A photograph of three women sitting at a desk in a recording studio. They are all wearing large headphones and looking towards a computer monitor. The woman on the left is wearing a black jacket, the middle woman is wearing a grey jacket, and the woman on the right is wearing a red quilted jacket. A professional microphone is mounted on a stand in front of them. In the background, there is a blue and red patterned tapestry on the wall.

MAPPING COMMUNITY MEDIA IN KYRGYZSTAN: AN AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

RESEARCH REPORT

By

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SUMMARY

This report presents the key findings from an extensive audience analysis of Community Media in Kyrgyzstan. The research, commissioned by the Kyrgyz Association of Community Media, was designed and carried out in 2021 in 7 regions by Dr. Elira Turdubaeva, Dr. Evangelia Papoutsaki and Begimay Almazova. The audience analysis identified 12 emerging themes that demonstrate the role and impact of community media in peripheral communities, the needs of local communities in terms of local information and news content production and dissemination, and most importantly the way local community members engage with content generated by Community Media. Other than the expected but also affirmed traditional role CM in community development, this research identified the significant impact of the increased media literacy, and more specifically digital media literacy, that has contributed to the strengthening of community and individual confidence. By consuming, producing and circulating locally developed content, communities have developed a stronger sense of agency that enables them to better negotiate community and authorities dynamics. Overall, CM in Kyrgyzstan contribute to the development of the critical conditions required for healthy information ecosystems which include a localized information landscape and dynamics of production, movement, access, use and impact based on local information needs, social trust and influencers. Those communities with established Community Radios and CMCs act as pioneers and positive role models for others. Audience engagement in these communities depends on social cohesion levels, time of operation of CM in these communities, location of CM, volunteers capacity and leadership role played by CM managers.

REPORT
OUTLINE

*A. KEY FINDINGS & EMERGING THEMES
FROM INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUPS*

B. SURVEY FINDINGS

C. APPENDIXES

1. SURVEY QUESTIONS

2. INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

*3. PREVIOUS STUDY & BACKGROUND
CONTEXT*



INTRODUCTION

AIM

The aim of this research was to conduct an audience analysis that would help identify the current and potential roles of community radio and community multimedia centers in a wider media landscape and local communities in Kyrgyzstan. By employing a wider mapping approach to the communicative ecology of mountainous, and remote from the center, communities in Kyrgyzstan, we can better understand the existing audience needs and how best to strengthen the role community media can play in shaping such communicative environments.

These communities not only share common characteristics, but they are also experiencing a unique to the Central Asian region community radio and community multimedia centers trend that is reshaping, and in turn, shaped by, their communicative ecologies, partly redefining the way they experience their communicative sociality. Placing this research within the wider context of Kyrgyzstan's post-soviet media space and practices also enabled us to understand the impact community radio and community multimedia centers can have on remote community development.

Note:

see Appendix 3 for an extensive background context to CMC in Kyrgyzstan with a conceptual and theoretical framework, as well as two in-depth case studies research that acts as a predecessor to this audience analysis. Whilst one of the case studies in this previous research no longer operates as community radio, the analysis provides valuable insights about community needs and the impact of CM in remote communities that inform future activities.

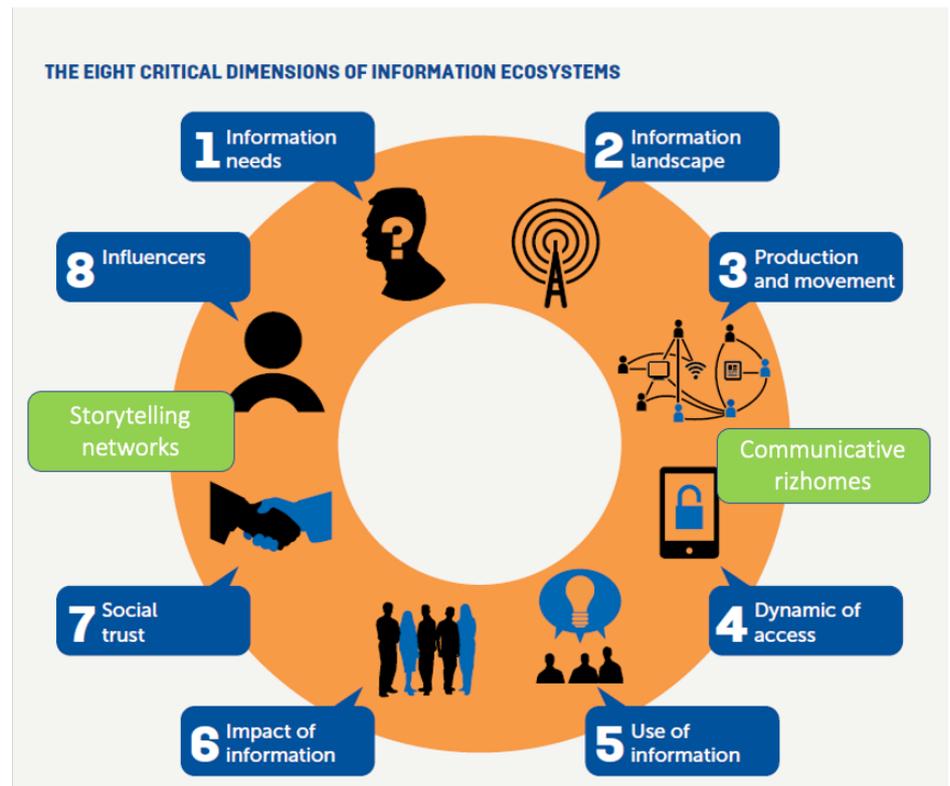
RESEARCH DESIGN

The researchers employed two conceptual and methodological frameworks in designing this audience analysis: mapping **Remote Communities Communicative Ecologies** (RCCE) conceptual framework developed for similar research by Papoutsaki and Turdubaeva (2022) that draws on Papoutsaki and Kuwahara's (2018) ICE approach and the Internews **Information Ecosystem** model.

The mapping of a remote community's communicative ecology can generate information on who has access to different information and communication channels, and how factors such as geography, distance, and cost can affect community communication practices. Remote Communities Communicative Ecology (RCCE) in this research contains various networks, flows, systems, forms, activities, interconnections, resources and issues distinctive to these communities. It also refers to a context of remoteness in which communication processes involve community members engaging with others in their local and extended social networks, both face to face and using a mix of media and communication technologies. RCCE also contains the identity of participants, the topics and language of communication, and the ways in which things are communicated. It is also described as a milieu of agents (i.e. MCM volunteers) who are connected in various ways by various exchanges of mediated and unmediated forms of communication. In this research, the communicative ecology of remote communities is considered to be created through a storytelling-network process in which inhabitants of remote and peripheral

communities, community organizations and community media work with each other to construct a vision and a reality for their communities as places where they belong and in which they engage shared concerns.

In this research, we see the communicative practices of remote communities, unlike their urban counterparts, as part of a more fluid, interconnected network system that embraces both individual and collective agents, reflecting strong reciprocal relationships that are necessary for living in remote areas and also containing several elements of what makes them resilient. These elements include a localized information landscape and dynamics of production, movement, access, use and impact based on local information needs, social trust and agents of change (see Papoutsaki and Turdubaeva 2022; Papoutsaki and Kuwahara 2018).



The ‘information ecosystems’ presented above in the Internews model provides an additional useful tool for mapping RCCE. Developed as a tool to understand how information contributes to a more connected and resilient community (Internews 2015), it identifies a number of elements that can assist in contextualizing the RCCE model. In this research, the contextualization of this model helped identify relevant community elements.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Who is the audience of community media and their characteristics?
2. What are the mediated communication practices and needs of these audiences and users in the hosting communities?
3. What place do community media have in a wider media landscape of these communities and to what degree is it reshaping their communicative ecologies?

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This research used **mixed methods** for data collection. Emphasis was placed on qualitative data collected through **in-depth interviews** and **focus groups** with the participation of:

1. representatives of the Association of Community Media of Kyrgyzstan heads of community radio and multimedia centers
2. current and past volunteers community media
3. community media audiences
4. media experts
5. government representatives
6. local municipalities
7. members of local communities

An in-depth online survey was also conducted as a way of identifying current trends with an emphasis on demographics and overall media use as a means of comparison with community media. This enabled the collection of a mix of quantitative and qualitative data from community audience and managers and volunteers of community media.

Limitations

The response to the survey was limited and thus resulting in statistically not reliable data. However, the 37 completed questionnaires provided indications of some trends that complemented the qualitative data. In the future, such survey would need to be administered by a researcher in the communities and not online (via mobile).

Fieldwork was carried out in 7 regions of Kyrgyzstan. The following participants, Community Multimedia Centres (CMC) and communities were included in the fieldwork:

In-depth interviews

Coordinators of 15 Community Multimedia Centers, Volunteers of 15 Community Multimedia Centers, Local Municipality Heads of 15 villages where 15 Community Multimedia Centers are located.

Focus group discussions:

4-5 representatives of civil society organizations in 15 villages where 15 Community Multimedia Centers are located
4-5 villagers in 15 villages where 15 Community Multimedia Centers are located

The list of 15 Community Multimedia Centers:

1. Barskoon village, Issyk-Kul oblast
Coordinator: Osmonalieva Gulkair "Barskoon" Community Multimedia Center
2. Tasma village, Issyk-Kul oblast
Coordinator: Jumagulova Gulnaz "Nur FM" Community Multimedia Center
2. Kara-Suu village, Jalal-Abad oblast
Coordinator: Maametova Anara "Sary-Bulun" Community Multimedia Center

4. Terek-Suu village, Jalal-Abad oblast
Coordinator: Mirsirayimov Nurbek "Ak-Bakay" Community Multimedia Center
5. Kyzyl-Tuu village, Chuy oblast
Coordinator: Algojoeva Janar "Konok" Community Multimedia Center
6. Jal village, Chuy oblast
Coordinator: Sultanalieva Dinara "Dostuk" Community Multimedia Center
7. Jani-Jer village, Chuy oblast
Coordinator: Omuralieva Tursun "Jani-Jer" Community Multimedia Center
8. Uch-Korgon village, Batken oblast
Coordinator: Abdurahmanova Gulbahor "Uch-Korgon" Community Multimedia Center
9. Kosh-Bulak village, Batken oblast
Coordinator: Saparkulov Bakit "Suluktu" Community Multimedia Center
10. Iskra village, Batken oblast
Coordinator: Juraev Abduraim "Sumbula" Community Multimedia Center
11. Kyzyl-Bulak village, Osh oblast
Coordinator: Nurmanova Chinara "Kyzyl-Bulak" Community Multimedia Center
12. Kuu-Maydan village, Osh oblast
Coordinator: Murzash kzy Nurzada "Kenesh-Nuru" Community Multimedia Center
13. Uchkun village, Naryn oblast
Coordinator: Naizabek Mukanbetov "Uchkun" Community Multimedia Center
14. Baetov village, Naryn oblast
Coordinator: Mamytbekova Gulbarchin "Tun-Uk" Community Multimedia Center
15. Kulanak village, Naryn oblast
Coordinator: Tumonabeva Aizat "Kulanak" Community Multimedia Center

EMERGING THEMES



THEME 1

Social Media: Adopting to New Forms of Accessing, Producing & Sharing News

THEME 2

Multimedia Storytelling & Digital Literary: New Tools Used by Volunteers

THEME 3

Raising Local Issues and Addressing Community Concerns: CMCs Contribution to Finding Solutions

THEME 4

Motivating Community Media volunteers

THEME 5

Helping Address Fake News & Rumors at the Local Level

THEME 6

Filling the Information Gap Between the Center & Periphery and Locally

THEME 7

Connecting Neighboring Communities

THEME 8

Contributing to Community Development
Building Local Communities
Connecting Local Municipality with Community

THEME 9

KEY FINDINGS & EMERGING THEMES

This section presents the key findings from the collected data. An effort has been made to group them around coherent themes, however it is important to note that there is an unavoidable overlap in some cases.

SOCIAL MEDIA: ADOPTING TO NEW FORMS OF ACCESSING, PRODUCING & SHARING NEWS (1)

With increased access to mobile Internet in most regions of Kyrgyzstan, local communities are now better placed in accessing information and news, especially so from social media and messaging apps. Social media in particular has enabled them to also share information and most importantly express their opinions. Community Radio and Multimedia Media Centers are using social media to disseminate their content, as well as to engage with their current audience but also attract new audience. Messaging apps like Telegram and WhatsApp have also become alternative sources of information for news and programs of Community media.

This is an important observation as technology has enabled the bypassing of traditional media that often left remote and peripheral communities outside the information flow. The ability of CMC to engage with social media and mobile technology has brought these communities into the digital information space that manifests at different levels (*intra-community, inter-communities, intra/inter-regionally, and nationally* but also *internationally* as is the case with community members in *migration*).

CMC digital content is changing the information ecosystem of their communities and reshaping the information landscape by enabling a greater democratization of information production, sharing and using.

Recommendation: further strengthen social media skills for interactive content creation and dissemination and develop a strategy for reaching a wider and more engaged audience locally.

THEME 10

Inadequate Resources:
Challenges Community
Media Face

THEME 11

COVID-19 Impact and
Health Communication:
Challenges and
Opportunities
*# Reliable Source of
Health Information
During COVID-19
Pandemic
Challenges Community
Media Faced During
COVID-19 Pandemic*

THEME 12

Breaking Gender
Stereotypes

Evidence:

*“Our readers are our villagers. There is a **WhatsApp group of our village**. We share our news there, too. Our Local Municipality also sends their announcements there. Later Local Municipality also created another WhatsApp group. There are **labor migrants** also sitting on these WhatsApp groups. We created 3-4 WhatsApp groups because there is a limitation that no more than 250 people can be in a group.”*

*“We write news and posts on social media of our community media about local issues and problems. **Migrants** from our villages working in Russia mostly read and watch our news and social media posts and stay informed about what is going on in our village.”*

*“People got used to us and started sharing information with us and giving interview to us and writing comments on our social media pages. Many things have changed in our village. **Access to Internet has improved, digitalization is happening**. Before local people were getting information from TV and newspapers and now, they are getting information from Internet and social media. We report about issues and problems of other neighboring villages, too.”*

*“Local people started **openly expressing their opinions**, by giving interviews, attending our roundtables, live broadcasts and programs. Local people use Facebook to share their opinions, too. They usually post on Facebook group of our village and start sharing them further in other groups. We also invite representatives of Local Municipality and decision makers to our roundtable attended by public and they deliver their problems to them, and decision makers solve these problems.”*

*“Now we are explaining to our villagers to share our content on social media so that it would reach more people. Currently only our volunteers are sharing our content on their social media accounts. On WhatsApp group people tend to share the content for example which says, “There is something inside banana” and not news of CMC. Even my mother does this. **We need to educate our villagers about what is true and what is fake and what type of information we should share.**”*

“We have social media accounts. There are 5150 subscribers on Instagram and more than 2000 on Facebook.”

*“**Activists** mostly share our content and comment on them. Others just read and do not share or comment”*

“We need to enlarge CMC. Now local people do not watch TV and most of them get news from the Internet through smartphones.”

*“Now in Kyrgyzstan people do not watch TV much. **Most people get information from social media**. Local Community’s news is always important and interesting to local community members. We always conduct opinions polls such as “What would you like to read about or to*

watch about on our media?” among public and prepare content accordingly.”

*“I love my village that is why I decided to be a volunteer at CMC. Now many people use social media and their role is very important now. And my task is to make posts on social media accounts of our CMC. **We are a remote village, but it does not cause any discomfort to us.**”*

“I always monitor social media and messenger groups of local communities on Telegram to find out about local issues which are being discussed there. I also write on these groups which issue I am going to raise in my news and ask them questions and they start sharing their ideas there.” (CMC coordinator)

“As I am also active in my village, local people always follow me on social media, “What Gulbarchyn has written about this time?”. I also share our news stories on various messenger groups and ask them to read or to watch.” (CMC coordinator)

“We disseminate our news also through Facebook page of our Baetovo village.”

“We also share our news on WhatsApp groups. I personally share our news through my WhatsApp groups. Volunteers also do. On WhatsApp there are such groups as “Family” “Friends’ etc.”

“Before on kyrgyzmedia one news would get 100 reads in one month, I was thinking no one reads them. But now it is getting better, and one news gets 50 reads in one day.”

“We can read again our CMC’s news. We can read yesterday’s news, too. We can search for news. But on radio we cannot. News disappears.”

MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING & DIGITAL LITERACY: NEW TOOLS USED BY VOLUNTEERS (2)

CMC has had a marked impact on digital media literacy and has undoubtedly increased the volunteers’ awareness for the need to develop further their skills so they can not only increase content production but also, and most importantly, improve and increase the access, use and impact of this content among the community members.

A distinction has been made between radio content and digital content made available in different formats. Community radio content can reach further if it is shared online and in social media with the audio element being supported by other related multimedia content. As a result of increased access to mobile internet and thus social media, the community’s digital media literacy has increased with a mark preference shift from text to audiovisual news and information consumption which has been noticed by the CMC volunteers.

Interviews and focus groups participants demonstrated the wish and will of local community members to undertake further multimedia “storytelling” content creation training. At the same time it’s important to continue catering to the older generation that has a preference to radio content.

Recommendation: Investing in further multimedia content development training and programs to reach more audience in digitally engaging ways.

Evidence:

*“We use **ClipArt visualization program** to create content such as video, photo stories, tests. This content creates most of the discussions from our audiences and engages them. They are more popular than just texts.”*

*“We need **trainings on how to make podcasts**. We do not know how to make podcasts. We are very interested in this.”*

*“Our new volunteers need trainings on visualization tools, video and photo editing tools and **how to use new tools to make content more interesting** such as online polls and tests.”*

*“Our volunteers are also **digitally literate**. They shoot **Tik-Tok** videos and know how to create digital content.”*

“We would like to create more video-content rather than text. We create video-content rarely.”

*“I would like to make more video content. I use **Adobe Spark** to edit my videos, but it is very slow. For example, today I am making a video news about Kok-Bory (national sports game) and I sat for half day to edit it. I have heard that Association of Community Media in Kyrgyzstan bought **Canva**, and they told us that they would give us. We need to buy license to use such programs. I do not have budget for it.”*

“People who give interviews to our volunteers are impressed and say, “If school children ask such questions, what will they be asking when they grow up?”

“Because our volunteers are young school children, they see local problems differently, from different angle and present them and talk about them differently.”

*“Before we were writing only text news, but now we also shoot video news, and they are **more effective than just text news**.”*

Elderly people cannot use Internet, we would like to deliver our news to them through radio. But we do not have radio yet. I would also like to increase video content.

“It would be great to have a multimedia center where youth could use computers.”



RAISING LOCAL ISSUES & ADDRESSING COMMUNITY CONCERNS: CMCs' CONTRIBUTION TO FINDING SOLUTIONS (3)

This aspect of Community Radio and CMCs is clearly the strongest and most established function. Respondents provided strong evidence of the multiple roles CR and CMCs play in addressing not only practical issues that affect the day to day life in their communities (i.e. sanitation, street lighting, charity campaigns etc) but also systemic/structural issues such as domestic violence and gender inequality, access to education, infrastructure and voting rights.

