



# Kenya

## Research findings and conclusions

Professor Lucy W. Maina



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## Acknowledgements

This report could not have been prepared without the generous contributions of many individuals and organisations.

The BBC World Service Trust is particularly grateful for the close collaboration with Vivien Marles and Kathy Lines of the Fuse Group. Recognition also goes to the following editors and reviewers for their expertise and guidance: Stephen King, Julia Moffett, Chris Armstrong, Hendrik Bussiek, Linda Coffey, Diane Cross, Steve Godfrey, Yvonne Kramer, Susannah Lear, Sam Mallac, Sheri Margolis, John McCormick, Mary McEntegart, Sina Odugbemi, Lelani Prevost, and Linda Stratmann. The team at Red Stone design also played an important role in this project.

A note of thanks goes to those individuals who provided additional background research and support to the project: Valeria Camia, Vivek Chandra, Alice Dashwood, Tim Dubois, Wanyana Lule, Leila Makki, Lisa Nuch Venbrux, Dominic Rustam and Simon Jackson.

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Published by the BBC World Service Trust, 2006

BBC World Service Trust

Room 310 NE

Bush House

PO Box 76

Strand

London

WC2B 4PH

UK

ISBN 1-906086-07-9



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## About this report

In March 2005, the UK Government's Commission for Africa delivered a report entitled "*Our Common Interest*", which represented a significant attempt to understand and recommend an action programme for Africa's social and economic development. A key component of the report focused on the importance of a strong media sector to support governance and development in Africa, and called for greater attention to, and resources for, media sector development as a result. The BBC World Service Trust and a number of international and African partners have subsequently set out to help develop ideas for future Africa media development initiatives.

In order to inform these efforts, the BBC World Service Trust – in collaboration with Rhodes University (South Africa) and Ahmadu Bello University (Nigeria) – has undertaken an extensive, pan-African research effort in 17 African countries, of which Kenya is one. Data presented in this report is based on both secondary research gathered by local researchers in Kenya and on extensive interviews conducted locally among key media practitioners and leaders. It is presented here in three parts:

- Media Sector Developments: an examination of developments in the media sector in Kenya over the past five years;
- Challenges for Future Media Development Activities: an analysis of the perspectives of a range of key informants on media development challenges in Kenya;
- Case Study: a case study from Kenya illustrating good practice in media development.

The research was funded by a generous grant from the UK Government's Department for International Development. The research was conducted by Professor Lucy W. Maina in association with the BBC World Service Trust Research and Learning Group.

The BBC World Service Trust is the independent international charity set up by the BBC, which uses media to advance development. The Trust works to: raise awareness of development issues among mass audiences and opinion formers; influence attitudes, awareness and behaviour among poorer communities through a wide range of educational programming on poverty-related topics; and, build capacity in the media sector in developing and, transitional countries.

## Acronyms

- AMOK** Association of Media Owners in Kenya
- AMWIK** Association of Media Women in Kenya
- AWC** African Woman and Child Feature Service
- BBC** British Broadcasting Corporation
- CBS** Central Bureau of Statistics
- CCK** Communications Commission of Kenya
- CCTV** China Television
- CDF** Constituency Development Fund
- CNN** Cable News Network
- CTN** Cable Television Network
- DANIDA** Danish International Development Agency
- EAMI** East African Media Institute
- EATN** East Africa Television Network
- FEMNET** African Women's Communication and Development Network
- FES** Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
- FF** Ford Foundation
- FPE** Free Primary Education
- GDCC** Gina Din Corporate Communications Ltd
- ICT** Information and Communication Technology
- ICJ** International Commission of Jurists
- IDRC** International Development Research Centre
- ISP** Internet Service Providers
- JKUAT** Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
- KBC** Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
- KANU** Kenya African National Union
- KCOMNET** Kenya Community Media Network
- KIMC** Kenya Institute of Mass Communication

**KTN** Kenya Television Network  
**KUJ** Kenya Union of Journalists  
**MCK** Media Council of Kenya  
**MDGs** Millennium Development Goals  
**META** Media Educators' and Trainers' Association  
**MIC** Ministry of Information and Communications  
**MISC** Media Industry Steering Committee  
**MOA** Media Owners' Association  
**MOE** Ministry of Education  
**NARC** National Rainbow Coalition  
**NCS** National Communication Secretariat  
**NGO** Non-Governmental Organisation  
**NMG** Nation Media Group  
**NPC** Nairobi Pentecostal Church  
**NTV** Nation Television  
**RFI** Radio France International  
**RMS** Royal Media Services  
**RR** Regional Reach  
**SG** Standard Group  
**SIDA** Swedish International Development Agency  
**STV** Sky TV  
**UNDP** United Nations Development Programme  
**UNICEF** United Nations Children's Fund  
**UNIFEM** United Nations Development Fund for Women  
**UON** University of Nairobi  
**USIU** United States International University  
**VOA** Voice of America  
**VOK** Voice of Kenya



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# Kenya

## Country Report Context



# 1. Introduction

This study was carried out in Kenya in March and April of 2006, mostly utilising secondary data and literature. In cases where required information was not documented, primary data from respective persons and organisations dealing with the topics of interest was sourced. A fair amount of information on the Kenyan media is documented but is often difficult to trace because the field attracts a great variety of parties and no particular effort has been made to consolidate what is available. Recent years have seen an increase in media data but tracing past data, in order to make comparisons with the situation five years ago in 2000, was difficult.

Key information sources for this research have been Steadman Research Services International-Kenya and the Nation Media Group<sup>1</sup>, both of which conduct regular studies on the media, as well as Consumer Insight, market research organisations, and the Internet. In some cases, detailed information on the media is only made available for a fee, and thus some data could not be sourced due to cost implications. Several research assistants were used because the data was scattered across different organisations.

Another difficulty was finding the precise types of data stipulated by this research brief. For instance, a directory of all film agents in Kenya exists but it is not broken down into local and foreign-owned agents as the research instrument demanded. In other cases, media consumption data is disaggregated by town, day and hour of viewing rather than total yearly viewing as demanded by the instrument.

A final difficulty was the slowness of Internet connections in Kenya outside the capital, Nairobi, which made the necessary Internet research extremely slow at times.

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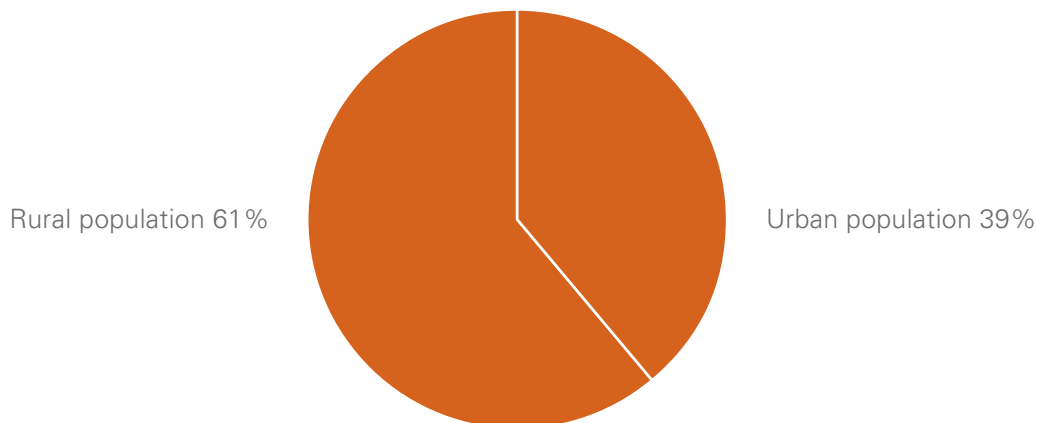
<sup>1</sup> The reliance on statistical information provided by the Nation Media Group (NMG) was made necessary by there being no other comparable sources in many cases.



## 2. Country Overview

The East African nation of Kenya has eight provincial administrative regions and a population of about 33.4 million<sup>2</sup> (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004). The population is around 11% higher than it was in 2000. About three million people, 10% of the population, live in the capital city, Nairobi, with around 750,000 people in the second city Mombasa. Kenya has a young population, with 79% of its people aged 34 or younger and 42% aged 14 or younger (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004). The United Nations cites a similar figure, 43% for those 14 or younger (UNSTATS 2005a). According to 2002 and 2003 estimates, most people (61%) live in rural areas (see Figure 1 below), and the average life expectancy is estimated at 44.6 years of age (UNDP, 2006; Republic of Kenya, 2002). The GDP per capita per person was estimated at US\$1,100 in 2005, and 50% of the population was estimated to be living below the poverty line in 2000 (CIA, 2006).

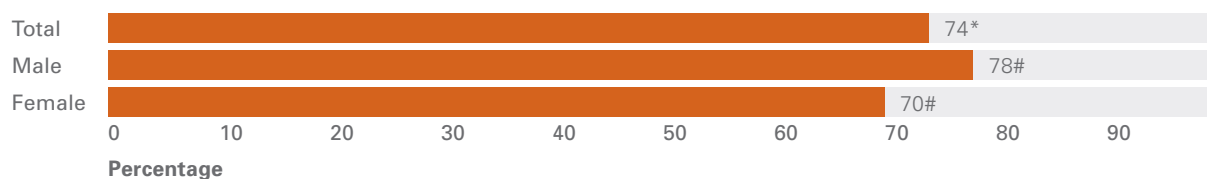
**Figure 1: Urban vs Rural Population**



Source: 2003 statistics cited in UNDP, 2006

<sup>2</sup> The World Bank estimated the total population at 33.5 million in 2004 (World Bank, 2006a)

**Figure 2: Literacy Levels Age 15+**



Source: 2004 estimates cited in World Bank, \*2006a and #2006b

The World Bank estimated in 2004 that the total population literacy rate was 73.6%, with male literacy at 77.7% and female literacy at 70.2% (see Figure 2 above) (World Bank, 2006a; 2006b).

Both English and Kiswahili languages are national languages, but the usage of English is restricted mainly to Nairobi and other major towns. It has proved difficult to find any formal statistical information on the various languages spoken in Kenya, beyond the fact that there are said to be more than 100 dialects. A personal observation from the author is that the languages most widely spoken are Kiswahili, Kikuyu, English, Luyhia and Kalenjin. Mother-tongue languages include Kikuyu, Luyhia, Luo, Kalenjin and Kamba.

An estimated 42 ethnic groups live in Kenya. The most populous ethnic group is the Kikuyu at 20%, followed by the Luyha (14%) and the Luo (13%). Kenya also has a small percentage of people of Asian, European and Arab origin, estimated at 1% of the population (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2003). In terms of religion, it is estimated that 45% of the population is Protestant and 33% Catholic. Followers of traditional religions sit at around 10%, Muslims at around 10%, and other faiths at 2% (CIA, 2006)<sup>3</sup>.

Kenya gained its independence from the British in 1963 and was a *de facto* and then *de jure* one-party state under the KANU party until 1992, when President Daniel Arap Moi oversaw the repeal of Section 2A of the Constitution, allowing for multi-party politics. Within the past five years, significant political changes have taken place, with the KANU party, which ruled the country for 39 years, being ousted, together with President Moi, in the national elections of 2002. KANU was succeeded by the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), led by President Mwai Kibaki. This new political dispensation has been a key factor in the growth in the media sector in Kenya over the past five years, particularly the radio sector.

<sup>3</sup> The CIA World Fact book (2006) notes that estimates for Muslims and followers of traditional religion vary according to the source.

## Key findings

- Kenya has most of the typical characteristics of a developing nation, including a high percentage of young people.
- The national languages are English and Kiswahili, and there are more than 100 vernacular dialects spoken by the country's more than 40 ethnic groups.
- The most significant change affecting the media and many other institutions of public interest in the country was the reinstatement of multi-party democracy in 1992, which led a decade later, in 2002, to a new political dispensation and an improved democratic environment.



## 3. Media Health

As mentioned above, the main changes affecting the media sector were the return to multi-party democracy in 1992 and the dethronement of the KANU government in the 2002 elections. The major changes occasioned by this political shift include the registration of new FM radio stations; increased freedom for both the public and other institutions to air their views through the media openly and candidly; increased political content and political battles fought via the media; and the growth of public demand for information and news. Kenyans are currently extremely reliant on the media for various types of information, rather than on the government or other sources, as recently established through research carried out by the Steadman Research Services-Kenya (*Daily Nation*, 2006)<sup>4</sup>.

Up until 1992, due to suppression of dissident voices by the then-KANU government, the media sector had experienced very slow growth. It was common for journalists to be arrested and imprisoned for trivial offences, since the government was wary of the media challenging its activities. For a long time, the only 'voice' heard on air was the Voice of Kenya (VOK), a state-owned broadcasting company which is now called the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC). Since the opening up to multi-party democracy, the media has grown significantly and, at present, more than 20 Kenyan radio stations and several domestic TV stations are available in the country (Republic of Kenya, 2006a).

Generally, the health of the media in Kenya is improving. The upsurge in the number of media activities and also the increase in the number of practising journalists attest to this. Despite these changes, however, media policy, law and regulation in Kenya still remain a bone of contention and relations between the state and the media are still tense<sup>5</sup>. The government has, in recent years, attempted to introduce new laws giving it greater power over media conduct, but bodies such as the Kenya Union of Journalists and an industry association called the Media Council of Kenya are insisting on a dispensation characterised by self-regulation<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> In the Steadman research, respondents drawn from a sample of the entire country, were asked from what source they obtained to state the most authentic and credible information.

<sup>5</sup> In 2002, the government attempted to introduce the Media Bill (known by some as the 'Gag Bill'), but without success. Strong opposition from media organisations, among them the Media Council of Kenya and the Kenya Union of Journalists, led to the shelving of the Bill. This same Bill has been re-drafted and is awaiting approval by the government, even though media players continue to complain about its contents. There is no certainty as to how this issue will be resolved.

<sup>6</sup> Information gained from 2006 researcher interview with government official who requested anonymity.



### 3.1 Status of the laws regarding rights and access to information

There is still no single or clear media law in Kenya even though various bills on the same have been presented to Parliament, including the Press Council of Kenya Bill and Kenya Mass Media Commission Bill, both introduced in 1995. At present, the media sector is regulated via various acts such as the Public Order Act, the Defamation Act, the Preservation of Public Security Act and others.

Section 79 (1) of the Kenyan Constitution is a freedom of expression clause, stating that: "Except with his own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, that is to say, freedom to hold opinions without interference, freedom to receive ideas and information without interference, freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference (whether the communication be to the public generally or to any person or class of persons) and freedom from interference with his correspondence" (Republic of Kenya, 1998).

In spite of the Constitution's suggestion of freedom to receive ideas and information, there is no access to information law in Kenya. Recently, the government prepared the Freedom of Information Bill of 2005, which is still awaiting Parliament's approval. This Bill borrows heavily from the Australian Freedom of Information Act of 1982, and the United Kingdom Freedom of Information Act of 2000. The drafting of the Bill, though broadly seen as a step in the right direction, has been criticised by some for being overly legalistic and for adopting a foreign structure. The Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) has prepared a parallel Freedom of Information Bill, which it hopes will provide for the government grounds for comparison and subsequent reformulation of the Bill (Media Council of Kenya, 2005a).

