Chapter 2

Institutions Involved in Media Training

The recent decades witnessed a rapid expansion of the Nepali media—both print and electronic. With the expansion of the sector, the demand for young, dynamic and trained human resources also increased. Because of the increased employment opportunities and also because of the glamour associated with the media sector, member of the younger generation of Nepalis have shown interest in becoming part of this vibrant and growing sector. To cater to this increased demand, a number of organizations have come up to provide various types of media trainings. Apart from these organizations, media/publishing houses and other media related institutions have also provided media trainings from time to time. Even organizations which are not directly related to the media have conducted training programs. The focus of this chapter is on the non-academic institutions that are involved in media training. By looking at their objectives and at the types of trainings provided, these institutions can broadly be divided into two categories: first, those whose primary objective is to provide media training, and second, those organizations whose primary objective is not media training but they are engaged in some such activities.

2.1 Institutions that primarily provide media training

Under this category are those institutions established with the sole aim of providing media trainings. They run trainings professionally, and rely on the fees and grants for the continuation of their work. Generally, they put out public notices inviting applications from those interested in the field of journalism for the training programs. Prominent among these are Nepal Press Institute (NPI), established two decades ago, and Media Point, set up more than a decade ago. Apart from these two, there are a number of other institutes involved in this training work. The number however will not provide a real picture, for there are only a handful of organizations which have provided such trainings for three or more consecutive years. That is to say, many of these training providing institutions close within a couple of years.

2.1.1 Nepal Press Institute

With the aim of improving the quality and professionalism of the Nepali media, Nepal Press Institute (NPI) was established in 1984 by senior working journalists, including Bharat D Koirala and Gokul Pokharel. Initially set up in Kathmandu, NPI now has its branch offices or what it calls Regional Media Resource Centres (RMRCs) in the east, west and central part of southern Nepal. Biratnagar (in east), and Nepalgunj (in mid west) resource centers were established in 1995 and the Butwal (central) branch was opened in 2003.

‘To provide basic journalism training’ was on the top of the list of objectives of NPI at the time of its establishment.²⁰ Therefore, NPI since its inception has been running a 10-month long basic media training course.²¹ The training runs for two and half hours each days, five days a week.

So far, NPI in Kathmandu has already produced 24 cohorts totalling 530 journalism trainees. Each year it trains 25 students on average. NPI’s regional resource centers have been conducting three or five-month long proficiency level training courses. In three-month training these three resource centers teach two hours daily. Despite NPI’s directive to stick to the five-month basic course, it has not yet been put in practice in Butwal and Nepalgunj. They (those running these regional centers) reason that the participants prefer short term courses.²² Biratnagar has until 2009 produced 13 batches of trainees, with average 30 students in a batch. Nepalgunj resource center has produced its 11th batch with 25 students in a batch on average. Butwal however has produced six batches of students, with 30 students on average.

Apart from these regular trainings, NPI also occasionally conducts short term advance trainings and other specific trainings. Such trainings are mostly designed for those who have already completed basic journalism courses or they are meant for the active journalists. Desktop publishing, radio program production, feature writing, development and investigative journalism, economic and business reporting, environment journalism, conflict reporting, peace journalism, constituent assembly reporting, parliamentary reporting, are some of the areas/themes where the NPI has conducted training programs over the past years both in Kathmandu and in its regional centers. NPI has slowed down a bit since 2005 in terms of organising short term trainings due to financial reasons. After a decade-long support, NPI’s major donor Danida has stopped funding NPI to organize such activities.

2.1.2 Media Point

The success of privately owned broadsheet daily *Kantipur* and other papers after the political transition of 1990 played a lead role in attracting many to the field of journalism. The demand for trained personnel was such that NPI alone could not admit all the potential journalism trainees. This led to the establishment of a private company Media Point (MP) in 1995. Set up by journalists Shreeram Singh Basnet, Arjun Bista, and Sanjay Gorkhali, MP’s objectives were similar to those of NPI. It had a similar course design and the duration of the course was also the same. In addition, the majority of those who taught the course at NPI also taught at MP, which is also the case even today.

Beginning from 2005, the 10-month long course of MP has been shortened to a mere four-month one. According to its executive director, Shriram Singh Basnet, due to reduced demand from the participants for the longer version of the course, MP decided to offer the short term course.²³ So far, MP has already produced 25 batches of students, with average of 20 students in each batch, which means it has already provided basic

²⁰ As mentioned in NPI brochure published in 2007. NPI’s other major objectives are: research, publication, advocacy, networking, library and resource center, etc.

²¹ It was changed to a 12-month course in 2002/03, but after three batches of trainees, NPI reverted to its original 10-month format.

²² Separate interviews with Birendra Sharma, Yagya Sharma and Hasta Gurung of NPI.

²³ Interview with Basnet.

journalism training to some 500 students. Apart from the regular course, MP has also conducted around half a dozen short term training programs outside Kathmandu in the past.

2.1.3 Other institutions

With the influx of FM radio stations in Nepal since the mid-1990s (see Humagain, Onta and Bhatta 2008 for further details), there emerged a huge demand for qualified human resources in the newly opened radio stations. Compared to print, radio was much more glamorous and there supposedly was also some money in it, so a great many young people showed interest. To tap this newfound opportunity, training institutes mushroomed with the aim of providing trainings to aspiring radio journalists and radio jockeys. Erstwhile basic computer training centers, tuition centers, and foreign language training centers too ventured into the field. Those already involved in FM radio stations also got involved, and some training centers fought to hire popular radio program hosts.

Now that the demand side has slumped, that there already are many 'trained' people unemployed, and that the economic health of many radios is poor, there is not much demand for basic radio training.²⁴ And because of this many such training centers too have vanished from the scene. Jamaleshwor Institute (JI), a one time popular radio training center, is one such example. Established in 1999, just when the FM craze had begun, it was finally shut in 2005 after being in operation for more than five years. According to its manager Tirtha Bhandari, JI had provided radio presentation and broadcast journalism trainings to some 30 batches of trainees (or around 550 students in total). It had to be closed down due to decrease in the number of trainees.²⁵

Academy of Audio-Visual Arts and Sciences (AAVAS) is a not-for-profit organization (NGO) which has been involved in broadcast media training since its establishment in 1998. Initially, it used to train people in radio program production, presentation, and reporting. However since around 2004, it has solely concentrated on the technical side. It now provides training on video camera operation, visual editing, and also trains radio technicians. It also occasionally provides training on television program production. Gajendra Paudel, training coordinator of AAVAS, claims that there is no match to AAVAS when it comes to the physical infrastructure or training facility. Indeed, there are very few institutes which provide training on the technical side of broadcast media.²⁶ During our study visits, we found very few such technical training institutes outside of Kathmandu. One former employee of Radio Nepal, Kamal BK Nirmohi, has established an audio recording studio (Wave Digital Recording Studio) in Nepalgunj, which he also uses to provide basic radio technician training. It has already produced three batches of trainees totalling three dozen students.²⁷

After print and radio, television sector too witnessed a significant expansion in Nepal. And following the growth, a few institutes have begun training program in

²⁴ For various reviews of the first decade of independent radio in Nepal see Humagain, Onta and Bhatta (2008).

²⁵ Interview with Bhandari. He mentioned that the royal coup of 1 February 2005 was also responsible for the closure of radio training institutes. After the coup, the government had banned radios from broadcasting news related programs, due to which many radio journalists lost their job (see Dhungel 2007).

²⁶ Interview with Paudel.

²⁷ Interview with Nirmohi.

television journalism, program production and video jockeying. On Air Media, Vikalpa-the Option, Medias Collection, etc. are a few examples of such institutes. All three were opened after 2004 or so. Though their main objective is to provide training on video jockeying and television journalism, they also offer training on event management and operation, public speaking skills, marketing, and other technical trainings, as could be gleaned from their brochures.

2.2 Institutions whose primary objective is not media training but are engaged in such activities

In this category are those institutions which are involved, albeit irregularly, in media training business, even though media training is not their primary objective. Some of these institutions are directly related to the media sector, whereas some have nothing to do with it directly. Of those related to the media are media houses, media advocacy organizations, journalists' associations/societies, etc. There are also advocacy NGOs which got involved in the sector largely to influence the media via trainings and other means.

2.2.1 Media houses

One would think that the media houses have a natural interest in training their journalist staff members, and hence would invest in that process. But the reality is media houses in Nepal are not making any genuine effort to train their personnel. Some media houses occasionally do organize refresher trainings for their staff/reporters and a few others have organized basic training programs targeting fresh candidates with the aim of selecting the best from a large cohort of participants.

A great majority of the journalists interviewed during the course of this study told us that the practice of in-house training simply does not exist. Be it private or public, the media houses have largely neglected this activity. A few of the trainings, if one could call them so, that have been organized are limited to one-four days of gatherings, in which the talk is limited to introduction to the institution and some discussions on newer trends in journalism. The biggest media house Kantipur Publications organizes annual regional meetings in which its bureau chiefs, district-based reporters, and stringers of the region participate. In such meetings experiences are shared, new trends are discussed and past works are reviewed.²⁸

Srijana Acharya, Nepalgunj based reporter of Kantipur Television told us that she has never been provided in-house training. Acharya is a reporter who also doubles as camera person. She has been requesting the higher authorities for camera operation/editing trainings, which the management of Kantipur Television has so far not listened to. She however added that she receives feedback on her work from the editors.²⁹ According to a Nepalgunj based reporter of Avenues TV, the management organizes one-two week long general in-house training for the newly recruited staff.³⁰

Kantipur FM, the leading private-sector FM radio station, organizes in-house training once each year with the aim of identifying newer areas, issues which have not been covered, and introducing innovations in the presentation style and reporting.

²⁸ Interview with Mohan Budha Aiyer of Kantipur Publications.

²⁹ Interview with Acharya.

³⁰ Interview with Smriti Giri.

According to Praveen Adhikari of Kantipur FM, such training lasts for three-four days and usually external resource persons are brought in to train the human resources.³¹ Another private FM radio station Ujyalo FM also occasionally organizes orientation training programs for its employees. It also organizes a two-three day introductory training program while launching a new program. This is especially true in the case of programs with external or donor funding.³²

In the wake of establishing a new FM station, the usual practice has been to organize trainings. Two modes of practices are observed in these initiatives. One, selecting the individuals first for different positions and then providing them with relevant trainings—technical trainings for technicians and journalism/presentation trainings for the reporters and other program hosts. One such example is Dinesh FM of Dhangadhi in far-western Nepal. It first selected the personnel and then provided them with relevant trainings, but charged the participants the cost of such training.³³

In the second format, the FM stations first invite applications for the training program mentioning the fact that those who do best would be subsequently employed by the station. Seeing the employment opportunity, many apply for the training and pay necessary fees to the station. At the end of the training only a few get employed, and the rest are left out. Such a mechanism has helped the stations not only to cover the cost of the training, but also to make profits. Quite a few FM radio stations have used this mechanism. Bijayapur FM and Ganatantra FM of Dharan (in east Nepal), and Bageshwari and Krishnasar FM of Nepalgunj (in west Nepal) have followed this method. The two FM stations in Dharan provided training to about 100 applicants each, despite the fact that only a handful of them were actually needed.³⁴ It turned out to be a lucrative business proposition and a few print media houses too have followed the footsteps of these FMs. Examples include *Morning Times Daily* and *Blast Times Daily* of Dharan.³⁵

Communication Corner, Equal Access and Antenna Foundation, all based in Kathmandu, are all involved in media content generation, especially for the radio. Their primary objective is to produce radio programs on issues related to development and public awareness. Media training is also on their priority list. About 10 years ago Communication Corner (CC) organized three one-month long radio program production trainings, in which the participants were charged fees. It also has conducted two ‘community radio broadcasting’ trainings with donor support.³⁶ Now that CC itself is involved in operating an FM station, it is not that involved in external training related activities. The trainings that it organized in the recent past were all related to specific donor-funded programs and were for those involved in those specific program production.

The training programs organized by Equal Access and Antenna Foundation are all project based. They both seek funds from the donors for the production of radio programs on specific issues, in which they put training as one component. Subsequently, they

³¹ Interview with Adhikari.

³² Interview with Gopal Guragain and Manteshwori Rajbhandari of Ujyalo FM.

³³ Interview with Tekraj Joshi and Manila Chaudhari of Dinesh FM.

³⁴ Interview with Dorpadhwoj Rai of Bijayapur FM and Rajendra Kirati of Ganatantra FM.

³⁵ Interview with Basudev Baral of *Morning Times Daily* and Kishor Karki of *Blast Times Daily*.

³⁶ Interview with Gopal Guragain and Manteshwori Rajbhandari of Communication Corner.

provide training, usually of less than five days, to those involved in that particular program.