Audience in these communities is now socialized around accessing local information through CR and CMCs and in the case of the most established operations, the community engagement has increased after seeing their capacity to address local issues. This engagement has a positive impact on social cohesion in these communities as it strengthens collective action.

Recommendation: continue supporting this key function of the CR and CMCs operation with more “off-air” activities and workshops on community development news writing.

Evidence

“Other media write mostly about politics. CMC writes about local people’s problems. Other media do not cover our local issues at all.”

*“We would like our CMC to write about our problems and issues. **If they do not write about them, it will become even worse.**”*

*“We write news about our **village’s problems**. The most important problem of our village is our road. For example, our road was really bad and we made news about it after which local municipality reconstructed it. We also had a new village nearby and they did not have electricity. Our volunteers wrote about it in the news and after this local municipality provided them electricity. We also write about drinking water problems in our village.”*

*“I made news about **trash in our village** and people started taking their trash to a dump after that. Before they were leaving their trash on the streets.”*

*“We have **infrastructural problems**. As you know our city is a city of coal miners. We raise issues and organize discussions and debate to solve them. We take interviews from local people and try to cover events on site.”*

*“**Water** is a problem here. In winter we have water only once in a week. Most local people are dependent on coal mining, and we need additional employment opportunities.”*

*“During **pandemic** CMC was publishing important and useful information about pandemic and about rules.”*

*“CMC writes about **domestic violence**. They write about violence happening in families.”*

*“Recently we had Presidential Elections and protests after it. Our CMC wrote about it taking interview from local women who were observers at Elections and who told about **violations during voting**.”*

*“We grow cabbage here. CMC is also informing us **how to grow cabbage** and providing us new information.”*

“CMC also writes about the problem of trash in our village, that it is harmful to throw it, that it pollutes the environment.”

*“CMC also writes a lot about **kids with disabilities** and their problems. After her news articles 3-4 kids with disabilities got help.”*

“Our villagers grow cabbage. Recently farmers had problems such as prices of cabbage have dropped dramatically, and local farmers went bankrupt. CMC wrote about this problem and now all villagers and the country know about it.”

*“CMC writes here mostly about the **problems of farmers and cattle breeders** and also about our school. We have 2-month short courses, 10-month courses in our village and we write about them, too.”*

*“We write about **youth in Jani-Jer**, about sports, about farmers and their problems and the life of our vocational school. Our vocational school has also students with disabilities, kids of vulnerable groups, **kids of migrants**. We write about **employment issues** after graduating our school.”*

*“The director of CMC Tursun gives us topics for discussion. For example, on “Waste”, “Decency” and we discuss them. Tursun writes about mother-singers actively. She creates stories about the life of **mother-singers**. When they see how CMC is writing about them, they want to be even more active, it is such a motivation for them.”*

*“Tursun gets interviews from different people, **from hospitals** and other sectors and raises local problems and issues. After her news articles, these problems are solved. Some people invite her and ask her to write about their success.”*

“Our school’s sport hall was not working. After our news about it, it was repaired and started working. We also write about trash. There was a huge trash hangar near our village, after our news it was closed.”

*“In spring when people take cattle to jayloo (mountain pasture) **wolves attack cattle**. When we wrote about this problem on our CMC, this news became very popular, and many people read them.”*

*“**We raise daily problems**, such as pure water, road etc. 2 years ago our school was in an emergency because it was very old. We raised this issue and started writing news about it on our website. After that our school was repaired.”*

*“We wrote that neighboring village’s Local Municipality did lightning on their streets and after that news our village’s Local Municipality also did **lightning on our streets**.”*

*“Recently **CMC organized charity campaign** recently to help a woman in our village for her surgery. After this campaign, villagers collected money and helped her.”*

*“Recently our CMC wrote that kids in our kindergarten were sleeping on the ground and that there were no beds. **Kloop media** has published it and Public Broadcasting Channel KTRK showed this news after which political party Zamandash provided beds for them.”*

*“Last months I make **news about biodiversity, sports, traditional culture, human rights**. People are interested in them. But they are not interested in political news. We write about local issues such as road and water”*

*“Our CMC once wrote that our **kindergarten** was receiving bad quality coal. Now director of kindergarten is saying that they started receiving high quality coal since then.”*

*“Our CMC wrote about **new ice-skating place** in our village and kids started going to skating instead of sitting at home with smartphones.”*

*“Our CMC wrote about **vocational school’s roof**, that it was leaking. After CMC wrote about it, the administration of school repaired it.”*

*“I gave interview on **violence against kids**.”*

*“In winter I gave interview to CMC about **who needs coal** in our village, which families are receiving coal.”*

*“We write about local issues and problems of our village such as trash, pure water, irrigation, reserve and after publishing it in 10-15 days **we come to Local Municipality and ask whether there has been some change** or whether they have solved these problems.”*

‘I GIVE THEM ADVISE AS I GIVE TO MY OWN KIDS’: MOTIVATING COMMUNITY MEDIAVOLUNTEERS

(4)

Community Media depend largely on volunteers, it is thus important to have a supporting system that helps recruiting, training and sustaining their participation. The overall findings from this research and that produced by Papoutsaki and Turdubaeva in the part, indicate that CM activities help building confidence and self-belief in the participating volunteers which turns to agency and self-directed development personal growth. School kids can make better career choices. This of course has a rippling effect in the community.

Recommendation: continue supporting this key function of the CR and CMCs operation with more active mentoring programs that will increase community trust in the younger/school students volunteers’ capacity to produce accurate and useful information for the community.

Evidence

“We do teambuilding by going to nature together as a team. We have our fund to which we collect money together and we spend them on teambuilding. I try to give to our volunteers all knowledge and skills I get from trainings I attend in Bishkek. I try to motivate them to do self-learning. I give them advise like I give to my own kids.”

“Once a week I bring my school pupil to CMC and they read news they make. Although I am breastfeeding my daughter, I bring them every week to CMC.”

*“The role of our CMC in our village is big, especially for our school children. Their **speaking skills are improved**. They attend trainings and seminars in Bishkek and Issyk-Kul. It is a **great motivation** for them. Otherwise, they could not go to these places. When they come back from Bishkek after trainings, they want to change something in our village and to work more.”*

“We need to explain to our villagers that they need to give interview to us, because most of them refuse to give interviews to us thinking that we are just young school kids.”



HELPING ADDRESS FAKE NEWS AND RUMOURS ON A LOCAL LEVEL (5)

Participants in this research strongly indicated the important role CM play as an alternative, verified and trusted news source. Community members repeated the trust they have in locally produced news. Smaller communities have often higher levels of social cohesion and relational accountability which acts as a mechanism of deterrence for actions that threaten the community.

Locally produced news thus are expected to be trusted more and community members are not only expected to not do anything that would harm the community but are also to be held accountable for their actions. Both these community functions can play to the advantage of community media. In this case we see an overwhelming support and a recognition that CM serve the community well.

Recommendation: continue supporting this key function of the CR and CMCs operation with workshops on news writing and community development oriented material.

Evidence

“When we read news of CMC, we see the photos of our villagers and we trust them more.”

*“Our CMC writes truth because **we all know each other in our village, and we can check information easily.** But other media can write fake news.”*

*“Community media is very **important for local municipality** because it helps us to inform villagers and to **provide verified information.**”*

*“Fake news is being disseminated by many people. It may cause conflicts in our society. We need trustworthy information these days and our local **CMC provides us trustworthy information.**”*

“...people were listening to rumors and not verified information, but now we provide them verified and trustworthy information on our website. There was no local newspaper and website before.”

*“Our CMC is raising local issues and problems. **It is difficult to trust other media.** You never know what is true and what is fake.”*

“Other media repeat constantly the same news for the whole week. I do not like them. The same news is disseminated across all other media.”

*“**Yellow journalism** can create sensation and cause even conflicts and war. But community media tells truth and do not chase sensations.”*

“Our local CMC informs us from the site where the event is happening, on time. It delivers information without distortion to us.”

*“The most important is that our **CMC delivers information to us without distortion.** Some good things remain invisible, and our CMC talks about them.”*

*“Our CMC tells truth and verified information, facts. They **provide information which we cannot find in other media.** They deliver information very fast, on time. It is very useful for us to know what is happening on time.”*

*“CMC raises actual problems of local people. They do live broadcasts about them. Their news reach local people better than other media. They tell truth. Our CMC visits the place, sees it, asks local people and then provides news, but **other media do not visit the place of the event but says “Send me to WhatsApp.”**”*

“CMC delivers open, true, verified information. They get interviews, shoot on events site when it is happening.”

*“CMC write about local news; **they write truth in comparison to other media.**”*

*“There is no fake news on our CMC, they always tell truth and verified information. There is no rumor there. **They do not write rumors.**”*

*“Before when there was no CMC, our villagers were getting information about what was happening in our village from each other, from rumors or from mouth to mouth. But **now they get information from us, accurate, trustworthy, and verified information.**”*

*“We share in our news, the problems which were not told before. **People know truth from our news website.** Before people were disseminating fake news, but now we tell only true and accurate information.”*

COMMUNITY MEDIA FILLING THE INFORMATION GAP BETWEEN THE CENTER AND PERIPHERY AND TRANS-LOCALLY (6)

Community Media can play a role in reversing flows of information, building on existing social capital to strengthen social cohesion and trust, contributing to community development by holding community authorities accountable and reducing feelings of remoteness by focusing on community change. Being able to hear your own community's voices encourages contribution to the community media and acts as a powerful amplifier of community representation; hearing your voice can act as a validation.

This research provided enough evidence for the crucial role CM play in Kyrgyzstan's peripheries and remote communities. There is a marked gap in information flows between the villages and rayon centers where decisions are made by regional authorities. Lack of representation has led to a chronic disengagement that CM are trying to address with local reporters often acting as the go-between, conveying concerns, information about important decisions and holding authorities accountable where possible.

Recommendation: Greater support to local reporters with workshops and mentoring on local government reporting skills.

Evidence

*“We all know each other because we are the sons of one father, one tribe. **We get news late from the rayon center.** Sometimes after half a year or after one year. We cannot go to rayon center frequently to attend events and trainings, because we pay all travel expenses ourselves. **Our local community multimedia center informs us about what is happening.** We follow their posts on Facebook every day.”*

*“**Our local CMC is informing local public about the issues being raised at meetings of Local Municipality. Before it was impossible.**”*

*“Our CMC was launched in 2010 because of the lack of information about local issues in Sumbula. **We are very far from the center.** It is Kyrgyzstan's the remotest region. We do live broadcasts on Facebook. We raise the issues of local people. For example, now it is spring, and we raise the issue of seedlings. **Our issues are seasonal.** There are 23 000 people living in Suluktu.”*

“Before CMC was launched, local people were getting news about local events and issues from meetings.”

*“Before if villagers had problems, they would tell only to each other and share it only with each other. But **now thanks to CMC their problems are shared to the whole village and to Kyrgyzstan.**”*

*“Our CMC can **deliver our local problems to decision-makers**, to Prime-Minister, to President, to Deputies of Parliament. Our Local Municipality cannot solve these problems.”*

*“There is a lack of public trust in government. **CMC is helping to build this trust and to be a bridge between them.**”*

*“**We are far from the center.** We do not have local media outlets. We get information only through Internet. Our CMC informs local people and deliver accurate local news to local people.”*

“The role of local CMC is very important. [without them] we cannot deliver our information to central media outlets.”

*“I am a member of Ak-Talaa Youth Public Union for the last 3 years. Our aim is to develop youth in Ak-Talaa. Ak-Talaa region is far from center. **Our local CMC is a bridge between public and government.** We work closely with CMC and share information about our activities with public through them. They help us to reach our publics. Soon, when they launch community radio it will help them to reach more audiences.”*

“Our CMC was launched in 2014. Why was it launched in Uchkun village? Because our village is situated in the middle between Naryn city and Ak-Talaa region and we can cover both regions. Our village is the biggest in Naryn region.”

COMMUNITY MEDIA CONNECTING VILLAGES (7)

Participants indicated another valued service CMCs provide: they believe that shared information among neighbouring communities strengthen the regional connections, breaking isolation and promoting good practices, acting often as a healthy competition between communities to achieve better.

Recommendation: this is an area of potential growth for the CMCs and more attention is recommended to be placed in fostering regional reporting.

Evidence

*“CMC should write about issues and problems of local people and be a voice of people. Our CMC writes about 7 villages. However, we do not know the people living in all the 7 villages. **CMC unites all of us.** We*

learn what is happening in other villages and they also learn what is happening in our village.”

*“Now our **CMC informs us about what is happening** in our village and **in neighboring villages**. Before we could not know. It is very useful for us, we receive new information, news is easy to understand, and they write truth.”*

“We were not receiving any information about neighboring villages before, now we know what is happening not only in our village but also in other villages.”

*“School pupils also participate as volunteers. They also attend trainings and learn how to write news. They also **write news about neighboring villages**.”*

*“Before we would not go to other villages and regions. But now **thanks to CMC we visit other villages and other regions and learn about them**.”*

*“When our CMC writes news about success in our village, our **neighboring villages can read** about it and also have ideas to repeat it.”*

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (8)

Findings demonstrate community media can be a valuable tool in community-driven development that can help reduce the gap between community and local authorities, and instigate higher levels of accountability, as well as foster community agency. It is worth noting that community media is more successful in communities with high social cohesion (such as in the Suusamyр Valley) and when led by community insiders or with strong connections to the community. Two sub-themes emerged in this category pointing the attention to role community media play in building local communities and in connecting local communities with municipal authorities, presented separately below.

Recommendation: continuing strengthening these functions with workshops and mentoring that builds community development reporting skills. These are specific skills that require knowledge of local authorities and legislation among other topics.

COMMUNITY MEDIA BUILDING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

*“Jani-Jer is a big village. I also did not know much about my village before. After starting to work at CMC I **started learning more about our village and its people**. We were **all separate**, school, administration, farmers etc but now **CMC is uniting them**.”*

*“We like our CMC because they write news about our village, who is doing what. **If they would not write about them, we would not know them.** We learn news on time now. School pupils also participate as volunteers. They also attend trainings and learn how to write news.”*

*“We do not need political news. **We are more interested in news about lives of our community members,** who is doing what and how they are earning for living.”*

“I recently gave interview about swimming pool which I built and my garden. After my interview most people asked me how I built it and how I have grown my garden.”

*“CMC is the only media which writes about our village. Other media do not write about our village. **It is interesting for us to know what is happening locally rather than what is happening in the country.** Our village is big, and it is split into Kulanak West and Kulanak East.”*

*“CMC writes about **local people’s lives.** Life stories are very interesting.”*

*“There is a lot of political news in other media. People are overwhelmed with them. **When we write about our village’s history, abandoned pastures, they get more popular.**”*

COMMUNITY MEDIA CONNECTING LOCAL MUNICIPALITY WITH COMMUNITY

*“I was planning to open a press service at our Local Municipality. But I decided not to open this service, because CMC started fulfilling this task and informing the public about our work and activities both through their website and social media. People have smartphones and they access information through Internet. I give interviews to CMC volunteers. I also congratulate public during holidays such as 8th of March and Nooruz. I am always open to CMC and I am myself interested in giving interview. I also send them announcements. For example, during pandemic we were sending them announcements about lockdowns. **CMC usually asks me about our plans, activities and work. They deliver our information and interviews in a very good format.** I like and am satisfied with the way how they write and deliver information to public. **They deliver it as it is without any distortion.** 21st century is a century of information. If we inform public, we can build trustworthy relations with it. I wish CMC would engage audiences especially youth to their content.” (Local Municipality Head)*

*“CMC informs local public about what is happening locally. We always struggle to gather people to meetings. **CMC helps us to announce them and to gather people to our meetings and public hearings.** It is very important for us to deliver news and announcements to our public and CMC helps us to do this. Until now we have not helped CMC financially, but this year I am thinking of including financial help in our next year’s budget. When CMC was launched first, they worked very actively, but now they have slowed down.”*

*“I write about local issues and problems. Recently I wrote about trash problem in our village and Prosecutor’s Office invited Head of Local Municipality of our village for questioning. **Head of Local Municipality asked me why I wrote about this problem. Now I am afraid to write about this problem.**”*

*“The **representatives of Local Municipality sometimes reject to give interview. Especially during emergency situations such as floods.**”*



COMMUNITY MEDIA AMPLIFYING & STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY VOICES (9)

It is a common misunderstanding in this field of community development and media that communities do not have a voice and which then media are expected to generate on their behalf. This research and the previous one conducted by Papoutsaki and Turdubaeva indicate clearly that communities have a voice that is simply lacking the means to be heard by those that matter. Community Media act in a two-fold capacity in this case: first they provide a practice ground where these voices are strengthened and become more confident which then enables the CM to act as amplifiers of these voices, locally, regionally and also at a national level.

Traditionally there is a certain fear dealing with media because of lack of trust and the power dynamics linked to the urban central areas that are removed from their daily reality. Reporting on important local issues such as corruption practices by local figures of authority, and serving as a watchdog on behalf of the community to hold power holders accountable and transparent in front of their community can and does have a powerful impact.

It was interesting to note how some participants referred to CM as “our CM”, indicating a strong sense of co-ownership, a positive sign in

community media language use. This sense of community ownership was evident also in comments about CM not being owned by the government or other authorities. This is an area that needs more attention as communities are often weary in sharing their opinion with media, even when they know it is their local CM, an attitude fostered by years of authoritarian governments. This is however slowly changing.

Recommendation: Invest more in community media literacy activities that engage local community members and groups in generating their own content as a means of fostering greater sense of ownership.

Evidence

"I like our CMC's stories about local people's lives."

"Local news is more valuable than other news."

*"The problem is that **most local people are shy** and do not give interviews. We **need to explain the importance of interviews to local people**. They are afraid that their interviews will be posted on Internet and refrain from giving interviews."*

*"**Journalists from the central media do not come often** to our city. Our community media makes news about our village. Recently they made news about our local Kazibek Jol. I recognized the place where I live from their news and it was very nice feeling for me."*

*"We **helped local girl's surgery through charity campaign** CMC launched. They also inform us about events happening in our community such as "At Chabysh" Horse Racing, other sports news, a local sports girl who is fighting at international competition. **This local news is not covered by regional and foreign media.**"*

*"Our CMC delivers news using **easy to understand language**. They take interviews from local people on site where the event is happening. They **provide news very fast.**"*

*"**When we read news of CMC, we read them very carefully and with big interest, because they write about our community.** However, when we read news of other media, we read them without such big interest because they write not about our community."*

*"**Other media do Public Relations or advertising** of some people. But our CMC does not do it. **They give local people's voices and opinions.**"*

*"CMC is good for **delivering ordinary villagers' voices to the government.**"*

*"When other media come to our village to make reports and programs, they ask for money. But our **CMC does not ask for money**, they do it for free."*

“Other media ask for money to tell the public about our work. For example, I teach courses on Mental Arithmetic, and we attend international competitions. Our CMC writes about us for free, but other media ask for money”.

“We like that our CMC is free and there is no censorship on them, and they tell the truth without being dependent on government.”

