



# Inform Educate Inspire 2010





Equal Access was founded to create positive social change for millions of underserved people across the developing world. **Inform. Educate. Inspire.** is more than our tagline, it reflects the continuum of change achieved by our beneficiaries through interaction with our innovative media and community engagement services.

# Our Approach



## Inform

The simple act of receiving vital information at just the right time can profoundly impact the course of one's life. We provide practical life-changing information that helps people help themselves.

## Educate

Without education that develops essential life skills and a belief in one's personal power to affect change, individuals struggle to apply new information in ways that yield positive results. Our programs foster human development and personal empowerment.

## Inspire

Even with adequate information and education, it often takes the social cohesion and courage derived from interpersonal dialogue, group trainings and peer support to mobilize and sustain significant change at community and national levels. For this reason, we provide leadership trainings and a range of community empowerment activities as essential compliments to our media programming - driving the continuum of positive change by inspiring individuals and communities to work together and achieve shared goals.

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

On behalf of our beneficiaries, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your generous support and collaboration this past year. 2010 marks Equal Access International's eighth year creating positive social change for millions of underserved people across the developing world in five interrelated challenge areas: Women's & Girls' Empowerment, Human Rights, Youth Life Skills & Livelihoods, Health and Civic Participation & Governance.

In 2003, our first project reached 200,000 Nepalese. Today our innovative, interactive media programs have a broadcast reach to 106 million across Nepal, Afghanistan, India, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Pakistan, Chad, Niger and Yemen. By combining the power and broad reach of media with direct community mobilization activities, our beneficiaries receive life-changing information and education and are inspired to work together to overcome daunting challenges and improve their lives.

As media-makers and community dialogue facilitators, our ability to inspire social change is rooted in the universal tradition of storytelling. Especially in times of crisis or despair, stories of courage and triumph over difficult odds, not only inform and educate—they also light millions of hopes anew.

Understanding this, Equal Access is ***Changing the Story*** for millions across Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Through the stories and voices featured in this report, we hope you agree that it is as if nourishing rainwater is at last falling on parched and forgotten places. Communities and young people are taking new actions and asking new questions because they trust our radio and TV shows; participate in trainings or mobile theatre events; and continue discussions at youth clubs, roundtables and town hall forums. Through SMS text, radio call-ins and community reporter interviews, we hear, "we are waking up" "my community is evolving" "this program gives us a time to reflect and a time to express ourselves".

Despite heightened challenges in Afghanistan, Yemen and Pakistan, we continue to catalyze rights-based solutions enabling greater acceptance of women's and girls' rights, tolerance, and increased understanding of human rights in the context of Islam. This past year, our *by youth for youth* radio and community engagement program expanded to Yemen. Now Equal Access empowers young people (aged 15–30) in seven least developed countries (Chad, Niger, Afghanistan, Nepal, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Yemen) with millions of regular youth listeners and thousands of youth mobilization activities across each country.

None of this would be possible without the dedication and generosity of our distinguished supporters, extraordinary worldwide staff, Board of Directors, Advisory Council, partners and most importantly, not without the courage and unshakable belief in positive change demonstrated every day by our beneficiaries. Please join us in addressing these challenges and in reaching new countries. Together we can ***Change the Story*** when nothing could matter more. By reducing inequity and giving voice to previously unheard stories and solutions, we replace enmity with collaboration and empower millions with the tools they need to improve their lives.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Gunther  
Chair, Board of Directors

Ronni Goldfarb  
President & CEO





# Women's and Girls' Empowerment



Millions of women and girls across the developing world are subject to oppression and denied basic human rights, simply because they are female. Whether forced into childhood marriage, denied access to education, trafficked into the sex-trade, raped as a tool of war, victimized by domestic violence, or prevented from full participation in livelihoods and civil society, women and girls have too long endured assaults to their dignity, intelligence and power.

**Equal Access is Changing the Story.**

**Everyday, whether gaining new knowledge of their rights by listening to our serial dramas and trusted chat show hosts, mobilizing social change at village discussion groups, or acquiring leadership skills at our trainings, millions of women and girls are transforming their lives and their communities.**





## In Nepal



*"I have just learned that I am dying of AIDS, but I don't want to tell my wife. How can I?"*

*"I want my husband to get tested for HIV. How can I ask him to do this?"*

*"I am a sex worker and if I say no to my clients' demands, they beat me. What can I do?"*

Equal Access Nepal's award winning radio series and community action initiative, *Mutual Understanding*, (or *Samajhdari*) addresses dilemmas on the intersection of violence against women and HIV. More than one million loyal listeners tune in to "reality" dramas, stories of triumph over violence and solutions to daunting challenges faced by Nepalese women every day. Combined with on the ground legal literacy training and listening groups, *Mutual Understanding's* candid on-air dialogues teach women to speak unhesitatingly, think critically and organize collectively around their rights in relation to HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence. Blazing a trail for previously unheard voices, Equal Access trains women survivors as community reporters to record women's stories and raise national awareness on previously taboo topics—thereby encouraging mutual understanding.

## In Afghanistan



Denied schooling, forced into early marriages and bartered to settle disputes, Afghan girls struggle to realize their potential. Women are forbidden to work outside of the home and denied rightful inheritances under Afghan Law. Most brutally, violence against women and girls is all too frequently tolerated as a societal norm. Resistance among conservative communities to embrace the rights of women and girls arises from a lack of knowledge that these rights are enshrined within the Koran and Islamic Law. To address this vital challenge and to further increase the impact of our ongoing leadership training roundtables, Equal Access created an extensive network of listening and discussion groups for women and girls across Afghanistan. The groups bring women together for discussions about issues raised in Equal Access' radio series and to support one another in catalyzing change in the context of Islam. While providing a safe space to learn and translate new ideas and skills into action—from civic rights, to literacy to vocational skills—these gatherings enable women and girls to claim their inherent rights to participate in and to promote social transformation.



*"Until the Equal Access community reporter training, I didn't know about violence against women, HIV, trafficking, and so on. I couldn't even identify the violence of my own situation. After the training, I began to record and send audio of the experiences of women from my community to Samajhdari. This encouraged me to believe I could make a difference. It boosted my confidence. I regained respect in my community. The "back then" Kamala was at risk, but she has turned into the Kamala who encourages women at risk to speak up for their rights. Between the past Kamala and the present Kamala, there is an immense distance."*

**Kamala Bhandari, Community Reporter, Sindhupalchowk District, Nepal**



*"Violence against women is opposite of Islamic law. Islamic law not only condemns it but terms it as a crime and those who commit this action should be punished. The government and civil societies should take firm steps to combat this problem and help Afghan women to defend their rights and root out all violence against women."*

**Secretary of a Religious Leader's Council of Afghanistan at an Equal Access Leadership Training Roundtable**

## Special Award

In June 2010, *Mutual Understanding (Samajhdari)* won the UK's One World Media "Special Award" for the most outstanding media coverage of the developing world, recognized particularly for bridging the divide between different societies and raising awareness of vital development issues.

## What is a Community Reporter?

More than 160 Equal Access trained community reporters across our three continents of operation contribute to our radio series. Drawn from marginalized groups – such as women, youth, and indigenous communities – our community reporters bring new voices and perspectives to the national stage and broaden the dialogue, placing the power of media directly in the hands of **all people**.