Equal Access produces some of its programs in coordination with NGOs working in the districts. It selects what it calls community reporters from among these NGO members for each of its such programs. These novice reporters are given training on program production. In such trainings, they are taught basic radio reporting skill, and other related issues, along with some technical skill such as using voice recorders, sending files via email, etc.³⁷

Likewise, Antenna Foundation, in the past, has organized training programs especially related to some of its productions, namely, radio programs such as *Chhinophano*, *Sodhikhoji*, etc. But since early 2009, this institution is venturing full fledged into the training business. It has heavily invested in setting up a good training center with full facilities within its office premises. In 2009 alone it conducted seven training programs on various issues: advance radio technician training, radio feature production training, radio marketing, JSSR media training, radio program production training, and so on.³⁸

2.2.2 Media-related professional organizations

Media related professional organizations are also found involved in the training of journalists. Sancharika Samuha, Asmita Women Publication House Communication and Resource Centre, Working Women Journalists (WWJ), Mahila Sanchar Samuha (Banke), etc. have all conducted media trainings, mostly to women but occasionally to men as well. Prominent among aforementioned organizations is Sancharika Samuha, the organization established to promote women journalists. It has been, since its establishment, and especially since 2000, active in the training sector. Initially it conducted basic journalism training to bring women into the journalism field. Of late, its focus has been in feature writing training. It has its branches in all five regions, which also conduct feature writing and other trainings.³⁹ Mahila Sanchar Samuha of Banke is following the footsteps of Sancharika Samuha for it too organizes basic journalism trainings—that lasts for one week to three months—and feature writing trainings for women in mid west Nepal.⁴⁰

Established in 1988, Asmita focuses basically on research, publication and advocacy. It has in the past conducted trainings, but currently focuses more on advocacy of gender issues. Likewise, the WWJ too organizes trainings for its members. So far, it has conducted four such trainings that include blogging, and creative writing.⁴¹

Similar to the initiatives of women journalists, other social groups, especially Janajatis (ethnic nationalities) and Dalits too are involved in training and other related issues. Be it Jagaran Media Centre of the Dalits or the Association of Nepalese Indigenous Nationalities Journalists (ANIJ) of the Janajatis, they are active both in bringing issues related to their communities to fore, and in bringing member of their communities in the media sector as active journalists. Jagaran Media Center has in the

³⁷ Interview with Upendra Aryal and Binayak Aryal of Equal Access.

³⁸ Interview with Madhu Acharya of Antenna Foundation.

³⁹ Interview with Nirmala Sharma of Sancharika Samuha.

⁴⁰ Interview with Achhari Pokharel of Mahila Sanchar Samuha.

⁴¹ Interview with Sangita Lama of WWJ.

past organized basic journalism trainings and radio program production trainings. Likewise, ANIJ too conducts basic and advance journalism trainings to the people from the Janajati communities.⁴²

The journalists working on various beats have come together to form societies of their own. Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ), Society of Environmental Journalists Nepal (SEJ Nepal), Society of Economic Journalists Nepal (SEJON), Education Journalists' Group (EJG), Nepal Sports Journalists Forum (NSJF), National Forum of Photo Journalists (NFPJ), Health Journalists Association of Nepal (HEJAN) are some such institutions of the journalists working on various fields. These associations too occasionally organize trainings on issues of their concern.

Community Radio Support Centre (CRSC) is a project of NEFEJ, which aims to support and strengthen the capacity of community run and managed FMs. It has been providing radio management training to station managers, radio program production training to program hosts and radio reporters, digital editing and other technical trainings to the technicians involved in the community radios. Based on demand from the radio stations, and on a set criterion, such trainings are given both to the staff of a single radio station and a group of radio stations.⁴³ Likewise, the umbrella organization of the community radios (ACORAB) also organizes trainings from time to time. ACORAB started conducting training for its member radios in 2006. It provides four types of trainings which include radio management training, basic journalism and program production training, and technician training.⁴⁴

Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ) was initially a part of Himal Association, an NGO in Kathmandu. CIJ later branched off to register itself as a separate NGO. It provides trainings on investigative journalism and feature writing. In the year 2005-06 it organized two three-month long residential investigative journalism workshops. It has also conducted other short term trainings.⁴⁵

The umbrella organization of working journalists in Nepal, the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ), its district or branch committees, and other associations such as Press Chautari (journalist front of the Communist Party of Nepal, Unified Marxist-Leninist), Nepal Press Union (the front of Nepali Congress) and Revolutionary Journalists' Association (the front of Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist) also provide trainings to their members once in a while. The FNJ has in the last two years organized two training programs with the help of International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). Of the two, one was related to the security of the journalists working in the conflict areas (particularly in the southern plain called the tarai) or where there is social unrest.⁴⁶ The Banke district committee of FNJ seems to be particularly active in organising training programs for the journalists—it has used various sources to organize such programs. Since 2006 it has organized four such training programs.⁴⁷ Other district branches of the FNJ too have conducted trainings occasionally.

⁴² Interview with Mohan Singh Lama of ANIJ.

⁴³ Interview with Raghu Mainali of CRSC.

⁴⁴ Interview with Pramod Tandukar of ACORAB.

⁴⁵ Interview with Rajendra Dahal of CIJ.

⁴⁶ Interview with Dharmendra Jha of FNJ.

⁴⁷ Interview with Jhalak Gaire and Shukrarishi Chaulagain of FNJ, Banke.

2.2.3 Media unrelated NGOs

There are numerous NGOs in Nepal that are currently active in raising various social issues. The NGOs involved primarily in activism or advocacy work have their interest in tapping various media for the effectiveness of their work. They want to work closely with the media sector so that they could feed in their agenda. These organizations run training programs for the journalists to 'sensitize' them regarding the issues or causes that they champion. In addition, some of them are also organising media trainings targeting not the journalists but their own staff, so that their staff can be familiar with the sector and thus could deal effectively with various media. Of the two, the former is much in practice than the latter.

Organizations working in the human rights sector such as INSEC, IHRICON, NHRC have organized training programs for the journalists on various aspects of human rights. Likewise, CWIN and UNICEF have organized trainings on child rights, Search for Common Ground on peace, and so on. HIV/AIDS, women and domestic violence, women health, environment, conflict, peace process, constituent assembly, good governance, etc. are some of the issues that the organizations advocating such issues have organized training programs for the journalists. Usually such trainings last three-five days and are organized in the regional headquarters or at the center i.e., in Kathmandu. Many even provide daily allowances to the participants. In Kathmandu, especially in mainstream media, the journalists have their own beats, but this is not the case for regional media. Due to this a journalist receives every sort of trainings in the districts. Concerns have been raised about the usefulness of such NGO organized trainings because they are organized not because of the participants' interests but because of the interest of the NGOs. In addition, there is no target group, there is no follow up trainings and no impact assessment. Compared to the investments made in such initiatives, the return is paltry in terms of the impact. Nevertheless, these training sessions have played some role in prompting the journalists to write on specific issues.

As mentioned earlier, these NGOs are also providing media trainings to their own staff members so that they can be able to understand the functioning of media, and gain other related skills. Pro Public, Bageshwari Asal Shasan Club (BASC), Reyukai Nepal, Active Forum for Human Rights Awareness (AFHA) are some of the NGOs involved in such an exercise. Pro Public, as part of its campaign to reach out to a large mass, has been involved in forming various radio listeners' club of its radio program Asal Shasan (good governance) across the country. Such clubs are then mobilized at the local level to curb corruption. Pro Public also provides three-seven day long basic journalism training for the members of such listeners' club and helps them publish wall magazines or monthly bulletins. BASC is one of the listeners' club of Pro Public which branched out to form an NGO of its own, and is now following the footsteps of Pro Public for it too has been active in forming such member clubs in various villages across the district and running basic journalism trainings. It is also conducting trainings on radio program production and program hosting.⁴⁸

2.4 Conclusion

Be it profit making or not-for-profit institutions, almost all media training providers are located in Kathmandu. During our study we did not find any institution which had the

⁴⁸ Interview with Namaskar Shah of BASC.

primary objective of providing media training located outside Kathmandu (NPI's regional resource centers are the only exceptions).⁴⁹ Due to NPI's presence in three regional centers outside Kathmandu, there is availability of regular and 'longer-term' media training programs in those places. But for the people outside these areas, and in the far west, there exist no such facilities. The demand driven growth that followed media boom has now dwindled, leading to demise of many privately run media training institutes.

It is evident from the above discussion that the media houses are investing hardly anything in the human resource development of their staff members. The practice of inviting external professionals and providing in-house training also does not exist. Some of the radio stations are involved in in-house and external training, but largely as part of donor funded projects. The human resources working in media houses either learn from their seniors (by asking or by observation) or wait for the opportunities to come by from external media training organizers. There are plenty of such trainings available but whether they actually cater to the needs of particular journalists is another thing.

To conclude this chapter, there are very few institutions which conduct training on a regular basis. A majority of them are run under 'project basis.' And they rely solely on the money from external donors. Privately run organizations too have come forward to provide media trainings, but on the most they tend to have a short life-span as discussed earlier.

⁴⁹ Before NPI opened its branch in Butwal, Press Academy Butwal, established in 2000, was running media training. It had produced four batches of students till 2003. Set up by local journalists Rishiram Bhushal, DR Ghimire, Madhav Nepal and Arjun Gyawali, this organization couldn't compete and was forced to shut down after NPI opened its bureau in Butwal.

Chapter 3

Media Training Curricula

This chapter examines various aspects of media training curricula that are developed by not-for-profit (or NGOs) and private training institutions. In the first section we look at both basic and advanced training curricula with a focus in print media. The second section focuses on electronic media. And the final section outlines some salient features and shortcomings of these training curricula.

3.1 Print media training curricula

3.1.1 Basic print journalism

The basic print journalism curricula aim to familiarize students with fundamental aspects of media and mass communication as practiced in print journalism. Such curricula usually begin with topics like news, hard and soft news, news structure, news reporting, wall-paper journalism, etc. Interview is another topic. It is discussed as a tool of making news, the necessary pre-interview preparations, and techniques of interviewing people. The details of such interview techniques are however not mentioned in the training curricula, and are said to be dependent on the trainer's own experience and expertise.

The curricula also include units on editorial and op-ed pages, where the trainees learn not only how editorials are written, but also other editing and copy-editing practices in newspapers. The trainees are provided with a list of words frequently used in print media so that they become familiar with the vocabulary specific to print journalism. Topics like media law, media ethics, implementation and violation of media law in Nepal, etc. are also covered in the curricula. In addition, such courses include knowledge on some technical aspects like photography and layout design in print media.

3.1.2 Specialized print journalism

The purpose of such trainings is to enhance the understanding and writing skills of participants in specialized fields or beats. The curricula of such trainings are comprehensive as they try to cover all major issues related to that particular subject. For instance, training course on legal reporting includes subjects like media law, legal provisions related to media, abundance and violation of law, etc. Parliamentary reporting, crime reporting, business reporting, environmental reporting, etc. are other areas where specialized trainings are provided and the curricula also cover issues related to that specialized field.

3.1.2.1 Training on feature-writing⁵⁰

Feature-writing is a specialized type of print media training. The curricula of such trainings include understanding news, reports, case studies and developing skills to write them so that a good feature can be written.

Table 3.1: An overview of feature-writing curricula of NPI and Sancharika Samuha

NPI curriculum	Sancharika Samuha curriculum
Function of a feature story Features of a feature story Types of feature stories	Writing for media Writing for development Writing for news Profile writing
Importance of planning Planning for a feature story Criteria for selecting ideas Feature content	Feature writing Materials required for a feature Process Research Interview Ways of writing Structure Entry/lead
Source of information (primary sources like interviews, observation, etc. and secondary sources like documents, websites, etc.)	Language and Style Use of photo
Writing feature stories Planning for writing	Media and women Women in media Mainstreaming gender in media
Writing introduction, body and conclusion Feedback and rewriting Finalizing stories	

Source: Course manuals of NPI and Sancharika Samuha

The curriculum of feature writing trainings could be based on various approaches. For instance, as seen in Table 3.1, it can be more comprehensive, elaborative and can also include the basics of feature writing (like in the NPI one), or be concise, precise, practical and directly address the types of feature writing (as in the other one).

Profile writing is another way of feature writing. The training curricula on profile writing as developed by some institutions like Sancharika Samuha have clearly laid out the prerequisites of good profile writing. The manuals also include examples of good features, and emphasize the role of social research in producing them. They also discuss interviews, photography, and the role of language in developing feature articles. Such trainings are usually a week long.

⁵⁰ Journalist and trainer Mohan Mainali thinks that feature writing can be included in the basic journalism training, because it involves the basics of print journalism. But NPI has not included it in its five-month basic journalism training course. Institutions like Sancharika Samuha provide feature writing training to journalists already involved in the field of journalism. Though slightly different in format, feature report is also very much part of the electronic media.

Notes and a considerable amount of reference materials are provided to the trainees. But some trainees have also complained this ‘over referencing’ as being problematic and burdensome. The trainees are made to write features, and trainers read them and provide feedback. In this way, writing, feedback and revision is a usual procedure until a good feature is written.

3.1.2.2 Investigative journalism

Investigative journalism curriculum focuses on certain aspects of journalism. For instance, the 2006 course module of the Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ), included topics like news, features, basics of investigative journalism, photo journalism, and the use of computer in journalism. There is also a special section on Nepali language, in which the trainees are taught about proper word choices, sentence formation, intra- and inter paragraph coherence, etc. CIJ’s ‘Patrakarita Pathshala’ (PP) included 20 classes on language, each three-hour long. This is quite remarkable when compared to the course developed by others which pay critically no attention to language.⁵¹ PP was designed also to provide classes on social science basics to the trainees so that they could have a better overview of foundational aspects of Nepali society (Mainali 2007).

3.2 Electronic media training curricula

3.2.1 Radio journalism training

The radio journalism trainings can be divided in two categories like the print journalism training. One is basic radio journalism which comprises certain courses like radio anchoring and the basics of radio journalism. And the other is advanced or specialized one, which deals only with certain aspects or specialized fields of radio journalism.

3.2.1.1 Basic radio journalism curricula

The training curricula on basic radio journalism include topics like fundamentals of radio/FM, and the technical, administrative and in-house affairs of radio stations, in addition to discussing the types of radio stations, radio programs, ways of identifying audience and making appropriate programs for the targeted audience. Both commercial and not-for-profit institutions (NGOs) provide such training, and their course contents also differ accordingly.

The course structure of trainings run by commercial institutions is not concrete, as it displays a wider range of concerns: from basic issues of radio like introduction to radio, language and script of radio programs, program presentation, making live programs, reporting and reading news, etc. to seemingly ‘non-radio’ issues like personality development, leadership skills, enhancing self-confidence, and handling of the masses.

On the other hand, trainings by NGOs like the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (ACORAB) and Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) regard community as their central concern in designing their training curricula. They emphasize the need of learning from community rather than imposing one’s own view in conducting radio programs, and also encourage trainees to design programs that suit local socio-cultural contexts.