“Our CMC is open and free. It also covers political news. We like our CMC because it covers local issues and problems openly and freely.”

“I like our CMC because it sometimes writes news which you cannot read in any other media. Sometimes some people do not understand their news and start writing negative comments on their social media. Our CMC needs to explain their audience what they are writing about. I would like our local community to be involved more in CMC. I mostly like their political news.”

“Now local people also know that CMC belongs to people and not to government, not to local municipality.”

“Some people do not understand the importance of interviews and refuse to give interviews. We need to explain them.”

“I would like local public to take active part and be more involved in CMC. Some people are afraid of giving interview sometimes and say to us “Do not show me in news”. I would like also our audiences to be more and large.”

“I invite to live broadcasts Aksakals because they are not afraid of expressing their opinion freely, others are afraid. We work also mostly with Youth Organizations.”

“Recently we collected trash and CMC wrote about it on their Facebook page and there was conflict after this post. Because some readers do not understand it and start writing negative comments and criticizing. We said during our interview “Everyone needs to collect their own trash, not only the state officials.” Some readers supported this by saying “Yes, we need to collect trash after ourselves and to keep our environment clean.” But some readers wrote negative comments to our interviews. Nurbek, our CMC’s coordinator who is also working at Local Municipality wrote this news and after one week he was invited to Prosecutor’s Office to be questioned and they asked him “What activities are you doing?”

“Other media writes mostly about politics. But CMC writes about local people and their problems.”

“I would like our CMC to grow to TV channel, so that we can watch it every day. Every evening we turn on Naryn TV with the hope that they will show Kulanak. But they rarely show.”

“Volunteers of our CMC came to me and asked me to give interview about how I look after pigeons. They made news about me. I told them how I care for them and that each pigeon gives 2 eggs per day.”

*“It turns out that there are many **woods carving masters, iron work masters** and many talented masters. **If CMC would not write about them, we would not know about them.**”*

“When there are important events at our school we take photos, videos and send to volunteers of CMC and they post them on their website.”

“SOMETIMES WE PAY FOR INTERNET FROM OUR POCKET”: CHALLENGES COMMUNITY MEDIA FACE (10)

There are several challenges faced by the CM which roughly come in three separate categories: material resources, human resources and skills. Funding and negotiating community and authority relations follow up.

The cost of connectivity remains a big issue with many resolving to cover that cost themselves to keep their activities going. Technical equipment fixing and also updating is a frequent issue. Having the right space to host the CM is important as recording requires soundproof buildings and that’s not always possible. Recruiting of volunteers mostly relies of school children which has tremendous advantages and a positive impact on their self-esteem but results in a frequent turnover when they graduate and the need to recruit and train a new group comes up.

Dealing with a resistance or sometimes lack of understanding of the importance to give interviews by both community members and authorities can result in discouraging younger volunteers. However, despite these issues, CM tend to attract dedicated individuals who act as key driving forces in maintaining the CM operations locally.

Recommendation: strengthen the support the Kyrgyz Community Media Association provide to local CM leaders and develop further a network of CM leaders and volunteers who can share resources.

Evidence

*“Sometimes we **pay for Internet from our pocket**. **CMC is like my child**. Teachers work for CMC as volunteers during break between classes. Loudspeaker is still not fixed. Our mic is also broken, and I could not get it fixed yet. I also have other projects and have no time sometimes to*

make news. Our teacher volunteers are also busy most times. So, we cannot produce 8 news per month sometimes.”

“The main problem now is an office. And also, **our technical equipment is outdated**. Our school has given me a small room, but due to pandemic, the school is closed. I cannot recruit new volunteers because we do not have an office where they could work. **I pay for Internet at home 700 soms and for Internet modem 730 soms. I pay them from my own pocket.**”

“**I pay for Internet myself**. Sometimes from donors’ money. Recently I got 100 euros from EU Commission in Kyrgyzstan for Internet costs from one project.”

“We need **trainings on how to make podcasts**. We do not know how to make podcasts. We are very interested in this.”

“Our new volunteers need trainings on visualization tools, video and photo editing tools and **how to use new tools to make content more interesting** such as online polls and tests.”

“**It is not easy to work for CMC and to make news**. Sometimes when you want to take interview, some people reject to give interview by saying they do not have time. I would suggest other volunteers not to be a pessimist in this case and keep going.”

“We **would like that there will be volunteers from other villages, too**. At least one volunteers from each village, so that they could also raise their local problems and write about them at CMC.”

“**Getting interviews is a problem**. We need to chase people especially **Local Municipality representatives** to find them in their offices and get interview. I do not have enough time, I send volunteers.”

“**As our CMC is situated in the end of our village, it is far from village center and most people cannot come to give interviews**. Now I am talking to Ayil Okmotu, to ask them to organize it in a way that villagers could leave their letters in their office and later I can take them.”

“**I write news mostly at night as I teach during the day**, and I also work as a psychologist at the dormitory of our school. I have also another part-time work at airport. I go there once in 3 days. I work for a company which provides food for passengers.”

“I recruit volunteers from school, some volunteers come themselves. I also work with their parents explaining them what volunteers do. **Sometimes we work at night and volunteers stay at my home**, because during the day they study and get interviews.”

“The main problem is **volunteers. They leave school after graduation, and I need to recruit new volunteers and train them again.**”

“Our volunteers need more trainings and seminars. We need **more technical equipment.**”

*“Before we were using **loudspeakers**. It reached only certain number of **people**. Soon community radio will be launched, and it will reach everyone”.*

*“Soon our radio Toguz-Toroo FM will be launched, and I hope that our audience will be increased. For example, **housewives can also listen to it while doing their household duties**. They do not have time to read news from website. **Elderly people cannot read news from website, but they can listen to radio**. Our citizens who are labor migrants abroad also read our news and comment on our social media.”*

*“The role of our local CMC is very big. We work with them very closely. The **only thing is that they give us very limited time**. 2-3 mins are not enough to deliver our problems. We would like them to give us more time, at least 5 mins so that we can tell more. **We have heard that there will be launched a new Community Radio soon and we are hoping that it will give us opportunity to deliver our voices more.**”*

*“I would like our local CMC to be given more time, at least 15 mins so that we can **talk more about our region to the whole republic.**”*

*“The **representatives of Local Municipality sometimes reject to give interview**. Especially during emergency situations such as floods. We stopped using loudspeaker because some local people started **complaining** that it is making a loud sound and their babies cannot sleep.”*

*“Our most important problem is that we do not have a room. **I work from home; all technical equipment is in my house now**. Volunteers work from school.”*

*“I also need to pay for Internet connection of my volunteers. Also, to pay for their travel when they go to interviews. **We need a sponsor**. Currently only some projects help us with trainings. Association of Community Media in Kyrgyzstan supports us. They teach us how to write project proposals. **Since its launch the Association has been helping us both financially and morally**. They never left us alone.”*

*“We **need photo camera to shoot photos for our news stories**. Currently we are using our own smartphones to get interviews and we cannot make photos parallelly.”*

*“Our CMC is situated at school. There are 3 turns of classes in one day at our school, that is **why it is very crowded and when we are recording our voices for news stories it is very difficult because of voices outside.**”*

*“It is **difficult to make live broadcasts here** in this room at school because of sounds outside.”*

“I would like local people to be more active and engaged. Even if there are more than 700 households in our village, our news is read only by

about 200 people. We need to increase the number of readers and subscribers.”

COVID - 19 IMPACT AND HEALTH COMMUNICATION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES (11)

Community Media are traditionally effective with local health campaigns and information dissemination. Evidence from this research indicates that the CM were able to step up to the challenge of providing needed information to their communities and that their local audience appreciated having this information at a time of general panic and misinformation.

Two sub-themes emerged from this section, the first on CM as a reliable source on health information and the second on the specific challenges CM faced during the pandemic that can help the Community Media Association to better support them in the future.

Recommendation: strengthen health communication and reporting skills

COMMUNITY MEDIA AS THE RELIABLE SOURCE OF HEALTH INFORMATION DURING COVID - 19 PANDEMIC

*“We provide our CMC information about immunization, vaccination. Most local people do not have information about these topics. We also **organize campaigns on tuberculosis, domestic violence, COVID-19 vaccination for parents.**”*

*“**Local people could not know about events and campaigns organized by Local Health Committee before.** Now through CMC they know about them and take part actively.”*

*“Recently we had a planned vaccination for newborns and children until 16 years old. And most parents were doubting and rejecting vaccinating their kids. Our local **CMC wrote about vaccination and parents started vaccinating their kids.** Only one parent was against and rejected vaccination.”*

*“Recently when **we covered campaign on COVID-19 vaccination,** most parents in our village were against it and required not to disseminate this information. Then we **disseminated flyers and posters through WhatsApp.**”*

*“Media plays an important role in our work. Even during pandemic our CMC was **informing local publics about hygiene, sanitation and rules.**”*

“During pandemic we were making announcements to public through loudspeaker “To stay at home””.

*“Our aim is to inform public about infectious diseases. Before we were writing for “Jenish Tuusu” local newspaper, but this newspaper was closed two years ago, and we started working with CMC. **When COVID-19 started, misinformation also started, and our local people also started to panic.** So, we started informing people about pandemic through our CMC. They started reading them and the interest for such information was high.”*

*“I write about health issues. This year was a very difficult year because of pandemic. I was informing public about the epidemic situation in our rayon. When there was a panic among local public, we started informing them. **People started reading us and I realized that local public needs more information locally.** As our proverb says, **“a lonely tree cannot be a forest”**, the same for people. We need to exchange information with each other and build trustworthy relations. For this we need to inform.”*

“During pandemic also we did announcements for local public through CMC.” (Local Municipality Head)

*“I think **we get the most correct and trustworthy information from our local CMC.** During pandemic they were informing us about the virus and how to protect from it.”*

“During pandemic, our CMC was informing us about COVID-19, how to protect from it, what measures to take, rules and lockdowns. We were getting very important information about pandemic from them.”

*“We also **work with village Health Committee.** For example, on HIV Day we write about campaigns of Village Health Committee.”*

C H A L L E N G E S C O M M U N I T Y M E D I A F A C E D D U R I N G C O V I D - 1 9 P A N D E M I C

*“Now it is pandemic, and we are **struggling with trainings of our volunteers.** Online education also made it difficult for us to work for CMC. As I am also a teacher and I also had to switch to online teaching.”*

*“**Due to pandemic and online education, volunteers are working online,** and we are **struggling with creating content.** We do it once in a month now. We also do online live broadcasts.”*

*“During pandemic since last year, **parents are afraid of sending their kids to do volunteering** and the school is also closed”*

“Last year we started live-broadcasts once in a month. Unfortunately, it stopped in June and July when the pandemic increased.”

COMMUNITY MEDIA BREAKING GENDER STEREOTYPES (12)

Gender related reporting attracts a lot of attention both by CM reporters and the community. This might be due to efforts made by donor aid agents to strengthen gender equality and domestica violence through workshops and trainings. This is clearly an area that merrits CM’s attention which do their fair part in reporting these issues.

Given the wide spread gender related violence in the country, CM can play an even more important role in not only covering the issues but also take a more solutions approach to their reporting.

Recommendation: strengthen gender reporting

*“News articles about **“Success of “Altin Tuyak Jene”** (“Golden Leg” Aunt) (Барскоон: “Алтын туяк жеңенин” уйгулиги (kyrgyzmedia.kg)) where a local woman makes bricks are made and news article **“Veterinarian woman on a motorcycle”** (Барскоон: Мотоциклчен мал доктор (kyrgyzmedia.kg)) about women veterinarian who helps villagers by visiting their homes riding a motorcycle were very popular and we learnt about them. All villagers were very interested in them. We need to help our CMC by providing information.”*

*“CMC writes about gender equality and domestic violence a lot. There were **articles about gender equality which created a huge discussion.**”*

*“CMC writes about **“Shayir Apalar” mother-singers.**”*

*“During elections they **write about women candidates for Local Council Elections.**”*

*“We had women’s meeting at our school recently and Gulbahor (CMC coordinator) invited **gender experts and women leaders to our meeting.** She regularly comes to our school and attends our events.”*

*“In the framework of gender projects, we raise the issues of **women’s rights and domestic violence** and get interviews from women’s NGOs.”*

*“Recently I gave interview to our CMC on how to solve the problem of **gender inequality during elections** and about new law on quota for women candidates.”*

“When we write about women who play football or volleyball and win prize, gets more reads and watches.”



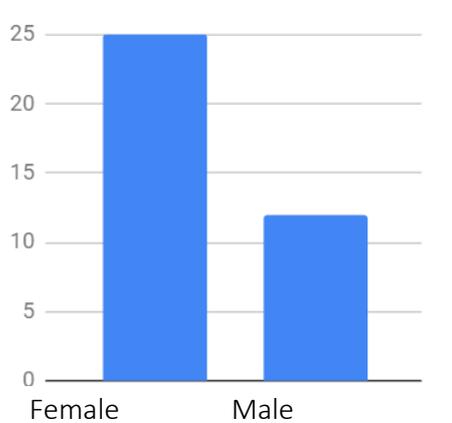
SURVEY RESULTS

Overall, 37 respondents participated in the survey. The questionnaire was sent through Google Forms to WhatsApp numbers of respondents. Quota sampling was used in this study and respondents from 14 multimedia centers were selected.

Demographic characteristics of respondents

Gender

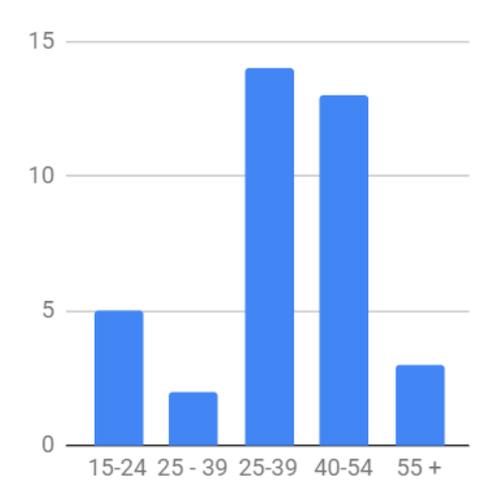
The female half who participated in the survey prevails twice as much as the male half.



Gender	Frequency
female	25
male	12
Общий итог	37

Age

The majority of respondents vary in the age category from 25 to 54, where the total number of them is 29 respondents, which is representative of 78 percent of the questionnaire.



VALUE	FREQUENCY
25-39	14
40-54	13
15-24	5
55 +	3
25 - 39	2

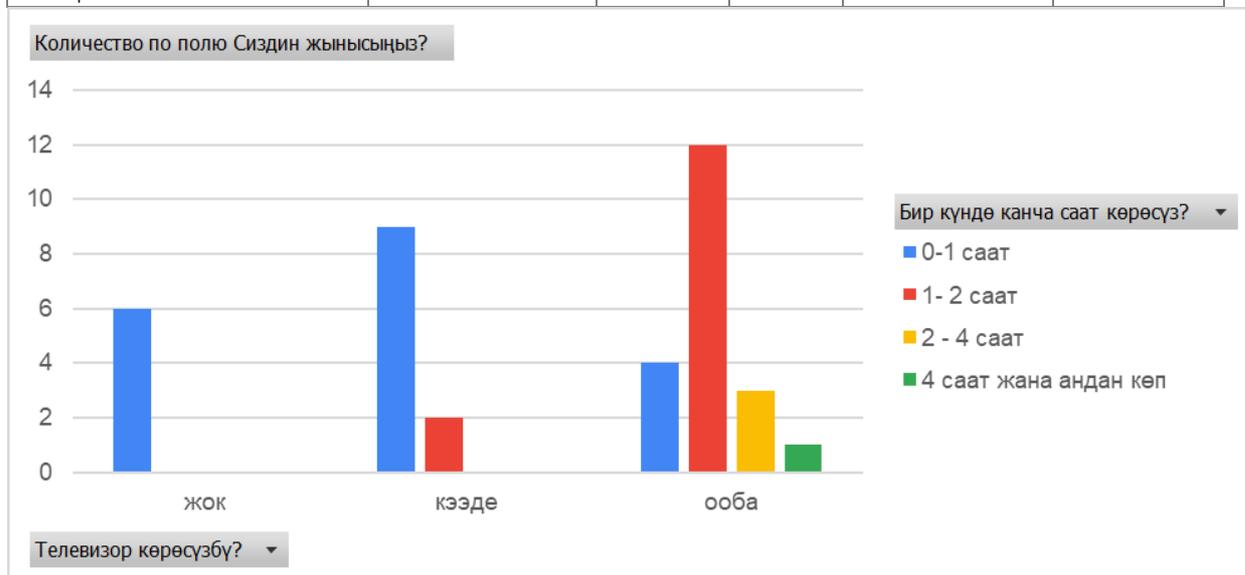
Total rows 137

Media Uses

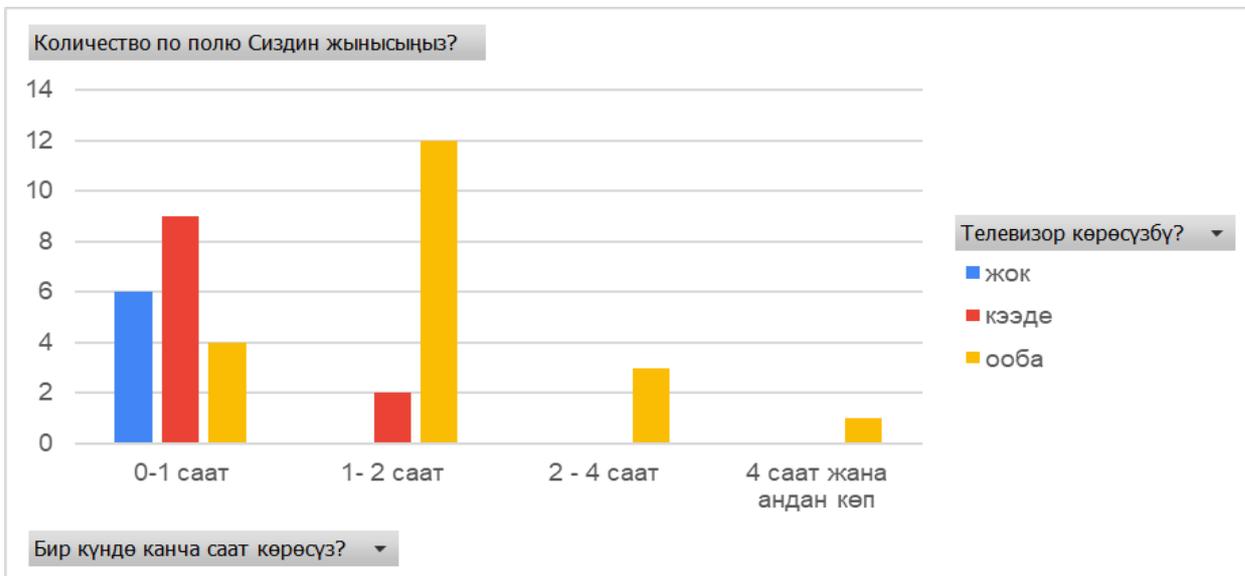
More than half of the respondents 54.04% watch TV.