## Facts

More than 50% of women in South Asia experience violence as part of their daily life.



# Youth Life Skills and Livelihoods



By 2020 the world's population under 30 will reach 4 billion—the majority living in the developing world. In fragile or least developed countries, where Equal Access fulfills its mission, youth under 30 already comprise more than 50% of the population. Weak governments, dysfunctional education systems, and lack of employment opportunities, leave youth without the skills or resources to fulfill their potential—increasingly vulnerable to discouragement or even worse—to violence.

## **Equal Access is Changing the Story**

**By implementing a comprehensive youth development and leadership program to empower marginalized youth (aged 15–30) across the developing world, our program is reaching and empowering youth in Afghanistan, Nepal, Cambodia, Yemen, Pakistan, Laos PDR, Chad and Niger. In each country, the program is implemented through a nationally broadcast interactive radio series produced *by youth for youth*, leadership trainings, self-formed discussion groups and civic engagement activities. This year we have added interactive mobile text messaging to further increase participation. We address serious gaps in young people's formal education which contribute to discouragement and alienation through a specially designed “life skills” curriculum that builds self-esteem, improves young people's capacity to lead productive lives, provides livelihoods training and engages them as community and social change agents.**





## In Niger



Every week an estimated 2.42 million listeners tune into *Youth Boulevard (Gwadaben Matasa)* a lively youth chat and magazine radio series encouraging youth people (aged 15–30) to embrace tolerance, peaceful alternatives to violence and positive civic action. Our youth producers and community reporters receive passionate responses to a variety of issues via SMS text, letters and radio call-ins. More than

2,000 youth gather in 140 listening clubs to learn together and organize collective actions to improve their communities. For example, Abdoulahi Aboubacar’s listening group organized a town clean-up. “When we heard one episode about a donut seller and the clean-up of his street, we began talking about how the Mayor has been doing a lot to clean up our city. We said to ourselves, ‘Why not help the Mayor in the cleaning effort?’” The club’s clean-up initiative ultimately gained the respect of the whole community, becoming a weekly event. The town’s mayor told Abdoulahi that he was inspired by the club’s activities and instituted a 4,000 FCFA fine (about 8 USD) for littering or throwing trash in ditches. “I think that it is important to lead by example. Others may join in, or be inspired do something else,” said Abdoulahi.

## In Yemen



Young people in Yemen struggle to find their voice and express a vision for their future. This is compounded by a severe lack of jobs and positive social outlets for young people (aged 15–30). To address this challenge, Equal Access implements “YOUTH” an innovative initiative combining a youth chat radio series *Let’s Be Our Best Together* with leadership trainings, listening and discussion groups and intergenerational public roundtable/forums to inform, educate and empower Yemeni youth with life skills and livelihoods training and encourage their active participation in good governance. Life skills such as self-awareness and esteem, empathy, decision making, and managing your emotions are woven into the “reality” episodes and form the foundation of the program. By creating an interactive national conversation across six governorates, YOUTH offers a compelling alternative information and education stream to counter the increasing religious fundamentalist and extremist ideologies taking hold in Yemen. YOUTH enhances young people’s public voice for moderation and tolerance while increasing collaborations among youth, media, community, government and religious leaders leading to a more tolerant and effectively governed society.



“Good evening... we are your loyal listeners. Even if Youth Boulevard was on every day we would be ready to listen because it helps us to discover our reality and to know who we are... thank you for what you are providing to young people.”

### SMS text from youth listener in Niger

“My name is Donia and I am a youth facilitator for my listening club on *Let’s Be the Best Together*. I have trouble with my eyes so I have difficulty seeing. Being a facilitator helped me overcome my feelings of insecurity that prevented me from fulfilling my dreams and from making friends. Because of Equal Access and the training that I have now, I am able to make friends with others and I can now discuss and think about how to solve my problems by myself and not feel scared or shamed because of my disability.”



### Donia, Youth Listening Club Facilitator, Yemen

“Thanks to the episode that I heard on secret of success for youth, I asked myself the question ‘Why not me?’ And that is how I asked Elhadjji Babaye if he could accept me as an Apprentice. He told me ‘Yes’ and it has begun. Today I have been an Apprentice for nearly seven months and I have even begun to sew my own clothes. Thank you to everyone working on this program, it is possible that without you I never would have had the courage to decide to do something.”

### Abdoullay Mahaman Lawaly, in a letter, Niger

### Why SMS

Equal Access engages listeners through SMS interaction (text messaging over mobile phone) across seven countries. SMS audience interaction numbers are as high as 5,000 messages a week for our most popular programs. In many of the geographically isolated areas that Equal Access targets, the internet is nonexistent and letters can take weeks to reach the radio team. Our production teams and FM broadcasters ask questions on-air and have SMS responses minutes later. Young people across these countries actively participate, have their opinions integrated into the show and receive SMS text messaging responses—simulating the powerful interactivity and user-generated content termed Web 2.0.

### Did you Know?

More than 70% of Yemen’s population is under 30 years of age.



# Youth Voices from Worldwide Programs

*"I remember the day. My friends and I were playing near the village temple—it was Janaipurnima the Hindu festival where everyone ties the holy thread that symbolizes purity and well being. My friends had the holy thread in their hands and I also wanted to wear the holy thread. I asked the priest to tie the thread on my wrist but he slapped me and accused me of sabotaging the entire festival. I was frozen by the hatred in his face as he told me that I was a Dalit, untouchable. One day, I listened to Equal Access youth show, Chatting with My Best Friend, and for the first time in my life I found solace. The radio hosts stressed how youth can raise awareness about caste discrimination. I lobbied in my school and asked for help from like-minded friends to form a club. People tried to sabotage our club but we did not give up. We staged street dramas on caste discrimination, we entered temples together and asked our neighbors to boycott local shops that discriminated people on the basis of their caste. One day we surely will succeed in making our community discrimination-free."*

**Dallu Ruchal from Nepal, plans to register his club as an NGO**



## Did You Know

- 91.4% of Nepalese youth have listened to *Chatting with My Best Friend* (7.8 million Nepalese)
- 6.9 million young people have been listening for more than 2 years
- 96% of listeners reported that they had made changes to their personal lives as a result of the program, including greater consciousness about youth rights, taking action to advance those rights and organizing with other youth

*"The issues which were mentioned in these programs are true and common in Afghanistan. We need educated and intelligent youth to rebuild the country. They are the wealth of the country and have a special role in bringing peace and stability."*

**Listener to Equal Access Pashto Youth Radio Series, Our Country, Our Future**



*"In response to your youth program about violence, parents must advise their children and instill in them a sense of forgiveness and of non-violence so that Chadians will live in Peace."*

**SMS text from a listener in Chad**



Far right in white dress, Equal Access Lao youth producer, Chounkham for Youth-Heart-Friends

*"Before, youth in the area did not listen to radio but now they do. I was timid before but now I am not—I have the courage to speak up."*



*"I believe in your show, Success Starts With You. After hearing an episode on how to raise swine using new techniques, I called in to ask more questions. You were so very nice to put me in contact with the actual swine expert featured on the show, and he actually met me in my village top provide detailed advice. Because of you, I not only began a swine farm business, but started a community group where members share skills and learn from each others' experiences. We have 36 members including veterinarians, animal sellers and swine farmers. I want to help improve my community's standard of living to show people in my village the benefits of learning how to raise swine the proper way."*

**Triev Phalin, Kampong Cham Province, Cambodia**



# Human Rights



The experiences of rural people struggling to survive through persistent conflicts, recurring human rights abuses and exploitative situations are rarely heard or documented—let alone shared with others in their community or country. Similarly, human rights abuses based on caste, religious, ethnic or social divisions are often tolerated as the norm. And increasingly in poor countries, migrants forced to leave their homes in search of adequate work are exploited and denied basic rights as they make their way through uncertain lands.

