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FIT/510-PHI-61
Technical Report

PHILIPPINES

Tambuli Community Radio

Tripartite Review of Tambuli Community Radio

by **Carlos A. Arnaldo**
Nina Wernberg

Serial No. FMR/CII/COM/94/227(FIT)



**United Nations Educational,
Scientific and
Cultural Organization**

Paris, 1994

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TRIPARTITE REVIEW OF TAMBULI COMMUNITY RADIO

by **Carlos A. Arnaldo**
Nina Wernberg

Report prepared for the Government of the
Republic of the Philippines by the United
Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

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FIT/510-PHI-61
Technical Report
FMR/CII/COM/94/227(FIT)
5 August 1994

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Printed in France

Executive Summary

The Tripartite mission review of community media centres in Banga, Ibajay and Laurel, and discussions with representatives of Batanes and Olutanga have shown that the project has basically fulfilled its development and immediate objectives. An experimental methodology has been established based on the varied experiences of setting up the first five stations. Wherever possible, trainers and researchers are recruited from the regions where the sites are located, backed up by experienced consultants recruited in Manila. While guidelines for the setting up of community media centres have been drafted, these notes are still being updated and improved, as new experiences bring in improved methods or show new challenging situations.

Collaboration with the national cooperators has been cohesive and productive. The Project Management Team has also focussed on developing a network of local cooperators to spread the idea of community radio, and to root research and training work on a firm anchorage of local specialists and institutions. This has not only produced a broad team of cooperators but has also netted significant savings in the use of project resources, while ensuring an implementation team who better understand the local ideosyncrasies.

Every effort has been taken in this project to demystify radio and newspaper work, using simple equipment and production methods. Special use has been made of the *karaoke* (a singalong cassette console with loudspeaker) for producing the flagship programme of all stations, *Baranggayan sa Himpapawid*. While maintaining simplicity, the project should not lose sight of professionalism in radio production, in choice of equipment, production techniques and regular transmission. Maintaining a high technical quality will be especially important for FM broadcasting which provides clean signals and can exaggerate even small technical faults. Professionalism will also be necessary for maintaining the respect of other commercial stations in the broadcast areas. Ways are also being studied to link up with established commercial stations for news and programme exchange.

While in any project for media and development, it is difficult to justify with certainty the attainment of socio-economic development in the space of two and a half years, the more important development aspect of the project has been its direct contribution to empowerment of the people, self-confidence, awareness and appreciation of culture. This has been shown in the increased communication from the grassroots to the urban centres; enhanced dialogue of baranggay leaders with their constituents; discussions of the ordinary baranggay folk with the town Mayor and other government officials; the general airing of the problems and aspirations of the people through radio and newspapers. In the project phase itself, research should

be directed to audience research and studying indicators that reveal improvements in the socio-economic life of these baranggays.

While the plan of operation proposed the establishment of two community centres during the pilot phase, five such centres were set up. After the first two centres were operational, it was found that these sites offered only a limited view of the problems and challenges of setting up centres in other parts of the country, and that a broader selection of sites was necessary, in particular for isolated island situations, cooperating with educational institutions, and language groups. The mission therefore believes that the project team operated within the spirit of the plan of operations, although it was agreed that it would have been more correct to have informed Danida earlier and to have asked Danida's advice before proceeding.

In the light of these observations, the Tripartite Mission recommends that the project team continue its highly relevant work with the *Baranggayan sa Himpapawid* and the creative use of the karaoke, but should also take care to ensure professional recording techniques and use as far as possible high quality recording equipment. Similarly, professionalism in broadcasting management and transmission must also be safeguarded, in particular maintaining steady and regular broadcast transmission. Efforts should be made to strengthen the transmission facilities of each community centre to ensure as complete a coverage as possible of the sites and to provide technical maintenance and replacement as required. Greater efforts should be spent in supporting the use of printed materials, newsletters, posters, leaflets and other forms of printed information materials, where these are relevant and contribute to the overall communication and development goals of the centres.

In the project phase, greater emphasis and effort should be applied to the preparation of documentation and training manuals, particularly in the local languages, both for the guidelines and policies of the community media centres, as well as for specific skills training. Also in the project phase, further reinforcement of the management team in the field of community organization should be foreseen and appropriate consultants be recruited. The need for this has been aptly shown in the pilot phase.

To disseminate the experiences of this project which the Mission considers a potential model for other countries of Asia and the Pacific, a regional seminar should be organized under the project to document, evaluate and examine the possible applications in other countries. For this a case study on Tambuli Community Radio should be prepared and published.

Based on the impact of the community media centre in Banga, further examination should be made of the possibilities of cooperating with relevant educational institutions and established non-governmental orga-

nizations which have already shown a proven track record in socio-economic development and maintain a continuing agenda in this field.

With a view to long-term viability, the project should continue its efforts to eventually establish an autonomous, non-profit foundation to assure continuing assistance upon completion of the project.

Based on the observations of the sites and discussions with the project personnel, the Tripartite Mission believes that the team and its community partners are highly motivated, professionally skilled, and from the pilot phase now have the experience and know-how to continue to the project phase and the establishment of eight more community media centres. The project phase proper should therefore be favourably considered.

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L INTRODUCTION

1. The Tripartite Review took place from 7 to 15 April 1994. The members were Ms Nina Wernberg, representing Danida; Carlos A. Arnaldo, representing UNESCO; Ms Jeanette Tuason, representing the Secretary-General of the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines. Mr Louie Tabing, Project Manager assisted at all sessions and visits of the Mission, ably supported by Mr Marcos Phillip Vega, Field Operations Officer, and Ms Rina Ordoñez, Executive Administrator.

2. Available for the mission were the Project Manager's report for 1993; and an evaluation report prepared by Dr Delia Barcelon, Dean of the College of Mass Communication, University of the Philippines. A case study on financial expenditure and forecasts was not completed in time for the mission's examination.

