

## Launch of two new radio series

*By Sonia Chopra*

Community radio Alfaz-e-Mewat FM 107.8 launched two special radio series in the month of June. The first series titled "Full on Nikki" focuses on adolescents and has been developed by BBC Media Action in partnership with UNICEF. The other series focuses on government programs such as the midday meal, the integrated child development services, and social welfare schemes that benefit citizens. This series is supported by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), Hyderabad that runs the web portal 'Vikaspedia' that makes information about government programs available in 23 Indian languages.



### Listeners' speak

In order to know the reception of the new programs, the Alfaz-e-Mewat community radio team held interactive sessions with the adolescents' girls group in village Jatka in district Nuh on June 19, 2017. The session was attended by about 40 girls who listened to the first radio episode on the topic of voice and silence and shared their personal experiences thereafter. The girls found the program to be entertaining and remembered the key phrases used by the fictitious radio jockey 'Nikki' who plays the program host and the comic character 'W download' who shares a brief fact file in the program.

Many girls shared their perceptions about gender based discrimination and how far they are able to speak up their mind and hearts in such conservative society. The girls' remarked that lot of their aspirations are restrained due to lack of opportunities, family mind set of not letting girls study beyond school and early marriage. They said even though things are changing gradually but still there is a long way to go.

The second program focusing on government programs and social welfare schemes appeals rural villagers as lack of information afflicts the effective implementation of programs. The title of the program 'Nai Dishayein' (new directions) aptly touches the pulse of the community and presents the information in a drama form in order to create a better recall with the audience.

The program is intended to increase awareness about key government programs to ensure better accountability and transparency in rural governance. If citizens know their rights, they can participate to ensure better functioning of the programs.

To involve listeners actively in the program there is a live discussion after every episode so that they can share their views and thoughts on the issues by calling in at the studio number 9813164542.

*(Sonia Chopra is communications associate, S M Sehgal Foundation)*