## **Equal Access is Changing the Story.**

**Equal Access media and community action initiatives provide essential knowledge of basic human rights and how to protect them. Modeling tolerance and respect by emphasizing listening and dialogue, even the most marginalized voices and stories are not only heard but able to affect positive change.**





## In Afghanistan



Mobile street theater performances are a widely loved and powerful medium for engaging Afghan communities country-wide. Through theater and song, characters convey human rights messages that educate and inspire audiences with new understanding about the compatibility of basic human rights tenants as integral to the Koran and Islam. Held at community

venues from schools and mosques to markets and restaurants, performances maximize “equal access” for thousands all at once—including women and youth. Equal Access integrates mobile theatre as a vital introduction to deeper work inside each community. For example, our *Tolerance Caravan*, implemented across six provinces, begins with a lively theatre performance creating a receptive environment across the district. This is followed by targeted trainings on specific human rights issues, such as the rights of women and children, the rights of citizens to live in freedom, voting rights, alternatives to violence and other rights guaranteed in the Afghan constitution. Following these trainings, a roundtable is formed for public dialogue and problem-solving with community and religious leaders, youth, civil society, local government and the media. By combining entertainment, education, training and on-air dialogue—commitments are made and solutions are enacted. Finally, the benefits of working toward shared rights and goals are tangible.

## In Cambodia



Tackling human rights issues such as trafficking, domestic violence, child exploitation, and discrimination against HIV-positive populations, Equal Access’ *The Future is in Your Hands* radio series and branded communications challenge listeners to rethink perceptions about the role of women in Cambodian society; how to protect youth from exploitation; and encourage greater use of legal resources to confront human rights abuses. Independent research indicates that *The Future is in Your Hands* listeners have a better understanding of key human rights issues. More than 80% of listeners surveyed have shared key points from the program with others in their community, which indicates that the program has helped to overcome stigmas and taboos about sensitive topics, opening up space to find solutions to these challenging problems.



*“People in Afghanistan have had three decades of crises and problems like insecurity, joblessness, poverty... and most of these problems stem from the bitter fact that some people misuse their wealth and power. I want such people to forget the past and look forward to a bright future... I see it as my duty to talk about issues like peace and stability, observance of human rights and law, and everyone’s responsibility toward children and youths in the country.”*

**Mohammad Qasim Arab, Herat, Afghanistan**



## Straight from the Roundtable

*“Nowhere in the Koran does it say that we should promote violence. Religious leaders should promote peace—that is our duty. But we do not have the capacity to diffuse the message as far—but **the radio lightens our load** because it can speak in a loud voice and the radio has a long reach.”*

## Engaging Afghans 2009–10

- 76 Roundtables with 2,000 participants
- 92 Training/workshops with 1840 participants
- 436 Public Forums with 9360 participants
- 250 Mobile Theatre Shows for 199,400 people
- Radio programs with a reach to 10 million



*“My interaction with Equal Access projects has allowed me to become a more positive person, to become a man. I am a role model for young people in my community. I encourage them to express their opinions and dare to stand up for rights and their ideals.”*

**Mik Sinh, Community Youth Reporter, Cambodia**

## Please Broadcast Everyday!

*“I live in Chey village and listen to... Sweet FM 100.5. Your program educates women and children to avoid forms of sexual abuse and exploitation which often happen to them and leave them no future and unhealthy... this program especially educates people in remote areas who are low educated to understand and give value to women and children... please present this program to the remote area and broadcast it everyday!”*



# Mobile Theater



199,400 people in 17 provinces across Afghanistan were entertained and educated at more than 250 Equal Access Mobile Theatre performances this past year on topics including Voter Education, Human Rights, Peace and Conflict Transformation, and Drug Demand Reduction.

Performances are held in traditional public gathering spaces such as markets, schools and cultural centers so that large numbers of people can learn together and no segment of society is excluded. Following each performance, audiences give direct feedback in facilitated discussions. Local TV stations often rebroadcast performances for a national or regional audience creating further impact. Mobile theatre is often part of a 2–3 day outreach plan to specific communities, followed by trainings, and public round-tables with highlights broadcast over radio to a national audience.

*"In my opinion the theater performance on tolerance was fantastic. Such shows will help women and girls to understand their rights and enhance their knowledge. We live in Afghanistan, a country grappling with problems of discrimination, economical sufferings, and inattention to men, women and children. Such theater programs are very effective, especially to young generations. The future of the country will be in their hands, and such programs will have great impact on them for positive changes."*

**A teacher in Sadiqya school, Herat City**





# Civic Participation & Governance



Widespread illiteracy, post-conflict scenarios, and weak governments leave individuals and communities without the information they need to protect their rights, demand accountability of their governments or participate more fully in shaping their societies. Likewise, local leaders thrust into new governance systems often need training on how to be accountable to their constituents.

## **Equal Access is Changing the Story.**

**Our innovative media programs provide civic education through drama, panel discussions and interviews for millions across each country, while our targeted trainings build the capacity of local leaders and government officials. We bring elected officials, community leaders, local journalists and everyday citizens together for town hall forums and roundtables to discuss issues and achieve collective solutions. By combining informative media shows with targeted trainings and public forums a more informed citizenry holds leaders accountable, and newly trained leaders are more responsive to their constituents.**





## In Chad



Chad suffers from acute poverty exacerbated by a series of conflicts during its first 50 years of independence. Ethnic tensions, coup attempts and spill-over effects from crises in neighboring countries contribute to instability. Nearly half the population is under the age of 15 and innovative media offers one of the few outlets for youth and their communities to engage on issues relevant to their lives.

With a broadcast reach across 4 regions and the capital city of N'djamena, 1 million Chadians are regular listeners to Equal Access' *Positive Tribunal (Dabalaye)* radio show and its sister series *Youth Alive (Chabab Al Haye)*. Working to improve governance, empower at-risk youth and render superfluous ideologies that promote intolerance and violence, *Positive Tribunal* is having a profound impact. When listeners indicated that abuse of public vehicles was undermining public confidence in government, the Minister of the Automotive Administration was interviewed on-air and subsequently began to enforce a policy against abuse. "Police started towing cars that weren't being used properly—it didn't matter if it was a Minister's car," explained a government official. "You have to communicate with the media that people use most." Since then, abuse has subsided. By promoting dialogue between groups divided by tribal lines, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status, *Positive Tribunal* is charting a clear course for listeners to participate in promoting transparency, peace and stability in their communities.