3. Visits were arranged to selected Tambuli sites in Banga and Ibajay on the island of Panay; and Laurel in the nearby province of Batangas. Project briefings were held daily. Because of uncertainty of air bookings to the northern island of Batanes and a security problem in Zamboanga, the sites of Basco and Olutanga island were cancelled, but video clips of previous visits by the Tambuli team were shown and discussions were held with Mrs Celine Navarro in Manila, one of the members of the Batanes Development Foundation.

4. The objectives of the Review were:

a) To assess whether the project has achieved the development and immediate objectives, as stated in the project document of 14 July 1990 (see Annex II for the statement of objectives). This assessment should take into account the nature of this first phase as a *pilot project*, and as a methodological preparation for a further development phase.

b) In function of this assessment, propose considerations for future action on the part of Government, UNESCO and Danida. These shall be formulated in a set of recommendations to be included in the report.

5. The complete terms of reference for the Review are contained in Annex II.

6. The next section presents the findings and observations of the Mission, followed by the conclusions and recommendations.



A fisherman blows the *tambuli*, in this region a conch shell, to call his fellow villagers to help draw in the boats for the evening. Photo UNESCO/CAA/94

II. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

7. This section of the report presents the major findings and observations as formulated for each site; and the Mission's views concerning the specific points raised in the terms of reference.

Banga

8. Banga Community Radio is located on the campus of Aklan State College of Agriculture, some 15 kilometres from Kalibo airport and is the largest single area of inland Panay. Since its foundation, the College has been the major resource for agricultural technology and higher education in the province. It has a distinct outreach to the farming towns and villages that surround it. Its dynamism is due in great part to its Founder and current President Dr. Helmar Aguilar who by his example has imbued his faculty and students with this same spirit. The outreach programme of the College, and particularly uphill farming technology in the hinterlands of the province has been well appreciated and is now further propelled by community radio.

9. The College has provided studio premises and offices and was instrumental in convening leaders of all sectors of society to form the Banga Community Media Centre. Each of these leaders and their members takes an active part in preparing broadcast material and airing programmes. These include: agricultural development, women's affairs and issues; tricycle drivers and transportation; paramedical assistance and advice; farming techniques; police and civic peace; the handicapped; and 'personal advice.' Feedback mail is plentiful and regular, showing a close contact with the listeners.

10. Several technicians man the station and have contributed to the installation of the transmission system, including an FM antenna on the top of Mount Manduyog. This height, some 100 metres, has provided a clear signal to all areas of Banga and even reaches several kilometres up and down the coast from Kalibo to Ibajay.

11. An innovation in both Banga and Ibajay is the design of a light vest with pockets for batteries, microphones, cassettes, walkie talkie etc. The vest displays the Radio Tambuli-Manduyog (or Ibajay) logo, the name of the staff member and his role in the station: broadcaster, technician, station manager, etc. This has served to give the new broadcasters a distinctive identity and role in the community.



In Banga, a DYTМ producer gets ready for women's programme. 'Broadcaster vests' give radio staff a personality and a role function in the community. *Photo UNESCO/CAA/94*

12. Banga, though the most recently established (less than a year ago), is perhaps the most advanced of all stations. This is in large part due to the logistics support provided by the College, the access to vast educational resources and the participation of both educated and less educated citizens in the station. The Community Media Centre is cohesive and well attuned to one another's problems and viewpoints. In view of the coming elections for baranggay captains and council members, candidates who are members of the station, have voluntarily resigned from their duties during the election period. The same is true of Ibajay and Laurel.

13. The Tripartite team was highly satisfied with the progress made by the Banga Community station and could only suggest innovations in the area of 'schools on the air,' short radio programmes aimed at providing supplementary educational fare relevant to listeners, particularly in the field of agriculture. There are some two decades of experience available in this field through members of the Philippine Foundation of Rural Broadcasters and the Institute of Development Communication,

University of the Philippines, Los Baños. The three members of the Project Team have all had experience in this field.

14. Banga also showed a high level of technical competence both in studio production and in transmission operation and maintenance. Many of their lessons could be brought to bear in other stations, particularly Ibajay, some 60 kilometres away.

Ibajay

15. This is a medium sized town skirting the coast of Panay, but with a large farming population in the interior. The station is housed temporarily in the *convento*, the residence of the parish priest, until new premises are constructed. While ordinarily the project would avoid too close an identification with either church or state, in this case, the parish priest has religiously remained neutral, while fully participating and contributing to the Community Media Centre, of which he is the Chairman. As noted in previous field reports, it is often the local church that shows itself to be the 'neutral' or non-partisan institution, as is also the college in Banga.

16. Ibajay too has established its Community Media Council with a similar range of social sectors. The town Mayor, Florencio Miraflores, has participated in both the council meetings and the programmes of Radyo Ibajay. It is also significant to note that while this is one of the smaller towns of Panay, the Mayor is a candidate for governor of the province. His leadership in Ibajay has already been shown on many occasions, notably interpretations of the 15 kilometre sea limit for large fishing vessels (over 3 tons) to favour servicing of the 'fish shelters' within this limit. These fish shelters are floating rafts of long bamboo poles with broad leaves; they provide a 'shelter' where fish tarry in the cooler waters and are later caught by the fishermen. While the law was formulated mainly to keep out industrial fishing boats, particularly from foreign countries, some of the local fishing boats reach this tonnage and would therefore also be prohibited from fishing in these waters. The Mayor proposed a liberal interpretation of this law to favour the local fishermen.

