



## Innovative Use of Technology for Humanitarian Media Aid

2010 Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action: Internews Network

**In 2010, Internews Network commits to deepening the innovative use of new technologies in its future emergency and humanitarian media response programs, enabling disaster affected populations better access to humanitarian media information. By introducing these technologies to areas with a higher perceived risk prior to either a disease outbreak or natural disaster, its goal is to offer an increased level of preparedness, response and dialogue within the community.**

Total estimated commitment value: **\$3,000,000**

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**Focus Areas:** Global Health, Enhancing Access to Modern Technology

**Problem Statement:** Dialogue between humanitarians and the local population is often limited and centers on relief activities. While in the past 20 years, the humanitarian community has dramatically improved the way relief is provided to people caught up in disasters and crises, much more could be done to keep those most affected by disaster informed of assistance efforts and able to engage in the relief process. In fact, there is a significant opportunity for a more robust exchange between affected populations and humanitarians to improve the effectiveness of the immediate humanitarian response and to build sustainable results over the long term. Specifically, strong and effective, local media are uniquely positioned to play a catalytic role in engaging communities during an emergency.

**Approach: Independent, local media can improve humanitarian relief efforts and enable people in the midst of crisis to take an active role in their own survival and recovery.** Internews believes communities that are familiar with technologies and the role of local media are more likely to benefit from them during a time of need. For instance, local media such as radio stations can play a vital role in ensuring that people get the accurate and timely information they need to save lives and reduce suffering. Known and trusted by the local populations, speaking in the local language, and deeply familiar with local politics and culture, local radio stations, broadcast television, newspapers and community media, independent local media can fill an important need that international relief agencies and other outside groups cannot meet. Civil Society Organizations in key sectors such as gender can also activate grassroots networks, utilize social and citizen media tools, and bring stories to the attention of local and national media. In this new commitment, together with its technology partners and working relationships with in-country local media, Internews is now better positioned to respond to a global crisis that presents a humanitarian media need.

### **Methodology:**

- Build a technology alliance with the partners Internews works with in humanitarian media responses including FrontlineSMS, Ushahidi, Digital Democracy, HealthMap and several universities. The alliance brings the best of two worlds together – Internews partners' experience developing technology tools and Internews' community relationships. Depending on the type of response needed the alliance would determine the partners needed in each case.
- Build specific interactive platforms that embrace both digital and mobile elements such as crowd sourcing and mapping to be used by the media in an emergency response that are deployable immediately to the affected area.

- Work with women's Civil Society Organizations to develop media-based information, reconciliation and development tools, using gender as an example where the impact of emergencies is felt long after the immediate crisis is resolved.

#### **Planned Deliverables:**

- **Korogocho Health Initiative- Community Preparedness Pilot**

Internews and its partners HealthMap and FrontlineSMS:Medic plan to launch an 18-month initiative in the Korogocho slum area of Nairobi, Kenya to provide timely health information to and from the community in an effort to address current health issues and improve public healthcare. In partnership with the local radio station, the project will enable community members, health workers and clinics to have access to more accurate information about local health issues and create an ongoing health dialogue. Community health workers will be trained to text messages via low-cost handsets to the local radio station. Radio journalists will be trained to use the FrontlineSMS platform, filter and investigate information, and report that health information back to their community. Through the use of dynamic mapping technology, the project will help identify trends and inform action to prevent suffering or loss of life. Internews currently has a regional office located in Nairobi, Kenya and is recognized within the area by other NGOs, the local community and the local media as a leader in media development. The project has several phases including; health worker training, software development, journalist training and a community engagement campaign .

- **Humanitarian Response in Pakistan**

Internews responded to the crisis in Pakistan by providing information to nearly five million people affected by the floods in Pakistan's northwest region. There was significant damage to infrastructure and communications networks and the media organizations have been severely affected and are struggling to get back on air. Internews is working with local radio stations in the hardest hit areas in Pakistan's northwest region to ensure journalists are able to continue reporting on the devastation and provide critical humanitarian aid information to those who need it most.

Internews plans to expand the humanitarian media work into the Southern areas of Pakistan to support journalists there. In addition, Internews will initiate an audience survey and media assessment on how to most effectively communicate with the affected population throughout all areas. This may result in Internews working with local journalists to help them utilize more traditional methods of communication and information distribution such as involving community leaders, or traditional forms of information notices at mosques or public announcements. Internews is also distributing radios and is sharing their methodology about distributing radios with other humanitarian organizations.