⁵¹ NPI has allocated no classes for languages in its 2009 curriculum.

The curriculum of such trainings places research as an important topic for radio journalism. It also includes the importance of research, identification of research problems, and research methods. Interview is regarded as the source of news, and the techniques of interview and questionnaire preparation are taught in such trainings. Besides, preparation of radio reports, radio magazines, order of radio programs are other topics included in such training modules. But as such trainings try to incorporate and over stress the local perceptions of reality in designing their courses, they may sound more theoretical than grounded.

NPI's curriculum on radio training includes radio reporting, news, interviews, radio magazines and technical know-how of radio programs. It starts with basic topics like broadcasting system, radio frequencies like FM, MW and SW before actually discussing about radio.⁵² NPI, as evident from its training module, regards radio journalism to be essentially different from the print one in that it is broadcast while the latter is not. Whereas some private institutions try to topically include a wide range of issues, their training modules are quite unclear and they tend to miss some relevant issues like means of collecting news, writing narrations, synchronizing sound effects, bytes, music and narrations, etc. (which are covered in the NPI curriculum).

There are other curricula designed for trainings on radio administration. Such trainings focus on the administrative aspect of radio programs and radio stations, like the inclusiveness of staff in the administrative body, in-house communication, organizational structure, development and management of institution, etc. The course module also aims to teach ways of building competitiveness, social marketing for radio programs, and marketing for advertisements.⁵³

There are few other types of trainings called in-house and attachment trainings. One finds no specific course designed for these types of trainings, but the apparent objective of such trainings is to enhance mutual understanding between program producers and radio stations. In attachment trainings, people from local radio stations are trained along with personnel from nationally influential radio stations in an attempt to familiarize the former with radio program presentations. Such trainings are designed for individuals having specialized knowledge and those involved in their respective fields for a long time.

3.2.1.2 Specialized radio journalism curricula

The primary aim of such trainings is to raise the pressing issues surrounding national politics and society. The beneficiaries of such trainings are those having a prior knowledge of the basics of journalism, and because of this the training curricula do not include the fundamentals of journalism.

Such trainings can take place on any issue, and the design and content of the course, differs accordingly with the discretion of the training institutions or trainers. For example, in one NEFEJ training course on conflict and violence, topics like meaning and definition of conflict and violence, their types, causes, etc. were included. In some ways, the course was designed with an aim to identify how journalists can contribute in resolving social conflict and violence.

⁵² NPI curriculum revised in 2009.

⁵³ Interviews with Raghu Mainali and Pramod Tandukar.

Another case may be taken of a curriculum designed by EJJ (Table 3.2). Its curriculum has been designed with a view to enhance skills and knowledge of journalists working in the field of education, as seen below:

Table 3.2: Structure and objective of curriculum developed by EJJ

Objective	Curriculum content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance the capacity of journalists working in education • To initiate discussions on the present condition of news on education, and the issues covered in radio programs on education • To encourage media people to conduct such programs • To identify proper source of information concerning education • To familiarize journalists with media ethics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of radio programs on education in FM radio stations • National and local issues in education and the media approach • Ways to incorporate issues of education in FM radios • Government expectations from FM radios in raising the standards of education • Givers and takers of information education in FM radios • Technical aspects of producing news • Management of teacher-student relationship and media approach • Codes of ethics for the media people working on education • A manual for FM journalists on 'Education for All'

Source: EJJ Report on Training held on 12-15 July 2009.

3.2.1.3 Training for radio technicians

The course on these types of trainings concerns technical aspects of radio stations, like transmitters, towers, and equipment used in radio stations. The training course also includes a brief introduction to computer programs as how they are related in producing radio programs. The training is primarily practical-based and the course is designed covering the practical technical and technological aspects of radio programs and radio stations.⁵⁴

3.2.2 Online media curriculum

Comparatively new, such trainings on online media include topics like introduction and nature of online media, ways of writing online, designing web pages, uploading materials on the web, etc. This has recently been included in its 2009 curriculum by NPI.

3.2.3 Television journalism curriculum

The curriculum on television journalism primarily includes the means and methods of reporting on television. It covers different aspects of television journalism such as the use of camera, camera movement, shots, microphone, light, OB Van, Electronic News Generation (ENG). Besides, the course also features the use of narration in reporting,

⁵⁴ Based on the training provided by the BBC for radio technicians in July 2009 in Kathmandu.

synchronization of narration and picture (audio-visual), station jingles, video editing, etc.⁵⁵

3.3 Salient features and shortcomings of training curricula

In general, it appears that the media training curricula are designed with two main objectives: to provide trainees with knowledge and to equip them with practical skills. Most curricula have included practical training in one way or other. It is quite evident that these media training curricula pay attention to practical aspects, which is praiseworthy.⁵⁶ Internship is an important part of long-term media trainings, and this will certainly help in orientating participants in practical aspects of mass communication and journalism. NPI's 10-month curriculum, revised in 2009, has included two-month internship as a part of the course in which the trainees have to spend 34 days in media houses. Its three-month short training also requires trainees to spend two weeks (at least 10 days) in media houses. Media Point has not explicitly included internship as mandatory in its curriculum, but has stated that it would arrange internship to those interested.

Similarly, the flexibility of the curricula is another positive aspect of media trainings. NPI has tailored its training for ten, three and one month, based on the need of the trainees, and despite being flexible, it has not actually missed central themes of media. The 10-month training course includes 12 days of feature writing, while the three-month course includes one to three days of feature writing. When the eight-month (except two months' internship) course of Media Point was shortened to four months, no substantial change in the course curriculum was made; only the duration of the course was changed.

Still, there are some aspects which have not received due attention in such media training courses. Of these, the most striking is the ignorance towards the issue of language. Nepali language still needs adequate attention in the curricula. Similarly while flexibility is a good aspect of training curricula, the very lack of a fixed curriculum is another problem facing such trainings. This problem is most prevalent in private and commercial training centers, and their practice of designing 'ad hoc' or 'need based' courses only demonstrates their lack of clarity and vision.

Trainings on radio journalism apparently show lower degrees of intensiveness and depth when compared to those of print journalism (particularly investigative and feature writing). And as mentioned earlier, a structured curriculum or training module is a must which make such trainings systematic and hence more effective.

⁵⁵ Interview with Gajendra Paudel of AAVAS. NPI has incorporated these issues in its curriculum on television journalism

⁵⁶ For instance, NPI has included a project work at the end of each unit. Similarly Media Point claims that 70 percent of its curriculum is practical, although it has not mentioned project work in its curriculum as such.

Chapter 4

Trainees

Mainly two types of trainees take part in the trainings. One group comprises of enthusiastic and eager new participants willing to learn journalism to whom training teaches basic skills of journalism. It is called basic training. The other group comprises of those who already have basic skills and want to be professional journalists. This is called advanced and/or specialised training. This chapter looks at the trainees that participate in basic and advanced/ specialized trainings. It also discusses the trainee selection process as well as the issue of inclusion and exclusion in the trainings, and also highlights the weaknesses of the trainees.

4.1 Basic trainings

Basic training is designed for those who want to work in the journalism sector. In some institutions the trainees have to go through certain selection processes. But in recent days the competition is not as stiff as it used to be. For instance, the number of the participants has decreased to half of what it used to be in the basic training provided by the Regional Media Resource Centre (RMRC), Nepalgunj of NPI.⁵⁷ The same is true for Media Point (MP), an organization providing regular trainings in Kathmandu. About 30 people apply these days for the basic training at MP whereas it used to be about 60 in the past.⁵⁸ The reason behind this decrease is the increased number of training institutions and formal institutions offering journalism courses.

The emergence and growth of FM radio stations has generated new avenues in media training. The basic radio training is conducted by FM radios themselves. The trainings provided by FM radios often target youngsters. They put out advertisements mentioning that the best trainees would get jobs in those institutions. It has been found throughout the country that FM stations in their initial phase of broadcasting provide paid trainings to a large mass, many times more than the number needed to run FM radio station, and only the best are hired to run the programs. The promoters of the radio stations have benefited from the trainees' keen interest to work in the new radios.

There are examples where stations charged up to Rs. 10,000 per person to participate in these trainings. They provided training in two or three shifts because of the large number of participants (often more than 100). FM radios adopted this technique solely for economic benefit. The institutions or the radio stations, through these trainings made a lot of money, enough to run their radio stations for some months. Even though they selected

⁵⁷ Interview with Pitambar Kattel, coordinator of NPI, Nepalgunj.

⁵⁸ Interview with Shreeram Singh Basnet, executive director of Media Point.

the best from the participants, they paid them meager wages just because they are beginners in the profession.⁵⁹ Most trainees feel cheated at the end.

Such a practice is employed by almost all new radio stations.⁶⁰ Shivaraj Yogi from Dhangadhi in far west Nepal says:

FM radios train the participants to provide job. They provide the job but don't pay. When I was working as the news chief in Khaptad FM in 2064v.s. (2007/08), it had organized a one and half months journalism and anchoring training. Narayan Shrestha, Deepak Raj Pandey and Shreeram Paudel were the trainers from Kathmandu training different packages. They collected Rs 6,000 each from 42 participants. Except the dropouts, 38 were appointed in the radio who worked as volunteers but when they had to be paid, the contract stated that radio journalists would be paid half of the amount s/he had collected as advertisement revenue that month. Except for some important five-seven people other RJs aren't paid and they have to depend on the advertisements they collect. At present, there are only about seven employees working in Khaptad FM. Others have already left.⁶¹

The establishment of many radio stations without adequate preparation and feasibility has indeed created these problems. Radio Purvanchal, a radio run and managed by women landed in a similar training related controversy. The local branch of Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ) had to intervene in this controversy.

With the growth of FM stations, many private training institutes have mushroomed in major cities across the country to provide radio anchoring and radio journalism training. They put out advertisements often mentioning the names of some popular radio hosts as trainers who however do not appear in the trainings at all. They even publish such notices without taking consent from such individuals. Such institutions flourish in certain seasons, especially when there are fresh School Leaving Certificate (SLC, 10th grade) and 10+2 graduates in the market, who want to receive training. The institutions meet their annual budget from the income of a season.⁶² But only a few of the individuals enter the media sector through these trainings. Interestingly, due to the lack of trust over such trainings, Radio Annapurna of Pokhara had clearly mentioned 'untrained individuals are prioritized' in its vacancy advertisement.⁶³

In commercially run training institutes, many participants are stuffed together in a room. It is also true for not-for-profit organizations (or NGOs) if they are conducting trainings without donor assistance; they also bring together a large number of trainees and train them by 'lecture method.' Training becomes practical and effective when there

⁵⁹ Interview with Arjun Upreti, the president of Nayasansar, a training institution in Itahari.

⁶⁰ Such views that the best would be placed in job after the trainings were shared by Rajendra Kiranti (station manager, Ganatantra FM, Dharan), Dorpadhwoj Rai (managing director, Bijaypur FM, Dharan), Sandesh Das Shrestha (manager, B FM Biratnagar), Rajendra Sharma (station manager, Star FM Dharan), Tula Adhakari (station manager, Krishnasar FM, Nepalgunj), and Kulmani Gyawali (station manager, Radio Lumbini, Butwal). Big FM in Pokhara did not collect the money but rather provided travel allowance in the training.

⁶¹ Interview with Yogi.

⁶² Interview with Milan Pratik, promoter of Creative Broadcasting Media Plus in Pokhara.

⁶³ Interview with Dipendra Shrestha, station manager of Radio Annapurna in Pokhara.

are not too many participants—the trainer can pay enough and equal attention to every trainee, comment on his/her home assignments and provide feedback to them. Such a practice is not possible when there are a large number of participants, and the training becomes more didactic, one way rather than participatory. Vijay Mishra and Yagya Sharma, both trainers from Biratnagar regard 16-20 participants as the ideal figure for a training class.⁶⁴

4.2 Advanced/specialized trainings

Advanced or specialized trainings are provided to practicing journalists. Many journalists interviewed for this study held a positive view towards such advanced trainings. However, a few participants also complained about some trainings as being less effective than expected. There was dissatisfaction over two- or three-day long trainings organized by various NGOs, as such trainings are organized in the interest of the organizers rather than that of the participants. Such trainings are the necessity of the trainers or the organizers rather and not of the trainees.⁶⁵ They organize these types of trainings to make the journalists sensitive about the issues they advocate or champion. For example, Pro Public, Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal (IRHICON), Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC), Transparency International, Nepal Red Cross Society, etc. have organized such advanced or specialized trainings in various parts of the nation. Generally, the journalists working in big media houses of Kathmandu have their own beats, or specialized area of focus. But in many small media houses, a single person has to cover all the beats for whom these short term and general trainings are useful.

There were also complaints that most NGO trainings are not well designed/prepared as their priority is other than training itself. Since their target population is not clear, the participants are selected at random and they comprise from skilled professional hands to amateur and rookie journalists. This creates hassles to the trainers. If they focus on the beginners, the seniors or skilled ones get bored, and if they focus on skilled ones, the beginners cannot grasp the contents.⁶⁶

Most such trainings are based on projects, and therefore are not followed upon after the termination of the projects. People from these institutions appear as trainers and preach in the name of training, without interacting with the participants and conducting practical exercises, for they have very little knowledge about the basics of media.⁶⁷ Dipendra Shrestha of Radio Annapurna, Pokhara has the following to say about the short term trainings:

We learn many skills in longer term trainings. There is a repetition of the same skill in short term trainings that last one-two days. In some of the trainings, the trainers are not well prepared and don't even provide the necessary reference materials. I feel these programs are organized only for public relation and discussions. If the training are organized outside Pokhara, like in Kathmandu and travel allowance is given and we have personal work there as well, we go there. Short trainings are organized for theoretical skills but they lack discussions. How

⁶⁴ Interview with Mishra and Sharma.

