



First Response Radio
Ready When Disaster Strikes

2021

**EQUIP
TRAIN
RESPOND
IMPACT**

ANNUAL REPORT

In 2021 all FRR teams continued to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic from their home stations in Pakistan, India, Indonesia and the Philippines. This year also saw FRR teams responding to natural disasters in Indonesia and the Philippines.



#COMMUNICATIONISAID

EQUIP




Radio Distribution Strategy

FRR's field experience has highlighted that there are currently insufficient numbers of radios being distributed during a disaster and they can be slow to reach those affected communities who need them most. After a decade of seeing little change, for the past 2 years, FRR has been working with the CDAC Network to create a strategy for radio distribution during disasters.

This year, the CDAC Working Group has focused on developing specific task groups for the 5 key challenges for effective radio distribution; purchasing, logistics, distribution, coordination and research. To begin with, the groups will establish standards for the quality and quantity of radios required in an emergency/crisis. This is followed by establishing a coordinated strategy to make sure that radios are readily available in disaster zones. The long term goal of CDAC members is to stockpile radios BEFORE disaster strikes as close to disaster prone areas as possible.

We are excited to be working alongside 15 member organisations who have offered their expertise and resources and are hopeful that this can bring a collaborative approach to radio distribution during disasters.

-  PURCHASE RADIOS
-  STORAGE & TRANSPORT
-  DISTRIBUTION
-  COORDINATION & TRACKING
-  RESEARCH

FRR Global Suitcase Inventory

Since 2005 we have been using our iconic suitcase radio equipment as part of our strategy to train and equip teams in disaster prone countries. Over the last 16 years, FRR has deployed 14 suitcase studios of which 12 are still on the field in Asia including those in use by FRR teams in India, Pakistan, Indonesia and the Philippines.

We have also supplied several organisations with a full studio kit including the BBC, Internews, IOM with the most recent studio kit being delivered to Deutsche Welle in 2020. Each FRR team is responsible for their suitcase studio and will conduct regular maintenance checks and testing to make sure that the kit is ready for the next deployment.



TRAIN



FRI rolls out 'Blending Learning' Training Program for 2021!

Following last year's conference where FRR teams expressed their desire to upgrade their training methods, we take a closer look at how First Response Indonesia (FRI) have adapted their training program for 2021.

As with all FRR teams, FRI previously conducted full training sessions in person, however, the COVID pandemic has called for

training methods to be adapted so that they can still be implemented while maintaining health protocols. Throughout 2021, FRI rolled out their 'Blended Learning' training format which incorporates a hybrid of e-learning and onsite training.



The new format is carried out in two stages; the training sessions originally held in the classroom now take place through an e-learning system. These sessions cover the theoretical concepts behind radio disaster response and are taught by qualified FRI trainers. The onsite training takes place in person across cities in Indonesia. Onsite sessions focus on the more practical elements of the training, learning how to use radio equipment and the suitcase studio is available at each location. The sessions conclude with a field exercise that is designed to provide trainees with an experience as close as possible to a real disaster, where they produce live, disaster related radio.

This year FRI has completed online training for two classes (10 students per class); the first being local FRI staff and the second consisting of local NGO/Humanitarian partners. The e-learning sessions took place over 5 days, for 3 hours per day and included a mix of multimedia formats; pre-recorded videos, Zoom presentations, student workbooks and breakout sessions. 10 participants from the online training went on to complete the onsite training which is carried out over 24 hours. This was held in Jakarta and included a full day of hands-on training, practising setting up the radio equipment, conducting interviews and live broadcasts. The students slept overnight at the office building and were faced with realistic challenges and stresses throughout the training to simulate a real disaster.

This 'Blended Learning' format has proved a great success, with students noting that the interactive methods implemented by FRI have been particularly effective. After review of the onsite training, the FRI team may expand this in the future. We look forward to seeing the FRI team further develop this training format in 2022!



RESPOND



COVID - Focus shifts to Global Vaccination Campaign

COVID-19 continues to impact the ways that FRR teams have been operating in 2021. With the pandemic entering its second year, the relevant topics for discussion for many has shifted to focus on vaccination campaigns that are being rolled out across the globe. This comes with a different set of informational challenges; all FRR teams are using their local stations to provide accurate information, educate listeners on the latest rumours and fake news and look for ways to engage local communities in discussions.