Time spent by respondents watching TV

Количество по полю Сиздин жынысыңыз?	Названия столбцов				
Названия строк	0-1 саат	1- 2 саат	2 - 4 саат	4 саат жана андан көп	Общий итог
жок	6				6
кээде	9	2			11
ооба	4	12	3	1	20
Общий итог	19	14	3	1	37



Количество по полю Сиздин жынысыңыз?	Названия столбцов				Общий итог
Названия строк	жок	кээде	ооба		
0-1 саат	6	9	4		19
1- 2 саат		2	12		14
2 - 4 саат			3		3
4 саат жана андан көп			1		1
Общий итог	6	11	20		37

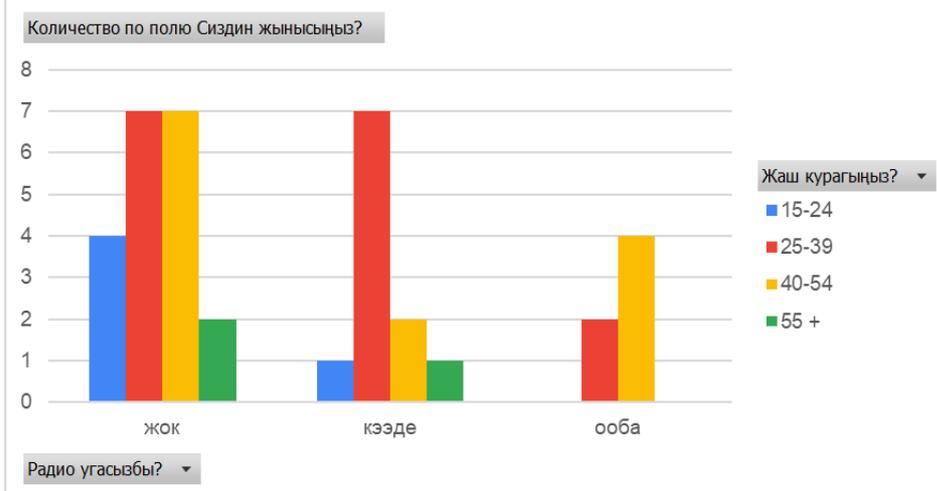


The majority of respondents do not devote more time to TV, in most cases it takes from 0-2 hours to watch television.

Comparison of different categories with radio

a. Age and frequency of listening to radio

Количество по полю Сиздин жынысыңыз?	Названия столбцов				
Названия строк	15-24	25-39	40-54	55 +	Общий итог
жок	4	7	7	2	20
кээде	1	7	2	1	11
ооба		2	4		6
Общий итог	5	16	13	3	37



As seen from table and figures, in most cases respondents don't listen to the radio at all, or they listen, but only sometimes.

The ratio of the working schedule to the number of hours devoted to listening to the radio

Количество по полю Сиздин жынысыңыз?	Названия столбцов			
Названия строк	0 - 1 саат	1 - 2 саат	2 - 4 саат	Общий итог
жумусуз	2			2
пенсионер	1			1
студент	2			2
толук иш күнү	24	2	1	27
толук эмес иш күнү	2			2
үй тиричилиги	3			3
Общий итог	34	2	1	37

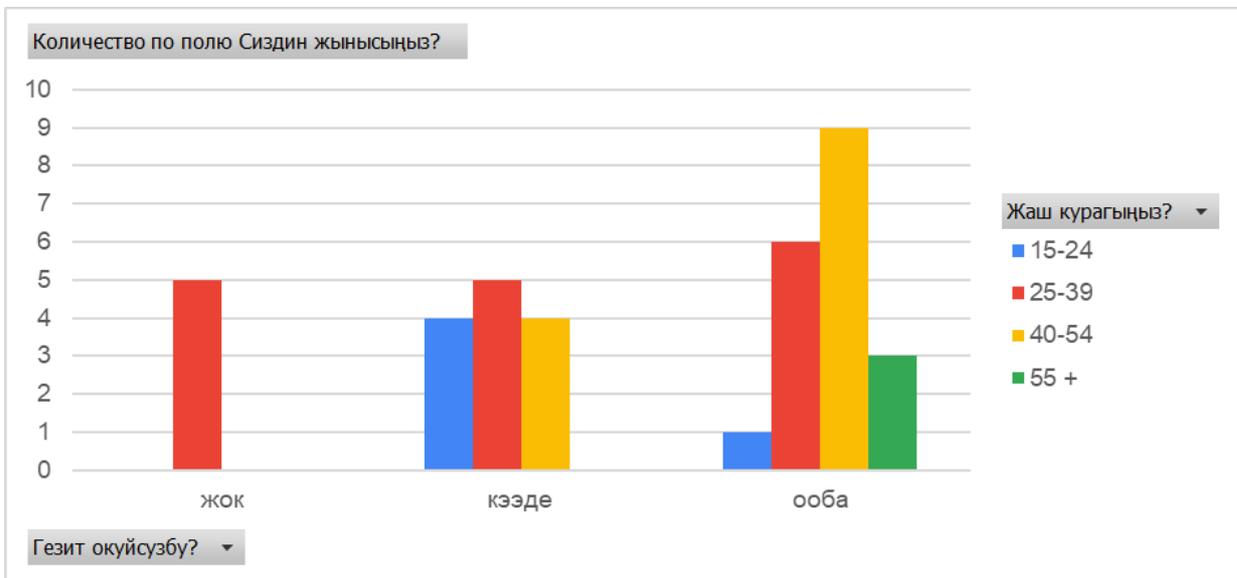


According to this comparative analysis, it can be assumed that in most cases, people who devote radio from zero to an hour a day have a full-time job.

Comparison of different categories with a newspaper

a. Comparison of age and frequency of newspaper reading

Количество по полю Сиздин жынысыңыз?	Названия столбцов				
Названия строк	15-24	25-39	40-54	55+	Общий итог
жок		5			5
кээде	4	5	4		13
ооба	1	6	9	3	19
Общий итог	5	16	13	3	37

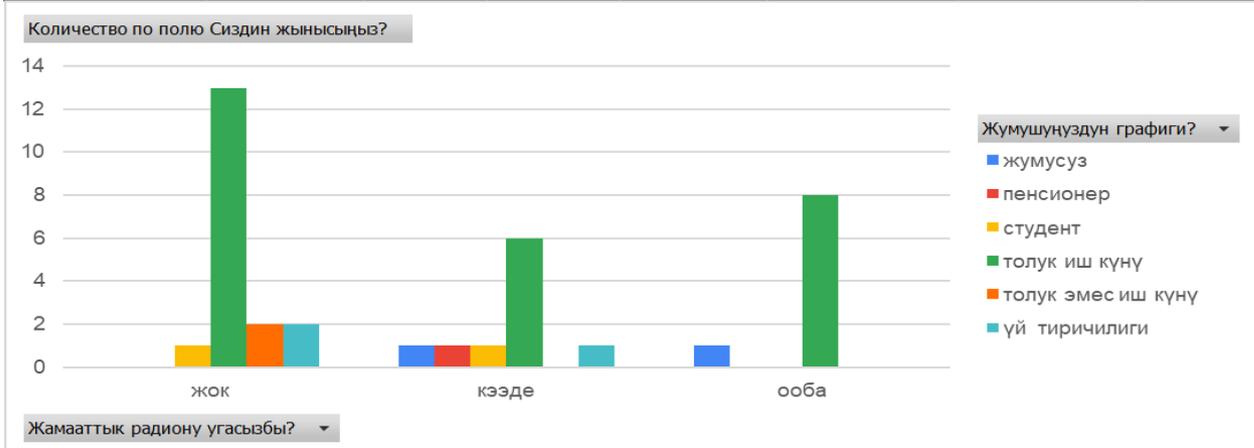


32 respondents or 86% of them, of almost all age categories, read newspapers.

Comparisons regarding Community radio

a. Work schedule in comparison with listening to public radio

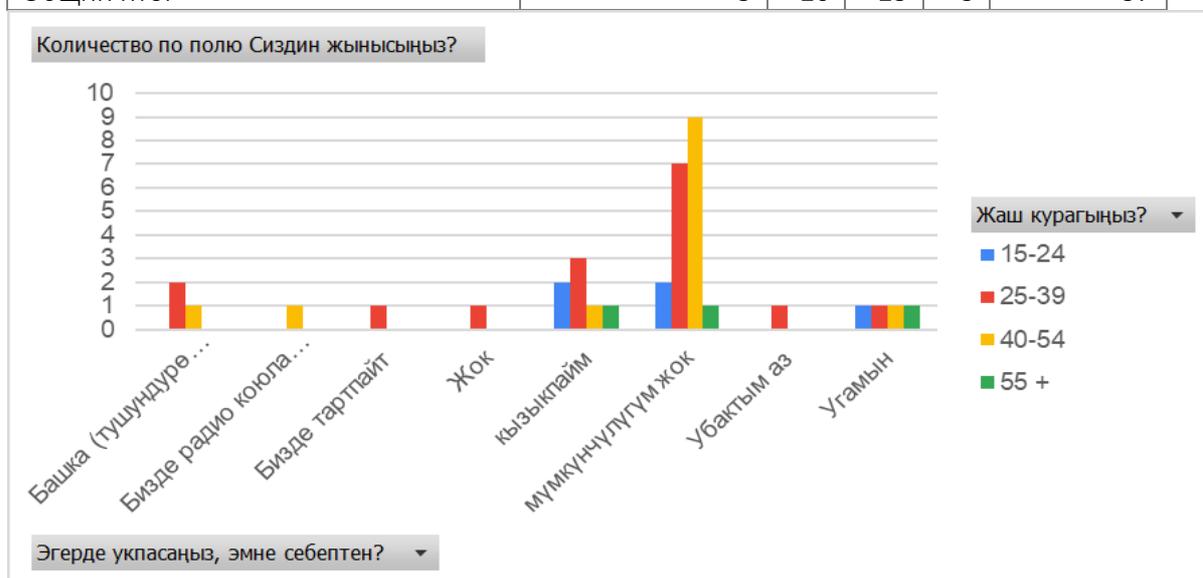
Количество по полу Сиздин жынысыңыз? Названия строк	Названия столбцов жумусуз	Пен-сионер	студент	толук иш күнү	толук эмес иш күнү	үй тиричилиги	Общий итог
жок			1	13	2	2	18
кээде	1	1	1	6		1	10
ооба	1			8			9
Общий итог	2	1	2	27	2	3	37



Most of the respondents, as well as when analyzing the level of listening to the radio, tend to answer that they do not listen to public radio or rarely listen. This graphical representation makes it clear that the majority of respondents are people with full-time jobs.

Reasons why respondents don't listen to public radio

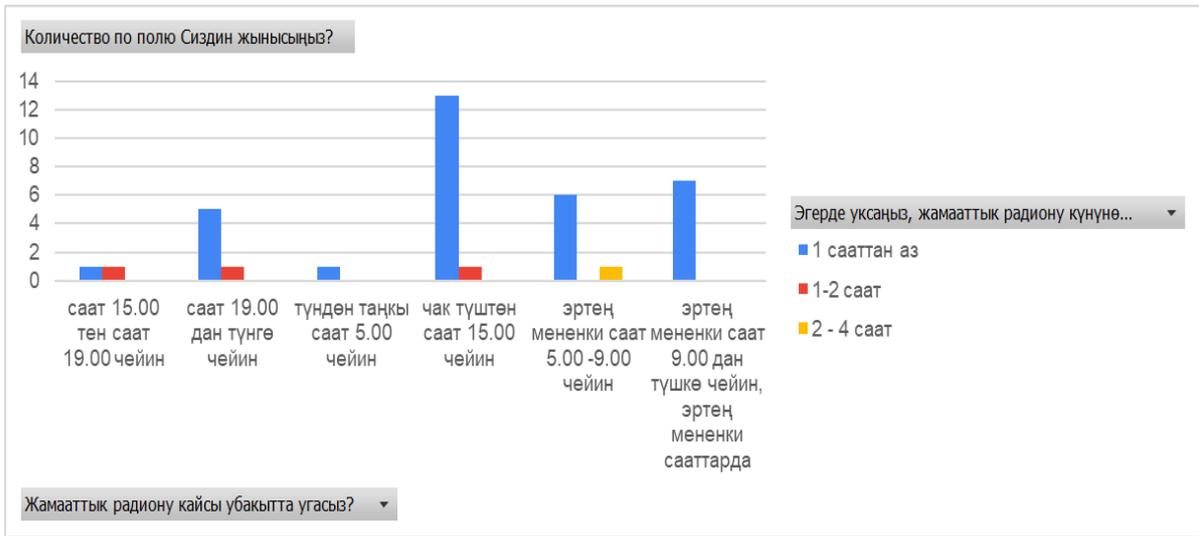
Количество по полю Сиздин жынысыңыз?	Названия столбцов	25-39	40-54	55+	Общий итог
Названия строк	15-24				
Башка (тушундурө кетсеңиз)↓		2	1		3
Бизде радио коюла элек			1		1
Бизде тартпайт		1			1
Жок		1			1
кызыкпайм	2	3	1	1	7
мүмкүнчүлүгүм жок	2	7	9	1	19
Убактым аз		1			1
Угамын	1	1	1	1	4
Общий итог	5	16	13	3	37



The main reason why most of the respondents do not listen to public radio is that they either “do not have the opportunity” (51%) or “are not interested” (18%).

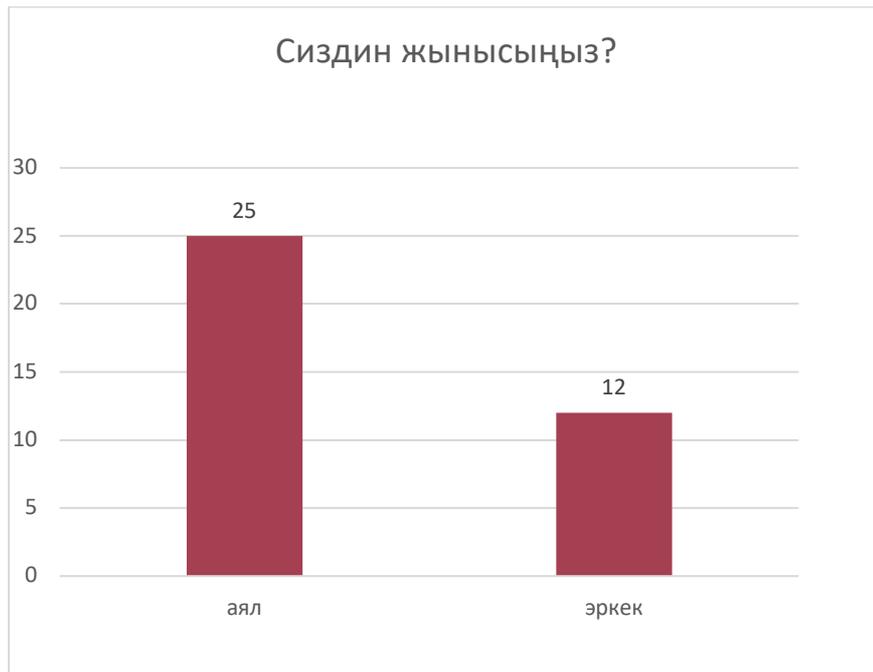
Comparison of the parameters of the time spent listening to public radio and the period in which respondents listen to the radio

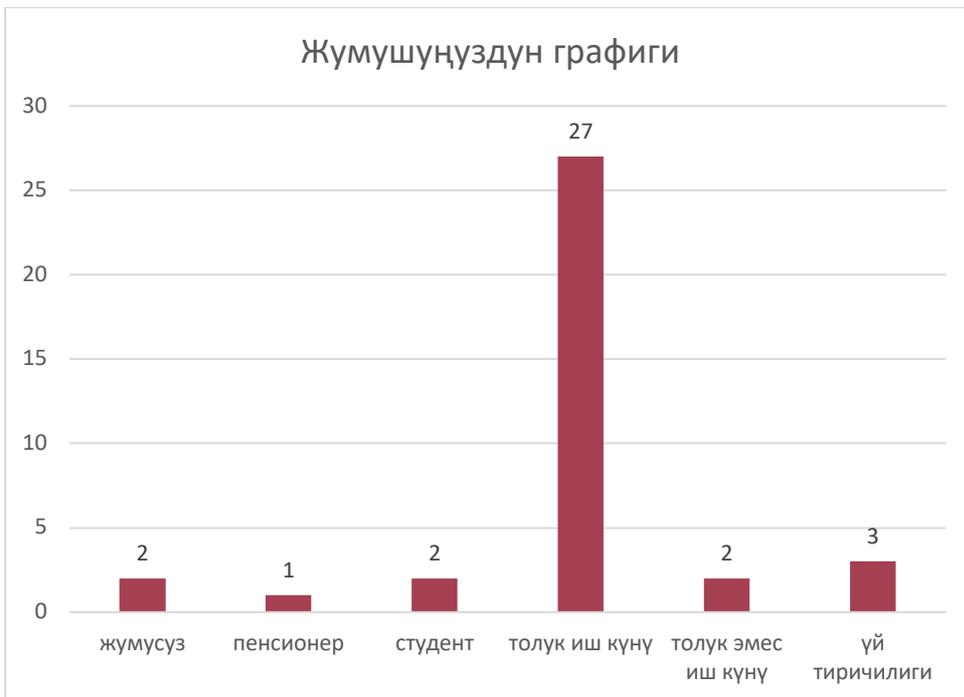
Количество по полю Сиздин жынысыңыз?	Названия столбцов	1-2 саат	2 - 4 саат	Общий итог
Названия строк	1 сааттан аз			
саат 15.00 тен саат 19.00 чейин	1	1		2
саат 19.00 дан түнгө чейин	5	1		6
түндөн таңкы саат 5.00 чейин	1			1
чак түштөн саат 15.00 чейин	13	1		14
эртең мененки саат 5.00 -9.00 чейин	6		1	7
эртең мененки саат 9.00 дан түшкө чейин, эртең мененки сааттарда	7			7
Общий итог	33	3	1	37



This comparison of the parameters of the amount of time listened to and the time period shows that the majority of respondents listen to public radio for less than an hour (89%), starting in the afternoon until three o'clock in the afternoon (38%).

