

The News Agency “Agencia Informativa Púlsar”

Project 2001–2003

Victor van Oeyen

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Sida Evaluation 05/01

**Department for Democracy
and Social Development**

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Sida Evaluation 05/01

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Executive Summary

a. Project description

The News Agency Púlsar operates in the context of Community Radio in Latin America. This type of radio works in the field of “communication for social change” and focuses the democratisation of communication to democratise society. Approximately 3,500 radios in the entire region identify with this line of work.

One of the most important associations in the continent is the AMARC-ALC: “Asociación Mundial de Radio Comunitaria, América Latina y Carribe”¹. AMARC-ALC has 400 members and develops various work lines: legislations, gender and women, management, and others

The objective of *Púlsar*, co-founded by AMARC-ALC in 1996, is to influence the public opinion, through community and citizen radios and other means of communication in Latin America and the Caribbean, providing independent information set in a context that favours national majorities and focusing regional events from a citizen perspective.

Púlsar wants to help radios to improve their programming through a different type of international news. In this sense, it intends to generate information flows with two basic characteristics: (1) provide a citizen perspective on the news already on the public agenda, and (2) generate the ‘other news’, i.e. information from civil society, particularly social movements, emphasising excluded and disregarded groups. Púlsar produces its press notes based on two sources: the Internet and its own correspondents. Distribution is by Internet.

Sida supported Púlsar as the only component of the “*Plan de Gestión AMARC-ALC 2001–2003*”. The project was first presented to Sida in September 2000. The project presentation was formalised in April 2001 and Sida approved the project on October 11, 2001 through DESO decision 0759/01. The total three-year project amount was SEK 2,260,000.

b. Objective and scope of the evaluation

The objective of the evaluation is to review and assess:

- Activities of the news agency Agencia Informativa Púlsar in the period between 2001 and 2003 (relevance, impact and sustainability)
- Achievement of the project objectives
- Problems and challenges experienced during the programme period
- The institutional capacity of AMARC-ALC in relation to its objectives
- Relevance of AMARC International support to the LAC region

c. Summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation confirms relevance and pertinence of the Púlsar proposal. Although a lot of information is available on the Internet, it does not respond to the needs of community radios: regional information from a citizen perspective in a radio format.

¹ World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters – Latin America and the Caribbean

In 1999, Púlsar had 2,468 subscribers, 3 journalists-editors, 29 correspondents; and it produced almost 20 press notes daily.

In 2000, Púlsar's role was evaluated as "*important in the provision of relevant information giving rise to a reflection for small radio broadcasters with scarce resources*"².

In November 2000, shortly after the first presentation of the Púlsar project in Stockholm, AMARC-ALC suffered a *very deep institutional crisis* regarding the internal management model and coherence thereof with its participatory and democratising discourse.

The crisis rocked the foundations of AMARC-ALC. After its executive staff left, the international office of AMARC intervenes. The institution enters a period with considerable instability and various temporary regional coordinators. Only in July 2003 the institution formalises appointment of a permanent regional coordinator. Meanwhile, the Quito office is closed down and a new one is opened in Buenos Aires.

The association responds to the management model crisis with a decentralisation policy, both as regards political-institutional management and as regards operating management. The Regional Board reflects presence of the sub-regions and the work areas will operate from different parts of the continent. The idea is to thus avoid creation of new bureaucracy.

The crisis had far-reaching consequences for Púlsar. Because of the close institutional relationship, the distrust and discrediting of AMARC-ALC affect the News Agency. At first, the agency personnel try to ensure continuity of the news service. The lack of financial resources paralyses activities in June 2001. When, at the end of October 2001, Sida makes its first disbursement, a large part of this money is used to compensate the internal loans that had been granted for operation of Púlsar until June. Púlsar closes its doors for 16 months.

At the request of the Regional Board, associate member Comcosur assumed management of "*Púlsar second period*" from Uruguay as from October 2002. A crisis version is implemented: instead of the daily news production, Comcosur produces two weekly mailings (on Tuesdays and Fridays) covering circumstantial information. Comcosur notes that there was no money available to expand the service and thus to better satisfy radio expectations.

The 151 programmes produced by *Púlsar Montevideo* until the end of April 2004 are characterised by a thematic approach from a citizen and gender perspective. The press notes were carefully prepared in a radio script format, ready to be used in the radio room. Besides notes on current issues, Púlsar covered 8 special events regarding significant citizen meetings worldwide, such as the meeting of the World Trade Organisation, for which audio capsules were produced.

In spite of the big efforts of Comcosur and the national representatives of AMARC-ALC who acted as correspondents, actual use is minimal and the impact is therefore low. The lack of audio, the limited 'heat' of the news, the more involved approach and the geographical semi-representativeness are all factors contributing to reduced use of the programme. Moreover, the database and administrative component continued to be concentrated in Ecuador, hindering adequate contacts with users.

On the institutional level, the project impact has been very significant. As its executives state, "*Púlsar saved AMARC-ALC*". This rescue has two sides. On the one hand, 38% of the Púlsar project funds enabled continuation of the institutional operation of AMARC-ALC: these funds covered the salary of the general coordinator, meetings of the Regional Board and participation of a Latin American dele-

² Lasse Willén, Púlsar Evaluation, May 2000, translation: Bhanu Bhatnagar, Sida

gation in the World AMARC Congress. On the other hand, the reopening of Púlsar (second period) was a very important symbolic event for the members of AMARC-ALC, who interpreted Púlsar's revival as a sign of recovery from the crisis.

Since the first of May 2004, Púlsar has again taken up its identity of a News Agency, now from *Buenos Aires, Argentina*. With a small team, it started with two electronic newsletters containing 12–14 notes daily. The press notes have a news format, they keep more distance and reflect a better balance as regards regional presence.

In conclusion, the project 2001–2003 has neither achieved its objectives nor its work plan. Project management has been very irregular and was conditioned by the priority given to institutional survival in a broader sense. The institutional crisis and organic close relationship of Púlsar with the institutional structures made it impossible for the agency to stay in the shade of the problems. In this process, Sida follow-up could have been more appropriate.

There are signs that AMARC-ALC is coming out of the crisis and entering a consolidation phase. The reopening of Púlsar underlines the seriousness of this intention.

Recommendations

In spite of limited compliance of the project, *we recommend giving continuity to the relationship of Sida with AMARC-ALC regarding the Púlsar project*. The principal reasons are the need for a radio news line from a citizen and Latin American viewpoint, the validity of AMARC-ALC as a collective stakeholder in the radio community panorama, the presence of potential interested strategic allies and revival of the AMARC-ALC institutionality.

We recommend conditioning *continuity of the relationship* in two ways:

1. Development in the media environment demands effectiveness and efficiency. We recommend that AMARC-ALC draft a medium-term plan based on three elements:
 - 1) A participatory interinstitutional diagnostic on news practices and demands
 - 2) Joint work with similar networks (ALER, IPS and others)
 - 3) A plan on strategic alliances with key social stakeholders
2. Adequate institutionalisation of Púlsar, breaking with the crisis logic

Both action lines must be developed in a special project, to be submitted in 2 months' time, and with a duration of one year. Subject to an evaluation, the project duration could be extended for implementation of the plan. We recommend that Sida assume co-responsibility in the project.

Below, the project is reviewed according to the Terms of Reference guiding this evaluation (see annex 1). Behind every objective or aspect (numbered according to the Terms of Reference) a brief comment is made, also indicating where more information can be found in the text or conclusions

A. Review of objectives of the evaluation	
Number	Objective
2.a.	Examine the activities of the news agency “Agencia informativa Púlsar” and other programmes of the Projects for the Democratisation of Communication 2001–2003, with emphasis on Púlsar, to determine the quality – defined as relevance, impact and sustainability.
Short comment	Relevance. The proposal of Púlsar is relevant in the societal and media context of Latin America.
More in	Text: 3.d. Conclusions: 1
Short comment	Impact: Due to 16 months of inactivity and limited implementation during the rest of the time, the impact is limited.
More in	Text: 4.d, 4.e, annex 14 Conclusions: 2
Short comment	Sustainability: The project executing institution is recovering from a deep institutional crisis. The potential in terms of sustainability relates to its possibilities to enter into alliances with peer institutions and organised social stakeholders in civil society. Commercial survival in the news market is not feasible.
More in	Text: 8.a, 8.c, 8.d Conclusions: 8, 10, 12
Number	Objective
2.b.	Assess the degree to which the objectives of the programme, as mentioned in the letter of General Coordinator Fernando López of 4 October 2001, have been met.
Short comment	The impact has been very reduced. Almost half of the project time, there was no activity due to an institutional crisis. In the active months, and in spite of strong institutional constraints, the information produced in general terms responded to the proposed criterion. Use of this information was reduced because it did not respond to the required format, and it was not accompanied by the necessary institutional conditions.
More in	Text: 5, 6, annex 14 Conclusions: 7, 9, 11
2.c.	Identify any problems and challenges that might have been experienced during the programme period.
Short comment	The institutional crisis in AMARC-ALC has hampered development of the Púlsar project as planned. The problems and challenges experienced as a result of the crisis absorbed the whole institutional response capacity. Economic resources of the Púlsar project saved AMARC-ALC
More in	Text: 3.c, 4.d Conclusions: 3, 4
2.d.	Examine the AMARC-ALC institutional capacity in relation to its objective to promote democratisation of communication through the support of community radio stations and the news agency Púlsar. Determine relevance, impact and sustainability of the institutional capacity in relation to the above objective.
Short comment	Relevance: AMARC-ALC is a very important player in the community radio world in Latin America. It develops relevant actions in legislations, the news line, and supports its associates actively in the revision of their communicational projects
More in	Text: 3.a, 3.d Conclusions: 1
Short comment	Impact: The principal impact is found in the legislations work area that combines its characteristic as a movement with practical usefulness.
More in	Text: 3.b, 3.d
Short comment	Sustainability: The strength of the institution’s sustainability is reflected in the 400 members’ deep feeling of ownership. At the economic level, the crisis has not yet been overcome.
More in	Text: 3.c, 3.d Conclusions: 13, 14

2.e.	Examine how AMARC International succeeds in giving relevant support to the Latin America region.
Short comment	The support from AMARC International has been very relevant and positive during the crisis. On the same time it limited the direct relationship between Sida and AMARC-ALC.
More in	Text: 8.a.2, 8.b Conclusions: 6
2.f.	Draw conclusions and make recommendations for the future in view of the new project proposal for AMARC Latin America and AMARC International. Recommendations should be prioritised.
Short comment	The principal recommendation is for Sida to continue its institutional commitment to AMARC-ALC in relation to the news line, subject to two conditions: a medium-term plan including a diagnostic, joint work and strategic alliances, and a short-term plan for institutional strengthening.
More in	Text: 9, 10

B. Review of the aspects to be considered in the evaluation

Number	Aspect
3.a.	Assess the programme performance from the perspectives of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and impact.
Short comment	Effectiveness and impact: Low effectiveness and impact due to a period of inactivity of 16 months and limited implementation during the rest of the time.
More in	Text: 4.d, 4.e, annex 14 Conclusions: 2
Short comment	Efficiency: Use of the resources did not respond to efficiency requirements. One example is the 'divorce' in management between Quito and Montevideo. Another example is the lack of updating of the database. There were no planning, control, follow-up mechanisms, etc.
More in	Text: 5.c, 8.c Conclusions: 7
Short comment	Relevance: The proposal of Púlsar is relevant in the societal and media context of Latin America.
More in	Text: 3.d. Conclusions: 1
3.b.	Assess the programme impact in the public, especially regarding community participation.
Short comment	The radios or other users of Púlsar determine the possible impact. There are no reliable data on their actual use of Púlsar. The low survey response rates and perceptions of interviewees suggest a reduced impact.
More in	Text: 7.b Conclusions: 9
3.c.	Assess the impact of the programme in promoting community radio and to what extent new, sustainable radio stations have been put up as a result of programme activities.
Short comment	The impact on community radio has been indirect: Púlsar has been very important for operation and strengthening of AMARC-ALC. The financial funds transferred to AMARC-ALC were fundamental for its institutional survival. Furthermore, taking into account the mentioned constraints, the operation of Púlsar fomented the members' identification with AMARC-ALC.
More in	Text: 8.a, Conclusions: 4, 9
3.d.	Assess the effectiveness of the training of radio producers.
Short comment	Activity not carried out.
3.e.	Assess women's participation and skills in community radios.
Short comment	In the Montevideo period, gender was well covered at the thematic level. This has not been seen yet in Buenos Aires. At a certain moment, Púlsar distributed "Ciberenredadas", a news production of the Red-Ada (Women Journalist Network).
More in	Text: 5.b.2, 6.b.2

3.f.	Assess factors outside the scope of the programme, which have hindered and/or enhanced the programme.
Short comment	The institutional crisis in AMARC-ALC has hindered development of the Púlsar project as planned. The problems and challenges appearing as a result of the crisis absorbed the whole institutional response capacity. Economic resources of the Púlsar project saved AMARC-ALC
More in	Text: 3.c, 4.d Conclusions: 3, 4

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1. Methodology of the evaluation

1.1 Reasons for the evaluation

The “Agencia Informativa Púlsar” project (January 2001–December 2003) foresees an evaluation upon conclusion of the support period.

The Terms of Reference¹ state that the following aspects should be reviewed and assessed:

- Activities of the news agency Agencia Informativa Púlsar in the period between 2001 and 2003 (relevance, impact and sustainability)
- Degree to which the objectives were met
- Problems and challenges experienced during the programme period
- The institutional capacity of AMARC-ALC in relation to its objectives
- Relevance of AMARC International support to the LAC region

1.2 Used methods and instruments

- Review of printed, electronic, audio and other documentation (June 1 – 30, 2004).
 - Internal, written documents on Púlsar or AMARC-ALC (project, reports, minutes of meetings, correspondence with Sida, etc.)
 - Material produced by Púlsar (guides, scripts, audio material, etc.)
- 35 face-to-face interviews (Ecuador, Argentina, Uruguay, El Salvador) and distance interviews (June 15–July 19, 2004) with:
 - 6 external analysts of AMARC-ALC
 - 9 internal reference persons of AMARC-ALC (people in political positions, regional coordinators, Púlsar executives)
 - 7 external reference persons of AMARC-ALC (colleagues and peer institutions)
 - 13 reference persons of the Púlsar project (producers, potential users, users)
- 3 surveys (June 20–July 18, 2004)
 - Electronic survey on use and usefulness among 2,058 Púlsar subscribers
 - Face-to-face survey among 22 potential users of Púlsar in FARCO – Argentina
 - 9 telephone calls to subscribed radio stations in Ecuador

¹ See annex 1

1.3 Limitations

- Very scarce documentation (systematisations, studies, reports, monitoring) on the programme period
- The programme period was broken up due to temporary suspension and constant changes
- Difficult access to key informants due to the project distance

In view of the mentioned limitations, it was necessary to (re)build the information, causing delays in the timeframe, which did however not affect results.

2. Context and institutional proposal of AMARC-ALC²

2.1 Context

Latin America is the continent with most inequality in the world. Application of the neoliberal model in almost all countries gave rise to the further deepening of these contradictions. The continent is facing *enormous challenges* such as implementation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement and huge migration streams. The combination of a formal democracy with a lack of people's participation in daily life puts a lot of pressure on the political systems.

At the same time, there is a trend towards the gradual regrouping of social movements on different levels, e.g. the World and Continental Social Forums. The election of presidents who are trying to contribute to social change (Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela) has caused a timid revival of the hope that a different world is possible.

The media occupy an essential place in society, as the spaces where the dominant approaches and agendas in society are generated. In this sense, the growing homogenisation of the content, which is unrelated to the continent's main issues, is a reason for concern. Simultaneously, there is a growing absence of relevant participation, from the point of view of social, cultural and gender-based representativeness.

Concentration of the media in very little – and increasingly global – hands intensifies these phenomena. The epicentre of international news is still the North and its interests.

The *radio* continues to occupy a preponderant role in the media. Internet penetration is very much differentiated, reserving its individual benefits to the urban elites. For the majorities, many obstacles need to be overcome before they can perceive real benefits. From the perspective of development and a participatory democracy, this reality obliges to think of more relevant alternatives.

Convergence between the traditional means of communication, such as the radio and the *Internet*, is an adequate way to put the New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs) at the service of the excluded population. One way consists in using the Internet for content generation and distribution as Púlsar does.

² A more detailed version of this chapter can be found in annex 11

³ For example in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Guatemala there are national consolidated coordination instances with joint projects and concrete services for their members

Community Radio

Community radio combines the advantages of the means (low cost, user friendly, easy access, nearness) with a practical policy of high levels of participation, both in institutional management and in radio programming. The purpose of community radio is to democratise communication to democratise society.

In Latin America there is an enormous diversity in the approximately 3,500 community radios, which is reflected in their size, audience, institutionalisation, cultural participation, technological modernity, programming, the importance of news, etc. In spite of this huge diversity, the word *movement* can be used as all community radios share a set of central features such as their orientation towards social change, participation, the absence of profit seeking as the central motivation and the defence of cultural diversity.

In almost all countries, *national coordination* is practiced. Some spaces display a high level of institutionalisation³, others are less structured. In about 7 countries, there are satellite-operated national news projects run by community radio networks.

Most countries lack adequate *legislations* that recognise the space of community radios, condemning them to comply with regulations for commercial radios or with norms relegating this means of communication to a marginal position.

2.2 Institutional proposal of AMARC-ALC

AMARC, the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, has been operating in Latin America since 1990. Today, it has nearly 400 associate members. It is easy to become a member of AMARC. A new member can register as a radio⁴, but also as a production group, a radio federation or as an individual. This way, AMARC-ALC tries to group all community radio initiatives on the continent, representing the existing diversity.

AMARC-ALC develops the following action lines:

Legislations. According to all interviewees, this is the principal programme of AMARC-ALC, the purpose of which is to defend members against state interventions and to put this topic on the public agenda. <http://alc.amarc.org/legislaciones>.

News Agency Púlsar. Púlsar intends to influence the public opinion with independent information set in a context, favouring national majorities and focusing regional events from a citizen perspective. www.Púlsar.amarc.org.

Gender and women. This programme wants to contribute, from the member radios, to a change in the unequal relationship between men and women. The programme promotes the members' empowerment for them to access decision-making spaces in their context.

Management. Focusing integrated community radio management, for a long time this programme was in the vanguard of AMARC-ALC. In 1998, this component published the book titled "Gestión de la Radio Comunitaria" (Community Radio Management). The programme is now in a 'transition' phase due to a lack of resources.

CAESI: Centro América en Sintonía. This programme is implemented in conjunction with the Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica (Latin American Association of Radio Education – ALER). It works with the 100 members of both associations in the region, with the objective of strengthening their political communications projects.

⁴ <http://amarc.org/amarc/esp>

Ritmo Sur. The Ritmo Sur programme is also executed together with ALER in the 12 Latin American countries that do not form part of CAESI. The objective of the proposal is to consider and put into practice other communications projects with a different type of management.

Institutional Strengthening. AMARC-ALC is rebuilding its institutionality after an “*almost fatal crisis*”, as its current Regional Coordinator says. The crisis affected the entire institution, both as regards formal institutional aspects and as regards persons.

2.3 The institutional crisis of AMARC-ALC in 2000

An internal evaluation (1999) mentioned a contradiction between the little participatory institutional practices and the democratisation discourse of the Association. An attempt to gradually reform management failed when a new coordinator was appointed, who was left to work side by side with the former coordinator. The conflict burst with severe consequences.

At the end of 2000, institutionality collapsed. Almost all people involved felt strong for-or-against personal loyalties towards the general coordinator. Because of this personal-level conflict, the institutional reality became unmanageable.

The team was divided into persons with strong positions for or against renewal. Some people were fired, others resigned. Both sides shared the reasons underlying their actions to a maximum through the Internet. An electronic war broke out between both parties, seriously harming the internal and external institutional image.

The international AMARC office, headquartered in Montreal, had to come and take a series of important decisions, e.g. on dismissals and the closedown of some activities.

As a result of the mentioned problems, the institution's economic situation fell to a very delicate level, having to cope with labour claims in the middle of a decrease in funding. In order to overcome the economic crisis, all types of economic reserves were used to attend to the emergency. The decision was made to sell the institution's patrimony.

Sida received information on the crisis on several occasions, among other things, through direct contact between General Secretary Sophy Ly and the Culture and Media department. On May 30, 2001, Sophy requests condoning of the funds disbursed for 2000, and this request is accepted. This way, Sida supported solution of the immediate problems.

In spite of the crisis having reached its deepest point in October 2000, AMARC-ALC has not yet been able to fully bridge this phase in its history. The consequences are still visible today, particularly at the level of institutional operation⁵. The crisis caused a decline in the institution's internal confidence. For various persons, the conflict of 3 years ago continues to be a reason explaining the actions of today.

A key point for recovery of the institution's confidence in the movement was the meeting in *Cumbayá*, Ecuador, in February 2002, where representatives from all countries, plus the programme officers and Board met during three days to clear up the panorama. The minutes of the meeting reflect a total disorientation and an absolute lack of information. The meeting was “*very emotional*” and was helpful to “*reaffirm the will to continue*”. At the same time, the programme situation was analysed, one of the programmes being *Púlsar*.

⁵ Absence of institutional routines such as organised information (reports, systematisations), budget constraints, outdated economic reports, etc.

In that same meeting, AMARC-ALC is “*re-founded*”. Basically⁶, the organic structure of the *Regional Board* of AMARC-ALC was changed, which is now as follows:

- Regional Vice-president, elected by all
- Vice-president for women, elected by women only
- 6 sub-regional representatives, elected in the sub-regions (Mexico, Brazil, Central America, Andes, Caribbean and Southern Cone).

The purpose of this structure is to guarantee maximum participation from the sub-regions. In April 2003, the first Regional Board was elected applying this mechanism. Most elected members of the board are unrelated to the crisis.

The Cumbayá Meeting was immediately followed by a joint meeting of AMARC-ALC and ALER. It was the first time the two “motors” of the Latin American community radio movement met formally to coordinate actions. Thus, a change in the interinstitutional relationship was started, which had been limited to formal and distant coordination until that time. All interviewees agree that this relationship is progressing well.

After various internal procedures⁷, in July 2003, the new Regional Board appointed Ernesto Lamas as the Regional Coordinator, using regular institutional procedures. This appointment marks the beginning of the association’s stabilisation phase. Headquarters are moved from Ecuador to Argentina.

Only at the beginning of 2004 did the organization obtain a budget to ensure regular institutional operation, paying the salary of the regional coordinator and of a project assistant. AMARC-ALC does not yet have its own infrastructure due to a lack of funding. Meanwhile, it is housed in the offices member Radio La Tribu put at their disposal.

AMARC-ALC opts for **decentralisation** of the institutional part, aimed at avoiding the concentration of bureaucracy in one place. Expectations are that this will enable AMARC-ALC to have a deeper impact in more places. In practice, the decentralisation is expressed in the presence of coordination instances in different parts: Gender-women from Peru, Legislations from Uruguay, Regional Coordination, Management and Púlsar from Argentina. The logic is still under development. The idea is to distribute economic resources over the different countries as well, depending on their work plans.

2.4 Analysis

Somewhat more than one year ago, AMARC-ALC started with stabilisation of the association. Nonetheless, the institution is still perceived as weak: there are no funds to implement offices and except for the legislations programme, there are no consolidated programmes. The internal and external perception of AMARC-ALC is that it is an “institution just coming out of a crisis”. It is as if the crisis in the management model were translated in an identity crisis of AMARC-ALC.

When building a network like AMARC, one of the fundamental criteria is the perceived usefulness of its joint projects. In this sense, probably the so-called “re-foundation” of AMARC-ALC should be deepened further, because in reality, it had been limited to institutional management; the election mechanisms of the governing instance were changed, as well as a couple of essential regulations. No re-foundation efforts were made in terms of the institution’s vision, mission and strategies. To date,

⁶ It was also decided that the office of AMARC-ALC did not necessarily have to be located in Ecuador; and that economic audits had to be carried out.

⁷ Gustavo Gómez, Feb–June 2001; Fernando López, Jul 2001–Sep 2002; Gustavo Gómez, Oct 2002–Jul 2003

the decentralisation process seems to respond to a “relief of pressure” rather than the different parties’ ownership of collective elements. The concentration in Argentina of three of the five strategic programme components (General Coordination, Management and Púlsar) is a motive for questioning effectiveness of the decentralisation efforts.

AMARC-ALC has been saved by its high degree of symbolic ownership among the members. There is an active commitment envied by peer entities. Now the crisis has come to an end, new grounds must be identified to maintain this level of ownership. It is clear that the association is now trying to build its collective identity. The institution must still conclude the process for digesting its past to then continue with a true re-foundation. The implementation of a democratic, participatory and decentralised management model is fundamental, but only the beginning. (Re)construction requires innovating and daring proposals that are useful for the members.