Indonesia - FRI deploys after earthquake strikes Mamuju

In the early hours of January 15th, a 6.2 magnitude earthquake struck the Indonesian island, Sulawesi, near to the city of Mamuju, causing widespread damage to buildings and the displacement of thousands in the surrounding areas. An initial assessment revealed that there were no radio stations on the air. First Response Indonesia (FRI) deployed two highly trained volunteers from the North of Sulawesi and a deployment manager from FRI's Jakarta office to Mamuju.

In partnership with the Synod office of GKSB church, FRI set up a local radio station and began broadcasting from Mamuju to the affected communities. After a week of broadcasting disaster-related content, the two FRI volunteers completed their deployment. The deployment manager stayed for an additional three weeks, training the youth from the church to help with the broadcasts. After four weeks on the ground, the long term relief and rehabilitation phase had begun and FRI closed out the deployment and returned all FRR equipment to Jakarta.



Philippines - Typhoon Rai/Odette

In December, Typhoon Rai (locally known as Typhoon Odette) hit several major regions of the Philippines. FRR Philippines is run by local radio network, FEBC Philippines, and had 3-4 stations that were in areas directly affected by the typhoon. The stations were used to broadcast critical information before the storm hit regarding what to do before, during and after a typhoon. Most of the stations were able to avoid damage and the staff were all accounted for, but the key station in Cebu City had a damaged tower/mast forcing the radio station off air (DYFR FM Cebu).

The FRR team in Manila was on standby to deploy if needed to help put DYFR FM back on the air. However, after being off air for 4 days, DYFR FM discovered their station could still run at reduced power, despite the severely bent tower. The station is running part time from 8am to Noon on weekdays. They have switched from normal broadcasts to FRR type humanitarian broadcasts which include information to affected communities on where to get safe drinking water, providing updates on government relief efforts and which areas have a strong telephone signal. DYFR staff have also been gathering information on the street, the thoughts of local residents and allowing them to provide messages of encouragement to their fellow communities.

FRR/FEBC Philippines continues to engage in discussions with other Government and humanitarian organisations to ensure radio is used where needed to help the community recover.





Cyclone Idai, Mozambique 2019 - A classic example of coordination and collaboration

The CDAC Network CoP Group requested examples of in-country coordination and collaboration from members as part of a showcase to better understand what is working well in regards to communication and disaster response. FRR provided a case study of coordination and collaboration during the 2019 response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique.

Key areas of coordination included UN OCHA providing an initial needs assessment along with liaising with the government. In terms of logistics, several agencies provided transport and power generators to enable teams to reach severely affected areas. 5 different organisations worked together to operate the radio station and facilitated training and equipping of local staff. Even after Radio Buzi was on the air, radio distribution was still an important topic and multiple agencies were involved in purchasing, coordinating and distributing radios to the affected community.

At least 12 organisations collaborated together to get the single radio station on the air during Cyclone Idai, Mozambique. The response was hailed as a classic example of excellent coordination and collaboration during a crisis.

[Click image to download pdf](#)

Radio Station

CYCLONE IDAI – MOZAMBIQUE 2019



- RADIO VOLUNTEER STAFF
- RADIO FREQUENCY
- SUITCASE RADIO EQUIPMENT
- DISASTER RADIO TRAINING



BUZI FM 104.3



Events / Workshops

As the impact of the pandemic is still being felt across the globe, networking and events continue to look different this year as many conferences and trainings have moved online!

World Summit on the Information Society Forum

Our FRR Intl Coordinator, Mike Adams, joined the ITU WSIS Forum 2021 in April as an expert panellist for the discussion on Communication and Aid in the Digital Age hosted by long standing partners, CDAC. Mike shared the ways in which FRR has applied using technology to improve communication that can act as a multiplier in a humanitarian response.

Deutsche Welle

Having delivered a suitcase studio radio kit last year, FRR continues to partner with Deutsche Welle Akademie (DWA). Mike was invited to share his expertise and knowledge through a series of online workshops, facilitated by DWA, on establishing community-led crisis communication in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a great chance to share and draw on the valuable experience that FRR has in setting up crisis networks, engaging and empowering local communities and combating misinformation.



First Response Radio

First Response Radio (FRR) is a network of radio broadcasters, NGOs, and Government partners. Our members have been working in disaster areas since the Tsunami of 2004, providing critical information via radio, as aid. Our goal is to set up a radio station for the affected community within 72 hours of a disaster. The best way to build this capacity is to equip and train teams before disaster strikes.



info@firstresponseradio.org