### 3.2 Status of the laws regarding criminal defamation and insult

In the past, the law that applied in cases of defamation (which has now been repealed) was the Seditious Law, which was contained in the Penal Code and by which persons publishing, selling or distributing materials of an allegedly seditious nature were liable to arrest and detention. Kenyan history is dotted with cases of journalists being arrested and jailed on these grounds, especially during the one-party dispensation where speaking against the government was itself labelled as seditious. Today, in spite of the repeal of the Seditious Law, journalists are still vulnerable because of the lack of a clear media law to criminal charges related to alleged defamation under various acts, such as the Public Order Act, Public Security Act, Defamation Act and others. For instance, according to the provisions of the Public Security Act, amended in 1997, a person can be arrested on the basis of compromising public safety, public order, morality or internal defence through a published story even though the interpretation of how the story affects public safety is left to government machinery (Moggi & Tessier, 2001).

Journalists continue to be held for alleged defamation and insult offences without due process. In a case in early 2006, two journalists from the *Standard* newspaper were held for publishing an allegedly 'false' story regarding an alleged meeting of President Mwai Kibaki with a powerful opposition politician. The two arrested journalists were held without clarity as to which law they had contravened. Later, the arrest and public outcry led to a police raid on the *Standard* office's printing press and the offices of its sister TV station KTN-TV, an event described by many as a return to the 'dark days' of press harassment<sup>7</sup> (*Standard*, 2006; BBC, 2006a). Both local and international outcry led to the release of the journalists and a return to air of the TV station affected. There was also the return of confiscated equipment, but no apology from the government minister responsible has been forthcoming. Currently, a case regarding the raid remains in court.

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<sup>7</sup> Before multi-party democracy was reintroduced, it was treasonable to portray the head of state in a negative light, and detention of press people was common.

### 3.3 Status of the laws that exist to allow media regulatory bodies to function independently

There are no provisions at present for independent media regulation. The state-controlled regulatory body with some jurisdiction over media matters is the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK), overseen by the Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC). The CCK was formed by a 1998 Act of Parliament to deal with licensing, regulating and coordinating of telecommunication, TV and radio communication frequencies and equipment. It also controls and regulates postal and courier services. Though the CCK grants frequencies to applicants, the actual licensing is done by the Ministry of Information and Communications. The Ministry has the mandate to evaluate and licence all broadcasting applications and to register all film and production agents in Kenya.

The state-owned broadcasting corporation, the KBC, also has some regulatory powers over, for instance, technical standards for radio and TV receivers. In the proposed new ICT Bill, a National Communications Secretariat (NCS) would be formed to serve as a policy advisory body and other new media regulation mechanisms would be created (Republic of Kenya, 2006a). However, the degree to which the new structures would be independent of the state remains to be seen.

Non-state players attempting to guide the Kenyan media regulatory space include the Media Council of Kenya, an industry body set up in 2004<sup>8</sup> that lobbies for self-regulation. Another player is the Media Industry Steering Committee (MISC), formed in 1993 and comprised of various stakeholders in the media, such as the Media Owners' Association, the Kenya Union of Journalists, the Editors Guild, the Kenya Correspondents Association, media NGOs, training institutions, state media, and the alternative press. The body aims to promote and defend the freedom and independence of the media and advocates for, among other things, the establishment of an independent broadcast regulator. The Media Council grew out of discussions held by MISC. The Media Owners Association is a body of owners of the main broadcasting and media houses in the country, including directors and managers of the powerful Standard Group and the Nation Media Group.

### 3.4 Current provisions that aim to secure the independence of publicly-owned media

Provision for the independence of the state media does not currently exist but is alluded to in several draft laws, such as the proposed new Constitution and in the government ICT Policy (Republic of Kenya, 2006a). The state-owned broadcaster, with both radio and television services, is the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC). The KBC Act of 1989 stipulates that the KBC is mandated to, among other things, control broadcast receiving sets, oversee licensing of dealers, repair persons and importers of broadcast receiving sets (Republic of Kenya, 1989). Hence, for every radio or TV set bought in the country, a permit for the same has to be given by the KBC at a fee and must continue to be given (or is expected to be given) every year thereafter. Having the KBC overseeing these procedures is an issue of controversy and is one of the drivers of the Media Industry Steering Committee's push for establishment of an independent broadcasting authority to regulate broadcasting.

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<sup>8</sup> The idea to establish the Media Council of Kenya industry association was first mooted in 2002, but it was not until 2004 that the MCK set up offices.

### 3.5 Current provisions to support community or alternative media

There is no regulation to support community or alternative media, due to the fact that there is no comprehensive media law. However, the need for support for community media is well articulated in the 2006 draft of the National ICT Policy (Republic of Kenya, 2006a), and several NGOs have been drafting and pushing for provisions for community media. In terms of the press, companies wishing to register a newspaper are required to purchase a bond costing Kshs1 million (US\$13,888) before licensing. This provision keeps small-scale investors out of the print sector, serving as a 'gag' on alternative print media.

### 3.6 Regulatory obligations for public or state broadcasters to fulfil a public-service broadcasting remit

The state-owned broadcaster KBC does not have a clear, legislated public-service broadcasting remit. The KBC does, however, attempt to fulfil many criteria – such as access and multi-lingualism – that are typical of public-service broadcasting remits. It aims to reach both rural and urban citizens and tries to gear its programming to all age and interest groups. The KBC has a variety of vernacular-language radio broadcasts targeted at rural people of various origins. The launching of KBC's vernacular services was spurred by the opening of Kameme FM, a Kikuyu-language station started in 2000 by a private media entrepreneur. KBC mainly supports government's views but the more liberal politics of recent years have seen it loosen its former conservative approach. With dwindling state funding, KBC has had to re-engineer itself to be more like the private players in order to attract a larger audience and more advertising revenue. This commercially-oriented shift is seen by many as unfortunate since it undermines the idea of a public broadcaster. Formerly, non-commercial and educative programmes dominated KBC, but no longer. Instead, KBC is struggling to 'make ends meet' amidst powerful private players without much success, and hence stands accused of abandoning its responsibility to the people<sup>9</sup>.

### 3.7 Regulatory obligations for private broadcasters to fulfil a public-service broadcasting remit

In the absence of a dedicated media law, private broadcasters do not have to fulfil a public-service broadcasting remit.

The private broadcasters, while seeming to take the duty of informing the public seriously, exhibit a tendency towards bias, and almost every channel can be identified with a political party or personality. This situation is exacerbated by the presence of cross-media ownership – for example, the broadcast and print holdings of the Nation and Standard Groups – which has in many cases led to duplication of content across media, and the domination by a single orientation across various channels depending on who owns them. It is for this reason that the government's Media Bill process has, among other things, aimed to limit cross-media ownership.

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<sup>9</sup> Information gained from 2006 researcher interviews with NGO official who requested anonymity; media lobbying group official who requested anonymity.

The government also wants to see improved local content in the broadcast media. The 2006 draft ICT Policy states in connection to content that: “The CCK [Communications Commission of Kenya] will, in consultation with the broadcasting, media professionals and production industry as well as the public, devise mechanisms to ensure increased local content in the various types of programming services including films, drama, children’s programmes, documentaries and music. Media training institutions in conjunction with the broadcasting industry will be encouraged to nurture research into aspects of programming and curriculum development in the industry. The Government will promote local production of advertisements and create an enabling environment for the production and export of local broadcast and media products that will contribute towards job creation” (Republic of Kenya, 2006a, p.17-18). Currently, a large portion of both public and private broadcaster content is dedicated to airing foreign entertainment and music programming, with local content only representing a small fraction of output.

### 3.8 Journalism

There is no legislated requirement for journalists to be registered or licensed by the government. According to the Ministry of Information and Communications, willing journalists can be registered but, without a regulatory framework, few journalists bother to do so. However, the Ministry is planning to enforce registration of all journalists in the near future, once legislation is put in place. Most journalists are not affiliated with professional associations, and this is not a requirement either. The Kenya Union of Journalists says that only 200 journalists are registered with the union, even though it is estimated that more than 3,000 journalists are at work in the country<sup>10</sup>. The union claims, however, to represent the interests of all journalists, whether registered with the body or not. About 200 women journalists are registered with the Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK), which represents the interests of women in the media and also those of women in general. The 200 women in the media registered by AMWIK are far below the overall estimated number of 1,000 female journalists in the country. About 600 journalists are on the Media Council of Kenya records. The Council is currently conducting a baseline survey towards a database of all journalists in the country with details of where they work (Media Council of Kenya, 2005c).

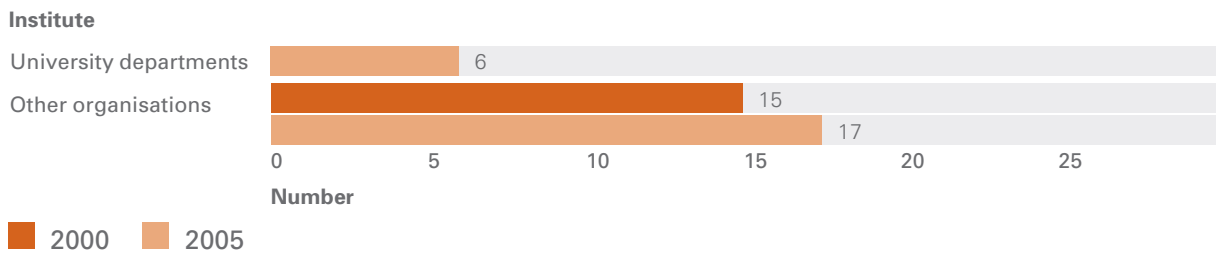
The number of journalism schools (see Figure 3) continues to increase and, currently, an estimated 23 institutions are offering standardised media training at various levels<sup>11</sup>. These include six departments in various universities in the country. The University of Nairobi offers a postgraduate Diploma, a BA and an MA in Journalism which integrate radio and television production, feature and news writing, public relations, photojournalism, communication theory, media law and ethics. Daystar University has a Bachelor’s Degree in Communications and a Certificate and a Diploma in the same. United States International University offers a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, and a minor in the same. The Tangaza College, a constituent college of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, has a Diploma course in Communications and Media covering journalism, photography, radio production and video. Maseno University has a Department of Communications and a Media Technology Department. The Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture And Technology (JKUAT) recently started to train journalists at degree level. Moi University is also expected to launch its own media and journalism training courses soon.

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<sup>10</sup> Information gained from 2006 researcher interview with a media network official who requested anonymity.

<sup>11</sup> In addition to this estimate, there could be up to 27 small colleges that have recently opened, most of them opportunistic in nature and offering sub-standard education. The MCK has now been mandated by the government to inspect these schools and give a brief to the Ministry of Education. Sources: researcher interviews in 2006 with one media network official, one media practitioner and two educators who requested anonymity. As well as the MCK, there is a Media Educators and Trainers Association (META), which is also trying to regulate training of journalists and media personnel. It is also worth noting that there has been public outcry over quality of media education being offered by these colleges (Media Council of Kenya, 2006a).

**Figure 3: Number of Journalism Training Institutes**



Sources: Moggi and Tessier, 2001; Researcher interviews in 2006 with one educator, and one media network official who requested anonymity

At college level, the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication is perhaps the most specialised public institution offering media training. The courses provided include film production, radio and television training. Another institution is the All Africa Conference of Churches, which has a communications training centre offering a Diploma in media production, photography, radio and television production and public relations. Other schools and colleges offering media-related courses include the East Africa School of Journalism, the School of Media Studies, Blanes College, the Institute of Communication Studies and Development, Media Network, Foundation College, Job Institute, Kenya School of Professional Studies, School of Media Studies, Mohamed Amin Foundation and Andrew Crawford Productions.

Among the challenges faced by media training in Kenya is the lack of modern equipment and resources, which often compromises quality. The costs of the courses are also quite high and therefore prohibitive for many young people aspiring to pursue journalism. Private training institutions appear to have better facilities than public or government-owned ones.

Another issue is the need for specialised journalism training, as most schools and colleges offer courses that are general in nature<sup>12</sup>. It is also necessary to mainstream topical issues and concerns such as gender and development in journalism training in Kenya in order to enhance the quality of print reporting and broadcasting.

The first comprehensive Code of Conduct for journalists was finalised in 2001 and is now in force. This Code was prepared by the Media Council of Kenya in conjunction with the Media Industry Steering Committee (MISC). Both the Media Council and Kenya Union of Journalists monitor the conduct of journalists. However, it is evident that when journalists allegedly overstep the mark, the government often tends to ignore the role of these bodies in regulating the conduct of journalists, and attempts to apply direct legal sanctions in terms of some of the public order laws mentioned earlier in this section. In the Code of Ethics handbook prepared by the Media Council, issues of free and independent media, freedom of expression and the right of privacy are highlighted. The requirement that Kenyan media outlets openly account for their conduct is emphasised, and the Code requires all journalists practising in the country to be accurate and fair in reporting and to publish or broadcast an apology wherever this conduct is not upheld. The Code stresses the role of editors in ensuring that published letters to the editor are not one-sided or offensive. Other issues covered by the Code of Ethics include: the professional obligation of journalists to protect confidential sources; guidelines regarding use of subterfuge to obtain information; the duty to avoid use of obscene, vulgar and offensive language or material; guidelines for dealing with matters of plagiarism; proper conduct with regard to paying for news or information; matters of discrimination in reporting; dealing with sectarian interests; reporting on victims of crimes;

<sup>12</sup> Researcher interview in 2006 with one NGO official who requested anonymity.



and avoiding glorification of acts of violence and types of advertisements that may not be in the public interest.

In spite of this, on 27 July 2006, a *Standard* journalist was ordered to appear in court to reveal the source of one of her articles. Magistrate Felix Kombo held that the Code of Ethics had no legal foundation and therefore it could not be a defence in refusing to reveal the source of a story. A constitutional application has been filed by the journalist's lawyer who wants the High Court to decide if the journalist can be made to give evidence in the case (*Daily Nation Online*, 2006).

In Kenya, a full time journalist's salary ranges between Kshs20,000 (US\$277) and Kshs250,000 (US\$3,472) per month, with an average of about US\$1,875. This average is deceptive, given that the majority of permanently employed journalists in the country earn below Kshs40,000 (US\$555) per month. By comparison, secondary school teachers in the country earn about US\$600 a month, more than most journalists. However, even more significant is the fact that about 80% of all journalists in Kenya are not permanent employees but are employed instead as correspondents. As correspondents, they are not on regular pay and depend on short contracts from media companies, typically earning as little as US\$100 per month. It is estimated that 75% of all newspaper content is generated by correspondents. According to Moggi and Tessier (2001), raising the status of journalists in the country would be one of the best and most efficient ways of improving standards. A Kenya Correspondents Association exists, but it is not well recognised or supported. Most media owners are reluctant to improve terms for correspondents even though they restrict them to working for their respective companies.

In general, practising journalists in Kenya face myriad challenges, including lack of protected access to information, poor levels of technology in their workplaces, low pay, fear of intimidation and victimisation in the absence of a proper media regulatory framework, and negative attitudes from the public due to lack of proper understanding of the role of journalists and of the media in general.

## Key findings

- The constitutional section on free expression and information freedom is not supported with media-specific legislation or an access to information law.
- Various laws are used by the state to criminalise and punish alleged defamation and insult, including the Public Security Act and the Defamation Act.
- There is no provision in place at present for independent media regulation.
- Both private and public broadcasters in the country attempt to meet public-service remits, but these remits are not explicitly codified or subject to strict regulation.
- Journalism training is undertaken by various institutions, including at least six universities and several colleges, but the training is expensive, lacking in modern equipment and facilities, and often too general in orientation, not providing the necessary specialist journalism skills.
- Efforts made towards journalist self-regulation by the Media Council of Kenya and MISC are undermined to some extent by direct state intimidation of journalists accused of errors.
- Journalists' income is relatively low, particularly for the huge number of correspondents without permanent positions.
- Most journalists endure problems of acquiring information in the absence of access to information legislation and fear of intimidation.