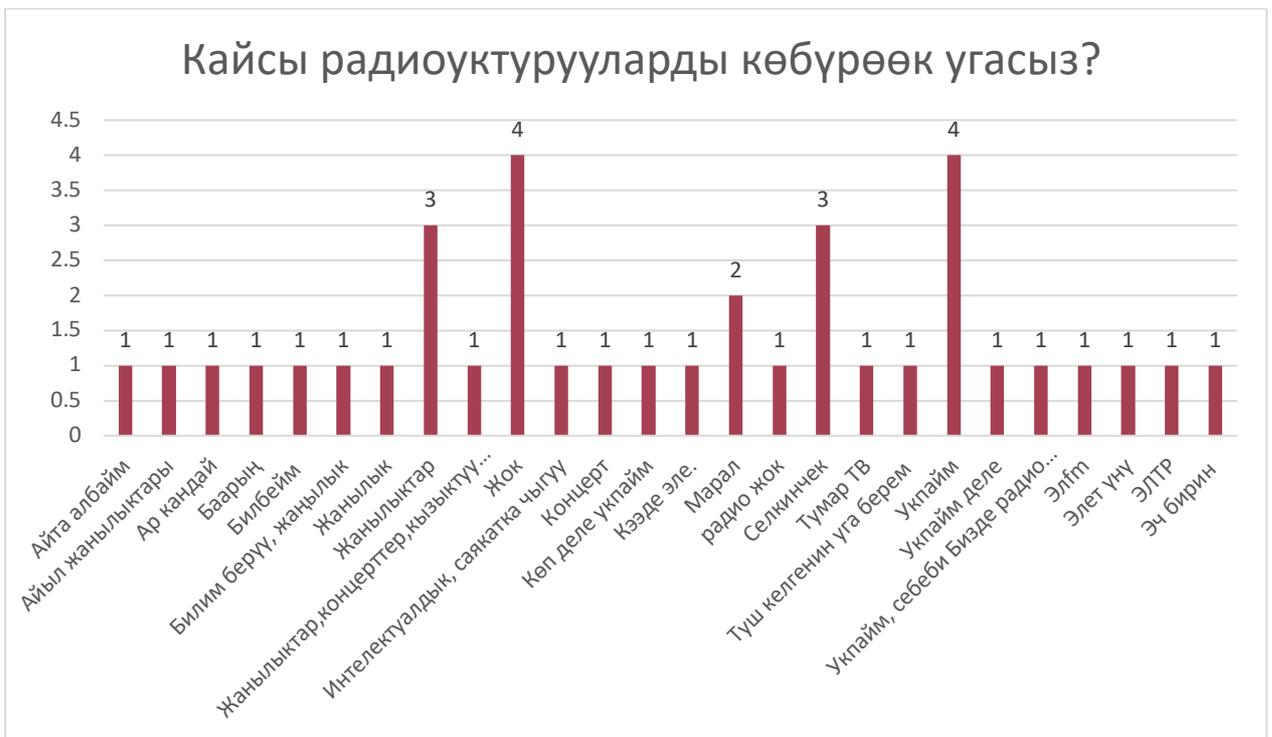
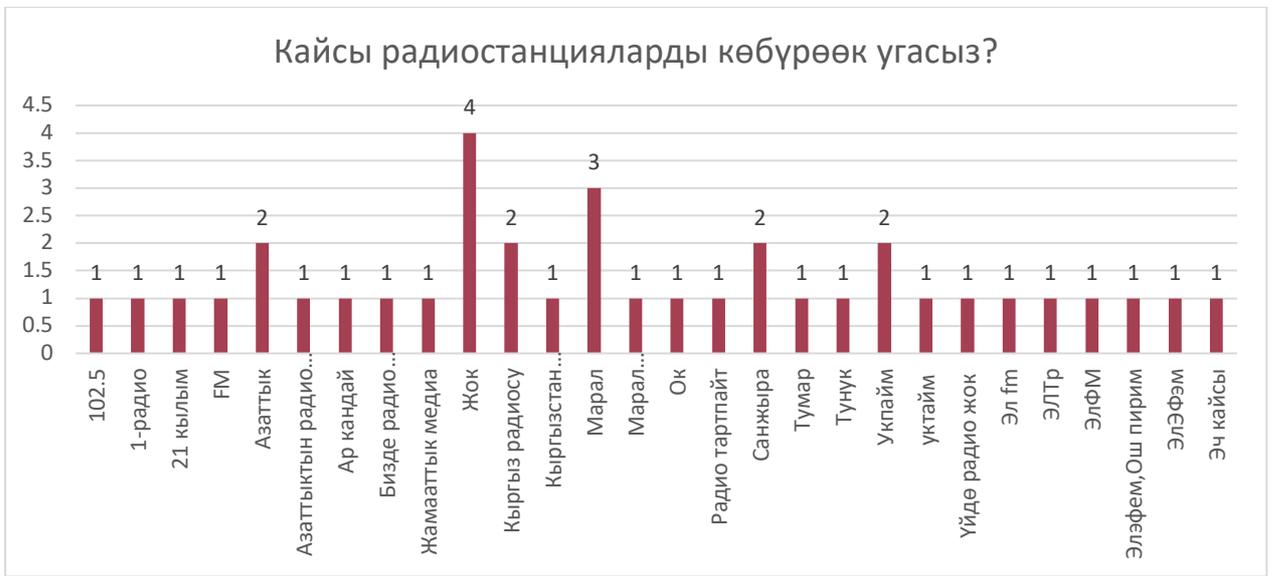
Frequencies



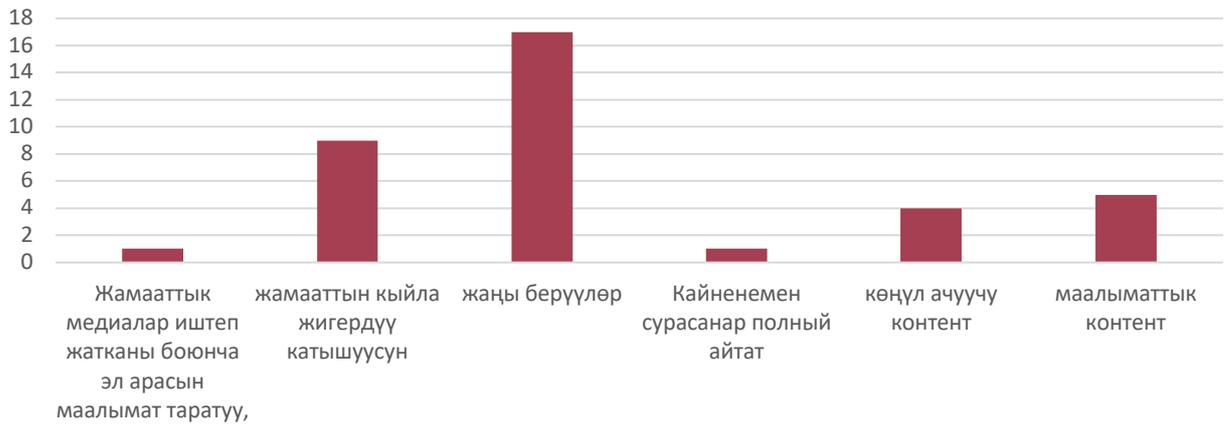




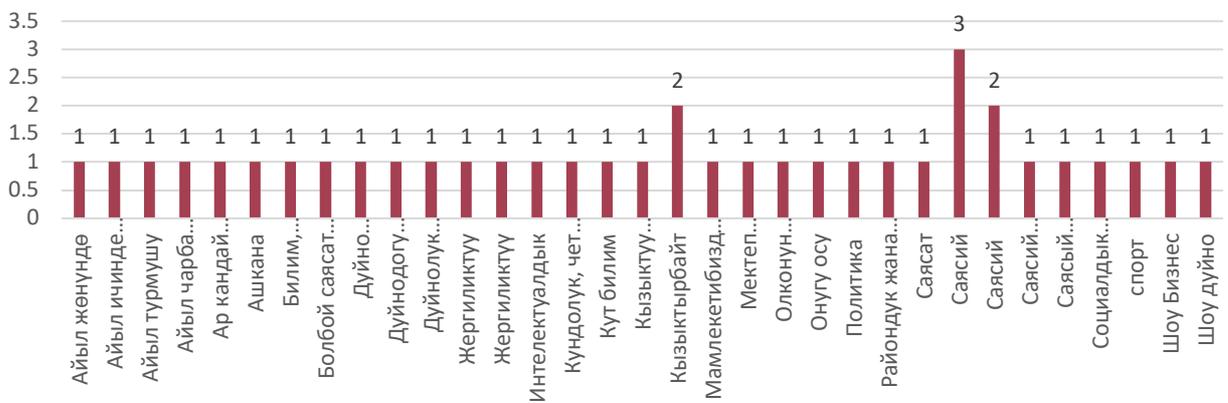




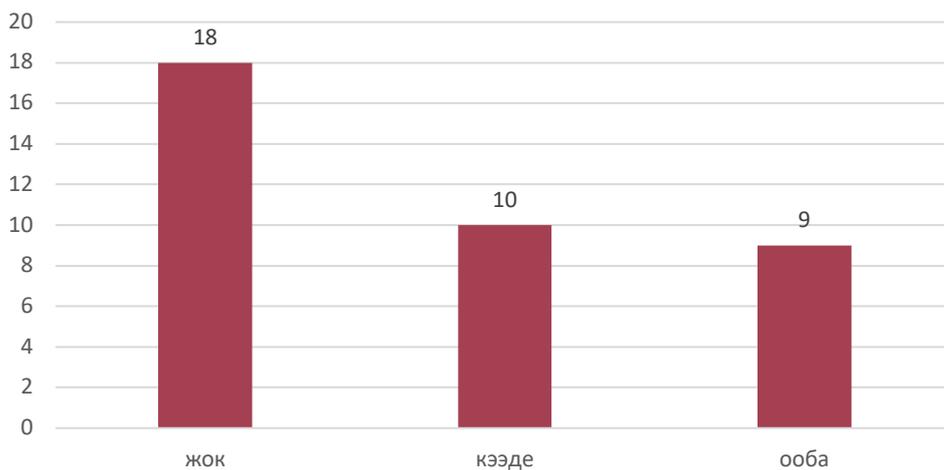
Кайсы гезиттерди көбүрөөк окуйсуз?

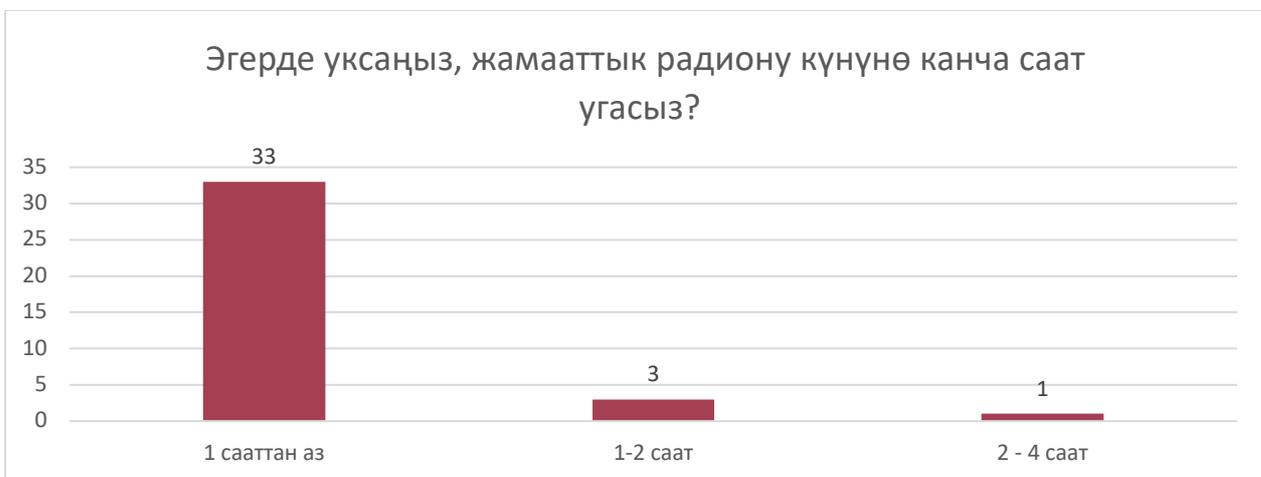


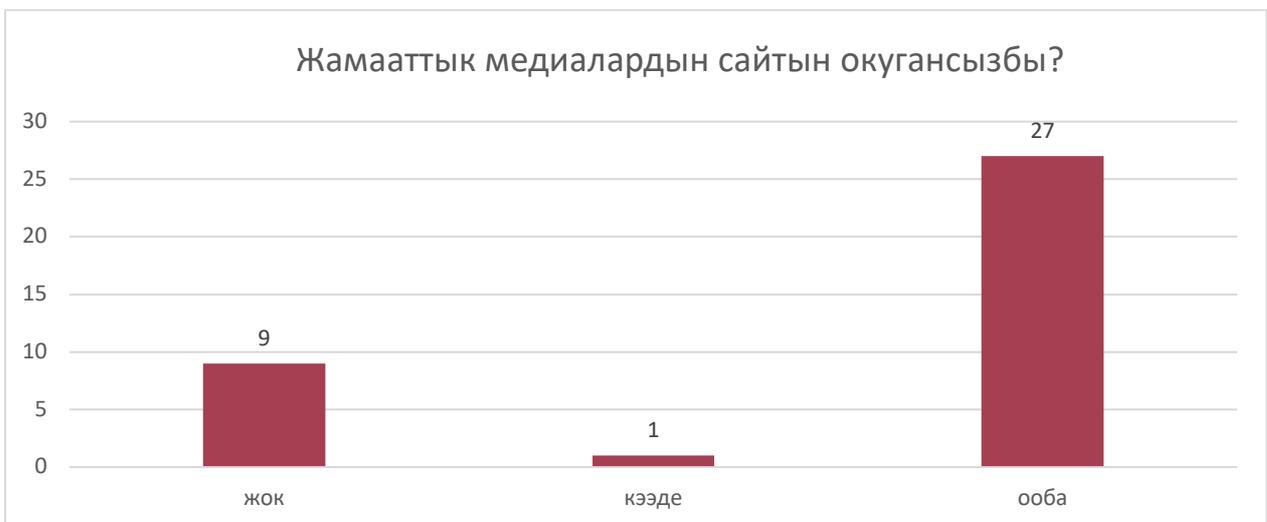
Сизди кандай жаңылыктар көбүрөөк кызыктырат?



Жамааттык радиону угасызбы?



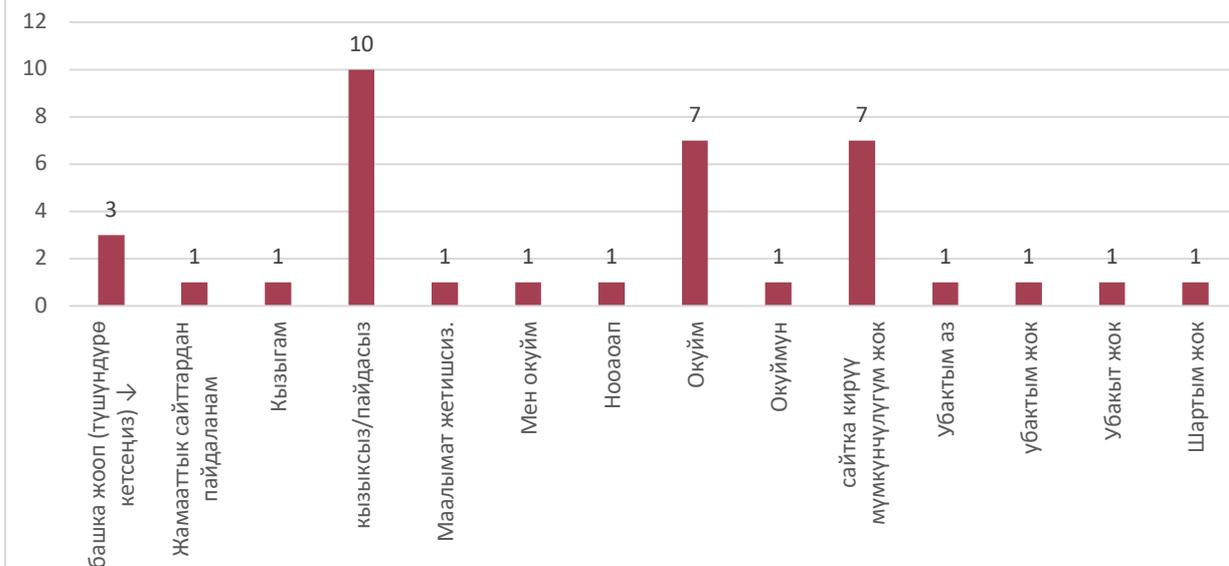




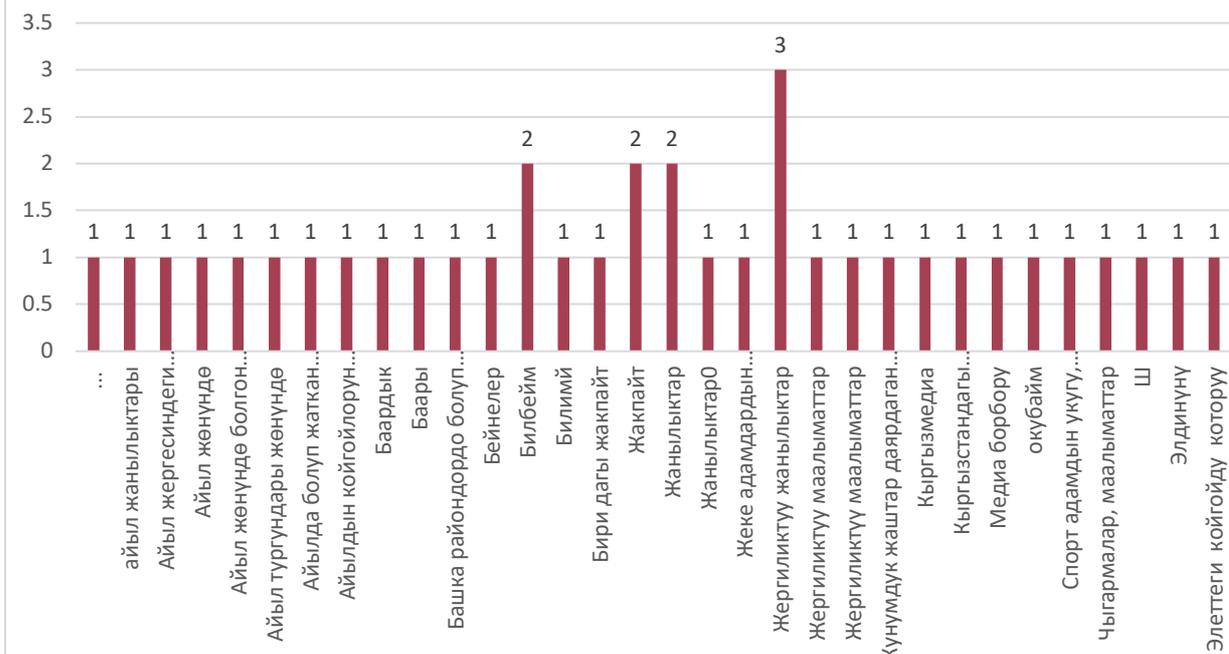
Эгер окусаңыз, жамааттык медиалардын сайты кайсы жерден колдоносуз?