Community radios have enormous needs, but the needs of their publics are even more enormous and social sectors expect an active and political intervention from AMARC-ALC in their daily lives. Hence, true to its political principles, AMARC-ALC must feel the obligation of putting its institutionality at the service of the most effective interventions within its reach.

AMARC-ALC assumes *diversity* as a characteristic of its basic institutional identity. It is therefore very complex to propose programmes that are sufficiently flexible so as to be useful for all, or for a large part of membership. At the same time, when talking about a joint political project, this implies that the institution wishes to go beyond mere service provision. It means that the institution wants to influence the social, political, cultural and economic reality of the excluded.

The *legislation* programme is an adequate response to these criteria. All interviewees, both in and outside AMARC-ALC affirm that this is the strongest programme. This is because this programme contains the explicit political component that unifies the association: the right to communication. Besides, it offers usefulness on different levels: it is useful internally (defence of and advice for individual members) and it is useful externally to advance the public position of community radio. Moreover, it is showcased effectively. Without any doubt, the action area of Púlsar, i.e. international information, is another fertile action area with a lot of potential to develop a joint communication project. Every radio, even the smallest one, needs international information.

This is the institutional setting within which the Púlsar project 2001–2003 was submitted, approved and executed. From the first day onwards, this period was characterised by considerable institutional instability. Hence, besides being an important project for AMARC-ALC, at the same time Púlsar became the programme that rescued the whole framework. Púlsar gave an identity to the association, something “*we are doing*”. Even during its absence of 16 months, Púlsar provided a certain coherence and *raison d’être*. Further down, we will see that also in economic aspects, Púlsar has been the lifeboat rescuing AMARC-ALC.

3. Púlsar's communications proposal 2001–2003

3.1 The news context in Latin America

The desire to generate information flows for Latin America from Latin America dates back to the seventies. Thirty-five years ago, the continent already worried about the big information consortiums from the North⁸ defining the quantity and type of news on the reality of the countries and the region. Many studies pointed out that several mechanisms beyond regional decision-making influenced the perception of the Latin American reality.

In Costa Rica in 1976, the Latin American countries committed to democratise communication. In the following years, many Latin American countries established national communication policies. These efforts were based on their conviction that communication and culture should not be left to market forces, but rather that states have the obligation to design this field of utmost importance for the development of their people. The McBride report published by UNESCO in 1980 set out the need for better-balanced international information flows⁹.

The mentioned motivations still very much apply. The growing media concentration has homogenised information flows even further.

For the select group of Internet users, this means has more than increased information flows. Many people directly access hundreds of pages with information. In practice, the traditional means of communication act as gatekeepers, organising the available information according to the segmented publics they target: youth, sports fans, women, children, and intellectuals.

For the media themselves, the Internet has considerably widened the number of potential sources. This is not necessarily translated in more diversity in the broadcasted information.

3.1.1 The same issues always come back, in the same languages and with the same approaches

- The media favour focusing on exceptional things, almost always with a negative content: poverty, contamination, violence, insecurity, discrimination. Oscar Ferrero, Colombian analyst: *“We have been colonised by a development discourse. These are not ‘bad’ topics, because they are important, but I believe it is necessary to underline that these are not own topics.”*
- Generally, the news is negative and, as such, it generates a feeling of powerlessness, of being mere lookers-on, and not participants.
- Little attention is paid to the other side of reality: *“in information spaces, we are not discussing topics such as social networks, our own wisdom, and how to link in this diversity.”*
- There is very little space in the media to follow up on processes. Competition ‘obliges’ the media to offer the latest news, with no chance to provide the necessary follow-up. In this sense, it is very difficult for the radios to prepare an ‘own’ thematic agenda with the international news.
- The starting point to approach news items is the dominant world: the protagonists are presidents (not women or indigenous peoples), and the angle reflects the position of the middle classes.
- The topics reflect a macro-dominated agenda, with little effort to include experience from daily reality.

⁸ Associated Press, Agence France Press, Reuters, Tass

⁹ McBride, Sean et al: Many Voices, One World; Paideia, Madrid, 1980

- The news does not report on and from the daily reality of countries. Hence, a process of cultural rupture is taking place in Latin America. The audience is better acquainted with the United States and Europe than with its own or neighbouring country.
- International news in other languages is very limited, even though Latin America is the world's laboratory of cultural identity.
- This panorama is not black and white. CNN news items are not always bad. The Radio Netherlands news is considered good. They provide a context; they let people speak.

3.1.2 Scarce news in radio format?

There is an enormous flow of written news. Nearly 700 *electronic news* sites in Spanish are registered on <http://news.google.es/> (one is Púlsar). Very few are written from the logic of radio use. Besides Púlsar, there is known only one other provider: every day, ALER submits the electronic Contacto Sur news bulletin, composed of 6 press notes on Latin America's situation selected from the newsletters ALER Satelital satellite-transmits to its audience, which they say is distributed to 423 addresses.

In Latin America, the supply of *audio satellite-transmitted press notes* is good: Radio France International, The Voice of The United States of America, Radio Netherlands, BBC, CNN Radio news and many others provide good quality audio news.

It is no longer possible to state, as was the case five years ago, that there is no *audio news on the Internet*. The radio stations using satellite transmission at the same time provide audio news on the Internet. With the popularisation of MP3, the offer is constantly growing. Last month, Inter Press Service incorporated audio in its web page¹⁰.

All technological means have advantages and disadvantages, the most important ones of which are:

Satellite:

- + The programmes are finished, full audio, ready for broadcasting "as is"
- + It is possible to have long and life broadcasts
- + No telephone line is needed
- + Enables immediate broadcasting
- Needs a parabolic antenna which is rather expensive

Written format:

- + Flexibility: the information can be organised and used according to one's needs
- Lacks the radio flavour of sound (testimonials, music, sound effects, etc.)
- The news item must be written in easy, radio language

Internet audio capsules:

- + Versatile because they are small. They can be used according to one's needs
- + Many people consider them as raw material for illustration
- + The Internet can be used on a to-and-fro basis (interactivity)
- An Internet connection is required

¹⁰ IPS decided to step into the world of audio news and has materialised this new strategy through reciprocity agreements with community radio stations: the radio receives IPS news for free and, in exchange, it records a certain amount of audio information. The first radio signing the agreement was Radio El Puente, member of AMARC, from Montevideo, Uruguay. www.ipsatam.net

3.1.3 And what informational demands do community radios have?

Within the context of this reality, the demand for international information on behalf of the radios must be considered. On the one hand, this demand is of a 'corporate' type: all radios want to have international news in their programming.

But community radio demands go further than that. As Atún Hurtado, analyst in El Salvador, says: *"You die if you stick to the local news. What type of journalism do we want to make unless we adopt the dimension of what is happening in Latin America?"*. This political approach claims the vision of the big fatherland, of the need to share and build collective images that reflect or differ from ours, but from *'our'* viewpoints. The images built in Latin America on the different countries or regions are fundamental for any process of social change. It is about seeing the 'zero hunger' process through the eyes of the Brazilian landless people, and not through those of a BBC correspondent, however good he may be. It is about knowing the other side of the coin of the Bolivarian process in Venezuela, from the perspective of the people living in Maracaibo.

3.2 Púlsar's proposal

With Púlsar, AMARC-ALC wants to *"Influence the public opinion through community and citizen radio broadcasters and other media in Latin America and the Caribbean, with independent information set in a context, favouring national majorities and focusing regional events from a citizen perspective."*¹¹

For its proposal, AMARC-ALC defines information as 'news'. With Púlsar, AMARC wants to set up a source of news that is or is not on the agenda of the dominant media.

On the one hand, Púlsar wants to inform on the same topics as other means of communication, but with a different, citizen-based perspective. For Púlsar, the 'citizen perspective' is something like looking from the different stakeholders in civil society and involving them as subjects in the generation of information.

On the other hand, Púlsar wants to include topics on the agenda that are normally disregarded and it wants to give people who usually do not have any space in the media a chance to speak. Therefore, it wants to organise its own coverage through a network of correspondents. The priority topics to be covered are women-gender, indigenous peoples, infancy, democracy, ecology, human rights, social movements and communications. Of these topics, special attention will be given to gender and communications, as these are strategic issues for AMARC.

AMARC-ALC opts for achieving this objective using electronic mail and the Internet as the technological support platforms, contending that the Internet is more easily accessible as compared to other means.

3.3 Brief historical overview of Púlsar¹²

CEDEP and AMARC-ALC set up Púlsar in 1996 with 48 users. After a short while, Púlsar produces 18 press notes a day. The written notes are prepared in a radio format, in other words, they are presented in a radio script format¹³. Various notes include audio to complement the note as input. At one moment in time, the correspondents were paid. During one year, notes were prepared in the native Quechua language (Ñuqanchik). From the start, two types of press notes were prepared: the outstanding notes, related to the dominant agenda (but from a citizen perspective) and the forgotten notes.

¹¹ Overall Objective of the Plan of the News Agency Púlsar 2001–2003. Also see annex 12

¹² For a schematic historical overview of Púlsar, see annex 4

¹³ The text is ready for use. It literally says what must be read in the radio room.

In 1999, Púlsar had 2,468 subscribers, one fifth of which were radios. Besides, it had 3 journalists – editors, and 29 correspondents in 17 Latin American countries.

The *first crisis* occurred in 1998 when the relationship between Púlsar and AMARC-ALC is in dispute. The first executive director of Púlsar (Bruce Girard) states that “*Púlsar cannot be the agency of the community radios or AMARC*” and must enjoy relative independency and autonomy. On the other hand, the Coordinator of AMARC-ALC, José Ignacio López Vigil, advocates a “*strong synergy*”¹⁴ between both entities. In spite of the Regional Board’s attempts to intervene, the latter wins the dispute and the founder withdraws¹⁵.

After the withdrawal of Girard, Púlsar enters in a phase of constant instability. In its eight years of existence, Púlsar had ten executive directors and no executive director at several times. The longest uninterrupted executive director was Bruce Girard, who was in office for two years (*see table 1*¹⁶).

3.4 How did the crisis in 2000 affect Púlsar?

As Púlsar was part of the AMARC-ALC institutionality, it was impossible for the agency not to be affected by the management crisis in October 2000. The crisis rocked the foundations of Púlsar.

It caused various problems for Púlsar:

- Its human resources team¹⁷ split into one group that was loyal to the former management and another group of ‘innovators’, worsening the work environment and quality.
- The internal and external credibility of Púlsar declined because it was immersed in AMARC’s internal electronic war.
- Some correspondents withdrew to express their loyalty to the former regional coordinator.
- As from March 14, 2001, a new executive director, Carlos Berence, tried to save the agency as good as possible, but he had to desist soon due to a lack of funds.

Púlsar suspends its activities starting on June 1, 2001. Púlsar does not develop any activities during 16 months, until October 2002¹⁸, when Púlsar is reopened from Comcosur in Montevideo, Uruguay.

In its meeting at the end of March 2004, the Regional Board decides to normalise operation of Púlsar. It also determines that in order to do so, the agency shall be moved to the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, to be near the location of the AMARC-ALC general coordinator.

In the review period (January 2001–June 30, 2004), four moments can be distinguished:

¹⁴ Letter of José Ignacio López Vigil, October 1997

¹⁵ It is difficult to interpret this first crisis based on the knowledge available today. If AMARC had opted for autonomy, Púlsar would have been a lot less affected by the second crisis than it actually has.

¹⁶ The tables are attached as annex 3

¹⁷ Just before culmination, the previous executive director resigned; hence, Púlsar’s executive management was acephalous when the crisis started

¹⁸ Except for the mentioned meeting in Cumbayá in February 2002

Table 2: Operational moments of Púlsar from January 2001 to June 30, 2004

Moments	Period	Location	Executive Director	Central characteristics
M 1	Jan 1–May 31, 2001	AMARC office Quito, Ecuador	At first there is no director, since March 14: Carlos Berence	3 journalists 18 press notes daily
M 2	Jun 1, 2001–Oct 16, 2002	Suspension of activities	General coordination from AMARC-ALC	XXXXXXXXXXXX
M 3	Oct 17, 2002–Apr 30, 2004	From Comcosur, Montevideo, Uruguay	Carlos Casares and Beatriz Alonso, Comcosur, Uruguay and Maira Rodríguez in Quito for administrative matters	– 2 mailings a week, each one with 11 notes – radio script format – no audio – 8 special coverage reports
M 4	May 1, 2004–today	From Buenos Aires, Argentina	Marcos Salgado, with a team of five persons	– 3 mailings daily – no audio

Our communicational analysis is related to moments three and four, partly because in these two periods information was available and partly because M1 was characterised by constant changes. On the other hand, when speaking about Púlsar with users, they only refer to the last two moments and do not remember the first one.

Before starting with the communicational review in chapter five, something more about moments one and two.

Moment 1: diffuse operation. January–May 2001

Carlos Berence, who took charge as the executive director of Púlsar on March 14, had carried out a diagnostic on Púlsar before he started working there. On October 27, 2000, the month the crisis erupted, he published the paper titled “*Apuntes para un diagnóstico. Líneas para un plan de acción*” (Some notes for a diagnostic. Lines for an action plan). This paper he prepared during a long stay in Quito contains very useful numbers¹⁹, an analysis of the work team, the technical resources and projections. Berence bases his short management period on this diagnostic, but unfortunately, he does not have the time to make any progress.

Moment 2: Suspension of Púlsar due to a lack of funding. June 2001–October 2002

In April–May 2001, the only things that were still functioning in AMARC-ALC Quito were the gender-women programme (halftime), Púlsar and Planeta Radio²⁰. In May, Planeta Radio had to be closed down and in June the decision is taken to close Púlsar as there were no funds.

3.5 Analysis

Púlsar’s communication proposal

The political – communicational approach of Púlsar is clear and is shared by the AMARC-ALC leadership. The fixed objective reflects the political dimension of the AMARC project in three key concepts: influence the public opinion, regional integration and the citizen perspective. The presented plan contains different components of a communicational approach. Activities and goals are proposed in quantitative and qualitative terms, although these are not always related to the proposed objectives.

¹⁹ On correspondents, covered countries, covered topics, protagonists, sources, types of subscribers, ...

²⁰ The global Planeta Radio project was a kind of virtual supermarket offering digitalised sonorous products. In AMARC-ALC a team of two persons started to digitalise all material they found, from radio soaps to radio clips. The project was closed due a lack of funding.

The proposal responds to the need for another perspective and other topics, as a reaction to discourse 'colonisation', and to ensure more balance in the international news, strengthen community radios and support them in management of the tremendous information flow.

Reality confirms the underlying assumption of Púlsar: radios do not have the capacity to produce international information themselves. However, considering the changes that have occurred in the field of communications, it should be asked whether Púlsar (or AMARC-ALC) should limit itself to news as its only format. There are alternatives that could enrich its proposal beyond news. Some affirm that today information alone will not bring one very far. Radios need other input such as commentaries, analysis to understand the world of today.

The challenge of defining proposals that take into account the linguistic diversity on the continent remains. In 1997, Púlsar had a news service in Quechua, thanks to a specific project, but things did not move beyond that experience.

Púlsar and AMARC-ALC

The relationship of Púlsar – AMARC-ALC is complex. On the one hand, AMARC considers Púlsar as something that is “very much ours”, very much AMARC’s. With Púlsar, the same identification is developed as the one we have mentioned before with AMARC-ALC. Gustavo Gómez: “*In the crisis, Púlsar was very important because it was our way to insist on our belonging to AMARC-ALC*”. In practice, this is translated in a strong institutional interdependence. On the other hand, the objectives state that Púlsar also wants to serve ‘other means’. Therefore, it would need a more autonomous institutional capacity for positioning itself and for defining journalistic and operating practices²¹. In general lines, there would be three possibilities: Púlsar as an agency for all associate members of AMARC-ALC, for all community radios or for radios in general.

The proposed challenge (influencing the Latin American news agenda) is a lot bigger than AMARC. Because of a lack of long-term projection and clarity, Púlsar is hesitant regarding the existence of potential allies (IPS, ALER). Alliances with third parties would considerably open up the capacity to exercise influence (contact networks, technological support, thematic specialisation, etc.). Some progress has been made in this sense, as can be seen in the joint coverage of ALER and Púlsar of the Continental Social Forum in Quito in July 2004.

Likewise, it would be helpful to clarify strategies for alliances with social stakeholders. This aspect has been started with the World Social Forum, but requires further clarification and deepening.

One of the consequences of the above mentioned comments is that there should be more clarification about what Púlsar wants in terms of editorial management; although this element is included in the work plans, it is not clear what would be the importance and functionality of an Editorial Council.

The role of radios and correspondents

The Internet is an excellent support platform to deepen the relationship with radios, which could play a role that goes beyond use of the material produced by Púlsar and which may actually become correspondents. Their organised contributions should be complemented with independent correspondents. It will be important to clearly delimit each party’s responsibilities and competence.

²¹ Marcelo Solervicens in an electronic email dated July 14, 2004, says that: “AMARC will cover debates on the Social Forum of the Americas thanks to the work of Púlsar journalists, the News Agency of Community Radios in Latin America.”

4. Communicational development of Púlsar-Montevideo: October 17, 2002–April 30, 2004

When Púlsar is restarted in Montevideo, it virtually starts from scratch. The social capital it has is the name and prestige of Púlsar and the affection AMARC-ALC members feel for the agency. Besides, it has a database with about 2,500 electronic addresses, the association's support and Sida funding.

The start-up was entrusted to Comcosur²², an NGO that has coordinated the electronic news agency Recosur (Red de Comunicación Informativa del Cono Sur – Southern Cone News Communication Network)²³ since 1993. In view of the crisis, this NGO was invited by the Regional Board to help set afloat Púlsar.

Towards the outside world, Comcosur self-identifies its management as “*Púlsar second period*”.

4.1 Products and formats

In its 19 months of managing the agency, four products have been offered on an ongoing basis:

4.1.1 Newsletter

The chosen communications format consisted of *two weekly mailings* (on Tuesdays and Fridays), without audio. According to the people in charge, the funds available for communications management from Montevideo did not allow for a more ambitious approach.

On average, every mailing consisted of 9 to 11 notes. Because the news was sent only twice a week it was impossible to cover last-minute news. Although it was not possible to work as a ‘true’ agency this way, the advantage was that it was possible to make a more thorough analysis.

A ‘rustic’ format was used. The electronic mailing page had the following characteristics:

- Prepared as a script for radio programming
- Opening and closing phrases
- A hint of music and sound effects
- Use of colours to emphasise different countries or topics. Pink, for example, was used for gender-related news.

This format was chosen because “*many people use the Internet for the first time and we had to make sure that the slowest people could also use the information,*” explains Carlos Casares²⁴.

The notes did not include audio because it was impossible to find technical ways to include audio without limiting the access of radios with restricted electronic access.

Sometimes, the mailings included a communiqué of the community radio movement, e.g. to announce a special event on legislation.

²² Comunicación participativa Cono Sur – Europa (Participatory Communication Southern Cone – Europe)

²³ Recosur is composed of La Tribu (Argentina), FM Sur (Argentina), Red Ada (Bolivia), Carlos Osvaldo Catalogne (Brazil), ECO (Chile), FM Trinidad, (Paraguay), Comcosur (Uruguay) and is allied to POONAL, the German News Pool on Latin America.

²⁴ Responsible for Púlsar coordination from Comcosur

4.1.2 Web page

Slowly, a new web page was structured. It was impossible to access the previous Púlsar web page (Quito) because the people in charge had not left behind the access codes. The page contained a press note file. For the evaluation, it was impossible to access this version of the web page because it was again replaced by a new page, this time designed by Púlsar Buenos Aires.

There was no audio either on the web page. Making a final assessment of its management, Comcosur indicates it was impossible to have “*audio news and/or news with supporting audio for downloading by the community radios without any major obstacles. To do this, we would need a higher budget than the one we have had so far.*”

4.1.3 Special coverage

In recent years, special coverage was provided for various events in the social movements with which the community radio identifies itself. A total number of eight events were covered in this sense:

- A. Feminist Meeting, Costa Rica, December 2002
- B. World Social Forum, Brazil, January 2003
- C. WTO Meeting, Guadalajara, Mexico, September 2003
- D. Crisis in Venezuela, 2002
- E. Information Society Summit Meeting, December 2003
- F. Fourth World Summit for Children and Adolescents, Río de Janeiro, 2003
- G. Fourth World Social Forum, India, February 2004
- H. Fourth continental meeting of indigenous women, April 2004

Coverage of the WTO meeting in Guadalajara included audio.

4.1.4 Window of counter-information

Púlsar Montevideo signed a covenant with the analysis programme that has the biggest audience in Uruguay²⁵ to set up a corner called “*Púlsar, ventana de contrainformación*” (window of counter-information). This corner develops co-productions on the reality of community radio or as seen by community radios. These productions were later distributed on CDs²⁶.

4.2 Content

The entire production covered²⁷:

- A total number of 151 newsletters
- On average, every newsletter contained 11 press notes (minimum of 7, maximum of 14)

4.2.1 Regional coverage²⁸

- 82% of the notes came from Latin America and the Caribbean The other notes came from Europe (6%, half from Spain), United States (4%) and the Middle East– Iraq (4%).

²⁵ Amargueando, programme of journalist Alberto Silva, in Radio Amlibre, 1410 AM, Montevideo

²⁶ A total of 5 CDs were produced: Púlsar in the World Social Forum 2003, Community Radio Clips 1, 2, 3, Windows of counter-information

²⁷ Source: Púlsar files, www.Pulsar.amarc.org see annex for a comprehensive analysis

²⁸ Tables 4 to 7 show the relative weight of the sub-regions and countries

- In Latin America, almost all notes were prepared in the countries, very few from the sub-regions (e.g. Andes Region, Southern Cone, etc.).
- The best-covered sub-region is the Southern Cone. The least covered one is the Caribbean. Half of the Caribbean coverage is from Cuba.
- Most coverage is on Argentina. One out of every seven Púlsar notes is on Argentina, i.e. on average more than one press note in every newsletter.
- There are important differences in the sub-regions: Uruguay, with 3 million inhabitants was given the same coverage as Brazil with 60 times more inhabitants. In the Andes Region, Peru was covered half of the coverage given to Venezuela or Bolivia.
- Coverage of various countries is very scarce, e.g. Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Haiti, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico had to wait for seven newsletters to appear in one note.
- Central Americans have felt and complained about the marginal presence of Central America. Because of this, they recur a lot more to other sources.
- Some coverage was very circumstantial. For example, 16 out of the 19 notes on Haiti were related to the political situation of Aristide between January and March 2004.
- There are unbalances in the newsletters, favouring some countries like Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Uruguay, including more than one note on these countries. This trend decreases in October 2003, but it does not disappear.

The weight of some countries sometimes responded to content options, but often also to the availability of and access to news sources.

4.2.2 Topics

Púlsar did not make a systematisation of the content. For this evaluation, a sample was taken of four of the 151 programs, accounting for 42 press notes (see table 9).

Based on observation of the 42 notes, we can assert that:

1. The notes are linked to the situation, without being last-minute notes.
2. The treated topics reflect an own thematic agenda. A lot of attention is given to social movements and non-violence. Gender and communication are also points of focus. During some time, Púlsar included the Ciberenredadas notes on the situation of women.
3. When 'hard' topics are considered, such as economics and politics, events are reported from a different angle, from commitment to the excluded.
4. A detail harming some countries is that in every newsletter, the press notes are presented in an alphabetical country-by-country order. Taking into account the facility of the radio formatted script, probably the notes on Argentina will have been read more frequently than the notes on Venezuela.
5. All notes are signed with initials, so that it is possible to track the origin²⁹.

It is also clear that the thematic agenda and discourse follow a political line, that is to say the selection and presentation respond to a political position of the agency. This is clear in its antiwar position in

²⁹ Annex 6 includes the list of sources used by Púlsar – Montevideo

Iraq; before and during the war there is at least one note in every newsletter reporting on facts that were ignored by other means of communication. For example, it reports on North American soldiers who question the war and who distribute non-violence texts of Pérez Esquivel, Eduardo Galeano, José Saramago.

Another example of this politisation is that almost all press notes on Venezuela reflect strong support for president Chávez.

4.3 Project management

Púlsar was managed by Comcosur, an Uruguayan NGO with 9 years of experience in the development of electronic information networks, which was invited by the Regional Board to help save Púlsar.

In December 1998, Comcosur had signed an agreement for coordination with Púlsar³⁰. But neither an *agreement* nor a letter of intent was signed between AMARC-ALC and Comcosur for the latter to assume coordination of Púlsar.

According to Comcosur “*the only thing we agreed upon to compensate this effort of Comcosur was that AMARC-ALC would pay for a meeting with Recosur*”.

The *team* that worked for Púlsar was composed of Carlos Casares, Beatriz Alonso and Yessy Macchi. The group received technical assistance from Constanza Casanova for the web page. Besides their work for Púlsar, this same team continued to produce the newsletters of Recosur and Comcosur. Owing to the limitations resulting from these multiple responsibilities, it was impossible to increase Púlsar’s production.