## 4. State of the media – Literature Review

### 4.1 Moggi & Tessier (2001)

According to this report, entitled *Media Status Report: Kenya*, there has been positive growth of the media sector since the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1992, but a comprehensive media policy is still lacking in the country. This report details the main steps taken towards media regulation in Kenya, including the formation of the Task Force on Press Laws in Kenya in 1993, the subsequent failed attempt by the Attorney General to introduce a Kenya Mass Media Commission Bill in 1995, and the re-constitution of a new Task Force on Press Laws in 1996. The report submitted to the Attorney-General by this Task Force led to the enactment of the Kenya Communications Act of July 1998, which established the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) as the main regulatory body.

Basically, this report finds that media policy, law and regulation in Kenya are deficient in upholding the constitutional provisions for freedom of expression by the media, in linking media law and telecommunications law, in mass media licensing, and in interest protection. According to the report, security concerns in Kenya tend to override the constitutional right to freedom of expression, with many sections of the Penal Code contradicting freedom of expression. The report applauds the media policy work being done in Kenya but regrets that no current policy is comprehensive enough to guide media operation in the country. The report expresses concern that freedom of expression continues to be abused, and is also critical of the role of the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) as a regulator of broadcasting, given that the KBC represents government interests. The report finds that even the recent media reforms steered by the government have been done more for the sake of international image than out of genuine interest.

The report acknowledges that the print media, TV and radio are growing and expanding and that a greater variety of interests is being represented, but it decries the disparity between rural and urban areas in terms of outreach and capacity.

## 4.2 Omosa & McCormick (2004)

This Omosa & McCormick report for the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) looks closely at the state of the media in Kenya, and particularly the state of media support services. It is a product of the Universal Access to Communication Services in Rural Kenya project, conducted with funding from Canada's IDRC. The study, aimed at providing information on access, availability and utilisation of communication services in rural Kenya, took the form of a household survey conducted in 12 districts of the country.

The bulk of the rural population has difficulty accessing fixed telephone lines, mobile telephony, postal and courier services and, to some extent broadcasting. The research found that among communication services, only radio is widely-owned, by about 68% of the rural population. Sixty-five percent of the population has access to TV, compared to 25% who own a TV set. Only 20% of the rural population own a mobile telephone handset, while a post office box is owned by less than 6% of the population. A tiny proportion of the rural population own an email address or a fixed telephone line. In terms of frequency of utilisation of communication services, both radio and television recorded relatively high usage on a daily basis for those who had access to these media (TV usage 51.4%; radio usage 78.7%).

The study identified the need for improved rural incomes, improved physical access to communication services through reduction of the distances covered to communication facilities, diversification of languages used in the operation of communication services to include more vernacular languages and Kiswahili, and improvement in the basic knowledge and skills needed to use communications technologies. The report called for efforts to subsidise communications access in the rural parts of the country.

## 4.3 Steadman Research Services International – Kenya (2005)

This fourth quarter 2005 report in the Steadman Group *Kenya Media Diaries* series provides a comprehensive statistical analysis of both radio and TV in the country. The report gives a station-by-station analysis of the various radio and TV stations and their reach in the country, based on primary data gathered through a representative national sample. The data is based on the respondents' previous seven days of listening and viewing. In terms of television reach, two private commercial services, Kenya Television Network (KTN-TV) and Nation TV (NTV) are shown to be neck-and-neck in terms of national average, with 89% of respondents watching KTN and 86% watching NTV. These two are followed by KBC, Citizen TV, Stellavision TV, Family TV, East African TV (EATV) and Metro TV in order of viewership. In the largest urban area Nairobi, KTN leads with a viewership of 91.2%, followed by NTV at 89.2%, followed by the rest in the same order as the national order. KTN also leads in the second city, Mombasa, but NTV takes the lead in Kisumu and Nyeri. The state broadcaster, KBC, leads in Nakuru and Bungoma.

With regards to radio, Kiss FM has the leading radio listenership in the country followed by Citizen, Easy FM, KBC-Kiswahili, House of Reggae radio, Capital FM, Kameme, Y-FM, Inooro, KBC-English, Ramogi, Classic and Baraka FM, in that order.



## 4.4 Consumer Insight (2006)

Consumer Insight's *Media Report – January 2006* gives a breakdown of the most-listened-to radio and most-viewed TV in the country at the beginning of 2006. The report also details the favourite radio and TV presenters in order of preference. On TV, the hourly preferences are also detailed. The ratings for Nairobi and a combination of all towns are given. Data was gathered using a random sample drawn from various district towns in the country. From the report's findings on TV, NTV and KTN-TV came out on top in the towns and cities, followed by KBC, with Citizen and Family much further behind. Radio preferences in cities and towns show that Kiss rates highest, followed by Easy FM, Citizen, KBC-Metro, Inooro, Kameme, KBC-Kiswahili and Capital FM, in that order.

## 4.5 Republic of Kenya (2006a)

In 2006, the Ministry of Information and Communications released its draft ICT Policy. The overall objective of the policy is to improve the livelihoods of Kenyans by ensuring the availability of accessible, efficient, reliable and affordable ICT services. The policy document gives an overview of the status of ICT's in Kenya, starting with teledensity statistics which show that 260,000 million people have fixed-line telephone, while four million are cellular mobile subscribers. The report says there are 73 registered Internet service providers (ISP) companies, 16 of which are active, with approximately one million Internet users and over 1,000 cyber café outlets. According to the report, an estimated 60% of the population is reached geographically by television signals, while 90% live in areas reached by radio signals.

The policy document calls for a comprehensive policy to regulate ICT in the country. The sector has previously been regulated by a variety of pieces of legislation, such as the Science and Technology Act of 1977, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Act of 1988 and the Kenya Communications Act of 1998. The policy affirms the important role that broadcasting will continue to play in the 21st Century as a communication tool, outlining the framework within which national public broadcasting, private broadcasting, community broadcasting and signal distribution services should be provided. It also calls for capacity-building in the sector. The policy aims towards a legal and regulatory framework that will engender a broadcasting sector characterised by:

- investment, growth and sustainability;
- broadcasters that are efficient, competitive and responsive to audience needs;
- the presence of dispute resolution mechanisms;
- streamlining of licensing processes and allocation of frequencies through an equitable process;
- services that reflect a sense of Kenyan identity, character, cultural diversity and expression through the development of appropriate local content;
- diversity in ownership and control;
- availability of broadcasting services throughout Kenya, including universal access to a viable public-service broadcaster;
- fair competition;

- innovation;
- adherence to social responsibility by encouraging the development of, and respect for, codes of practice by all licensees; and,
- research and development.

The policy calls for the state-owned broadcast company, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), to be restructured to ensure its relevance and viability in the market. Amendments are to be made to the KBC Act to reflect the nature, structure, mandate and funding of the corporation as a public broadcaster. A National Public Broadcasting Service is proposed in the policy which would be provided by the KBC, operating commercially but with universal service obligations and some government support to sustain universal service. The policy would also entrench development of a pluralistic broadcasting landscape through continued licensing of private commercial broadcasting services that would, in turn, be expected to provide a diversity of programming content, contribute to job creation and ensure human resource development. The existing communications regulator CCK would continue to be responsible for technical evaluation of applicants and granting of licences and frequencies. Further, the policy calls for systematic regulation and encouragement of community broadcasting services, with only non-profit community broadcasting service providers being licensed at community level. Applicants for community licences would need to guarantee a focus on specific community issues not tackled through private or public broadcasting, and focus on community development issues such as health, education, culture and the environment. The policy also aspires to promote the introduction and uptake of digital broadcasting in the country by managing the transition from analogue to digital broadcast transmission systems.

In addition, the policy aspires to promote local content in broadcasting, working in conjunction with CCK and media professionals. Further, media training institutions would be encouraged to nurture research into aspects of programming and curriculum development for the industry. The policy pledges to promote local production of advertisements and to nurture an enabling environment for production and export of local broadcast and media products, with the end result being a contribution towards job creation. The formation of a broadcasting Content Advisory Council is proposed to advise the CCK on broadcasting content standards, monitoring of broadcast content, monitoring of ethical compliance and handling of complaints from operators and consumers.

The policy also touches on media professional standards and the need for a broadcaster code of conduct to ensure balance, fairness, preservation of the public interest and equitable election coverage.

The policy includes the following targets to be reached by 2015:

- improving fixed-line teledensity in rural areas from the current 0.33 lines per 100 inhabitants to five lines per 100 inhabitants;
- improving the fixed-line teledensity in urban areas from the current 1.97 lines to 20 lines per 100 inhabitants;
- increasing the number of mobile subscribers from the current four million to ten million;
- expanding the country's current international Internet bandwidth from the current 69 megabits per second (Mbps) to 1 gigabit per second (Gbps); and,
- providing all primary schools with affordable Internet access.

The policy also sets a 2010 target for all secondary schools and tertiary institutions to have affordable Internet access.

The policy has been sharply criticised by media industry players through the Media Council of Kenya (Media Council of Kenya, 2005a), due to the Council's exclusion from the drafting process, the policy's vagueness on matters of public interest – such as the proposed local content ratio – the assumption that the government is representative of the people's view, and the integration of media policy into ICT policy instead of treating ICT as a media tool.

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## Key findings

- While the media sector is growing in the multi-party dispensation, the absence of comprehensive media policy and law is undermining development of a strong media able to play its full role in the democratic dispensation.
- There are wide disparities between urban and rural areas in terms of access to communications services, making it necessary for subsidisation schemes to be developed to improve rural infrastructure and affordability.
- Private commercial TV and radio stations are commanding high audience ratings, thus providing healthy competition to the state-owned KBC services.
- The government's 2006 draft ICT Policy contains detailed guidelines on broadcasting aimed at, among other things, converting the KBC from a state to a public broadcaster, ensuring orderly regulation of public, commercial and community broadcasters, improving the local broadcast content production industry, establishing a sector-wide code of conduct and improving research and skills development in the broadcasting sector.
- The draft ICT Policy also contains targets for the spread of media support technologies, such as telephony and Internet.



## 5. Radio

### 5.1 Key changes and developments in the radio sector in the past five years

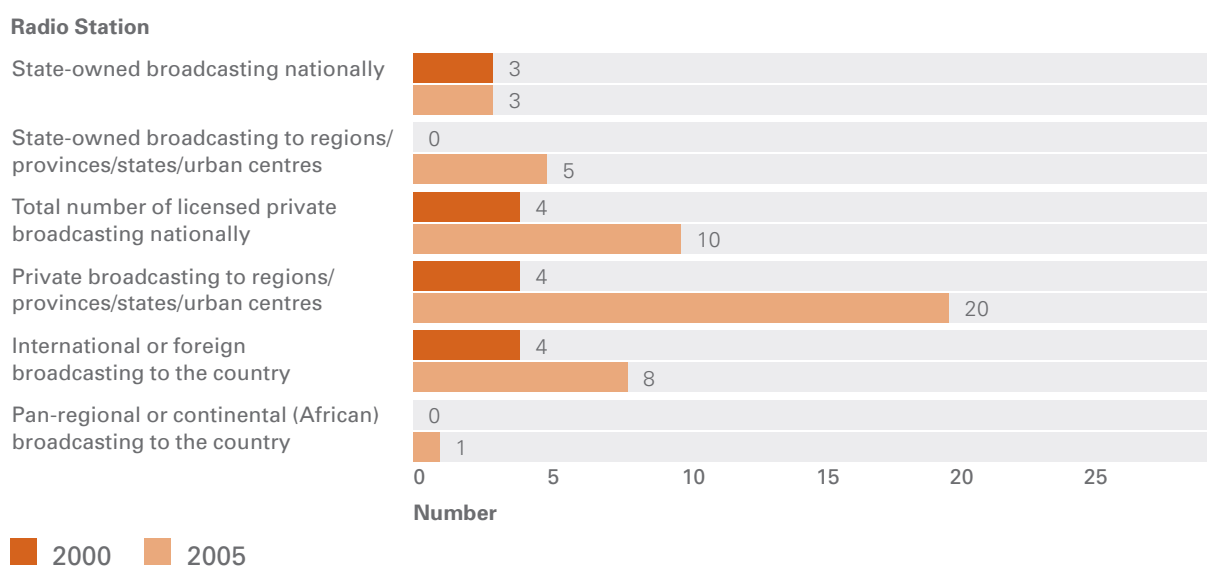
The size and nature of the marketplace for radio has enlarged significantly since 2000, with 34 new stations coming on-air, bringing the total in 2005 to 49 (Republic of Kenya, 2006b; CCK, 2005b). In particular, there has been an increase in vernacular-language stations, and the proliferation of these stations reflects a push towards addressing the various interests groups in the country. There are now a number of radio stations serving different ethnic groups and major religions in the country, and the interests of the youth (the largest segment of the population) are now being targeted by stations such as Kiss FM and others. Radio listenership in the country is quite high. In an InterMedia survey, it was found that 91% of the population had listened to the radio in the past seven days (InterMedia, 2005).

The upsurge of stations is a result of liberalisation of the airwaves, and listeners now have a wide range of listening choices, particularly entertainment services. Regionally-based vernacular language stations previously considered a threat to state security now abound and continue to open. Most are commercially-oriented and many have 80% of their content focused on non-serious entertainment issues, resulting in a need for radio to become more informative and balanced between information and entertainment.

In terms of national services, six new stations, all private commercial, have emerged since 2000: Kiss FM, Kameme FM, Ramogi FM, Classic FM, House of Reggae and Inooro FM. There are now 13 national stations (see Figure 4 and Table 1), three of them are state-owned Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) outlets – KBC English, KBC Kiswahili and KBC Metro FM – and the rest are private commercial stations.

The even greater growth in stations over the past five years has been at regional/local level. State-owned KBC has created five new regional services, and 16 new private commercial services have been launched at regional level (see Figure 4 and Table 1). International radio stations have also increased since 2000, from four to eight, and two non-profit community station projects, still at an experimental stage, have been launched: Man'gelete and Maseno<sup>13</sup>. One of the reasons hindering the expansion of community radio in the country is the lack of support for communities to start their own radio stations and existing bureaucratic bottlenecks in licensing. More support in this area is required.

**Figure 4: Broadcasting & Ownership Status of Radio Stations**



Sources: CCK, 2005b, Republic of Kenya, 2006b

From the data obtained, 34 stations have come into existence since 2000. Out of this number, five are new outlets of the state broadcaster KBC while 29 are non-state stations: international (4), pan-regional African (1), private commercial (22) and community (2) (NMG, 2006; Republic of Kenya, 2006b; CCK, 2005b; KBC, 2006; Moggi & Tessier, 2001).

<sup>13</sup> These non-profit community stations have not been included in Figure 4, as they are not classified as either state or private. However, they are included in Table 1.