Internews has maintained an active presence in the region for over 7 years now and its humanitarian information programs for the region have included a daily program produced for Emergency Broadcast Stations set up in the aftermath of the 2005 earthquake, and recently two radio programs for people fleeing Pakistan Military's operations against the Taliban Militants along Pakistan's borders with Afghanistan.

- **Increased Response by Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities**

Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) initiative is a cross cluster service launched in 2009 that brings together experts in outreach, communications and humanitarian media in a collective effort to improve a two-way communication flow between the humanitarian community and affected populations. CDAC is a source of expertise and advice, a community of practice and an advocacy platform that aims at ensuring that the humanitarian sector and local media play a vital role to maximize aid effectiveness, accountability and transparency to affected communities. CDAC's central objective is to provide a coordinated service to enable humanitarian operations to get lifesaving information to affected populations and to channel their voices back to the providers of assistance working with local media and non mass media communications. The CDAC network that is currently deployed to Haiti includes experts in radio, mass media, SMS, web based and non mass media communications, public information officers, and journalists, both local and international. More information can be found at <http://crisescomm.ning.com/> or <http://cdac-haiti.org/>.

- **Expanding the Reach of the Internews Haiti – *Enfomasyon Nou Dwe Konnen* (News You Can Use) Humanitarian Media Program to Rural Areas of Haiti**

Haiti Radio Program Provides Lifesaving Connection for Earthquake Survivors. Internews Network's daily humanitarian information program, *Enfomasyon Nou Dwe Konnen* (News You Can Use) began January 21, and reaches Haitians via 36

local radio stations, and approximately 75% of the population with daily information on safety, health, aid and reconstruction. The program is reported and produced by local journalists, who convey useful information to listeners in camps, makeshift shelters, and homes. The show's practical health and nutrition advice is saving lives. Even simple information can have a wide impact on the wellbeing of earthquake survivors. Internews is committing to expand the program into radio stations in rural areas of Haiti as well as help radio stations work to manage their local stations to become sustainable businesses.. More information can be found at [www.endk.info/](http://www.endk.info/).

- **Sri Lankan Women Speak: women as agents of change in post-conflict states in the immediate aftermath of humanitarian emergencies.**

Suffering does not end with the cessation of hostilities or the phase-out of large-scale humanitarian aid. Sri Lankan women endured many unspoken hardships throughout the 30-year conflict, and continue to struggle as former IDPS with no home to speak of; with painful memories of the loss of family members; as victims of domestic violence; rape and alcoholism among men; supporting households as war-widows; or just having watched the opportunity for their lives to improve fade away. Despite these experiences, women remain significant, untapped agents of change, both within their local communities and across ethnic divides. Internews, with local partners such as the Association for War Affected Women (AWAW), will train women to use media tools to a) document their experiences, b) access essential information to enhance their economic empowerment, c) collaborate and reconcile with women from other local communities, other ethnic communities and across the diaspora and d) participate in policy decisions that affect them. Beyond the immediate impact of the radio, social media and newsletter products, Internews and partners will develop a toolkit for gender-based recovery and reconciliation in other conflicts. This project will build upon Internews' successful Lifeline humanitarian information project that end in September 2010, and will help bridge the gap between humanitarian and development aid.

**About the commitment:** Building from its previous 2006 commitment to develop an emergency media program, which culminated in an internationally acclaimed program that provides Haitians with life-saving information following the January 2010 earthquake, Internews commits to deepening the innovative use of new technologies in its future emergency and humanitarian media response programs.

Due to its deep ties to traditional mass media in over 70 countries around the world, Internews is uniquely positioned to maximize the potential of new digital communications technologies – mapping, online news services and mobile/SMS, and crowd sourcing/feeding tools – to effectively reach a greater number of people with more directly relevant news and information during a crises, whether it be man-made political crises or a natural disaster. Internews is able to maximize the impact of new information technologies by linking them directly to traditional communication technologies, most notably community radio

**Partnership opportunities:** Internews is looking for both in-kind and monetary support for the development of this innovative approach to humanitarian response.

**Offering partnership:** Internews looks to partner with technology companies that have innovative products and services that may be used to provide either better access to information or communication services. We are also capable of working with media partners during a Humanitarian crisis response to offer best practices in both gathering the information and distributing information to affected populations. Internews is looking for funding partners to support our humanitarian and health related programs.

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