17. In Ibajay, the mission was able to witness a *barangayan sa himpapawid* in the Aklan language. Some 60 people gathered for the event held under the coconut trees along the beach. Villagers hosted and acted as emcee (master of ceremonies), technicians, coordinators, interviewers. Aware that the *karaoke* has limited recording possibilities, the station technician recorded the programme on a separate semi-professional cassette recorder. The programme was recorded live, with few breaks – showing that the team had mastered the basic operations of live, outdoor broadcasting. A prominent feature of the programme was a 20-minute segment called *Balitaktan*, or debate in which the Mayor, the Barangay Captain and several Councillors could be questioned by any of

the villagers. Among the topics brought up were funds for bridge construction, interpretations of the 15 kilometre sea limit and the lack of school teachers, forcing the present teachers to handle double and even triple loads, while crowding the classrooms and contributing to diminished learning.

18. The programme also offered talents in singing, poetry and recitation in both Aklanon and Pilipino, the national language. This is significant because in the non-Tagalog regions, there has historically been great resistance to learn and speak Pilipino which is based on Tagalog, the language of the central plains of Luzon. Most of the performers showed very high competence in the national language.



In Ibayay, the Baranggay Captain addresses the villagers gathered under coconut trees along the beach coast. A number render songs, poems or stories in the *baranggayan sa himpapawid*. Photo UNESCO/CAA/94

19. Radyo Ibajay also had problems with transmission. Recent typhoons may have altered the antenna direction or loosened connections. There could also be interference from Banga, now tuned to almost the same frequency. It is suggested that Ibajay re-tune its frequency lower to 96 or 98 Megahertz, to avoid interference with Banga. Based on the experience of the 100 metre high antenna of Banga, it is also recommended that, as far as possible, Ibajay's antenna should be mounted higher, on a solid mast and with solid mounting (due to frequent typhoons in this region). The technician of Ibajay has also studied antenna propagation and could contribute to the design of a new antenna for local manufacture at half the cost it would be in Manila, and one-fourth that of an imported antenna. This expertise should be built on and expanded, as this is the kind of experience also required in other sites.

20. Both Ibajay and Banga brought up the need for increasing FM listenership. At present it was estimated that only 30% of listeners had FM radios. The project had procured some 1,000 low-cost FM receivers for this purpose; several thousand more would be required to significantly increase listenership in these two areas alone.

21. It was brought to the attention of the two communities that a UNESCO design for AM/FM radio receivers with solar power was available, if a local assembly shop (or several) could be set up. There were four technical schools in Banga and one in Ibajay, and some had already experience in assembling MW radio sets. The basic components could be obtained cheaply enough, even in the Philippines. The problem was rather if local assembly could be organized and made economically viable, preferably profitable. In Ibajay, the Mayor offered to organize financiers if the assembly were really viable.

22. On the other hand, there are a number of significant points to bear in mind: a) the time factor to develop production capacity to a level where it can satisfy demand and be profitable; b) competition from existing low-cost FM radios already available; c) need of proper quality control and maintenance.

23. In the light of the above, it is suggested that the project management team reconsider this component of the project as a solution to satisfy the demand for FM radios in the project areas. Certainly, the project should not be considered a banking source to pay for all FM radio sets in the country.

Laurel

24. Laurel is only 85 kilometres from Metro Manila, a coastal town on Lake Taal, and currently at the end of a dead end road. One uses this road only if one is going to Laurel. Ironically, despite its proximity to Manila, Laurel exhibits many of the symptoms of an economically depressed area: limited market, low incomes, mainly subsistence farming, few service industries, general neglect by national and provincial development programmes. And yet, the area shows large potential for fish breeding (Lake Taal is one of the environmentally cleanest lakes in the country and has several varieties of fish), tourism (a long coast faces the once ninth wonder of the world, the perfectly conical Taal volcano); and farm produce (one of the richest and fairly well irrigated plains. And yet, it is believed by many, the dead end road has in effect held back the development pace.



Mike Amo, Station Manager of DZTL, Laurel mixes wit and hard grit experience to transmit information on development over the air. Equipment is simple, demystifying radio. *Photo UNESCO/CAA/94*

25. The town was quick to organize its Community Media Council which is also supported by a private foundation created by the Mayor, Joven de Grano. Although the parish priest has been changed three times since project work began, and the town has suffered several political ups and downs, the Council has continued despite these upheavals. Broadcasts have been maintained and the newspaper suffered only one lapse of five months. The province is known for highly volatile politics, but life otherwise goes on as usual.

26. From interviews with the townspeople, it can be said that they are acutely aware of their economic situation, and living close to Manila, they are aware of the national and provincial resources available to them, if they can make a good case of their township. Plans are widely known for extending the provincial road along the coast to reach the next set of towns in the neighbouring province of Cavite: Amadeo and Alfonso, and from there to Tagaytay City. People are also fiercely aware of their skills in fish cage breeding and its potential, if only a wider market were available. Some are also planning to develop modest touristic day stops along the lake. Community radio has likely played a major role in this awareness, as a matter of fact many of the broadcasters refer to the phenomenon of 'nagising na,' the awakening of the people to a new reality.

27. As the station also reaches the next town, Talisay, the Laurel broadcasters have organized a number of *baranggay sa himpapawid* in barrios of that town as well. The purpose was to evoke an inter-town cooperation as well, but it is too early to judge the results.

28. There has been some dissatisfaction about the limited reach of the present transmitter. A number of the farther barrios are blocked by a small ridge that attenuates signal strength in these areas. A stronger signal would also enable Radyo Laurel to reach more baranggays in the next town, Talisay. It is suggested that further thought be given to the antenna configuration in Laurel. One possibility is to set up an antenna on Tagaytay Ridge, about 140 metres high, with a 100 watt amplifier beaming the signal down to the whole valley of Talisay and Laurel. This would be fed by a link transmitter of 10 watts from Laurel itself. This solution would require arrangements for a small room at Tagaytay Lodge and payment of rental and electricity, possibly recoverable through radio advertisements. There may also be need of a link transmitter in the shadow zones, if these would still persist with a Tagaytay antenna. But simply increasing the power at the present antenna site would not significantly extend FM coverage.