Púlsar – Montevideo strengthened the feeling of *ownership* of the receiving radios with newsletters. The 32 letters of congratulation sent to Comcosur for the re-opening of Púlsar in October 2002 were shared with the subscribers. On the occasion of meetings, simple information brochures were published³¹ and stickers were distributed.

The more administrative management (sending of newsletters, administration, the database, correspondence with recipients) continued to operate from the city of *Quito* for two reasons: Sida had pointed out that because of institutional policies, it was impossible to support a project implemented from the Southern Cone, including Uruguay. The second reason was that this way it was possible to support the administrative operation of AMARC-ALC. In the final report on its management, Comcosur stated that: “*this whole time, we could not access the Púlsar database – which we had said in Nicaragua, and which the Board committed to facilitate but never did – to study the current scope of the agency, its growth, preferences, criticisms and statistics. We could not even try this as we did not have this basic information*”.

During the field visits, the evaluation verified that the *database* was outdated. In this sense, 4 out of the 10 Ecuadorian recipients of Púlsar that were registered in the database did no longer receive the newsletters, among other things because their electronic address had changed³².

Since the reopening, AMARC-ALC decided that the national representatives would be Correspondents of Púlsar. This hampered the work for Comcosur, as the representatives did not always have either

³⁰ This agreement stipulates that “two news agencies have judged it was convenient to join forces to improve their efforts and respond to demands”

³¹ On the occasion of the World Social Forum in 2003, and after the meeting with the Central American News Network with the gender approach in June 2003.

³² La Luna, Católica, Universidad San Francisco, and Municipal said that they had not received Púlsar for a long time. See annex

the capacity or the time to work as correspondents. Considering the crisis, the measure was acceptable “to have at least something”. Nevertheless, this is an undesirable situation in development of a professional agency. In its final report, Comcosur mentions that “*they had not been able to implement the new scheme of correspondents for Púlsar, with mutual commitments, frequent press notes, certain types of notes, and fixing a value for every published note Púlsar commits to pay its correspondents. In order to concretely implement this, it is necessary to have a budget exceeding the budget we have managed so far.*”

During its administration, there was no budget for *Training*. The only training event was the meeting of the “Central American News Network with the Gender Approach” in June 2003, in which both Púlsar and ALER Satelital participated³³. A *monitoring* system was not implemented either.

5. Communicational Development of Púlsar Buenos Aires: 1 May 2004–present

On May 1, 2004, Púlsar takes up again its identity as a news agency from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

5.1 Products and formats

In these two months, Púlsar has been offering the following products:

5.1.1 Headline news

Since May 28, from Monday to Friday, 9:00 Argentine time

Following the media agenda

Two headline news items from 2 to 3 newspapers from approximately 10 countries, plus a title summarizing them.

Receiver: the radio journalist. Not to be read directly on the air. It is support material

Objective: time-saving for the journalists

5.1.2 Midday panorama

Since June 8; from Monday to Friday, 12:00 Argentine time

First electronic mailing

5 press notes. Title plus one paragraph. First approach

The web page is renewed

5.1.3 Day Panorama

Since May 3; from Sunday to Friday; 19:00 Argentine time

Second electronic mailing

7–9 press notes. (12–14 a day)

The web page is updated at the end of the day.

Projection: final update from Mexico (for time-related reasons).

³³ This meeting was financed with funds from CAESI (Central America Tuned In), the joint programme of AMARC and ALER in that region

5.1.4 Portuguese

Of the 7–9 panorama notes at close, Sophy Hammoe – Púlsar employee – translates approximately 4 into Portuguese. Besides, she produces one note daily from Brazil.

5.1.5 In-depth notes

More detailed

Notes from other sources: ERBOL, CNR, rebelión.org, etc.

5.1.6 Web page

Complements the information through a link in the e-mail, targeting another, more diffuse audience, which accesses the information e.g. through search engines like Google. Púlsar is now registered on Google-news. In May, the agency registered 55,000 hits. According to the Púlsar executive director, there are approximately 1,000 regular users.

5.2 Content

5.2.1 Regional coverage in the Buenos Aires period (May–June)³⁴

Tables 10 to 13 show the relative weight of the different sub-regions and countries in January–June 2004.

- 91% of the notes in May and June covered Latin America and the Caribbean. The other notes were mainly on the Middle East – Iraq (5%), the United States (4%) and Europe (1%, all on Spain). It seems that the new administration tends to give more priority to Latin America.
- In Latin America and the Caribbean, almost all notes were prepared from the countries, very few of which from the sub-regions (e.g. Andes region, Southern Cone, etc.). The exception is the Caribbean, where more than half of the notes were generated under the sub-regional “Caribbean” concept.
- Contrary to the Montevideo administration, now the Andes region is the best-represented sub-region. The reason for this presence is that Bolivia is the country with most coverage, accounting for one out of every 7 notes.
- The region with the lowest presence is still the Caribbean, although its presence increased from 6 to 9%.
- Except for the Bolivian case, it seems coverage within the regions is better balanced. Argentina and Brazil occupy the same (second) place in order of importance.
- There are still various countries with a very marginal or no coverage. As opposed to the previous administration where they were amply covered, Cuba and Haiti disappeared from the agenda. In Central America, the almost absent countries are El Salvador, Panama and Costa Rica.

5.2.2 Topics in the Buenos Aires period

Púlsar Buenos Aires has not yet systematised the content. This evaluation took a sample of 4 programmes received on two days in June. Based on observation of the 22 press notes (see table 15), we can assert that:

- On average, 11 notes are produced on a daily basis (in July, this number rose to 14).
- Audio has not yet been introduced.

³⁴ Source: Own calculation based on information provided by Buenos Aires

- The notes are a mixture of current events and circumstantial information.
- The Buenos Aires administration also reflects an own thematic agenda. A lot of attention is given to movements and politics. As opposed to the previous administration, no attention is given to gender, and little attention to communication.
- Unlike the previous administration, more importance is given to ‘macro’ topics, such as world press notes, United Nations news, and notes on the European Community.

Other aspects that catch the eye when reviewing the press notes are:

- Seemingly, the Buenos Aires administration has opted for more formality and distance and less explicit politisation, were it not in the selection of the topics.
- All newsletters have one note per country.
- In the electronic mailings, the notes are signed as “Púlsar”. The web page shows the sources of the note; hence, it is possible to trace the origin.

5.3 Project management

At the moment of the field visit, the Buenos Aires administration³⁵ was still in a very initial phase with a limited organisational structure. A small group of journalists was formed, all of who from radio La Tribu, where AMARC-ALC is temporarily housed. Púlsar rented a small flat at 200 metres from the AMARC office.

In principle, Púlsar wants to take advantage of the member radios and networks for them to be correspondents. Besides, the decision was taken to open sub-regional correspondent offices that have started to operate from Mexico, Uruguay and Brazil.

In response to the demands from Brazil, a Portuguese press note service was started, which for the moment being consists of the translation of about four regular notes.

The **team** working for Púlsar Buenos Aires is composed of 5.5 persons³⁶ and is led by the experienced journalist Marcos Salgado, who has participated in Púlsar as the Argentine correspondent over the last years.

No other action fields have been developed to date (training, monitoring, style guide, etc.) because of a lack of time and because of the uncertainty surrounding the continuity of Púlsar.

³⁵ June 20–23, 2004

³⁶ Marcos Salgado, Executive Director; Walter Isaia, Editor; Inés Farina, Editor; Nicolás Schiffrin, Technical maintenance; Daniel Saavedra, webmaster; in Brazil, Sofia Hammoe, Editor/Translator; in Mexico there is one halftime correspondent and in Uruguay, two halftime correspondents

6. Púlsar from a user perspective

6.1 Potential users

Since its restart in October 2002, weekly mailings have been sent to the database addresses.

In July 2004, this database included 2,058 electronic addresses, the geographical distribution of which can be seen in table 16.

1. The origin of 15% is unknown as the address cannot be traced (e.g. hotmail.com). Probably, most of these subscribers are from Latin America.
2. At least 80% of the subscribers are Latin Americans. There is quite some interest in Europe and North America in Púlsar, where 6% of the subscribers is concentrated.
3. Some countries (Honduras, Dominican Republic) are not on the list. It seems Púlsar has less than two subscribers there.

No other information is available on the users, such as the individual or collective nature of the subscribers, the type of institution (radio, NGO, association, communication centre)³⁷.

6.2 Use of Púlsar

There is no recent reliable information available on the use of Púlsar³⁸. This evaluation carried out two surveys, one among community radios in Argentina when they met in an assembly of the Argentine Community Radio Forum (FARCO) and another one that was sent to Púlsar's mailing list.

Face-to-face and telephone interviews, and visits to some radio stations provided further information on use of Púlsar. The results are as follows:

6.2.1 Potential users (FARCO)

- a. A total number of 22 institutions were surveyed, 19 of which radios
- b. Of the 19 radios, 2 do not have Internet access.
- c. Of the 17 radios with Internet access, 7 receive Púlsar
- d. Of the 7 radios receiving Púlsar, 4 use it
- e. The most important reasons for the non-use of Púlsar in spite of receiving it are irregular operation, the lack of audio and the availability of other news sources.

6.2.2 Survey among Púlsar receivers

- a. The survey was sent on three opportunities to the 2,058 addresses of the database³⁹.
- b. A total number of 51 answers were received, i.e. 2.5%⁴⁰. This is a too small basis to reach any conclusions⁴¹. Hence, all comments are made with ample reservations.

³⁷ Bruce Girard reports that in the first Púlsar period, a lot of importance was given to these registers to have an idea on use and potential use of the information

³⁸ Púlsar Montevideo sent a questionnaire to the list in November 2002, but the response rate was so low (three) that the team considered the results as insignificant.

³⁹ Mailing dates: June 20, July 8 and July 18, 2004

⁴⁰ In 1998, Púlsar carried out a similar survey, with a response rate of 28% of the subscribers

⁴¹ It is also clear that many answers come from institutions and persons with close links to the AMARC-ALC and Púlsar management

- c. Slightly less than half of the users are radios, 20% are communication centres and the rest are individuals, radio or electronic networks, NGOs, newspapers, news agencies.
- d. 43% of the answers come from the Southern Cone (Argentina, Uruguay, Chile), where only 18% of the receivers is concentrated. 22% of the answers come from the Andes region, 14% from Europe and the US and very few answers from Central America, the Caribbean, Mexico and Brazil.
- e. 20% uses the local newspaper as its source for international news. One out of every 3 (36%) uses the national newspaper. Other sources of international information are other radios (30%), television (24%) and the satellite (14%).
- f. 76% of the interviewees uses the Internet as its source for international news.
- g. A total number of 70 sources of international news were identified in different media, several of which are mentioned in more than one medium (for example, Radio Netherlands is mentioned in the Internet, radio and satellite).
- h. All interviewed persons/entities receive Púlsar. 78% of the recipients answering the survey use it in some way. Of the 21 radios, 14 use Púlsar (66%).
- i. Of all those that somehow use Púlsar, 50% does so 'almost every day' and 38% at least once a week.
- j. Those that do not use Púlsar argue that it is very irregular, its coverage is non-convincing, there are no news items in Portuguese, almost no news on women, the proposals and media are outdated and they receive other Púlsar-like mailings.
- k. 90% of the users access Púlsar through the electronic newsletters, 48% enters the web page if they think there could be more information there based on the electronic press note. Only 3% directly accesses the web page.
- l. All radios that use Púlsar read the news items in their news bulletin. Many use Púlsar for internal background information. Some institutions use the notes to aliment their periodic bulletins.

6.2.3 Visits and interviews

The visits and interviews showed four types of relationship with Púlsar⁴².

1. The radios whose only source of information is Púlsar are very enthusiastic about this service. One radio that does not have its own connection had signed an agreement with an Internet café. In exchange for advertising, the radio could use the Internet. The radio downloaded Púlsar, recorded and printed it and then took it back to the radio station.
2. In general, the radios with access to different sources (e.g. Radio Netherlands, ALER Satelital) have two different reactions. Some radios affirm that they no longer need Púlsar with the satellite service, arguing that radio needs audio.
3. On the other hand, another group mentions the complementarity of different media. The advantage of the satellite for them is that they can download long and big audios and enter in chain. They underline the importance of Púlsar because it enables them to have access to electronic input for other programmes whenever required and in the quantities as they may require.
4. A group of special users are the agencies, radios and networks outside Latin America for which Púlsar's services are extremely useful. In this sense, the Red OLA Network of the Andalusian Association of Municipal Broadcasting Stations (Spain) uses Púlsar every day for its news broadcasts on 60 radios.

⁴² All interviewees had the Púlsar service

6.3 Strengths and weaknesses

For the persons interviewed and surveyed, it was not always clear whether they were giving an opinion on the Montevideo Púlsar or the Buenos Aires Púlsar. It is therefore necessary to interpret the mentioned criteria more in terms of input for a reorientation of Púlsar.

Annex 13 contains a complete list of the identified strengths and weaknesses.

The most outstanding *strengths* are the medium it uses (the Internet), plus the fact that it is sent on a daily and regular basis. The provision of news from Latin America and on social movements is confirmed to be a strength. Finally, users appreciate the social and South perspective of the Púlsar news approach.

The most important *weaknesses* are the absence of audio, the superficial treatment and absence of an own agenda, as often the news is ‘a rehash’. Besides, the limited presence of Central America is pointed out, as well as the inadequate selection of press notes and the limited objectivity. Finally, discontinuity is mentioned as another weakness, as well as the many changes in Púlsar’s development, the lack of its own correspondents and the non-taking advantage of the linkage possibilities the medium offers.

6.4 User suggestions and advice

In annex 10, we have incorporated a list of 39 concrete suggestions from those who responded the survey. The suggestions are closely related to the weaknesses stated in the foregoing paragraph and propose changes in the format, content and approach of Púlsar.

7. Sustainability of Púlsar

7.1 Economic situation

7.1.1 Budget execution

The economic report on the three years and a half reflects the institutional crisis⁴³.

In general terms, and without going into an in-depth review, the following points are worth underlining:

- Funds have been managed through AMARC International. Sida remitted the funds to Montreal and Montreal sent the money on to Latin America in parts.
- The disbursed sum from Sida amounts to CAD 383,909.94 (see table 3).
- A total sum of CAD 354,793.00, i.e. 92% of the disbursed amount, has been accounted for so far. AMARC-ALC was unable to provide supporting documents for the remaining 8%. Current coordinator Ernesto Lamas asks for understanding for this reality. The project was executed in the middle of a crisis and “*with five different regional coordinators over a three-year period*”.

⁴³ Source: Summaries of the accounts 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 of Púlsar-AMARC-ALC and the corresponding itemised breakdown

- Of the amount rendered, 15% was destined to “project administration”. This percentage was approved in the original project and was collected by AMARC Montreal.

Púlsar expenditure (see table 17)

The evaluation did not make a thorough review of the expenses within the framework of Púlsar. Some details are noted with the naked eye:

- The number of personnel paid in the Púlsar project is not consistent with project outcomes. Taking into account that the project effectively operated during 26 out of the 42 months (January 2001–June 2004), this means that the monthly expenditure in personnel amounted to nearly CAD 5,000, i.e. approximately USD 3,800 monthly. It is surprising that the said amount were insufficient to develop the project personnel component.
- One of the explanations is that some items under this heading should have been included under general institutional expenses of AMARC-Latin America and the Caribbean, for example payment of the administrator (Maira Rodríguez).
- The special coverage press reports were expensive.
- Expenses in communication are very high, especially taking into account that the project was suspended during 16 months. We understand part of these expenses were made on account of AMARC-ALC.
- The expenses in equipment include two complete technical installations (Uruguay and Argentina) in two years time.

Tables 18 and 19 show that only 50% of the funds disbursed by Sida have been spent within the framework of the Púlsar project; 38% of the disbursed amount was spent on budget items related to overall operation of AMARC-ALC. These “non-Púlsar” expenses continued until April 2004.

7.1.2 Financial relationship of AMARC-ALC, AMARC Montreal and Sida

When visiting Europe in September 2000, the then coordinator, Oscar Pérez, submitted the “*Business Plan AMARC-ALC 2000–2002*” to Sida. Because of circumstances in Sida, he only met with the administrator, and not with any of the programme officers.

Immediately after the crisis, Sida froze the funds destined to a training project of AMARC-ALC. When AMARC Montreal joins to help solve the crisis, it was decided that the funds for AMARC-ALC should pass through AMARC International as a means to provide institutional guarantees. Sida puts back its trust in the project, unfreezes the pending funds and relieves AMARC of the obligation to render accounts on year 2000.

In May 2001, six months after the conflict exploded, AMARC Montreal submits the “*Business Plan AMARC-ALC*” to Sida, covering 2001–2003. In her project presentation letter, Sophy Ly says: “*I strongly recommend that a significant amount of the funding go to institutional reinforcement in the first year*”⁴⁴. We have no information on any decision Sida may have taken on this matter.

On October 4, AMARC-ALC ratifies the proposal, stating that “*we maintain the action lines of this program*”⁴⁵ as proposed in the business plan.

On October 11, 2001, Sida’s “Culture and Media” department approved Púlsar’s funding for a sum of SEK 2,260,000.00

⁴⁴ Letter AM/01/SGL/034/sl, May 30, 2001

⁴⁵ Letter of Fernando López, dated October 4, 2001

As can be seen in table 3:

- AMARC Montreal sends funds to AMARC-ALC as an advance payment for a future Sida disbursement halfway 2001.
- When the Sida funds reach Montreal, 60% of the amount is used in compensation of the expenses made in advance. Another 21% is transferred to AMARC-ALC in January 2002.
- In September 2002, the second disbursement is sent to Montreal; 60% of the amount is transferred to AMARC-ALC. The Regional Board decides to restart Púlsar from Montevideo.

It is impossible to infer from the correspondence whether Sida had asked for explanations on this matter. As the relationship went through the Montreal office, there was no direct contact with the then regional coordinator Fernando López. The latter sent a letter in October 2001 confirming effectiveness of the proposal.

Based on the information available for the evaluation, the following aspects are noted:

- In September–October 2001 there is an electronic exchange between AMARC Montreal and Sida, in which AMARC Montreal exercises pressure to achieve approval of the submitted project and proceed to the disbursement of funds. Sida gives its consent at the end of October.
- Sida asked for a clarification in July 2002 on the paralysis of Púlsar. AMARC responds “*the news service Púlsar will be taken up again soon*”. It seems Sida did not follow up on this afterwards.
- The reports the general coordination of AMARC-ALC⁴⁶ prepared were so succinct that they made it impossible to have a clear idea of the project progress. We do not know the criteria Sida uses to regulate information flows from projects.

7.1.3 Funding and own revenues

During the entire project period, Púlsar has been delivered to the subscribers for free. External funding from Sida has become its only source of funding.

It is clear from the circumstances that the proposal to start raising own funding was not met. Neither were the corresponding plans prepared.

Analysis

Fund management on behalf of AMARC Montreal has been conservative. After having advanced its own funds, Púlsar was suspended in June 2001. When disbursements arrived from Sida, Montreal first had to repay already spent amounts in the first months of 2001. Afterwards, it needed quite some time to transfer the remaining amounts to AMARC-ALC.

In a first instance, Sida reacted adequately to the AMARC crisis. First, it froze funding, then it accepted the intervention and guarantee of AMARC Montreal and waived one rendering of accounts. Upon approval of the Púlsar funding, it made a timely disbursement of the respective funds.

However, development of the Púlsar project was insufficiently followed up. In July 2002, there was a brief email exchange with Montreal⁴⁷ but apparently Sida was waiting for this evaluation to further clarify project development. A closer follow-up might have generated, for example, more timely disbursements from Sida. It could also have resulted in AMARC-ALC's enhanced institutional concern for completing the project, or at least for asking itself the necessary questions... The last disbursement was made one month before project conclusion. AMARC-ALC that was trying to get out of deep crisis did not have any reservations regarding the sources to cover urgent expenses.

⁴⁶ Púlsar report covering January–December 2002, 2.5 pages; and the Activity Report of the news agency Púlsar, 5.5. pages – November 2003

⁴⁷ Electronic exchange between Asa Eriksson (Sida) and L. Michel (AMARC Montreal) on July 5–30, 2002

7.2 Relationship of AMARC-ALC with AMARC Montreal

In various documents, AMARC-ALC is defined as a “*branch of AMARC International*”⁴⁸. On the movement-building level, this image coincides with the three-yearly definition of the overall policies in the world general assembly. Nonetheless, the realities between the regions are very different and the bylaws offer the possibility of independent development of regional programs. In order to maintain worldwide coherence, common lines are defined such as gender, legislations, communication and development and the importance of culture.

The General Coordinator notes that AMARC-ALC’s belonging to the international level, gives the entity its sense of being an international movement. The radios have a fraternal relationship with other radios in the world.

In the years before the crisis, AMARC-ALC had an independent relationship with donors, while, formally speaking, AMARC International was the entity with legal capacity. Because of the crisis, AMARC Montreal offered itself as the financial channel and institutional guarantee, which implied direct contact between Sida and AMARC-ALC came to a stop.

All AMARC-ALC leaders mention that the intervention of AMARC Montreal during and after the crisis has been very valuable. The direct support and intermediation towards Sida were key elements to make progress in solving the crisis. They also point out that the relationship with the Secretary General of AMARC is good. He attended some meetings of the Regional Board and represented AMARC-ALC with Sida, which he did adequately from his knowledge of the situation in Latin America.

7.3 Collective reflection, planning, follow-up and monitoring

In the period 2001–2003 there were few spaces for collective reflection on the translation of the communications proposal into practice. In the seminar in Cumbayá in February 2002, “*a lot of time*” was devoted to discussions on Púlsar, but this was not registered.

Before the re-launching of Púlsar in October 2002, there was no reflection on the characteristics this new attempt at launching Púlsar should have. In May 2004, when Púlsar moved from Uruguay to Argentina, no in-depth discussions were held either on the line to be followed. Seemingly, Púlsar’s role in the institutional rescue was more important than the search for effectiveness in its (re)launching.

There were virtually no work plans.

The needs of radios are not the starting point. “*We have no knowledge on this*” says Mauricio dos Santos. “*We have been very pragmatic, but the time has come for a serious reflection*”. Púlsar did not invest in finding out whether its proposal is still fit for them, while the radios are its most important counterparts. In recent years, no diagnostics or analyses have been made to update the project proposals in terms of:

- a. *The topics* people are interested in
- b. Capacity and willingness to *make a contribution* to Púlsar (content, etc.)
- c. Important *social stakeholders* such as sources, subjects and/or allies
- d. *Institutional practices* (International news programming, available workforce, news sources, technological situation)
- e. *Radio demands* (formats, contents, quantities, frequencies, technological media)

⁴⁸ Business plan AMARC-ALC 2001–2003 page 9

The high rate of management turnover has been a characteristic of Púlsar since its first executive director left and is not specifically related to the last crisis. It has been part of its congenital features, particularly as a result of the institutional management style, which defined in-depth topics with an intensely personal style. After the change, turnover continued as a consequence of the crisis.

For several years, the same issues appear in all evaluation reports, showing the need for continuity and monitoring⁴⁹. The absence of an institutional definition on strategies, action lines and approaches resulted in those matters being decided at the discretion of the successive people in charge of managing or coordinating the institution, pushing the cart in the direction they judged convenient. The high management turnover caused instability in the editorial and operating fields of the agency. Because of this lack of a clear, stable and predictable identity, Púlsar lost effectiveness and impact.

7.4 Alliances

Púlsar did not develop any initiatives to strengthen its position in the media context by entering into strategic alliances. There is a certain fear to identify possibilities in this direction. There are however serious candidates.

ALER

At the institutional level, AMARC-ALC has developed an alliance with ALER within the framework of three projects: Ritmo Sur, CAESI and NUMA. The Ritmo Sur project includes a paragraph on a growing coordination between both entities: “*foment the continental news work of ALER Satelital and Púlsar*”⁵⁰.

ALER satelital is developing an electronic mailing list to complement its satellite broadcasting. In this sense, this is a direct threat for Púlsar.

All interviewed users point out that both projects are complementary, mentioning their ideological similarity as a good starting point for joint activities. From the perspective of users, the only tricky point is that AMARC-ALC’s editorial line is much freer than ALER’s in topics such as the church and sexuality. As for the rest, most users do not understand why both agencies work separately, as many of them are members of both institutions.

The leaders of both institutions share the idea of their complementary nature. The institutional situation also favours increasingly joint activities. Simultaneously, both institutions emphasise that these processes need time. ALER states that the only way for Púlsar to have a future is merging with ALER satelital.

IPS

Inter Press Service Latin America is specialised in analysis news. It has 7 regular correspondents in Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, Mexico, Cuba and collaborators in Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Central America, and Paraguay. It is headquartered in Uruguay. In Latin America, IPS serves 3 agencies, 5 databases, 33 newspapers, 12 magazines, 14 radios and 35 NGOs⁵¹.

