

African Media
Development
Initiative



Mozambique

Research findings and conclusions

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Mozambique

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, to 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 Mozambique is one. Data presented in this report is based on both secondary research gathered by local researchers in Mozambique 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 Mozambique 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 Mozambique;
- Case Study: a case study from Mozambique illustrating good practice in media development.

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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

AEJ Association of Media Companies

CIUEM Eduardo Mondlane University Informatics Centre

CSCS Supreme Media Council

EDM Electricidade de Mozambique (Electricity of Mozambique)

EISA Electoral Institute of Southern Africa

FDI Foreign Direct Investment

FRELIMO Front for the Liberation of Mozambique

GABINFO Gabinete de Informação (Department of Information)

HIVOS Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation (Netherlands)

ICS Social Communication Institute

ICT Information Communication Technology

IDRC International Development Research Centre (Canada)

INCM National Institute of Communications

INE National Statistics Institute

ISP Internet Service Providers

ISPU Higher University and Polytechnic Institute, Mozambique

MISA Media Institute for Southern Africa

NiZA Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa

NSJ Nordic School of Journalism

OSISA Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

OTM Mozambique Workers' Organisation

RENAMO Mozambican National Resistance Party

RM Radio Mozambique

SARDC Southern African Research and Documentation Centre

SNJ Mozambique Association of Journalists

TVM Television Mozambique

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

VSO Volunteer Service Overseas



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Mozambique

Country Report

Context



1. Introduction

Research for this report was hampered by a number of problems. Very little statistical data on the state of media in Mozambique is available. In fact, there are no organisations that dedicate their work to generating this kind of information, including the National Statistics Institute (INE). GABINFO (the Department of Information), operating under the Office of the Prime Minister, is the government body responsible for issuing media licences. However, apart from keeping records about the number of licences issued, GABINFO does not deal with information in the detailed manner required for this study.

There are other statistical gaps in Mozambique, such as the absence of reliable information on the sizes of the different ethnic groups in the various regions. During the independence war, the main liberation movement was faced with a number of internal conflicts that had their origins in racial and ethnic divisions. This became a lesson on how the country was to be governed after independence, with classification of the population based on ethnic, regional or racial origin strongly discouraged.



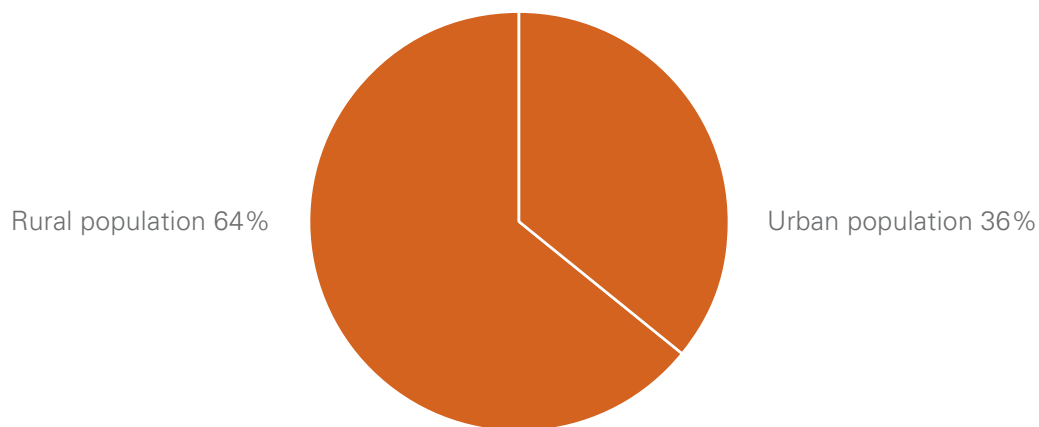
2. Country Overview

The Southern African nation of Mozambique, which shares borders with Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, became independent on 25 June 1975, led by the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), following 500 years of Portuguese colonial domination and a decade of armed struggle. At independence, Mozambique defined itself as a one-party state, led by FRELIMO as the only legal party, governing the country on the basis of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Other political parties were banned, and there was no provision in the first Constitution for freedom of expression, meaning that the media was, effectively, the monopoly of the state. Political reforms were introduced in 1990, with the adoption of a new Constitution that provided for a liberal multi-party system with guarantees for individual rights, including freedom of expression. Changes to the Constitution were further effected in 2005 but, broadly speaking, this did not in any way interfere with the freedoms enshrined in the 1990 Constitution. From 1994, regular general elections have been held every five years to elect the President and the 250-seat Assembly of the Republic (Parliament). Parliamentary elections are based on a proportional representation system, with each of the country's ten provinces, plus the city of Maputo, being taken as constituencies within which the proportions of votes gained by each party are calculated. The current composition of Parliament is as follows: FRELIMO 160 seats, RENAMO 90 seats.

The 1997 Mozambican census reported the population at 16 million, with the World Bank estimating that the population had reached 19.4 million in 2004 (World Bank, 2006). According to UNSTATS, 44% of the population was under 14 years of age in 2005 (UNSTATS, 2006).

As seen in Figure 1, Mozambique has a mainly rural population, with a 64.4% rural percentage according to 2003 figures (UNDP, 2005).

Figure 1: Percentage of Population Urban vs. Rural



Source: UNDP 2005, based on 2003 figures.

The country is broken up into 11 main regions, as detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Population by Region

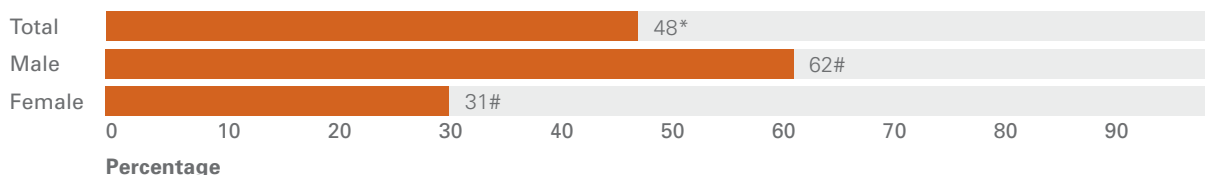
Regions	Total Population in Millions
Nampula	3.77
Zambezia	3.79
Sofala	1.68
Cabo Delgado	1.65
Tete	1.55
Inhambane	1.41
Manica	1.36
Gaza	1.33
Maputo City	1.24
Maputo Province	1.07
Niassa	1.03

Source: National Statistics Institute (INE), 2006

The literacy rate in 2003 for the population over 15 years of age was 47.8% (CIA, 2006), with there being approximately twice as many males in this age group who were literate (62.3%) compared to females (31.4%) (World Bank, 2006).

Figure 2: Literacy Levels

Literacy Levels Age 15+



Sources: 2003 figures from* CIA, 2006;# World Bank, 2006

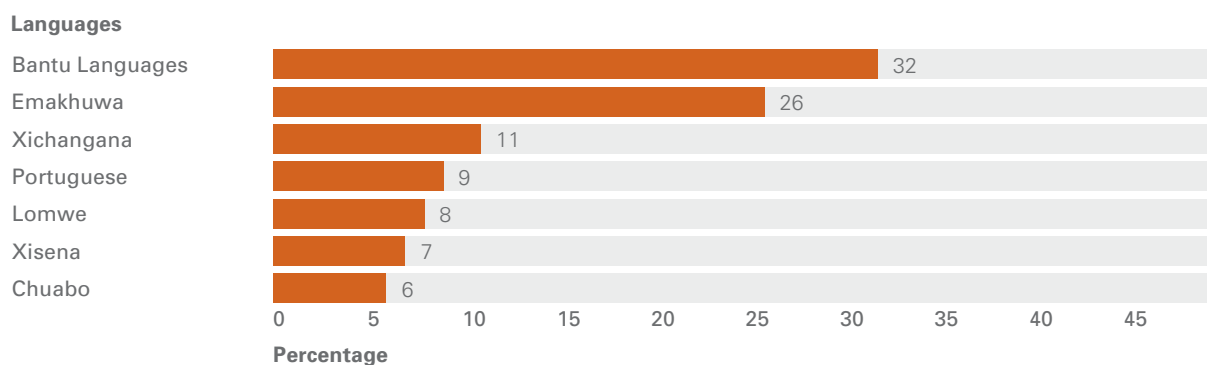
Mozambique has experienced some strong economic growth since the end of the war in 1992 and the first multi-party elections of 1994. This scenario is expected to remain in the foreseeable future, with real GDP growth expected to be 7.2% in 2006 and 7.5% in 2007 (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2005).

In 2003, the per capita income was estimated at \$US1,200 (CIA, 2006). Inflation remained in single digits for most of the second half of the 1990s, although it experienced a surge into the double-digit zone in 2000-03. Fiscal reforms, including the introduction of a value-added tax and reform of the customs service, have improved the government's ability to collect revenue. However, Mozambique is still highly dependent on foreign assistance for much of its annual budget and, according to a 2001 estimate, around 70% of the population lives below the poverty line (CIA, 2006).

Subsistence agriculture is still the main source of livelihood for the vast majority of Mozambique's rural poor. Concerns have been raised that while Mozambique is making progress at the macro-economic level, such dividends do not filter down to meet the basic needs of the most deprived in society. There is a feeling that most of the expansion that has been registered in the economy has had more to do with large inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI) and less to do with economic activity based on traditional and labour-intensive sectors (Republic of Mozambique, 2006). Examples of capital-intensive foreign investment projects are the MOZAL aluminum smelter in Maputo and a gas pipeline to South Africa. Small- to medium-scale labour-intensive investments have developed at a very slow pace, mainly due to stiff regulation, bureaucracy, labour market rigidities, lack of competitive markets, corruption and lack of access to credit, all of which lead to a high cost structure. Poverty is almost endemic in Mozambique, despite the fact that the country has vast natural resources. The 2005 United Nations Human Development Report Index ranked the country 168th in the world, 10th from the bottom (UNDP, 2005). Mozambique has enormous economic potential in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, gas and minerals.