Batanes

29. Although it was not possible to visit Batanes, discussions were held with Ms Celine Navarro, President of the Batanes Development Foundation. After Radyo Ivatan was established and on the air for more than a year, the Government network, Radyo ng Bayan decided to set up a 5 kilowatt MW station on the same island. This station reaches all the island groups of the Batanes province and part of the north coast of Luzon. Since then, a number of the volunteer producers trained in radyo Ivatan transferred to salaried positions in Radyo ng Bayan. Radyo Ivatan is now left with a modest but dedicated staff and broadcasts only in the morning hours.

30. It was felt that the impetus gained in Batanes should not be lost, and that considerable parallel work could be done without wastage or duplication if Radyo Ivatan could also reach the other islands. It would have three advantages. First, there would be an FM back-up to all the islands; second, two of the islands could broadcast back to Radyo Ivatan for re-transmission to the whole region; third, arrangements have been discussed with Radyo ng Bayan to relay the national news on the Tambuli stations and to simulcast selected programmes of Tambuli on Radyo ng Bayan. This arrangement would offer the best of two worlds, and would dovetail the work of both mainstream and alternate media in the same region.

31. It is therefore strongly urged that the Project Management Team study ways to expand the FM broadcast in the Batanes province to all islands. While the technical costs would be reasonable, it is understood that the logistics of reaching the outer islands and setting up technical facilities could be formidable. Without these, however, the outer islands will always remain outside the development scope of the province.

Olutanga

32. Olutanga is an island off the coast of Zamboanga, and to reach it one has to travel across some zones that either are heavily militarized or prone to ambush by armed rebel groups. On some occasions, the Project Team have even had to ride armoured jeeps of the army or the rebels to get to port towns in Zamboanga where a boat could be taken to Olutanga. Tambuli, however, has been fortunate to develop a strong credibility with the people and as such has so far been immune to aggression by either side.

33. It was possible on one morning to obtain a clear signal from Olutanga by SSB (HF) through which a briefing was obtained for the Tripartite report. Again, the experience has been that the farther, more isolated and more wanting in resources, the more active, dynamic and generous are the people. This, the most recent of Tambuli stations, shows

yet the greatest promise. The local folk have contributed materials and labour to the building of a new radio station. Technicians have been recruited from the island and training provided by local members of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster in Zamboanga City. The Community Media Centre also designed and reproduced their own handbook on island broadcasting. At the time of the Mission, the building was nearing completion and was expected to be operational within a month.

Specific Questions

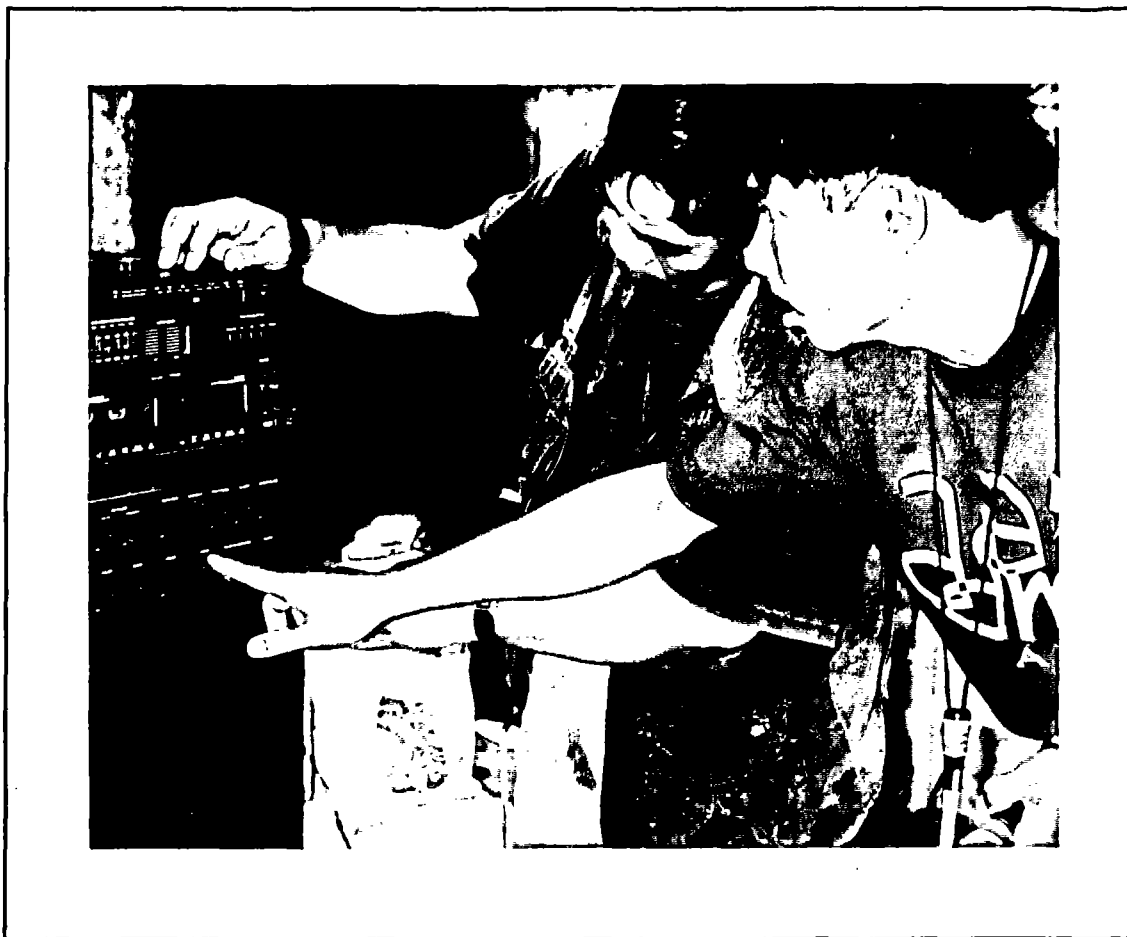
Project methodology

34. There has certainly been a basic methodology for setting up community centres with radio broadcasting and newspaper production facilities. It combines the more relevant techniques of social research and involving the community at every step. Once the site is identified, a full research programme is worked out, which includes sociological data and analysis, key informant interviews and focussed group discussions with community leaders or representatives. This foundation is then buttressed by professional training provided by specialists, as far as possible from the region itself. Meanwhile, social organization is tackled, leading to the creation of the community media council.