## In Nepal



Each week, more than two and half million Nepalese tune in to *New Nepal (Naya Nepal)* for an inspiring and information-packed half-hour that educates listeners on the hallmarks of a strong, stable, and representative government. *Naya Nepal* is a well-established forum where voices from rural or isolated areas are heard alongside influential politicians from Kathmandu talking about peace, human rights, voting, gender and minority balance in politics. To further advance Nepal's struggle for a stable democracy, and as a long-time supporter of democratic media norms, Equal Access is also establishing an environment in which media workers and institutions can support Nepal's emerging democracy through online and mobile phone-based social networking software.



"I know two women of different ethnic backgrounds who do not talk to each other practically at all because their differences put them in opposition to one another. But when we listened to *Positive Tribunal* together in which the village chief settled a conflict between the herder and the farmer, the two women laughed until they clapped each other's hands. Since then they have now reconciled their differences."

### A Community Reporter's story from her village in Chad



"Everybody is talking about New Nepal, New Nepal, but nobody is trying to make New Nepal. After listening to *Naya Nepal* I realized that to make Nepal new, young people from every village should come forward to make a change, we should not wait! It is good that *Naya Nepal* encourages us to write down our visions of a New Nepal. We should all be responsible citizens. Rights and responsibilities come together. Only responsible youth, responsible citizens and responsible parties can make Nepal NEW!"

### Youth Forum Participant, Kathmandu

### Did You Know

Equal Access Nepal produces three of the top five most-listened-to radio programs in Nepal and five of the top 10.

Equal Access worked with a wide range of media partners to develop a groundbreaking Media Code of Conduct which is now the nationally-accepted standard for responsible reporting. More than 100 radio broadcasters in Nepal are signatories to the Code of Conduct.



# Health



With severely limited access to basic information on a range of health issues and services—millions of rural and underserved communities across Asia, Africa and the Middle East struggle to make informed choices or receive the care and support needed to foster health and save lives.

## **Equal Access is Changing the Story.**

**Everyday, our popular radio and TV dramas, chat shows, street theater performances and community outreach activities provide vital information and education on HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, family planning, nutrition and sanitation—supporting communities to protect and advance their health.**





## In Cambodia



Malaria infections are on the rise and hundreds of thousands of Cambodians are at risk of contracting the disease. Ill-educated about how to prevent or treat malaria, many Cambodians do not take the simplest precautions to protect themselves or to properly treat the disease when infected. This has resulted in the spread of multi-drug resistant malaria and Cambodia has become the epicenter of this global health crisis. To address this

growing challenge, Equal Access produces two radio series, *Safety for You*, a magazine-show with drama features, interviews with experts, and community voices and *I Care About My Health*, a live call-in show where listeners in heavily forested regions call to ask questions and seek advice from doctors and other health workers. “People do not know much about effective malaria prevention methods or safe malaria treatment,” said Mr. Sin Ly, village chief, malaria health worker and one of Equal Access’ trained listening and discussion group facilitators, “There was a boy, maybe no more than 10 years of age, who died in the last two months ... because his parents treated his malaria by praying to the tutelary spirit...then it was too late to send him to get treatment at the hospital.” Along with facilitated listening and discussion groups, discussion guides and informational pamphlets, these radio series encourage the adoption of cost-effective prevention methods, promote proper treatment services, and dispel myths surrounding home remedies.

## In Niger



One of the world’s poorest countries, illiteracy rates are high and people are eager for trusted sources of advice and information. With an estimated 2.5 million regular listeners, Equal Access’ dynamic *Youth Boulevard* radio and community action series addresses HIV prevention, hygiene, and the negative consequences of drug use. Said one listener, “My parents and friends already asked me to stop taking drugs, but I refused. One day I was listening to *Youth Boulevard* on the bad health consequences of taking drugs. I thought a lot about it, and thought of my parents and friends. *Youth Boulevard* reached my mind and I stopped. Now that I have abandoned drugs and alcohol, I feel good and in shape—like I’ve re-entered the world. I now run a business and I’m back in my community and I’m proud of having stopped. There are a lot of friends who stopped taking drugs after listening to that show—I can’t even count how many because they are very numerous.”



*“Before I listened to Safety for You, when I had malaria, my mother would treat me through prayer because of superstition. I was not sent to a health center or a hospital. Now that I have been listening to the show each week, I clearly understand this issue and have explained it to my mother. Now when someone in the family thinks they may have malaria, my mother sends them to the clinic.”*

**Listening club participant, Cambodia**



*“Before listening to Youth Boulevard, I never undertook anything. I waited for my parents to find things for me to do. But today with my friends I have formed an association to fight against poor hygiene in our town. I am proud to be finally useful for my society and my family.”*

**Youth Listener, Niger**

## What is a Listening Club?

The impact of our media programs is magnified in thousands of communities where self-formed or supported groups meet to listen and talk about issues raised on our radio shows. Each listening club has 15–60 participants. We train community leaders and volunteers to establish these clubs and support their peers in tackling tough challenges – such as reducing the spread of HIV, reversing damaging practices and promoting positive social change at the grassroots level.