The official language of Mozambique is Portuguese, which is spoken by 39% of the population but mostly as a second language. In terms of mother-tongue (first language) speaking, the most widely spoken languages, based on 1997 Census data, are as follows: Emakhuwa 26%, Xichangana 11%, Portuguese 9%, Lomwe 8%, Xisena 7%, Chuwabo 6%, other Bantu languages 32% (CIA, 2006). Figure 3 below shows the breakdown of widely spoken languages.

Figure 3: Widely Spoken Languages



Source: CIA, 2006 based on 1997 census

Ethnic segmentation data is not systematically kept and is discouraged by the government. There are ten main ethnic groups, listed here in alphabetical order: Chopi, Lomwe, Macua, Makonde, Njanja, Pimbine, Sena, Shona, Tsonga and Yao. The country is diverse in its religious beliefs, as seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Main Religious Groups

Main Religious Groups	% of Population Belonging
Catholic	23.8%
No religion	23.1%
Muslim	17.8%
Zionist Christian	17.5%
Other	17.8%

Source: CIA, 2006 based on 1997 census.

Key findings

- Mozambique is rich in natural resources but its economy was crippled by 16 years of civil war that ended in 1992.
- In 2005, the country was ranked tenth poorest in the world by the UNDP.
- Mozambique formally became a multi-party democracy with the elections of 1994.



3. Media Health

3.1 Status of the laws regarding rights and access to information

The right of citizens to access information is guaranteed by Section 48 of the Constitution, which, as a fundamental right, states that “all citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, freedom of the press and the right to information” (Republic of Mozambique, 2005). The Constitution further states that “the freedom of the press includes, namely, the freedom of expression and of creativity by journalists, access to sources of information, protection of independence... and the right to establish newspapers, publications and other means of communication” (Republic of Mozambique, 2005).

The information freedom guarantees enshrined in the Constitution are further developed in the Press Law of 1991, which outlines the conditions under which such freedoms are exercised, as well as the rights and obligations of journalists before the law (Republic of Mozambique, 1991). Section 3 of the Press Law states that:

- “... The right to information means the ability of every citizen to receive information on facts and opinions relevant at the national and international level, as well as the right to impart information, opinions, and ideas through the media”; and,
- “No citizen shall be prejudiced in his/her workplace due to his/her legitimate exercising of the freedom of expression of thought through the media” (Republic of Mozambique, 1991).

No changes have been introduced to these provisions since the Press Law was passed in 1991, although it is understood that the government has now initiated moves to have the Press Law amended within the next four years. The discussions on the amendments are at a preliminary stage and, as such, not much information is publicly known as to what the amendments might be. From the author’s own knowledge, no fundamental changes are envisaged that would affect freedom of expression. More likely are new provisions to cover the manner in which the managers of state broadcasting organisations are appointed. Another provision that is likely to be targeted for change is that which restricts foreign ownership of media companies to 20%. This percentage is likely to be increased so as to facilitate foreign investment in the media, given that no significant foreign investment in the media industry has taken place to date. The amendments might also impose a ban on political parties and trade unions from owning or investing in radio and television stations.

It should be noted, however, that the Press Law, while making provision for journalists to access public information, at the same time gives great latitude to government officials and courts to refuse access to information seen as *sub judice*, or military or state secrets, or information potentially infringing on the privacy of citizens. The criticism against this provision is that, if it is left to the discretion of government officials, the law will often be subject to abuse, thus effectively curtailing the right of the people to know about the workings of government.

3.2 Status of the laws regarding criminal defamation and insult

There is no specific law of criminal defamation in Mozambique, but cases of defamation can and do come before the courts under the Criminal Code. Section 42, Paragraph 2 of the Press Law specifies that “media related crimes are subject to the common penal legislation...” (Republic of Mozambique, 1991). This results in a *de facto* criminal defamation provision. The Press Law is particularly threatening as regards criticism of heads of state, stating in Section 47 that “proof of facts is not admissible where the head of state is the offended or, where there is reciprocity, is a foreign head of state or his/her representative in Mozambique” (Republic of Mozambique, 1991).

3.3. Status of the laws that exist to enable media regulatory bodies to function independently

At government level, media policy is coordinated by GABINFO (the Department of Information), which falls directly under the Office of the Prime Minister. There is no independent regulatory body charged with overseeing the activities of the media.

In the broadcasting sector, the nearest to such a body is the National Institute of Communications (INCM), the role of which is restricted to the allocation and management of the airwaves, with no powers over the editorial and operational functions of the broadcasting industry. The INCM, which falls under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, is purely a technical body, offering advice to GABINFO on allocation of frequency spectrum. There is also a statutory body called for in the Constitution, the Supreme Media Council (CSCS), which is responsible for ensuring that the rights of citizens are protected from possible excesses by the media. But the CSCS cannot be seen as a regulatory body, because its role is restricted to ensuring that citizens have an institution of redress if they feel their rights have been infringed by the media. It functions mainly through conciliation and guaranteeing the right of reply. Under the Constitution, the CSCS is also supposed to issue advice on the licensing of private radio and television stations, and to express its views on the appointment of chief executive officers of the public media. The CSCS is composed of 11 members, constituted in the following manner:

- ❑ two designated by the President of the Republic, with one of them serving as Chair;
- ❑ five elected by Parliament, on the basis of the proportional representation held by each political party;
- ❑ three elected by journalism’s professional bodies; and,
- ❑ one representative of media owners.

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

The independence of state-owned media and of journalists working for state-owned media is guaranteed under the Constitution in Section 48, Paragraph 5, which states that: "The state guarantees the impartiality of the public sector media, as well as the independence of journalists towards the government, administration and other political powers." Section 48 goes further to guarantee "diversity of currents of opinion" in the state media (Republic of Mozambique, 2005). The Constitution also stipulates that during election periods, contesting parties and candidates have guaranteed access to air-time on state radio and television. No changes have been effected over the past five years to these Constitutional provisions, but while these guarantees seem strong in theory, the extent to which they are fully realised is doubtful. Chief executive officers in the state media serve at the pleasure of government, and with the politics of patronage so entrenched, it is difficult for them to withstand the pressure of government intervention. On the other hand, in the view of the author of this report, the Mozambican government largely avoids interfering with the activities of the state media – or if it does interfere, it does so very subtly.

Statutory Instrument 18 of 16 June 1994 turned Radio Mozambique (RM) from a state-owned entity into a public-service broadcaster, funded partly from the state budget, under a contract programme on the basis of which RM is obliged to outline its programme of activities and targets for the year. RM collects additional revenue from advertising, as well as from licence fees levied annually on vehicles and on the purchasing of home radio sets. The same legal status of public broadcaster was conferred in the same year on Television Mozambique (TVM) through a separate Statutory Instrument, with the same provisions as those applying to RM. The CEOs of both Radio Mozambique and Television Mozambique are appointed by the Prime Minister upon advice from GABINFO, in consultation with Cabinet. Members of the Boards of the two organisations are appointed by the respective CEOs, with the approval of GABINFO and at the discretion of Cabinet.

3.5 Current provisions to support community or alternative media

From a legislative point of view, there are no provisions to support development of community media. There is, however, a Social Communication Institute (ICS), which is a government department under GABINFO, the main mandate of which is to develop rural communications. The ICS, in partnership with the UNESCO Media Project, has established a number of community radio stations in various parts of the country. In addition, in cooperation with the Eduardo Mondlane University Informatics Centre (CIUEM), through a project funded by the Kellogg Foundation and the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the ICS has set up several telecentres, which can best be described as rural media centres. The telecentres aim to promote rural development by offering rural communities access to information and communication technologies (ICTs), including Internet. The institutional framework of this telecentre programme is still weak, but with the Ministry of Science and Technology showing an increased interest in its development, it is expected that in the near future the programme will see a rapid expansion.

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

The state broadcasting sector is governed by the provisions of the Constitution (2005) and Press Law (1991). Section 11, Paragraph 3 of the Press Law states that state-owned broadcasters shall:

- strive to have balanced programming, taking into account the diversity of interests and preferences of their audiences;
- promote development communication; and,
- through the production and dissemination of national activities, promote the development of culture and creativity, in order that these occupy an increasing air-time (Republic of Mozambique, 1991).

In addition, in terms of Section 12 of the Press Law, state-owned broadcasters are required to provide political parties that achieve Parliamentary representation with air-time to present their policies. During election campaigns, this right is extended to all contesting parties and candidates (Republic of Mozambique, 1991).

Steps have been taken since the introduction of the 1991 Press Law to move the state radio (Radio Mozambique) and state TV (Television Mozambique) more towards being public broadcasters at arm's length from the state, via the two 1994 Statutory Instruments mentioned above in Section 3.4. But there are no legal mechanisms in place to ensure that the public interest is represented in the process of policy formulation for public service broadcasting. The Boards for both Radio Mozambique and TVM are appointed at the discretion of the Cabinet, without any public involvement either through Parliament or any structures of civil society.

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

There are no specific provisions for private broadcasters to fulfil a public-service remit.

3.8 Journalism

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Association Act, which emanates from the Constitution, journalists in Mozambique are free to join any trade union of their choice.

There is only one journalist's trade union in Mozambique, the Mozambican Association Journalists (SNJ). There are no exact figures for the number of members registered with the SNJ, as there is a tendency among journalists in Mozambique to assume that the mere fact that they are journalists automatically makes them members of the SNJ. Also, for some time the SNJ did not conduct membership drives. This situation is expected to change as a result of a new SNJ executive that came into office in November 2005. The SNJ is affiliated to the Mozambique Workers' Organisation (OTM), which is the country's main congress of trade unions.

There is no requirement for journalists to be registered with the government or to be licensed to practice in Mozambique. Section 26 of the Press Law states that: "It shall be understood by journalist, for the purposes of the present law, every professional who is dedicated to research, gathering, selection, and public presentation of events in a news, information or opinion, through the media and to whom such activity constitutes the main, permanent and

remunerated profession” (Republic of Mozambique, 1991). However, the law does impose an obligation for registration with GABINFO for foreign correspondents, according to section 32 of the Press Law (Republic of Mozambique, 1991).