**Table 1: Radio Stations Currently Broadcasting in Kenya**

Name of radio station	Reach	Existing before 2000	Existing after 2000	Ownership
BBC	International	1998		Private
Transworld Radio	International	Yes		Private
Radio France Int'l	International	Yes		Private
Sound Asia	International	1999		Private
Sound Asia FM	International		2000	Private
BBC Africa	International		Yes	Private
Voice of America	International		2001	Private
China Radio	International		Yes	Private
East Africa Radio	Pan-regional		Yes	Private
KBC English	National	1928		State
KBC Kiswahili	National	1953		State
KBC Metro FM	National	1995		State
Capital FM	National	1996		Private
Nation/Easy Fm	National	1999		Private
Metro East	National	1999		Private
Citizen FM	National	1999		Private
Kiss FM	National		2000	Private
Kameme FM	National		2000	Private
Ramogi FM	National		2001	Private
Inooro FM	National		2003	Private
Classic FM	National		2004	Private
House of Reggae	National		Yes	Private
KBC Coro FM	Regional		2000	State
KBC Pwani FM	Regional		2001	State
KBC Western	Regional		Yes	State
KBC Central	Regional		Yes	State
KBC Eastern FM	Regional		Yes	State
Biblia Husema	Regional	Yes		Private
Family FM	Regional	1999		Private
East FM	Regional	1999		Private
Baraka FM	Regional	1999		Private
IQRA	Regional		2000	Private
Radio Waumini	Regional		2001	Private
Citizen Mulembe	Regional		Yes	Private
Hope FM	Regional		2002	Private
Pulse FM	Regional		Yes	Private
Y-FM	Regional		2004	Private
Sayare FM	Regional		2004	Private
Jesus is Lord	Regional		Yes	Private
Kass FM	Regional		2004	Private
Simba FM	Regional		2005	Private
Sheikh FM	Regional		Yes	Private
Munga FM	Regional		Yes	Private
Faith FM	Regional		Yes	Private
Victoria Radio	Regional		Yes	Private
Star Radio	Regional		Yes	Private
Sauti ya Rehema	Regional		Yes	Private
Man'gelete	Community		2004	Non-profit
Maseno	Community		Yes	Non-profit
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>49</b>

Sources: NMG, 2006; CCK, 2005b; Republic of Kenya, 2006b; KBC, 2006; Moggi & Tessier, 2001

A general problem in the radio sector is that stations granted frequencies often fail to go or stay on air. Some may go on air for a while and then close while others are stopped for contravening their specifications for broadcasting or interfering with other frequencies. The cumulative CCK listing of frequency allocations (see Table 2 below) shows that 224 frequencies have been allocated to stations, a far higher total than the number of broadcasting stations (49). Some of this may be a result of different frequencies granted to single stations for use in different regions. In 2005, there were 163 radio frequencies off air, 93 in use, six subject to court proceedings, and five in dispute (CCK, 2005b).

**Table 2: Cumulative Frequency Allocation to Radio Stations in Kenya**

Period	Cumulative No. of FM frequencies assigned at the end of each period
Up to 30 June 1999	79
July 1999-30 June 2000	83
July 2000-30 June 2001	84
July 2001-30 June 2002	92
July 2002-30 June 2003	137
July 2003-30 June 2004	148
July 2004-30 June 2005	225
July 2005-30 September 2005	224

Source: CCK, 2005a

Most radio stations depend on advertising, with the growth in the number of stations leading to strong competition for advertising revenue. The closure of many licensed operators is a reflection of high expenses and of this increase in competition. A list of the leading radio stations nationally shows Kiss FM, a station with a special focus on the youth, has the highest audience share (57.5%), followed by Citizen (42%) and Easy FM (41.2%) (Steadman, 2005). Most of these stations have started since 1998, and have a lot of entertainment content and modernised styles of reporting, which particularly appeal to the youth. Table 3 illustrates the audience shares for the major radio stations in the country.

**Table 3: Audience Share for the Ten Most Popular Radio Stations in the Country**

Station	Audience Share (%)	Year
Kiss FM	57.50	2005
Citizen FM	42.00	2005
Easy FM	41.25	2005
KBC Kiswahili	28.75	2005
House of Reggae	25.25	2005
Capital FM	21.75	2005
Kameme	17.75	2005
Y-FM	15.50	2005
KBC English	14.25	2005
Inooro	13.25	2005

Source: Steadman, 2005

From the list above, only Kameme and Inooro broadcast in vernacular non-English languages, targeting the Kikuyu speakers who are the most populous ethnic group in the country.

From available records, the leading radio station in the Rift Valley, the most populous province in Kenya, is regional radio station Sayare FM, a recently-opened station (2004) that has a Christian focus. The station had an audience share of 58%. This station is also the leading radio station in the Western Province, with an audience share of 37%. In Eastern Province, the national Kikuyu-language station Kameme FM has the largest audience rating (50%). In Nyanza, the national station Ramogi leads with an audience share of 57%.

The success of Sayare is remarkable given that it is less than two years old. The station broadcasts in Kiswahili and English in an area that is multicultural, hence the preference for a station broadcasting in the national languages. Kameme, the first radio station to broadcast full time in a local language (Kikuyu), is said to have opened the market for vernacular broadcasters and now commands a listenership across the country, wherever the Kikuyu are found. Its fame started in the Central Province and then shifted to other areas of the country. Having been the most popular station in Central Province, Kameme has since been overtaken by Inooro FM, another national Kikuyu radio station. Trends show that rural people are most likely to tune into stations broadcasting in local languages, hence the popularity of vernacular-language radio, which is now an important instrument for reaching rural majorities. For instance, statistics show that in Central Province, Inooro and Kameme (both broadcasting in Kikuyu) top the audience share, with Inooro having 54% and Kameme 48% (Steadman, 2005). Table 4 shows the five largest provinces and the dominant radio station in each.



**Table 4: Top Radio Stations in the Five Most Populous Regions**

Region/Province	Station	Total number of listeners	Audience share of radio listeners in the region (%)
Rift Valley	Sayare	401,000	58
Eastern Province	Kameme	331,588	50
Nyanza	Ramogi	374,000	57
Central Province	Inooro	229,000	54
Western Province	Sayare	82,000	37

Source: Steadman, 2005

## 5.2 Investment and growth in the radio sector in the past five years

Most stable investment in the radio sector is undertaken by large capital investors, which may suggest that the capital outlay requirement is well beyond the reach of many. There has also been a trend in the past for people well-connected to government to stand better chances of acquiring licences. However, this trend may be changing, given the many licences are being granted to a wide range of players in recent years – even though, as already highlighted, many of these stations are still unable to stay on air. Several non-Kenyan investors have also penetrated the market, such as the investors in the Kiss FM and Family FM stations who are from the UK and the United States. Churches and religious organisations, with their international contacts and strong capital assets, have had good success in launching viable new radio services. An example is Radio Waumini FM, started in 2001 by the Catholic Church of Kenya.

## 5.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Generally, there appears to be a greater variety of owners compared to the year 2000, as evidenced by the large number of private parties that now own and operate stations. However, very few stations are owned by communities and, as already observed, the two community stations that have gone on air are still at a very early stage. The fact that the two community stations are initiated and funded by NGOs (EcoNews Africa and IDRC) puts in question their sustainability should the NGOs discontinue their financial support. Proper mechanisms for continued community support need to be put in place.

There is evidence of decreased levels of partisan government decision-making around station licences (issued by the Ministry of Information and Communications on the advice of the regulator CCK), though one can still find cases of stations being temporarily denied a frequency as a result of content not favourable to the government. For instance, Kass FM (a vernacular station that broadcasts in the Kalenjin language) had its frequency temporarily turned off late last year for broadcasting supposedly anti-government messages (*Daily Nation*, 2005).

## 5.4 Diversity

There has definitely been an increase in recent years in the diversity of programmes presented. Other than an increase in topical issues (for example, HIV/AIDS, drugs, gender violence, politics), there is also an increasing tendency for radio to address youth-related themes such as dating and careers. Unfortunately, foreign programming still continues to dominate radio, particularly with regards to music, but local music is slowly finding its place, partly as a result of the growth of the local music industry. Some media analysts believe that radio in Kenya today is too focused on entertainment content, rather than on news and education. Another concern is that radio focused on the youth often has a tendency to use obscene and unbecoming language. This makes many people wary of the role of radio today in national development<sup>14</sup>.

## 5.5 Quality of radio output and programming

Most stations are up to date with current affairs. However, most only provide a few minutes of news and current affairs at any one time, the rest being devoted to entertainment. There is little evidence of improved journalism, though production quality does seem to have improved.

## 5.6 Specific challenges

Radio stations in Kenya face the challenge of financing, occasioned by the high cost of operations, relatively small advertising markets and high equipment maintenance costs. Other difficulties are stations' inability to pay journalists well, tough competition in the industry and fear of harassment by government when content is perceived as compromising state security.

### Key findings

- The largest radio station growth in the past five years has been at regional level among private commercial stations.
- Two vernacular-language-only stations have emerged, broadcasting in Kikuyu, thus bucking the trend at other stations where programming is primarily in the national languages of English and Kiswahili.
- Two experimental community radio stations have been started up.
- There are many financial challenges for stations, caused by the high cost of operations and stiff competition for advertising revenue.
- The state appears to be taking a more hands-off approach to the content of commercial stations, with notable exceptions such as the case when Kass FM temporarily lost its licence last year after broadcasting programming seen as too critical of government.

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<sup>14</sup> Researcher interview in 2006 with one NGO official who requested anonymity



## 6. Television

### 6.1 Key changes and developments in the television marketplace in the past five years

From the data collected, the state-owned TV channel KBC Channel 1 remains the only channel with over 90% geographical coverage in the country. KBC also has an entertainment channel, KBC-Metro, focused on city and urban markets around the country, and produces a satellite pay-TV channel, KBC Channel 2<sup>15</sup>, broadcast on the MultiChoice satellite platform.

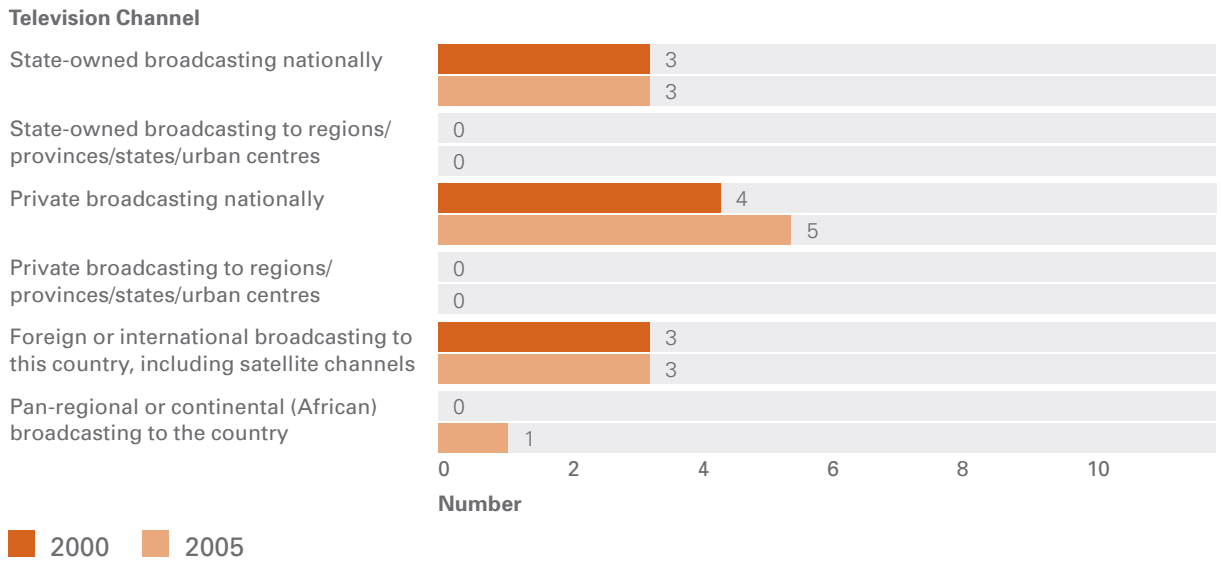
The other five Kenyan domestic TV channels – KTN-TV, Nation TV, Family TV, Citizen TV and Sayare TV – are all privately-owned (see Figure 5). There is one pan-regional African service, East African TV, broadcasting out of Tanzania. There are two satellite channels; MultiChoice and STV/TV, and an international cable television network, CTN, which is a pay-per-view cable service aimed mainly at the up-market Nairobi-based Asian clientele. As many as 40 international channels can be accessed on the MultiChoice satellite pay-TV platform (which is based in South Africa), with the monthly subscription being about US\$80. In addition, programming from international channels such as the BBC and CNN (both available on the MultiChoice satellite platform) are routinely re-broadcast on the local free-to-air Kenyan stations. To date, no community TV channel exists in Kenya.

Only two of Kenya's TV channels are new within the past five years: East African TV (EATV) and Sayare TV. EATV, as its name suggests, is a regional East African channel. It broadcasts from Tanzania, and its content is mainly entertainment and music. For that reason, it is especially popular with youth in urban areas. Sayare TV, the other new station, has a Christian focus and has not made much impact so far in the country.

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<sup>15</sup> For the purposes of Figure 5, KBC Channel 2 has been classified as a state-owned TV channel broadcasting nationally.

**Figure 5: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Television Stations**



There are no regional or local TV services in the country (see Figure 5).

One of the probable reasons for slow TV sector growth is the low level of TV ownership in the country. There are varying statistics available on the percentage of the population that owns a television set. One source estimated that only 17% of Kenyans owned a television set in 2004 (Omosa & McCormick, 2004), with another source stating in 2005 that 32% of Kenyans owned a television set (InterMedia, 2005). The discrepancies in the statistics arise because no national study has yet been conducted to validate TV or radio ownership levels in the country. However, demand for TV appears to be real given that, in rural areas, some businessmen allow viewing of TV for a fee in large halls, and this method appears to be a viable way of making an income. It would seem, then, that many households are just not able to afford the cost of purchasing a receiver.

Table 5 illustrates the general assignment trend for TV frequencies in the country since 1992.

**Table 5: Cumulative TV Frequency Allocation in Kenya**

Period	Cumulative no. of TV frequencies assigned at the end of this period
Up to 30 June 1999	39
July 1999-30 June 2000	40
July 2000-30 June 2001	40
July 2001-30 June 2002	45
July 2002-30 June 2003	54
July 2003-30 June 2004	60
July 2004-30 June 2005	77
July 2005-September 2005	89

Source: CCK, 2005a

A comparison between the number of TV frequency allocations made and the number of TV stations currently broadcasting in the country (Table 6 below) reflects a huge shortfall between those allocated frequencies and those that actually go on air, although this circumstance is similar to the radio frequency disparity as sometimes one TV station may broadcast on several frequencies.

**Table 6: TV Services Available in the Country**

Name of TV service	Reach	Existing by 2000	Existing after 2000	Ownership
Cable Television Network	International	1994		Pay-Per-View Network
STV/TV Africa	Continental	1996		Private
MultiChoice-DStv	Continental	1999		Private
East Africa TV	Pan-regional		2002	Private
KBC TV Channel 1	National	1963		State
KBC Metro	National	1995		State
KBC Channel 2 (on MultiChoice satellite pay-TV)	National	Yes		State
KTN TV	National	1990		Private
Nation TV	National	1999		Private
Family TV	National	1999		Private
Citizen TV	National	1999		Private
Sayare TV	National		2004	Private

Sources: NMG, 2006; CCK, 2005b; Republic of Kenya, 2006b

Analysis of audience shares across the various TV stations indicates that Nation TV and KTN-TV are leading, both with 86.5% of national share. KBC Channel 1 is next with 77.5%, followed by Citizen TV at 43.75% and STV at 36.75% (See Table 7).