35. The earlier criteria for selecting sites has also been periodically examined and updated and now serves as a basic guideline for rejecting or selecting potential sites.

36. This methodology, established early by the project and revised with each new learning experience, has now become a standard operating procedure.

37. There is need, however, to document what is happening. The reproduction of the Tambuli Primer has been most useful and should be updated and translated into other local languages, as was done in Olutanga. the methodology should be set down as well in clear and simple language so all communities can follow it as a basic guideline. The Project Management Team may also wish to consider whether it is time to recruit a regular, even though part-time editor to ensure timely and well presented manuals, reports and other Tambuli documents.



The *karaoke* simplifies radio production and demystifies the technicality of making programmes. It can provide professional results if well used and in conjunction with at least semi-professional equipment. *Photo UNESCO/CAA/94*

Professionalism in media operations

38. Training has generally covered two aspects: technical handling of the material to ensure high technical quality; and projection of the personality of the station as a public service outlet through various programme formats. It can be said that the stations have generally earned a high degree of credibility in comparison with other radio stations and other media. Much of this is due to its community orientation: "I have to see these people everyday, how can I not tell the truth?"

39. There have also been good relations with broadcasters of the commercial stations in the same region, many of them recruited as trainers for Tambuli stations. These same trainers are the strongest arguers for professional quality.

40. The *karaoke* method has, however, highlighted a gnawing problem. The use of this non-professional equipment can lead to laxity in

production skills and a resultant lowering of technical quality. The *karaoke* does not have adequate mixing capacity nor recording of high quality. Cheaper *karaoke* microphones, while pleasant sounding through a loudspeaker system, do not provide the broad frequency range required for broadcast.

41. While the use of the *karaoke* technique has been recognized as highly successful in demystifying radio and in drawing ordinary people to participate more fully in broadcasting, greater attention should be paid to technical production quality and the use of more professional equipment in the final recording process. This would mean, for example, that a semi-professional mixer and high quality cassette recorder should be used for the final mix-down, and that more professional microphones be used for interviews, music and other programme inputs. If such a mixer and recorder can be incorporated in the *karaoke* machine (most are hand assembled locally), this could be a solution. Such equipment is already available to the project and need only be integrated with the *karaoke* machines.

42. On the other hand, the mission did recognize the expert handling of this non-professional equipment to render a technically acceptable output. But with several commercial stations in competition, there may come a day when lax technical quality will no longer be acceptable. This observation holds for all Tambuli sites using the *karaoke* for *baranggayan sa himpapawid*.

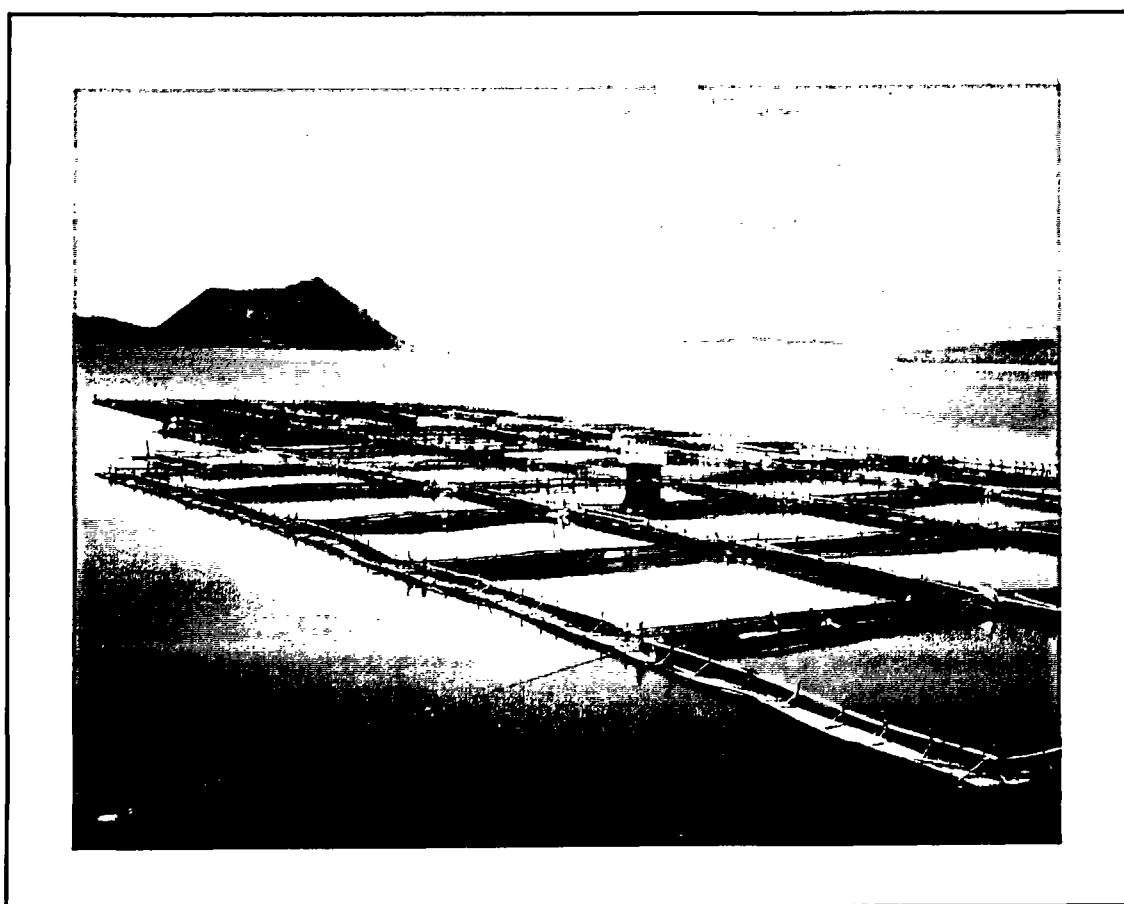
43. None of the stations or newspapers can be said to be economically viable at present. It is still too early to expect this level of achievement. Those that have had the help of foundations or larger institutions may reach this level more quickly. Since last year, one station was able to give Christmas bonuses to their staff. Others provide a weekly rice ration to supplement food needs.