## Did You Know?

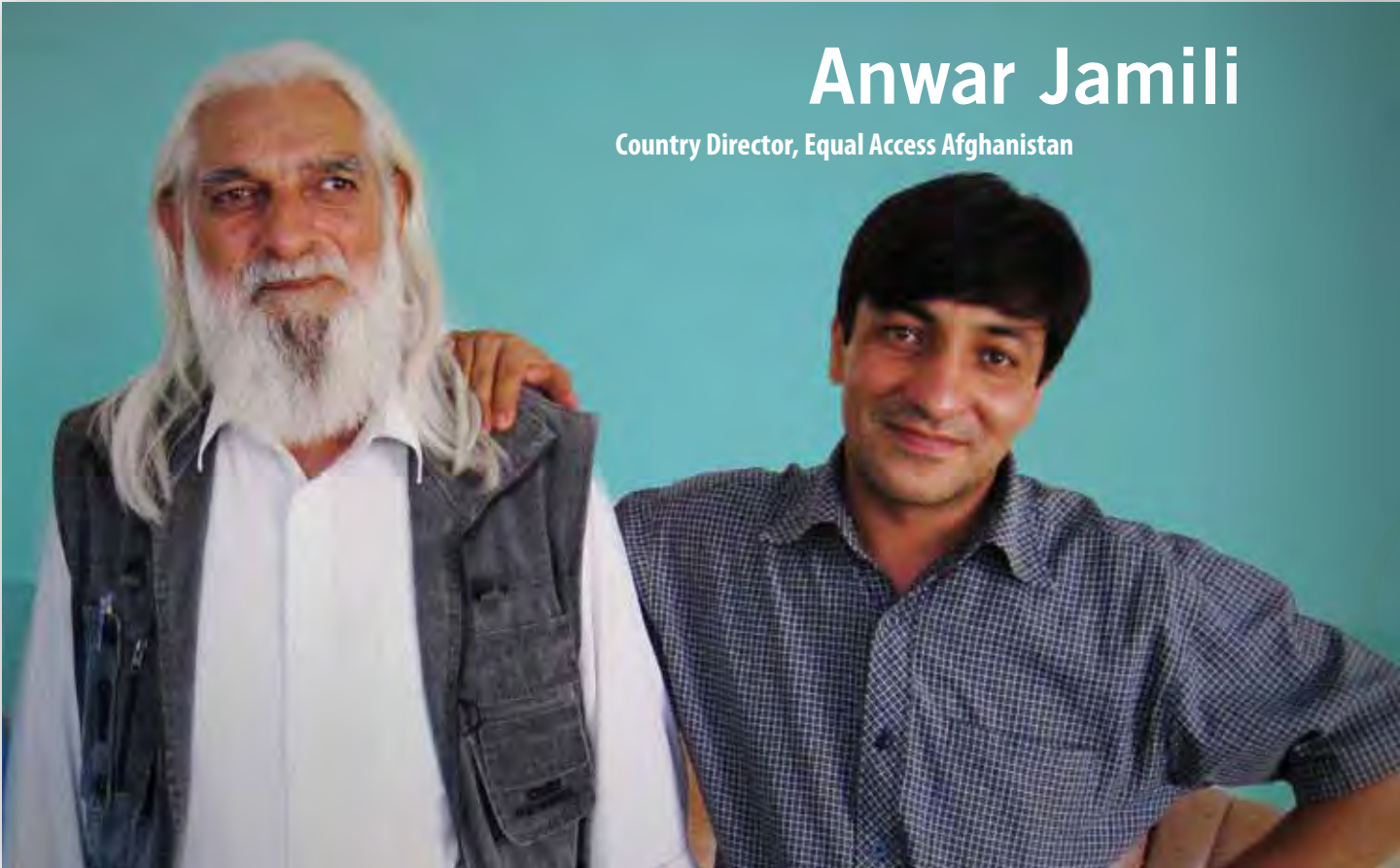
In Cambodia, malaria prevalence rates range from 15%–40% in villages near or in forested areas.

## Preventing HIV in Nepal

More than 6.9 million Nepali youth are regular listeners of Equal Access Nepal’s award-winning “Chatting with My Best Friend” radio series. The show is cited as the most trusted and best information source on HIV and sexual and reproductive health in the country (source: Nepal DHS, 2007). Regular listeners tend to complete school, are more knowledgeable about HIV, and practice less risky behaviors (source: Nielsen Nepal)



# Our Team



**Anwar Jamili**  
Country Director, Equal Access Afghanistan

Left to right: mobile theater actor Hashmat Ullah Fanayee, Country Director Anwar Jamili



I remember the time I walked for five days to Pakistan with my parents to flee from the disasters of war and assault from the former Soviet Union. I was so very young then, not even school age. The sole resource we had on that walk was the medium of radio. My father listened each night to get information on the situation in our country. I still remember the news jingles of Radio BBC and Radio Voice of America. I listened to them because I had an unshakable trust in Radio as a resource of information.

Although I completed my degree in medicine, I never gave up my relationship with media. I found my way to becoming a BBC radio actor, the producer of agricultural programs with an NGO, and then joined Equal Access Afghanistan as Senior Producer. Here I lent a hand to program management business development and finally was given the opportunity to lead as Country Director.

I have the opportunity to closely work with different people on projects relevant to health, youth, elections, governance, fighting against corruption and poppy cultivation, rule of law, human rights, women's and children's rights, struggling against extremism, and strengthening peace and stability.

I stepped on the path which brought me to this point with passion and enthusiasm and I still complete all of my work with full enthusiasm and assiduousness. I hope this proves to be a significant beneficial source for serving my people and my country.

**Boshra Amin Nasher :** I was born in Sana'a, the capital city of Yemen. Yemen is one of the most beautiful countries in the world and has a great history and culture, but because of some problems and the poverty of the country, most of the people in the world don't know about my country. I dream that will change and I want to let all people know the real beauty of Yemen.

The chance to do this came when I joined Equal Access, which gives me the ability to do my best to be the best—not only me but also all of Yemen's youth—through the program *Let's Be the Best Together*. In this program, I have the chance to share the dreams of the youth, to speak about their problems and to work together with Yemeni youth to solve problems and make their dreams something real.

I thank Equal Access for opening this gate to express my hope and to show my talents which I didn't know about. I have become a writer and presenter and help the youth in my country to know the meaning of peace and tolerance.



**Sherine Shafer :** For me Equal Access is a real starting point. When I graduated from high school I was interested in radio and I thought I would love to present programs and work in radio but it seemed to me very difficult because I did not have any background in this. But in 2009, I began to work at Equal Access. I gained a lot of skill in the field of media that has helped me build and develop my abilities and talent. This has helped me to build my confidence in and taught me that success is not impossible. Now I am able to write, produce, and deliver radio programs. Equal Access has given me a chance to enter the information field through a wider door. I believe that the future of Yemen depends on youth. I believe in the role of youth, when we really care about the future of Yemen, we build our capacity. We can do what previous generations could not do.



**Sherine Shafer**  
**Boshra Amin Nasher**  
Radio Producers, Equal Access Yemen



# Gapita Katiella Gasso

Content Manager, Equal Access Niger



I try to practice Mahatma Gandhi's direction to "Be the Change You Want to See in the World".

When I was young, I was passionate about radio because I loved music. But I became a journalist and presenter as the Program Director of the largest private radio station in Niger after attending the Institute for Training in Information and Communication (IFTIC). Then, in 2008, I was recruited by Equal Access as a Producer.

For my debut at Equal Access, I produced a magazine-format show that provided practical information to millions of desperate, frustrated, and inactive young people and showed them how to adopt healthy behaviors and make positive life choices by being creative and enterprising. Since November 2009, I am responsible for the content of all Equal Access Niger radio productions. I oversee the work of the three production teams producing high quality programs and supervise production staff to help them develop their skills.

Equal Access Niger gives millions of people the opportunity to adopt positive behaviors, to be more tolerant, and to reject violence on a daily basis. I find a personal meaning and direction for Gandhi's quotation in the vision of Equal Access, "A World in Dialogue where All Voices are Heard and Respected". I am a supporter of equality and human rights, and this work affords me the opportunity to be useful to my community, to cultivate self-confidence and undertake activities to better contribute to national development.

The first time I saw a radio program being made was during a school trip when I was 16. What struck me most was that although there were only two presenters chatting together in the studio, they were creating something that heard by hundreds of thousands of people across the country. That impression, that radio is such a simple yet powerful medium, has stayed with me ever since, throughout my career as a radio producer, up until now as a program manager with Equal Access.

Although I loved my time working as a radio producer for the BBC World Service in London, I always knew that what I wanted most was to enable people whose voices were often unheard to experience the wonder and empowerment of being listened to by millions. Since joining Equal Access in 2005, I've been allowed to fulfill that dream.

My first big project was to design a community reporter training for rural Nepalese women, many of whom came from so called "lower caste" families, whose voices were seldom heard. Watching the confidence and social status of these women grow through the simple act of holding a microphone in their hand and speaking directly across the national airwaves was truly inspiring.