IPS started to introduce audio in its Internet-provided news pages. Already in the first periods of Púlsar there were plans to work together. IPS is prepared to discuss this matter. In March, the IPS director proposed AMARC-ALC to discuss the possibility to “*do things together between Púlsar and IPS*”. The proposal is currently under consideration in the Regional Board.

⁴⁹ See annex 9

⁵⁰ Draft project of Ritmo Sur, page 19, June 2004

⁵¹ Source: IPS, data of 2003

8. Conclusions

1. The Púlsar project and proposal respond to a real demand from the societal and media reality in Latin America. AMARC-ALC is a relevant stakeholder in this reality. The audiences, community radios and also other radios need information flows fomenting regional integration and from a citizen and gender perspective. The Internet is a very helpful medium to build the project, though not the only one.
2. As the report and annex 14 state, implementation of the Púlsar project in 2001–2003 was very limited, as a direct consequence of a deep institutional crisis that shook the foundations of AMARC-ALC, the project implementing agency. In view of the very close institutional relationship between AMARC-ALC and Púlsar, defined as an AMARC-ALC project, it was impossible for Púlsar to stay in the shade of the conflict.
3. The suspension of Púlsar for almost half the project period (16 out of 36 months) was decided on because of the non-availability of funding. This non-availability found its origin in a series of factors:
 - AMARC-ALC gave priority, also in economic terms, to the satisfaction of other institutional needs, with the objective of solving the institutional crisis. It therefore partially used funds destined to Púlsar.
 - In view of its institutional logic of disbursing after receiving an activity report, Sida transferred its funds in an untimely manner (at the end of the project years).
 - Partial fund transfers suffered delays in AMARC Montreal.
4. It is difficult to imagine that AMARC-ALC would have survived its crisis if it were not for the Púlsar funds. As can be seen in the respective tables, basic expenses such as salaries of the AMARC-ALC regional coordinators were paid with Púlsar money, even when Púlsar was temporarily suspended.
5. Hardly 50% of the money Sida disbursed has been invested in operation of Púlsar. Non-availability of the other half of the money hindered adequate project performance. This prioritisation in the light of the institutional crisis responds to institutional – political criteria, both on behalf of AMARC-ALC and Sida. This evaluation finds that the institutional-political decision to give priority to other expenses has significantly hampered the development of Púlsar. At the same time, we must point out that the Secretary General of AMARC International (Sophy Ly) recommended that Sida destine a considerable part of the first-year funding (2001) to institutional strengthening. AMARC-ALC continued to use important sums of Púlsar to pay general expenses of AMARC-ALC until April 2004. The evaluation does not know whether AMARC-ALC got in touch with Sida to request permission for shifting the budget items and changing the project objectives. It seems Sida did not respond to signs on the existence of a crisis and thus implicitly gave a “laissez-faire, laissez-passer” sign, which seems to have been interpreted as permissiveness.
6. The support AMARC Montreal gave to AMARC-ALC has been crucial to overcome the immediate effects of the crisis, and restore the trust of the funding agencies, as was the case with Sida. AMARC Montreal’s disposition has been very positive during the entire project period. However, the lack of direct contact between Sida and AMARC-ALC has not benefited Sida’s capacity to understand the processes that were going on in Latin America.

7. Instead of favouring an efficient ‘all-in’ re-launch from Montevideo in October 2002, the re-launch was ‘lukewarm’ based on a crisis logic and the need for funds to meet institutional matters. The Comcosur team did not have a chance to manage the whole Púlsar project, as a considerable administrative part stayed behind in Quito. During 19 months, a logic is being applied that does not respond to the news agency Púlsar project, in terms of daily production, networking, radio format.
8. The suspension followed by partial implementation from Uruguay and the subsequent move of Púlsar to Buenos Aires confirms the discontinuous management of Púlsar. In its eight years of existence, the agency had 10 different executive directors. This institutional feature has not enabled development of a “Púlsar style”, which seriously affects its journalistic practices, its editorial line, and its external image.
9. The evaluation was unable to verify Púlsar’s impact. Owing to the absence of adequate systematisations (surveys, follow-up of the use pattern, databases) that say something about the use and usefulness of Púlsar in the implementation period, it is impossible to make any well-founded statements on the matter. What we did find was enthusiasm for its existence, particularly among AMARC-ALC membership. The low survey response rate (2%) contradicts the response on other moments (28% in 1998). The surveys and interviews show little verified uses, little frequent uses, complementary use in more consolidated radio projects and more intensive use in more precarious radio stations. Without any doubt, there has been an impact on the institutional level; operation from Montevideo helped to restore institutional confidence: *Púlsar was back*.
10. During three years, AMARC-ALC lacked the institutional capacity to re-implement the Púlsar project in accordance with the terms laid down in the project 2001–2003. Only in May 2004, this was achieved. This delay can be explained or by the institution being stuck in a crisis logic, or by a deficient self-critical operation resulting from that crisis. There are signs that the institutional capacity is recovering; Púlsar’s presence in Ecuador was closed, the office was moved to Buenos Aires, the hiring of own personnel, Púlsar has a – rented – office, the Regional Board has been renewed and there is a paid Regional Coordinator for institutional management.
11. Comcosur complied with its task within the terms and budget constraints assigned to it by AMARC-ALC. Within this framework, the encountered weaknesses and strengths were normal. It did not have the necessary institutional capacity to conquer more economic manoeuvring space for Púlsar and to look at the project from the outside, from the perspective of requirements of the audience and radios that needed a radio news agency, not a good-educational-note-providing service.

After the Girard administration, the Comcosur administration was the second longest administration (19 months). Considering the importance of continuity and validity of AMARC-ALC’s decentralisation policy, the type of evaluation the Regional Board made to decide on moving Púlsar to Buenos Aires is not perfectly clear.

10. Púlsar’s sustainability is fragile. No progress was made in the economic field, and few possibilities come to mind to achieve medium-term independent commercial sustainability. In the institutional field, almost everything still has to be built; consolidation of a network of correspondents has not been achieved, there is no system for follow-up and monitoring, no training activities have been implemented, no style guide has been developed, no reporting logic has been applied, etc. In the social field, Púlsar has not developed a network of strategic alliances and mutual support, except on the occasion of the World Social Forum. Considering the relations of AMARC-ALC members on the local, national and also continental levels, this is fertile ground for further exploration and exploitation.

12. In practice, technologies have been turned into institutional flags; the concrete examples are AMARC-ALC and ALER. One has put its faith in satellite technology, the other one in the Internet. Nonetheless, the different existing technological means are complementary: satellites, Internet, and radio waves. Every medium has advantages and limitations, but none of them should be more than merely a means of transportation.
13. Other stakeholders in the field of alternative and Latin American information are interested in joining forces. ALER has expressed its willingness in this sense, as well as IPS, which has already made serious offers to AMARC-ALC for a strategic alliance in Uruguay. UNESCO is still an important potential ally that would support this development. In spite of the leadership of AMARC-ALC being formally prepared to advance in these contacts, there is a certain stubborn hesitation based on the fear of losing its institutional identity.
14. The installation of Púlsar in Buenos Aires is once again a new start. It is too early to issue an opinion on successfulness of this new operation, but there is clearly a new enthusiasm, with serious management, an attempt to observe the original lines of Púlsar and to give new dynamism to the agency through regional correspondents. Many obstacles still have to be overcome, of which the economic issue is but one. The most important bottlenecks yet to be solved are:
 - a. Identity of Púlsar
 - The relationship between Púlsar and AMARC-ALC, the other community radios and the other radios
 - b. Relations
 - The strategy regarding alliances
 - The relationship with radios and their participation in the project
 - Ownership of the project on behalf of the radios
 - c. Operation
 - The project's own institutionality
 - The editorial line
 - Continuity in management
 - Presence in the regions

9. Recommendations

In spite of the limited execution of the projects approved by Sida, and in spite of the numerous difficulties to be overcome, we recommend giving continuity to the relationship of Sida with AMARC-ALC regarding the Púlsar project for the following reasons:

- a. The reality of the media confirms the need to have a radio news line from a citizen and Latin American viewpoint.
- b. AMARC-ALC is a strategic stakeholder in the community radio movement. The strong commitment of its members to 'their' association is a symbolic asset that must be taken advantage of as a strength in the broader movement.

- c. The principal factor underlying non-achievement of the project was the institutional crisis in AMARC-ALC, and not errors in the proposed concept.
- d. AMARC-ALC is on the verge of getting out of the crisis and building a different operating logic.
- e. There are strong potential allies, with experience and institutional prestige, who could reinforce joint activities favouring a better-balanced communication.
- f. Púlsar is already coordinating some activities with one of these potential allies (ALER) in other institutional fields.

Below, the proposal is further detailed:

1. In the first place, we recommend that Sida and AMARC-ALC clarify pending issues together. The project has not been executed as per the proposal. Before continuing with any type of inter-institutional relationship, which must be based on mutual trust, it is necessary for AMARC-ALC and Sida to be in touch directly to clear up various issues⁵². A good opportunity to do this could be presentation of the financial – activity report by the end of July.
2. We recommend continued support for Púlsar; in principle for a period of one year, with the possibility to extend support to three years, provided the conditions mentioned below are met.
3. Developments in the media environment (growing concentration, expansion of multimedia and the enormous news supply) do not allow for palliative solutions. Effectiveness and efficiency are absolutely paramount. An alternative news agency must be solid in institutional, ideological, communications and technological terms. This line must be useful for a great diversity of experiences in the community radio movement. At the same time, management must be professional, defining proposals based on a thorough knowledge of the public's needs. We therefore recommend, as a first condition, that AMARC-ALC prepare a *medium-term plan* (3–5 years), based on the following elements:
 - 1) Carry out a participatory institutional diagnostic on information practices and demands of radios and their audiences, beyond the institutional limits of AMARC-ALC and the community and popular radio world.
 - 2) Using the input provided by the diagnostic, prepare and implement a work proposal together with similar networks (ALER, IPS and others) aimed at taking advantage of institutional, information-related and technological complementarities based on a joint communications project. Creation of an independent agency could be considered. Even though the proposal must be ambitious, it must also very well define the levels, weights and speeds of participation of every party taking into account its strengths and weaknesses, and without creating expectations that could never be fulfilled.
 - 3) Prepare a plan on strategic alliances with key social stakeholders in Latin America⁵³.
4. The second condition we recommend is the appropriate and proactive *institutionalisation* of the Púlsar project, breaking with the institutional crisis logic and based on the following 17 elements:

⁵² Economic and activity report flows, economic and financial management and situation, interinstitutional communication, follow-up and monitoring.

⁵³ I.e. stakeholders with whom joint activities can be developed, pursuing the same objective, for example, Human Rights Committees, Indigenous Fund, Amnesty International, Media Watch, etc.

Institutional area

- 1) Clarity in the relationship of Púlsar with AMARC-ALC
- 2) Establish a democratic and functional internal organisation, with clear and transparent regulations, agreements and procedures
- 3) Real operation of an editorial council ensuring independent editorial development
- 4) Monitoring and follow-up systems
- 5) Strategy for strategic alliances with similar entities
- 6) Lines for a strategy focusing economic sustainability

Communications

Content

- 7) Editorial line
- 8) Participatory definition of a thematic agenda based on knowledge of the needs and demands of the audience and users
- 9) Presence of the regions, particularly Central America

Relations

- 10) Policy focusing strategic alliances with social stakeholders
- 11) Role and functioning of correspondents and sub-regions
- 12) Relationship with radios
- 13) Participation of the audience (research, feedback)

Formats

- 14) Implementation of audio
 - 15) Format diversity
 - 16) The role of languages
 - 17) Role of the web page
5. We recommend that both action lines (mentioned above as conditions: medium-term plan and institutionalisation) be prepared in *a special project*, with a duration of one year, for presentation to Sida in a short term.
 6. Given the importance and appropriate historical moment, we recommend that *Sida commit* to development of a citizen radio news agency in Latin America in the medium-term and invest in active follow-up of the development thereof. In this sense, we also recommend thanking AMARC Montreal for their intervention in the crisis and taking up again a direct relationship with AMARC-ALC.

10. Lessons learned

The concept of co-responsibility means that the partner from the North follows up the projects more closely.

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Annex 1 Terms of Reference

1. Background

AMARC is a non-commercial international organisation for local radio producers that supports community radio all over the globe. It has approximately 3000 members in 106 countries. Sida has provided support to AMARC's activities in Africa and Latin America for three years (2001–2003). MSEK 2.6 were provided to AMARC Africa and MSEK 2.2 to AMARC Latin America. As part of the overall decision, it was also decided that Sida's contribution to AMARC would be evaluated after the signed agreement period, i.e. 2003 (DESO Decision 759/01)

The overarching objective for AMARC Africa between 2001 and 2003 was the development and promotion of community radio as an important tool for social development and democracy. To achieve this goal AMARC Africa has concentrated on providing organisational development and support services to radio stations. The objective for AMARC Latin America is promoting the democratising of communication through seven separate programmes. Sida has concentrated on providing support to one of these programmes, namely strengthening and developing a news bureau called Púlsar, helping to create opportunities for active participation in the political process.

This evaluation will concentrate on AMARC Latin America and the news agency Púlsar.

2. Objectives of the Review

An evaluation is foreseen towards the end of the project period stated in the project document of DESO 2001-02492. The review will cover the period from 2001 – 2003.

The objectives of the review are to:

- 2.a. Examine the activities of the news agency “Agencia informativa Púlsar” and other programs of the Projects for the Democratisation of Communication 2001–2003, with emphasis on Púlsar, to determine the quality – defined as relevance, impact and sustainability.
- 2.b. Assess the degree to which the objectives of the programme, as mentioned in the letter of General Coordinator Fernando López of 4 october 2001, have been met.
- 2.c. Identify any problems and challenges that might have been experienced during the programme period.
- 2.d. Examine the AMARC-ALC institutional capacity in relation to its objective to promote democratisation of communication through the support of community radio stations and the news agency Púlsar. Determine relevance, impact and sustainability of the institutional capacity in relation to the above objective.
- 2.e. Examine how AMARC International succeeds in giving relevant support to the Latin America region.
- 2.f. Draw conclusions and make recommendations for the future in view of the new project proposal for AMARC Latin America and AMARC International. Recommendations should be prioritised.

3. Scope of the evaluation

The review shall cover all activities carried out by the programme as prioritised in the Sida Decision-contribution document DESO 2001-02492, regarding the Latin America part of the programme.

It shall include, but not necessarily be limited to examination of the following *aspects*:

- 3.a. Assess the programme performance from the perspectives of effectivity, efficiency, relevance and impact.
- 3.b. Assess the programme impact in the public, especially in regarding community participation.
- 3.c. Assess the impact of the programme in promoting community radio and to what extent new, sustainable radio stations have been put up as a result of programme activities.
- 3.d. Assess the effectivity of the training of radio producers.
- 3.e. Assess women's participation and skills in community radios.
- 3.f. Assess factors outside the scope of the programme, which have hindered and/or enhanced the programme.

4. Issues to be addressed by the review mission

The mission should to the extent relevant and possible address the following crosscutting concerns in its assessments and recommendations:

- 4.a. The continuing relevance when it comes to general approach and implementation modality in view of any development in the prevailing sectoral context since the time of project design and approval.
- 4.b. The sustainability of the programme giving an assessment of the likelihood the programme results will endure after the programme has ended;
- 4.c. The development of local ownership through participation and capacity-building;
- 4.d. The possible impact of the approach being used to address Poverty Reduction, HIV and AIDS, Democracy and Human Rights issues.

5. Products expected from the Review

A draft evaluation report submitted locally prior (sending relevant parts of draft report to relevant stakeholders) to the de-briefing at the end of the mission. The report should include the main observations/-conclusions/recommendations for the future, ensuring a comprehensive coverage of all the points mentioned under points 2,3 and 4 above. The final report, maximum 30 pages (paper and electronic version) should be submitted to Sida Stockholm not later than 15th of August 2004.

6. Methodology

The mission is expected to use at least the following modalities for assessing project performance:

- Review of the programme documentation, including the programme Document, the progress reports and other relevant documentation.

- Interviews of staff, participants, board members, partner institutions and other relevant actors.
- Travel to identified programme sites and partners in the region Latin America

Once fieldwork is completed, the consultant should prepare conclusions and recommendations and present them through the following steps:

- Elaboration of a draft evaluation report
- Debriefing on preliminary findings
- Elaboration of a final report

7. The consultant for the mission

The Consultant shall be independent and have practical experience of project and programme implementation. He or she shall have good knowledge of freedom of speech and freedom of information by supporting the community radio movement. Knowledge about massmedia's role in democracy building in developing countries.

The consultant shall travel to Latin America to conduct part of his/her research regarding the evaluation. The consultant shall be fluent in Spanish and English.

8. Time-frame

The consultant is expected to complete the evaluation within 3 months of receiving and collecting all pertinent and relevant information.

9. Payment

Two Invoices shall be sent to Sida, to the respective officer/division, when the different phases of the evaluation are completed. Payment will be made within 30 days of receiving the invoice.

The invoice shall provide an overview as to the type and extent of the work carried out, while also referring to the decision legitimising the financial contribution.

10. Representative & Contact Person

The representative shall be: Pia Hallonsten and Peter Erichs

The contact person shall be the responsible officer at Sida, Stockholm.

11. Disputes

Swedish law applies. Disputes concerning the contribution or decision, as well interpretation of the afore mentioned, and co-operation partners' rights and duties, please refer to "Lag (1929:145)" on arbitrators.

12. Standard Conditions

For any remaining concerns please refer to Sida's *Standard Conditions for Consulting Services*

Annex 2 Methodological report

2.a. Cuadro metodológico principal

No.	Categoría	Nombres	Método	Temas
1	Analistas externos	Daphne Plou, Argentina Bruce Girard, Uruguay Oscar Ferrero, Ecuador Lourdes Tibán, Ecuador José I. López Vigil, Perú Atún Hasbún, El Salvador	Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista telefónica Entrevista presencial	– Contexto socioeconómico, cultural y mediático – Relevancia Púlsar – Incidencia Púlsar – Experiencias parecidas
2	(Ex)Cargos políticos	María Pía Matta, Chile Ximena Gudiño, Ecuador	Entrevista telefónica Entrevista presencial	– Relevancia Púlsar – Políticas institucionales
3	(Ex-) Coordinadores Regionales	Fernando López, Ecuador Oscar Pérez, El Salvador Gustavo Gómez, Uruguay Ernesto Lamas, Argentina	Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial	– Crisis AMARC-ALC – Institucionalidad AMARCALC – Relevancia Púlsar – Incidencia Púlsar – Sostenibilidad
4	Representantes Nacionales AMARC	M. de los Santos, Uruguay Gisela Dávila, Ecuador DINA Sales, El Salvador	Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial	– Institucionalidad AMARCALC – Incidencia Púlsar
5	Ejecutivos Púlsar	Marcos Salgado, Argentina Maira Rodríguez, Ecuador Carlos Casares, Uruguay Beatriz Alonso, Uruguay	Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial	– Programación – Sostenibilidad – Cumplimiento objetivos y metas 2001–2003
6	Receptores Púlsar	Los 2058 suscriptos de Púlsar	Encuesta electrónica	– Uso – Utilidad Púlsar – Fortalezas y Debilidades
7	Radios receptoras Púlsar	Las radios suscriptas en Ecuador	Encuesta telefónica	– Recepción – Uso
8	Potenciales Users Púlsar	Radios reunidas en Asamblea del Foro Argentino de Radio Comunitaria	Encuesta escrita	– Fuentes internacionales – Uso Púlsar – Fortalezas Debilidades
9	Potenciales Users Púlsar	Radios Comunitarias: – Aire Libre, Argentina – FM Alas, Argentina – FM La Tribu, Argentina – ARPAS, El Salvador – AMLibre, Uruguay – El Puente, Uruguay – La Cotorra, Uruguay – Tierra, Chile – EMA, España	Entrevista visita Entrevista presencial Entrevista visita Entrevista visita Entrevista visita Entrevista visita Entrevista telefónica Entrevista telefónica	– Uso – Utilidad – Fortalezas – Debilidades
10	Colegas o Potenciales aliados	IPS, Alejandro Kirk IPS, Claudia Cariboni ALER, Mario Villalobos ALER, Luis Dávila CAESI, Hernán Gutiérrez APC, Valeria Betancourt UNESCO, Claudio Menezes	Entrevista telefónica Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial Entrevista presencial	– Relevancia Púlsar – Incidencia Púlsar

2.b. Boleta de Encuesta mandada a 2058 receptores de Púlsar

Estimad@s usuari@s de Púlsar!

Después de haber apoyado a Púlsar entre 2001 y 2003, la Cooperación Sueca para el Desarrollo (Asdi) está ejecutando una evaluación del trabajo. La evaluación quiere involucrar activamente las experiencias y los puntos de vista de ustedes, l@s usuari@s de Púlsar: los centros de comunicación, las radios, las redes.

Es por ello que les invito muy cordialmente llenar la presente encuesta sobre Púlsar. En total no le tomará más que 10 minutos.

Unas ampliaciones de uso más:

1. Enviamos la boleta en el cuerpo de este mismo correo (y no en attachment), para evitar cualquier tipo de transmisión de virus.
2. Cuando le pedimos marcar algo, puede hacerlo con XXXXX o subrayando o poniendo en negrita la(s) alternativa(s) de su preferencia.
3. Una vez que haya completada la encuesta, por favor mandarla de inmediato a: vanoeyen@hetnet.nl

Les agradecemos muchísimo su colaboración. Su opinión es muy importante para seguir construyendo una Púlsar fuerte y al servicio de todas y todos ustedes!

Atentamente,

Victor van Oeyen

Consultor

Cuestionario Uso – Utilidad – Agencia Informativa Púlsar

Datos institucionales generales

1. Nombre _____

2. Tipo de institución:

☐ Radio

☐ Centro de Comunicación

☐ Red

☐ Otro: _____

3. Lugar: _____

4. País: _____

5. Teléfono _____

6. Correo Electrónico _____

7. Nombre responsable de

Prensa/Informativo _____

Solamente para las radios: Datos Técnicos

8. ¿En qué onda(s) trabaja su emisora?

Marcar	Potencia
☐ Onda Corta	Watts_____
☐ Onda Media	Watts_____
☐ Frecuencia Modulada	Watts_____

Fuentes de Información Internacional

9. ¿De dónde recibe información para hacer sus notas internacionales?

(marcar todo lo que vale)

- ☐ De los periódicos locales
- ☐ De los periódicos nacionales
- ☐ Por televisión (mencionar los canales)

Nombre medio	Lugar
_____	de _____
_____	de _____
_____	de _____
_____	de _____

- ☐ De otras radios (mencionar las radios)

Nombre medio	Lugar
_____	de _____
_____	de _____
_____	de _____
_____	de _____

- ☐ De Internet o correo electrónico (mencionar los fuentes)

Nombre medio	Lugar
_____	de _____
_____	de _____
_____	de _____
_____	de _____

☐ Por satélite (mencionar las fuentes)

Nombre medio

Lugar

_____ de _____

_____ de _____

_____ de _____

_____ de _____

☐ Otro: _____

10. ¿Da algún uso a los servicios de Púlsar?

☐ Sí (pasar a pregunta 12)

☐ No

11. ¿Porqué no usa los servicios de Púlsar?

☐ Es demasiado irregular su servicio

☐ Su cobertura noticiosa no me convence

☐ No es muy radiofónico

☐ Otro: _____

Por favor, aclare su respuesta:

¡Gracias, la encuesta terminó para usted!

12. ¿Desde cuando está recibiendo los servicios de Púlsar?

☐ Recientemente (desde unos 3 meses o menos)

☐ Un año

☐ Dos años

☐ Más de dos años

☐ Recibí hace tiempo. Después lo perdí de vista.

☐ Recientemente volví a recibir

13. ¿En qué se diferencia Púlsar de otras fuentes de noticias internacionales?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

14. ¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza algún servicio de Púlsar?

☐ (Casi) todos los días (5–7 días por semana)

☐ Varios días a la semana. (3–4 días por semana)

☐ Semanalmente (1–2 días por semana)

☐ Menos de un día por semana

☐ Casi nunca

15. ¿Puede indicar la forma de acceso a Púlsar que más utiliza?

(puede marcar más alternativas)

☐ Los despachos por correo electrónico

☐ Cuando hay algo interesante en el despacho electrónico, consultamos la página Web.

☐ Consultamos directamente la página Web de Púlsar

☐ Otro: _____

16. ¿Cuál(es) de los servicios de Púlsar ha estado utilizando en el último mes?

¿Puede indicar, detrás de cada servicio, para qué lo utiliza?