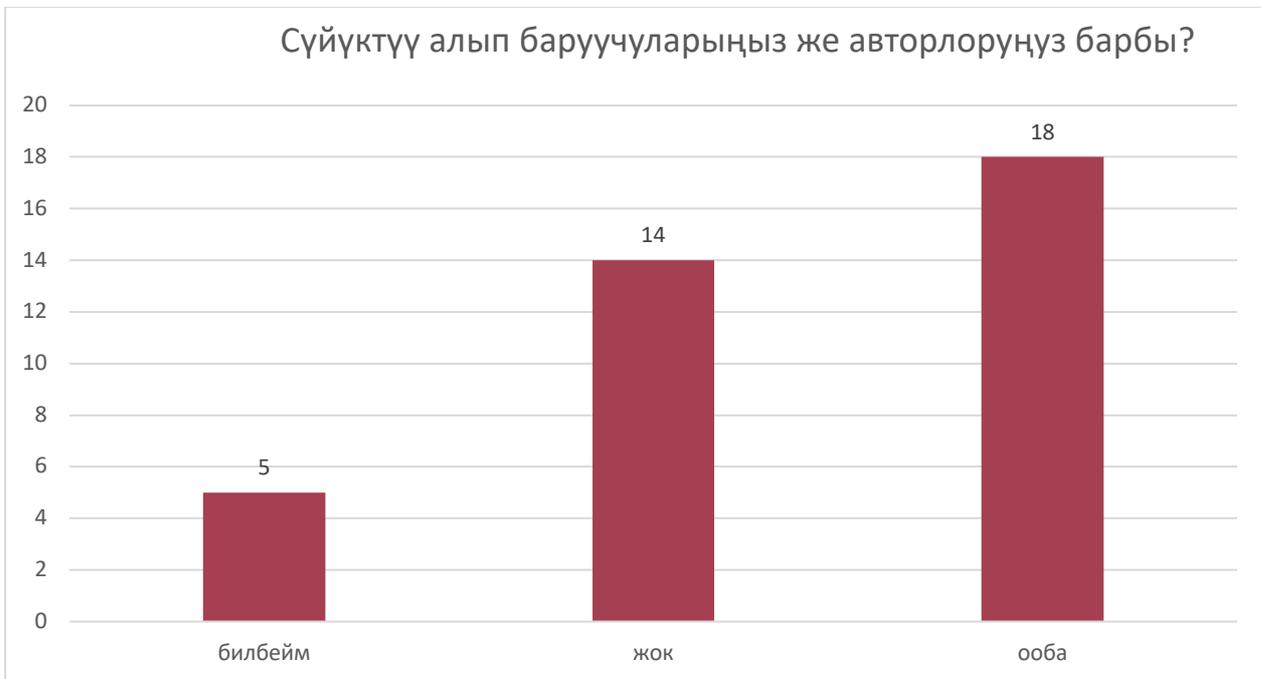


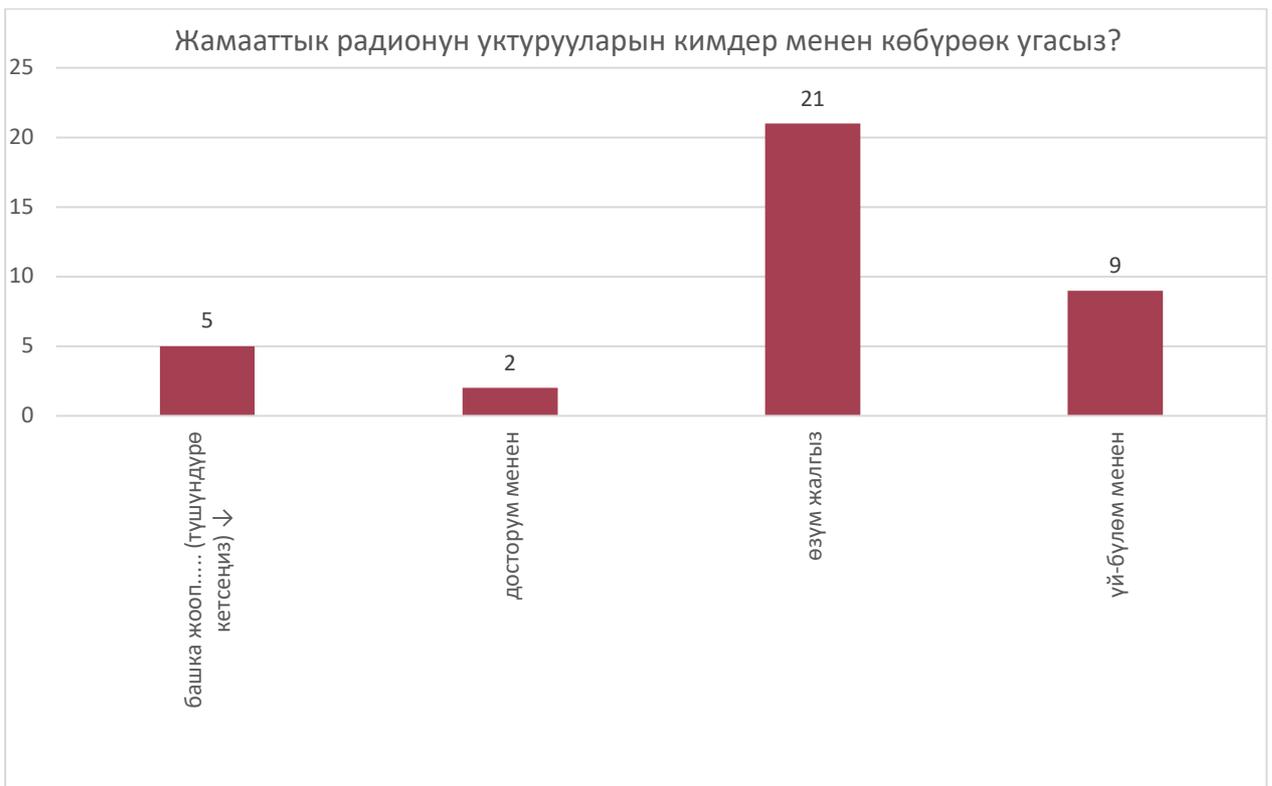
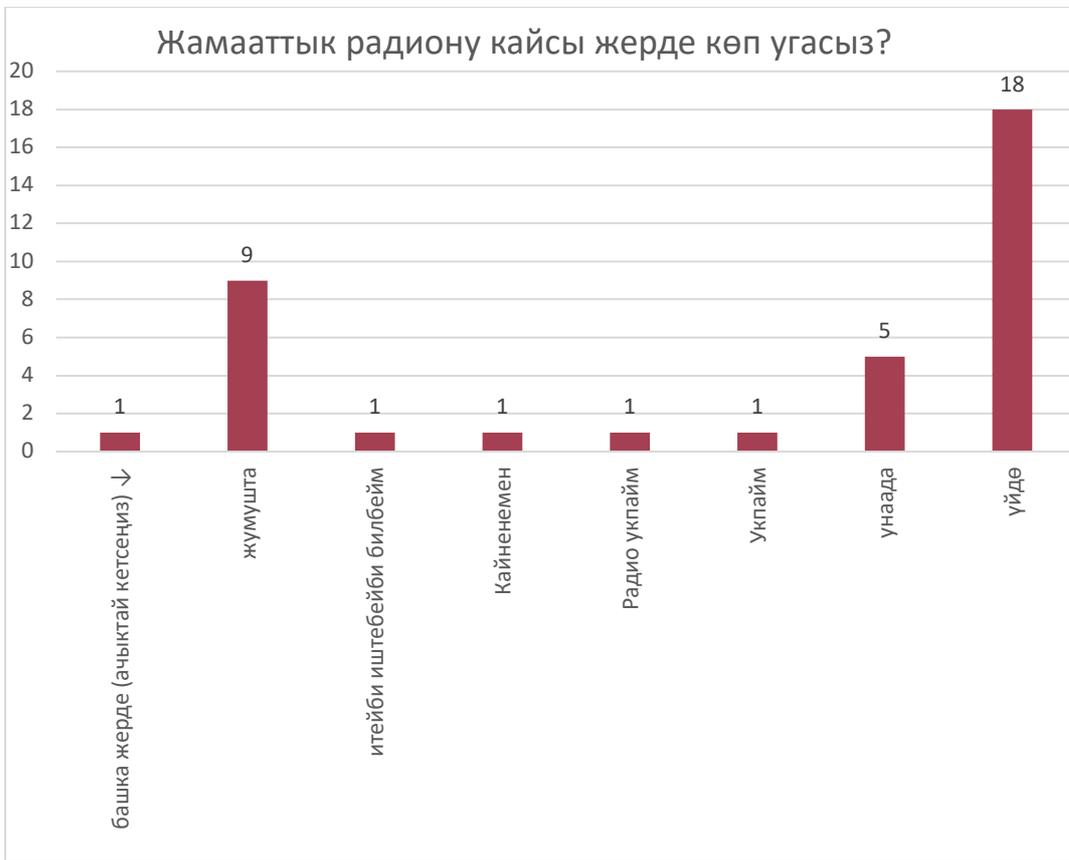
Эгер окубасаңыз, эмне себептен?

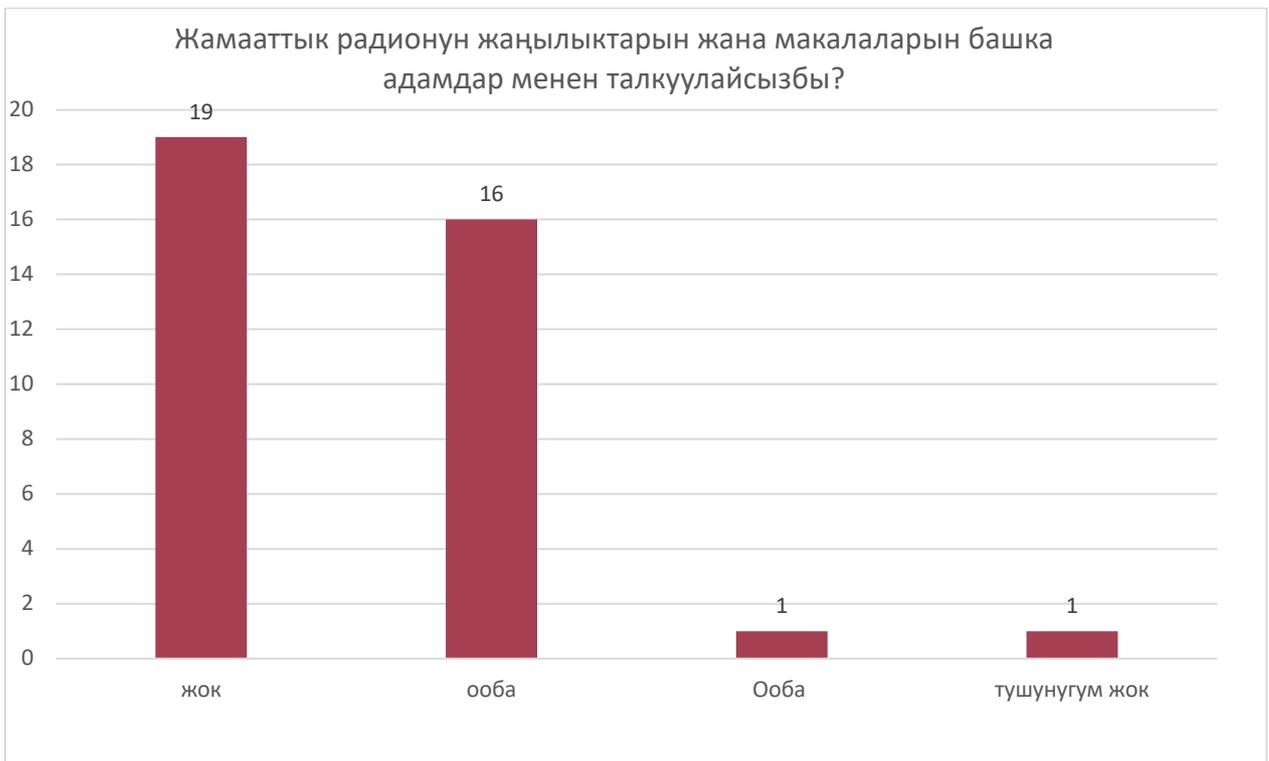


Эгерде окусаңыз, сизге сайттагы кандай маалыматтар жагат?