As an Equal Access program manager now based in the UK, I get to travel to a range of countries from Yemen to Chad to Nepal, and witness again and again the power of our unique approach to radio which every day makes a difference to the lives of young people, women and those who would otherwise have no way to have their voices heard.



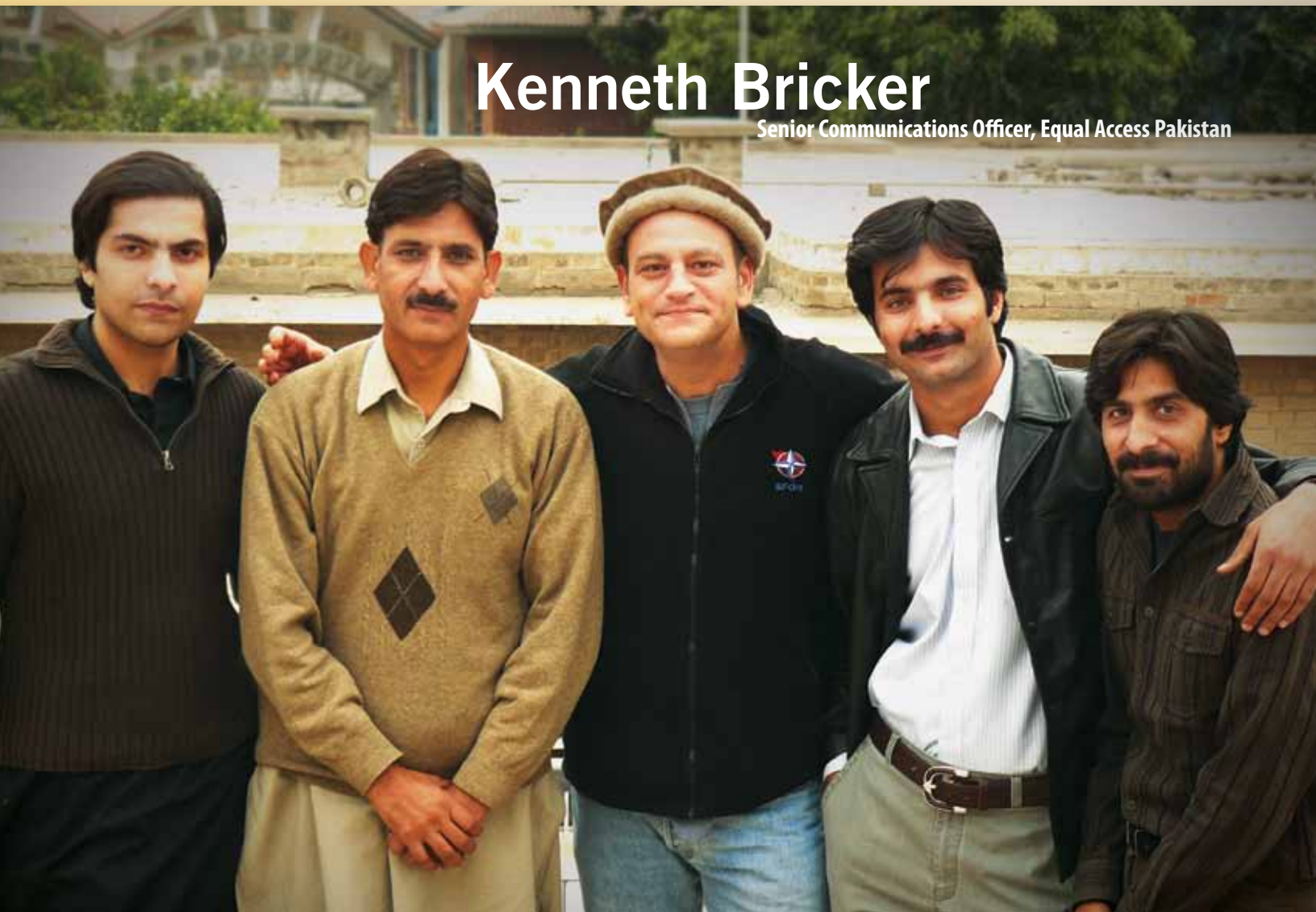
# Gemma Ferguson

Program Manager, Equal Access UK



# Kenneth Bricker

Senior Communications Officer, Equal Access Pakistan



Senior Communications Officer Ken Bricker, center, with the Equal Access Pakistan capacity building team at the FATA Secretariat Media Unit

A wise man once told me that the greatest gift in life is to have the capacity to help others.

I was never able to fully appreciate the meaning of those words until I began working at the US Indian Health Service in 1995. Indigenous people in the US are often referred to euphemistically as “America’s First Citizens”. In reality, they are often America’s Forgotten Citizens. I had an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of these underserved Americans when I supervised the transportation of \$48 million of advanced medical equipment to extremely remote Inuit villages in Northern Alaska.

Fifteen years later, when I learned about Equal Access, I was inspired by its mission to create positive social change for millions of underserved people in the developing world. After several conversations with Ronni Goldfarb, I knew Equal Access was the right organization for me.



As a media professional with more than 20 years of experience, I know how important it is for marginalized groups to have access to the right information. In Pakistan, EA is making a difference through its ground-breaking radio program, ‘*Kadam pa Kadam*’ (translated as ‘*Step by Step*’). We provide practical news and information to the underserved citizens of FATA—such as advice on finding jobs and accessing public health services—that improves their lives in tangible ways. According to a recent public opinion survey, the program offers hope to a disadvantaged population, while serving as a check against the influence of extremist groups attempting to destabilize Pakistan through violence. We are providing the people of FATA with an alternative to extremism—information that empowers ordinary citizens to take ownership over their lives.

Equal Access is a very rare and special organization. I am proud to be associated with this team of dedicated professionals and am immensely grateful for the opportunity to serve those who need it most.