– *Panorama del mediodía*

☐ Para información interna

☐ Para lectura en el noticiero (detallar: aproximadamente ____ notas por semana)

☐ Otro uso: _____

– *Panorama final del día*

☐ Para información interna

☐ Para lectura en el noticiero (detallar: aproximadamente ____ notas por semana)

☐ Otro uso: _____

– *Titulares de periódicos*

☐ Para información interna

☐ Para lectura en el noticiero (detallar: aproximadamente ____ notas por semana)

☐ Otro uso: _____

– *Página Web (ver también pregunta 17)*

- ☐ Para información interna
- ☐ Para lectura en el noticiero (detallar: aproximadamente ____ notas por semana)
- ☐ Otro uso: _____

17. Solamente para los que utilizan la página Web de Púlsar:

¿Cuáles secciones de la página Web utiliza más? (marcar –máximo– las tres que más utiliza)

- ☐ América
- ☐ Europa
- ☐ Asia/Medio Oriente
- ☐ Derechos Humanos
- ☐ Amarc
- ☐ Red de Mujeres
- ☐ Documentos
- ☐ Diarios del día
- ☐ Portugués
- ☐ Todas las noticias

Participación

18. ¿Envía usted alguna vez noticias a Púlsar?

- ☐ Sí
- ☐ No

19. En los últimos 6 meses, ¿con qué frecuencia ha enviado noticias para Púlsar?

- ☐ Todos los días laborales (5 días a la semana)
- ☐ 1–4 veces por semana
- ☐ 1–3 veces por mes
- ☐ Menos de una vez por mes

20. ¿Tiene alguna sugerencia para mejorar su participación en Púlsar?

21. ¿Cuáles son las fortalezas de Púlsar?

22. ¿Cuáles son las debilidades de Púlsar?

23. ¿Transmitir Púlsar ayuda a su emisora en algunos de los siguientes aspectos? (marque con una (X) en el círculo de las alternativas que se ajusten a su realidad)

- ☐ Da mayor prestigio a la programación por ser parte de una Agencia Internacional.
- ☐ Cualifica la programación
- ☐ Aumenta los ingresos económicos (por publicidad comercial, educativa etc.)
- ☐ No sabe
- ☐ No registra un beneficio concreto
- ☐ Otro _____

24. Tiene usted algún ejemplo de que una nota de Púlsar haya generado comentarios, opiniones, acciones etc.?

☐ No sé

25. ¿Nos podría decir qué le parece la evolución de Púlsar en los últimos años?

☐ No sé

Sugerencias para Púlsar

26. ¿Tiene alguna crítica que puede ayudar a mejorar el servicio de Púlsar de AMARC-ALC?

27. ¿Tiene una sugerencia que puede ayudar a mejorar el servicio de Púlsar de AMARC-ALC?

Muchísimas gracias por su colaboración!

Victor van Oeyen

Annex 3 Tables

Table 1: Púlsar Executive Directors

No.	Name of Executive Director	Management period	Time in office
1	Bruce Girard, Canada	March 1996–March 31, 1998	2 years
2	Raúl Rodríguez, Peru	April 1–December 1998	9 months
3	Giovanna Tassi, Italia	January–March 1999	3 months
4	Oscar Vigil, El Salvador	April–July 1999	4 months
5	No director (J.I. López V. takes charge)	August–December 1999	5 months
6	Andrés Cañizales, Venezuela	January–September 30, 2000	9 months
7	No director (J.I. López V. takes charge)	October 2000	1 month
8	No director	November 2000–March 2001	4.5 months
9	Carlos Berence, Argentina	March 14–May 31, 2001	2.5 months
	Suspension of activities	June 2001–September 2002	16 months
10	Gustavo Gómez, Uruguay (*)	October 2002–July 7, 2003	9 months
11	Ernesto Lamas, Argentina (*)	July 7, 2003–April 30, 2004	10 months
12	Marcos Salgado, Argentina	May 1, 2004–today	

(*) In this period, the General Coordinator of AMARC-ALC acts as the Púlsar director. This whole time (19 months) the *de facto* coordination of Púlsar is in the hands of Carlos Casares, from Comcosur, Uruguay.

Table 2: Operational moments of Púlsar from January 2001 to June 30, 2004

Moments	Period	Location	Executive Director	Central characteristics
M 1	Jan 1–May 31, 2001	AMARC office Quito, Ecuador	At first there is no director, since March 14: Carlos Berence	3 journalists 18 press notes daily
M 2	Jun 1, 2001–Oct 16, 2002	Suspension of activities	General coordination of AMARC-ALC	xxxxxxxxxxxx
M 3	Oct 17, 2002–Apr 30, 2004	From Comcosur, Montevideo, Uruguay	Carlos Casares and Beatriz Alonso, Comcosur, Uruguay and Maira Rodríguez in Quito for administrative matters	– 2 mailings a week, each with 11 press notes – script format – no audio – 8 special coverage reports
M 4	May 1, 2004–today	From Buenos Aires, Argentina	Marcos Salgado, with a team of five persons	– 3 mailings daily – no audio

Table 3: Financial flow Púlsar project 2001–2003

Disbursals from Sida (SEK – Swedish krona)		Received by AMARC Montreal (CAD)		Transferred by AMARC Montreal to Púlsar (CAD)		
Dates	Amounts	Dates	Amounts	Dates	Transfers to AMARC-ALC	Expenses for AMARC-ALC ¹
2001						
				Jan19,2001	31,802.77	
				Feb19,2001	10,000.00	
				Feb20,2001	7,000.00	
				Jun21,2001	7,679.00	
Oct31,2001	1,429,000					
		Nov30,2001	109,363.00			
				De24,2001	10,000.00	
2002						
				Jan03,2002	12,000.00	
Sep11,2002	1,580,000					
		Sep18,2002	125,171.00			
				Sep23,2002	73,484.99	
				Dec31,2002		20,000.00
				Dec31,2002		20,119.31
2003						
				Jan15,2003	10,025.00	
				Feb28,2003		12,332.43
				Aug11,2003	14,708.00	
Nov20,2003	1,880,000					
		Nov25,2003	136,700.00			
				Dec22,2003		2,017.03
				Dec31,2003		20,000.00
2004						
				Jan06,2004	131,211.92	
				Mar31,2004		1,529.49
Total	4,889,000		371,234.00		307,911.68	75,998.26
				Total	383,909.94	

¹ AMARC Montreal assumed institutional representation of AMARC-ALC, which implied certain expenses

Table 4. Sub-regional presence in the 1,452 press notes of Púlsar Second Period

Sub-regions	Number of notes	% of total
1 Southern Cone (incl. Brazil)	627	43
2 Andes	431	30
3 Mexico and Central America	284	20
4 Caribbean	94	6
5 Latin America as such	16	1
Total	1,452	100

Table 5. Country presence in the 627 notes of the Southern Cone

Countries	Number of notes
1 Argentina	212
2 Brazil	144
3 Uruguay	136
4 Paraguay	70
5 Chile	65
Total	627

Table 6. Country presence in the 431 notes of the Andes

Countries	Number of notes
1 Venezuela	114
2 Bolivia	114
3 Colombia	81
4 Ecuador	71
5 Peru	51
Total	431

Table 7. Country presence in the 284 notes of Mexico and Central America

Countries	Number of notes
1 Mexico	112
2 Guatemala	56
3 Honduras	28
4 Panama	26
5 El Salvador	22
6 Nicaragua	19
7 Costa Rica	17
8 Central America	4
Total	284

Table 8. Country presence in the 94 notes of the Caribbean

Countries	Number of notes
1 Cuba	48
2 Haiti	19
3 Dom. Republic	15
4 Puerto Rico	9
5 Caribbean	3
6 Other countries	0
Total	94

Table 9. Topics of four newsletters from Púlsar–Montevideo

No. ²	Country	Topics	Summary
Nov 1	Argentina	Communication	Threats to relatives of journalist
March 9	Paraguay	Communication	National community radio congress
Feb 2	Switzerland	Communication	World Information Society Summit must contribute to equity
Feb 3	Argentina	Communication	Proposed launch of picket TV in Argentina as citizen expression
Feb 8	Uruguay	Corruption	Signs on misappropriation of housing funds
March 3	Chile	Human Rights	Investigation of crimes of military during Pinochet dictatorship
Nov 2	Argentina	Economics	Peasant protests against FTAA
Feb 7	Dom. Republic	Economics	Protests against economic policy in Dom. Republic
July 10	Dom. Republic	Economics	Protest against new agreement with IMF
July 8	Guatemala	Economics	Maquila factories threatened by illegal practices
Nov 9	Honduras	Economics	Discussions on government's economic package
Nov 10	Mexico	Economics	Open letter against transgenics
July 7	Costa Rica	Gender	Priority to train lawyers with sensitivity to women's issues
July 4	Bolivia	Gender-Com.	Media sell cheap images of women
July 2	Argentina	Gender-Soc.	Every 13 days a woman dies of an illegal abortion
Nov 3	Bolivia	Integration	Gas issue Bolivia–Chile
Feb 5	Colo–Pana	Integration	Criticism of plans to militarise Colombia–Panama border
July 3	Bolivia	Movements	Ibero-American Social Summit
July 5	Brazil	Movements	Leader of Landless Movement arrested. Conflict continues
Nov 8	USA	Movements	Critical protest against FTAA repressed
Feb 6	Mexico	Movements	Indigenous march in Mexico against misery
Nov 11	Paraguay	Movements	First Social Forum in Paraguay
Feb 4	Brazil	Non-violence	4 Brazilian MPs travelled to Iraq to express solidarity
July 6	Colombia	Non-violence	Thousands of refugees from violence return to their homes

² Dates: Friday February 7, 2003; Tuesday July 15, 2003; Friday November 21, 2003; Tuesday March 23, 2004

March 4	Colombia	Non-violence	Excess violence in Colombia
Nov 7	USA	Non-violence	Bush defends military option in Iraq in visit to Great Britain
Feb 1	World	Non-violence	No against US invasion in Iraq
Nov 6	China	Others	Tension and threats between China and Taiwan
March 1	Argentina	Politics	General of dictatorship arrested
Nov 4	Bolivia	Politics	Start of national dialogue in Bolivia
March 2	Brazil	Politics	Fight against hunger continues
March 6	El Salvador	Politics	Radio entrepreneur president
March 7	France	Politics	Electoral defeat of French government
Feb 9	Venezuela	Politics	Strike in Venezuela failed
July 11	Venezuela	Social - dev	Venezuela went up in human development list
July 1	Argentina	Social – ec.	Unemployed repressed by police in Buenos Aires
March 5	Costa Rica	Social – ec.	Tobacco companies sued
March 11	Venezuela	Social – edu	Considerable progress in literacy training
July 9	Mexico	Social – migr.	Enormous flow of Central American migrants to US
March 8	Mexico	Social – migr.	Human migration traffic is good business
Nov 5	Am. Central	Social – sal	Central American AIDS Congress
March 10	Dom. Republic	Social – sal	Doctors on strike

Table 10. Sub-regional presence in the 525 press notes of Púlsar Buenos Aires

Sub-regions	Number of notes	% of total B.A.	% period Montevideo
1 Southern Cone (incl. Brazil)	174	33	43
2 Andes	200	38	30
3 Mexico and Central Am.	106	20	20
4 Caribbean	45	9	6
Total	525	100	100

Period: May–June 2004

Table 11. Country presence in the 174 notes of the Southern Cone

Countries	Number of notes
1 Argentina	48
2 Brazil	48
3 Uruguay	30
4 Paraguay	14
5 Chile	34
Total	174

Period: May–June 2004

Table 12. Country presence in the 200 notes of the Andes

Countries	Number of notes
1 Venezuela	42
2 Bolivia	76
3 Colombia	28
4 Ecuador	19
5 Peru	35
Total	200

Period: May–June 2004

Table 13. Country presence in the 106 notes of Mexico and Central America

Countries	Number of notes
1 Mexico	16
2 Guatemala	21
3 Honduras	36
4 Panama	6
5 El Salvador	5
6 Nicaragua	15
7 Costa Rica	7
Total	106

Period: May–June 2004

Table 14. Country presence in the 45 notes of the Caribbean

Countries	Number of notes
1 Cuba	0
2 Haiti	0
3 Dom. Republic	17
4 Puerto Rico	1
5 Caribbean	27
Total	45

Period: May–June 2004

Table 15. Topics of four newsletters from Púlsar – Buenos Aires

No. ³	Country	Topic	Summary
Pdjun11-2	Peru	Communication	Peruvian Congress delays treatment of Radio and TV Law
Pdjun11-3	Ecuador	Economics	Assembly of indigenous parliament against free trade
Pdjun11-5	USA	Economics	In 2003 military expenses increased, mainly in US
Mdjun29-1	UN	Economics	Increased poverty in least developed countries
MDjun11-2	Colombia	Movements	Banana workers obtain wage increase
Mdjun29-2	Ecuador	Movements	Retired claim pension increase
Mdjun29-3	Honduras	Movements	Government breaks dialogue with teachers
MDjun11-1	Panama	Movements	Police repress student protest
Mdjun29-5	Peru	Movements	Teachers get discount, not increase
Pdjun29-5	Peru	Movements	Peasant front announces strike
Pdjun29-4	Iraq	Others	Former president Saddam Hussein will be surrendered to Iraq government
MDjun11-5	Argentina	Politics	La Pampa deputies condemn US measures against Cuba
Pdjun29-2	Argentina	Politics	Argentine primer minister annoyed with US interference
MDjun11-4	Bolivia	Politics	Preparation of gas referendum
Pdjun29-6	Bolivia	Politics	Social organisations criticise president's will to join FTAA
Pdjun11-4	Brazil	Politics	Poor countries ask more power in UN
MDjun11-3	Congo	Politics	Congo government retakes control of country
Mdjun29-4	Europe	Politics	Next president of the European Community elected
Pdjun29-3	Guatemala	Politics	Summit of Central American Heads of State and Government has started
Pdjun29-1	Paraguay	Politics	Comeback of Coup participant Lino Oviedo
Pdjun29-7	Paraguay	Soc.-Hum.Rights	Guaranies denounce living kidnapped by timber corporation
Pdjun11-1	World	Social – child	250 million children in the world work

Table 16. Púlsar subscribers

No.	Region	Country	Number	% of total
Latin America			1,605	78
1		Argentina	121	6
2		Bolivia	157	8
3		Brazil	67	3
4		Chile	110	5
5		Colombia	51	2
6		Costa Rica	80	4
7		Cuba	13	1

³ Two dates were selected from 33 midday panoramas and 62 day panoramas: June 11 and 29

8	Dom. Republic	0	—
9	Ecuador	141	7
10	El Salvador	75	4
11	Guatemala	116	6
12	Haiti	3	0
13	Honduras	0	—
14	Mexico	34	2
15	Nicaragua	33	2
16	Paraguay	139	7
17	Peru	225	11
18	Uruguay	141	7
19	Venezuela	99	5
Europe		67	3
20	Germany	12	1
21	Belgium	2	0
22	Spain	41	2
23	France	5	0
24	United Kingdom	4	0
25	Switzerland	3	0
North America		50	3
26	Canada	17	1
27	USA	33	2
Others		336	17
	Unknown	299	15
	Others	37	2
Total		2,058	100

Source: Own elaboration based on Púlsar information, July 2004

Table 17. Expenses made with the Sida budget for the Púlsar project (Can. Dollar)

Description	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total CaD
Personnel	32,088.00	29,894.00	40,604.00	23,487.00	126,073.00
Special coverage reports	4,937.00	4,013.00	7,494.00	1,507.00	17,951.00
Communications	6,470.00	6,063.00	7,702.00	3,866.00	24,101.00
Institutional image	0	0	4,716.00	1,578.00	6,294.00
Production	2,578.00	0	0	0	2,578.00
Equipment	812.00	3,154.00	1,703.00	3,604.00	9,273.00
Representation	0	0	0	2,101.00	2,101.00
Total expenses made for Púlsar project	46,885.00	43,124.00	62,219.00	36,143.00	188,371.00

Table 18. Expenses made with the Sida budget outside the Púlsar project (CaD)

Description	CaD
Not rendered	29,116.00
Indemnities	17,514.00
Meetings of the Regional AMARC-ALC Board	31,336.00
Participation of the Latin American delegation in world AMARC assembly – Nepal	11,890.00
Salaries of general coordinators	54,981.00
Total	144,837.00

Table 19. Summary of the Sida project expense structure

Type of expenses	Amounts spent	% of total
Total expenses made outside the Púlsar project	144,837.00	38
Expenses within the framework of the Púlsar project	188,371.00	50
Administration (15%)	46,276.00	12
Total expenses rendered	379,484.00	100

Annex 4 Schematic historical overview of Púlsar

Año	Fecha (aproximada)	Acontecimiento AMARC	Acontecimiento Púlsar
1983		Fundación AMARC Mundial	
1990		Fundación AMARC-ALC en Lima, Perú	
1995		Traslado oficina AMARC-ALC a Quito, Ecuador	
1996	4 de marzo		Inicio Púlsar con 48 estaciones
1997	Agosto		Inicia proyecto Ñuqanchik (con apoyo de UNESCO)
1998	31 Marzo		Finaliza gestión Bruce Girard
1998	Abril		Finaliza proyecto Ñuqanchik
1998	Agosto	7ª Asamblea mundial AMARC en Milán. Se lanza el concepto "Derecho a la Comunicación"	
1999			Púlsar tiene casi 2000 suscritos ⁴
2000	Julio	Asume CR ⁵ Oscar Pérez	
2000	Noviembre	Crisis gestión institucional; Oscar Pérez y José Ignacio López se van	
2001	1 de Enero		Inicia proyecto Asdi apoyo Púlsar
2001	Enero	Asume interinamente CR Maira Rodríguez	
2001	2 marzo	Asume CR Gustavo Gómez (hasta junio)	
2001	Abril	Edición Plan de Gestión AMARC-ALC 2001–2003 ⁶	
2001	30 Mayo	Presentación proyecto a Asdi por AMARC internacional ⁷	
2001	Junio	Asume CR Fernando López (hasta septiembre 2002)	
2001	30 de Junio		Suspensión servicio de Púlsar. La agencia tiene casi 2500 suscritos
2001	4 de Octubre		AMARC confirma a Asdi objetivos Púlsar 2001–2003 ⁸
2001	11 de Octubre		Asdi decide apoyar Púlsar 2001–2003 retroactivamente desde 1 de enero 2001
2001	31 de octubre		

⁴ Girard, Bruce; Agencia Informativa Púlsar; en Radio, the one to watch; FAO Roma 2003

⁵ CR = Coordinación Regional, cargo ejecutivo más alto en AMARC-ALC

⁶ Plan de Gestión AMARC-ALC; Democratización de las comunicaciones: fortaleciendo la red de radios comunitarias y ciudadanas mediante la capacitación, la perspectiva de género y el uso de las nuevas tecnologías; Quito- Ecuador, Abril de 2001

⁷ Documento Asdi DESO 0759/01. El documento viene acompañado por una carta de Sophy Ly, que menciona la crisis y recomienda invertir un buen monto durante el primer año en fortalecimiento institucional de AMARC-ALC

⁸ Carta Fernando López, octubre 4 de 2001

Año	Fecha (aproximada)	Acontecimiento AMARC	Acontecimiento Púlsar
2002	Febrero	Encuentro AMARC-ALC en Cumbayá, Ecuador	
2002	Febrero	Encuentro AMARC-ALC y ALER en Cumbayá, Ecuador	
2002	Febrero–Agosto		Dirección Púlsar ejecutada por el Coordinador Regional en Uruguay
2002	11 de Septiembre		
2002	Septiembre		Trabajan 4 periodistas + un asistente técnico para Púlsar. Se brinda capacitación por Internet
2002	Octubre		
2002	16 de Octubre		Se retoma el servicio de Púlsar desde Quito y Montevideo. Características principales: – Dos despachos por semana (martes y viernes) – Producto principal: boletín de noticias en formato radiofónico – 1000 users en 10 países
2002	Septiembre	Renuncia Fernando López	
2002	Octubre	Gustavo Gómez Inicia segunda gestión (hasta 1 de julio 2003)	
2003	Febrero	8ª Asamblea mundial AMARC en Kathmandú.	
2003	Abril	Elección Nuevo Consejo Regional. María Pía Matta Vice-Presidente	
2003	Abril		Inicio programa “Ventana Púlsar de Contra-información” en Radio Libre, Uruguay
2003	8–13 Junio	Taller “Desarrollo de Redes de Comunicación Radiofónica en Centro América”, CAESI, Guatemala	
2003	Junio		Taller “Agencia Informativa Púlsar”, Nicaragua
2003	Julio		Inauguración nueva página web: www.Pulsar.amarc.org
2003	7 julio	Cambio Coordinación Regional: Ernesto Lamas. Traslado Sede a Buenos Aires, Argentina	
2003	20 de noviembre		
2003	31 diciembre		Finaliza proyecto Asdi apoyo Púlsar
2004	Viernes 30 de abril		Último despacho desde Quito y Montevideo. Número 157
2004	Lunes 3 de mayo		Inicio coordinación Púlsar desde Buenos Aires. Características principales: – Despachos diarios • Titulares • Notas ampliadas • Titulares de periódicos (desde 28 de mayo)

Annex 5 Used documents

No.	Título
1	Agreement between Sida and AMARC International on support of AMARC Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean during 2001–2003
2	Comcosur; Boletines Semanales, martes y viernes, octubre 2002–abril 2004,
3	Comcosur; evaluación de Púlsar, at. Victor van Oeyen, junio 2004
4	Email correspondence between Sida (Asa Ericksson) and AMARC International (Michelle) between 5 and 30 of Juli 2002
5	Email correspondence between Sida (Chirstina Bjorkenvall) and AMARC International (L. Michel) between 21 of September and 4 October 2001
6	Folleto: Otra comunicación es imprescindible y también posible. Púlsar, Agencia Informativa de AMARC.
7	Folleto: Púlsar, Agencia informativa de AMARC; algo de historia
8	Geerts, Andrés; Oeijen, Victor van; La radio popular frente al Nuevo siglo; estudio de vigencia e incidencia; ALER, 2001, Quito, Ecuador
9	Girard, Bruce; Agencia Informativa Púlsar; In: "Radio, the one to watch; FAO; Rome, 2003
10	Informe Narrativo Agencia Informativa Púlsar – AMARC-ALC, 7 XI 2003
11	Informe Narrativo Púlsar – período de enero a diciembre del 2002 – AMARC-ALC
12	Letter AMARC from Sophy Ly to Asdi – Montreal, May 30 th 2001
13	Plan de gestión AMARC-ALC Período 2001–2003. Democratización de las comunicacion es
14	Recosur; carta de intenciones entre Púlsar y Recosur, diciembre 1998
15	Sida Document Decisión-contribution DESO 0759/01
16	Summary Translation of Laase Willéns Evaluation of Amarc/Púlsar, May 2000. Translated by Bhanu Bhatnagar

Annex 6 Codes and sources of Púlsar Montevideo

Códigos y fuentes en Púlsar – gestión Montevideo

Elaboración: Beatriz Alonso y Carlos Casares

Las abreviaturas de las fuentes generalmente se manejaban con las iniciales de los corresponsales:

JG – Judith Gerbaldo (Argentina)

KL – Kintto Lucas (Ecuador)

EC – Eduardo Curuchet (Uruguay)

JD – Jorge Díaz (Uruguay)

Oscar Boltes (Paraguay)

RED-ADA (Bolivia)

Oswaldo Catalogne (Brasil)

Roberto Stirling (Chile)

Ramón Haniottis (Holanda)

Sergio Ferrari (Suiza)

Alix Arnold (Alemania)

Tomás Callao (España)

Asoc. Radio y TV Comunitaria (Venezuela)

Arturo Bregalio (Paraguay)

Miriam Candia (Paraguay)

Andrés Capelán (Uruguay)

Walter Isaía (Argentina)

Taís Ladeira (Brasil)

Oswaldo Catalogne (Brasil)

Por otra parte muchas veces las noticias se completaban con información de otros medios (escritos, radiales, paginas web u otros servicios noticiosos los cuales también se identifican con las iniciales y/o en algunos casos nombre completo).

También podía suceder que la noticia se localizara primero en un medio periodístico y luego se completara, verificara con los corresponsales del lugar. En ambos casos se identifica la fuente periodística y las iniciales del corresponsal/periodista que corrobore y enriquezca la información.