Journalists in Mozambique are generally poorly paid. The average monthly salary is equivalent to around \$US150. The low pay is mainly due to the fact that media companies are very poor themselves, and generally there are no government policies aimed at promoting the development of the media sector through measures such as exemption from taxes and import duties on newsprint. However, compared with other professions (for example the minimum teacher’s pay of \$US75 per month), journalists are relatively well paid (VSO, 2006).

There are currently three university departments offering journalism programmes, and one vocational journalism programme.

Key findings

- The Constitution of 1990, amended in 2005, protects freedom of expression, free press and freedom of access to information.
- The 1991 Press Law reaffirms most elements of freedom of information and expression, but does include measures that create a *de facto* criminal libel sanction.
- As well as making defamation a criminal offence, the Press Law makes it a criminal offence to publish disparaging information about heads of state, regardless of the truth of the allegations.
- Measures are being taken to transform the state-owned radio and TV services into public-service broadcasters, but there is an absence of clear legal instruments for public-service provision and the Boards of Radio Mozambique (RM) and TV Mozambique (TVM) are chosen at the discretion of Cabinet.



4. State of the Media – Literature Review

Very little literature exists on the state of the media in Mozambique, with no organisations in the country that do media monitoring as their core business. The literature reviewed in this section is thus drawn from regional Southern African overviews compiled by regionally focused organisations.

4.1 Hanlon in Minnie (2005)

This publication, *Outside the Ballot Box – Pre-Conditions For Elections In Southern Africa 2004-2005*, is the result of a collaborative effort between the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA), the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA), the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), the Dutch NGO HIVOS, and the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA). The publication is a series of articles based on the recent history of democratic elections in the region, drawing on the experiences of individual countries that held elections in 2004 and 2005. The primary objective is to focus on those issues essential for successful democratic elections, including the role of the media in ensuring that voters vote from a well-informed position. Among other things, the book examines whether the media in the region are behaving in a way that enhances the democratic process.

The article on Mozambique, authored by Joseph Hanlon, notes that the European Union observer mission found coverage of the 2004 election on the state-owned radio (Radio Mozambique) and TV (TVM) to be “reasonably balanced” (EU in Hanlon, 2005, p.90). There were nightly election programmes during the campaign period and, as the EU concluded, “The incumbent party received more coverage, but not to an unusual degree” (EU in Hanlon, 2005, p.90). In the press sector, the state-owned daily *Notícias* was found to have given 57% of its election coverage to the government and ruling FRELIMO party, while 19% went to opposition RENAMO. Meanwhile, it was found that private media were more supportive of the opposition. In general, however, Hanlon found a lack of critical reporting by all media houses, both state and private, resulting in “flaccid and dull” coverage: “Normally the media, both private and state, simply quoted or interviewed candidates. There was neither an attempt to challenge the weak points of the two main parties – corruption and inaction, particularly in the justice sector, by the government, and the lack of an alternative policy on the side of RENAMO – nor did the local media play a part in investigating fraud and misconduct. This was done by foreign journalists and observers” (Hanlon, 2005, p.90-91).

4.2 Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) (2002; 2003; 2004)

These MISA annual reviews of the state of media freedom in Southern Africa (MISA 2002; 2003; 2004) look at the legal frameworks for media and outline the main incidents in each country that may have constituted infringement of press freedom or freedom of expression.

The 2002 report found no legal mechanisms for censorship in Mozambique, saying the media environment was liberal, but the article decried the fact that the state treated the media as if it were any other industry, with no special provisions such as exemptions from customs duties on the importation of essential inputs such as newsprint. The 2002 report also described media management in Mozambique as generally unprofessional, and journalists as poorly paid.

The 2003 report noted the need for Mozambique to have specific laws and regulations for broadcasters, advertisers and community broadcasters, and also noted the media's fragile financial and technical situation, which determined to what extent they were able to exercise their public interest functions. The major challenge, the article noted, was the need to invest in new ICTs and in the development of professional associations.

The 2004 report's section on Mozambique said that while the government does not directly adversely interfere with the media, there are occasional situations in which influential people in the ruling party or government may have overtly or covertly tried to intimidate journalists so as to dissuade them from exposing issues that could be of public interest. In this regard, the report gave the example of a district administrator in the town of Mocuba, in Zambézia Province, who publicly announced that he was relieving a journalist of his duties at a local government-funded community radio, after the journalist commented on the poor state of roads in the district. Another incident highlighted in the article was the case where Radio Mozambique and TVM, the two state broadcasters, were accused of censorship for refusing to give publicity (even on a paid advertising basis) to a book that highlighted the life of a former FRELIMO dissident.

4.3 Gender Links (2003)

This study, *Gender and Media Baseline Study 2003*, looks at representation of gender issues over a one-month period in news items from 114 print and electronic media outlets in 12 Southern African countries, including Mozambique. A total of 25,110 news items were analysed from private, public and community media, in order to generate "baseline data for monitoring progress towards achieving gender balance in media coverage", in order to build media monitoring capacity in the region with a gender orientation, and in order to generate an "advocacy tool" for ensuring diverse coverage of women's and men's realities in the region (Gender Links, 2003, p.7).

Key findings for the entire region include:

- general under-representation of women's "views and voices";
- no significant differences between private and public media in the quality or frequency of coverage of women's themes;
- older women, aged 50 and over, "are virtually invisible";
- lack of coverage of certain occupational categories where women predominate, with only beauty contestants, sex workers and homemakers getting significant coverage;
- coverage of women politicians is not proportionate to their representation in Parliament;

- men's voices dominate "hard news";
- the print media have the lowest levels of coverage of women's issues; and,
- both blatantly sexist reporting and subtle stereotyping occur.

(Gender Links, 2003, p.10-12).

4.4 Rama & Lowe Morna (Eds.) (2005)

This Gender Links report, *My Views on the News! The Southern African Gender and Media Audience Study*, attempts to establish the manner in which women and men interact with news. Specific questions asked as part of the study were:

- What aspects of the news do women and men interact with?
- Why do they interact with these aspects of the news (as opposed to other aspects)?
- What impact do gendered representations have on these news preferences?
- What aspects of news are considered to be omitted or insufficiently included?

The Mozambican chapter of this report found, among other things, that television is the main source of news for women (56%), while radio is for men (42%). It also concluded that in regional terms, newspapers are more popular in Mozambique than in the rest of the region.

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Key findings

- Mozambican media should take a more investigative approach to election coverage in order to help build democracy.
- Influential figures in the ruling party or government at times overtly or covertly try to intimidate journalists.
- News reporting, as in the rest of the region, lacks adequate representation of women's voices and experiences.



5. Radio

5.1 Key changes and developments in the radio marketplace in the past five years

Between 1975 and 1990, all media in Mozambique, including radio, were a monopoly of the state. The 1990 Constitution (amended in 2005) and the subsequent Press Law of 1991 opened the way for the proliferation of different radio stations in the country, thus providing diversity both in terms of focus and ownership patterns. There is no statistical data to show the total number of licensed radio stations in the country in 2000, so it is difficult to compare the situation between 2000 and 2005. And even for 2005, statistical data from the GABINFO (Department of Information) on the total number of licenced radio stations in Mozambique is uncertain.

Recent research found that 98% of the urban population had listened to the radio in the past 12 months; of which 91% had listened to radio in the past seven days (InterMedia, 2005).

5.1.1 The only radio service with national coverage is state-owned Radio Mozambique, headquartered in the capital Maputo, which has 11 affiliates. It is the largest media organisation in the country, employing more than 1,000 people and broadcasting in 21 languages, including English and the national official language, Portuguese¹.

5.1.2 Radio Mozambique has 11 affiliate stations comprised of ten regional affiliate stations broadcasting from each provincial capital, and a dedicated sports channel. It is difficult to establish exactly how many non-state stations operate at regional level. According to GABINFO, there would appear to be around 50 (F. Tinga, personal communication, April 2006)². Of the roughly 50 non-state stations, several are non-profit community radio stations, established with the involvement of the foreign-funded UNESCO Media Project, religious organisations (mainly the Catholic Church), the government Institute of Social Communication (ICS) and municipal authorities.

5.1.3 There are no reliable estimates of the number of radio stations that began operation in the past five years.

¹ From personal communication with Radio Mozambique.

² According to the Director of GABINFO, Dr Felizberto Tinga, there are various sets of records on station licensing, many of which at times do not reflect all the media that are operating. He estimated that there were around 50 registered non-state radio stations, more than 40 of which were operating, but he could not distinguish in this total between private and community stations.