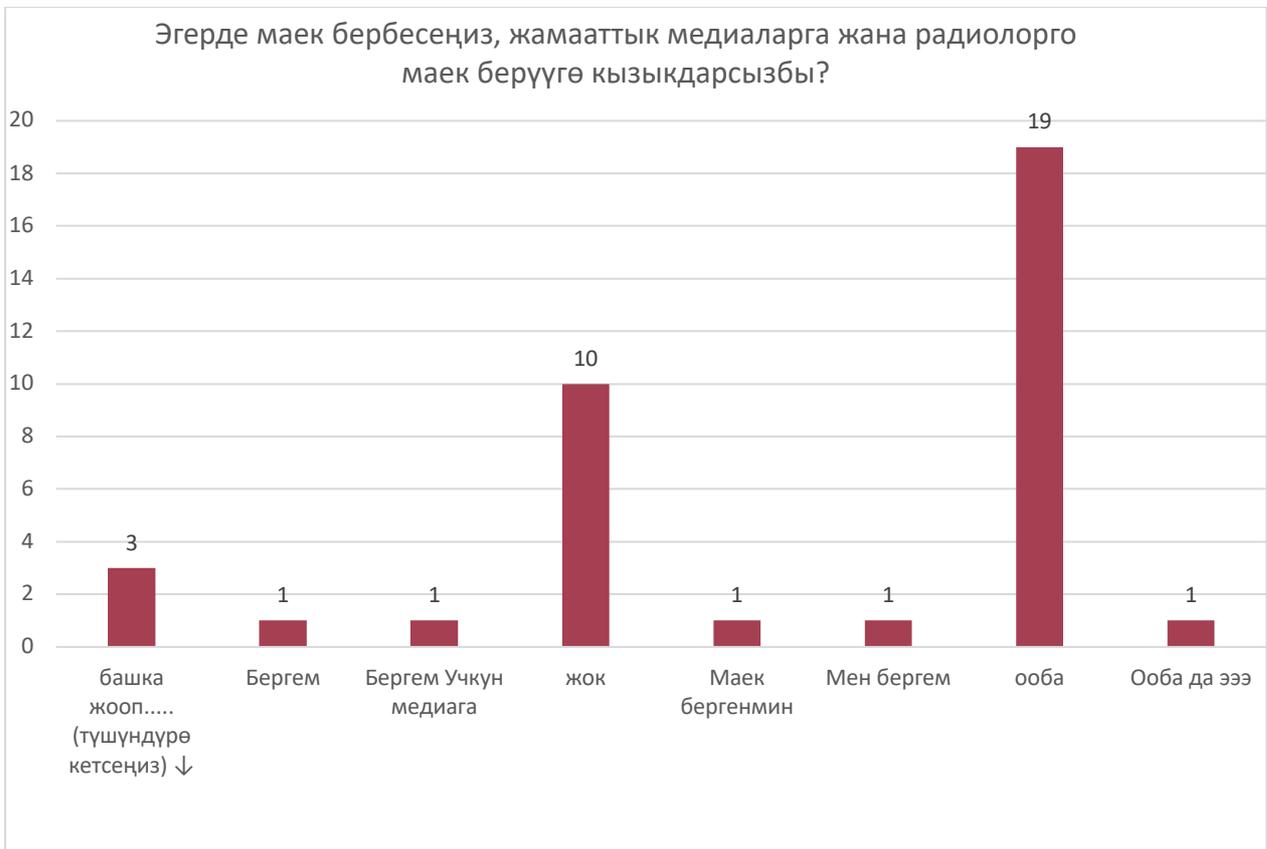


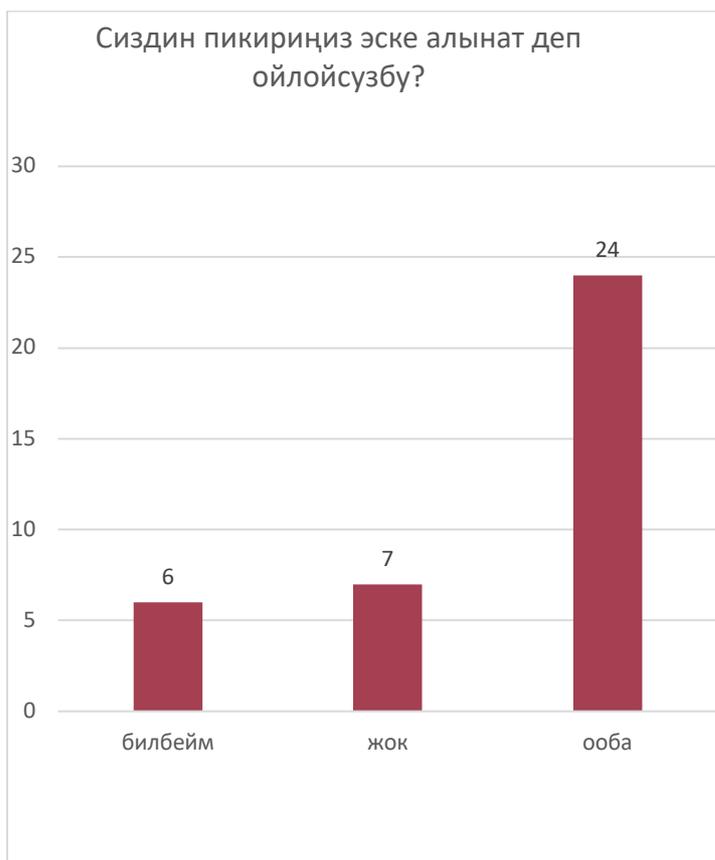


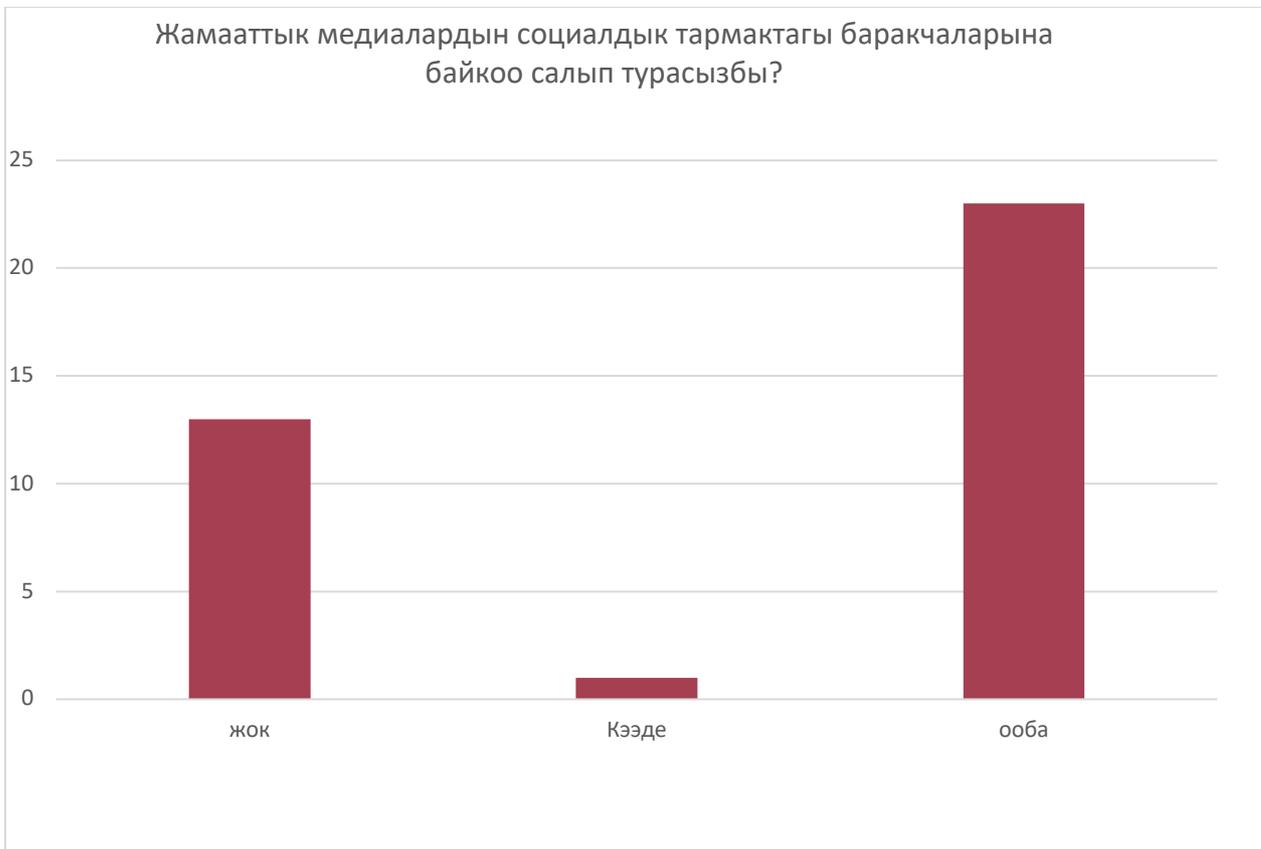




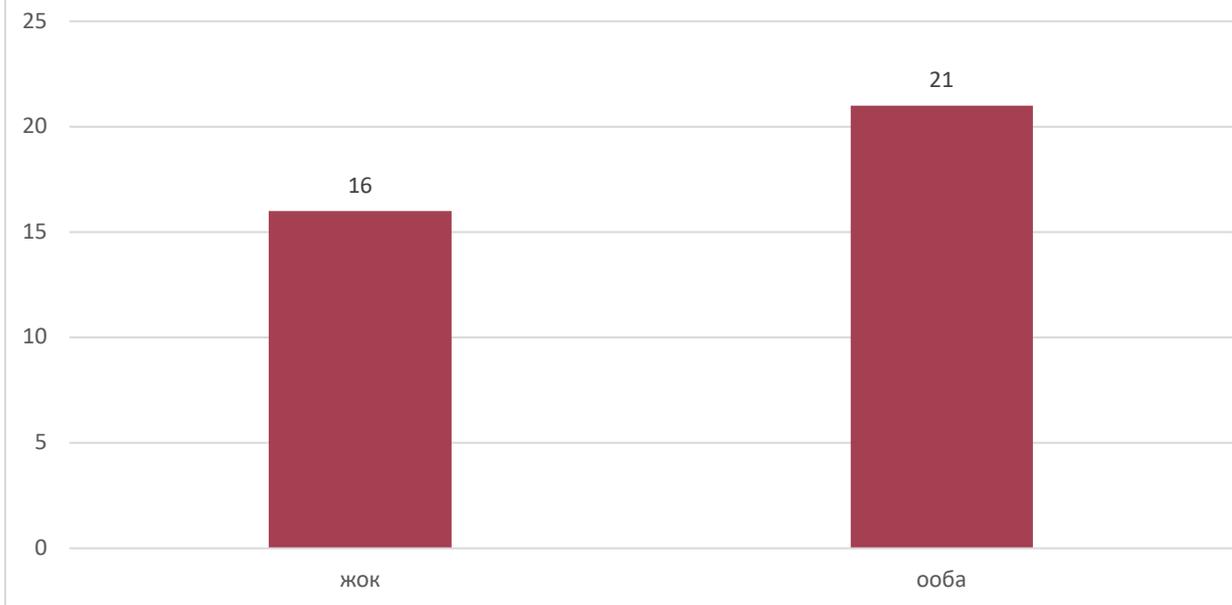




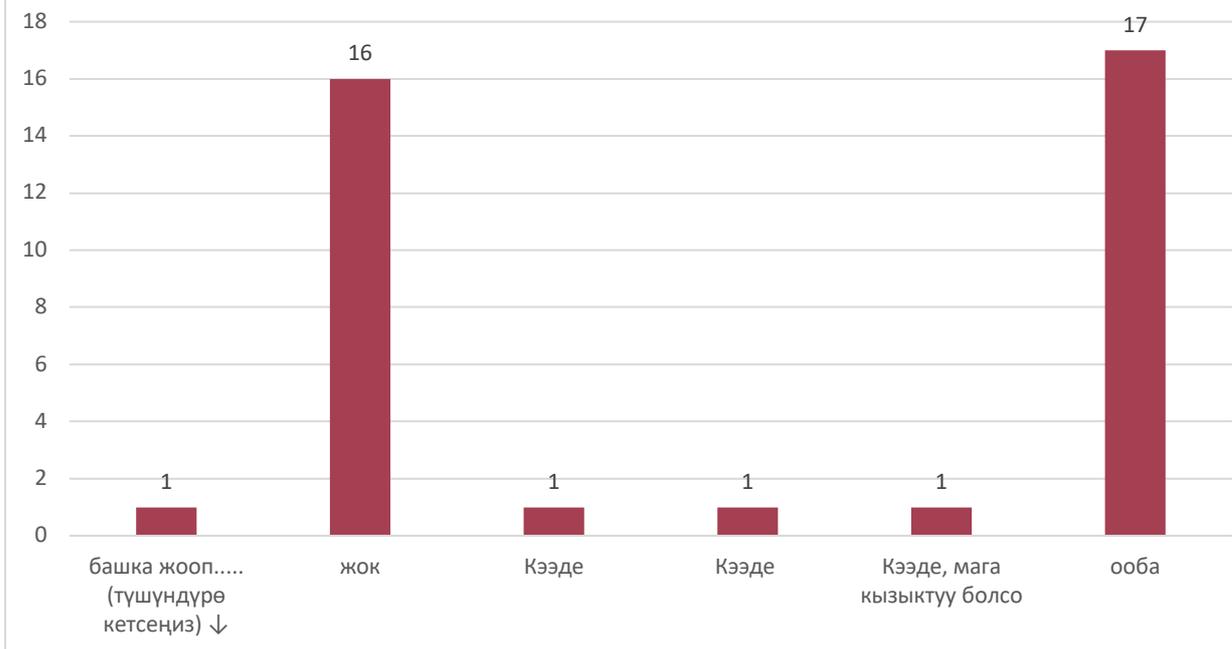




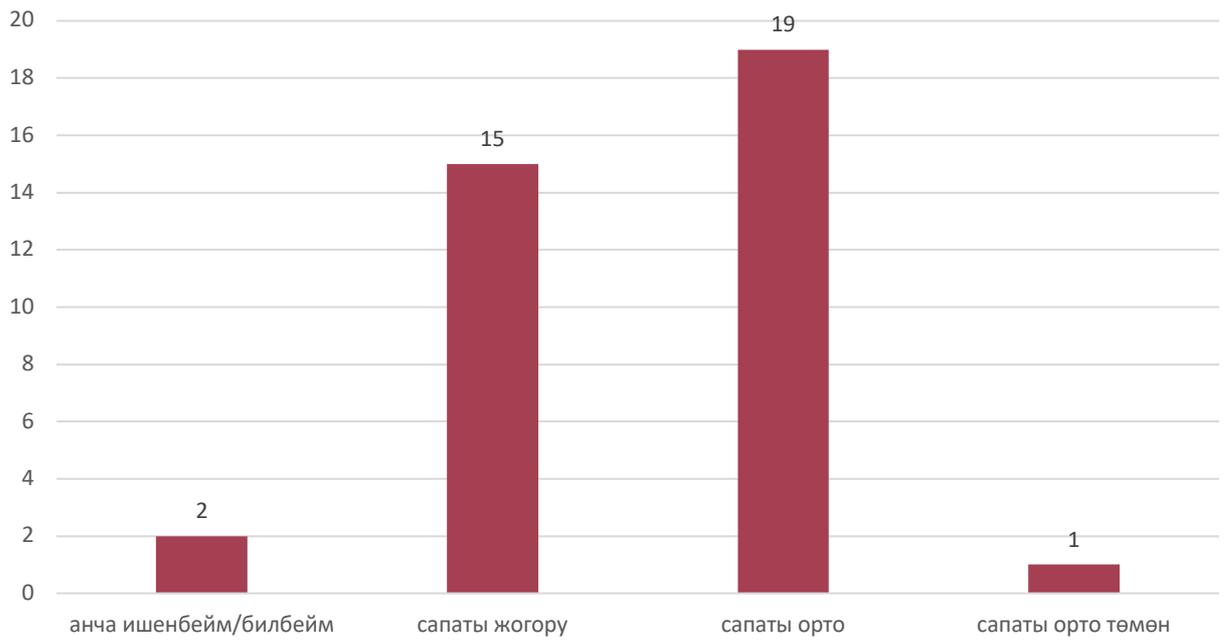
Жамааттык медиалардын социалдык тармактагы жаңылыктарын, макалаларын видео жана сүрөттөрүн комментарийлейсизби?



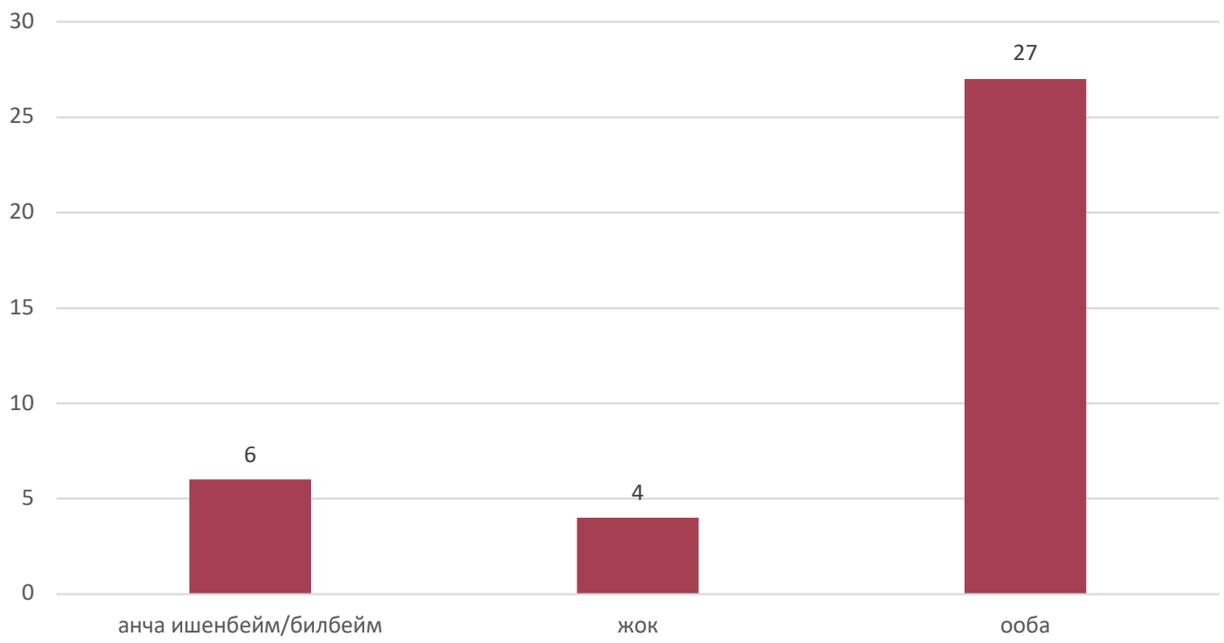
Жамааттык медиалардын социалдык тармактагы түз берүүлөрүн көрөсүзбү?



Жамааттык медиалардын жергиликтүү жаңылыктарынын мазмундук сапаты тууралуу эмнелерди айта аласыз?

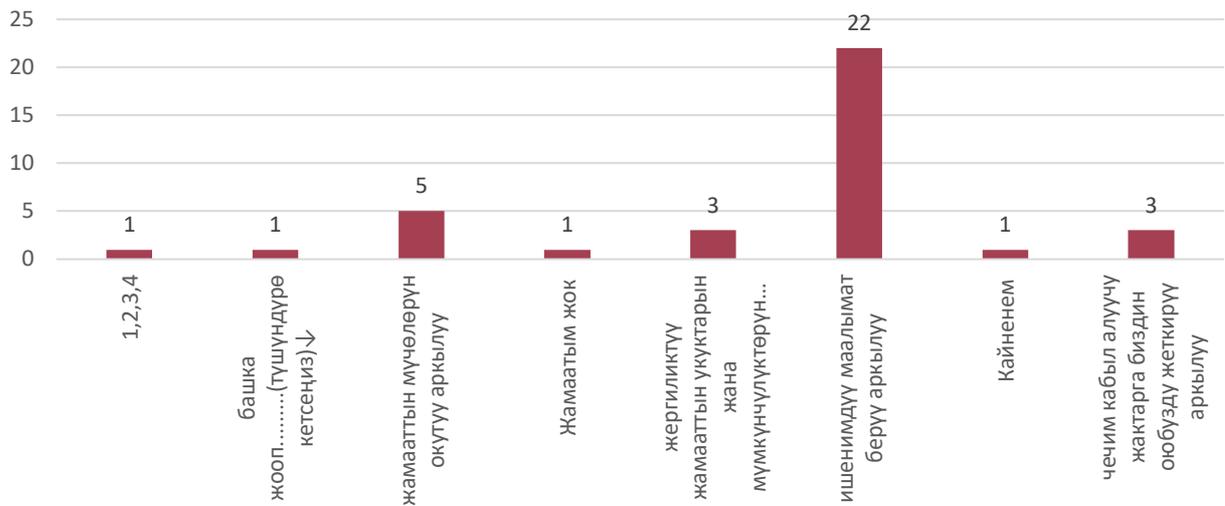


Жамааттык медиа сиздин жергиликтүү жамаат жөнүндө билимиңизди кеңейттиби?

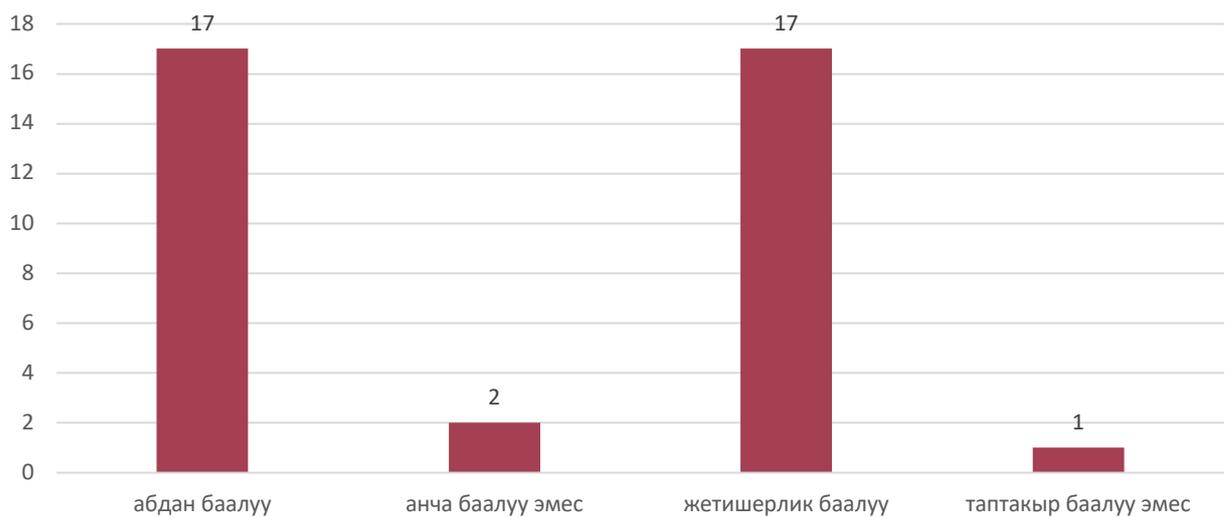




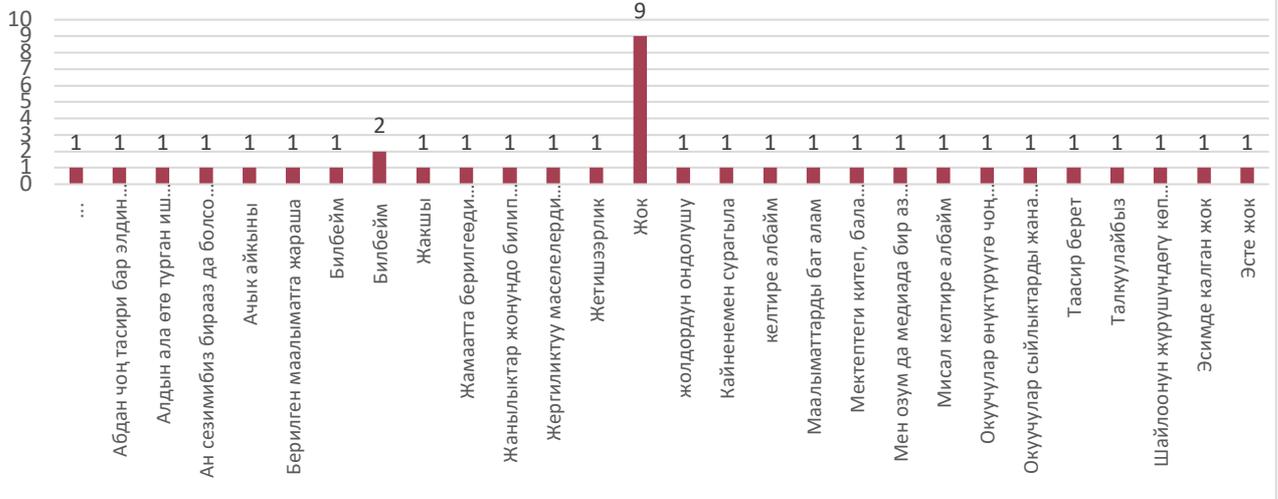
Жамааттык медиа сиздин жамааттын муктаждыктарын кандайча колдошу керек деп ойлойсуз? (тиешелүү деп эсептегендердин бардыгын белгилеңиз)



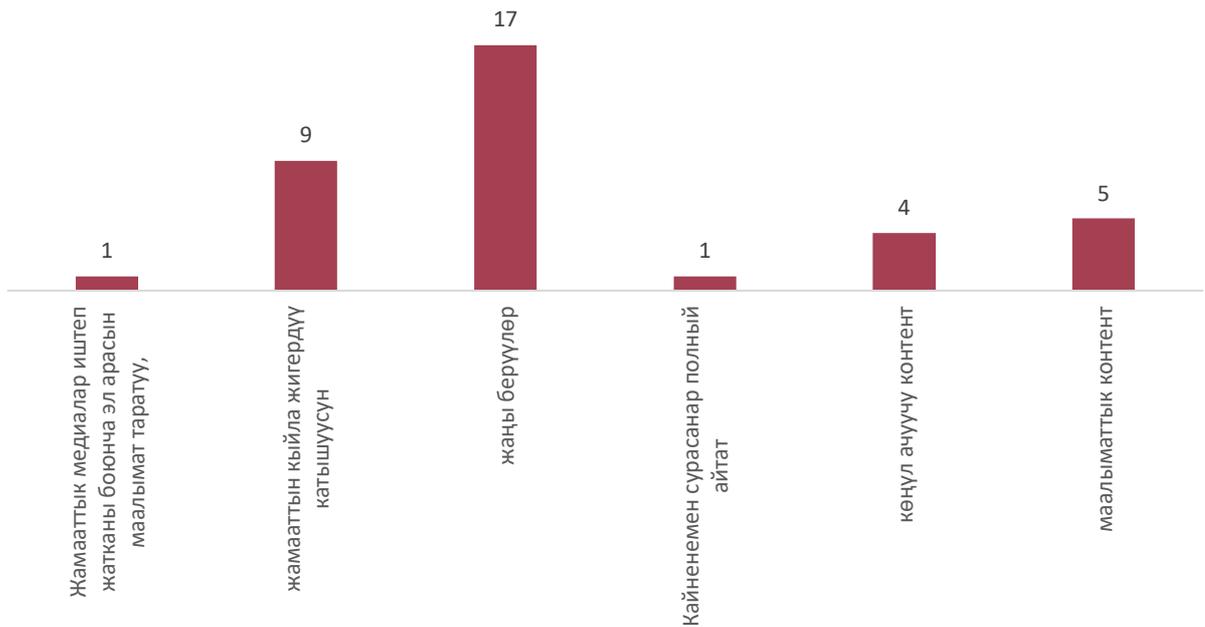
Жамааттык радио жана анын кызматтары сиздин жамаат үчүн маалымат каражаты катары канчалык баалуу?



