

# World Radio Day 2017 in Ha Noi, Vietnam

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On the occasion of World Radio Day (WRD), more than 250 Vietnamese media managers, professionals, university lecturers, students and representatives of international and national organizations contributed to key dialogues on the transformative power of radio as a means of communication on societal issues such as gender equality.

World Radio Day was proclaimed by UNESCO in 2012 and adopted by the UN in 2013 to celebrate the unique power of radio to touch lives and bring people together across every corner of the globe.

Speakers and participants emphasized the importance of engaging a more dynamic audience, ensuring that the views and diversity of its spectators are well presented and promoted.

The theme for WRD 2017 “Radio is YOU!” is one grounded on audience participation and engagement, providing a platform for listeners of all walks of life to voice their views and opinions, not only on-air but in the policy and planning of radio stations.

While social media and audience fragmentation can group individuals in media bubbles of like-minded people, radio is uniquely positioned to bring communities together and promote positive dialogue for change.

By listening to its audiences and responding to their needs, radio provides the diversity of views and voices needed to address challenges faced by many communities today.

Following a celebration organized by the National Radio Voice of Viet Nam (VOV) and UNESCO Ha Noi, seminars on two key topics: Radio is YOU! and Media Promotes Gender Equality, invited participants to speak up and share their experiences.

Young students and professionals shared practical examples and constructive criticism regarding the establishment of mechanisms to facilitate audience’s participation and commitment to radio.

These mechanisms included, among many others, a listeners’ club for devoted fans, complaints channels, and interactive programs.

Speaking at the WRD 2017 celebration, **Susan Vize**, UNESCO Representative to Viet Nam, stressed the comprehensive power of Radio as *“It is specifically suited to reach remote communities and vulnerable people: the illiterate, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and the poor. It offers a platform to intervene in the public debate, irrespective of people’s educational level, and a forum for people to voice their opinions, recommendations and contributions.”*

Director General of VOV, **Nguyen The Ky**, further affirmed that WRD reinforces *“the idea of a diverse, healthy and humane radio sector, emphasizing audiences` participation and interactivity. Audience is the main contributing factor to the strategies and policies of radio stations.”*

Along the same lines, **Pham Trung Tuyen**, Director of the VOV Traffic Channel, stated that *“audience engagement is a primary and regular element of all programs on the VOV Traffic channel.”* As *“audience interaction is a mandatory indicator to develop radio format and program, VOV Traffic leadership and staff are fully aware that the audience is our main source of information which accounts for 60-70%,”* he added.

During the second seminar on the promotion of gender equality, participants raised their awareness on the Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM) of Viet Nam developed by the Ministry of Information and Communications

(MIC) with technical assistance from UNESCO.