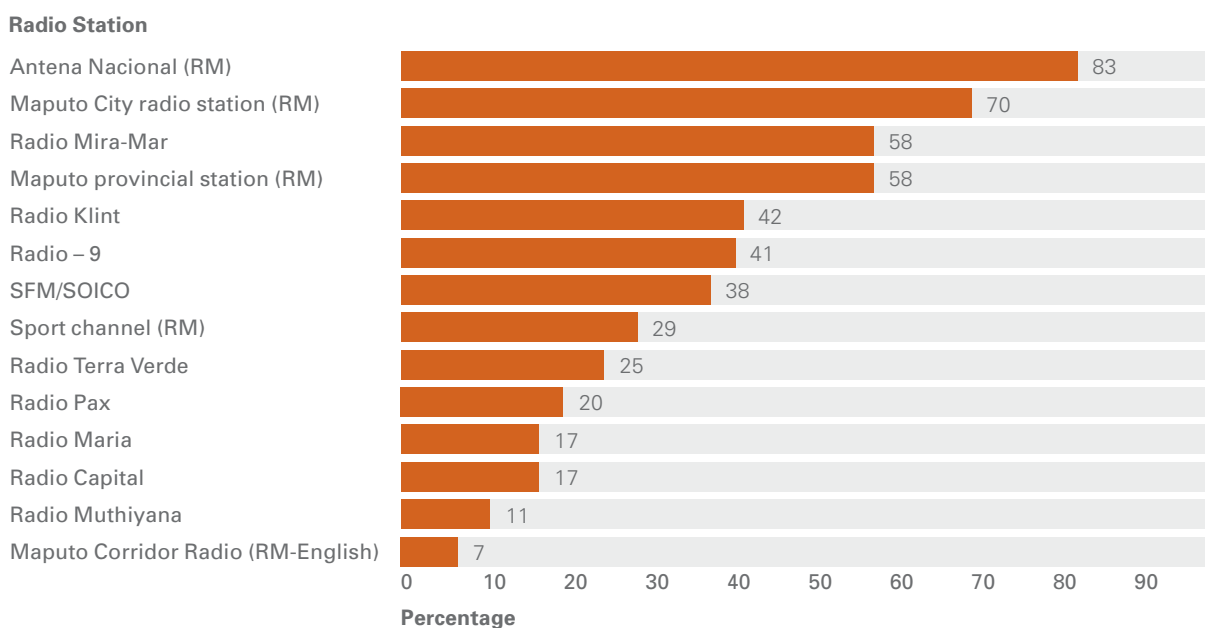
5.2 Investment and growth in the radio sector in the past five years

Most of the investment in the radio industry is local. In the author's view, a difficulty for investors in private commercial stations is that advertisers tend to concentrate on stations that offer access to large broadcast footprints and audiences, and this favours the established state broadcaster Radio Mozambique. Another challenge for commercial radios is technology, with investors needing to keep mobilising resources to pay for new equipment.

The UNESCO Media Project, churches and government have contributed significantly to the growth of the radio sector, through funding the set-up of many community radio stations. However, there is a danger that some of these initiatives may collapse once UNESCO and other assistance ends, given that often their local advertising markets are small.

Hard statistical data on radio audience share and geographical reach is not readily available. But a 2005 survey by InterMedia on the urban audience reach of 25 radio stations gives some idea of the popularity of Radio Mozambique (RM) stations in relation to their private commercial rivals. Figure 4 below shows the results InterMedia captured for 14 of the stations. Respondents in urban areas were asked which stations they had listened to over the past 12 months.

Figure 4: Radio Station Listenership 2005 (Urban Sample)



Source: InterMedia, 2005

5.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Starting from the situation in the 1970s and 1980s, where there was only one radio station (state-owned) in the country, now there are many, covering all sections of society, with a large community radio sector. Apart from state-owned Radio Mozambique, ownership can be divided into three categories: private commercial; religious community-based (e.g., Church-run); and, community-run. Many of the community-run radio stations are joint initiatives between the state and the respective communities, while others are projects supported by the UNESCO Media Project.

As part of its political and economic reforms, the government took a decision in 1994 to transform Radio Mozambique (RM) and TV Mozambique (TVM) from state into public-service broadcasters. The new public broadcasters were to be funded partially from the state budget, with additional sources of revenue coming from annual licence fees levied on vehicles, a monthly levy collected through the public power utility EDM, as well as advertising. All these measures are already in place, even though both RM and TVM still complain of insufficient revenue. While RM does cover opposition viewpoints and would seem to be largely free of direct state pressure, some critics view RM's public broadcaster status as meaningless, given that appointment of the broadcaster's Board is solely at the discretion of Cabinet, without any safeguards to ensure that the interests of the public are represented at the station.

Also, at local government level, there have been instances where local authorities have tried to exercise control over community radio stations, particularly those funded by the state. One such case occurred in the Angoche district of Nampula Province, where a community radio station was ordered to close down temporarily by the district administrator. The closure was apparently ordered because, during the December 2004 election campaign, the station invited the main opposition party for a debate on its election manifesto. Although the station was subsequently re-opened, there was no disciplinary or legal action taken against the administrator (MISA, 2004).

5.4 Diversity

There is diversity in programming for most of the radio stations in Mozambique, including the state-owned Radio Mozambique. Different voices (including the opposition) are often heard on various radio stations on a number of issues.

5.5 Quality of radio output and programming

Programmes range from those on women's and children's issues to programmes on rural development, cultural programmes, politics and the economy. Radio Mozambique (RM) has a daily 30-minute morning show in which a number of subjects are debated, with a guest invited to set the tone on a given issue. This is a phone-in programme, in which the public is invited to participate. Similar RM programmes include a weekly called "Cards on the Table", in which government officials are asked to explain certain policy issues that relate to their respective areas. A particularly popular RM programme is a panel discussion that runs for two hours on Saturdays, and to which the public is invited to phone in and offer their views. Community radio stations often also have discussion programmes, during which specific community-related issues are debated openly.

Although there is no specific legal requirement for local content, most of the radio stations give a good amount of time for local music and drama in their entertainment segments.

5.6 Specific challenges

The main challenge facing the development of radio in Mozambique is the ability of the various small private commercial and community stations to attract sufficient advertising to sustain themselves, as advertisers naturally will tend to maximise gains by placing their adverts with those radio stations, such as the state-owned RM stations, that have a greater area of coverage.

Key findings

- State-owned Radio Mozambique (RM) is the dominant player, with a national channel and 11 regional services, broadcasting in multiple languages.
- RM's content is relatively balanced and free from direct state intervention, but its Board is still determined by Cabinet and there are no legal safeguards ensuring public interest principles are followed.
- The private commercial stations are struggling to win audience share from state-owned RM.
- The community radio sector is strong, supported by international donors (through UNESCO), by churches, and by the government; though long-term sustainability may be difficult for some of these stations and there have been some cases of local government interference.



6. Television

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

Television is a fairly recent phenomenon in Mozambique, existing only since 1980 with the launching of Mozambique Experimental Television, later to be re-named Television Mozambique (TVM), under the direct supervision of the then-Ministry of Information. TVM remains the only Mozambican channel with national coverage, and also has four regional affiliates. But since 2000, the TV market has diversified substantially with several private commercial and community stations coming into existence. As well, there are two subscription services available, the South African-based MultiChoice Africa DStv service and a local cable service called TV-Cabo.

A 2005 urban-only study found that three-quarters (75.7%) of the urban population owned a television set, and 88.5% of the respondents had watched television in the past seven days either on their own set or someone else's (InterMedia, 2005).

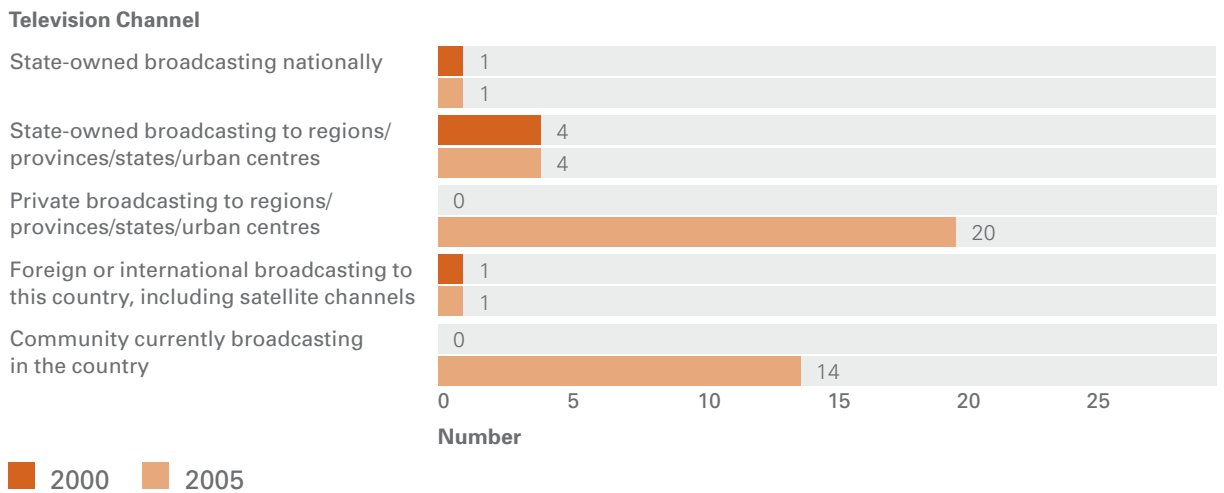
6.1.1 The only national channel is the state-owned TVM, which also provides distribution to two international Portuguese television channels. The other service available throughout the country is the foreign MultiChoice Africa DStv satellite subscription service, which offers 52 channels but whose subscribers are only a tiny fraction of the country's population because of the high monthly fee of \$US52.50³.

6.1.2 The TV environment is more diversified at regional and local level, where TVM operates four regional stations, all linked to TVM's Maputo national studios. Apart from TVM's regional presence, it is estimated that there are more than 30 private commercial and community TV stations at regional and local levels (F. Tinga, personal communication, April 2006). The community stations are government-supported, in some cases with additional support from the UNESCO Media Project. Most of the regional and local non-state TV outlets are concentrated in the main urban centres of Maputo, Beira and Nampula.

6.1.3 All of the private commercial and community stations are new since 2000, representing a significant expansion in the TV sector over the past five years (see Figure 5, p.21).

³ Monthly fee figure provided to researcher by MultiChoice.

Figure 5: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Television Stations



Source: F. Tinga, Director of GABINFO, personal communication, April 2006

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

Most of the investments in the television sector in Mozambique have been by Mozambican nationals. As in other media, this can partially be attributed to a provision in the Press Law that limits foreign investment in a media outlet to no more than 20% (Republic of Mozambique, 1991).

6.3 Plurality, ownership and control

As mentioned earlier, steps have been taken since 1994 to dilute state control of TVM, in an effort to evolve TVM into a public-service broadcaster. But critics point to the fact that TVM, as with RM, still operates essentially as a state broadcaster due to direct Cabinet control over Board appointments.

And because the state is directly involved in funding several of the community television stations, there is significant state presence in TV in Mozambique.