Жамааттык медиа аркылуу алынган маалымат сизге жана / же сиздин жамаатыңызга кандайча таасир эткендиги жөнүндө 1-2 мисал келтире аласызбы?



Жамааттык медиалар үчүн кандай өркүндөтүүлөрдү сунуштаар элеңиз?





CONCLUSIONS

Comparative Analysis of CMCs

CMC	Community Development	Capacity building for volunteers	Social Media Use	Community Engagement	Community Impact
“Barskoon”	High	High	High	High	High
“Nur FM”	Medium	High	High	Medium	Medium
“Sary-Bulun”	High	High	High	High	High
“Ak-Bakay”	High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium
“Konok”	High	High	High	High	High
“Dostuk”	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
“Jani-Jer”	High	High	Medium	High	High
“Uch-Korgon”	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
“Suluktu”	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium
“Sumbula”	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
“Kyzyl-Bulak”	High	High	Medium	High	Medium
“Kenesh-Nuru”	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium
“Uchkun”	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
“Tun-Uk”	High	High	Medium	High	High
“Kulanak”	High	High	High	High	High

1. Who is the audience of community media and their characteristics?

The audience of community media are mostly villagers where the community media centers are located and labour migrants from those villages who left for labour migration to other countries. The members of local communities in those villages are the main audience of community media centers, among them elderly people, housewives, school pupils, school teachers, local municipality representatives, NGOs, civil society organizations, activists, Women’s Council and other local community organizations members.

2. What are the mediated communication practices and needs of these audiences and users in local communities?

More than half of the respondents (54.04%) watch TV. The majority of respondents do not devote more time to TV, in most cases it takes from 0-2 hours to watch television. Majority of respondents don't listen to the radio at all, or they listen, but only sometimes. 86% of respondents read newspapers. Most of the respondents, as well as when analyzing the level of listening to the radio, tend to answer that they do

not listen to public radio or rarely listen. The main reason why most of the respondents do not listen to public radio is that they either “do not have the opportunity” (51%) or “are not interested” (18%). The majority of respondents listen to community radio for less than an hour (89%), starting in the afternoon until three o'clock in the afternoon (38%).

Members of local communities in villages where the multimedia centers are located have access to Internet through smartphones and mobile Internet and the main source of information for them are social media such as Facebook and Instagram, Telegram and WhatsApp messengers. Almost all villages have their own Facebook groups through which they share information daily and news about local communities as well as about the whole country and these social media pages are also used by labor migrants who are working in Russia or abroad, they are also staying connected to their communities and villages through these social media networks. Most villages have WhatsApp groups where they also disseminate and share the information and news as well as of community media news.

Community media volunteers and coordinators also tapped to this existing social media networks like Facebook groups of villages, Instagram accounts and Telegram channels and WhatsApp groups of these villages. They share their links of their news or the links to their Facebook live broadcastings. Coordinators of multimedia centers also use these social media networks and messenger groups to look for the news and information on what is happening in their village and for the contacts for their interviews.

Local Municipalities in those villages are also using the social media networks to disseminate their announcements and for public communication purposes. Overall, the he access to the Internet and social media has enabled local community members to stay connected to the center and not feel the remoteness of their location from it.

Access to mobile Internet in regions of Kyrgyzstan allowed local communities to get information and news from social media and messengers, as well as to express their opinions.

3. What place do community media have in the wider media landscape of these communities and to what degree is it reshaping their communicative ecologies?

CM has significantly increased volunteers' Digital Media Literacy Skills and their awareness for developing further their skills. This builds confidence and self-belief which in turn strengthens agency and self-directed personal growth.

CM plays multiple roles addressing practical issues and systemic issues such as domestic violence and gender inequality, access to education and healthcare services.

Community Media help address fake news and rumours on a local level. CM serves as an alternative, verified and trusted news source in local communities where they operate.

Community Media is filling the information gap between the center and periphery and locally

Community Media Connecting Villages and strengthening the regional connections

CM contribute to Community Development through building local communities and connecting local municipal authorities with community

Community media amplifying and strengthening community voices. By doing this, community voices become more confident.

Community Media act a as the Reliable Source of Health Information During COVID-19 Pandemic, despite the challenges faced by community media during COVID-19 Pandemic.

Community Media is also helping with breaking gender stereotypes.





THE RESEARCH TEAM

Dr. Elira Turdubaeva has a PhD degree in Media and Communications from Kyrgyzstan-Turkey Manas University. She worked at several universities, including a prior appointment as Department Head of Journalism and Mass Communications at American University of Central Asia. She is also a founder and currently a president of a new start-up Online University in Kyrgyzstan and Association of Communicators of Kyrgyzstan. Her research focuses on media uses, political participation and media, election campaign analysis, protests and social media, social media uses, network analysis, new media studies, ICT and youth, propaganda analysis, representations of gender, journalism education, media and migration, media and activism, surveillance technologies and privacy in Central Asia, hate speech and social media, etc.

Associate Professor Evangelia Papoutsaki is a New Zealand-based academic holding a Ph.D. degree from Cardiff University, UK. Her most recent international development position was as the Communication Media Program Lead at the University of Central Asia, Naryn campus. Her professional background and academic research migrant and community media, journalism and media education in developing countries. She has extensive experience in the Asia Pacific and former Soviet Union regions including her faculty position at the Dept of Communication Studies, Unitec, New Zealand; Head of Communication Arts Department at DWU, Papua New Guinea; Co-Head of the Department of Journalism at the American University of Kyrgyzstan; Visiting Faculty Fellow at various institutions in Georgia, Mongolia, and Kyrgyzstan; International Research Fellow at the Center for Pacific Islands Research at Kagoshima University, Japan. Evangelia is a member of the Royal Society of New Zealand, Executive Editor of ePress ; editorial board member of several journals, co-founder of the Contemporary PNG Studies Journal; and guest co-editor of various special journal issues. She has published three edited volumes on communication issues in the Pacific and co-edited the Central Asia Communication and Media Landscape volume with Dr Turdubaeva (forthcoming with Lexington Press). <https://www.epapoutsaki.com/>

Beginmay Almazova has Bachelor's degree from Zhusup Balasagyn Kyrgyz National University, Faculty of Journalism and a Master's Degree in Journalism from Kyrgyz National University named after Jusup Balasagyn. She has previously worked at the Press Service of the Land Use and Construction Department of the Bishkek City Mayor's Office and in 2022 moved to the municipal enterprise "Tazalyk" as a press secretary



APPENDIXES

1. Survey Questionnaire

Audience Analysis - Community Media in Kyrgyzstan

Demographics

1. Gender a. Female b. Male
2. Age. a.15-24 b.25-39 c.40-54 d.55+
3. Occupation
a. Full-time b. Part-time c. Home duties d. Retired e. Unemployed f. Student
4. How much do you earn a month?
a. Under 5000 soms b.5000-10 000 soms c.10 000-15 000 soms d.15 000-20 000
soms e.Over 20 000 soms

General Media consumption

5. Do you watch Television? A. Yes b. No c. Sometimes
6. How many hours a day do you watch Television?
a. 0-1 hours b. 1-2 hours c. 2-4 hours d. 4 hours and more
7. Which TV channels do you watch most?
8. Which TV Programs do you watch most?.....
9. Do you listen to radio? A. Yes b. No c. Sometimes
10. How many hours a day do you listen to radio?
a. 0-1 hours
b. 1-2 hours
c. 2-4 hours
d. 4 hours and more
11. Which radio stations do you listen to most?
12. Which radio programs do you listen to most?
13. Do you read newspapers?
a. Yes b. No c. Sometimes
14. Which newspapers do you read most?.....

Community media consumption

15. What news are you interested in reading most?
16. Do you listen to Community Radio (CR)?
a. Yes b. No c. Sometimes
17. If no, why?
b. Not interested b. Cannot access it c. Other(explain).....

18. If yes, how many hours a day do you listen to Community radio?

- a. Less than 1 hour
- b. 1-2 hours
- c. 2-4 hours
- d. 4 hours and more

19. When do you listen to Community radio?

- a. 5am – 9am Breakfast
- b. 9am – Noon Mid-morning
- c. Noon – 3pm Afternoon
- d. 3pm – 7pm Drive
- e. 7pm – Midnight Evening
- f. Midnight – 5am Late night

20. Which Community radio programs do you listen most?.....

Why do you listen to Community Radio?

- a. Local information / local news
- b. Specialist music
- c. Local voices / local personalities
- d. They play Kyrgyz music / support local artists
- e. They give an independent voice / not owned by big business or government
- f. The announcers sound like ordinary people / the announcers sound like 'one of us'
- g. Diversity in programming
- h. Locals can participate / I feel like I can get involved with the station if I was interested
- i. Programs not available elsewhere / I hear something that I don't hear anywhere else
- g. Specialist information programs
- k. Other

21. Do you read CM website?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Sometimes

22. How you use the CM website?

- a. On the phone
- b. On computer (home/work)
- c. Community Multimedia Center
- d. Other (explain).....

If no, why?

- a. Not interesting/useful
- b. Can't access it
- c. Other (explain).....

23. If yes, what do you like reading on the CM website?

24. What programs of CR or which content of CM you like most.....

25. Why?

26. Do you have favourite presenters?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Do not know

27. If yes, what you like most about them?

28. Where do you most listen to CR?

- A. At home
- B. At work
- C. In a car
- D. in Jayloo

E. Other (explain)

29. With whom do you most listen to programs?

- a. With family
- b. With friends
- c. Alone
- d. Other.....(explain)

30. When do you most listen to programs?

- a. In the morning
- b. At noon
- c. Afternoon
- d. In the evening
- e. At night
- d. Other.....(explain)

32. Do you discuss with others the content shared at CR?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

31. Can you give us some examples of discussions/information sharing?

34. Have you ever given an interview to CR or CM?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

35. If not, would you be interested in participating in the CM/CR at some point?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

36. Have you ever asked question to speakers on CR program or commented on news on CM website?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

37. Do you give feedback to the community radio station?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Sometimes
- d. Other...

38. Do you think your feedback is taken into account?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

40. Are you following the Social Media pages of CR or CM?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

41. Do you watch news, read news, listen to news on social media accounts of CR or CM on social media?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

43. Do you post news or write a letter or call to share a news story or other information to CR or CM?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

44. Do you comment on news or articles or videos and photos of CR or CM on their social media accounts?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

44. Do you watch live broadcastings of CR or CM on social media?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Other (explain).....

32. What do you have to say about the quality of content of local news and current affairs?
- a. High quality
 - b. Average quality
 - c. Low quality
 - d. Not Sure/Do not know

33. Has the CM/CR increased your knowledge about your local community?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure/Do not know

34. If yes, how?

35. Do you feel the CM/CR has strengthened your community?

- a.yes
- b. No.
- c. In some ways
- d. Not sure/Do not know

36. If yes/some ways, how?

37. How do you think CM/MR should support your community's needs? (tick as many as you see relevant)

- a. By providing reliable information
- b. By delivering our voices to decision makers
- c. By educating community members
- d. By empowering local communities
- e. Other

38. How valuable are Community radio and its services as an asset to your community?

- a. Very valuable
- b. Quite valuable
- c. Not very valuable
- d. Not at all valuable

39. Can you give 1-2 examples that the information received through CM/CR had an impact on you and/or your community?

40. What improvements would you recommend to CM or CR?

- a. New programs/content
- b. Informative content
- c. Entertainment content
- d. More community involvement
- e. Other

2. Interview and Focus Groups Protocol

To Local Municipality:

(Depending on who is interviewed, we might also ask them some of the questions intended for the general audience)

(Some of the questions asked to NGO reps about remoteness and services and needs of the community should also be asked here)

1. Do you collaborate with Community Media (CM)?
2. If no or you have limited collaboration, what are some of the reasons for this?
3. If yes, how do you collaborate with CM?
4. Could you give us 1-2 specific examples of successful collaboration? Could you give us any examples where the collaboration was not so successful?
5. How often do you give interviews/participate in CM programs? What are these programs?
6. What issues do you talk about during your interviews on CM?
7. How is it decided what topics to talk on the CM?
8. How proactive are you in reaching out to CM with issues you want to share with the community or are you waiting to be invited by CM?
9. Do you give feedback to the community radio station? Do you think your feedback is taken into account?
10. What is the importance of CM in your community? (I would say instead: What role does the CM play in your community? What is the impact of CM in your community?)
11. How you assess the role of CM in informing your community members?
12. Does Municipality support (financially, materially, information-wise) CM?
13. What improvements would you recommend to CM or CR?

To audiences:

(Make sure we note gender, age, occupation, and general questions about their general media habits: what other media do they consume, why and what is their preferred media for information and entertainment?)

The answers would be grouped around individual, community, and media themes for analysis

1. Do you listen to Community Radio (CR) and/or read CM website?
2. If no, why?
3. If yes, why? What do you like/dislike about CM/CR?
4. What do you have to say about the Quality and usefulness of content of local news and current affairs?
5. Has the CM/CR increased your knowledge about your local community? If so, how?
6. Do you feel the CM/CR has strengthened your community? How?
7. How do you think CM/MR should support your community's needs?
8. What programs of CR or which content of CM you like most? Why?
9. How often do you listen to CM/CR programs? (hours daily, weekly, monthly)
10. Do you have favorite presenters? Tells more about what you like most about their style.
11. Where, with whom and when do you most listen to programs? (at home, with family, friends, etc)
12. Do you discuss with others the content shared at CR? Can you give us some examples of discussions/information sharing?
13. Can you give 1-2 examples that the information received through CM/CR had an impact on you and/or your community?
14. Have you ever given an interview to CR or CM? (if not, would you be interested in participating in the CM/CR at some point?)
15. Have you ever asked question to speakers on CR program or commented a news on CM website? Or Do you give feedback to the community radio station? Do you think your feedback is taken into account?
16. Are you following the Social Media pages of CR or CM?

17. Do you watch news, read news, listen to news on social media accounts of CR or CM on social media?
18. What would say are the Key differences between community radio and other media broadcasters?
19. Do you post news or write a letter or call to share a news story or other information to CR or CM?
20. Do you comment on news or articles or videos and photos of CR or CM on their social media accounts?
21. Do you watch live broadcastings of CR or CM on social media?
22. What improvements would you recommend to CM or CR? (new programs/content, kind of information, more community involvement etc)

The older Civil Society/NGO people: (what do you mean by older?)

(Depending on who we interview, we might want to also ask them some of the questions intended for the general audience)

1. What kind of NGO (or community media) do you work for? What is your background? Why did you choose to work there?
2. What are the needs of your community (both general in terms of services and infrastructure and information wise)
3. What does community mean to you?
4. What is unique in your community?
5. What does remoteness mean to you and how do you and your community experience it?
6. How do you experience the distance from the “capital”/urban centers of Kg in terms of political and civic engagement? Does that distance matter? Why?
7. How can Civil Society/NGOs work with community media and how can this help their communities?
8. What is the role of CR or CM in your community?
9. Has your NGO collaborated with and/or participated in CM/CR programs?
10. If no, why?
11. If yes, whose initiative was it? (you or the CM?) Give us some examples. What was the outcome? Did you consider your participation useful for your NGO?
12. Any recommendations/thoughts about how to make CM/CR more useful to the community and civil society?

The younger volunteers:

(Make sure we note gender, age, occupation and general questions about their general media habits: what other media do they consume, why and what is their preferred media for information and entertainment?)

1. What prompted you to volunteer for the community media?
2. What is your involvement in the CM/CR? (specify tasks)
3. What does remoteness mean to you and how do you experience it?
4. What does community mean to you?
5. What is unique in your community?
6. What are the needs of your community (both general in terms of services and infrastructure and information wise)
7. What contribution has the community media made to your community? (both community radio and multimedia center)
8. What has changed as a result of the community media in the way your community members receive and share information?
9. What were the main source of information about the community before the community media arrived?
10. How have community media helped meet some of these information needs?
11. What programs/content has been more impactful/popular?
12. Who do you mostly target as audience?
13. How has your work in the community media changed you personally?
14. What is the role of CR or CM in your community?

15. Any recommendations/thoughts about how to make CM/CR more useful to the community? What improvements would you recommend to CM or CR? (new programs/content, kind of information, more community involvement etc)

To CR or CM director

1. When was your CR or CM founded?
2. Why was it founded in your community? How was your community selected as a host of the CM/CR? Describe the process/timeline/resources/challenges etc
3. When did you start working as director?
4. Why you decided to work as director?
5. What is the program schedule of your CR or CM?
6. How many hours do you broadcast or how many news do you post on CM website?
7. What issues do you raise in your programs?
8. Who do you invite as speakers/contributors to your programs or content or whom you interview? What is the process of selecting/inviting participants?
9. Do you work with civil society organizations? How? Examples
10. How you recruit volunteers?
11. How you train volunteers?
12. Who are your audiences?
13. What are the challenges you face?
14. How do you generate additional financial sources for sustainability of your CR or CM?
15. How do you work with the Community Media Association of Kyrgyzstan? What support do they provide you? What could they do more or differently?
16. How you work with Local Municipality? Do they support you?
17. Do you have social media account?
18. How many followers do you have on your SM account?
19. Do you have a community/audience feedback mechanism? Do your audiences write comments, ask questions and share your content on social media?
20. What is the role of CR or CM in your community?
21. Any recommendations/thoughts about how to make CM/CR more useful to the community? What improvements would you recommend to CM or CR? (new programs/content, kind of information, more community involvement etc)

**FOR APPENDIX 3
SEE ATTACHED
SEPARATELY**