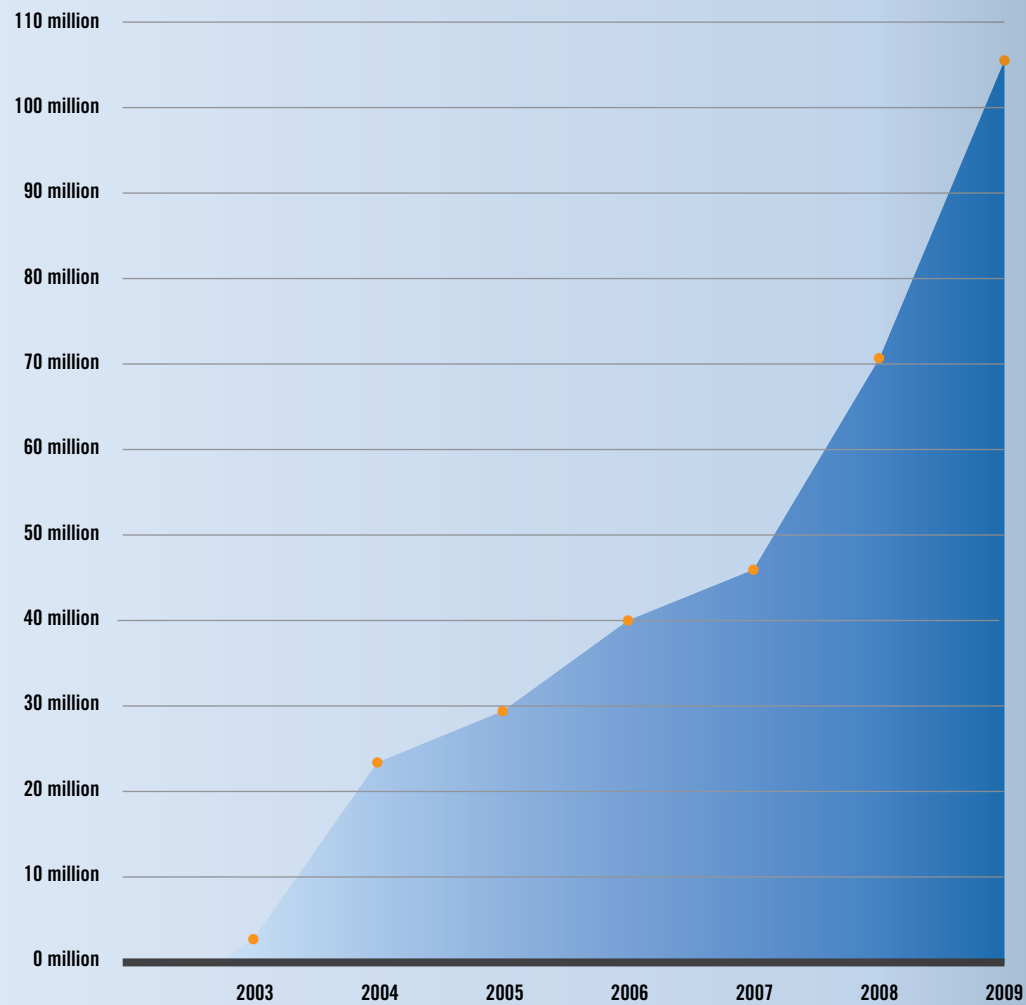


# Metrics

## Broadcast Audience Reach

Our broadcast reach expanded to 106 million across Asia, Africa and the Middle East in 2009

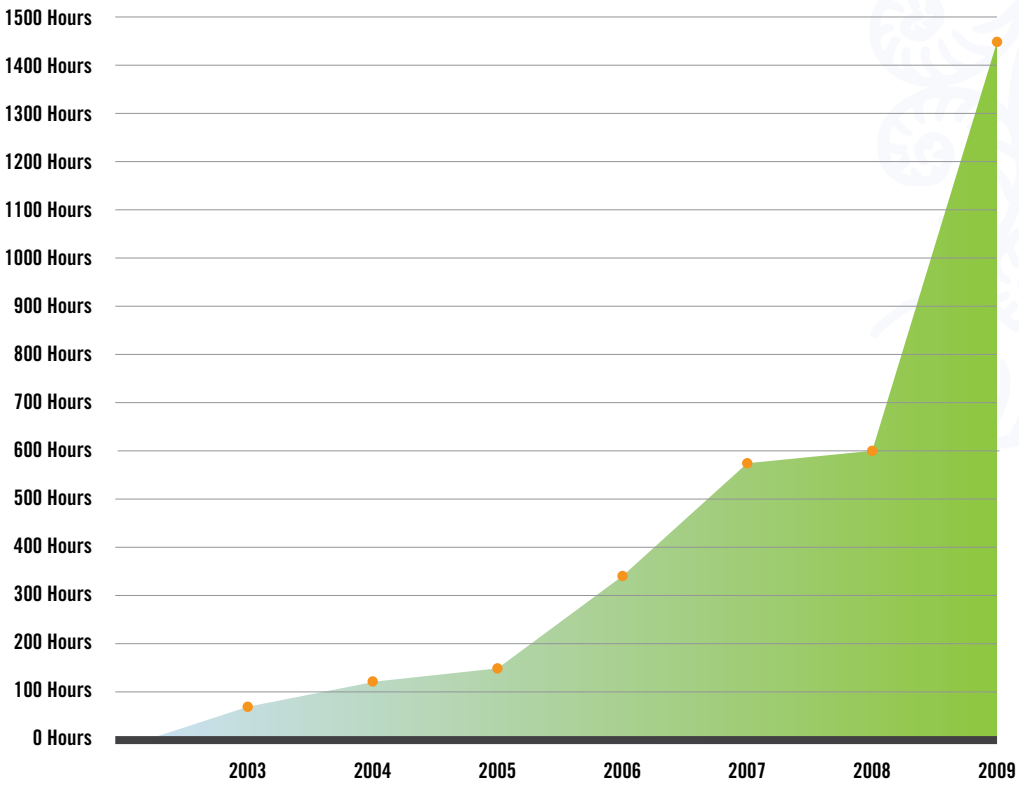
Often radio is the most effective way to reach the vast majority of people in remote areas as well as urban centers while at home or at work. By networking radio stations together across each country to participate in the creation and broadcast of different radio series, Equal Access ensures that information is delivered at national scale and that even the most marginalized and isolated areas are included. To ensure that all people have equal access to information, we work to build the capacity of radio stations and set up micro-FM radios so these remote communications can assess radio in some cases for the very first time. In 2009, we also produced TV serial dramas, video documentaries and TV spots in Afghanistan and Cambodia.



## Original Hours of Content Produced

Over 1400 hours of original content produced in 2009

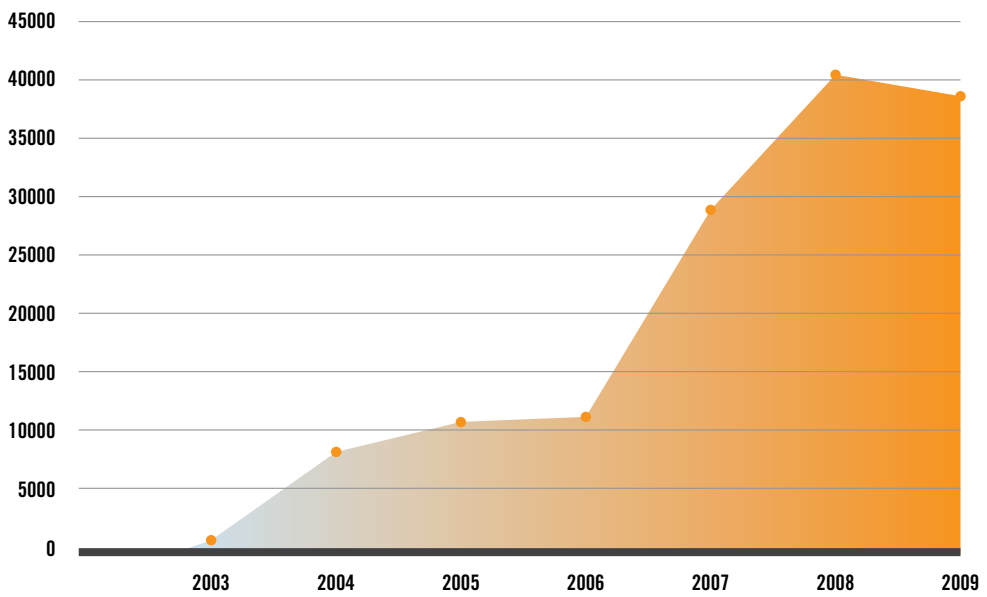
Each year, Equal Access content production continues its steady growth delivering hundreds of hours of life-changing information to more underserved communities. When broadcast, performed and distributed in tandem with thousands of hours of training and direct community engagement activities, broader and deeper impact is achieved and sustained.