Transparency in ownership is guaranteed by a provision of the 1991 Press Law, which requires media companies to register with GABINFO. As well, all private firms are required to register with the Registrar of Companies, and all the information pertaining to ownership and the nature of the business is freely accessible to the public. The requirement for registration with GABINFO is for administrative purposes only, and there should be no grounds for denial of a licence if all legal requirements are met by the applicant.

Editorial freedom is guaranteed by the Constitution to all television stations, including those where government has a stake. Although no cases of direct interference in television have been reported in Mozambique, this does not, however, entirely exclude the tendency of owners (state and private) from trying to influence editorial content in order to protect their advertising or political interests.

6.4 Diversity

Television programming is relatively diverse, with a wide range of programmes made available and many different views given access to the airwaves. Some of this diversity appears to be a result of competition between stations. However, competition has also had some negative impacts on diversity, with the quest for greater audience share prompting Mozambique's television channels to show a heavy diet of Brazilian soap operas many times during the day. Without any legal requirement for local content, even the state-owned TVM is drawn into this kind of competition, sometimes reneging on its social responsibility as a purported public-service provider.

6.5 Quality of television output and programming

There is a lack of information and entertainment programming reflective of Mozambique's culture and realities, and across all television channels there is an evident lack of effort to offer detailed information on any given subject. Often, for a half-hour news bulletin, ten minutes will be dedicated to local news, with the rest being reserved for international news, sport, weather and commercials. Most of the national news is based on official events, such as opening or closing of conferences, seminars or workshops, with little to reflect the other activities that take place in the country. Local production, whether for news or entertainment, is evidently lacking, and from the author's own discussions with the professionals concerned, lack of resources, such as money for travel and equipment, is seen as the main reason.

6.6 Specific challenges

One of the main challenges facing the television sector in Mozambique is the ability of the sector to remain viable and sustainable from an economic point of view. This means the ability to mobilise greater advertising revenue, a situation that is premised on the country's economic performance.

Current investments tend to be small rather than large scale. There is a need for privately owned services to be established that have national footprints. This will require the corporate sector to take an increasing interest in investing in the television industry. Such national services could help fill the current gap in programming reflecting Mozambican realities, and such programming could prove popular and attractive to advertisers.

Key findings

- The only national free-to-air service is the state-owned Mozambique Television (TVM), which also has four regional affiliate stations.
- TVM has started to face competition in the past five years at regional and local level, with several private commercial and non-profit community stations being set up.
- Local content and programming diversity are undermined by an absence of local content regulation and the popularity of foreign programming, such as Brazilian soap operas.



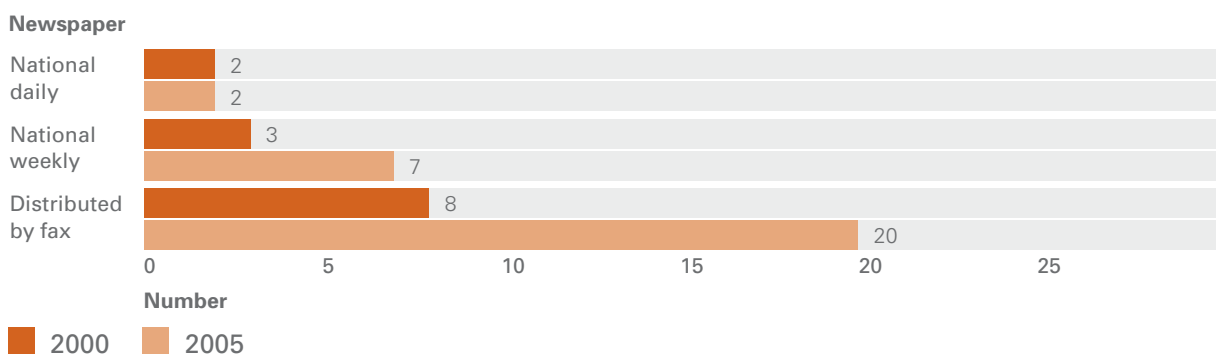
7. Newspapers

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

7.1.1 There are two national dailies, *Noticias* and *Diario de Moçambique*, the same number of national dailies as in 2000. However, there was a growth in the number of national weeklies between 2000 and 2005, from three titles to seven. One of the two national dailies, *Noticias*, is state-owned, through the Bank of Mozambique. The other national daily, *Diario de Mocambique*, is privately owned and based in the second city, Beira (GABINFO, 2006). *Noticias* has a national readership share of 21% and *Diario de Moçambique* has a readership of 3.6% (GABINFO, 2006).

Among the seven national weeklies, two are state-owned, *Domingo* and *Desafio*, and the other five are privately owned. *Domingo* and *Desafio* are estimated to have readership shares of at least double that of any of the privately owned national weeklies (GABINFO, 2006).

Figure 6: Total Number of Newspapers



At regional level, the biggest growth has been in small newspapers sent to readers via fax. There were around 20 such publications in 2005, up from eight in 2000 (GABINFO, 2006).

7.1.3 The new titles of the past five years have been found among the national weeklies and the fax-based regional/local publications. However, the circulation of fax newspapers is limited due to the fact that they are subscription-based and most subscribers are companies, government organisations, embassies and NGOs. Below in Table 3 is a GABINFO listing of 16 fax newspapers, with their years of establishment. It is not possible to establish the total number of newspapers distributed by fax, because some of them have circulation of less than 500, exempting them from registration under the Press Law. Without exception, all fax newspapers in Mozambique are owned and run by journalists. Some of these journalists previously worked for other newspapers and found that their ideas and way of seeing things would be better served if they owned and ran their own newspapers.

Table 3: Fax Newspapers

	Publication	Year
1	Canal de Moçambique	2006
2	Matinal	2006
3	Mediafax	1992
4	Correio da Manhã	1996
5	Wampula Fax	2001
6	Folha de Moçambique	2004
7	Diário de Notícias	2004
8	Tribuna Fax	2005
9	Expresso da Tarde	1998
11	Vertical	2001
12	Diário da Beira	2003
13	Pungue	2005
14	Autarca	2004
15	Faísca	1997
16	Diário da Zambézia	2005

Source: GABINFO, 2006

7.2 Investment and growth in newspapers in the past five years

The formal (non-fax) print sector's slow growth can be seen as mainly due to economic factors, including the high cost of imported newsprint and the costs of printing. Only one of the private papers (*Diário de Moçambique*) has its own printing press, meaning that most private papers are vulnerable to printing prices set by printing firms.

Without exception, all investments in the private press in Mozambique have been Mozambican initiatives led by local journalists, typically after the journalists left other papers

over disagreements on editorial policy. For instance, the *Savana* newspaper is owned by Mediacoop, a group of 13 practising journalists who came together to form a media cooperative following liberalisation of the media under the 1990 Constitution and the 1991 Press Law. In 1992, they launched *Mediafax*, the pioneer of independent fax newspapers. Two years later, in 1994, they launched the *Savana* newspaper. Since 2000, Mediacoop has been transformed into a private limited company. Another example is the *Zambeze* newspaper, which was established in 2002 by Salomão Moyana, a founding member of Mediacoop and the first editor of *Savana*.

7.3 Plurality, ownership and control

There is plurality in the pattern of private newspaper ownership in Mozambique, with no two papers owned by the same investor or company. However, most of these private independent newspapers are small businesses struggling to survive. Setting up a newspaper in Mozambique is a fairly straightforward process. Even though there is a requirement for registration with GABINFO, this is for purely administrative purposes. As long as the applicant fulfils the basic necessary requirements, there can be no denial of permission to operate. The Constitution and Press Law give government no power of control over the press, even though this can be done indirectly through the threat of advertising withdrawal by government departments and parastatals, and through the imposing of high printing costs on private papers by printers aligned to the ruling party.

In theory, the company that owns *Noticias* is a private one. However, its majority shareholder is the Bank of Mozambique, the country's central bank, making it in effect a state-owned paper. Although notable efforts have been made by the editorial management to pursue an independent editorial policy, it is quite evident that, generally, the paper is supportive of government policies. However, it must be said that *Noticias* does also provide quite extensive coverage of opposition political parties.

7.4 Diversity

There is a diversity of issues covered in Mozambican newspapers. Although virtually all newspapers in Mozambique are urban-based, there is still some coverage of rural development. Women in Mozambique are increasingly playing a prominent role in society, and as such are starting to get better coverage in the newspapers.

However, compared to radio, newspapers have a limited reach, which is exacerbated by the high cost of distribution. An additional factor is that contrary to radio, which broadcasts in different languages, all newspapers in Mozambique are in Portuguese, which means that they are only accessible to those who can read this language.

7.5 Quality of newspaper reporting

Quality can generally be linked to working conditions for journalists. As the majority of newspapers find it difficult to generate adequate advertising and sales revenue, salaries for journalists are generally low, and this has a significant impact on quality. There is a tendency to churn out news with very little contextual analysis. The poor working conditions for Mozambican journalists also mean that staff retention is low, with experienced journalists moving on to seek better-paid jobs, leaving less experienced journalists in the newsrooms. In such an environment, quality is often sacrificed.

7.6 Specific challenges

The economic growth that Mozambique has experienced over the past decade has not translated into significant investment in the newspaper business. This is not an area where the local business community finds it attractive to invest its money. As noted before, one major obstacle for the development of newspapers in Mozambique has to do with the high costs of newsprint and the captive situation in which newspapers find themselves with the few existing printing houses. Apart from *Noticias* and *Diário de Moçambique*, no other newspapers in Mozambique have a printing press of their own. This makes them vulnerable to the dictates of the quasi monopoly of printing, and in one way or the other these printing presses are owned by individuals with close links to the ruling party.

Another challenge facing Mozambican newspapers is distribution. Mozambique is a very long country, with a length of close to 3,000 kilometres. With almost all newspapers based in the capital, Maputo, in the far south of the country, newspaper companies have to bear the costs of flying their newspapers long distances. Without a government policy that subsidises newspaper distribution, it is difficult for the majority of newspapers to be distributed and read in remote parts of the country away from urban centres.