44. The question of viability is important, as it also bears on the good will and volunteer spirit of the new broadcasters. The project's training inputs have certainly paid off in developing a large force of volunteers and has certainly oriented their good will to public service. But given the economic needs of the most baranggay folk, some thought should also be given to sources of professional income for the communication personnel, as one day, good will can wear out and volunteerism will yield to economic needs. It is urgent now to think of maintaining this good will through some kind of income supplement.

3. *Socio-economic improvements at the community level*

45. Unfortunately, there have been no examples of income generating activities as resulting from the work of the Community Media Centres, the radio broadcasts or articles in the newspapers. This should certainly be worked on in the future and any progress on this point should be examined and documented in the project phase.

46. But it is difficult to measure expected socio-economic development anywhere. As a matter of fact, important as they are and they should not be neglected, income generating activities and socio-economic outputs need not be part of the immediate objectives of the project. They would be exceedingly difficult to attain and more difficult to measure with any accuracy.



The fish cages of Laurel stretch some 200 metres into the lake facing the renowned Taal Volcano, once the world's most perfect cone. *Photo UNESCO/CAA/94*

47. The project has nonetheless proven its potency as a political and socio-cultural tool, and specifically as a communication tool for development. A constructive dialogue has begun on radio and in newspapers, as well as within the communities themselves. There is a new awareness and self-confidence among the ordinary people and these are the basic pre-requisites for social change and empowerment of the people. Certifying the attainment of these pre-requisites is much more meaningful than measuring economic improvement merely in terms of additional pesos.

48. It is also suggested that the original idea of setting up community newspapers may need re-thinking or paring down to realities. In any community, small or large, a newspaper is a major undertaking with serious long-term responsibilities and major economic commitments. So far only one fully fledged newspaper has been launched, that in Laurel, *Abot Tanaw*, or 'share your vision.' and even this one, although sold regularly (when it comes out) has had difficulties. The paper in Batanes is more of a news sheet, as is the only issue of *Sayaw Ati* in Ibajay. Even as a simple news sheet, however, the information is being disseminated, shared and discussed. It is possible that a newspaper in the conventional understanding is not necessary or relevant, and that some costs can be saved in this domain. After some of the newscast have 'negotiated to borrow' paper, ink and use of the duplicating machines, they are eventually distributed free, because to charge would belittle the good will, borrowing and volunteer efforts of those who contributed. But this local negotiation is itself a community effort and roundly to be applauded.

4. *Adherence to the strategy of the project document*

49. The birthing of the concept of Tambuli Community Radio was a long process that began as early as 1988, the original idea being the potential use of a mobile transmitter that could be installed in villages and transmit live programmes both in the village and to a wider public through a network of FM links. Included in the early thinking was an FM transmitter for the College of Mass Communication, at the University of the Philippines Diliman campus in Quezon City; this was conceived of as an experimental station that would innovate new formats for use in the barangays. At the same time, it was also thought that an experimental station could be set up in Batanes, where no national radio signals reached and where a real 'first' in broadcasting could be established.

50. UNESCO provided an FM transmitter to the College of Mass Communication in 1988. Despite the technical preparations, this transmitter was never installed. Instead, the College took the initiative to set it up in Batanes in 1989, using a simple survey as the basis of their work. This was before the Tambuli project was set up. The Batanes Development Foundation, already established, cooperated closely with the College, and maintained operations for several months. When the

Tambuli project was set up, it was decided by the Project Management Team to assist this early station and take it under the wing of Tambuli where it would benefit from technical advice, training and methodological research. Although referred to as the first Tambuli station, it was actually set up before the project was operational.

51. For the next station, it was felt that project work should be sited in a location that is easily accessible and can be observed and assisted as needed. This would be in many ways, a laboratory case. Laurel in Batangas fit the profile required. While Laurel was in many ways a rapidly developing station and responded well to development inputs, it did not display the breadth of experience required for going farther abroad. There was little experience with isolated island situations, other cultural and language groups, varying social and economic conditions. even if successful, the Laurel experience alone could not be used as a basis to extrapolate to other regions.

52. And hence, it was decided to look into the island of Panay. While the project team has selected Ibaday as fulfilling all the criteria, Banga had the attraction of a college of agriculture which had willingly volunteered its resources. It was decided by the team to consider both, with a view to linking them and tapping the resources of the College more widely.

53. At the same time, the island of Olutanga was raised as a highly suitable island site, the first after Batanes. And it was after much insistence from the Olutanga community and several offers of volunteer work and materials, that this station too was adopted by Tambuli. These five stations would then round out the experiences and provide a solid refinement of the guidelines to cover all typical situations in the country.

54. The decision to tackle five stations was also taken in the context of economies of scale. To build two or five centres, there would need of maintaining a project team, paying overhead and project back-up, manpower for training and research. The management costs for two or five stations would be almost the same. And hence, it was felt to be a wiser economy to aim for five stations.