⁶⁵ Interview with Rabindra Bastola.

⁶⁶ Interview with Nisha Dahal, program presenter of B FM Biratnagar.

⁶⁷ Interview with Dharmendra Jha and D.R. Ghimire.

much training should we receive on the same subjects like balanced news and short lead? These are already known; so the trainings have not been that useful. I am also the secretary of the Federation of Nepalese Journalist, Kaski district committee, and the federation is asked to collect Dalits, ethnic nationalities, and female participants for various training. There is a problem when there is no Dalit journalist. The fashion of training for training's sake is increasing.⁶⁸

Both parties, i.e., the trainees and organizers will benefit if trainings are organized with the objective of making the journalists analyze the issues at hand neutrally. But what the organizers want to do is feed their agendas into the media from their point of view, which the participants are not very interested in.⁶⁹

4.3 Trainee selection process

The participants for the trainings are selected in three ways: one, the training providing organizations select the participants; two, they ask media houses to send the participants; and third, participants are selected by the journalists' association called Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ). In all of the above three modes, the targeted audience of the training remains unclear. The participant selection procedure is thus very random and ad hoc. Those journalists who even lack basic skills of journalism are selected for feature writing and other advanced trainings.⁷⁰ Due to this, the effectiveness of the training is limited.

It is also found that the participant selection process is biased as those who are given the responsibility of selecting the trainees are often found selecting their near and dear ones and not those who are in real need of the trainings. In most trainings organized by NGOs, the clever and smart ones are mostly invited irrespective of their beat or working field. The daily and other allowances associated heavily influence the selection practice.⁷¹ The Regional Media Resource Centres (RMRCs) of Nepal Press Institute used to provide daily allowances to the participants with the support from DanidaHUGOU. This led to increased participation in the trainings. And some people even received the same training twice.⁷²

Amit Rijal, station manager of Big FM in Pokhara said:

Mostly there are institutional invitations for training but the institutional decisions are biased. The senior staff want to take part if allowance is provided. The program directors have attended basic trainings, for example. If there is air ticket for trainings outside of Pokhara, station managers or program directors take part in the training, no matter what the level and purpose of the training is. Some seniors are also preoccupied with the idea that if juniors receive training, they learn more and become better skilled⁷³

⁶⁸ Interview with Dipendra Shrestha.

⁶⁹ Interview with Sharachchandra Wasti.

⁷⁰ Interview with Hemanta Karmacharya and Dharmendra Jha.

⁷¹ Interview with Madhav Sharma.

⁷² Interview with Hemanta Karmacharya.

⁷³ Interview with Rijal.

A female radio journalist shared a similar experience in which the station manager and director went to the training whenever air ticket was supplied, and she was given the opportunity when only the bus fare provided.⁷⁴

The training organizers also usually want the senior members to participate. But from some media houses, only the novices attend the training. The training becomes less effective when seniors and beginners are put together in a group. This is so also because the organizers do not have an idea of whom to provide the training, and even when they have an idea, they do not clearly spell that out. Arjun Upreti, a trainee of the past, and a present day trainer shared his experience: “The station manager who doesn’t produce programs, also attends the training focused on program production.”⁷⁵

Community Radio Support Centre (CRSC), a project of the Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ), organizes trainings for the journalists working in the community radios. CRSC had to make the trainee selection procedure strict when participants not directly related to the training started appearing as participants. Raghu Mainali, co-ordinator of the CRSC said, “If any unrelated person appears in the training and if they do not show their interest on the training, then they are sent back and that particular station is warned and will be banned for the next two trainings.” Mainali spelled out the changes made in the selection process at CRSC:

When we organize trainings we ask the radio stations to recommend individuals working on the particular issue/area. We select the participants based on the recommendations, bio-data and also make assessment of the importance and usefulness of the training to that particular individual. These days we ask for two names, and select one of the two. Even after the completion of all selection process, in one of the trainings aimed at reporters, a chairman of a radio station appeared as participant. We sent him back. He said “sorry” and left. We also send back individuals who come twice for the same training.⁷⁶

Equal Access also conducts trainings related to radio. It has gone through similar problem, that is, unrelated persons coming for the training irrespective of the focus subject. According to Binayak Aryal, training management officer of Equal Access FM Network, initially they used to request the radio stations to send anybody working in the particular subject for the training.⁷⁷ But these days they request for individuals who are committed to work for at least two years in the institution.

We have already dealt with the issue of selection procedure related to district committees of FNJ and media houses. Both FNJ and the media houses do not keep record of the individuals who receive trainings. They claim that they can remember the individuals taking part in trainings without the record as there are very few members working in their media houses. But if they do keep records, then it would not only make the selection process easy and transparent, the charges of partiality would also vanish.

The trainings are organized based on certain assumptions of the organizers rather than assessing the need first. The choices and interest of the journalists should have been

⁷⁴ The conversation was made with her. She wishes to remain anonymous.

⁷⁵ Interview with Upreti, president of Naya Sansar, Itahari.

⁷⁶ Interview with Mainali.

⁷⁷ Interview with Aryal.

the primary factor in the trainings but this aspect is not given due consideration, which have made the trainings less effective. The better way to do is to ask the journalist to write why they need that particular training. Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ), Sancharika Samuha, etc. follow this practice. CIJ invites the application from interested participants in which the applicant should submit sample of his/her previous work and academic qualification certificates along with an essay to judge language and writing skills. Based on those documents, CIJ selects the candidates, but also positively differentiates women, Dalits, people from remote regions, and victims of state and non state actors (see Mainali 2007 for further details).

For basic trainings, NPI conducts entrance examinations or aptitude tests. It first publishes notices in local newspapers for the basic trainings outlining prerequisites. For one- and three-month long basic journalism training, the minimum qualification of the participant is secondary school (SLC) and in a batch only 30 participants are trained. In the ten-month long training organized in Kathmandu, they have set the minimum qualification as 10+2 or certificate level. On average 25 participants are trained in a batch. However, for other trainings, the NPI does not have such criteria set, and the selection practice is rather ad hoc.

4.4 The issues of inclusion and exclusion

Nepali media does not reflect the social fabric of the country. There is still a monopoly of hill Brahmin males in the profession. If people from various communities could be included in the basic journalism training itself then it could pave the way for an inclusive Nepali media.⁷⁸ Some institutions are paying attention to this fact and are making efforts in that direction. Jagaran Media Centre focuses its basic journalism training on Dalits whereas the Association of Nepalese Indigenous Nationalities Journalists (ANIJ) focuses on ethnic nationalities. Similar practices are also taking place in other areas outside of Kathmandu. For example, Vision Nepal of Butwal organized trainings only for Madhesi Dalits. Mahila Sanchar Samuha (Women Communication Group) of Nepalgunj has been conducting trainings on basic journalism and feature writing only for women.⁷⁹ Likewise, Madhesi Media Mission provides training for Madhesi journalists. Radio Lumbini, with the support from MS Nepal, conducts trainings with special focus on marginalized groups such as Dalits, women victim of domestic violence, etc.⁸⁰

Though NPI also aims to include women, Dalits, ethnic minorities, Madhesis, in their trainings, there is no particular policy guiding its work. Last year NPI with assistance from the District Development Committee, Morang organized separate one-month long trainings for each social group. Yagya Sharma, a trainer, was of the opinion that in such trainings the participants do not come because they want to be journalists but because it is being provided free of cost.⁸¹ In the case of Dalits, even though the training was free, there were not enough participants to select from. NPI had to put an extra effort to gather participants. Sharma doubts whether these 'forceful' trainings will produce desirable results.

⁷⁸ See Onta et al 2008 for more details on this subject.

⁷⁹ If males show their keen interest, only two or three are included.

⁸⁰ Interview with Sharada Gaire, program presenter, Radio Lumbini.

⁸¹ Interview with Yagya Sharma.

Though Nepali media is not inclusive, the training institutions try to make their trainings more inclusive. Interestingly, even when these institutions invite just one participant, they request to include member of excluded groups, e.g., Dalits, ethnic nationalities, Madhesi, women, etc. There are a few people from those communities in the journalism profession and it so happens that the same person is repeatedly sent to attend various trainings.⁸²

Logshari Kunwar, a journalist of Dhangadi in far west Nepal is one such trainee who very often gets selected for trainings due to the 'quota' system. She said:

I took one week journalism training organized by the Society of Environment Journalist Nepal (SEJ) in 2059v.s. The training was provided free of cost, and I got trained about radio anchoring, news writing and news reading skills. After 2/3 months I took part in another three- day training organized by SEJ Nepal in Lamki. Later I also received two trainings organized by SEJ Nepal, one in Nepalgunj and the other in Dhangadi. In the training of SEJ Nepal, the policy was to include 20 percent female trainees, but as there were only two female journalists active in the far western development region, I got selected all the time. However, in actuality I learned the journalistic skills more from the editor Birendra Rawal than from any of those trainings.⁸³

There are many other examples of one person receiving a number of trainings, especially in the cities where the NPI's regional resource centers are located. The reporter of Bageshwari FM (Nepalgunj) Smriti Giri and the editor of *Bijayapur weekly* (Dharan) Ganga Baral have already received more than 17 trainings related to radio, basic, conflict, peace, domestic violence, women, women trafficking, children, codes of conduct, feature writing, HIV/AIDS, human rights, etc.⁸⁴ Nepali media will be inclusive if the excluded groups are included from the very beginning, i.e., from the basic training. But in the name of inclusion this act of a single person getting all the opportunity should come to an end.

4.5 The problems with the trainees

A great many members of the journalist fraternity are still not very educated. This is particularly true in the case of the journalists working outside Kathmandu. According to Sharachchandra Wasti, an active journalism trainer, in some of the trainings, out of 25 participants there are not even five trainees who can comprehend what is being taught.⁸⁵ If the journalists are at least college graduates (i.e., with a bachelor's degree) then perhaps this problem would partially be solved. In some trainings, foreign trainers are also present but this is not very useful because of the language problem. And even if the trainers are Nepali, and the teaching and reference materials are in English, such trainings

⁸² Interview with Narayan Karki, Dipendra Shrestha, Rajesh Bidrohi, Pradeep Menyangbo, Bikram Luitel and Sita Mathemba.

⁸³ Interview with Logshari Kunwar, the publisher of *Morning Bell daily* in Dhangadi and the editor of *Hamro Seti weekly*. Birendra Rawal is associated with SEJ Nepal and is the publisher and chief editor of *Hamro Seti weekly*.

⁸⁴ Interview with Giri and Baral.

⁸⁵ Interview with Wasti.

are also less useful because of the journalists' lack of command over the English language.⁸⁶

The trainers often blame the trainees for being 'lazy,' and claim that only a few are devoted and intelligent. In general, two types of participants attend the trainings. Some of them come out of their own interest and some of them because of the wishes of the training providing institutions.⁸⁷ The ones who come on their own are more excited and devoted to the trainings. The trainees who come to the basic training of radio are found preoccupied with an idea that there is nothing to be done except speaking in the radio. But when they know that the speakers in the radio have to prepare the script themselves, some of them quit the training.⁸⁸

Some participate in trainings because of the interest and excitement, but not all of them work professionally in journalism. It is found that only ten percent of the trainees who have received training from Nepal Press Institute are working in the journalism sector⁸⁹ and from some batches not even a single participant has joined the sector.

All the journalists do not learn the same skills in a training program. The practical aspect of the training is more important. Some journalists repeat the mistakes even after theoretically and practically knowing that they should not be making those mistakes (Mainali 2007).

⁸⁶ Centre for Investigative Journalism's training school, PP, had plenty of study materials in English. Two journalists of Dharan, Sita Mademba and Pradeep Menyangbo, said they had difficulty in comprehending those materials when they were participating in the training.

⁸⁷ Interview with Yagya Sharma, Biratnagar based journalism trainer.

⁸⁸ Interview with the Sandesh Das Shrestha, director of B FM Biratnagar.

⁸⁹ Interview with Harsha Subba, the management committee chairperson of RMRC, Biratnagar.

Chapter 5

Trainers

The effectiveness and quality of any training program depends largely on the trainers involved in it. The quality of trainers is more important than the curriculum, physical infrastructure and the availability of reference materials. Indeed, the lack of experienced trainers is the main problem of media institutions conducting journalism and other media related trainings. Due to the small number of experienced trainers, the same person has been conducting trainings in many places. And even novice journalists, persons with hardly any experience, have worked as trainers and have been guest lecturers in various training programs.

NPI has set out some basic criteria for the appointment of a trainer since long. According to NPI policy, the person should be teaching journalism in college or should have at least bachelor's degree in the relevant subject, and trained on media related Training of Trainers (ToT). But in the case of guest lectures, ToT is not mandatory. However the guest lecturer should at least be active in that particular field. These are also the criteria of NPI's three Regional Media Resource Centres (RMRCs) outside the valley but if the trainer has experience in journalism and ToT in other fields, they do not require ToT in journalism as such.

Media Point, another regular training providing institution, has also the set the minimum requirement for trainers, which is a bachelor's degree and specialization in journalism. Most of MP's trainers have taken ToTs, but MP also has occasionally used people with long experience in teaching as trainers. Those active in their specific fields have appeared as guest lecturers in MP's trainings. In many other institutions, there are no set criteria or minimum qualifications that a trainer should possess. In most cases trainers are selected on the basis of the economic health of the organizers and on trainers' time and availability.

5.1 Training of trainers (ToT)

Along with experience in a specific field or adequate knowledge in teaching and training, ToT is considered to be essential for a good trainer. However, there is hardly any recognized institution that provides ToT on media in Nepal. NPI has organized ToTs infrequently on basic and advanced journalism. Altogether 41 trainers, 26 in Kathmandu and 15 in regional centers, have been working as trainers in training programs of NPI.

