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International perspectives on community and citizen's media

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The pursuit of sustainable, user-centred and volunteer-based production practices and business models are important drivers of innovation for community and citizen's media around the world. These drivers are apparent in the rapid changes to making and managing radio that are occurring in Australian community radio as this issue of 3CMedia goes 'live', in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They are also apparent in the sub-continental Indian and African cases of community media discussed in the two articles that make up this issue.

The author of the first article, Subhransu Mohapatra, shows how the needs and interests of displaced populations can seed the rapid development of community media. However, sudden success can also result in sudden failure, as occurred with GlobalOriya.com, a community e-newsletter that provided news, information and a platform for interaction to the Oriya diaspora. However, volunteer citizen-journalists were quickly overwhelmed by the unanticipated popularity of their community media initiative, and the regulatory complexity of different jurisdictions and expectations of professional conduct that accompanied a rapid rise in popularity. Subhransu Mohapatra reflects upon why closure was the only risk management strategy available to the GlobalOriya.com publishers at the time.

In east African countries such as Rwanda, community radio has been significantly shaped by the communication for development agendas of international aid agencies. Emmanuel Munyarukumbuzi explains why understanding the motivations for audience participation in Rwandan community radio, as well as uses of mobile apps such as WhatsApp, are important to the sustainability of these services. Integration of mobile technology into community radio operations turns out to be both multi-faceted and routine in station operations.

These articles started life a year ago as papers that were presented to the International Conference on Citizen and Community Media organised by Dr Usha Rodrigues and hosted by Deakin University in Melbourne. Over forty community radio practitioners from Australia and South Asia gathered to exchange ideas and information about a diverse range of community media enterprises, the national contexts in which they operate, and how they have used digital technologies to explore and enhance social participation. The conference was enabled by the Australia India Council of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Community Broadcasting Association of

Australian also sponsored the event and 3CMedia is delighted to be able to support this continuing dialogue in this issue.