**Table 7: TV Channel National Audience Shares**

Channel	% audience share	Year of data
Nation TV	86.5	2005
KTN TV	86.5	2005
Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) Channel 1	77.5	2005
Citizen TV	43.75	2005
Sky TV (STV-TV Africa)	36.75	2005
Family TV	34	2005
East African TV (EATV)	23.75	2005
KBC Metro	14.75	2005
Sayare TV	10	2005

Source: Steadman, 2005

## 6.2 Investment and growth in the television sector in the past five years

Growth in Kenya's TV sector has been slight in the past five years, with only two new stations available and only one of them, Sayare TV, Kenyan-based. Meanwhile, satellite subscriber numbers have not shown any great growth, with the monthly subscription cost remaining beyond the means of most.

Most investors in the sector are people with significant resources. Previously, investors in TV and other media were people allied to government, but this trend is fast disappearing. Most owners of TV stations are also investors in radio and press. The practice of cross-media ownership is supported by some but government is moving towards restricting this phenomenon (Republic of Kenya, 2006a). Another notable feature is that shareholding in most TV business is largely controlled by one or two individuals, which means that the influence of personal interests on programming cannot be ruled out.

## 6.3 Plurality, ownership and control

The two most popular channels in the country, Nation TV and KTN-TV, are independent from government control. They are owned by the Nation Media Group (NMG) and Standard Group respectively, both of which have holdings in other media sectors, making them cross-media players. The NMG and Standard Group, by virtue of their cross-media holdings, are seen as wielding significant political power. Immediately after the current government came to power, the NMG appeared skewed in its favour while the Standard Group (where former President Moi owns more than three-quarters of the shares) immediately took sides against

the government. The failure of the current government to win in the recent national referendum is seen as largely due to key players making use of the Standard Group's media outlets to oppose government. Lately, the NMG appears to have edged closer to criticising government on certain policies. The state TV broadcaster KBC is still sympathetic to government, but not in the former sycophantic style, while Citizen TV remains more pro-government than the rest.

## 6.4 Diversity

The two new stations of the past five years have introduced an element of specialisation into Kenyan TV, with the new channels addressing the changing interests of the population. EATV is particularly successful with the youth due to its promotion of African music. The other new channel, Sayare TV, is part of a wave of increased religious programming, with religious interests starting to be increasingly served on Kenyan TV. Almost all channels now have one or two religious programmes per week, and two channels, Family TV and Sayare TV, are religious-based.

Political subjects dominate talk shows and open discussions. Unfortunately, women and children's issues are not well represented, but there is a trend towards more of this type of programming. There is a great deal of foreign-made programming on the channels, even though the Ministry of Information and Communications has called for a larger proportion of content to be local. The reliance on foreign programmes is necessitated by the high costs of local production and also partly by audience preference.

## 6.5 Quality of television output and programming

Generally, there has been some improvement in the quality of programming and presentation in recent years. However, it appears that only a few journalists are able to meet the challenge of professionalism, and there is a great deal of migration from one station to another and poaching of journalists. Few journalists are able to achieve excellent standards in reporting, but the few who do are quite good. In general, programming and presentation quality certainly require intervention if TV is to become an important medium in Kenya.

All TV programming is in English and Swahili, with no vernacular-language presence.

## 6.6 Specific challenges

TV in Kenya faces challenges around financing, low-quality production and presentation, and lack of local content. For most of the day, Kenyan domestic TV is dominated by foreign material such as soap operas, music and movies.

### Key findings

- The TV sector has not experienced great growth since 2000, with only one new domestic service, the religious Sayare channel, being launched and the arrival of one new pan-regional service (Tanzania-based EATV).
- Religious and entertainment interests are increasingly being catered for.
- There are concerns that too much Kenyan TV programming is entertainment-based as opposed to factual, and that there is not enough local content.
- Improvement is needed in local TV journalistic standards.

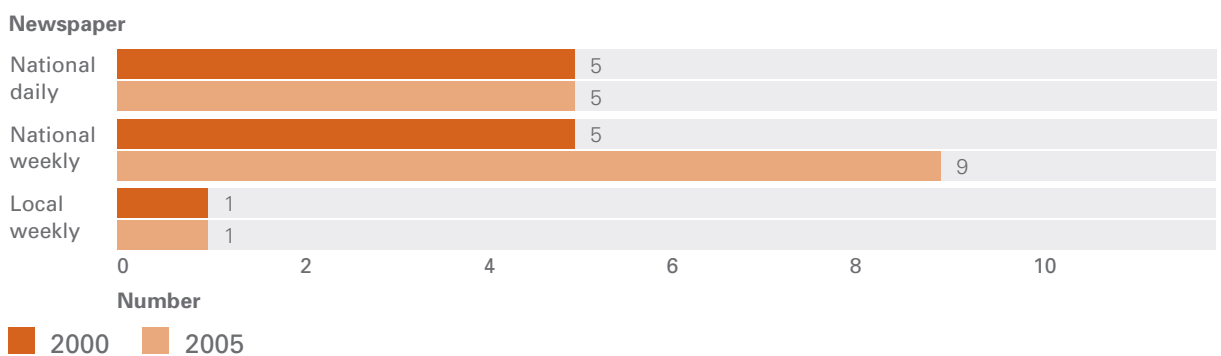


# 7. Newspapers

## 7.1 Key changes and developments in the newspaper marketplace in the past five years

The number of dailies has not changed since 2000, while the number of national weeklies increased from five to nine between 2000 and 2005, including the addition of the *Citizen* weekly (a gossip tabloid), the *Kenya Monitor* and *The Leader*. Local newspapers apparently continue to be seen as an unattractive investment prospect in the country. There are no significant regional or local papers, with all publications seeking a national presence. There are six international weeklies and eight international dailies. There is also an international monthly – *Le Monde Diplomatique*. There are two pan-regional newspapers published in Kenya: the *East African Business* and the *East African*. There are three dailies that are published in Uganda but read in Kenya: *The Daily Monitor*, *New Vision* and *Bukedde*. There are 15 newspapers published in Tanzania but also read in Kenya, comprised of six weeklies and nine dailies. These newspapers have a high number of expatriate readers. There is one state-owned news agency, the Kenya News Agency.

**Figure 6: Total Number of Newspapers**



Source: NMG, 2006



The *Daily Nation* is the leading daily in the country in terms of readership, followed by the *Standard* (NMG, 2006). All other dailies fall far below these leading newspapers in readership. The *Daily Nation* was founded in 1960 by the Aga Khan and is now owned by the Nation Media Group (NMG), of which the Aga Khan is the principle shareholder. The NMG also owns the *East African*, a pan-regional paper, and the *Monitor*, a daily in Uganda. The *Daily Nation* was a strong critic of the Kenyan government during the one-party era under Daniel Arap Moi. After the entry of the NARC government in 2002, the paper softened its stance and its reporting is slightly in favour of the government. Still, it remains the paper with the most balanced reporting in Kenya. The NMG also owns Nation TV and Easy FM radio. The *Standard*, on the other hand, is owned by the Standard Group, a group of businessmen associated with former President Moi. The *Standard*, and the Standard Group's TV (KTN-TV), are the main critical voices against the current NARC government. This stance is earning the paper a competitive edge and its sales, especially of the Sunday issue, are rising steadily (NMG, 2006; and, research interview in 2006 with media practitioner who requested anonymity). The *Kenya Times*, owned by the former ruling KANU party, is unpopular with most readers. Table 8 below presents the most-read newspapers in the country.

**Table 8: Most-read Newspapers**

Newspaper	% readership	Year
Daily Nation	74.2	2006
Standard	23.4	2006
The Kenya Times	0.8	2006
The People	1.6	2006
Sunday Nation	74.6	2006
Sunday Standard	23.4	2006
East African	no figure available	2006
The People on Sunday	1.6	2006

Source: NMG, 2006

The growth of newspapers since 2000 has not been impressive. The requirement that publishers purchase a bond of Kshs1 million (about US\$13,800) from the government before commencing publishing is discouraging for many investors. Some alternative press outlets still publish without government authorisation and suffer occasional confiscation of their copies. The *Citizen* is one such paper and it dwells mainly on sensationalising imagined or real stories about the who's who of Kenya. Still, the market for such tabloids is limited mainly to the urban areas.

About 7.6 million people reportedly read newspapers, and a slight improvement has been noted in the number of those who read every day since 2000. NMG research shows that daily newspaper sales increased from 211,437 copies to 215,232 between 2000 and 2005 (NMG, 2006). There has been a growing demand for print media, especially that dealing with political news and coverage. A recent survey concluded that most people (75%) consider the media as a source of credible information (*Daily Nation*, 2006). However, only a small percentage can afford a newspaper every day, and it would seem that most literate people only aspire to read a paper at least once in a week.

## 7.2 Investment and growth in newspapers in past five years

There has only been a slight increase in press advertising in recent years, due partly to slow economic growth<sup>16</sup>. This appears to be one of the reasons why not so many newspapers are in the market. The government is the single greatest advertiser in the two major dailies<sup>17</sup>.

## 7.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Ownership is still concentrated in the hands of a few: those who can afford the Kshs1 million demanded as a bond by government in order to allow a publication to commence, and those who can afford the equipment and overheads that go with printing a daily. The owners of most successful newspapers are also the owners of other media channels in radio and TV. Both the Nation Media Group and the Standard Group are examples of this cross-media ownership.

The Standard Group, aligned with the previous Moi regime and critical of the current NARC government, was subjected to government-sanctioned raids on its newspaper and TV offices in March of 2006.

## 7.4 Diversity

There has been an increase in diversity of newspaper coverage as almost all topical issues are now covered. Weekly publications are particularly notable for their diversity of content, with the *Sunday Nation* and *Sunday Standard* being good examples of this trend. Their wide coverage reflects a cross-section of views and activities. Other papers now seem to be copying this trend.

## 7.5 Specific challenges

The print media is growing slowly in the country and most newspapers, save for the two most popular ones – *Daily Nation* and the *Standard* – are still struggling to increase their market share. Among most newspapers' main drawbacks are the high cost of hiring good journalists, the costs of distribution and the low amounts of advertising spending. The virtual duopoly of the two most popular papers also acts as a discouragement for potential new investors.

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<sup>16</sup> Researcher interview in 2006 with media practitioner who requested anonymity.

<sup>17</sup> Researcher interview in 2006 with media practitioner who requested anonymity.

## Key findings

- Kenya has two dominant daily newspapers, the *Daily Nation* and the *Standard*, with other papers struggling to remain viable.
- The Nation Media Group and Standard Group also publish weekly Sunday editions, and have cross-media holdings in the electronic media, further entrenching their power in the media sector.
- New investment in the print sector is discouraged by the high start-up fee charged by government to new titles.
- Some papers, such as the gossip tabloid the *Citizen*, do not pay the fee to government, thus rendering themselves vulnerable to occasional seizure of copies of the paper.
- The government-sanctioned raids on the Standard Group's newspaper and TV offices in March of this year revealed that the current government is not yet willing to allow an unfettered newspaper sector.



## 8. Media Support

### 8.1 Key changes and developments in new media technologies in the past five years

Obtained statistics show that the percentage of people with access to the Internet has improved from below 1% in 2000 to 4% in 2005 (Internet World Stats, 2006). This figure is still very low and represents only 1.5 million people out of the total population of 33 million in the country.

Currently, 73 Internet service providers (ISPs) are registered in Kenya, with about 16 of them active. There are about 1,000 cyber cafés operating (Republic of Kenya, 2006a). Currently, Internet speed is slower than in other parts of the East African region, due to most ISPs' inability to afford good access to fibre-optic networks. Liberalisation of the Internet gateway and backbone services is currently taking place, but state-controlled JamboNet continues to be the main gateway. A series of complaints against the government gateway monopoly is finally bearing fruit and the new draft ICT Policy of 2006 calls for improved broadband services and Internet access technology to allow smoother operations of ICT in the country (Republic of Kenya, 2006a).

The available statistics suggest there was a drop in fixed-line telephone connections between 2000 and 2005, from 313,470 to 281,764 (CCK, 2005c). The drop in fixed-line ownership can be attributed somewhat to the slack performance of the only fixed-line company, TELKOM-Kenya. Meanwhile, the number of mobile phone users has increased dramatically from 180,000 (0.6% of the population<sup>18</sup>) in 2000 to 4.6 million (13.4%<sup>19</sup>) in 2005 (CCK, 2005c). The number of mobile telephone operators has increased from two to three, even though the third company has yet to start up following its licensing last year. Most rural areas continue to be marginalised in terms of Internet and fixed-line use.

<sup>18</sup> This percentage was calculated using the World Bank population estimate for 2000 of 30.7 million (from World Bank, 2006a).

<sup>19</sup> This percentage was calculated using the UNSTATS population estimate for 2005 of 34.3 million.

## 8.2 Key changes in media support in the past five years

Though comprehensive data is not accessible, there appears to be growth in the number of locally-owned film production firms. This change is apparently a result of the increasing popularity of the Kenyan film industry and also the increasing attraction of Kenya as a shooting location for international film companies. The film producers' directory, *af2005 Directory*, listed 40 locally-owned and 13 international or foreign-owned television/film independent production companies in Kenya in 2005 (Africa Film and TV, 2005). Data on advertising agencies was not immediately available at the time of this research. There has definitely been an increase in market research, with Steadman Research and Consumer Insight being the leaders in collecting media market data. There are currently around 70 advertising agencies, 13 market research agencies and 22 marketing consultants in Kenya (Yellow Pages, 2006). Some of the leading international advertising agencies, including Ogilvy & Mather, McCann-Ericson and Young & Rubicam, have local offices or affiliates.

## 8.3 Audience and readership research data

The main sources for broadcasting audience data are the media houses and the market research firms, Steadman Research and Consumer Insight. The Nation Media Group carries out studies on radio and TV performance about every two months, while Steadman Research and Consumer Insight do regular media monitoring around the country and hence have the latest and detailed data on both radio and TV. Newspaper readership data is less regular. The Nation Media Group carries out readership research about once every six months. Most data collection is carried out primarily in towns and thus does not always properly represent rural trends, which may vary from urban ones. Internet access data is available locally but in many cases is not accurate because this usage continues to increase at a fast rate and requires close monitoring. Research on mobile telephone use is mainly carried out by the operators themselves, namely the two established firms Celtel-Kenya and Safaricom-Kenya. These two firms have detailed data on calling patterns, hourly distribution of usage, and other data. The Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) also has partial data on mobile telephony (CCK, 2005c).

## 8.4 Media support, ISPs and ownership

There is significant foreign ownership participation in Kenyan market research organisations, mobile telephone firms and advertising firms.

Safaricom Limited, Kenya's current leading mobile telephone operator, was initially formed in 1997 as a fully-owned subsidiary of TELKOM Kenya. But in May 2000, UK-based Vodafone acquired a 40% stake and management responsibility for the company. Celtel-Kenya and Steadman Research Services International-Kenya are both local operations of international firms, Celtel International and Steadman Research Services International. Consumer insight and McCann-Ericson are continental agencies with offices in South Africa and other countries in Africa.

However, many ISP companies are Kenyan or have Kenyan shareholders. Some of the major ISPs include Africa Online, Kenyaweb.com, Insight Technologies, Interconnect, ISP Kenya, Nairobi Net, Swift Global (K), Communication Solutions, Wananchi Online and Uunet Kenya.

## Key findings

- Internet usage rates continue to be low in the country but the sector is growing.
- Seventy-three ISPs are registered in the country, 16 of which are actively providing services.
- Most rural areas continue to be marginalised in terms of Internet and telephone fixed-line use.
- There has been a strong increase in mobile phone subscriptions over the past five years, and a third mobile operator was licensed in 2005 to compete with Celtel-Kenya and Safaricom-Kenya.