In July 2001, NPI provided a 10-day ToT to 14 journalists from various parts of the country. It was organized in association with Baltic Media Centre, Denmark. In January 2003, NPI organized another ToT that lasted for two and half years in association with the Danish School of Journalism (DSJ). The training was especially meant for those with at least a bachelor's degree and had been involved in journalism for a long time. Based

primarily on DSJ's teaching course on proactive news reporting, news interview, feature writing, production of radio programs and online journalism, this training was reportedly more effective and different in style. Right after the completion of the each course, NPI used to organize internship programs for the participants in various parts of the country on the same issues (news interview, radio program production, etc.). The trainees were asked to give feedback on their works to trainers of NPI and DSJ. In its next training phase, Nepali specialists in related fields were used as resource persons. The trainees were then put in a place for ten days to two weeks according to necessity in order to teach training courses and practical exercises. Again those trainees were sent by NPI to various places like before to provide internship for others. The same procedure was followed in every training phase.

In this ToT, trainees had to develop training modules and under the internship programs, they had to carry out their own courses. This made ToT very effective. A participant of the training said, "After the training there was drastic change in our ways of working. Before, we used to think of training as some sort of classroom lecture, which used to be monotonous for both interns and teachers (us). However, after the training, we began to teach by participating interns in the training course."⁹⁰ Although the training course was for two and half years, the ToT lasted till the mid of 2007 with regular gaps in between. The program started with 24 interns from various parts of the country, including Kathmandu. However, due to its terms for interns to actively participate in every activity, only 14 were able to complete the entire course. Those who were passive and in short of their assignments were left out in the next phase.

Apart from these two ToTs, NPI occasionally gave ToT on the specialized field. In February 2002, NPI conducted a ToT on investigative journalism for 14 participants in association with the Centre for Investigative Journalism (based in Philippines). This was a two-week long course. Another ToT of NPI was on gender and media of one week duration. It was held in May 2002 in association with the Mainstreaming Gender Equity Program (MGEP). There were 19 participants and all of them were from within the NPI. In September 2007, NPI along with Media and Democracy Group (M&DG), Canada, organized another ToT on election reporting for 23 participants. All of the participants were NPI's trainers. And in February 2009, in coordination with the same organization, another ToT on parliamentary reporting was delivered, in which 21 trainers participated. In these specialized trainings partner organizations arranged their own trainers whereas Nepali reporters and specialists were present as guest lecturers.⁹¹

No other organization is found as active as NPI in organising the ToT on media. Media Point organized one ToT of 15 days on basic journalism in 2007. The advertisement inviting the applications spelled out the following conditions: a bachelor's degree, and at least ten months' journalism experience. A total of 12 candidates out of 27 applicants were selected on merit basis. Except one, all journalists were based in Kathmandu. Ram Krishna Regmee, Shreeram Singh Basnet and teachers of campuses and others conducted this ToT. It was not as sophisticated as NPI's for it did not have the internship component. However, the participants had to design the course module, and they also had to make presentations. The executive director of Media Point claimed that

⁹⁰ Interview with Hemanta Karmacharya.

⁹¹ Information regarding the various ToT program conducted by NPI is based on interviews with Hasta Gurung and Chirinjivi Khanal of NPI.

such a ToT is adequate for basic training. Indeed, it has helped mitigate the scarcity of the trainers. In its four-month training period, Media Point employs almost 30 trainers (including regular trainers and guest lecturers) many of whom also teach at NPI's 10-month long training program.⁹²

Though it has been organising numerous trainings on radio, Community Radio Support Centre (CRSC), a project of NEFEJ, has so far conducted only one ToT. In 2007, it organized a five-day program with 12 candidates from various parts of the country, and a follow-up was done in 2008. Before that ToT program, there were three trainers (Raghu Mainali, Bharat Bhushal and Pratik Bhandari) in CRSC with ToT on subjects like media, conflict, and other topics. The program's aim was to prepare qualified trainers who are based on various parts of the country so that it would help ameliorate the problem of arranging trainers from Kathmandu in trainings conducted outside the Kathmandu valley. The ToT that was organized only made the trainers capable of conducting basic trainings, for they had limited experience and knowledge of radio journalism and radio program production. There still is scarcity of good radio trainers on the basics of radio management and technology who could also conduct advanced radio training.⁹³

It is not easy to find practicing journalists who also could conduct ToT. Only a handful of them have turned into trainers on their own through national and international trainings and have conducted trainings in association with other institutions.

5.2 The availability of trainers outside Kathmandu

Even though Kathmandu has some nationally and internationally ToT trained people and journalists with long experiences in the field, it still lacks good trainers. It may be mainly accounted to the lack of professionalism in this work. Many trainers are not fully dedicated in this work because of their involvement in many other jobs and commitments. If this is the situation in Kathmandu, it is worse outside Kathmandu—qualified trainers are a rarity. The trainers have to be brought from Kathmandu or training institutes have to be content with whoever is available locally. In order to tackle this problem NPI made some investments in preparing a few trainers in places like Biratnagar, Butwal, Nepalgunj, Dhangadhi and Mahendranagar. However, since these people are mostly practicing journalists, they are confined to their own areas. And therefore, there is severe scarcity of quality trainers in most places outside these areas.

Since refresher training programs are rarely organized for the trainers, many trainers from outside Kathmandu are not very up to date, i.e., they are not aware of the newest trends and developments in the field. During our research, many respondents expressed their dissatisfaction towards the trainers from their regions. One journalist from Nepalgunj was blunt, "What meaning does it hold when a person who has not published a single feature report goes around preaching the ways to write news features?" Another journalist from Nepalgunj, Bheshraj Basnet, thus explained his reasons for not participating in many training programs: "People with even less knowledge and skill than your own come as expert and give lectures. So what is the point of participating, when you do not benefit? That is why I usually do not participate in many trainings."⁹⁴ Basnet has found a majority of trainers brought from Kathmandu to be better, for they can teach

⁹² Interview with Shreeram Singh Basnet of Media Point.

⁹³ Interviews with Raghu Mainali, and Bharat Bhushal of CRSC.

⁹⁴ Interview with *Hamro Samachar* daily's Bheshraj Basnet.

trainees something new, something useful. Besides, he added, they focus on practice exercises—such as preparing wall papers—give assignments, and provide feedback on the work of the trainees. Another journalist Manoj Shrestha, *Annapurna Post's* Biratnagar correspondent lamented, “Trainers come to trainings without updating themselves on relevant issues and recent developments.” Radio Annapurna’s station manager Dipendra Shrestha too echoed similar concerns.⁹⁵

It is true that in Katmandu one gets more opportunities to learn, to get exposure to the outside world. And there is some truth in what the respondents said above. However, there is also a tendency to regard anything said by Kathmandu-based trainers as more appropriate. Tula Adhikari, station manager of Krishnasar FM in Nepalgunj, says “It’s not that there are no local people who can give good trainings but people from Kathmandu are regarded as accomplished trainers whether their lofty talks could teach skills or not is another thing.”⁹⁶ Ram Krishna Regmee, Mohan Mainali, Rajendra Dahal, Hasta Gurung, Dharmendra Jha, Shobha Gautam, Vinaya Kumar Kasaju, Sharachchandra Wasti, Raghu Mainali are some of the Kathmandu based trainers ranked as good ones by journalists based in different parts of the country. This assessment has been done on the basis of their teaching skills, adoption of practical methods, presentation of new and stirring examples, in-depth studies, use of varieties of tools, skills to engage trainees, providing assignments and giving feedback and suggestions.

There is much dissatisfaction among journalists on the specialized or issue focused trainings organized by NGOs, especially by those not directly related to media. In such trainings though information is provided on related issues, they mostly fail to make a case on why the journalists should care about these issues. Nepalgunj based journalist Krishna Adhikari says, “In those types of programs, experts come to preach whatever they like. So, rather than for learning, such programs are good as get-togethers.”⁹⁷ Therefore, in a way these sorts of trainings are mainly focused on getting attention and advertisement rather than on content, or in improving the skill of the trainees. In the view of media trainer Sharachchandra Wasti, organizers in such trainings generally teach the journalists to write in their own interests. According to him, “Those who teach journalists to write in a certain way might nullify the ethics of journalism. And journalists should and can write independently even when NGOs are trying to force their interests with their knowledge and skill in a specific subject.”⁹⁸

The trainings provided by FM radios and by the commercial training institutes are of rather poor standards. If a program host becomes a bit popular then s/he easily qualifies to be a trainer for these commercial institutes. They try to bank on the glamour value of that particular host. Such a trend of becoming trainers after having attained media popularity, without having necessary trainings, skills and knowledge, is prevalent. Some rather popular RJs from FM radios in Kathmandu are frequently invited to provide radio training in various parts of the country. In such trainings, the fees are very high, even though the actual investment cost is low as they are given by their staff who have very little experience. However, this is also the result of lack of professional trainers in the radio sector.

⁹⁵ Interviews with Manoj Shrestha and Dipendra Shrestha.

⁹⁶ Interview with Adhikari.

⁹⁷ Interview with Sagarmatha Television’s correspondent Krishna Adhikari.

⁹⁸ Interview with Wasti.

Outside of Kathmandu, there is a severe scarcity of qualified trainers. ‘Trainers from Kathmandu’ is one important feature of the advertisements published to attract trainees in the radio trainings outside of Kathmandu. Local trainers are paid less compared to those ‘imported’ from Kathmandu. The Kathmandu-based trainers also get other benefits. The Kathmandu brand is so marketable, or so the organizers think, that such programs are organized as per the schedule of these trainers. Netra KC, Nepalgunj-based correspondent for the BBC Nepali Service, has been a radio trainer for over three years in the three-month long training program of RMRC (Nepalgunj). He says, “I am often invited as a trainer because of RMRC’s poor economic health. But whenever they have plenty of funds, they bring radio trainers from Kathmandu.”⁹⁹ Achhari Pokharel, president of Nepalgunj-based Mahila Sanchar Samuha added, “We generally bring trainers from Kathmandu when we have enough funds. However, as it is expensive to bring them on a regular basis, we arrange the classes when they visit the district for other purposes. But when there is no imminent chance for visits of journalists from Kathmandu, we use local trainers for the purpose.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Interview with K.C.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Pokharel.

Chapter 6

The Business Plans

Over the past two and half decades, media training programs in Nepal have worked primarily with three different types of business plans: (i) full cost recovery from the trainees; (ii) full cost subsidized by foreign or national donors; and (iii) a mixed model in which the training cost is covered partially by the trainees and partially by donors.

6.1 Full cost recovery from the trainees

From the point of view of financial sustainability of media training programs, the ‘full cost recovery from the trainees’ business plan is the most sensible one. Under this plan, the training organizing institution can expect to cover its costs from the fees collected from the trainees. Since the fees have been paid from one’s own resources, it is also likely that the trainees who participate in trainings under this business plan are more committed to the learning process.

This business plan has been in operation for the 10-month journalism training course run by NPI in Kathmandu since its establishment in 1984. In 2009, the total fees that each trainee had to pay was NRs. 22,000 (about US \$ 300) for this 10-month course.¹⁰¹ NPI’s RMRCs located in three other cities of Nepal currently run one-month or three-month media training programs by recovering all the costs involved from fees collected from the trainees.

Since mid-2008, NPI has also started to offer one-month mobile media trainings in other parts of the country. According to the training officer of NPI, Hasta Gurung, all the costs in running these mobile training sessions have been recovered from fees paid by the participating trainees. Gurung adds: “The fees charged tend to vary in different parts of the country. NPI does not make a profit but uses all the money thus collected to run the training programs in a specific location.”¹⁰²

This business plan is also the model adopted by several private-sector media training institutions. These include Media Point in Kathmandu, Naya Sansar in Itahari in east Nepal, and Bageshwari Asal Shasan Shrota Club in Nepalgunj. As mentioned in chapter two, many new FM radio stations have also used this business plan to run training sessions for novices interested in radio broadcasting jobs. Run under the title of ‘jobs for the best’ such stations raise significant amounts from a large number of trainees, most of whom eventually are not offered jobs with salaries in the concerned radio stations. Money saved from such schemes has helped these stations meet their operating costs for

¹⁰¹ Interview with Somnath Lamichhane, coordinator of NPI’s 10-month training program.

¹⁰² Interview with Gurung.

part of a year. In one particular instance in the city of Biratnagar, those running an institution that had raised Rs 10,000 (about US \$ 135) from each trainee disappeared with the money (College Times 2066v.s.)

Does the success of this business plan on the part of NPI and other private sector media training institutions mean that all such trainings can be fully run through fees raised from the trainees alone? The consensus opinion of those associated with NPI seems to be that basic journalism training programs can indeed be run under this business plan. The coordinator of NPI's RMRC in Biratnagar in east Nepal, Birendra Sharma told us:

For the one-month basic journalism training programs that we run these days, we charge NRs. 2500 per person (or NRs. 5000 if they are candidates sponsored by institutions)...Our maximum class size is 30 people. In the training we conducted late last year, we saved about Rs 50,000.¹⁰³

What is important to note here is that when the RMRC in Biratnagar runs its basic journalism training program in that city itself, the costs involved are minimal because it has its own building and many of the trainers are locally based. When such trainings are done in other locations in east Nepal, the costs go up because of the additional travel and accommodation expenses of the trainers and supporting staff.

However, NPI associates in Biratnagar claim that advanced journalism training cannot be run under this business plan. According to journalist Harsha Subba who is also the chair of the managing committee of NPI's RMRC in Biratnagar, advanced journalism training where trainers have to be flown into town from Kathmandu and where trainees also come from other parts of east Nepal, the higher costs thus incurred cannot be recovered from the fees paid by the trainees.¹⁰⁴ The implication is that such trainings have to be subsidized from other sources.