Algunas de las fuentes consultadas:

Argenpress (A)

Prensa Latina (PL)

Red Eco Alternativo (REA)

Rebelión (R)

El Mercurio (EM)

Venpress (V)

Red Ada (RA)

Mujer Ahora (MA)

Conaie (Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador) (CONAIE)

Adai (A)

ALER

Bolpress

Ministerio Educación de Brasil (Programa de alfabetización) (MEB)

Los verdes de Andalucía (LVA)
Le Monde Diplomatique (LMD)
Uruguay press (UP)
IPS

RADIOS

Radio el Espectador (RE)
AM Libre (AL)
Radio Mundo Real (RMR)
Red Con Voz (RCV)
Cadena Ser (CS)
Radio Nederlan (RN)
Radio Bemba FM (RB)
FARCO
UTPBA

Perú Indymedia (PI)
Crónica Viva (Perú) (CV)
El universo – Ecuador (EU)
La Hora – Guatemala (LH)
El Salvador. com – El Salvador (ES)
La Prensa – Honduras (LP)

Annex 7

Analysis of Púlsar's geographical coverage

Análisis de cobertura geográfica Púlsar – segundo período – desde Uruguay
Período: octubre 2002 a abril 2004 (19 meses)

2002: 21 boletines

2003: 101 boletines

2004: 29 boletines

Total: 151 boletines

Cantidad promedio de notas por boletín: 11 (mínimo: 7, máximo 14)

Fuente: página Púlsar en Internet

Método de codificación:

Se contabilizó las menciones de los países en el índice del boletín.

Cuando, en el índice, se mencionaba más que un país por noticia (por ejemplo Paraguay-Brasil), se registraba ambos.

Resumen final																					
Continente	Total	%	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr	may	jun	jul	ago	sep	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr
América Latina y Caribe Total	1452	81,6	33	78	67	75	59	57	72	88	77	112	113	104	84	81	85	81	64	74	48
Europa	112	6,3	1	2	3	3	7	2	4	11	10	8	5	10	5	1	7	7	4	15	7
Norteamérica	79	4,4	2	4	0	3	4	3	4	6	6	2	5	5	4	5	6	7	5	6	2
Medio Oriente	42	2,4	0	0	0	0	0	7	10	3	0	3	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	2	5
Asia	39	2,2	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	2	2	1	3	10	3	7	4
África	19	1,1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	4	0	3	2
Notas temáticas	36	2,0	1	2	2	2	9	2	4	2	1	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	1	4	0
Total final	1779	100,0	37	87	72	84	81	73	96	112	95	126	127	127	98	92	104	111	78	111	68

Continente	Países	Total	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr	may	jun	jul	ago	sep	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr
Europa	Europa Total	112	1	2	3	3	7	2	4	11	10	8	5	10	5	1	7	7	4	15	7
	España	65	1	1	2	2	4	2	2	8	6	6	2	4	4	1	2	2	2	9	5
	Otros	47		1	1	1	3		2	3	4	2	3	6	1		5	5	2	6	2
Norteamérica	Total	79	2	4	0	3	4	3	4	6	6	2	5	5	4	5	6	7	5	6	2
	EEUU	78	2	3		3	4	3	4	6	6	2	5	5	4	5	6	7	5	6	2
	Canada	1		1																	
África	Total	19			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1		4		3	2	
Medio Oriente	Total	42	0	0	0	0	0	7	10	3	0	3	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	2	5
	Irak	35					7	10	3			3	1	2	1	1	1	1		1	4
	Otros	7														1	2	1	1	1	1
Australia	Total	4		1			1										2				
Asia	Total	39	1	1		1	2	1	1				1	2	2	1	3	10	3	7	4

Región	Países	Total	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr	may	jun	jul	ago	sep	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr
América Latina y Caribe Total																					
		1452	33	78	67	75	59	57	72	88	77	112	113	104	84	81	85	81	64	74	48
América Latina y Caribe																					
		16	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	4	2	9	10	4	3	3	1	9	10	3
Caribe Total																					
		94	0	7	2	7	5	3	2	4	2	9	10	4	3	3	1	9	10	10	3
Centroamérica Total																					
		284	4	15	12	11	9	9	14	23	18	30	16	25	18	16	14	15	9	17	9
Area Andina																					
		431	12	23	20	24	19	15	21	22	20	28	34	28	37	23	29	24	21	17	14
Conosur																					
		627	16	32	33	31	24	29	34	37	37	44	51	47	26	38	41	31	24	30	22
Región Países Total																					
		94	0	7	2	7	5	3	2	4	2	9	10	4	3	3	1	9	10	10	3
Caribe																					
		3									1		2								
Cuba																					
		48		5	2	3	3	2	2	1	1	5	6	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	2
Haití																					
		19						1							1			5	5	6	1
Dominicana																					
		15		1	1	1			1			3	2	1		1		1	2	1	
Puerto Rico																					
		9		1	3	1			2			1					1				
Otros																					
		0																			
Región Países Total																					
		284	4	15	12	11	9	9	14	23	18	30	16	25	18	16	14	15	9	17	9
Centroamérica																					
		4				1						1				1					
México																					
		112	3	8	5	5	6	3	7	8	7	11	5	12	3	7	5	7	3	6	1
Guatemala																					
		56		2	4	1	2	2	3	6	3	6	1	5	4	4	1	4	3	2	3
Nicaragua																					
		19		1	1				1	1	1		4	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2

El Salvador	22	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
Honduras	28	1	2	1	1	1	3	4	2	1	1	3	2	2	1	2
Costa Rica	17	2	1		1	1	1	1	1	3	1	3			3	
Panamá	26		2	1	1	2	3	1	6	3	4	1		1	1	
Región	Países	Total	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr	may	jun	jul	ago	sep	oct	nov
Area Andina		431	12	23	20	24	19	15	21	22	20	28	34	28	37	23
Area Andina 0																
Colombia	81	3	4	3	2	6	5	7	4	7	6	7	4	5	3	5
Venezuela	114	3	6	8	8	4	2	6	2	4	8	12	7	8	13	4
Ecuador	71	4	2	3	6	4	4	3	2	6	1	3	3	2	7	3
Perú	51	1	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	3	4	5	6	2	7	1
Bolivia	114	1	8	4	7	4	3	3	3	6	5	7	7	9	15	9
Región	Países	Total	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr	may	jun	jul	ago	sep	oct	nov
Conosur		627	16	32	33	31	24	29	34	37	37	44	51	47	26	38
Conosur/ Mercosur 0																
Brasil	144	2	9	8	8	6	7	7	6	6	10	10	10	11	6	10
Uruguay	136	4	9	9	8	7	7	7	7	12	6	9	13	6	2	5
Argentina	212	5	9	9	9	7	7	9	12	14	12	17	13	18	12	14
Paraguay	70	3	2	3	3	3	5	6	3	3	5	3	8	6	3	3
Chile	65	2	3	4	3	1	1	1	3	2	4	5	7	6	3	6

Notas temáticas	Total	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr	may	jun	jul	ago	sep	oct	nov	dic	ene	feb	mar	abr
Notas temáticas	36	1	2	2	2	9	2	4	2	1	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	1	4	0
Comunicación 12					3		2	1				2						4		
Medio Ambiente	2														1			1		
Género – Mujer	18	1	2	2	2	4	2	2	1	1					1					
Mundo en general	3					2								1						
Indígenas	1											1								
Resumen Púlsar Buenos Aires- mayo-junio 2004																				
Continente		Total		%																
América Latina y Caribe Total		525		90,7																
Europa		4		0,7																
Norteamérica		20		3,5																
Medio Oriente		28		4,8																
Asia		1		0,2																
África		1		0,2																
Total final		579		100,0																

Annex 8 Telephone calls in Ecuador

Llamadas realizadas para conocer el uso real de Púlsar. Fecha: 17 y 18 de junio 2004

No.	Nombre radio	Reciben Púlsar	Utilizan Púlsar	Comentarios
1	Antena Libre, Esmeraldas	Si	Si	Otras fuentes que tienen: BBC de Londres, Radio Vaticano, Corape Usan unas 3 veces por semana en programas culturales. No nota diferencias importantes con las otras fuentes. Cada uno tiene su estilo. Sugerencias: – Lenguaje más sencillo – Integrar más las notas con el acontecer local. Así a la gente le gusta más – Tomarnos en cuenta para seminarios y capacitaciones
2	Católica, Quito	No	—	Jefes de prensa Amparo Suárez y Marlon (ambos exPúlsar). Buscaron Púlsar pero no encontraron
3	La Luna, Quito	No	—	Desde tiempo que no reciben
4	Latacunga, Latacunga	No	—	
5	Municipal, Quito	No	—	Mejor mandar a otra dirección: Paula Andrade: candrade@quito.gov.ec
6	Puyo, Puyo	No se contactó	—	
7	Sucumbíos, Sucumbíos	Si	Si	Uso de vez en cuando en radiorevistas. Otras fuentes que tienen: Argenexpress, ALAI, noticiadital No tienen sugerencias.
8	Universidad S.F. de Quito	No	—	Mejor mandar a otra dirección: jaimer@multimedios106.com
9	Corape	Si	No	
10	ALER	Si	Si	Utilizan una nota por día

Annex 9 Comparison to results of previous evaluations

El estudio evaluativo “*Agencia informativa Púlsar: marzo 1996–diciembre de 1999*”:

- Necesidad de retomar los clips de audio
- Diversificar formatos periodísticos y las temáticas
- Mejorar el diseño del sitio web
- Mejorar la relación con corresponsales
- Capacitación para el equipo de redacción en quito
- Reforzar la visibilidad de la agencia
- Involucrar suscriptores en los servicios de púlsar

La *Evaluación Interna* de Ernesto Lamas y Claudia Villamayor (1999) señala sobre Púlsar:

- No está explicitado el planteamiento político-cultural de Púlsar
- Se carece de una línea editorial que guíe el trabajo
- Constantes cambios de dirección suponen cambios de orientaciones
- Falta aclarar si es una agencia o un servicio para ciertas radios
- Se debe mejorar la situación con los corresponsales (contratarlos)
- No se tiene claro quienes son los users y qué hacen con el material
- Faltan objetivos claros en un proceso de planificación
- No hay propuestas frente a la sostenibilidad económica

El documento “*Apuntes para un diagnóstico*” de Carlos Berenze (octubre 2000) señala

- Línea editorial difusa e indefinida
- Necesidad de un consejo editorial
- Aclarar situación de los corresponsales
- Falta de continuidad de direcciones ejecutivas
- Necesidad de un plan de trabajo.

Annex 10 39 concrete user suggestions for Púlsar

Fuente: encuesta entre users de Púlsar

Ojo: las sugerencias no han sido editadas, ni ordenadas o corregidas.

1. Mejorar la retroalimentación con los users, esta encuesta es parte de ello, entonces me parece bien.
2. Me gusta el formato de correo electrónico que usa Radio Nederland, e incluso la de El Tiempo, de Colombia, o Deutsche Welle, podría hacerse algo así, muy parecido a como está llegando, pero que los titulares lleguen como enlaces a la pagina de Púlsar donde está la noticia.
3. Tener Servicio de audio p.e. vía Internet.
4. Abrir oficinas regionales p.e. en México, países andinos, Caribe, Brasil.
5. Ofrecer notas con audio digital.
6. Trabajar con corresponsales.
7. Incluir citas/voces de personajes/activistas involucrados en los hechos.
8. Diferenciarse o colaborar visiblemente con otras/parecidas fuentes de información en América Latina.
9. Que los directivos de AMARC América latina se comuniquen mucho mas frecuentemente con los socios.
10. Llegar mas allá de la simple información.
11. Incorporar rápidamente mas audios de noticias cubiertas en cualquier país. También imágenes que ayuden a analizar y transmitir con mayor significación cada noticia.
12. Que haya un correlato del derecho a la comunicación que se declama con quienes oportunamente iniciamos nuestra participación en esta asociación.
13. En las noticias a veces faltan informaciones básicos p.e. quienes son los actores exactamente, cuándo pasó y dónde.
14. La incorporación de audios en alguna de las informaciones.
15. Realización de reportajes o crónicas que profundicen temas.
16. Asegurar una buena red de corresponsales para no depender de terceras fuentes de información.
17. Que no pierdan el ritmo, que la web siga y mejore!!!
18. Que genera la mayor cantidad de alianzas con otras experiencias similares, cada día hay más y la red resulta más amigable por sus alternativas.
19. Usar mejor la información generada por los suscriptos.
20. Le falta participación de la membresía de AMARC en la producción.
21. La diferencia de este servicio podría darla el ofrecer miradas desde los sectores sociales excluidos y esto sería factible en la medida que las radios asociadas, ligadas a la vida de sus comunidades, participen de la producción, corresponsalías, línea editorial y toma de decisiones de la agencia.

22. Sí, para que la Agencia tenga mayor profesionalidad es necesario que los corresponsales en cada país también se profesionalicen, para ello es necesario establecer líneas de capacitación para los corresponsalías. También para que siga creciendo como agencia es necesario descentralizar en mesas de redacción subregionales que cuenten con recursos propios para atender de manera integral el trabajo periodístico que incluya la emisión diaria de notas en audio, es parte también de la profesionalización.
23. Tener más corresponsales que puedan ser pagados para que haya una clara responsabilidad y obligación al trabajo con la agencia.
24. Ampliar el numero de suscriptores como alternativa de agencia a otros medios.
25. Agilizar la información de Europa y América de Norte.
26. Mayor profundidad en las notas.
27. Nos gustaría bajar audios.
28. Le falta definir su línea noticiosa diferenciándose de las demás, ahora hay mucha competencia en ese campo.
29. Creo que de nada vale decir que una lista de información se envía a tantas direcciones porque me imagino que mucha gente está en las mismas condiciones que yo. (No lo lee porque recibe más que 10 de estas listas informativas). Prefiero recibir sólo 1 vez a la semana o cada quince días, con información más procesada, un poco mas de fondo.
30. Avanzar en las corresponsalías...
31. Mayor seriedad antes de circular una nota.
32. Exigir más responsabilidad a los corresponsales.
33. Evitar sesgos político-partidistas.
34. Indicar las fuentes de las notas.
35. Buscar ángulos e informaciones diferentes, no las mismas que se pueden encontrar en otros boletines o en las páginas web de los diarios.
36. Más notas desde los niveles comunitarios, historias ilustrativas sobre la realidad social, en vez de simplemente repetir lo que los medios convencionales publican.
37. Aumentar la cobertura informativa de más países de América, incluir informaciones de otros lados del mundo, presentar opiniones ó temas de debate sobre temas de interés regional donde se pueda participar.
38. Mantener el ritmo informativo de los últimos meses.
39. Logra incorporar mayor numero de corresponsales con nivel y muy activos.
40. No limitarse al espacio de la radio comunitaria. Hay que ser mucho más ambiciosos.

Annex 11 Context and institutional proposal of AMARC-ALC (expanded version of chapter 3)

A. Contexto

A.1. El escenario latinoamericano

América Latina no es el continente más pobre del mundo, pero sí el más desigual. La aplicación del neoliberalismo en prácticamente todos los países del continente hizo aumentar aún más estas contradicciones. La pobreza (o la exclusión económica) está tocando ahora también las puertas de la clase media. En Argentina, más que la mitad de la población está viviendo debajo del nivel de pobreza.

En este escenario los desafíos que se están presentando a la sociedad latinoamericana son enormes. La implementación del Tratado de Libre Comercio de las Américas (ALCA) provoca mucha resistencia por beneficiar desproporcionalmente a los EEUU y así poner en riesgo las economías frágiles. Los enormes flujos de migración interna (del campo a la ciudad) o internacional cambian radicalmente padrones socio-culturales y las estructuras macro-económicas nacionales. En El Salvador el 18% del Producto Interno Bruto depende de las remesas de los salvadoreños que trabajan en los EEUU. En Ecuador esta fuente de ingresos es el segundo en importancia, después del petróleo.

La confianza en la democracia y los sistemas políticos ha disminuido brutalmente en las últimas décadas. Esto está parcialmente relacionado con el manejo del concepto, pues la democracia es mucho más que el sistema electoral parlamentario. Es también la participación activa, el derecho a la fiscalización, la distribución de las riquezas, la responsabilidad social.

En los últimos años se puede observar dos fenómenos esperanzadores, desde el punto de vista de las mayorías excluidas. Por un lado hay un reagrupamiento de movimientos sociales en distintos niveles. Su máxima expresión es el Foro Social Mundial, iniciado en Brasil y ahora realizándose en distintos escenarios geo-sociales: de 25 al 30 de julio 2004 se reunieron 8 mil delegados en el Foro Social Continental en Quito, Ecuador. Por otro lado, la elección de presidentes en Argentina, Brasil y Venezuela, que buscan aportar a un cambio social en beneficio de las mayorías hace revivir tímidamente una esperanza y una apuesta a la capacidad de cambio de las estructuras injustas y excluyentes del continente.

A.2. Medios de comunicación

Continúa el proceso de concentración de medios en manos de los sectores dominantes. Esta concentración va en distintas direcciones:

- Internacionalización. Conglomerados europeos y norteamericanos, pero también latinoamericanos se vuelven dueños de los medios locales y nacionales
- Pocas manos. Son cada vez menos
- Multimediático.
- Convergencia con los poderes económicos y políticos

Sin entrar en absolutismos, el resultado general de esta concentración se expresa en las siguientes tendencias:

- Homogenización de contenidos. A pesar de una gigantesca oferta de programación, ésta se parece mucho y se dirige a los grupos poblacionales blancos de clase media y urbanos

Ausencia de contenidos mediáticos relevantes desde el interés de desarrollo participativo. Al contrario, reina la superficialidad, lo espectacular, la falta de análisis. Nunca antes hubo tanta información, nunca antes estábamos tan mal informados.

- Exclusión de las mayorías del consumo de medios como la televisión, la prensa escrita y el internet
- No participación de mayorías como sujetos de generación de contenidos
- El epicentro de la noticia internacional sigue siendo el Norte y sus intereses. Información sobre América Latina es generada por y transportada por agentes del norte: CNN, BBC, Radio Francia Internacional, Radio Nederland, Deutsche Welle. Mientras tanto sigue el vacío de la agenda latinoamericana desde América Latina.

En este escenario, la radio sigue jugando un papel preponderante.

Internet y otras tecnologías digitales penetran a velocidades totalmente distintas. *“En 2002, 606 millones de personas estaban conectadas de alguna manera al Internet. Esto equivale a casi el 10% de la población del mundo. De ellas el 62% vive en los Estados Unidos o en Europa Occidental, entre ambos con solamente 10% de la población mundial. Solamente 5% de los users del Internet viven en América Latina, y en África al Sur del Sahara apenas el 1%.”*⁹

En América Latina, para las elites en las grandes ciudades existe una gran gama de ofertas de conectividad (Internet, cable, telefonía celular), mientras que para las mayorías (rurales, indígenas, mujeres) hay una gran gama de obstáculos que deberán ser vencidos para llegar a las mismas condiciones: la ausencia de electricidad y telefonía y la pobreza hacen muy difícil lograr la conectividad. Además, el analfabetismo, la dominación del castellano y la ausencia de contenidos relevantes son factores que obligan a pensar en alternativas más pertinentes.

Una alternativa es, sin duda, la convergencia entre los medios tradicionales (radio, televisión, prensa escrita) y las Nuevas Tecnologías de Información y Comunicación (NTIC). En el seminario Onda Rural¹⁰ se ha indagado sobre las distintas posibilidades y prácticas instaladas de combinación. La visión dominante es que las NTIC están dando nuevas oportunidades a los medios tradicionales. Las potencialidades de combinación de radio e Internet son enormes. Una de ellas es el uso de Internet para la distribución de contenidos, como es el caso de la Agencia Informativa Púlsar. Otros ejemplos demuestran la diversidad en este campo:

- Radio Kothmale busca contenidos específicos en el Internet a solicitud de la audiencia y transmite por radio lo que encontró¹¹
- Varias radios en el Cono Sur implementaron un “telecentro educativo”, donde jóvenes del barrio reciben asesoramiento para buscar contenidos en los equipos de computación de la radio¹²
- La Red Quechua Satelital combina el Internet con la radio y con el satélite para la conformación de una red indígena internacional en al área andina¹³.

⁹ Girard, Bruce; The one to watch; Radio ICTs and interactivity; FAO; 2003

¹⁰ El taller “radio, nuevas tecnologías de información y comunicación y desarrollo rural, fue organizado por la FAO, AMARC y ALER de 22–22 de Abril 2004 en la ciudad de Quito, Ecuador. Mayor información: <http://www.onda-rural.net>

¹¹ ver: Girard, Bruce; “the Kothmale model” pp. 83

¹² “En cada esquina” se encuentra un café Internet en América Latina. En los telecentros educativos el objetivo es poner las NTIC al servicio de la educación y la formación humana. Ejemplos en varias radios, con mayor presencia en el Cono Sur: Radio Aire Libre (Argentina), Radio Favela (Brasil).

¹³ La Red Quechua Satelital conecta a unas 20 radios de habla Quechua y Quichua en Bolivia, Ecuador y Perú

A.3. La radio comunitaria

Como ya vimos, la radio tiene y seguirá teniendo un rol de mucha importancia en América Latina. El medio ofrece varias ventajas sobre otros por su bajo costo, el fácil manejo del receptor y por la posibilidad de acceso sin preparación especial (leer, tener luz eléctrica etc.). Además es un medio que permite altos niveles de participación, tanto en la gestión institucional como en la programación radiofónica.

La radio comunitaria da mucha importancia a esta participación. Tal como lo define AMARC, la radio comunitaria busca *democratizar la palabra para democratizar la sociedad*.

La diversidad entre las radios comunitarias es grande. Ello se debe a distintos factores, como los contextos históricos, sociales y culturales, las legislaciones nacionales, las demandas poblacionales, las realidades políticas y la fortaleza y el tipo de movimientos sociales, entre otros. Esa diversidad se expresa en distintos planos:

Hay radios muy *pequeñas* (Radio Espik de Santa Lucía, Uruguay tiene 10 vatios¹⁴ en FM) y muy *grandes* (Radio Fe y Alegría, de Maracaibo, Venezuela con 10.000 vatios en Onda Media).

Algunas radios funcionan a base de *voluntariado*, como Radio El Puente en Montevideo, Uruguay que no tiene personal pagado y mantiene 14 horas de programación con 50 voluntarios. Otras radios trabajan principalmente a base de *personal contratado*, como la mencionada radio Fe y Alegría que tiene 31 personas en planilla¹⁵.

Muchas radios se concentran en su trabajo de programación radiofónica, pero en el Cono Sur (y cada vez también en otros lados) las radios son “*mucho más que una radio*”; como Radio Aire Libre en Rosario, Argentina, que es un espacio cultural con múltiples estrategias: biblioteca, bar-restaurant, sala de teatro, clases de computación, telecentro educativo y radio.

Hay radios *bien equipadas* (con receptor satelital, con conexión al Internet, con computadoras) y hay radios que ni siquiera tienen teléfono. De las 21 radios que estaban presentes en la asamblea de FARCO, 3 no tienen acceso al Internet. De las 18 radios comprometidas con AMARC y/o ARPAS en El Salvador al menos 3 no tienen acceso al Internet. La cantidad de radios que tienen parabólicas para la recepción satelital es aún menor.

Hay radios que tienen *varios espacios noticiosos* por día, como radio La Tribu de Buenos Aires que tiene noticieros sintéticos en cada hora o Radio El Puente que con su departamento de prensa de 7 voluntarios produce dos noticieros grandes por día y varios ‘flashes’. Al otro ‘extremo’ hay radios que tienen *un noticiero por semana*, como radio Espik de Santa Lucía en Uruguay.

De la misma manera se puede observar una gran diversidad en tipos de programación, públicos, niveles de participación, idiomas de trabajo, orientación local, regional o nacional, posición ideológica, entre otros.

A pesar de esta gran diversidad, se pueden encontrar al menos siete características compartidas, con que se puede hablar de *un movimiento*¹⁶:

1. Apoyan y promueven cambios sociales necesarios para lograr una sociedad más justa.
2. Representan proyectos de vida ligados a luchas y reivindicaciones de grupos y movimientos diversos.

¹⁴ Salvo mención explícita, todos los datos ilustrativos en el transcurso del informe de evaluación provienen de información generada durante la presente evaluación.

¹⁵ Fuente: La Práctica Inspira, 32 experiencias de radio popular y comunitaria en América Latina; ALER-AMARC, Quito, julio 2004

¹⁶ La Práctica Inspira, 2004, cap. 2

3. Piden y construyen el acceso a la palabra a todos los grupos y sectores de la población.
4. Toman en cuenta las necesidades prioritarias de las comunidades a las que sirven.
5. Representan y defienden la diversidad cultural de sus entornos.
6. Privilegian la dimensión participativa en sus prácticas comunicacionales e institucionales.
7. No se dejan guiar por el lucro como motor de sus acciones.

En el estudio *La Práctica Inspira*, de AMARC y ALER, se estima que hay unas 3.500 radios comunitarias en América Latina.

Dentro del movimiento se pueden diferenciar, además, distintos tipos de actores y grados de organización.

Además de las radios, el actor central del movimiento, funcionan muchos *Centros de Comunicación*, “organizaciones sociales cuyas acciones acompañan las radios desde la producción radiofónica, la investigación, la capacitación o la formación”¹⁷. Según José Ignacio López Vigil hay cada vez más necesidad de los Centros de Comunicación porque “las emisoras tienen cada vez menos capacidad de producir, por montón de razones (plata, capacidad, menos capacitación etc.). Por ello el Internet es el canal maravilloso para conectar las radios con los centros de comunicación. Es un matrimonio tecnológico perfecto”¹⁸.