55. It should also be noted that as the work of Tambuli progressed, the concept became more widely known, with several demands coming in every month to assist in establishing a Tambuli station. As far as possible, the Project Management Team made every effort to coincide with the timing of community demands and offers of volunteer contributions. To turn these down or defer them to some future date, might have been to lose them permanently.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

56. The conclusions and recommendations are taken directly from the Tripartite Review as formulated and signed in Manila 14 April 1994. There are reproduced in entirety as follows.

Tripartite Review

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Tripartite mission review of community media centres in Banga, Ibajay and Laurel, and discussions with representatives of Batanes and Olutanga have shown that the project has basically fulfilled its development and immediate objectives.

An experimental methodology has been established based on the varied experiences of setting up the first five stations. This comprises selection and inspection of potential sites; benchmark research of selected sites, including discussions with baranggay leaders to ascertain their interest, orientations and aspirations for community media under their supervision; organization of community media centres; building, as necessary, the required infrastructure (studio, work rooms, offices, etc); training in radio and newspaper production; monitoring and follow-up assistance. Wherever possible, trainers and researchers are recruited from the regions where the sites are located, backed up by experienced consultants recruited in Manila. While guidelines for the setting up of community media centres have been drafted, these notes are still being updated and improved, as new experiences bring in improved methods or show new challenging situations.

Collaboration with the national cooperators (the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines, National Telecommunication Commission, University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication, University of the Philippines Institute for Development Communication, Philippine Press Institute, Philippine Foundation of Rural Broadcasters) has been cohesive and productive. The Project Management Team has also focussed on developing a network of local cooperators to spread the idea of community radio, and to root research and training work on a firm anchorage of local specialists and institutions.

This has not only produced a broad team of cooperators but has also netted significant savings in the use of project resources, while ensuring an implementation team who better understand the local idiosyncrasies.

Every effort has been taken in this project to demystify radio and newspaper work, using simple equipment and production methods. Special use has been made of the *karaoke* (a singalong cassette console with loudspeaker) for producing the flagship programme of all stations, *Baranggayan sa Himpapawid*. While maintaining simplicity, the project should not lose sight of professionalism in radio production, in choice of equipment, production techniques and regular transmission. Maintaining a high technical quality will be especially important for FM broadcasting which provides clean signals and can exaggerate even small technical faults. Professionalism will also be necessary for maintaining the respect of other commercial stations in the broadcast areas. Close cooperation with these commercial stations has also encouraged mutual help from these stations in the form of technical advice, training and assistance in technical maintenance. Ways are also being studied to link up with these established stations for news and programme exchange.

While in any project for media and development, it is difficult to justify with certainty the attainment of socio-economic development in the space of two and a half years, the more important development aspect of the project has been its direct contribution to empowerment of the people, self-confidence, awareness and appreciation of culture. This has been shown in the increased communication from the grassroots to the urban centres; enhanced dialogue of baranggay leaders with their constituents; discussions of the ordinary baranggay folk with the town Mayor and other government officials; the general airing of the problems and aspirations of the people through radio and newspapers. In the project phase itself, research should be directed to audience research and studying indicators that reveal improvements in the socio-economic life of these baranggays.

While the plan of operation proposed the establishment of two community centres during the pilot phase, five such centres were set up. After the first two centres were operational, it was found that these sites offered only a limited view of the problems and challenges of setting up centres in other parts of the country, and that a broader selection of sites was necessary, in particular for isolated island situations, cooperating with educational institutions, and language groups. The project team also found that their time was more usefully applied in the preparation of these centres. New experiences had been introduced, necessitating an updating and revision of the basic project methodology to take account of these in the guidelines for setting up community media centres. It was also believed that the project team was operating within the general outlines of the plan of operations, as one of the objectives was to show a cost-effective method for the project proper. The mission therefore believes that the project team operated within the spirit of the plan of

operations, although it was agreed that it would have been more correct to have informed Danida earlier and to have asked Danida's advice before proceeding.

Nonetheless, the overall achievement of setting up five operational community media centres, despite the difficulties and problems of some, has certainly shown a visible impact in the communities visited, enhanced communication systems, and a greatly increased dialogue that is grassroots based.

In the light of these observations, the Tripartite Mission proposes the following recommendations.

1. The project team should continue its highly relevant work with the *Baranggayan sa Himpapawid* and the creative use of the karaoke, but should also take care to ensure professional recording techniques and use as far as possible high quality recording equipment. Similarly, professionalism in broadcasting management and transmission must also be safeguarded, in particular maintaining steady and regular broadcast transmission.
2. Efforts should be made to strengthen the transmission facilities of each community centre to ensure as complete a coverage as possible of the sites and to provide technical maintenance and replacement as required.
3. Greater efforts should be spent in supporting the use of printed materials, newsletters, posters, leaflets and other forms of printed information materials, where these are relevant and contribute to the overall communication and development goals of the centres.
4. In the project phase, greater emphasis and effort should be applied to the preparation of documentation and training manuals, particularly in the local languages, both for the guidelines and policies of the community media centres, as well as for specific skills training.
5. Also in the project phase, further reinforcement of the management team in the field of community organization should be foreseen and appropriate consultants be recruited. The need for this has been aptly shown in the pilot phase.
6. To disseminate the experiences of this project which the Mission considers a potential model for other countries of Asia and the Pacific, a regional seminar should be organized under the project to document, evaluate and examine the possible applications in other countries. For this a case study on Tambuli Community Radio should be prepared and published.

7. Based on the impact of the community media centre in Banga, further examination should be made of the possibilities of cooperating with relevant educational institutions and established non-governmental organizations which have already shown a proven track record in socio-economic development and maintain a continuing agenda in this field.

8. With a view to long-term viability, the project should continue its efforts to eventually establish an autonomous, non-profit foundation to assure continuing assistance upon completion of the project.