Key findings

- The newspaper industry in Mozambique is dominated by two daily newspapers, based in the two largest cities, Maputo and Beira.
- The alternative to establishing conventional daily newspapers has been the establishment of papers transmitted by fax, with reach restricted to a small number of executives and other people in urban centres able to pay subscriptions.
- The weekly newspapers that don't own printing operations face problems with the cost of newsprint, printing and distribution.
- The lack of in-house printing facilities for all but two of the newspapers makes most papers vulnerable to cartel pricing by the printing press owners.



8. Media Support

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

There is no official statistical data on Internet use in Mozambique, but based on information provided to the researcher by the Eduardo Mondlane University's Informatics Centre (CIUEM), it is estimated that 0.9% of the population had access to the Internet in 2000, which, with a population of 19 million, would represent about 170,000 users. Another estimate, for 2005, puts the number of Internet users at 138,000 (CIA, 2006). Internet is fairly recent in Mozambique, and its use is limited mainly to the urban centres. There is a lack of reliable data on the number of Internet service providers (ISPs). However, even without reliable statistics, one can anecdotally observe an increase in Internet use between 2000 and 2005, given the growing number of Internet cafés in the main cities.

The Social Communication Institute (ICS), a government department under the Department of Information, focuses on development of rural communications. In cooperation with the CIUEM, with funding from the Kellogg Foundation and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the ICS has set up eight telecentres that offer rural communities access to information and communication technologies (ICTs), including Internet.

Mozambique currently has two mobile phone operators, and in 2004 it was estimated that there were around 708,000 mobile phones in use in the country (CIA, 2006), a figure that has almost certainly increased significantly in the past two years.

8.2 Key changes in media support in the past five years

According to information collected by the researcher from various sources, Mozambique has around 21 advertising agencies. As well, there are estimated to be 14 locally-owned television/film production companies and one international television/film production firm. There are no media monitoring firms in Mozambique.

8.3 Audience and readership research data

There is no systematic audience measurement data available for radio, television, newspapers or Internet, and there are no dedicated media market research companies operating in Mozambique.

Key findings

- There are no official statistics on Internet users in Mozambique, but estimates put the number at less than 1% of the population, between 130,000 and 170,000 users.
- Internet access would appear to be growing, based on observable growth in the number and use of Internet cafés in urban areas in the past five years.
- The government's Social Communication Institute (ICS) is supporting the development of rural telecentres to increase access to ICTs.
- There were an estimated 708,000 mobile phones in use in the country in 2004, and there are two mobile cellular companies.



9. NGO Activity

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

9.1.1 The number of NGOs in Mozambique is growing, but the number that deal specifically with media issues is limited, and it is difficult to obtain detailed information on how many NGOs work on media development.

9.2 Key NGOs involved in media development activities

The UNESCO Media Project in particular has made a significant contribution in the development of the media in Mozambique, particularly in support of community radio stations. Community radio stations are an important sector in terms of their ability to provide a platform for debate for poor people.

Meanwhile, NGOs – such as the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) – although not specifically media-oriented, have made their own contribution in terms of provision of training, alongside the Nordic School of Journalism (NSJ), based in Maputo. While being regional in intake, it has contributed to the training of Mozambican journalists. SARDC is a Harare-based NGO that has established an office in Maputo, and apart from research on politics, environmental and gender issues, it carries out some media-related activities – particularly during election periods, when it organises workshops and seminars on ethics in the coverage of elections. It also sponsors journalists from different media to cover elections throughout the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region. The Nordic-SADC Journalism Trust (NSJ) was established in the 1990s through assistance from the Nordic countries to help in the training of journalists in Southern Africa. It continues to provide short-course training, although the initial arrangement (the involvement of the Nordic countries) has since ceased to exist.

9.3 Climate of opportunity for media development activities

In the view of the researcher for this report, not enough is being done to support media development in Mozambique. The government seems primarily interested in supporting media in which it has an ownership stake, such as national radio and TV, its national daily newspaper *Noticias*, and some community radio and community TV stations. The donor community also does not seem to regard the development of the media as a priority.

Donor assistance to community radio, via the UNESCO Media Project, is laudable, but there are other elements of media development that need support. This lack of donor focus on media would seem to be contradictory to demands by the donor community for more transparency in the government's management of public affairs. It is difficult to have an accountable government where the media are weak. For its part, the government could contribute to the development of the media through initiatives that reduce operation costs, such as reduced customs charges on newsprint.

Key findings

- The UNESCO Media Project has supported the set-up of several community radio stations.
- The Nordic School of Journalism (NSJ) in Maputo is a journalism training hub for the region.
- In general, the donor community and government are not prioritising media development.



10. Conclusions

10.1 Media and information freedom

Press freedom is a fundamental right in Mozambique, and the legal environment in Mozambique is thus broadly conducive to media freedom, both for private and state-owned media. But it is one thing for the Constitution and Press Law to contain progressive provisions, quite another thing to ask whether these provisions are fully realised by all citizens.

For instance, the Press Law, while reaffirming freedom of the press, includes a *de facto* criminal libel provision. Another seeming contradiction in this law is that while it makes provision for journalists to access public information, it gives great latitude to government officials and courts to refuse access to information.

As far as broadcasting is concerned, the government has taken legislative steps to turn state-owned Radio Mozambique (RM) and Television Mozambique (TVM) into public service broadcasters. However, the reality is that the Boards of these institutions continue to be appointed at the discretion of Cabinet, without any public involvement. These institutions remain public in form only, and state-run in content and practice.

10.2 Statistics

In Mozambique, there is no systematic compilation of media data. The National Statistics Institute is lacking in this area. Some of the only official statistical information compiled is in relation to household living standard measures, e.g., possession of household goods such as radio sets. GABINFO (the Department of Information), what would be the most logical source of meaningful media statistics, does not keep organised records.

10.3 The economy and investment

The economy of Mozambique remains poor, and there can be no vibrant and pluralistic media without a strong economy. A strong economy would allow media organisations to remunerate properly and retain the best professionals, strengthening the quality of their products.

Investment in the media industry in Mozambique is still very low. Most of the business sector has not taken a keen interest in investing in the media, with most, if not all, private media investment initiatives taken by journalists themselves, often without a sound economic base to keep the projects sustainable. Things have not been made easier by a donor community that often shuns the funding of private media initiatives.

10.4 Diversity

The diverse nature of the media in Mozambique is beyond question. Many new media organisations emerged between 2000 and 2005, offering the public a multitude of voices on a variety of issues. The strong presence of community radio is a valuable instrument that allows poor communities in the most remote parts of the country to share views and information on a number of issues affecting them. However, more needs to be done towards building local TV content, with too much reliance at present on imported programmes such as Brazilian soap operas.

10.5 Technology

Mozambique has made significant inroads in the appropriation of new technologies, although the country may still lag behind in some aspects. There are now two mobile phone operators, up from one in 2000. Internet use, although still low, is growing.

Key findings

- The formal legal environment for media freedom is generally progressive, but certain specific provisions are worrying or lacking.
- There is a dearth of statistical data on media in Mozambique.
- A stronger economy and better investment are needed to guarantee a strong private media sector.
- Great gains have been made in the past five years in terms of diversity of media outlets, with the explosion of community radio as a positive example of media pluralism. However, local TV content is weak.
- There is emerging progress in the new technology sector, particularly around mobile phone and Internet use.



11. Appendices

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Appendix 2: Individuals/organisations consulted during the research

- Simão Anguilaze, CEO, Television Mozambique
- Simeão Ponguana, Head, News and Current Affairs, Television Mozambique
- Luísa Menezes, Radio Mozambique
- Felizberto Tinga, Director, GABINFO



Mozambique

Country Report

Way Forward



12. Introduction

Potential interviewees were selected on the basis of their positions and their experience of media issues in Mozambique. This included government officials responsible for shaping media policy, people actively involved in the media profession, people who were practitioners but have now moved elsewhere, individuals involved in training journalists, and others who, though not practitioners and not linked to any media-related institution, have an interest in media development issues. With this in mind, an initial list of 18 potential interviewees was drawn up, with the approval of the project's central coordinating team. From this list, 15 people were interviewed. The interviews ranged from 2,000 to more than 4,000 words, and reflect the thinking of some of the most influential media practitioners and analysts in Mozambique; people with strong views on the close interplay that exists between the development of the media and the entrenchment of democracy, human rights and civil liberties in the country.

It was relatively easy to secure interviews. However, problems related to individuals' schedules caused delays. The interviewees are extremely busy people with a number of issues to attend to, which may include the need for travel. This was a major problem, with previously scheduled interviews having to be rescheduled. All the individuals agreed to be audio-recorded. The purpose of the interview was clearly spelled out, and interviewees were made aware that the recording was important for accuracy and that their views were for the purpose of the research only. Several attempts were made to interview the Chair of the Media Supreme Council, but proved unsuccessful.

Interviewees showed a high degree of frankness. Most of them felt at ease in expressing their views, which this researcher interpreted as a measure of the atmosphere of freedom that is prevalent in the country, and which the interviewees themselves referred to as a key factor contributing to press freedom in Mozambique. All interviewees agreed to have attributed quotes included in the report.

The 15 interviews (including the two pilot interviews) were conducted between 4 March and 28 June 2006. With most of the targeted interviewees based in Maputo, no travel proved necessary. All the interviews were on a face-to-face basis, and duly taped with the expressed consent of the interviewees.



13. Media Development: an organisational perspective

Of the 15 interviewees, seven are key personnel in the management of media organisations, two are senior university lecturers in journalism or communications studies, one is Principal of a journalism school, one is Rector of a private university, one is leader of an organisation that brings together female journalists, one is a government deputy minister, one is the Director of GABINFO, and one is a senior lecturer in politics at the public university and a media analyst. They are all respected members of society with a critical view on media issues in Mozambique. It is worth noting that some of them, although being interviewed in a specific capacity, are involved in other activities that complement the spread in terms of diversity of views on the media in Mozambique. For example, Eduardo Namburete is both a senior university lecturer and an MP, Salomão Moyana is the Publisher of the *Zambeze* weekly newspaper and Chairman of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)-Mozambique, and Refinaldo Chilengue is Publisher and Editor of the fax daily newspaper *Correio da Manhã* and Chairman of the Association of Media Companies. This allowed the interviewees to draw on, and relate experiences from, different sources, thus enriching the content of the interviews, without losing the focus of the interview.