6.2 Full cost subsidized by foreign or national donors

6.2.1 Foreign donors

From the early 1950s when Nepal embarked on the journey of planned development, its state-owned media sector has benefited from various types of grants and support offered by different foreign governments, UN and other international agencies. Personnel working in state-owned print and electronic media have benefited from countless training programs organized in Nepal or abroad by Nepal's foreign friends and international media training institutions. For instance UNESCO organized many training sessions for such journalists in the 1960s and the 1970s. A group of 16 journalists working for the state television station, Nepal Television, was trained in The Netherlands in 1984 (Belbase 1985; Parajulee 2008). This trend continues until today.

Media training in the non-state sector has also seen the support from foreign donors for some time now. For instance, the media training activities of NPI were supported by the Danish government via Danida between 1995 and 2005. During this decade, NPI operated various types of training programs in different parts of Nepal with this support. It established RMRCs in Biratnagar, Nepalgunj, and Butwal. NPI even owns its own

¹⁰³ Interview with Sharma.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Subba.

building in the first two of these three cities. During this decade, all the trainings that NPI operated (apart from the 10-month course it ran in Kathmandu and three-month course run by its RMRCs) in different parts of Nepal were fully subsidized by the grant from Danida. The trainees did not have to pay anything. In many an instance, they instead received training allowances. Apart from NPI, Danida has also supported other organizations – including Sancharika Samuha, Federation of Nepalese Journalists, Jagaran Media Centre, Community Radio Support Centre (CRSC) of NEFEJ – to run media trainings.

Other donors have also been active in supporting media training activities in Nepal. After Danida stopped supporting NPI's training activities, it has received grants from other donors to run some of its training programs. One such donor has been the Danish organization MS Nepal which has over the years also supported training programs at Radio Lumbani, Radio Madan Pokhara, and Bheri FM, among other institutions. The radio journalism trainings organized by CRSC has been supported by the organization Free Voice based in The Netherlands. World Vision has supported the training activity of IMMOD Nepal in Butwal and Vision Nepal's journalism training focused on the Dalits of Tarai.

Most of the programs executed by NGOs are run in the form of projects. This is also true in the case of media training programs. NGOs conceive a specific training program and propose the idea to foreign donors for support. If the latter agree to provide financial support, such training programs are then executed for a fixed period. Elaborating this scheme, the FM network and training management officer of the organization Equal Access, Binayak Aryal told us:

All our training programs are project-based. We work in the field of behaviour change communication. When we approach donors for support for a specific project, we budget for training programs on the related subject. After the grant is received, we execute the said training programs.¹⁰⁵

In terms of the working modality of NGOs which are active in media training, those who have engaged in this field in a long-term basis tend to be cautious with their expenses. Other NGOs, especially those supported by international organizations whose work in Nepal is fixed for a short-term, tend to execute expensive trainings for the duration of the agreed project. Once that is over, there is no follow-up. Members of the media training community have begun to criticize such expensive trainings. P. Kharel who teaches at TU's RR Campus and at NPI told us:

The training budget of some of these NGOs for a year is the equivalent of the budget of the Journalism Department of RR Campus for 20 years. In these expensive training programs run by the NGOs, what trainees learn is not commensurate with the high costs.¹⁰⁶

Based on what Kharel has emphasized, it is clear that media training programs need to be evaluated based on their total costs and effectiveness.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Aryal.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Kharel.

In a context where there is a lack of adequate number of media trainers (see chapter 5), training of trainers (ToT) seems to be a priority in this field. For such ToTs, especially those which are both substantial and held over a course of time, local Nepali financial sources are probably difficult to cultivate. Hence foreign donor support should be used to execute such ToTs. For instance, the 2003 collaboration between NPI and the Danish School of Journalism in which more than a dozen media trainers were trained over a long period should be the kind of program that should be supported by foreign donors.

6.2.2 National donors

Minimum financial resources to run simple or basic journalism media trainings are increasingly being found from local Nepali donors, both in the state sector and beyond. This is a view that was emphasized by the chair of the Sunsari (in east Nepal) District Committee of FNJ, Rajesh Bidrohi who told us:

We have not charged trainees anything and we have raised the necessary funds to run such training programs locally. One of the trainings we ran last year was supported by the Sunsari District Development Committee (DDC) and the second was supported by the office of Dharan Municipality. Both of these entities are supporting FNJ, Sunsari District Committee. During the last fiscal year, Sunsari DDC gave us NRs. 200,000 (about US \$ 2700) and Dharan Municipality gave us NRs. 100,000 (about US \$ 1350). This year they are giving us NRs. 210,000 and one million rupees respectively. These grants will be partially used to run journalism training programs.¹⁰⁷

During the course of our research, we came across similar examples. For instance, the Morang DDC in east Nepal provided financial assistance to run basic journalism courses for Dalits, Janajatis and women during this fiscal year. NPI's RMRC in Biratnagar ran the first two trainings whereas the one for women was run by the Morang district committee of the Inter-party Women's Alliance. EJJ and ANIJ have run various training programs with financial support from the Ministry of Education of Nepal Government.

The private sector could also provide grants to subsidize the costs of media trainings. But this does not seem to have happened in Nepal as yet. However a few individuals have provided material support. For instance, a local businessman Krishna Gopal Tandon provided the land in which the building of NPI's RMRC has been built in Nepalgunj.

6.3 Mixed model

Some media training institutions have a mixed business plan whereby they run some programs with the support of donors and others by charging the trainees when donor support is not available. For instance the Mahila Sanchar Samuha (Group of Women Communicators) in Nepalgunj runs in this manner. Its chair Achhari Pokharel told us:

The financial resources needed to run our training programs come from the fees collected from the participating trainees and grants received from various organizations to which we submit project proposals. We have received financial help

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Bidrohi.

from the District Development Committee, Plan Nepal, UNDP, Mahila Bikas, etc. If the support received from the donors is adequate to cover our costs, we do not charge the trainees. When the support is inadequate or not there, we recover the full trainings costs from the fees we charge the trainees.¹⁰⁸

This mixed business plan model has also been used by other organizations. For instance, when the Nepal Press Union executed its ‘one village, one journalist’ program for over a decade during the high days of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal (1996-2006), it received grants from the Ministry of Communication of the Nepal Government, Frederick Ebert Stiftung, DFID, etc. but it also charged each reporter who wanted to be trained NRs. 500 (about US \$ 7). In a basic journalism course run by the Kirat Rai Patrakar Sangh in Dharan earlier this year, the 75 trainees that participated each paid NRs. 500 and the organizers got grants from the office of Dharan Municipality and the district committee of a national organization of business people. The organizers actually saved some money after covering all the costs.¹⁰⁹

The institutional business plan for organizations like NPI also fall in this mixed model category. The 10-month course NPI runs in Kathmandu and its basic journalism training programs in other parts of Nepal are paid for from fees collected from the trainees. However NPI only runs advanced or specialized trainings if there is support from donors. As mentioned earlier, advanced trainings tend to be more costly and active journalists are unlikely to be able to cover all the costs from their own savings.

A variation in the mixed model could be if media houses could be asked to pay a part of the costs necessary to cover advanced or specialized trainings in which their staff members participate, the remaining cost being borne by the individual herself. This could be justified as the media house’s investment in the enhancement of the journalistic capacity of its staff members. However, there are only a few media houses in Nepal which seem ready to participate in such a scheme. Most of the media producing organizations based outside Kathmandu are financially weak and are not in a position to subsidize the training costs of their staff members.¹¹⁰ Many small media organizations cannot even afford to send their staff members to multi-day trainings because that would result in the organization being severely under-staffed for that period. For instance, a Janakpur-based radio station did not send anyone to a 10-day training program being held in Biratnagar recently for this reason.¹¹¹

But some Pokhara-based journalists told us that if there are reliable and competent media training institutes, local media houses would be ready to cover the costs of training. For this to happen, media owners and managers need to be convinced of the utility of trainings for their staff members.¹¹² This is especially necessary in the case of radio station owners who seem to think that the only investment worth making is for the hardware. Another Pokhara-based journalist Madhav Sharma added that if the staff-trainee can assure the management that s/he will stay with the same media organization

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Pokharel.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Sreeshisha Rai, chair of the Kirat Rai Patrakar Sangh, Sunsari.

¹¹⁰ Based in part on an interview with Bhawani Baral, editor of *Bijayapur Weekly* published from Dharan in east Nepal.

¹¹¹ Interview with Vijay Mishra, a Biratnagar-based media trainer.

¹¹² Based on interviews with Narayan Karki, Punya Paudel, Badribinod Pratik, Dipendra Shrestha.

after the training for some time, media houses can pay for good trainings.¹¹³ Some media owners and managers do not send their staff members to trainings because they fear that if the latter become more competent, they will start bargaining for higher salaries and perks. They are also afraid of losing their staff members due to social networks established during out-of-station training programs.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Interview with Madhav Sharma.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Sandeshdas Shrestha, director, B FM, Biratnagar.

Chapter 7

Recommendations to Address Gaps in the Training Programs

In the previous chapters of this study, the research team has identified a number of weaknesses inherent in the various modes of media trainings in Nepal, as well as in the training curricula, when the latter exist. In the course of research, many of the people we interviewed suggested ideas that could be implemented to address the current gaps and weaknesses. At the conclusion of our research, we too thought of measures that could be implemented by the concerned agencies, institutions or groups in order to make media trainings in Nepal more effective and beneficial for the trainees and future journalists.

These ideas and measures are listed in this chapter in two main sections: i) general recommendations that need to be thought about by various entities concerned about the quality of media training and journalism in Nepal; and (ii) specific types of training programs that could be supported by donors in the next two-three years.

7.1 General recommendations

7.1.1 Training providing institutions

- Existing trainee selection procedure should be changed. While selecting candidates for the basic journalism training, their aptitude for journalism should be tested. For advanced and specialized trainings, the participants should demonstrate their commitment and competence through prior work. The selection criteria could be an application, essay, and curriculum vitae for such trainings.
- The training providers should maintain a database of their trainees—the type of training/s they have taken, their performance, and what they are currently doing. Such a record will be helpful in selecting the participants for future trainings, and for the evaluation of the training itself.
- Nepali media does not reflect the social fabric of the country. In order to make the media more inclusive/representative, the trainings should also be inclusive. Those social groups whose representation is meagre in the media should be encouraged/included in the basic training itself. However, in the name of making participation inclusive or fulfilling the ‘quota’ of various social groups, the practice of selecting the same individual in every training should come to an end.
- Curriculum or training module is a must for the training programs. However, many of the trainings that have been organized do not have both. Even in those institutions which have some sort of training curricula, these have not been

- In the name of curriculum revision, in some cases, only the duration of the training has been either increased or decreased. The demand of the market is also not taken into consideration while revising the curricula. The trainings provided by the NPI regional resource centers should also include online journalism in their one and three month trainings.
- Practicing journalists need specialized trainings in the beat that they are working on. Such specialized trainings are not adequately available for those working outside Kathmandu. Even when there are specialized trainings (organized occasionally), they are of shorter duration and are not very helpful.
- The number of participants is also important in the trainings. And if the participants' number is too big, trainings will not be effective. Due to a large number of trainees, the trainers are not able to closely monitor their work, to point out their weaknesses, and to help them revise their work. Therefore, the number of participants in a training session should be limited to 15-20 individuals.
- One important attraction or feature of the training programs is their supposedly greater focus on practice exercises in comparison to the formal journalism education curriculum. However, most trainings are found to be conducted in 'lecture mode,' and the practical aspect is found to be rather weak. This should change, and adequate practical exercises should be included in the program.
- In journalism, language plays a very important role. To express oneself—be it in print or in electronic media—in simple and lucid language is a challenging task. However, the language component has largely been neglected in most of the trainings organized so far. Since Nepali is used overwhelmingly in the media, it is better to include Nepali in the basic journalism trainings. But these days other national languages also are used in media, so training should also be conducted in those popular national languages.
- Trainings on copy editing/desk editing are rarely organized. Both language and content editing trainings should be held regularly, targeting young journalists.
- The monitoring aspect is very weak in the current training practices. The regular training providing institutes should also show some concern on what their graduates/products are doing. This will not only help in planning/designing future trainings but will also help in organising refresher courses.
- There is also a need of training for the trainers. Old trainers should be provided with refresher trainings and efforts should also be in producing new batches of trainers. Since there is a dearth of trainers outside Kathmandu, such trainings should also be organized in those areas.
- Selection of the venue is also important. Most trainings are urban- or Kathmandu-centric. Due attention should also be paid in organising trainings in rural areas. Due to presence of regional resource centers of NPI, many training related events have been taking place in Biratnagar, Butwal and Nepalgunj. However, the need for regular training providing agencies is also felt in other cities like Janakpur, Birgunj, Pokhara, Dhangadhi, and Mahendranagar.
- Conducting a quality training is not cheap, and generating resources is a challenging task. One easy and also sustainable way is to charge fees to the

- Cost-benefit analysis of the trainings should be done. If the achievement/result of the training is paltry compared to the investments made, then that is not considered a good investment. Only those trainings which produce good results should be continued.
- Camera, recorder, etc. are essential tools for the practice exercises. But the availability of such equipment is limited. Instead of the lecture mode of trainings, interactive mode should be used, and use of multimedia is also a welcome addition. The organizers should arrange essential equipment so as to make trainings more interactive and beneficial.
- The trainings are not organized according to the needs of the participants. The regular training providing institutions should at least assess the requirements of the journalists annually by conducting surveys, etc. The needs can be identified by regular interactions with the journalists. The trainings can also be arranged by looking at the media content, and identifying their shortcomings. Only then will the trainings be useful and successful.
- A study conducted in 2000 by the Nepal Press Institute had identified the following areas where training was required: code of conduct, research methodology and writing technique, institutional development for the big media houses, information technology and layout design, electronic media, etc. The same study also identified following areas for specialized/advanced trainings: development, health, economics, and legal sector (Josefsen 2000). This still holds true. Some new areas have also been suggested by the active journalists. Now that certain pockets of Nepal, especially the tarai and eastern hills have become dangerous places to report from, the journalists working in those areas are in need of trainings on how to cope with the unfavorable conditions, or how to report from the areas where there is social unrest and communal strife.
- Current global media trends, style, media marketing are some areas where training is needed at the managerial level.
- Most of the trainings focus on print. In recent years, many radio stations have been set up in rural Nepal where there is a severe scarcity of trained human resources. There are some opportunities for community radios but other FMs have been left out. They also are in dire need of trainings. Entertainment program hosts also need trainings on language, presentation, code of conduct, etc.