## 9. NGO Activity

### 9.1 Key changes and developments in NGO activity in the past five years

Media NGOs in Kenya are not well-documented in official statistics provided by the National Council of NGOs or the NGO Coordinating Bureau. The lists obtained from both these organisations show few NGOs working in the media, neglecting to mention several NGOs that are actually active in this area. The Media Council of Kenya has some NGOs as partners, but even the Media Council's NGO list is not comprehensive enough for conclusions to be reached. From the data collected for this research, it emerged that the current number of international NGOs registered in the country is 545 but few international NGOs are listed as having media development projects. The total number of local NGOs in the country in 2005 was estimated at 2,817, and seven were listed as carrying out projects that could qualify as media activity (representing a drop from the year 2000 when eight local NGOs were listed as carrying out media development).

However, it is the author's view that the overall growth of the media in the country has sparked growth in NGO activity in this area, and that this trend is likely to continue. This growth is also likely to be spurred by heightening political activity in the country, with the public likely to become more reliant on the media for information pertaining to political happenings. Information on specific media projects being run in the country is disjointed and requires an organisation-to-organisation survey. Such surveying is complicated by unreliable address and telephone records.

### 9.2 Key NGOs involved in media development activities

From a few NGOs visited by the researchers for this study, it emerged that several of them are carrying out media activities.

A regional NGO in the country, EcoNews Africa, has among its objectives the improvement of community radio activities and, increasing the capacity of radio station managers to respond to the needs of audiences. EcoNews and other partners are currently supporting the Mang'elele community radio project in Kenya. The project, based in the Makueni area of the Eastern Province, is one of several community radio stations that has been launched as an experiment in the East African region. It incorporates 34 women's groups, who own and manage the station on behalf of the wider community. It was launched in 2004 and covers Makueni district and its surroundings. Its targets are the marginalised, remote and rural communities of the area. Its main focus is giving information and advice on development issues such as farming methods, education, health, human rights and cultural issues.

Another NGO, the African Woman and Child Feature Service (AWC), is an information network based in Nairobi. It was established in March 1994 to mainstream gender in and through the media. AWC is a pioneer media NGO in East Africa in this field, and is supported and funded by, among others, UN bodies, the Ford Foundation, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and Norwegian Church Aid. One of the AWC projects focuses on improving women's access to the media. AWC facilitates the travelling of journalists into rural areas to record stories and experiences of marginalised communities. Further, AWC helps improve content in the various media by liaising with newspapers and carrying out research on various content and publishing training manuals. The AWC also lobbies media houses to give satisfactory space and air-time to women, and advocates for the role of the media as a watchdog in society. The AWC has a coordinating role in the Media Industry Steering Committee (MISC) and a convening role in the Editor's Guild in Kenya. A summary of activities and partners of AWC is given below in Table 9.

**Table 9: African Woman and Child (AWC) Feature Service Media Activities**

Activity	Partners and supporters
Training and production of training manuals	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Foundation), Norwegian Church Aid, UNICEF
Lobbying and advocacy	Ford Foundation, Heinrich Boll Stiftung (Foundation), UNICEF/UNIFEM
Content creation/improvement	UN-Habitat, Netherlands Embassy, Ford Foundation, NORAD Heinrich Boll Stiftung (Foundation), UNICEF African Biotechnology Stakeholder's Forum
Policy and research	Netherlands Embassy, Panos, UNESCO, UNIFEM, G-WIP, HIVOS, Finish Embassy
Organisational capacity building	Global Fund for Women

Source: AWC, 2005

Another NGO involved in the media in the country is Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), the work of which in the media is three-pronged, including funding and conducting public forums on the role of media in good governance; holding workshops on national media policy; and, publications supporting/promoting journalistic standards. In its media programmes, FES works in partnership with the Media Council of Kenya.



The Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK) is another media development NGO. It started in 1983 and invites membership from all professional women in the print and electronic media, advertising and public relations. Among other things, AMWIK encourages schoolgirls to join journalism through lectures at schools and mentoring programmes. It also trains journalists on gender sensitive reporting and builds women's ability to tap the potential of the media effectively in highlighting their specific concerns.

The Kenya Community Media Network (KCOMNET) is a national network of individuals, media organisations, media professionals and NGOs committed to promotion of community media and development of communication in Kenya. It was started in 1995 as a brainchild of a regional community media workshop for Eastern and Southern Africa in Nairobi. The body has a membership of 30 community-based communication groups that employ a variety of media, including street theatre, songs and poetry, live music, puppets, radio listening groups, community newspapers and newsletters, community video, telecentres and radio broadcasting. KCOMNET aims to create awareness among decision-makers of the positive contribution of community media to national development, in an effort to encourage creation of an enabling regulatory environment for such media. KCOMNET is also active in training, with community members trained in areas such as general radio and TV production, radio drama, print journalism and new ICT use for radio. KCOMNET has hired lawyers to prepare a draft community broadcasting section for the country's anticipated Media Bill. It has also been pushing for concessionary conditions for community broadcasting, especially in frequency allocation, and is involved in accelerating access to Internet and other communication services to rural communities and lobbying for a special fund to be set up to assist community communication groups with equipment and production. The organisation has been lobbying and negotiating with Parliamentarians and other interested parties with the view to speeding up the Media Bill and getting support for community radio. These negotiations partly bore fruit when the Mang'elete radio station, a KCOMNET member, finally went on air in March 2004.

Kenya's Media Institute was founded in 1996 with the purpose of advancing and defending freedom of expression and promoting journalistic excellence in Kenya. It monitors media performance and conducts training and research. Since 2000, the Institute has been championing the recognition of the media's role as a critical tool in the democratisation of Kenya within the framework of political transformation. It is also involved in research and the preparation of a media law, and encourages professional journalism via awards through the National Media Trust.

Other NGOs working in Kenyan media development include FEMNET, African Broadcasting Network, the African Council for Communication Education, Development Horizons Trust, Innovative Communication Systems and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

### 9.3 Climate of opportunity for media development activities

The changed political climate since the rebirth of multi-party democracy in 1992 and the new government elected in 2002 has provided space for NGOs focused on media development. NGOs have been particularly active in advocating for media freedom and pushing for a dedicated piece of media legislation. The NGOs have been vocal in a timely way regarding the proposed Media Bill, which is still pending presentation to Parliament. The Media Institute and other NGOs reacted strongly after observing that the Bill was intended to control the media. The other area where NGO activity on media is concentrated is on women's issues, with many NGOs engaging in promoting the positive portrayal of women. Even though there remains a lot of work to be done in this area, the efforts being directed here are noteworthy.

#### Key findings

- Kenya's media-related NGOs have been particularly effective in lobbying and advocacy on the Media Bill process and on the rights of women in the media.
- The community media sector is benefiting greatly from NGO participation.
- The space for NGO activity on media issues has been opened since the move to multi-party democracy in 1992 and the election of a new government in 2002.



# 10. Conclusions

This study has outlined the main changes affecting the media in the country since the reinstatement of multi-party democracy in 1992 and, a decade later, the move to a new political dispensation and improved democratic space after the 2002 elections. The media in Kenya, though improving, are still ridden with uncertainties stemming from a lack of proper legislation and regulation. The government still retains ultimate control over most of what happens in the media sector.

In general, however, there would appear to be good prospects for media development in the country. Two positive trends identified are the growth in radio and the growth in interest in media product consumption. With continued liberalisation, democratisation and economic development, accompanied by enactment of an access to information law and a dedicated media law, the media in Kenya can be expected to flourish.

## 10.1 Media law and policy

The absence of dedicated media law and policy in Kenya is a major drawback to the development of a successful and vibrant media.

## 10.2 Journalist training and working conditions

Journalism training is available from a variety of institutions, ranging from universities to small colleges, but quality and standards of training continue to be matters of concern. Journalists in the country appear to be poorly remunerated, especially when they work as correspondents. Fear of intimidation and the difficulty of acquiring information are other major drawbacks to journalistic career development.

## 10.3 Radio

The growth of radio in the country over the past five years is commendable, and most of this growth has occurred at regional level with some highly successful use of vernacular languages. Community radio still lags behind due, among other things, to the low level of support from government.

## 10.4 Television

The TV sector is less vibrant than radio and has grown only slightly within the past five years, with the addition of only Sayare and EATV signalling some difficulties associated with investing in TV in the country. Matters of poor content and poor journalism in TV are also evident.

## 10.5 Newspapers

Growth in the newspaper sector continues to be hampered by the monopolistic nature of the two leading dailies – the *Nation* and the *Standard* – which is complicated by the papers' owners' cross-media ownership, making successful investment difficult for new entrants. Also, the requirement of a large lump-sum publisher's bond payment before start-up is far above the means of most investors.

## 10.6 Media support

With respect to media support sectors, Internet usage is rising steadily but many rural people continue to be marginalised. Mobile telephony is growing fast. Other services, such as marketing and research, media production and advertising are growing but slowly due to the poor economic climate and the high cost of the services, which make them unaffordable to most potential clientele.

## 10.7 NGO activity

There is a growing interest by NGOs in media development. Those already involved have had notable success on the Media Bill process, the rights of women in the media and community media development.

### Key findings

- A dedicated media law and access to information law are needed.
- Journalism training requires standardisation and upgrading, as do the working conditions of journalists.
- Community radio requires support so that it can flourish alongside state and private commercial radio services.
- Raised standards are needed in television content production, particularly local content.
- The newspaper sector is constrained by the dominance of the two main newspaper groups, the Nation Media Group and Standard Group, with their power bolstered through cross-media holdings.
- Media development NGOs are playing an important role in, among other things, lobbying and advocacy on policy-legal issues, supporting gender empowerment and building the community media sector.



# 11. Appendices

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## Appendix 2: Individuals/organisations consulted during the research

- Ian Fernades, Broadcasting Director, Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Nation Media Group, Kenya
- Macharia Gaitho, Managing Editor; Analyst: *The Sunday Nation*, Kenya
- Tom Idimuli, Head of Media; Media Entrepreneur: Gina Din Corporate Communications, Kenya
- Joe Kadhi, Lecturer; Academic: United States International University, Kenya
- Esther Kamweru, Executive Director; Media Support: Media Council of Kenya, Kenya
- Flitz Kopsieker, Resident Representative; NGO: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Kenya
- Mitch Odero, Chair Complaints and Ethics Committee; NGO: Media Council of Kenya, Kenya
- Kanja Waruru, Chair; Media Support: Media Owners' Association, Kenya

The other interviewees who asked not to be named were as follows:

- Government representative, Kenya (x 2)
- NGO representative, Kenya
- Academic, Kenya
- Media support worker, Kenya
- Media Practitioner, Private Sector, Kenya





# Kenya

## Country Report

### Way Forward



## 12. Introduction

This study was guided by one main objective – to identify the strategic priorities for developing an initiative that will strengthen the media within sub-Saharan Africa. The research focused on four main themes:

- the context for media development in various organisations;
- lessons learned in media development initiatives;
- developing an environment for successful media development; and,
- future strategies for media development in sub-Saharan Africa.

This baseline research intends to provide data that can inform the establishment of a new donor-backed media initiative in Africa.

The research mainly utilised the ‘key informants’ methodology. Key media organisations in the country were identified according to pre-defined categories in the research design. These organisations formed the sampling frame from which key media personalities were identified.

The key informants in the study were selected for interview using a purposive method of sampling. Purposive sampling implies a method where the researcher picks interviewees by convenience based on some criteria rather than in a random manner. Hence, the selection was carried out in three phases.

1. The heads of listed organisations were singled out from each category and listed.
2. Key persons involved in project design and implementation, in the various organisations, were identified and then listed where the respective category required more than one person to be interviewed. In the end, a total of 15 key informants were identified. However, only 14 of them were available for interview.
3. In cases where the selected interviewees were not immediately available, other interview candidates from the same organisation with comparable responsibilities were chosen.

Tracking down various interview candidates proved to be a tedious, often difficult, process. Most key informants were heads of organisations, with very busy schedules that could not easily accommodate a 40- to 60-minute interview. Making contact by telephone and email proved to be unreliable at times. All identified persons cooperated except for one, who declined. All interviewees were willing to be audio-recorded.

The analysis of the interviews involved creating categories for the various themes covered in the interviews, classifying them and determining the relationships between these categories. A reference code was used to classify the information and to detect emerging patterns.

Overall, the interviewees were frank, truthful and informative. Eight interviewees gave their consent for their quotes to be included in the final report. This reflects the changing perceptions of freedom of expression and the lessening fear of a state of intimidation.



# 13. Media Development: an organisational perspective

## 13.1 Key organisations

The organisations represented in the study include the Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ), the Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), United States International University (USIU), Gina Din Corporate Communications Ltd (GDCC), the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), University of Nairobi (UON), the Standard Group (SG), Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC), the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK), Nation Media Group (NMG) and the Media Owners Association (MOA).

## 13.2 Impact of media development initiatives

Six of the interviewees cited the change of regime in Kenya as the most significant development in the past five years. This has influenced, for example, freedom of expression, recognition of the media and its subsequent expansion. Five of the interviewees cited pluralism in the media and the proliferation of FM stations to more than 26 as the most significant change. Two of the interviewees felt that competition and the demand for better products in the media had occurred as a result of public enlightenment about the role of the media in society. In general, widespread reforms and the awakening of the media accompanied this awareness.

When asked about change at a strategic level in their specific area of work, two newspaper editors and a former writer felt competition had heightened due to the availability of instant news from radio, TV, mobile telephony and the Internet, necessitating them to design new ways of telling the same story while retaining its commercial viability and making it appealing to readers:

*“ Because editors are now required to think like business managers [rather] than journalists, sometimes it becomes very tricky to balance between doing journalism and doing business. ”*

(Media Practitioner, Private Sector, Kenya)

The need to repackage information was also cited. For the two journalistic trainers, their areas of work had been impacted by the need to revise the curriculum regularly. The University of Nairobi had, for instance, started Master and Bachelor degree training programmes in journalism within the past four years to meet this demand. For the two interviewees from the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), the strategic changes included getting more involved in media activities and championing regulation of the media and policy construction. The two interviewees from both the Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) and the Communication Commission of Kenya (CCK) cited an increase in their respective media concerns. The CCK had become busier in granting and monitoring licences, while the MIC had become more media-focused in regulating and developing policy in partnership with various media stakeholders. The Media Owners' Association (MOA) also claimed that the need to monitor and regulate the media had intensified due to its tremendous and somewhat unchecked growth.

### Regulatory and legislative frameworks

Half of the interviewees agreed that the government has dragged its feet on addressing media issues and tried to regulate media with sinister motives when the media prefers to be self-regulated. They felt that the ongoing process of regulation is not entirely favourable to the media. In the past, a lack of a comprehensive legislative framework had stifled media development and created an uncertain climate for its operation.

Two interviewees agreed that the vagueness in media regulation is responsible for the slow growth of both TV and print media. Further, the Miscellaneous bill of 2002<sup>1</sup> is also blamed for the slow growth of print media since it curtails investment in the area due to the requirement that investors deposit Kshs 1 million (about US\$13,888) as a publishing bond. The draft Information, Communications and Technology (ICT)<sup>2</sup> bill, which is pending approval by parliament, was deemed weak on communications though strong on technology and infrastructure. It was also faulted for discouraging cross-media ownership, an issue that might curb media growth. The general consensus among interviewees was that the fate of the media hangs in the balance as the pending bills represent a catch-22 situation.