13.1 Key organisations

Key organisations represented by the interviewees are: MISA-Mozambique (represented by its Chairman, Salomão Moyana); Eduardo Mondlane University (Dr Eduardo Namburete, Senior Lecturer, School of Communication and Art, who is also an opposition MP, and Dr Eduardo Siteo, a senior lecturer in the Department of Political Sciences); the Higher University and Polytechnic Institute (Professor Lourenço Do Rosário, Rector, and Dr Marcelino, Senior Lecturer in Media Studies); the quasi-state-owned daily newspaper *Notícias* (Rogério Siteo, Editor); the state TV, Mozambique Television (Simão Anguilaze, the Chief Executive Officer); the Association of Media Companies (Refinaldo Chilengue, Chairman); the privately owned weekly newspaper *Zambeze* (Lourenço Jossias, Editor); the privately owned media company Mediacoop (Fernando Lima, Chairman of the board of directors); the Mozambique Union of Journalists (Eduardo Constantino, Secretary General); the Association of Women in Media (Palmira Velasco, Chairwoman); and, the School of Journalism (Américo Xavier, Director). Two government departments were also represented,

the Department of Information, by its Director, Dr Felizberto Tinga, and the Department of Education and Culture, by the Deputy Minister, Dr Luís Covane. All the interviewees have a vast knowledge about, and involvement in, media development issues and this formed an extensive body of opinion on a range of media-related issues. Even though (in some cases) those interviewed may not be directly involved in media development activities, they are, by virtue of the positions they hold, individuals who have a degree of knowledge and interest about the media and quite strong views on the state of the media in Mozambique and the prospects for its development in the future.

13.2 Impact of media development initiatives

From the responses received from the interviewees, it is worth noting that, in general, they all recognised the growth in terms of the number of media houses over the five-year period under consideration, i.e., 2000-05. One of the interviewees, Dr Eduardo Namburete, a senior lecturer at the School of Communication and Art at the Eduardo Mondlane University, and also an opposition Member of Parliament, felt that the emergence of new media houses did not in itself mean an improvement in the quality of service provided. While noting that the past five years have seen a number of transformations in the media in Mozambique, with the most significant change being the numerical growth that the sector has registered, Dr Namburete observed that:

“ ... however, this does not necessarily mean that such growth was accompanied equally by an improvement in quality; quality has gone down considerably, and I have the perception that the media has tended to be more of a commercial product and less of a social product. I don't know whether that is the result of the economic dynamics in the country, where everything has become commercial, even at the level of the public sector. ”

(**Eduardo Namburete**, Senior Lecturer; Educator: School of Communication and Art, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

However, one interviewee, Refinaldo Chilengue, Chairman of the Association of Media Companies, had a divergent view. He noted that while quality was important, it was something that in the long-run would be taken care of by the market itself, as media organisations deemed to be providing a bad service would automatically lose market share. Chilengue, who is also Publisher/Editor of the fax newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, stated that the issue of quality was directly linked to quantity, and that there can only be a quest for quality in a pluralistic environment.

“ One can only appreciate quality where there is quantity; the more choice there is in terms of the number of media products, the greater the assessment ability will the public have in terms of the performance of the journalist. The quality might look lower, but it simply means that the market is increasingly more demanding. ”

(**Refinaldo Chilengue**, Chairman; NGO: Association of Media Companies [AEJ], Mozambique)

Basically, all interviewees saw the growth of community media, especially radio, as one of the most significant developments in the media landscape in Mozambique over the past five years. It was seen as significant in that, with the mainstream media concentrated in the urban areas, community media acts as an instrument that gives normally voiceless people a platform to have their voices heard.

Most of the developments that have taken place were attributed to the relatively stable political and economic environment prevailing in Mozambique, coupled with a legal framework that favours freedom of the press and freedom of expression. Another key factor mentioned as having contributed to the development of the media was the highly competitive environment, influenced by the emergence of new media initiatives, as well as a more liberal approach by the government in the way it relates to the media. This liberal approach was highlighted in the interview with the Director of the Department of Information (Felizberto Tinga), who said that it was not government policy to order the closure of media initiatives, even if these operated without having been registered. In such cases, he said, once alerted to the issue, the department would seek to persuade the organisation concerned of the need to observe the legal requirement for registration. This is related to the fact that registration of media initiatives in Mozambique is required by law as an administrative procedure only, and the Department of Information has no right to deny such registration if all requirements are met. In fact, during the interview, Dr Tinga expressed the view that the role of his department is to try and facilitate the emergence of new media initiatives, which he regarded as important in the process of development:

“ What we are trying to do is facilitate the emergence of new media. Sometimes irregularities occur. There have been some private initiatives which have taken place outside of the law. But instead of going and ordering the concerned individuals to close their radio station down because it has broken the law, we ask for (and are given) an explanation. The first thing to do is inform them what they should do to regularise the situation. What we want, in fact, is that they should operate, but within the law. ”

(Dr Felizberto Tinga, Director; Government: Department of Information, Mozambique)

The Deputy Minister of Education and Culture, Dr Luís Covane, although not pointing out any specific initiatives over this period, said that the changes in the media landscape were visible, and that he considered the developments in the sector as necessary to create a healthy environment that allows people of different tendencies to exchange their views freely.

“... In today's press we have the private sector and the public sector that interact in the same space. Their ideas have a greater chance of being expressed, and it's the Mozambicans who win from this. ”

(Dr Covane, Deputy Minister; Government: Ministry of Education and Culture, Mozambique)

But the most significant change that all the interviewees pointed out was the numerical growth in the media sector as demonstrated by the emergence of new weekly newspapers, radio stations and daily newspapers distributed by fax.

However, Rogério Siteo, Editor of the daily newspaper *Noticias*, preferred to take a philosophical view, noting that what we refer to as changes must be seen in the context of it being the consolidation of a long process that started with the country's decision to take the liberal democracy route. This view was echoed by Professor Lourenço Do Rosário, Rector of the Higher University and Polytechnic Institute (ISPU), who said there were important factors that can be considered as the basis for the changes that have taken place over the past five years.

“ One such fundamental factor was the opening up of the political system that took place from the beginning of the 1990s,” he said, while recognising that “the conditions for pluralism in the media are excellent. ”

(**Lourenço Do Rosário**, Rector; Educator: Higher University and Polytechnic Institute (ISPU), Mozambique)

Most of the interviewees also pointed out that the development of the media in Mozambique should not be seen in isolation from the normal process of development of the country, and that the two work in tandem. During the interview with the Director of Information, Dr Tinga, he indicated that it is the view of government that media development is an integral part of the country's development strategy. Despite the fact that, so far, government still has not put in place a clearly defined policy for media development, he referred to a recent government decision to allocate to each of the 120 districts in the country an annual special development fund of about \$US260,000, part of which he thought could be allocated to the development of media initiatives at local level.

The Deputy Minister of Education and Culture, Dr Luís Covane, said the most notable strategic change in the ministry in relation to the media was the establishment of a department to liaise with them. He considered the development to be of “*great importance*”, since it not only establishes an institutional framework through which the ministry can explain to the public what it is doing in terms of education and culture policies, “*but can also show society that we face major challenges, and that these challenges can only be overcome with the commitment of all of us*”. He said that this was significant because often the media have a tendency to portray what is wrong, while overlooking the more positive aspects.

Most interviewees found it hard to respond with specific examples of strategic changes that have occurred in their respective areas. However, in the case of the two universities, those interviewed noted that the establishment of schools of journalism or communication in their respective institutions was the most important development during this period. The significance of this is that while at the beginning these schools did not attract a significant number of candidates, the situation gradually changed and the schools are now recognised as the main centres for the training of future journalists.

One of the impacts noted by all interviewees in the media sector as a result of media development initiatives was the increase in the number of trained journalists, including at tertiary level. No specific numbers were given, except in the case of the Association of Women in Media, which said that through the UNESCO Media Project it had succeeded in securing 27 scholarships for undergraduate, Masters and doctoral level students. The general lack of specific numbers notwithstanding, it was considered that training was one area where the impact of media development initiatives at various levels was most visible. Indeed, continuous training of journalists was highlighted as a key success factor in the development of the media in Mozambique, which should be very much encouraged. This is because, in the view of all the interviewees, the acquisition of more knowledge by journalists had a bearing on the success of any initiative that may be undertaken, since it is an area that must be closely related to an improvement in quality.



14. Media Development Initiatives

One of the issues that interviewees stressed (particularly those from media-related NGOs and practitioners), was that media development initiatives or projects must be home-grown, and that the beneficiaries must be heavily involved in all stages of their planning, implementation and evaluation. It was often mentioned in the interviews that some donors make their own decisions as to what the media needs, without an effective consultation process with the beneficiaries. Rogério Siteo had this to say on this issue:

“ The donor community has done little or almost nothing. I’ll repeat what I said when the NSJ [Nordic-Sadc Journalism Centre] was still functioning... I said, look, you’re always organising courses. I said you should sit down and see whether or not these courses are having any impact... and you’ll have to understand that the impact of these courses is so small, but you’re spending a lot of money. ”

(Rogério Siteo, Editor; Media Practitioner Public Sector: Noticias newspaper, Mozambique)

As a result of this lack of consultation between donors and beneficiaries, the impact or outcome of some projects was considered to have been somewhat modest. One initiative often referred to as having been relatively more successful was the UNESCO Media Project, which can be seen in the development of the community radio sector. However, most interviewees said that the need for such initiatives to remain viable and sustainable in the long run could not be overemphasised, especially if (or when) UNESCO eventually pulls out of the project. Sustainability would be best achieved through the individual community radio stations’ ability to develop a strategy that allows them to attract significant advertising revenue.