En casi todos los países hay expresiones de coordinación nacional. Algunos de estos espacios tienen altos grados de institucionalización¹⁹, otros son espacios de coordinación menos estructurados. En unos 7 países existen proyectos informativos nacionales que funcionan por satélite. FARCO (Foro Argentino de Radios Comunitarias) iniciará un informativo nacional en el mes de agosto.

A.4. Legislaciones

En la mayoría de los países faltan legislaciones adecuadas que reconocen el lugar de la radio comunitaria, condenándolas a cumplir con regulaciones para la radio comercial o con normas que condenan su vigencia a la marginalidad. Después de años de lucha, donde AMARC-ALC jugó un papel crucial, han llegado las primeras victorias, como el informe anual 2002 sobre la libertad de Expresión de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos que dice: “las radios comunitarias, que deben actuar en un marco de legalidad facilitado por los Estados, responden en muchos casos a las necesidades, intereses, problemas y expectativas de sectores muchas veces relegados, discriminados y empobrecidos de la sociedad civil”.

B. Propuesta institucional de AMARC-ALC

AMARC-ALC (AMARC – América Latina y el Caribe) es parte orgánica de la Asociación Mundial de Radios Comunitarias, con sede en Montreal, Canadá. La instancia superior es la Asamblea Mundial, que se realiza con un intervalo de 2–3 años.

AMARC funciona en América Latina desde 1990, cuando comienza su funcionamiento desde Lima, Perú. En 1995 la oficina central es trasladada a Quito, Ecuador. Es AMARC-ALC que introduce el concepto de “radio comunitaria” en América Latina para las muchas prácticas de radio que están funcionando en el continente y que se conocen también bajo el nombre de radio popular, radio alternativa, radio ciudadana, radio participativa, radio para el cambio social, entre otros.

¹⁷ *La Práctica Inspira*, 2004, cap. 2

¹⁸ Entrevista para Evaluación Púlsar 2001–2003

¹⁹ Por ejemplo en Bolivia, Perú, Ecuador, El Salvador, República Dominicana, Guatemala existen coordinadoras nacionales con proyectos y servicios.

Es muy fácil asociarse a AMARC. Un nuevo socio puede inscribirse²⁰ como radio, pero también como grupo de producción, federación de radios, proyecto de radio, individuo o asociación con otra actividad. De esta manera AMARC-ALC busca tener más fuerza, acumulando todas las iniciativas de radio comunitaria que hay en el continente. Esto genera a su vez una gran diversidad.

La asociación a AMARC-ALC se caracteriza por un alto sentimiento de pertenencia institucional. En este sentido responde muy bien a la autoimagen movimientista.

Desde hace mucho tiempo AMARC-ALC desarrolla los siguientes campos de acción:

B.1. Legislaciones

Según todos los entrevistados, es el programa principal de AMARC-ALC. Su objetivo va en dos direcciones: defender a las asociadas (con alertas, con llamadas públicas etc.) contra intervenciones por los estados, y poner en la agenda pública el tema (con misiones a Washington, el capítulo de libertad de Expresión de la OEA, la Cumbre Mundial de la Sociedad de la Información, etc). Se maneja una página Web (<http://alc.amarc.org/legislaciones>) El programa recibe financiamiento de Misereor y de la Fundación Ford. Funciona desde Montevideo, Uruguay.

B.2. Agencia de Noticias Púlsar

La Agencia de Noticias al servicio de la Radio Comunitaria de América Latina y el Caribe. Su objetivo principal es “*Incidir en la opinión pública, a través de las emisoras comunitarias, ciudadanas y otros medios de América Latina y el Caribe, con una información independiente y contextualizada, favorable a las mayorías nacionales, que enfoque el acontecer regional desde una perspectiva ciudadana*”. Después de un cierre de 15 meses, la Agencia reinició sus labores en octubre 2002 desde Montevideo, Uruguay. A partir de 1 de mayo 2004 Púlsar funciona desde Buenos Aires, Argentina. www.Pulsar.amarc.org. Púlsar recibe fondos de Asdi hasta 30 de junio 2004.

B.3. Género y mujer

El programa de género y mujer busca contribuir, desde las radios asociadas, a cambiar las relaciones inequitativas entre los hombres y mujeres. El programa promueve el empoderamiento de las asociadas a fin de acceder a espacios de decisión dentro de sus medios. Además apoya la producción de programas radiales y el establecimiento de radios comunitarias para mujeres. Su primera estrategia es la incidencia hacia adentro, es decir hacia las mismas asociadas. Se realizan talleres, publican libros, capacitación, campañas y se participa en foros y debates. El programa funciona desde Radio Milenia, Lima-Perú. Recibe fondos de WACC, Unifem, Mama Cash, Global Food. www.redmujeresamarc.org.pe

B.4. Gestión

El programa de gestión estuvo buen tiempo a la vanguardia de AMARC-ALC. Manejaba el tema de la gestión integral de la radio comunitaria. El área publicó en 1998 el libro “Gestión de la Radio Comunitaria”. En base a la metodología expuesta en el libro el programa realizó 40 talleres de capacitación y asesoramiento en el continente. Ahora el programa está en ‘transición’ porque no tiene recursos.

B.5. CAESI

El programa “Centro América en Sintonía” es ejecutado junta a ALER (Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica), con sede en Quito, Ecuador. El programa atiende a las aproximadamente 100 asociadas de ambas asociaciones en El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica y Panamá y busca fortalecer los proyectos políticos comunicacionales locales, nacionales y regionales. El programa está compuesto de 5 componentes:

a. *Construcción en red*: articular a nivel nacional y regional a las asociadas

²⁰ <http://amarc.org/amarc/esp>

- b. *Fortalecimiento institucional*: apoyar a las socias a (re)definir su proyecto político comunicacional
- c. *Incidencia política*: desarrollar campañas de incidencia en la sociedad centroamericana; solas o con organizaciones sociales
- d. *Legislación* y derecho a la comunicación
- e. *Gestión* del mismo programa

El CAESI tiene una gestión colectiva con una Mesa Directiva compuesta por los representantes nacionales de AMARC-ALC y ALER y funciona con gran autonomía frente a estas asociaciones. Están preparando la puesta en marcha de una red informativa regional, llamada “*Bases fuertes, redes fuertes*”. Esta red se caracterizará por una construcción noticiosa desde lo local. Recibe financiamiento de Free Voice de Holanda.

B.6. Ritmo Sur

También el programa Ritmo Sur es ejecutado junta a ALER en 12 países de América Latina (los que no están en el CAESI). La propuesta surge a partir del estudio Vigencia e Incidencia de ALER y del programa de gestión de AMARC-ALC y tiene como objetivo considerar y poner en práctica otros proyectos políticos comunicacionales con otro tipo de gestión. Hasta el momento, Ritmo Sur hizo un diagnóstico de la realidad de las radios en los países, haciendo mesas redondas nacionales en cada país. El programa está en la fase de arranque. Recibe financiamiento conjunto de Free Voice y el CMC de Holanda.

B.7. Fortalecimiento institucional

AMARC-ALC está reconstruyendo su institucionalidad después de una “*crisis casi de muerte*”, como dice su actual Coordinador Regional, Ernesto Lamas. La crisis afectó el conjunto de la institución, tanto en el plano del modo de gestión como en el plano de las personas.

C. La crisis institucional de AMARC-ALC en 2000

Una evaluación interna de 1999, ejecutada por el programa de gestión de AMARC-ALC, constató que el modelo de gestión institucional tenía características contrarias al planteamiento político comunicacional de la institución. Ernesto Lamas menciona como los puntos más críticos: la concentración de poder, la falta de institucionalidad, el manejo como ONG (no como Red), la falta de participación democrática y la ausencia de identificación de la misión de AMARC por parte del personal. Se observaba una contradicción, pues mientras AMARC trabajaba por lograr la democracia en la sociedad, dentro de casa reinaba un manejo muy poco participativo. Se atribuía la responsabilidad por este estilo de gestión en gran parte a José Ignacio López Vigil, el coordinador quien, a su vez, había sido el iniciador carismático de AMARC en América Latina y el Caribe.

Fracasó un intento de reforma paulatina del modo de gestión, al nombrar un nuevo coordinador, manteniendo al anterior trabajando en la oficina. El conflicto estalló con consecuencias muy fuertes.

C.1. La crisis

A fines de 2000 La institucionalidad vino abajo. Casi todos los involucrados sentían fuertes lealtades personales, en pro o en contra, alrededor de la figura del coordinador general. Esto hacía inmanejables las realidades institucionales. Gustavo Gómez, en dos oportunidades coordinador interino durante el conflicto: “*Yo tuve como objetivo principal separar las dimensiones personales de lo político institucional, pues no había la confianza mínima para discrepar.*”

El equipo de la oficina se dividía en personas con posiciones fuertes de apoyo o en contra de una renovación. Algunos fueron despedidos, otros se retiraron. Ambos lados socializaron al máximo, a

través de Internet, los motivos de su accionar. Se desató una guerra electrónica entre ambas bandas. La imagen institucional interna y externa se vio seriamente afectado. Ello, a su vez, resultó en la disminución (en algunos casos en la suspensión) de la confianza en la capacidad de gestión institucional por parte de socios, de financiadores y de contrapartes.

La oficina de AMARC mundial, con sede en Montreal, tuvo que intervenir. Vinieron su secretaria ejecutiva y su presidenta y tomaron algunas decisiones importantes, como despidos y cierre de algunas actividades.

A raíz de los problemas la institución también entró en una situación económica muy delicada, teniendo que enfrentar demandas de liquidación laboral en una realidad de disminución de financiamiento. Para vencer la crisis económica se acude, sin mayor criterio que la urgencia, a todo tipo de reservas económicas. Cuando no alcanzan estos fondos, se decide vender los patrimonios institucionales.

Asdi recibió información sobre la crisis en algunas ocasiones, entre otros en contactos directos con Sophy Ly y el departamento de Cultura y Medios. El 30 de mayo 2001 Sophy solicita condonación del desembolso sobre el año 2000, solicitud que fue concedida. De esta manera, Asdi apoyó a la solución del problema inmediato.

A pesar de que el epicentro de la crisis se ubica en octubre de 2000, las consecuencias siguen visibles hasta hoy en día, sobre todo a nivel del funcionamiento institucional (en los discursos y en las prácticas institucionales²¹), pero también a nivel de las relaciones humanas. El proceso de la crisis ha dejado varias heridas abiertas, y, cuando menos, generó un retroceso en la confianza interna de la institución.

En todo el proceso hubo decisiones acertadas²², pero también se cometieron muchos errores de procedimiento. Por ejemplo, en vez de contratar a un evaluador externo y neutro, el vice-presidente de la asociación, identificado con la tendencia democratizadora, condujo la evaluación de la secretaria ejecutiva. Otro ejemplo es que al secretario ejecutivo que renunció bajo presión y con cierto resentimiento, se le permitió seguir trabajando en la misma oficina con el nuevo secretario. Un tercer error que costó caro era que se cambió todo el Consejo Regional al mismo tiempo que comenzaba el nuevo coordinador (Oscar Pérez). Por último, el conflicto interno fue llevado al espacio público mediante el Internet, por lo que adquirió dimensiones inmanejables.

AMARC-ALC aún no ha podido tomar el tiempo para hacer un balance y cerrar esta fase en su historia. En varias personalidades institucionales el conflicto de hace tres años sigue siendo un motivo que explica el accionar de hoy.

C.2. Encuentro Cumbayá febrero 2002

Un punto clave para la recuperación de la confianza en su movimiento ha sido la reunión de *Cumbayá*, Ecuador, en febrero 2002. Los y las representantes de todos los países, más los responsables de los programas y la mesa directiva, se reunieron durante tres días para aclarar cuentas. Según Gómez la reunión de Cumbayá en realidad era la prueba para ver si “*íbamos a quedar juntos*”. Las actas de la reunión reflejan un desconcierto total y una falta absoluta de información. El encuentro se convirtió en una reunión “*con mucha emoción*” que sirvió para “*reafirmar la voluntad de continuar*”. Al mismo tiempo se analizó la situación de los diferentes programas, entre los cuales estaba Púlsar, y se dieron pautas para su continuación.

²¹ Ausencia de información institucional (informes, sistematizaciones), falta de presupuesto, informes económicos no actualizados, etc.

²² Una decisión muy oportuna para el futuro institucional ha sido la convocatoria a la reunión de Cumbayá en febrero 2002.

Una segunda línea importante del encuentro de Cumbayá era lo que llama Ernesto Lamas la “*refundación de AMARC-ALC*”. Aparte de otros ajustes en lo institucional²³, se cambió la estructura orgánica de AMARC-ALC.

Ahí se elaboró la nueva *estructura del Consejo Regional* de AMARC-ALC:

- Vicepresidente regional, elegido entre todos
- Vicepresidente de mujeres, elegida entre las mujeres
- 6 representantes sub-regionales, elegidos por las subregiones:
 - México
 - Centro América
 - Caribe
 - Brasil
 - Andino
 - Cono Sur

Con esta estructura se busca garantizar el máximo de participación desde las subregiones. En abril 2003 entra en vigencia el primer Consejo Regional elegido con este mecanismo²⁴, y que en mayoría está compuesto por personas ajenas a la crisis, lo que, según Mauricio de los Santos²⁵ y otros, es bueno para el manejo de la institución.

Un tercer motivo para dar tanta importancia al encuentro de Cumbayá ha sido que éste fue seguido inmediatamente por una reunión conjunta entre AMARC-ALC y ALER. Esta reunión de planificación conjunta dio las pautas para lo que más antes fue descrito como el programa conjunto de gestión integral Ritmo Sur. Era, en realidad, la primera vez que se reunían formalmente ambos “motores” del movimiento de radio comunitaria en América Latina para coordinar acciones. Con esta práctica se dio inicio a un cambio en la lógica de relacionamiento ente ambas instituciones, que antes se había limitado a una coordinación muy formal y distante. Todos los entrevistados al respecto²⁶ coinciden en señalar que la relación, que antes se había marcado por una cierta rivalidad y una coordinación muy formal y distante, está avanzando en buen camino, materializándose en los proyectos conjuntos de Ritmo Sur, CAESI y el NUMA (Programa de Naciones Unidas de Medio Ambiente).

Después de varias gestiones interinas²⁷, en julio de 2003 el nuevo Consejo Regional nombró como Coordinador Regional a Ernesto Lamas, con procedimientos institucionales regulares. Con este nombramiento se inicia la fase de estabilización de la asociación. La sede se traslada de Quito a Buenos Aires, Argentina, y se toma la decisión de anular la presencia institucional en Quito, Ecuador.

Recién a principios de 2004 se logró un presupuesto para un funcionamiento institucional regular que permite pagar un sueldo al coordinador regional y a una asistente de proyectos. Actualmente AMARC-ALC aún no dispone de una infraestructura propia por falta de fondos. Mientras tanto la asociada Radio La Tribu les presta una oficina.

C.3. Descentralización

AMARC-ALC opta por un manejo descentralizado de la parte institucional. Con ello se quiere evitar una concentración de burocracia institucional en un lugar, que provoca muchos gastos y desconcierto

²³ Se determinó también que la oficina de AMARC-ALC no necesariamente tenía que estar en Ecuador; y que se tenía que hacer auditorías económicas

²⁴ Vicepresidente de AMARC-ALC: María Pía Matta, Vicepresidente de mujeres: Gabriela Ayzanoa, Representantes: México – Aleida Callejas; Brasil – Thaís Ladeira; Centro América – Luis López; Andino – Carlos Rivadeneira; Caribe – Vacante; Cono Sur – Carlos Casares

²⁵ Ex representante nacional de Uruguay y del Cono Sur en AMARC-ALC

²⁶ Ernesto Lamas, Coordinador General AMARC-ALC, María Pía Matta, vice-presidenta AMARC-ALC, Luis Dávila, Secretario Ejecutivo ALER

²⁷ Gustavo Gómez, febrero–junio 2001; Fernando López, julio 2001–septiembre 2002; Gustavo Gómez, octubre 2002–julio 2003

en los socios. Se apuesta a que, por su presencia institucional en distintos lugares, AMARC-ALC tenga mayor incidencia. Es el papel del Coordinador Regional recibir y compartir información mediante un flujo informativo permanente.

En la práctica el manejo descentralizado se expresa en una presencia de coordinaciones en distintos lados del continente: Legislaciones funciona desde Uruguay, Género-mujer desde Perú, la Coordinación Regional, Gestión y Púlsar desde Argentina.

La lógica está todavía en construcción. La idea es que se distribuyan también los recursos económicos entre los países, de acuerdo a planes de trabajo elaborados en los espacios nacionales. En legislaciones y en el proyecto NUMA esto ya está en marcha.

D. Análisis

AMARC-ALC ejecuta programas de Legislación, de Agencia Informativa Púlsar y de género y mujer. De manera conjunta con ALER ejecuta tres otros programas: Ritmo Sur, CAESI y NUMA. La institucionalidad de AMARC-ALC ha pasado por una fuerte crisis que casi puso fin a la asociación. El encuentro de Cumbayá manifiesta la decisión de continuar y democratizar el padrón orgánico de la institución. Hace aproximadamente un año AMARC-ALC inició la fase de estabilización de la asociación.

Sin embargo se sigue percibiendo la debilidad institucional. No hay fondos para la implementación de oficinas y, con excepción del programa de legislaciones, no hay programas sólidamente embarcados. La percepción externa de AMARC-ALC sigue siendo la de una-institución-que-está-saliendo-de-una-crisis. También al interior de la red se encuentra esta percepción. Se siente como que la crisis del modelo de gestión se hubiera traducido en una crisis sobre la misma identidad de AMARC-ALC.

En la construcción de la identidad de una red como AMARC un criterio fundamental es la visibilidad y la utilidad sentida de sus proyectos conjuntos. Todos los entrevistados, tanto dentro como fuera de AMARC-ALC afirman, por ejemplo, que el punto fuerte de AMARC-ALC es su programa de legislaciones. Es útil para afuera, es útil para adentro y es puesto en vitrina con eficacia.

En este sentido la llamada refundación de AMARC-ALC al parecer se debería profundizar más, ya que, en la práctica, se limitó a las partes de manejo institucional. Se cambiaron los mecanismos de elección del órgano gobernante, además de unos reglamentos que venían mejor en la nueva coyuntura, como la posibilidad de cambiar de domicilio, pero que no hacían a la esencia de la asociación. No se hizo una refundación en términos de visión, misión institucional, programas estratégicos y planes de acción. También la práctica de descentralización hasta el momento parece responder más a una descongestión que a una apropiación de lo colectivo por las partes. La concentración en Argentina de tres de los cinco componentes estratégicos del programa (Coordinación General, Gestión y Púlsar) cuestiona la eficacia con que se define la descentralización en términos geográficos.

Lo que ha salvado a AMARC-ALC es su alto grado de apropiación por parte de sus asociados, de sentirse parte de AMARC. En este sentido existe un compromiso militante que instituciones colegas observan con envidia. Ahora, la crisis terminó y hay que buscar nuevas motivaciones para mantener esta identificación. Lo que ahora se visibiliza es una asociación que busca construir su identidad colectiva. Aún le queda la tarea de terminar el proceso de digestión de su pasado. La crisis ha sido tan traumática, que varios miembros prefieren no hablar de ella. Tal vez aún falta hacer una evaluación profunda y participativa de la crisis para luego pasar a una refundación de hecho. Implementar un modelo de gestión democrática, participativa y descentralizada es un paso fundamental, pero inicial. Encaminar el proceso de (re)construcción requiere más: propuestas innovadoras, atrevidas y útiles para las asociadas.

Las necesidades de las radios comunitarias son enormes. Más grandes aún son las necesidades de sus audiencias y los sectores sociales que esperan de AMARC-ALC una intervención activa y política en sus vidas cotidianas. Por ello, siendo fiel a sus principios políticos, AMARC-ALC debe sentir la obligación de poner su institucionalidad al servicio de las intervenciones más eficaces que estén a su alcance.

AMARC-ALC asume la diversidad como rasgo de identidad institucional fundamental. Hemos visto algunas manifestaciones de esta diversidad. Este hecho hace muy complejo proponer programas que tengan la suficiente flexibilidad como para ser útiles para todos, o por lo menos para una gran parte de las asociadas. Al mismo momento, hablar de un proyecto político conjunto implica que se quiere ir más allá que la prestación de servicios desde un centro (aunque este centro esté descentralizado). Ello busca incidir en la realidad social, política, cultural y económica de los excluidos.

El programa de legislación responde bien a estos criterios. Tiene implícito el componente político reivindicativo que es rasgo unificador de la asociación: el derecho a la comunicación. Pero, además, cumple con el requisito de combinación de utilidades: es útil para socios individuales (da defensa, da consejos) y es útil para el conjunto (hace avanzar la posición pública de la radio comunitaria).

Sin duda que en el campo de la información internacional, AMARC-ALC encontró otro campo de acción donde hay mucha potencialidad para construir un proyecto político comunicacional conjunto. Cada radio, por más pequeña que sea, requiere de información internacional. Más allá de esta constatación, para la construcción de estrategias operativas, comienzan a ser muy importantes las diferencias identificadas.

Dicho esto, habrá que señalar que esto es el escenario institucional en que se ha presentado, aprobado y puesto en marcha el proyecto Púlsar 2001–2003. El período se caracterizaba desde el primer día por una gran inestabilidad institucional. Esto hizo que Púlsar, aparte de ser un proyecto importante para AMARC-ALC, al mismo tiempo era una salvación para el conjunto. Púlsar daba identidad a la asociación, una cosa concreta que “*estamos haciendo*”. Inclusive en su período de inactividad (16 meses) Púlsar daba cierta coherencia y razón de ser. Como veremos más adelante, también en lo económico Púlsar ha sido el corcho que salvó en muchos momentos a AMARC-ALC. Este contexto de crisis institucional ha influido de manera determinante en la eficiencia y en la eficacia con las que fue ejecutado el proyecto Púlsar 2001–2003.

Annex 12 Púlsar's objectives in recent years

Fuente: Proyecto Púlsar, AMARC-ALC, Marzo de 2001

Objetivo general

El objetivo de la Agencia se definió claramente desde su fundación,

- Incidir en la opinión pública, a través de las emisoras comunitarias, ciudadanas, y otros medios de América Latina y el Caribe, con una información independiente y contextualizada, favorable a las mayorías nacionales, que enfoque el acontecer regional desde una perspectiva ciudadana.

Objetivos específicos

- Mejorar cualitativamente la programación. Especialmente la informativa, de las radios comunitarias de América Latina.
- Contribuir a la modernización tecnológica de las radios comunitarias latinoamericanas.
- Aportar a la conciencia ciudadana sobre temas de integración regional.
- Difundir experiencias comunitarias multiplicadoras realizadas en América Latina y el Caribe.
- Informar y formar a la ciudadanía sobre temas de derechos humanos.

Fuente: Plan de Trabajo para el año 2000, Andrés Cañizales, enero de 2000

Objetivo general para el año 2000

Repotenciar el servicio diario de información con la ampliación de una oferta de materiales escritos y recursos con nuevas tecnologías que complementen a las notas informativas, partiendo del trabajo de corresponsales y colaboradores y de la edición y coordinación de Quito, con miras a aumentar el número de suscriptores de la agencia.

Objetivos específicos para el año 2000

- Mejorar en el plano periodístico el servicio diario de información escrita y rediseñar la página web.
- Contar con corresponsales propios en todos los países latinoamericanos.
- Introducir recursos adicionales para complementar las notas informativas. En un primer momento en formato texto (comentarios, entrevistas, análisis, documentación) y posteriormente con el uso de nuevas tecnologías (por ejemplo clips de audio por internet).
- Lanzar una campaña de promoción internacional para difundir el trabajo de la agencia.
- Incrementar sustancialmente el número de users.
- Participar de los esfuerzos de la oficina regional de AMARC en la búsqueda de financiamiento para los proyectos, así como en el diseño y posterior puesta en marcha de "Planeta Radio".
- Lograr la incorporación de nuevo personal al proyecto a través de la figura de cooperantes (europeos o norteamericanos).

Fuente: Project Summary Radio Net, Febrero 1999 (Traducción)

Objetivo general

Iniciar un programa piloto de capacitación e intercambio de información para radios comunitarias en América Latina y el Caribe. Con el fin de experimentar con usos de Internet que contribuyan al fortalecimiento de las radios comunitarias en la región.