Ian Fernades was of the opinion that even though the drafting of the media bill had been consultative, there was no guarantee that parliament would endorse the bill wholesale.

*“ There are two bills to be passed in parliament. One is the media bill and one is the broadcast bill, which is part of the ICT bill. The good thing is that the stakeholders have at least been consulted on drafting the bills and making changes where we think [they are] ... necessary. We only hope that our changes will be accepted by parliament. ”*

(Ian Fernades, Broadcasting Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: National Media Group, Kenya)

Another interviewee commented on the MCK and freedom of information bills, which are soon coming up in parliament; he viewed them as favourable, but only if parliament abstains from tampering with their content.

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<sup>1</sup> The Miscellaneous bill of 2002 introduced changes to the Books and Newspapers Act Cap 111 raising the publishers bond amount from Kshs 10,000 to 1,000,000, which is supposed to be deposited with the government before commencement of publishing.

<sup>2</sup> The ICT bill has been drafted by the Ministry of Information and Communications and deals with, among others, how the government plans to create an enabling environment for information technology, broadcasting, telecommunications and postal service sectors, as well as regulate them.

Only one interviewee, a government official, felt that the drafting of the Media Bill<sup>3</sup> had been highly consultative and that every stakeholder's view had been considered.

*“ I think we are going to adopt the BBC one [Media Bill] ... but media [players] have been arguing... we want to change a few things here and there, but we've agreed that they change. ”*

(Government representative, Kenya)

Projecting on the future of media regulation, a government official expressed hope that the ICT bill, which gives power to the CCK to monitor the media, would create a more certain environment for the media.

*“ I think it will give the commission power to address issues... I think those are major issues that have occurred because previously... there was no framework, no parameters of saying who should get a licence, or, once you've gotten it, where else can you go. ”*

(Government representative, Kenya)

Another interviewee expressed that the view that the parallel media bill, drafted by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), gives hope to media operations since it is fashioned after those from the West.

### **Audience research & media monitoring**

For five interviewees, both media research and the available data are inaccurate, uninformative and scattered. Some interviewees cited commercial interests as the driving force for independent research in the country. Four interviewees believed these interests have led to inaccurate information and sensationalised news, especially for the sake of tapping advertising revenue.

According to private media practitioner and media support interviewees, the lack of reliable research has led to uncertainty on specific trends and changes in the media. For instance, it is difficult for media houses to gauge audience preference with certainty. It is also difficult for media players to plan ahead aptly based on the available data, which is at times unreliable. Lack of data also restricts the refinement of products and content.

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<sup>3</sup> The government has drafted a Media Bill, which was presented to parliament early this year and is pending enactment. In the drafting of this bill, key media players, such as the Media Owners Association, Kenya National Commission of Human Rights, Advertiser's Association of Kenya, The International Commission of Jurists, the Kenya Union of Journalists and the Media Council of Kenya – were consulted (Media Council of Kenya, 2006).

*“ There is no research that we as media houses can really use to determine whether what we are doing is right or wrong, to determine our viewership patterns; and there is no research that even the agencies can use to determine where to advertise because the research is neither here nor there. You’ll find most of the agencies not subscribing to any one particular research; neither do any of the media houses. You’ll find each media house or each broadcaster going and saying I am number one or I have the most listeners or I have the most viewers... I do not trust the diaries because they are not consistent. ”*

(Ilan Fernades, Broadcasting Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: National Media Group, Kenya)

Only two interviewees felt that current research was adequate and up to date. One interviewee was of the view that the in-house monitoring of some media houses, though comprehensive, only serves their purpose and is not available to any others. One interviewee thought that gender monitoring was being adequately handled by the AMWIK, thus improving the quality of reporting on women’s issues.

### **Training and curriculum development**

Four interviewees felt that training and curriculum development, such as in gender studies and investigative journalism, were improving to meet the growing needs of the media.

A major concern expressed by at least ten interviewees was that sub-standard schools and colleges were mushrooming and offering poor journalistic training. Most of these do not have ample room, equipment or qualified teachers, and this had contributed to poor journalism, especially in FM radio.

Notably, two interviewees from the media support and academic sectors observed that MCK was now cooperating with the Ministry of Education and Information to curtail this practice. This move was perceived as positive and a sign of recognition of MCK’s role by the government. The failure of media owners to contribute to the training of journalists was cited as contributing to poor journalism, according to one interviewee. In the view of a journalism trainer, updating equipment, improving quality, encouraging more journalists to obtain PhD degrees and encouraging donor involvement are especially important needs.

*“ People start a school here with clerks and whatever, and they are saying [that] they are going to offer a diploma in broadcast production and journalism. [Yet they] don’t have a computer, don’t have a camera.... People are embracing the need to have a PhD and the need to have a more academic side. ”*

(Academic, Kenya)

In addition, five interviewees (Analyst, NGO, Government and Media Support sectors) were of the view that the alternative media is thriving, especially in the form of unregistered newspapers and magazines. However, Mitch Odera (NGO) felt government interference must be continually checked. Alternative media is virtually absent in the broadcasting sector. Private media practitioner and media entrepreneur interviewees were of the view that print media still experiences stifled growth due to the cost of launching a newspaper and the monopolistic nature of the market. An academic and NGO interviewees claimed that public and community media were experiencing little growth, while for a private media practitioner, cross-media ownership was hailed as healthy in that it promotes internal competition and, therefore, quality. The Nation Media Group (NMG) and Standard Group (SG) both happen to be cross-media owners as well as the leading media players in the country.





# 14. Media Development Initiatives

## 14.1 Review

An academic and two NGO interviewees supplied information for this section. The initiatives and projects discussed in this section were started by three organisations: the University of Nairobi (UON), the Association of Media Women In Kenya (AMWIK) and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES). In the case of UON, the interviewee cited being involved in projects targeting the establishment of a journalism curriculum at the United States International University (USIU) and journalist refresher courses. In the case of AMWIK, the interviewee had been involved in projects targeting women in media and the portrayal of women in media. The third interviewee had been involved in designing and funding projects on the role of media in good governance, in drafting a media policy (in partnership with the Media Council of Kenya), and in improving cartoon art.

## 14.2 Success and impact

### 14.2.1 Evaluating the success of media development projects

In the case of improving journalism training, the USIU/Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) project was rated as successful because training has improved in most universities and participants ranked the work highly after evaluation. Regarding the gender-related projects cited, success was assured through feedback and subsequent monitoring of women's portrayal in the media. Also, more women joining the media and entering into positions of leadership has been used to signify positive impact. The following quote clarifies this claim:

*“ When we see women who are also speaking with the media on their own, when you see journalists who are writing positive stories about women, you know, when we talk to the editors and they can understand our agenda. We see that we are successful. ”*

(NGO representative, Kenya)

In the case of FES, success of the projects was marked by launching the journalist code of ethics and media debate forums as well as the onset of a media bill. The latter shows that advocacy has finally sensitised the government to the need for a comprehensive media bill, which is expected to be tabled in parliament in the near future.

### 14.3 Lessons learned

In the case of the journalism training projects, the lessons learned include:

- that corruption can hinder the success of media projects due to the phenomena of 'briefcase NGOs', or NGOs that exist merely on paper without a permanent office or staff. Their main aim being to tap donor funds, which the owners misappropriate.

*“ Within our context, the factor that contributes to the failure of a project is corruption. [That is] number one. People go around trying to solicit money from donors without any intention of doing anything positive towards those projects. You see now a number of NGOs in this country are [providing] people's personal property. You see them driving around in very big cars, in big offices, all paid for by donors. To me that is not a success story, that is a story of failure and selfishness. ”*

(**Joe Kadhi**, Lecturer; Academic: United States International University, Kenya)

Sustainability of projects is also critical. Care is thus required when mounting projects so that one does not start them with unrealistic and high expectations, which may never be achieved.

In gender-related projects:

- fostering a specialization in reporting is important, as is a close collaboration between agencies doing similar work;
- policy harmonization with donors assures continued support; and,
- responding appropriately to the African cultural context should be considered a priority in designing projects.

For international donors, the lessons learned include:

- the need for projects to be sensitive to what is already in place;
- care ought to be exercised in designing projects so as not to impose foreign ideologies since countries can function differently from each other;
- sustainability is also important, though not easy to achieve; and,
- institutional building and allowing initiatives to be handled by local players are necessities.



# 15. Developing the Environment for Success

## 15.1 Key factors

From the series of responses received, the key factors responsible for successful media development projects in the country are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Factors Contributing to the Success of Media Development Projects

Success factor	Number of interviewees	Sectors
Democratic governance	8	Analyst, Government, Media Practitioner Private Sector, NGO (2), Media Entrepreneur, Media Support (2)
Liberalization of airwaves	3	Media Support, NGO, Government
Political activity	2	Government, Media Practitioner Private Sector
Economic growth (Consumers can afford media products, and advertising firms can afford advertising charges)	1	Media Practitioner Private Sector
Government commitment to the process of regulation	3	Academic, Media Support (2)
Public awareness and reliance on the media for information and liberation	3	Media Support, NGO, Media Practitioner Private Sector
Internet technology	1	Media Support
Free primary education	1	Media Practitioner Private Sector

Key factors responsible for undermining media development projects are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2: Factors Undermining the Success of Media Development Projects**

Inhibiting factor	Number of interviewees	Sectors
High cost of launching media	6	Media Support, NGO (2), Government, Academic, Media Support
Lack of or poor legislation and policies	4	Media Practitioner Private Sector, Academic (2), NGO
Difficulties with frequency allocation	2	Analyst, Media Support
Poor infrastructure	2	Media Practitioner Private Sector, Media Support
Lack of professionalism in journalism	2	Media Entrepreneur, Academic
Cut-throat competition and suspicion among media owners	2	Government, Academic
Government suspicion towards the media	2	Analyst, Media Practitioner Private Sector
Poor media access for rural people	1	Media Support

## 15.2 Political and economic influences

None of the interviewees offered additional political or economic issues apart from those already discussed.

## 15.3 Donor communities' role

Five interviewees commended the donor community for doing things right in terms of extending support in this area during the post single-party era. The following programmes were specifically commended:

- training and scholarships;
- support for a code of ethics;
- channelling assistance through MCK;
- financing regulation; and,
- the media bill.

However, views on where donors had gone wrong were abundant. They are listed in Table 3.

**Table 3: Criticism of Donor Involvement**

Criticism	Number of interviewees	Sectors
Funding was not sustainable or adequate	4	Analyst, Media Support, Academic, Media Practitioner Private Sector
Donors imposed projects and policies with little regard for the country context	4	NGOs (2), Government, Media Support
Too many workshops discussed one topic and did not translate to improvements in the media	3	Academic (2), Analyst
Inconsistent and staggered support did not allow media organisations to plan or fit well in the funding agenda	3	Media Practitioner Private Sector (2), Academic
Due to stringent and rigid support, donors fail to fund infrastructure and salaries to mount projects	1	Media Support
Donors have a bias for private media and anti-governmental motives	1	Media Entrepreneur
Discrimination in selecting target organisations	1	Media Entrepreneur

There were also areas that were cited as being grossly ignored in donors' funding agendas, such as how to improve editorial standards. It was suggested that journalism could be improved through initiatives that focus on benchmarking, training, community radio, audience research and local production.

## 15.4 Other issues

None of the interviewees offered other issues apart from those already discussed.



# 16. Future Strategies

## 16.1 Strategic priorities

Strategic priorities for a new donor-backed initiative were suggested as follows.

- Address training, specifically curriculum development and specialisation. (particularly in the area of media research).
- Establish centres of excellence.
- Provide support for the use of new technologies.
- Provide support for community and rural media, and expand rural access to media.
- Provide support for the public broadcaster.
- Provide support for local production and content development.
- Encourage more professionalism in media practice.
- Review current media legislation.

## 16.2 Focus of support

When asked to indicate where the focus of support for media development initiatives should be targeted, the interviewees just commented that one area was too important while another was not. To clarify their responses, the interviewees were then asked to prioritise the areas of support on a ten-point scale, with ten signifying the highest priority and one the lowest priority. Some areas were deemed to have no priority by the interviewees, and these are marked as 0. Table 4 shows the number of interviewees citing each priority area and the rating allocated for each (out of ten).

**Table 4: Priority Donor Support Priority Areas (according to interviewees)**

Priority area	Number of persons (mentioned) and rating										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Developing media frameworks for public-service remits			1		2	3		2	2	2	2
Developing local content	4	2	2	2					2	1	1
Supporting the growth and development of independent media		2	1			3	2	1	2	2	1
Raising standards of journalism and training							1	2	1	4	6
Supporting trade bodies	7	3	1			2		1			

### 16.2.1 Media frameworks

Eight interviewees rated supporting the development of media frameworks for public-service remits highly. Five interviewees viewed this area of focus as a medium priority, while only one interviewee considered it a low priority.

### 16.2.2 Developing local content

With regard to the development of local content, four interviewees perceived this area as a high priority. Six interviewees considered it a low priority, while four interviewees did not see this area as requiring any support.

### 16.2.3 Supporting the growth of independent media

In the case of supporting the growth of an independent media, six interviewees considered this area a high priority. Five interviewees thought it as a medium priority, while three interviewees indicated that this area is a low priority.

### 16.2.4 Raising standards of journalism

Discussion on raising the standards of journalism garnered the strongest support. Thirteen interviewees ranked this area as a high priority while only one interviewee deemed it a medium priority.

### 16.2.5 Any other areas

The only other focus area suggested by the interviewees was supporting trade bodies. In contrast to the high score for raising the standards of journalism, this area's ranking was skewed towards the low priority end of the scale for most interviewees. Seven thought that no support in this area was required; four deemed it a low priority, while two considered it a medium priority. Only one interviewee rated support for trade bodies as a high priority area.

## 16.3 Media sector focus

Five interviewees expressed the need to evaluate priorities equally across *all* media since these institutions have their own concerns and challenges. For instance, the challenges of poor journalism and standards cut across print, radio and television. Other interviewees were of the view that community media deserves special consideration since it is the most underdeveloped in the country. Yet, community media can foster positive changes at the grassroots level. For the moment, Kenya only has two community radio stations. Expansion in this area is hampered by high start-up and equipment costs and rigorous licensing procedures.

For three interviewees (NGO, Academic and Media Support), public media especially needs assistance since the only public broadcaster in the country performs dismally and does not conform to the description of a public broadcaster. This poor performance is attributed to the minimal support from the government, which compels it to compete unfairly with other media for income. In the words of one interviewee:

*“ My sense of a public broadcaster [is that it] should be a broadcaster that does not depend on advertising. At this moment, I don't see the difference between Royal Media Group [a private enterprise owning both Citizen TV and Radio] and KBC [Kenya Broadcasting Corporation]... I know that KBC has been forced to cancel educational programmes [in order] to substitute [them] with programmes that are sponsored by Coca-Cola, because they needed Coca-Cola revenue... To be a public broadcaster, you should depend on public funding and, therefore, you and me who are the audience should not be forced to be exposed to advertisement. That kind of framework should have helped KBC to become a truly public broadcaster. We need that. ”*

(**Mitch Odero**, Chair Complaints and Ethics Committee; NGO: Media Council of Kenya, Kenya)

## 16.4 Type of support most needed/useful

For those who cited all media as requiring attention, the areas identified are:

- ❑ support for small upcoming players, especially for equipment;
- ❑ raising professional standards; and,
- ❑ content improvement.