- Both one-two day long trainings and three-five month long trainings are called basic training which creates confusion. Perhaps the shortest version could be called an introductory training, and the longer version as basic one.
- Trainings that focus on television are severely lacking. Currently there are more than a dozen Nepali television channels on air, and they have their numerous stringers, reporters across the country, but there are a few who are trained in television reporting. Those working for print or radio are not only reporting them, but also are doubling as camera persons. They need TV reporting and camera handling trainings.
- Photo journalism training is also required for the local newspapers.
- The papers published from outside Kathmandu face scarcity of trained human resources in layout/designing and printing. Radio stations also lack qualified trained human resources. Training is needed in these technical areas.
- The trainings should also be designed as per the need of particular places. For example, the journalists based in famous tourist destinations such as Pokhara and Chitwan need training in tourism journalism whereas journalists from industrial areas, and where there are robust economic activities should be given long term and intense economic journalism training.
- The specialized trainings organized by the NGOs are found to have paid little attention to quality content/curriculum or in making the resource materials available. Instead they focus more on assembling large number of participants and so called inclusiveness, as well as on food and perks. They should seriously rethink their priorities.
- The journalists are also in need of other trainings such as English language training or computer training. The language training will help them understand and use the resources available only in that language.

7.1.2 *Media houses*

- Media houses should keep a record of the trainings that their staff/journalists have taken and the beat(s) that they report on.
- Media houses are not paying enough attention to in-house trainings even though these cost little. It should not be any difficult for the media houses to conduct such trainings with a few outside experts and their own editors and senior reporters as trainers.
- There is a tendency in the media houses to send the reporters/journalists for the trainings only if they have to bear no cost. They refrain from paying even a nominal sum, and the reporters miss training opportunities. The management should contribute in enhancing the skills of its staff, which eventually is an investment on the quality of the journalism product.
- The media houses should let their staff take part in trainings when the reporters get opportunities from abroad or from inside the country because the media houses ultimately benefit by the skills that the reporters learn in such trainings. They should not deduct the salaries of the staff taking part in essential trainings.
- Many journalists complain about the management's partiality/bias when it comes to selecting the reporters/staff for the training opportunities. The management should make clear policies and be unbiased.

- While recruiting new staff, the media houses usually select those who are known to them. Due to this practice trained human resources have not found place in them, which is also a loss to the institutions. The media houses therefore should make policies of selecting trained staff which is beneficial to both parties.

7.1.3 *Government/state*

- The government provides direct financial assistance to the newspapers, but examples are abound of such support being misused. One way of contributing to the media sector is also by helping the media institutions with competent, trained human resources. The government can help by providing financial support to the institutions involved in regular media training.
- The government owned media houses or the journalists working in them also need training. The government should also invest in the capacity enhancement of the journalists' involved in the public-sector media. This would make the public media competitive with other private media.

7.1.4 *Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ)*

- The Federation of Nepalese journalists is in a dilemma regarding trainings. It is still undecided whether to limit itself to advocacy work or to also get involved in training and other similar activities. So far it has concentrated itself in advocacy work, and has paid little attention to training. If it also wants to get involved in the training, then it should seek funds and provide regular trainings. Rather than engaging in one-off activities, FNJ should commit itself to training in a long-term basis and should run training programs professionally. If it does not want to go into that direction, it could still play an effective role by identifying the needs of its members and playing an intermediary role between its members and training providing institutions.
- Many training providing institutions also seek recommendations from the district committees of FNJ in selecting its members for the trainings. These committees should also keep record of their members, and their beats. Journalists from the districts also complain that they at times miss the opportunities because they do not receive information about training on time. The committees can play an important role to mitigate this problem.

7.1.5 *Trainees*

- The senior journalists demonstrate little interest in trainings and learning new things. They should also keep themselves abreast of the new developments that are taking place and be competitive.
- The journalists should always strive for opportunities of learnings/trainings in their field. Rather than participating in trainings for the sake of participation, they must get involved and try to hone their skills. They should also do some research and try to learn more about the subject by studying the available reference materials. They should also keep in touch with their trainers even after the completion of the trainings.
- There is a tendency among the journalists of participating in any free training that comes by, and especially when there is some monetary allowance associated. But

- There are some agencies who cheat trainees in the name of providing training. The trainees should pay attention to the track record of these agencies, and see if they have the resources, and capacity to provide such training. They should also try to find out about the trainers and their capacity prior to taking part in the trainings.

7.2 Specific types of training programs that could be supported in the next two-three years

7.2.1 Basic journalism training in non-university setting

Basic journalism training is being offered by several organizations and the versions that are being offered can be run with local funding in major urban centers. Hence subsidizing the current schemes seems unnecessary except when such trainings are executed in districts/towns not known for offering such programs in the past. Institutions that offer such trainings could be supported to provide trainings in non-urban locations so that such opportunities will become available to individuals who would otherwise not have access to them when they are offered in the main urban locations.

Additionally institutions that offer such trainings could also be supported to revise their training curricula/modules so that more practical elements could be embedded in the training programs. Support could also be extended so that such institutions could be better equipped to provide more hands-on experience for the trainees. These institutions could be provided with computer hardware, radio studio hardware and other technical equipment that they could use for basic journalism training sessions.

Among the organizations currently engaged in basic journalism training for print media, NPI with headquarters in Kathmandu and three regional centers in Biratnagar, Butwal and Nepalgunj is the best organization to support. With respect to radio, such support could be extended to ACORAB, Antenna Foundation and CRSC/NEFEJ, especially the latter two as they already have an active training program. With respect to television, it is hard to suggest the name of any existing organization that does competent basic television journalism training. Support could perhaps be extended to start such a training program in the next two-three years if a Nepali organization comes up with a credible vision and executable plan for basic training in television journalism.

7.2.2 Basic journalism training for members of communities traditionally underrepresented in Nepali media institutions

Several organizations have given their own versions of basic journalism training to their respective target communities in an effort to increase the number of journalists from those communities or groups. Notable among these are Sancharika Samuha Nepal (for women), ANIJ (for Janajatis/indigenous nationalities), and Jagaran Media Center (for Dalits). Since these efforts are important initiatives to make the Nepali media profession socially inclusive in the long run, they need to be supported. These organizations and at

least another one that wants to do work amongst the Madhesis could be supported for a combined program in which they execute both journalism marketing initiatives and basic journalism trainings. The former work will have to be financially supported in full and the latter could be partially subsidized.

7.2.3 Advanced journalism training in non-university setting

With respect to the Nepali media landscape, advanced journalism training can come in the form of in-depth and investigative reporting training or subject-specific reporting training. Such advanced journalism training in print media is being offered in Kathmandu by NPI and Media Point. In the past, Center for Investigative Journalism (CIJ) also offered such training. For the case of radio, such training could be offered by Antenna Foundation and CRSC/NEFEJ in the non-profit sector and CC in the for-profit sector. In terms of financial support, it would make sense to help NPI offer such trainings in different locations of Nepal where media is actively produced as such places are more likely to be the homes of individuals who have been in the media profession for at least four-five years. Antenna and CC could be supported to run advanced radio journalism trainings in Kathmandu whereas CRSC/NEFEJ could be supported for similar work in regional centers.

7.2.4 Advanced subject-specific reporting training

Subject-specific reporting training has been cultivated in part by the beat-system followed in the nationally influential newspapers published from Kathmandu and by the practices of organizations of journalists who work on different beats. Examples of such organizations include Asmita (gender), EJG (education), Jagaran Media Center (Dalits), NEFEJ (environment), SEJON (economy), etc. There are many other similar organizations, some more active than others. If such organizations come up with credible programs of advanced journalism training that build upon their own previous work on subject-specific reporting, then they need to be supported. Crucial here would be their ability to demonstrate the curricula to be used in such training and the reference books and human resources that will be offered to the trainees.

In some cases, some of these organizations could also be supported to develop their curricula and other reference sources. These organizations must also be required to work closely with academics or academic organizations that do research on related topics. For instance, if support to SEJON is being considered, it will have to demonstrate how it will use economists and academic resources generated by the latter in its training program.

7.2.5 Academic institutions

Academic institutions that offer BA and MA level courses on journalism or other aspects of the media industry could be supported to develop more infrastructure so that they can offer better hands-on training to their students. Exactly what additional infrastructure is needed would vary from institution to institution. Given the very inflexible syllabi regimes that govern Nepali academic institutions at the university level currently, support to develop new curricula in them would be virtually useless in a two-three year timeframe.

7.2.6 Collaboration between journalism training institutions and academic research institutions

Collaborations between journalist training institutions and academic researchers could also be supported by donors to better prepare the former to do contextually significant in-depth and investigative reporting. This would require, among other things, running crash courses on specific themes or research methods. Such courses would typically last for two-four months and will have to be mostly subsidized to allow the journalists to pursue them full time. Such collaborations can build upon the course offered by CIJ a number of years ago whereby journalists who were displaced by the then ongoing conflict were brought to Kathmandu to attend a three-four month reading-intensive course on contemporary Nepali society.

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Appendix 1

List of training providing institutions¹¹⁵

S.N.	Name	Subject Area	Target Participants	Required Academic Qualification
1.	AAVAS	Camera handling, visual editing, TV program production, radio technician, TV/radio presentation	Open to all	NA
2.	ACORAB	Radio management, basic radio journalism, technician, in house over all radio training, attachment training	Working journalists and employee with minimum two years experience in radio field	NA
3.	ANIJ	Adibasi movement and basic journalism	Trainee must be Adibasi/Janajati, preference will be given to working journalists	Priority to intermediate level but not compulsory
4.	Antenna Foundation	Radio technician, program production, station management	Radio producer in case project based radio producer training and open to all for other basic radio training	NA
5.	Asmita	Gender issues	Male and female journalists and activists	IA
6.	BASC, Nepalgunj	Basic journalism/ Anchoring	Children and youth	NA
7.	BBC World Service Trust	Radio technician, program production	Technician, working journalist and station	NA

¹¹⁵ There might be many other institutions that provide media related training occasionally but institutions listed here are those who organize training programs frequently.

		and station management	manager	
8.	Bikalpa the Option	Basic radio journalism and anchoring	Open to all	NA
9.	CIJ	Investigative journalism and feature writing	working journalists	10+2 or IA
10.	Communication Corner	Radio program production, community broadcasting	Radio producer, community mobilizers	NA
11.	CRSC, NEFEJ	Radio technician, production and management	Technician, working journalist and station manager	NA
12.	EJG	Education reporting	Journalists working on education beat	NA
13.	Equal Access	Radio program production	Program producers	NA
14.	FMDC	Human rights, peace building and social justice, conservation and environment	Working journalists active in far western region	NA
15.	FNJ	Organizational development and leadership, professional security	Members of executive committee and general members of FNJ	NA
16.	Freedom Forum	Legal issue, media law	Journalists working on law beat or having law background	NA
17.	INSEC	Human rights	Working journalists and human rights activists	NA
18.	Jagaran Media Center	Dalit issue, basic journalism	People from Dalit community, working Dalit journalists, but some time also targeted to non Dalits.	Generally SLC but not compulsory
19.	Mahila Sanchar Samuha, Nepalgunj	Basic journalism and feature writing	Fresh women, female journalists	SLC
20.	Media Point	Basic and advance	Open to all	SLC

		journalism		
21.	Media's Collection	Basic radio journalism and anchoring	Open to all	NA
22.	Naya Sansar, Itahari	Basic journalism and radio anchoring	Open to all	NA
23.	NEFEJ	Environment reporting, photography	Journalists working on environment beat	NA
24.	NMDC	Health and basic journalism	Journalists working on health beat	NA
25.	NPI and its 3 RMRCs (In Biratnagar, Butwal and Nepalgunj)	Basic and advance journalism Training	Open to all for Basic journalism training; and specific reporters for specialized and advance journalism training	10+2 or IA in case of 10-month basic training, SLC for three-month basic training and NA for advanced trainings.
26.	On Air Media Pvt. Ltd.	Radio/TV journalism, programme production, presentation, radio technician	Open to all	NA
27.	Sancharika Samuha Nepal	Basic journalism and feature writing	Female working journalists	IA
28.	SEJON	Economic and business reporting	Journalists working on economic beat	NA
29.	Vision Nepal, Rupendehi	Basic journalism	Tarai Dalit	NA
30.	WWJ	Blog, photography, creative writing	Working women journalists	NA

Appendix 2

Name list of persons interviewed

In Biratnagar

1. Ajit Tiwari, Eastern Bureau Chief, *Nagarik* daily.
2. Arjun Upreti, President, Naya Sansar, Itahari.
3. Bhawani Baral, Chief Editor, *Bijaypur* weekly.
4. Bikram Luintel, News Editor, *Udghosh* daily.
5. Birendra Sharma, Co-ordinator, NPI RMRC.
6. Chuman Basnet, Photo Journalist, *Udghosh* daily.
7. Ganga Poudel Baral, Editor, *Bijaypur* weekly.
8. Harsa Subba, President, NPI RMRC.
9. Kamala Kandel, Station Manager, Radio Purbanchal.
10. Lilaballav Ghimire, Reporter *Kantipur* daily.
11. Mahendra Bista, Deputy Editor, *Darshan* daily.
12. Manoj Shrestha, Reporter, *Annapurna Post* daily.
13. Mohan Bhandari, Editor, *Udghosh* daily.
14. Mohan Manandhar, Reporter, Nepal Television.
15. Nilifa Subba, President, Sancharika Samuha, Eastern region.
16. Nisha Dahal, Program Co-ordinator, B FM.
17. Ranjita Pokhrel, Program Presenter, Radio Purbanchal.
18. Sandeshdas Shrestha, Director, B FM.
19. Sarashwati Karki, Reporter, *Kantipur* daily.
20. Sarita K.C., Reporter, Avenues Television.
21. Sarita Katwal, Program Presenter, Radio Purbanchal.
22. Suman Shrestha, Station Manger, Sky FM.
23. Vijay Mishra, Trainer, NPI RMRC.
24. Yagya Sharma, Trainer, NPI RMRC.