Objetivos específicos

- Profundizar una investigación de diagnóstico entre las radios comunitarias en ALC, que permita entender mejor sus necesidades, capacidades, disponibilidad en relación con el uso de Internet para la radio comunitaria.
- Diseñar, producir y experimentar un Programa de Intercambio Radial para prestar el servicio de intercambio de archivos de audio a través del Internet y de intercambio de archivos escritos a través del correo electrónico para radios comunitarias en América latina y el Caribe, mediante la producción de dos herramientas específicas: un Nodo Central de Intercambio Radial y un Kit de Soporte Radial.
- Montar un programa de capacitación y acceso que permita a un pequeño grupo piloto de estaciones de radio participar en el programa RadioNet y sacar mejor provecho de los recursos Internet.
- Diseñar e implementar una estrategia de evaluación del programa RadioNet que permita aprovechar las lecciones aprendidas y preparar su ampliación hacia otras regiones en el futuro.
- Fortalecer la estructura operativa y organizacional de la Agencia Púlsar para facilitar la administración y prestación de servicios relacionados con RadioNet, y buscar mecanismos que permitan asegurar la ampliación y sostenibilidad futura de la actividades de RadioNet en ALC.

Fuente: Proyecto Agencia Informativa Púlsar, José Ignacio López Vigil, Septiembre 1998

Objetivo general

- Mejorar cualitativamente la programación, especialmente la información, de las radios comunitarias de América Latina.
- Contribuir a la modernización tecnológica de las radios comunitarias latinoamericanas.
- Aportar a la conciencia ciudadana sobre temas de integración regional, el <desarrollo sustentable, la equidad de género, los derechos humanos, la diversidad cultural y la cultura de paz.

Fuente: Púlsar: Impulso Informativo, Marzo 1996 (texto en inglés)

Objetivos a largo plazo

- Mejorar la programación, el estatus y la eficacia de las radios comunitarias de AL.
- Crear una mayor conciencia sobre los asuntos claves para América Latina, regionalmente y mundialmente, y promover temáticas relacionadas con desarrollo democrático, derechos humanos y libertad de prensa.
- Contribuir a una mayor integración de los países latinoamericanos.
- Aumentar las oportunidades para una participación ciudadana más efectiva en relación a asuntos locales, regionales y mundiales.
- Mejorar la calidad y aumentar la cantidad de las producciones radiales latinoamericanas.
- Asegurar que el servicio al público queda como uno de los objetivos de las radios latinas a través de modernizar las radios comunitarias y aumentar su capacidad de competir por ende asegurar su sobrevivencia.

Fuente: Girard, Bruce (1995) Una entrada popular al INTERNET, en: Chasqui, 52, pág 57. Ciespal, Quito

El proyecto Púlsar busca:

1. Identificar fuentes de noticia fiables y de alta calidad en el INTERNET.
2. Hallar diariamente información internacional y redactarla en un lenguaje y estilo radiofónico para

su inmediata utilización a través del INTERNET. Este servicio denoticias hace énfasis en la región latinoamericana y caribeña. Una tercera parte de las noticias distribuidas proviene de otras regiones.

3. Proporcionar capacitación y apoyo técnico a los radialistas comunitarios que deseen recibir este servicio.
4. Establecer una red continental de corresponsales que pongan noticias en el pool informativo, para facilitar el intercambio entre radios comunitarias.
5. Apoyar a las radios comunitarias que deseen optimizar los recursos ofrecidos en el INTEENET. De ésta manera, se informará a las radios sobre la accesibilidad y utilidad de datos relacionados con temas tales como derechos humanos, agricultura, economía, etc.

Reflexiones sobre los objetivos de Púlsar

Fuente: Evaluación de la Gestión de la Oficina Regional de AMARC-ALC de: Claudia Villamayor y Ernesto Lamas. Pág. 42 ff

5.2.2. Objetivos político/culturales

En general, debe decirse que los objetivos político culturales no aparecen explicitados como tales. Revisada la documentación y realizadas las entrevistas podemos decir que cuando se habla de objetivos son comunicacionales o periodísticos y que se carece también de referencias a los objetivos políticos de AMARC (salvo si las referencias a la agencia proviene de JILV o de la Vice presidencia.).

Partiendo de la base que toda institución tiene una política, así no sea explícita, es importante marcar que en este caso no hay expresa manifestación de tales objetivos.

5.2.3. Objetivos comunicacionales

La constitución del equipo de trabajo tiene como fortaleza la voluntad de sacar adelante un proyecto que tiene una enorme envergadura teniendo en cuenta el tipo de servicio que significa para las radios. Esta es una preocupación de todos los integrantes del programa. Por tal motivo más allá de las debilidades que se señalan a continuación, hay una lógica de comunicación interna entre pares que colabora a la hora de llevar adelante la tarea. Sin embargo, esto se ve coartado por una fractura comunicacional y profesional con la coordinación del programa.

El problema de Púlsar se arrastra desde el momento mismo de su diseño y surgimiento. Desde el comienzo se supo con qué infraestructura tecnológica se funcionaría y, por lo menos teóricamente, qué se quería lograr.

Sin embargo, no hubo un Norte preciso tanto en los objetivos comunicacionales como en los periodísticos, se careció y se carece de una línea editorial que guíe el trabajo de la agencia.

Si bien esta falta de orientación puede adjudicarse directamente a quienes han tenido a su cargo la conducción de Púlsar, es evidente también que existe falta de entendimiento y comunicación entre la Coordinación y la dirección de la agencia.

La coordinación general de la Oficina y la dirección de Púlsar (en el momento de realizarse la evaluación) nunca han funcionado de manera complementaria. Ni en los criterios políticos, ni en los periodísticos. Este es el resultado de pensar por separado, algo que se pone de manifiesto hasta en la búsqueda fragmentada de financiación, con criterios y proyectos paralelos.

Existe un debate no resuelto respecto de perfil del programa. Hay un problema de constantes refundaciones, cambios de dirección que suponen cambios de orientaciones de la Agencia. Esto no debería ser así si existiese un norte claro, una dirección política, comunicacional y periodística clara.

El primero punto consiste en discernir si se trata de una agencia, en el estilo tradicional, o de un servicio específico para determinadas radios. ¿Se trata de un programa o una línea dentro de otro programa que no está resuelto? En este programa hay cuestiones no resueltas que debilitan su tarea y su proyección.

Para quienes sostiene que se trata de una agencia es evidente la falta de perfil, que se origina en la carencia de recursos (entendidos aquí no sólo en lo económico, sino fundamentalmente en cuanto a capacitación, lenguaje y práctica periodística) por parte de las corresponsalías. A ello debería agregarse la falta de una línea editorial y de estilo que pueda ser trabajada con las corresponsalías desde una perspectiva política periodística.

Otro enfoque, sostenido por JILV, es que no se trata de una agencia de noticias en el sentido tradicional sino de una agencia de producción de insumos para radio que, por lo tanto, puede incluir desde noticias hasta recetas de cocina.

En cuanto al lenguaje de la agencia tampoco han existido criterios claros. Se parte de la base de supuestos que no han sido compartidos.

Los intentos de consensuar orientación política, lenguajes y estilos a través de un manual de redacción (¿o de estilo?) son insuficientes. Por ejemplo: es claro que no se logra incorporar en la línea editorial una perspectiva comunitaria y ciudadana, repitiendo aquí lo que sucede con la Red de Mujeres que no logra integrar la perspectiva de género en otros programas. Esto habla, más allá de este aspecto concreto, de la falta de una integración global de la propuesta de la Oficina.

Se hace necesario trabajar también respecto de las fuentes informativas, tomando en cuenta que las mismas no se pueden limitar a lo que se recibe por correo electrónico. Sería necesario, a pesar de las dificultades económicas, pensar en la posibilidad de contratar corresponsales que permitan incrementar la producción propia.

Se constata, al mismo tiempo, que se carece de un perfil claro de los users del servicio y de la utilización que los mismos hacen del material que se envía.

5.2.4. Objetivos organizacionales

Tal como se señaló antes, nunca se ha definido con claridad el rol de la dirección de Púlsar. Frente a este hecho, que dificulta la tarea la acción de la Coordinación ha Contribuido a reforzar el descontento del grupo. Los canales en la organización no son los adecuados para el esclarecimiento y la búsqueda de soluciones respecto de roles y de tareas, especialmente de la dirección de la agencia.

Por lo tanto la comunicación en la organización es caótica hacia adentro del programa como del Programa hacia afuera y viceversa. Aquí la responsabilidad no es exclusiva de quienes han estado frente del Programa.

Existen diferencias entre la primera etapa de la gestión de Púlsar y la actual, fundamentalmente porque ahora se carece de planificación. Actualmente no existe un diseño de política cultural y de objetivos claros para la agencia.

Falta también evaluar de manera particularizada el servicio de la agencia, tomando en cuenta quienes lo usan, pro qué y para qué.

5.2.5. Objetivos económicos

La búsqueda de la autosostenibilidad no es sólo un problema económico. Es más: la autosostenibilidad enfrentaría menos inconvenientes si el nivel político y el comunicacional estuvieran pensados integralmente con el económico. No hay política clara respecto de la gestión de recursos y se carece de coordinación con la autoridad del Consejo Regional y con la Secretaría.

Su financiamiento depende directamente de las gestiones de la misma coordinación general.

Todo lo anterior se agrava hoy por hoy, Púlsar es un programa absolutamente estratégico para AMARC-ALC, que mantiene su responsabilidad en cuanto a funcionamiento, pero que no termina de integrarse dentro de una estrategia global de la región.

Otras ideas sobre una línea editorial

Fuente: Uranga, Washington (1999) Lo que nos enriquece es la pluralidad y no el discurso único.

En: Velarde, Sandro, edit. (1999) El festín de la palabra. Cebem, Bolivia. Pág. 62

Necesitamos repensar la sociedad, el estado, la sociedad contemporánea, donde el peso de la comunicación es enorme y donde la responsabilidad de los comunicadores sociales es mayúscula.

La responsabilidad de los comunicadores sociales, más allá de lo que decimos en la televisión, escribimos en los periódicos o decimos en la radio, sino en la construcción del conjunto de la sociedad.

Annex 13 Strengths and weaknesses of Púlsar

Fuente: encuesta aplicada entre receptores de Púlsar, entrevistas personales y llamadas telefónicas. Junio 2004

De la encuesta y las entrevistas se destilan las siguientes *fortalezas* de Púlsar:

El formato

Su soporte tecnológico: Internet

La mayoría tiene Internet o puede acceder al internet

Es breve y conciso

El hecho que llega todos los días

Notas hechas para radio

Puntualidad

Cantidad de noticias

Página web accesible

El contenido

Que es latinoamericano

Confiabilidad de la información

Información sobre movimientos sociales

Cobertura de eventos especiales

Los temas que toca

Es información alternativa

Colocar lo local en dimensión regional

El enfoque

Su objetividad

La perspectiva social con que mira

Perspectiva desde el sur

Independiente de interés político-económico

Trabaja por comunicación democrática

Lo institucional

Medio que conecta a comunicadores alternativos

Es un buen referente para lo que es AMARC-ALC

De la encuesta y las entrevistas se destilan las siguientes *debilidades* de Púlsar:

El formato

Que no tiene audio

Falta la columna, la opinión

No hay noticias testimoniales

El contenido

No crean agenda propia

Es muy poca información

Problemas de redacción

Se encierra en lo noticioso (información es más que eso)

Errores informativos

Casi todas sus noticias son refritas

Poca información sobre Europa y Estados Unidos

Falta cubrir unos países, especialmente Centro América

No hay seguimiento de temas. Guadalajara estaba bien. ¿y ahora?

Falta información propia

Se hace eco a notas que no corresponden

No cubrir temas también importantes como lo cultural

Selección inadecuada de notas (p.e. casi todas las notas sobre Chile son sobre Pinochet)

El enfoque

No se compromete más allá que la informa

Superficial, falta ampliar, profundizar

Periodismo muy poco objetivo

No logran separar opinión de información

Querer distinguirse por ser de izquierda. Así no se gana el prestigio que se necesita

Lo institucional

Su discontinuidad, los muchos cambios en su desarrollo

Que no hay noticias en fin de semana

No aprovecha su capacidad de vinculación

No se aprovecha la voluntad de participación y aporte que hay

El manejo no es participativo. Solamente se informa del retorno de Púlsar

No se hace conocer

Faltan corresponsales propios

Débil formación de sus corresponsales

No se sabe cuántos users de verdad tiene Púlsar

La no coordinación con otras instituciones

La mala distribución (llega a muy pocas)

Annex 14 Compliance with objectives and activities Púlsar 2001–2003²⁸

This document is a summary of the Púlsar Plan 2001–2003, approved by Sida. The boxes (and the right hand column in the table) of the evaluation summarise achievement of the project proposals.

Overall Objective

Influence the public opinion, through community and citizen radios and other means of communication in Latin America and the Caribbean, providing independent information set in a context, favouring national majorities and focusing regional events from a citizen perspective.

The impact has been reduced. Almost half of the project period, there were no activities due to an institutional crisis. In the activity months, and in spite of severe institutional constraints, in general terms the generated information responded to the criteria. Use of this information has been limited as it did not respond to the required format, and as it did not go hand in hand with the required institutional conditions.

Specific Objectives

1. *Qualitative improvement of programming*, especially of the news, in community radios in Latin America.

Progress was limited because use of the Púlsar information was reduced.

2. Contribute to the *Technological modernisation* of Latin American community radios.

The objective (dating back to 1998) is not clear. If it refers to investments, then those were not considered in the budget. If it refers to the existence of Púlsar having given rise to implementation of the Internet, then it was probably not met.

3. Contribute to public awareness on topics related to *regional integration*.

Based on the content of Púlsar, it is possible to have information on different topics in the region from a citizen perspective. No studies were made on the use and reception of Púlsar. It is therefore difficult to assess whether it made a contribution.

4. *Disseminate multiplying community experiences* in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The objective is unclear. If the idea is to multiply aspects of community life, then something was achieved, but most Púlsar press notes referred to other more 'macro' topics.

5. Inform and train citizens on topics relating to *human rights*.

The viewpoint of most Púlsar notes is from individual and collective human rights. Specific topics were also treated (economic rights, non-violence, gender, education, etc.).

Specific Activities

1. Through training activities, update Púlsar journalists and 18 Latin American and Caribbean correspondents with workshops and exchange visits. Training should focus on radio journalism,

²⁸ Source: Business Plan of AMARC-ALC; period 2001–2003, the democratisation of communications; Quito, Ecuador, April 2001. This text coincides (with one exception, see below) with the letter sent by the General Coordinator on October 4, 2001, which is the point of reference for this evaluation

citizen treatment of the news and new technologies, treatment of the information from a gender perspective, news treatment of specialised topics such as environment, HIV, youth, child productions, etc.²⁹

No training activities were carried out.

2. Ensure an average production of 25 daily press notes (approximately 9,000 notes per year and 27,000 at the end of the three-year project) with a good selection of sources, contents and topics, and from a citizen perspective.

In the Púlsar Montevideo period, two weekly mailings were prepared with an average of 11 notes per mailing (22 weekly). In the Buenos Aires period (July 2004) the daily production amounts to approx. 14 notes

3. Ensure a production of at least 30 commentaries monthly, 3 reports weekly and other special sections.

No commentaries were produced.

No reports were produced.

Special coverage was provided on 8 occasions, covering important world or regional meetings, one of which with audio.

4. Maintain Púlsar's web page, providing information beyond news and input for ample radio programming in coordination with the Moebius – Planeta radio project.³⁰

There have been two versions of the web page (Montevideo and Buenos Aires).

To date, the content is limited to news.

The (global) Planeta Radio project was stopped.

5. Modify the format of the Púlsar web page, making it more modern and dynamic with links to broaden immediateness of the news through the provision of a context for the information³¹.

Some links were introduced in the page to other institutional pages or peer institutions. The “provision of context” links have not yet been installed.

6. Produce and distribute 3 CDs with spots, special productions and other audio support for the news work of the community and citizen radios.

Five CDs were produced with special productions: Púlsar in the World Social Forum 2003, Community Radio Clips 1, 2, 3, Windows of counter-information.

7. Implement an advertising campaign for the agency so as to reach more subscribers.

Two special brochures were produced on Púlsar. One on the occasion of the World Social Forum 2003 and another one to share its participation in the Central American News Network with the gender approach.

²⁹ This is the text of the letter. The Business Plan says that: “Train the team of Púlsar journalists as well as 40 correspondents from Latin America and the Caribbean in workshops and visits, focusing radio journalism, citizen treatment of the news and new technologies”

³⁰ This is the text of the letter. The Business Plan only says: “Maintain the web page of Púlsar”

³¹ Activities 5 to 9 are called “goals and results” in the Business Plan 2001–2003

8. Get in touch with radio journalists and people from American and European countries in order to fill vacant correspondent contacts.

Progress was made in two directions. There are some correspondents in Europe (see annex 6 for codes on sources). Besides, Púlsar use from Europe is considerable.

9. Implement Púlsar archives to cover news needs and especially the work of researches in the entire Latin American and Caribbean region.

The only progress consisted in maintaining the notes produced by Púlsar Montevideo on the web page.

10. Insert Púlsar as the journalistic segment of Planeta Radio.

Planeta Radio no longer exists.

11. Link Púlsar to the gender program of AMARC-ALC, giving priority to women's issues in the Púlsar content.

In the Montevideo period, gender was well covered, both as an area emphasised within general topics and as a specific area. In Buenos Aires, the same cannot be affirmed so far.

At a certain moment, Púlsar distributed "Ciberenredadas", a news production of the Red Ada Network. No longer produced.

12. Make space for the objectives of the legislation program in Púlsar topics.

Both in the Montevideo and Buenos Aires periods, the topic of legislations forms part of Púlsar's thematic agenda.

Table on Expected Outcomes between 2001 and 2003

No.	Outcomes	Quantitative Indicator	Qualitative Indicator	Comment of the evaluation ³²
1.	The number of users has grown	10,000 users in 2004		There is a list of 2,058 subscribers, it is not clear what percentage are actual users
		3 advertising campaigns		The principal campaign was that in the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in 2003
		Correspondents and representatives send lists of potential users		Done from Montevideo
			Positioning of the agency in the news media	Partly positioning among community radios, mainly among those committed to the institutionality of AMARC-ALC
			Excellent negotiation capacity with companies	Not realistic, no progress
2.	The daily news production has increased	Production of 25 daily press notes (9,000 a year)		Púlsar Montevideo produced two mailings weekly with approximately 11 notes in every mailing (22 weekly). In the Buenos Aires period approximately 14 notes are produced weekly (July 2004)

³² These comments are based on comments from Púlsar coordinators (Montevideo and Buenos Aires) and on data gathered during the fieldwork.

		Stability of the news service: good selection of sources, quality editing, citizen perspective	The service was unstable. These criteria were met in the periods of operation
3.	We have positioned the agency in Ecuador (or in any other country where the agency is headquartered)	400 users 3 national campaigns focusing radios, etc.	The lists show 141 subscribers. Not done. In Montevideo, a joint activity was carried out with radio AMLibre. Joint production of the programme "Ventanas de contrainformación". (Windows of counter-information). This was the basis for the subsequent production of CDs.
		Send letters, disks, triptychs, etc.	Letters, floppy disks, CDs, triptychs, shirts and stickers were distributed.
		Visit radios in the country	Some radios in Montevideo were visited
		Accreditation in official sources	Not done
		Journalistic and political interlocutor capacity of the agency in the Ecuadorian media	Minimal in Montevideo
4.	We have consolidated the network of commentators	30 commentaries monthly	Not done. See the mentioned co-production of the Windows of Counter-information programmes.
		Invitation of commentators with a citizen perspective from all countries and focusing different topics	Not done.
		The Quito team personally follows up commentators and sends symbolic things	Not done.
		Púlsar has more elements to compete in journalism and exercise an influence	Not achieved.
5.	We have consolidated an editorial line for Púlsar	30 brief commentaries monthly prepared by the executive direction	Not done.
		The executive direction and team produce daily opinion material	Produced, but irregularly.
		The Editorial Council is consolidated to orient the work	Appointed in 2004, its attributions still need to be specified
		Púlsar gains journalistic and political influence with users	According to user comments, a lot remains to be done for Púlsar to be a point of reference

		The Exec. Direction acquires journalistic and moral authority with correspondents and the team	There was no system of own correspondents
6.	We have adopted a variety of news formats	Two weekly reports	Not done.
		Three weekly interviews	Not done.
		A special weekly section	See the mentioned co-production of the "Ventanas de Contra información" programmes (40 chapters)
		Consolidation of the Quito team: Executive Direction Editor in chief 3 journalists – editors 1 responsible for archives 2 trainees	In Montevideo: 1 exec. director, 2 halftime journalists, 1 technician. In Buenos Aires: 1 exec. director, 3 fulltime journalists, 2 halftime journalists, 1 technician
		Enhanced journalistic and political development of the Quito team	The interruptions have hampered development
7.	We have consolidated the thematic axes	Permanent focuses: Women Indigenous peoples Infancy Democracy Ecology Human Rights Social movements Communications	Women ✓ Indigenous peoples Infancy Democracy ✓ Ecology Human Rights ✓ Social movements ✓ Communications ✓
		Permanent inclusion of these axes ensures the agency's mission	The inclusion of Movements, Democracy and Human Rights is permanent.
8.	We have consolidated the network of correspondents and possible informants	50 active correspondents in the LAC region, Europe, USA, Canada	The representatives of AMARC-ALC are LAC correspondents, but this policy will be changed. Annex 6 shows a list of sources. Some of them are located in Europe.
		6 exchange visits per year for correspondents to Quito	Not met.
		Symbolic things for correspondents	Púlsar shirts.
		Update Address list	The database was not updated.
		The correspondents are taken into account, they feel rewarded, and they are active project participants. The result is project ownership	There was no consistent policy with correspondents

9.	We consolidated the Púlsar Style	The Púlsar Style Guide was prepared (short notes, citizen perspective, context, journalistic research)	Not produced. The 1998 manual is used, but is not widely known.
		Daily Editing meeting	Met weekly.
		Weekly internal training meeting (evaluation of production)	In Montevideo this was met rigorously.
		Work breakfasts for political analysis	Not done.
		Plan for individual reading with subsequent sharing with the team	Not done.
		Scholarships in international institutions	Not done.
		Internal and external workshops for training in editing, discourse analysis, computer science, languages, etc.	Not done.
		Socialisation of the style and face-to-face and distance training for correspondents	Not done.
		Enhanced professionalism of the central team	Not achieved.
		Enhanced professionalism of correspondents	Not achieved.
10.	We have designed a strategy for service sales and we have made progress in sustainability ³³ of the agency	50% of the operating expenses are covered with own revenues	Not achieved.
		Agreements with national and international entities to sell information, campaigns, research, etc.	Not achieved.
		Training services in journalism and the Internet	Not achieved.
		Project stability enables long-term planning	Not achieved.
		Púlsar becomes a point of reference, not a mere source of information, but a source for radio journalism	Not achieved.

³³ The evaluation understands the document refers to economic sustainability

	Journalists and collaborators feel secure and confident	Not achieved.
	Obligatory source of consultation for researchers	Not achieved.
11. We have ensured a dynamic and useful web site	3,000 daily visits	Progress is being made.
	The web page is updated 5 times a day	In the last phase in the Montevideo period, updating was once a day .
	Audio clips, pictures, attractive design and flexible	The inclusion of audio and pictures was not achieved.
	Parallel pages are produced in other languages	Since June 2004, 4 notes are being translated into Portuguese.
	Realtime news segments	Not achieved.
	Capacity to enter into alliances with other means of communication that are working in new technologies	Not achieved.
12. We display a strong and modern corporate image	Evaluation of our image through correspondents, peers, external agents	The perceived opinion is not positive and reflects an agency recovering from an institutional crisis.
	Elaboration and distribution of information files, posters, etc.	Triptychs, shirts and stickers were distributed.
	Document on systematisation and history of the agency	Not achieved.
	Establishment of the Púlsar Prize for radio research journalism	Not achieved.
	Self-esteem and professional acknowledgment of the team	Growing.
	Ample capacity to attract new correspondents and specialised collaborators	Unknown.
	The agency's historical memory is being built	Not achieved.
13. We have modernised the technical infrastructure in response to agency needs	2 hardware updates (December 2002 and 2004)	Done.
	Permanent software update in view of growing technical requirements	Done.

	Digital recording studio for audio material	Not achieved.
	Capacity to offer news services with an optimum technical quality	A good technical installation was achieved, without audio.
14. We have established and consolidated alliances with other networks and similar organisations	Agreements with Recosur, IPS, Aler, Alred, Noticias Aliadas, ALC, POONAL	No agreements were signed. Coordination is being started (July 2004) with ALER.
	Projects for exchange and joint operation with these networks and organisations	Start of coordination (July 2004) with ALER
	Exchange, training and political missions	Not achieved.
	Increased negotiation capacity with international entities and commercial communication networks	Not achieved.
15. We have helped to develop Púlsar in Brazil	News Agency Púlsar in Portuguese from Brazil with a similar development as the agency in Spanish	Not achieved. Since June 2004, 4 notes are translated into Portuguese everyday.
	Support for external fund raising and sustainability mechanisms	Not achieved.
	Visits to Quito and support in training	Not achieved.
	Púlsar covers Latin America, finally incorporating the other half of the continent	Not achieved.

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