9. Based on the observations of the sites and discussions with the project personnel, the Tripartite Mission believes that the team and its community partners are highly motivated, professionally skilled, and from the pilot phase now have the experience and know-how to continue to the project phase and the establishment of eight more community media centres. The project phase proper should therefore be favourably considered.

On behalf of Danida

On behalf of UNESCO

Ms Nina Wernberg

Carlos A. Arnaldo

On behalf of the UNESCO National Commission
of the Philippines

Ms Jeanette Tuason

Annex I

UNESCO/DANIDA

Terms of Reference

for 510-PHI-61

Tambuli Community Radio

The proposed dates for the tripartite review are 12 to 22 April 1994.

The TPR mission is composed of Ms Nina Wernberg, representing Danida; and Mr Carlos A. Arnaldo, representing UNESCO. The Government shall be represented by the Secretary-General of the National Commission for UNESCO, Dra. Lourdes Quisumbing or her representative and the Tambuli Project Manager, Mr Louie Tabing. Other staff members of Tambuli Project Office, members of the Project Management Team and the Senior Advisory Panel shall be available for consultation or discussion as required and appropriate.

To facilitate the work of the mission, two studies are under preparation and shall be made available before the tripartite review: 1) an overview of project goals and accomplishments, by Dra. Delia Barcelon, Dean of the College of Mass Communication, University of the Philippines; 2) an economic forecast study of expected costs for setting up future stations, to be prepared by the Asian Institute of Management (author to be confirmed).

The mission's principal output shall be a report of its findings and a set of recommendations to be considered by the three parties.

The terms of reference are as follows:

Objectives of the review:

1. Assess whether the project has achieved the development and immediate objectives, as stated in the project document of 14 July 1990 (see Annex I for the statement of objectives). This assessment should take into account the nature of this first phase as a *pilot project*, and as a methodological preparation for a further development phase.

2. In function of this assessment, propose considerations for future action on the part of Government, UNESCO and Danida. These

shall be formulated in a set of recommendations to be included in the report.

Scope of the Review:

The Tripartite Mission should examine more attentively the following points:

1. *Project methodology*

Has there been a firm methodology established in setting up community centres with radio broadcasting and newspaper production facilities? In what ways has research work benefitted the planning of the community centres, policies and operations of radio stations and newspapers? Can this methodology now be set down as a permanent, though flexible guideline for future work?

2. *Professionalism in media operations*

What measures have been taken to ensure correct, professional operations in radio programming and newspaper production? How do the programmes and newspapers compare with the equivalent operations of commercial media in the provincial cities? Has there been any indication of the credibility of the station and of these programmes? Have there been competitive feelings or jealousy from commercial stations, or have efforts been taken to ensure cooperation and integration with these entities? Are the community media and training centres organizationally and financially sustainable? If not, what are the problems and what should be done in order to obtain sustainability?

3. *Socio-economic improvements at the community level*

With reference to the development objective, can any indications or concrete examples be cited of where radio or newspapers have contributed to improvements in social life or improvements in the economic means of livelihood? If it is too early to assess this aspect, can concrete and specific areas or activities be identified where community media might make such a contribution? Has the project shown any indications of catalyzing community decision-making or improving the trickle-down of socio-economic benefits of national and provincial development programmes to the communities concerned? Has the project succeeded in reaching its target group? To what extent are the newspapers being sold and read? Have the community facilities for resource mobilization, livelihood training, networking and social development been established and what are their results?

4. *Adherence to the strategy of the project document*

The strategy of the project (Section VII of the project document) states that "The project will be implemented in two phases: a) the *pilot phase* which shall run for two years during which two community media and training centres (CMTC) shall be set up and b) the *expansion phase* of 4 years where ten (10) other CMTCs shall be established. . . . " Can any justifications be presented for deviating from this original strategy and setting up five community centres instead of only two, as originally proposed? Can this be explained in terms of costs (economies of scale), the need to build and maintain overhead and project back-up, manpower, insufficient feedback to finalize a project methodology, timing with community needs, demands of communities, or other relevant factors?

In view of what is considered a radical change in strategy, strong justification shall have to be presented. Consideration of any future assistance will be directly dependent on a firm and convincing clarification of this issue.

Organization of the Review

A schedule of meetings to take place at the National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be made available upon arrival. Usually, there is an introductory meeting at the outset of the review; and a final wrap-up meeting where the recommendations are formulated and agreed upon. Other meetings, as necessary, may be called at the project headquarters at the University of the Philippines.

Visits to Tambuli Community Centres will be arranged for Laurel, Batangas (by land transport); Banga and Ibajay on the island of Panay (by air). If possible, a visit may be scheduled to Basco, Batanes, but this will be dependent on available flights and timing with the more important appointments of the mission. As appropriate and required, further visits may be arranged with some of the cooperating institutions: University of the Philippines, College of Agriculture (Los Baños), Aklan College of Agriculture Philippine Press Institute, city and provincial radio stations and newspapers.

Annex II

Statement of Objectives as in the Project Document (14 July 1990)

Development Objective

In the context of the country-side agro-industrial programme launched by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) to raise growth levels in the rural areas from 1990 onwards, the development objective of the project is to improve the economic living standard of rural communities and to increase the socio-cultural benefits accruing therefrom.

The development objective, though simply stated, has numerous facets to it. Succinctly put, it entails wiser and more active exploitation of existing resources, development of alternate sources of income, use of opportunities for learning new skills for cooperating with other members of the community. In a word, it involves cultivating a sense of pride and self-reliance within the rural environment.

Immediate Objective

To achieve these higher goals, the project aims to set up in selected rural areas a community centre for communication, aimed at social and economic development, information dissemination and networking. It seeks to provide community members with increased opportunities for formal and semi-formal education. To increase production, it intends to link institutions so that capital material and technical resources may be made available to those in need. Above all, the centre aims to catalyze decision-making and cooperative action at the local levels in harmony with overall national goals.