## Person Days of Training Delivered

More than 37,000 person days of training were delivered in 2009

We remain committed to complementing our media programming with leadership trainings, grassroots dialogue and direct community mobilization activities to foster positive change.





# Financials

## Financial Statements

Equal Access International is an independent nonprofit, charitable organization that is exempt from Federal Income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to Equal Access International for its’ exempt purposes and mission are tax deductible. Equal Access International is also registered with the U.S. Agency for International Development as a private voluntary organization.

In 2009, Equal Access implemented its programs across nine countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East with the financial support of a diverse range of supporters and partners including UN Agencies, bi-lateral and multi-lateral aid agencies, international development agencies, foundations and individual donors.

With a clear focus on the fulfillment of our mission, we have maintained a consistent level of General and Administrative costs over the past four years, while lowering our fundraising costs.

Fundraising costs were less than 1% while almost 90% of every dollar went to Program.

Financial information presented in this report was drawn from the audited financial statements of Equal Access, which were prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Electronic copies of our audited financial statements are available on request.

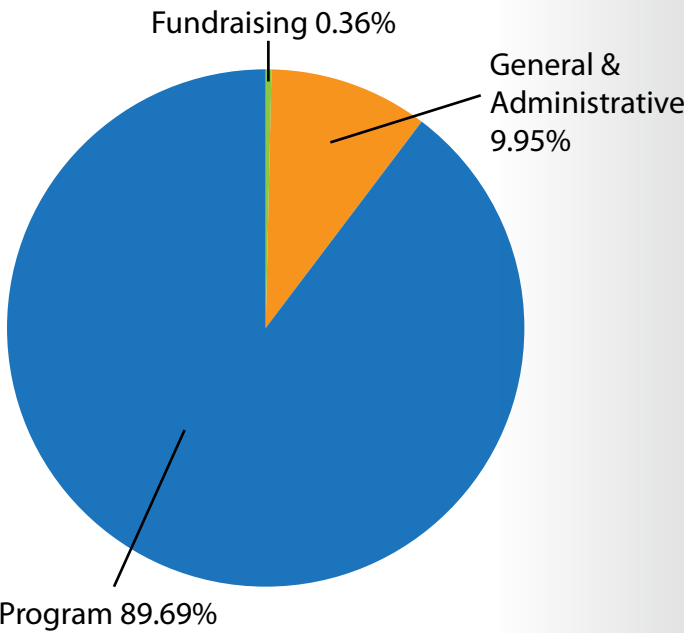
**Explanatory note from Director of Finance**

Equal Access International Condensed Financial Information for Year Ending December 31, 2009

### Statement of Activities

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 4,807,098</b>
Program Services	\$ 3,510,787
Program Support	\$ 439,219
G&A	\$ 438,359
Fundraising	\$ 15,722
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 4,404,087</b>
<b>Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 403,011</b>

## Expense Allocation



## Board Of Directors

- Mark Gunther, Chairman
- Ronni Goldfarb, President
- Robert J. Berg
- Amir Dossal
- Mary Beth Garber
- Julie Gupta
- Chet Haskell
- Saswati Paul
- James Tobin
- Avram Miller, Senior Advisor

## Senior Management Team

- Ronni Goldfarb, Founder & CEO
- Michael Bosse, Vice President Programs & Operations; Corporate Secretary
- Shannon Bledsoe, Director of Business Development
- John Neal, Director of Finance, Corporate Treasurer
- Anwar Jamili, Country Director Afghanistan
- Monte Achenbad, Country Director Cambodia and SE Asia Regional Coordinator
- Zara Mahamat Yacoub, Directrice Chad
- Venu Arora\*, Project Design and Content Consultant, India
- Deependra Joshi, Country Director Nepal
- Abdoul Kader Mamane Idi, Responsable Niger
- Kenneth Bricker, Senior Communications Officer Pakistan
- Amminadab Muyaneza, Country Director Yemen

In addition, Equal Access has a staff of 140 individuals worldwide—more than 90% are in-country nationals. Also we engage more than 160 Equal Access trained community reporters worldwide and 100% are in-country nationals.

\*Through Equal Access Partnership with Ideosync Media Combine

## Equal Access International

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Phone: +1-415-561-4884  
Website: [www.equalaccess.org](http://www.equalaccess.org)



# Thank You



On behalf of all the communities we serve, Equal Access would like to thank all the institutions and individuals whose generous support makes our work possible.

## Institutional Supporters

- Academy for Educational Development  
Asian Development Bank/ Ministry of Interior of Cambodia  
The Asia Foundation  
Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited Royal Bank (ANZ)  
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
BBC World Service Trust  
British Council  
Canadian Southeast Asia Regional HIV/AIDS Program  
Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI)  
Edgerton Foundation  
Embassy of the United States Kabul, Afghanistan  
GlobalGiving  
Imperial College London  
Open Society Institute  
Options  
Oxfam International  
Pact
- Partners for Development (The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria)  
National Radio Kampuchea Cambodia  
British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)  
United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)  
United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF)  
United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)  
University Research Co., LLC (URC)  
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)  
United States Institute for Peace (USIP)  
U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor  
U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)  
Vesuki, Inc.  
World Education

## Leadership Circle

- Richard & Lois Gunther  
The Avram Miller Family Foundation  
Mark Gunther & Anne Krantz  
Ronni Goldfarb

## Patrons

- Didi & David Barrett  
Carolyn Beahrs  
Robert Berg  
Michael Bosse  
Lanz Brooks  
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Mary Beth & Steven Garber  
Janet & D. Wylie Greig  
Andrew & Teresa Gunther  
Julie Gupta  
Arlene Hartsock  
Chester Haskell  
Rudy & Janet Hurwich  
Anil Lal  
Laura & Gary Lauder  
Eddie Lee & Square Two Design  
Nina Leis  
Elissa Leonard  
New Solutions Marketing  
Saswati Paul & Nathan Krishnan  
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Elaine Hoffman & Jack Cherbo  
Victoria Judson  
Lisa & Charly Kleissner  
Cynthia McKee  
Steven Paul Okuhn MD  
Planet Fitness  
Bonnie Raitt  
Joseph Robertson  
Janet & Richard Sitts  
Trucker-Huss, APC

## Friends

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Jefferson Asher  
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Henry Bamberger  
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Albert Barclay, Jr.  
Roberta K. Barker  
Robert Baum & Diana Slavin  
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Fonda Charne  
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Toni Trucks  
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Marlyn Kraemer Winslow  
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N'Djamena, Chad  
Kathmandu, Nepal  
Mardan, Pakistan  
Niamey, Niger  
Sana'a, Yemen

- Project Affiliate Offices:  
Delhi, India  
Vientiane, Lao PDR

[www.equalaccess.org](http://www.equalaccess.org)