Three interviewees, a private media practitioner and two in media support perceived funding to be the attention most appropriate for state and public media. This recommendation was cited as essential to removing dependence on advertising and competition, which was especially unfair for public media to compete in the market with other stakeholders. This was seen as the main reason why public media does not meet its goals in Kenya.

The attention most necessary in community media includes:

- ❑ training media personnel on how to broadcast issues of community importance and handle equipment;
- ❑ funding and technical assistance; and,
- ❑ easing entry bottlenecks, such as licensing procedures.



## 16.5 Appropriate organisational framework

For three interviewees, the new media initiative would be better off harnessing the projects of other organisations and enhancing their performance. For four interviewees, a coordinating role would suffice where the initiative would bring together other key players and help them to link and avoid duplication on projects. For another four interviewees, the initiative should aim at fostering cooperation with existing media organisations without particularly playing the superior or organizer role.

## 16.6 Pan-regional versus country-specific initiatives

Five interviewees were of the view that a new donor-driven initiative should take the form of a pan-regional organisation.

Five claimed that a country-specific initiative might be preferable due to the unique nature of each nation's media challenges and the need for concentrated, thorough work to address these specific challenges.

Only one interviewee supported a continental structure of operation for the new initiative, while three interviewees declined to give a definite stand citing numerous factors that would determine the shape of such an initiative, such as funding base, donor policies and others.

## 16.7 Initiatives relating to developmental content

Twelve interviewees cited developmental content as a necessary endeavour and thought that it should be enhanced. The views on how this could be done varied:

- the right to information is the key;
- enhancing the link between media reporting and development;
- changing perceptions about media and embracing the view that media is a partner in development;
- addressing rural disparities in information;
- removing an over-concentration on politics by the media, which was rated as taking 75% of all airtime;
- offering advisory services to the media;
- funding local content development; and,
- training journalists on issues like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), so that they are kept abreast on international issues.

Only in one case was the link between development and media perceived as unimportant, whereby reporting the truth and disseminating information was seen as the most critical role for the media:

*“ I am a journalist who believes that the content of all media should be based on news values... If it is not newsworthy, it should not be published. Of course, I'm [in] the minority. There are people who think that newspapers should be used for development. They have come up with a curriculum of developmental journalism. I teach differently. I teach people to report properly, to report the truth, interpretative journalism. ”*

(**Joe Kadhi**, Lecturer; Academic: United States International University, Kenya)

## 16.8 Initiatives to develop independent media

Most interviewees felt they had already dealt with this topic and that media is independent enough in this country. However, the few comments show that for some interviewees, policy and advocacy are critical. For others, there is a need to support new media products and upcoming media companies which are experiencing inception difficulties due to competition. In one case, strengthening advertising freedom was cited as critical in improving the media climate.

## 16.9 The role of media development in the country's democratisation process

Finally, eight interviewees felt that media development in the democratisation process was already being achieved in Kenya. Instead, they believed that it must be enhanced. One interviewee proposed that the media should try and foster good relations with government. For another interviewee, media should take a step towards educating political leaders rather than criticising them all the time. Yet another interviewee desired objectivity in reporting political matters to avoid confusing the audience. In one case, there was the view that media practitioners were prone to manipulating their reporting to favour certain politicians with whom they were aligned for some gain. The case of training in political communication was also cited as critical.

*“ The media has left the agenda [setting] role to the politicians... to do something before we start to do follow-ups. Media must take a more proactive role in discussing issues that are affecting the public. We should move from discussing issues that are interesting to the public to issues that are [of] public interest. ”*

(**Tom Idimuli**, Head of Media; Media Entrepreneur: Gina Din Corporate Communications Ltd, Kenya)



# 17. Summary & Conclusions

The findings generated by this study can be summarised as follows:

## 17.1 Media development: an organisational perspective

- The liberalisation of airwaves and emerging democratic ideals have been important variables influencing increment in FM stations, new media products, a free press and freedom of expression.
- Occasional problems between the government and media players arise.
- The recognition by government of the increasing relevance and role of the media in the country is evidenced by the committal to pass both the ICT policy and Media Bill, which have already been presented to parliament.
- With respect to various media organizations and their operations, there have been remarkable changes towards a vibrant media. For instance, broadcast and print media are now more careful about how they package and present information in order to obtain a competitive edge.
- The journalism curriculum is being reviewed continually to meet arising needs, while the spotlight is slowly turning to rogue trainers.
- The role of the public in the media and that of the media to the public are increasingly being acknowledged.
- A lack of sound policy and poor journalism practice continue to be critical issues.
- With regards to the impact of media development initiatives, the debate regarding self-regulation versus government regulation will continue to arise, especially with the Media Bill and ICT policy.
- In spite of media consultation on these drafts, media players are wary of contentious clauses and government interference, for example, discouraging cross-media ownership and converting the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) into a government statutory body. For most, this will compel the MCK to work in favour of the government rather than the media.

- Media research and monitoring emerge as poorly developed and concentrated in the hands of a few (for example Steadman Research).
- The quality, type and quantity of data are way below expectation. Available data has at times served the interests of a few rather than enhancing quality improvement or meaningful projections for all.
- Training in journalism is increasing, though journalism standards are declining due to sub-standard and unaccredited schools and colleges mushrooming in the country.

## 17.2 Lessons learned

- Media entrepreneurs need to support training and to develop specialised courses, which would nurture a responsive, vibrant and successful media.
- Research findings show that alternative print media is thriving but operating in an uncertain climate.

## 17.3 Developing the environment for success

- The success of media projects is largely dependent on collaboration with local partners, their sustainability, their relevance to the local context and local institutional building.
- Key factors important for successful media development in the country include democratic governance, a growing economy, investment policy, a positive media and government relationship, and positive public attitude.
- Factors that stifle media development include government suspicion, high investment required for publishing, the lack of proper regulation and legislation, poor journalism and slow government bureaucracy in licensing procedures.
- Donors' role in media development is commendable, especially in enhancing the regulation process.
- Donor shortcomings include a lack of sustainability, imposing external ideas on the local context, self-serving interests, staggered and inconsistent funding, rigidity in policy, bias in selecting projects and a failure to address training.

## 17.4 Future strategies

- Journalism training, public broadcasting, research, professionalism in journalism and the development of local content and community media were perceived as strategic priorities.
- Areas deemed as requiring critical assistance include stepping up the quality of journalism training and developing public broadcasting.
- Community media requires the most assistance, while state media was also singled out as a priority. Support would include funding, technical assistance, training, professionalism and local content development.
- New donor-backed initiatives should have a coordinating and cooperating role and a pan-regional organisational structure.
- The study reveals a need to link media content with development goals, especially rural development, while lessening political coverage.

- The media have achieved a role in the democratisation process but must enhance it. Unfair and partial reporting as well as external interference need to be lessened.

In conclusion, the results generated in this qualitative study generally indicate a strong need for training in journalism, establishing professionalism in media practice, passing a sound and effective media policy and law and supporting community media and public broadcasting ideals in the country.



# 18. Appendices

## Appendix 1: Interviewees

Ian Fernades, Broadcasting Director, Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Nation Media Group, Kenya

Macharia Gaitho, Managing Editor; Analyst: *The Sunday Nation*, Kenya

Tom Idimuli, Head of Media; Media Entrepreneur: Gina Din Corporate Communications Ltd, Kenya

Joe Kadhi, Lecturer; Academic: United States International University, Kenya

Esther Kamweru, Executive Director; Media Support: Media Council of Kenya, Kenya

Flitz Kopsieker, Resident Representative; NGO: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Kenya

Mitch Odera, Chair Complaints and Ethics Committee; NGO: Media Council of Kenya, Kenya

Kanja Waruru, Chair; Media Support: Media Owners' Association, Kenya

The other interviewees who asked not to be named were as follows

Government representative, Kenya

NGO representative, Kenya

Academic, Kenya

Media support worker, Kenya

Media Practitioner, Private Sector, Kenya

## Appendix 2: Media development projects/activities described in Section 14

Interviewee name & organisation	Specific media development project/title	Key purpose of project/initiative/activity	Project time span (dates or length in months/years of project) and status (ongoing etc)	Outcome sought	Target audience	Evaluation methods used if any	Result of Evaluation	Is/was this project/activity considered by your organisation to be a success? On what basis?
F. Kopsieker, NGO	Public forums on the role of media in good governance	Promoting a pluralistic media	11 months	More informed public	Public	Internal and external evaluation		Yes
		Independent media		More independent media				
	Workshops on National Media Policy, publication and launch	Improving legislative frameworks		Better media environment	Media players, Media Council of Kenya, etc			Yes
		Educating journalists		Professional journalism	Cartoon artists			
	Cartoon exhibitions on topical political issues	Sensitising the public through debates						Yes

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## Appendix 2: Media development projects/activities described in Section 14 – continued

NGO	Training for women journalists and media conferences	Improve women's journalism standards	Ongoing	Professionalism among women	Women journalists who are members of AMWIK		It's there for all to see, in the newspapers, TV. That's how we know	Yes
	Women and media	Improve portrayal of women in media, positive images	Ongoing	Positive coverage and portrayal of women	All journalists		The number of women in media is rising	Yes
	Women, leadership and development	We aspire to see more women in politics getting coverage.	Ongoing	More women in politics	Women in Kenya		We have more women in politics	Yes
		Curb gender violence		Less gender-related problems	Various districts		We get feedback at follow-up forums	Yes
	Establishing the journalism curriculum at United States International University, journalism refresher courses at University of Nairobi	Develop, improve curriculum		Improving journalism	Students of journalism		Internal, involves quality assessment through questionnaires to those trained/ participants	Very successful, our journalists are the top staff in most organisations

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# Kenya

## Country Report Case Study



# 19. Case Study

## The Media Debates Project: a Media Council of Kenya and Friedrich Ebert Foundation initiative

The liberal media climate and the return of multiparty democracy in Kenya in 1992 have roused public concern and involvement in media development. The dark period of media suppression spanned close to 15 years and stifled the media in Kenya. For most of those years, the only 'voices' to be heard were those aligned to the government of the day.

However, the situation has gradually changed. The media after 1992 became more vocal and audience-centred in terms of articulating matters of public interest. Over the past five years, and since the 'second liberation', the media sector has experienced unprecedented growth. For this reason, the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), a body formed in 2002 but operating since June 2004, has championed public discourse regarding the role of the media in the country's development.

In February 2005, the concept of 'Media Debates' was born. For ten months in 2005, the MCK invited the public to open forums aimed at generating insights that would enhance media performance in Kenya. The Media Debates project was funded by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), a German non-profit institution whose aim is to promote a pluralistic media through public forums on the role of the media in good governance.

The debates took place every first Tuesday of the month and attracted a diversity of people from the government, the private sector, civil society and the general public. The main topical issues covered in the 2005 debates included:

- the role of the media in good governance;
- ethical journalism in Kenya;
- people's right to information as one way of curbing corruption;
- rising abuse of media freedom;
- the emerging FM radio culture;
- the implications of the draft Information, Communication and Technology (ICT policy) on the media;
- the role of the media in the constitutional review debate;
- media and civic education process;

- the extent of adherence by the media to the code of conduct for the election process;
- the handling of political research findings by the media; and,
- the post-referendum action plan for the media.

The first public media debate regarding the role of the media in good governance was attended by the German Ambassador to Kenya and the Executive Director of the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET).

Two main points arose from the debate: 1) the media has a 'watchdog' role to play in the democratisation process; and, 2) the public depends on the media for information on the systems of government, and national and international trends.

It also emerged from this debate that the media needs to depart from the traditional notions of objectivity. It should embrace multiple voices, thereby giving citizens a chance to weigh and compare various views. There was an agreement that the media needs to go beyond elitist views and capture the views of the common citizenry, particularly rural inhabitants. Issues regarding the role of the public in MCK activities and the plight of journalists were also discussed. The MCK promised to look into both issues.

On the topic of journalistic ethics, the issue of unethical journalism was abhorred and blamed for government interference in the framework of independent media. The lack of a proper Freedom of Information Act (blamed partly on the government for dragging its feet on the enactment) and the low level of training of journalists in the country was also debated. The MCK committed itself to oversee proper coverage by journalists and not just elitist views, address matters of ethics and standards aptly and address the flaws of market-oriented journalism.

On the people's right to information as one way of curbing corruption, it was agreed that right to information is a basic right. It has a bearing on good governance and development. Issues such as the public authorities' structures, the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), public land, population census and voting were cited as matters that need improved public awareness if corruption is to be contained. From the debate, civil society should demand a fair freedom of expression bill that spells out how to tackle the denial of information. It was also agreed that the civil society should begin to lobby for the repeal of the retrogressive Official Secrets Act.

Alfred Mutua, the government spokesman, tackled the topic of the rising abuse of media freedom. He highlighted the advances made by the media since 1992 and the need for the media to enjoy its freedom within the framework of norms that guide society. From the debate, it emerged that the government was committed to the practice of free media, upgrading journalistic training and hearing views from media players on progress in media freedom.

Regarding the emerging FM radio culture, the panelist acknowledged that policies of liberalisation had brought about the onset of many FM stations and signified a real departure from the monopoly once held by KBC. With the proliferation of FM stations, new concerns arose, such as the use of foul language, foreign interactive culture and a decline in ethics. The debate described the need to protect the rights of the audience, uphold professional reporting and language, respect African culture and desist from ethnic and chauvinistic tendencies.

During the sixth debate, entitled, 'The implications of the draft ICT policy on the media', the ICT policy was deemed long overdue. However, the draft was biased to matters of technology and infrastructure rather than to information and communications. The draft policy was silent on the role of the media and was faulted for not addressing cyber crime and Internet use policies adequately. The need to expand and include more players in ICT, protect intellectual property rights and involve the media sector in debating ICT was acclaimed. It was also deemed necessary to train media professionals in ICTs.

The seventh debate discussed the role of the media in the constitutional review debate. This forum discussed how sensational and inaccurate reporting, and the use of inappropriate jargon by journalists shaped opinion during the referendum. The media were advised to adhere to truthful, fair and informed reporting.

The role of the media in the civic education process was the next debate. Issues regarding journalists being used by politicians to further their cause were raised. It was also observed that entertainment seems to be the key preoccupation of various broadcasting media at the expense of public education. Recommendations reached in this forum included the need for the media to strike a balance between educating and inciting the public, the need to take sides based on principle, and the need to reach out to the marginalised.

Regarding the extent of adherence by the media to the code of conduct during the election process, it was suggested that factual and accurate reporting should guide the media. Media owners' were acclaimed for their role in accounting for the conduct of their journalists during the referendum debates. Also, the current media code of ethics during elections was cited as being inadequate and in need of revision.

Regarding the handling of political research findings by the media, most journalists do not currently have the technical capacity to interpret research findings properly. Objectivity was also cited as lacking. It was recommended that journalists consider the social-political context and abstain from using data that might exacerbate disunity and hatred. Commercial interests, a lack of apt data and financial costs were singled out as main factors inhibiting media research.

Finally, on the post-referendum action plan for the media, the forum debated the media's failure to address the real issues throughout the referendum process. Citizen-centred rather than political-centred journalism was recommended. Media ownership issues were debated as well as extreme business interests. It was felt that social concerns should supersede political ones; the media should focus on ordinary people in the post-referendum period.

In conclusion, it is evident that the debates covered topical issues of the day affecting the media. They were especially geared towards generating recommendations and frameworks to guide the media.

The main concerns arising from the debates are: 1) the need to have an effective media bill and policy to guide media operations; 2) the need for journalists to be well trained and uphold standards; and, 3) the need for the media council to operate autonomously and to spearhead media reforms in the country.

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