In Dharan

25. Basudev Baral, Editor/Publisher, *Morning Times* daily.
26. Bhim Rai Jwala, Chief Editor, *Aujar* daily.
27. Dorpadhwoj Rai, Managerial Director, Bijaypur FM.
28. Hindu Rai, President, Dantakali FM.
29. Kishor Karki, Editor, *BlastTimes* daily.
30. Pradeep Menyangbo, Reporter, *Kantipur* daily.
31. Rajendra Kiranti, Station Manager, Ganatantra FM.
32. Rajendra Sharma, Director, Star FM.
33. Rajesh Bidrohi, Executive Editor, *Blast Times* daily.
34. Sita Mademba, Reporter, BBC Nepali Service.
35. Shreeshisha Rai, Reporter, *Gorkhapatra* daily.
36. Yubraj Ghimire, Reporter, *Janabidroha* daily.

In Kathmandu

37. Balkrishna Gyawali, office secretary, SEJON.
38. Bharat Bhusal, Trainer, Community Radio Support Center, Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ).
39. Binayak Aryal, Officer, FM Networking and Training Management, Equal Access Nepal.
40. Bindukanta Ghimire, General Secretary, Nepal Press Union.
41. Bishnu Prasad Sharma, Director, National Media Development Center (NMDC)
42. Chiranjivi Khanal, Training director, NPI
43. Dharmendra Jha, President, Federation of Nepalese Journalist (FNJ).
44. Dilip Nepali, Ex- General Secretary, Jagaran Media Center.
45. Dipa Gautam, Senior Producer, Nepal Television.
46. Gajendra Paudel, Training Coordinator, Academy of Audio-Visual Arts and Sciences (AAVAS).
47. Gopal Guragain, President, Ujyalo 90 Network.
48. Hasta Gurung, Training Officer, NPI.
49. Kapil Kafle, Trainer, IRHICON.
50. Lal Deosa Rai, Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication., RR Campus
51. Madhu Acharya, Director, Antennae Foundation Nepal
52. Manju Mishra, College of Journalism and Mass Communication
53. Manju Thapa, Coordinator, ASMITA
54. Manteshwori Rajbhandari, Board Member, Communication Corner.
55. Mohan Nepali, Kantipur City College
56. Mohan Singh Lama, General Secretary, ANIJ.
57. Munal Sisir, Director, Bikalpa the Option.
58. Nirmala Sharma, Vice President, Sancharika Samuha Nepal.
59. P. Kharel, Professor, Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication.
60. Prabin Adhikari, News Coordinator, Kantipur FM.
61. Pramod Tandukar, Director, ACORAB.
62. Pusparaj Poudel, Educational Journalist Group.
63. Rabindra Kumar Thapa, Director, Media Creation International.
64. Raghu Mainali, Coordinator, Community Radio Support Center, NEFEJ.
65. Rajendra Dahal, President, Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ).
66. Rajiv Timilsina, Kantipur City College
67. Ram Krishna Regmee, Professor, Kanitpur City College
68. Rem Bahadur BK, Chair, Jagaran Media Center.
69. Saraswoti Thapa, BBC World Service Trust.
70. Sharachchandra Wasti, Trainer.
71. Shova Gautam, President, IRHICON.
72. Shreeram Khanal, Lecturer, Gramin Adarsha Bahumukhi Campus
73. Shreeram Singh Basnet, Executive Director, Media Point.

74. Somnath Lamichhane, Course Coordinator, NPI.
75. Taranath Dahal, President, Freedom Forum.
76. Tilak Pathak, Reporter, *Nagarik* daily.
77. Tirtha Bhandari, Director, Jamaleshowr Institute.
78. Umesh Pokhrel, Educational Journalist Group.
79. Upendra Aryal, President, Equal Access Nepal.
80. Vinay Kumar Kasajoo, President, National Information Commission, Trainer.
81. Yam Bahadur Dura, Ex-program Coordinator, NPI RMRC, Nepalgunj.

In Pokhara

82. Amit Rijal, Station Manager, Big FM.
83. Badribinod Pratik, Editor, *Himdoot* daily.
84. Dipendra Shrestha, Station Manager, Radio Annapurna.
85. Madhav Sharma, Editor, *Hotline* daily.
86. Milan Pratik, Promoter, Creative Broadcasting Media Plus.
87. Narayan Karki, President, FNJ Kaski.
88. Punya Paudel, Editor *Pokharapatra* daily.
89. Rabindra Bastola, Editor, *Pokhara Aawaj* daily.
90. Tribhuvan Poudel, Journalist, *Hotline* daily.

In Butwal

91. Arjun Gyawali, Trainer, NPI RMRC, Butwal.
92. D. R. Ghimire, Trainer NPI RMRC, Butwal.
93. Dialson Adhikari, Station Manager, Namaste Radio.
94. Indira Aryal, Ex- Program Coordinator, Radio Lumbini.
95. Kabita Sharma, Station Manager, Radio Mukti.
96. Krishna Nepal, President, Radio Lumbini.
97. Kulmani Gyawali, Station Manager, Radio Lumbini.
98. Lekhnath Gyawali, Ex-program Producer, Radio Lumbini.
99. Mohan Chapagain, President, FNJ Rupandehi.
100. Ram Prasad Acharya, Radio Jagaran.
101. Siddhicharan Bhattarai, Chief Executive Director, IMMOD Nepal.
102. Yubraj Ghimire, Secretary, Vision Nepal, Rupandehi.

In Nepalgunj

103. Achhari Pokharel, President, Mahila Sanchar Samuha.
104. Arjun Khadka, Program Producer, Krishnasar FM.
105. Bhesraj Basnet, Managing Editor, *Hamro Samachar* daily.
106. Dilli B.C., President, Hatemalo Sanchar Samuha.
107. Ganga Neupane, Finance Officer, Active Forum for Human Rights Awareness (AFHA).
108. Hemanta B.K., Station Manager, Bheri Aawaj FM.
109. Hemanta Karmacharya, Publisher/Editor, *Kalpristha* daily.
110. Janak Nepal, Central Member, FNJ.
111. Janmejaye Pratap Singh, News Reader, Bheri FM.
112. Jayanarayan Shah, President, Nepal Sports Journalist Forum, Banke.

113. Jhalak Gaire, President, FNJ Banke.
114. Kamal B. K. Nirmohi, Station Manager, Radio Janaawaj.
115. Karuna Shah, Program Producer, Bheri Aawaj FM.
116. Khagendra Acharya, Technician, Bheri Aawaj FM.
117. Krishna Adhikari, Reporter, Sagarmatha Television.
118. Kumar Shrestha, Reporter, Krishnasar FM.
119. Mina Sharma, Program Producer, Bheri FM.
120. Mohammad Aarif Ansari, Desktop Publishing Officer, NPI RMRC, Nepalgunj.
121. Mohmmad Harun, President, Rubaru Communication Center.
122. Muna Shrestha, President Forum for Equity and Empowerment.
123. Nabin Giri, Station Manager, Bageshwari FM.
124. Namaskar Shah, Director, Bageshwari Asal Shasan Shrota Club.
125. Narendra Thapa, President Press Union Banke.
126. Netra K. C., Reporter, BBC Nepali Service.
127. Pampha Sharma, Reporter Krishnasar FM.
128. Pannalal Gupta, President, NPI RMRC.
129. Pitambar Kattel, Program Coordinator, NPI RMRC, Nepalgunj.
130. Pratiksha Singh, Program Producer, Bageshwari FM.
131. Purnalal Chuke, Editor, *Janamat* biweekly.
132. Puspa Shahi, Publisher, *Hamro Samachar* daily.
133. Rakesh Mishra, News Coordinator, Krishnasar FM.
134. Rudra Subedi, President, Press Chautari, Banke.
135. Samir Shrestha, Deputy Station Manager, Bageshwari FM.
136. Santosh Regmi, News Coordinator, Bheri Aawaj FM.
137. Shrijana Oli, Finance Officer, Active Forum for Human Rights Awareness (AFHA).
138. Shubhadra Dhital, Reporter, Krishnasar FM.
139. Sirjana Acharya, President, Sancharika Samuha, Nepalgunj.
140. Smriti Giri, Reporter, Bageshwari FM and Avenues Television.
141. Sukrarishi Chaulagain, Secretary, FNJ, Banke.
142. Tula Adhikari, Station Manager, Krishnasar FM.

In Dhangadhi

143. Arun Bhatta, Reporter, Shuklaphata FM, Dhangadhi.
144. Bharat Shah, Reporter, Nepal Television.
145. Bhojraj Joshi, Executive Editor, *Dhangadhi Post* daily.
146. Birendra Rawal, Editor, *Morning Bell* daily.
147. Dhana Bahadur Shah, Publisher, *Seti Samachar* daily.
148. Dirgharaj Upadhayaya, President, FNJ Kailali.
149. Ekendra Timalisina, Station Manager, Tikapur FM.
150. Harish Bhatta, Editor, *Samachar Saransha* daily.
151. Hemanta Poudel, Publisher and Editor, *Sudur Sandesh* daily.
152. Karuna Joshi, Member, FNJ Kailali.
153. Lakki Chaudhari, Member, FNJ Kailali.
154. Logshari Kunwar, Publisher, *Morning Bell* daily.
155. Lokendra Bista, Editor, *Samachar Saransha* daily.

156. Manila Chaudhari, Program Producer, Dinesh FM.
157. Mohan Budha Aiyer, Reporter, *Kantipur* daily.
158. P. R. Chataut, News Chief, Ghodaghodi FM.
159. Prem Chaudhari, Executive Editor, *Hamar Pahura* daily.
160. Shivaraj Bhatta, Executive Editor, *Sudur Sandesh* daily.
161. Shivaraj Yogi, Editor, *Shree Nepal Times* daily.
162. Siddharaj Bhatta, Regional Co-ordinator, National News Agency.
163. Tanka Kunwar, Deputy Editor, *Morning Bell* daily.
164. Tekraj Joshi, Executive Editor, *Dhangadhi Post* daily.
165. Umid Bagchand, Reporter, BBC Nepali Service.
166. Yogesh Rawal, Editor, *Seti Samachar* daily.

Appendix 3

Location map of field research sites



Appendix 4

Institutional profile of Martin Chautari

Martin Chautari (henceforth Chautari or MC) began as an informal discussion group in Kathmandu in 1991, allowing development professionals and academics to meet every two weeks to share insights and experiences. In 1995, the name 'Martin Chautari' was adopted after the late Martin Hoftun, one of the founders of the original discussion group. After being managed by the Centre for Social Research and Development for six years, in 2002 Chautari became registered as a separate non-government organization in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Since its inception, Chautari's core objective has been to enhance the quality of public dialogue in Nepal, particularly in matters pertaining to democracy, civil liberties and social and environmental justice. Started at a time in which Nepal had little, if any, culture of informed public discussion, Chautari's mainstay continues to be the discussion series. Premised on the democratic potential and practice of having face-to-face interactions, we currently hold four scheduled discussions a week with speakers and topics drawn from a wide spectrum. Chautari is the oldest and longest, continuously running discussion center in Nepal.

In addition to the discussion series, Chautari also conducts and supports research, with our main concentration being on media, environmental justice, education and democracy. In executing its research project, MC has trained a new generation of researchers through a rigorous mentoring program that allows the young researchers to immerse themselves in all aspects of the research enterprise.

It also publishes books (till date 57 books) and an annual journal in the Nepali language (*Media Adhyayan* [Media Studies] since 2006). It is also the editorial home of the journal *Studies in Nepali History and Society* (published by Mandala Book Point since 1996). MC has opened its research library and media center to the public. This has especially benefited those who want to do research on topics related to democracy, social movements and media in Nepal. The library's holdings total more than 15,000 books, theses and unpublished reports, a quarter of which is a special-collection related to the media. The library also holds a small collection of journals, magazines, newspapers and unpublished seminar papers.

All five components – the discussions, research, mentoring, publications and library – feed into each other and form an intrinsic part of what we see as being three chief strategic interests of MC: mentoring a new generation of researchers, promoting collaborations with faculty members working in Nepal's colleges and universities and promoting open dialogues with public intellectuals, social activists, policy makers and politicians.

MC's research on media has been supported by the Japan Foundation, the Asia Foundation and the Danish Embassy in Kathmandu. Chautari's work on environmental justice has been supported by the Ford Foundation and Action Aid Nepal. Chautari's work on democracy has been supported by the UK Department for International Development, Norwegian Church Aid and the Social Inclusion Research Fund. MC's work on the state of social exclusion in the higher education and education sector in Nepal is supported by the Ford Foundation. MC has been also engaged in collaborative research in public health (focused on the pharmaceutical industry) as part of a team consisting of researchers from India and the University of Edinburgh.

Executive Committee members: Chair: Dr Seira Tamang; Secretary: Dr Pratyoush Onta; Treasurer: Ms Srijana Subba; Members: Mr Basanta Ranjitkar, Ms Sangita Pandey, Mr Madhu Sudan Subedi, Mr Dharma Swarnakar