However, one of the interviewees pointed out that sustainability in community media should not be viewed in financial terms alone. The interviewee noted that it is also important to ensure that sustainability is evaluated in terms of relevance, development of human resources and the impact that such media must have in the development of a democratic process that is deeply rooted in the participation of people at all levels. The interviewee said this sustainability should be guaranteed by the state itself. The Director of the Department of Information, Felizberto Tinga, went a step further, linking the issue of sustainability with the need for the community to be involved in the management of community media. As an example, he cited a case he had come across in Burkina Faso, where he said one community was involved with the management of its radio station, including the maintenance of

equipment. He also emphasised that the issue of sustainability must be linked to the technological options that are made; technology must be accessible to the communities:

“ The question of community involvement itself [was important]... so, in fact, the technological options must not be such as to create a dependence of the media on the donor. ”

(Felizberto Tinga, Director; Government: Department of Information, Mozambique)

14.1 Review

In 1997, the government of Mozambique adopted a resolution on Media, Information Policy and Strategies, which aims, among other things, to:

“ ... promote pluralism in the media, based on the principles of press freedom as part of the individual rights and freedoms as enshrined in the Constitution, including the right of citizens to freedom of expression, freedom of access to information and the absence of censorship. ”

(Republic of Mozambique, 1997)

With this policy, the government believes that it will be able to create the conditions for an ample coverage of the country by the media, and that the recipients of such information can utilise it

“ in the interest of stability and the harmonious progress of the Mozambican nation. ”

(Republic of Mozambique, 1997)

However, despite these well-meaning objectives, there is little on the ground to show greater government commitment to the development of strong and well-funded media development projects.

No specific media development projects were mentioned during the interviews. This could be because, in reality, media development in Mozambique has not been viewed as an area of critical intervention, either by the donors or by media associations themselves. Although the government has often said that it views the media as an important component in the country's development process, it has been very modest in undertaking deliberate policies to help the development of the media, particularly in the private sector. Indeed, no significant media development programme features in the government's development plan for 2005-9. This is despite the fact that, in that same plan, the government does have a specific policy statement on the development of information and communications technologies (ICTs), where one of the stated objectives is the implementation of a project of community multimedia centres.

The only initiative that most of the interviewees referred to in specific terms was the UNESCO Media Project, but even here reference was made only in terms of its project to develop community radio, and not the development of the media sector as a whole. Although Dr Tinga mentioned that the government is undertaking an integrated community media development project, under the auspices of the Social Communications Institute (ICS), he was not specific about how much the government is spending on the project, apart from saying that *“it is a lot of money”*. One view, expressed by Rogério Siteo, Editor of the daily *Noticias* newspaper, was that there is a need for Mozambicans to initiate media development initiatives that can eventually be funded by donors. He said it was important to develop media projects that have a strong management component and are business-oriented. Siteo added that some projects initiated by donors were meant to strengthen the private sector media and develop it into some kind of opposition to the government, based on the political perceptions of the donors.

One critical area (referred to by at least three interviewees) was training, where the need to improve on the quality of journalism training was highlighted. It was in response to this challenge that two universities have established journalism and communications departments in the past five years, with the main objective of improving the quality of journalism in Mozambique. This could have resulted from the realisation that the young journalists graduating from the School of Journalism were not sufficiently equipped to face the growing challenges they face in the profession. The School of Journalism offers a two-year diploma, and students are admitted after ten years of education. During the interview, the Principal of the School, Américo Xavier, admitted that media organisations sometimes felt that their needs were not being adequately met by journalists graduating from the school, and blamed the situation on the school's curriculum, which he said was not adjusted to the needs of the market. However, he hoped that with the government undertaking a number of reforms in the secondary education sector, an opportunity might arise for a major curriculum overhaul.

It was not clear whether the organisations had any specific goals or objectives in their approaches to media development. The representatives interviewed knew what had been achieved and, in philosophical terms, knew the general objectives of their respective organisations. However, no one could be pinned down on specifics. This may be because the main objective for the majority of the organisations at the moment is firmly to establish themselves before approaching donors to fund any assistance. Another possibility is that the process for designing project proposals that meet the standards required by donors is so cumbersome that prospective beneficiaries lose interest, especially when projects take too long to get approval from donors. In addition, designing project proposals often requires technical expertise that many organisations may not be equipped with. My own observation is that unless there is a strong, coordinated and well-funded effort to develop media initiatives, and for as long as donors continue to assume an ambiguous position, planning of such activities can hardly be envisaged in the short term. This is reinforced by what Refinaldo Chilengue, Chair of the Association of Media Companies, had to say at his interview. After observing that the general attitude of donors is to shy away from supporting media development initiatives, Mr Chilengue added:

“ Donors must understand the situation on the ground. They have to know who the key players are, and they have to undertake a comprehensive needs assessment before making any move. After all, a lot of money is thrown around for projects whose impact is almost zero. This is the way I think they will be able to make a meaningful contribution to the development of the media in Mozambique. What I am trying to say here is that there has to be a more action-oriented approach, an approach that goes beyond seminars and workshops. ”

(**Refinaldo Chilengue**, Chairman; NGO: Association of Media Companies [AEJ], Mozambique)

None of the organisations interviewed only fund media development. There are at least two known organisations that deal with media development issues in Mozambique. These are the UNESCO Media Project and the Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC). However, they are also involved in other activities, with the media forming only part of their broader mandate. MISA-Mozambique is the only organisation the mandate of which is geared towards media activities. But even then it operates primarily as an advocacy organisation, not necessarily in the implementation of media development projects.

The Union of Journalists is currently involved in the implementation of a project on human rights and civic education. The three-year project is funded by the European Union, to the tune of \$US800,000. The project's target groups are journalists, teachers, non-governmental organisation (NGO) officials, community leaders and students. The main objectives of the project are:

- to contribute to the development of an active civil society that is aware of the need to observe human dignity; and,
- to strengthen the capacity of the intended target group in their understanding of human rights issues.

The project covers three geographical regions – Maputo City and Province, and the provinces of Gaza and Inhambane, all in the southern part of Mozambique. It is expected that by the time the project ends in 2008 it will have trained 150 journalists, 90 teachers, 900 primary school pupils, 80 community leaders and 120 NGO officials.

14.2 Success and impact

Generally, none of the organisations represented by the interviewees have formal procedures for the evaluation of media development projects. Without there being media development projects in the context of our working definition, it follows that projects are seldom evaluated in a formal way. In general, those interviewed indicated that media activities are only part of their overall mandate, and that budgets for media activities are drawn routinely from their overall budgeting processes, without a specific appropriation for full-scale media development activities. For example, when the Rector of the Higher University and Polytechnic Institute (ISPU), Professor Lourenço Do Rosário, was asked what portion of his institution's budget goes towards the funding of media development activities, he commented:

“ Normally, the funding of organic units is done in packages. The Schools of Communications and Psychology fall under the Department of Law. The funds are allocated to this department which, because it is the largest, takes 50% of the budget. The schools of Communications and Psychology share the other 50% on an equal basis. ”

(**Lourenço Do Rosário**, Rector; Educator: Higher University and Polytechnic Institute [ISPU], Mozambique)

There is, however, some limited evaluation of media projects. Marcelino Alves, a senior media lecturer at ISPU, said he was involved in the evaluation of one project that took place between 2002 and 2004:

“ We did so through a questionnaire that the participants [on the courses] themselves had to fill in. ”

(**Marcelino Alves**, Senior Lecturer; Analyst: Higher University and Polytechnic Institute [ISPU], Mozambique)

There was a general feeling that the key to success in the development of any media development project was ownership. This came out forcefully, for example, in the interview with Refinaldo Chilengue, Chairman of the Association of Media Companies (AEJ), when he said:

“ If the donors are interested in supporting the media, they should first know the sector better. I have heard of organisations that made us believe that they were here to support us, but who never made contact with media organisations in this country. If they want to know the media landscape in Mozambique, they have to interact with the sector representatives, and try and find out what their needs are. I think there are serious material needs that the media sector requires, and I believe donors could intervene to assist in that regard. ”

(**Refinaldo Chilengue**, Chairman; NGO: Association of Media Companies [AEJ], Mozambique)

Dr Felizberto Tinga (of the Department of Information) linked successful media development initiatives to their ability to be in tune with the country's development strategy, noting that those who are intending to undertake such initiatives would be in a better position to make a meaningful contribution if they explored those areas that are in deficit, thus complementing the government's efforts in bridging the development gap.

“ Often funds are donated from abroad, and the donors dictate the way in which such funds should be utilised, even the location of the project, regardless of whether a particular area really needs such a project. There should be greater coordination among the donors and between the donors and government, so that projects are implemented in line with the country's development strategy. ”

(**Dr Felizberto Tinga**, Director; Government: Department of Information, Mozambique)

This view was echoed by the Deputy Minister of Education and Culture, Dr Luís Covane, when he said that the government regards the media as partners in development, not adversaries. Eduardo Siteo noted that for media development initiatives to be successful, it was important to address such critical issues as technology, improvement in the quality of professionals and the management capacity of the media.

“ If activities were aimed at this, such a programme would be excellent. ”

(**Eduardo Siteo**, Senior Lecturer; Analyst: Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

The issue of ownership comes out as a key factor with regard to the relative lack of success of media development projects. Failure by prospective donors to engage the beneficiaries in a participatory dialogue at every stage of the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects was described by at least four of our interviewees as a key reason why projects on media development fail to achieve their intended objectives. The four interviewees, Eduardo Constantino (Mozambique Union of Journalists – SNJ), Felizberto Tinga (Department of Information), Luís Covane (Deputy Minister of Education and Culture), and Refinaldo Chilengue (Chairman of the Association of Media Companies), all stressed the need for media development projects to be made sustainable in order for them to achieve the desired outcome, which is the entrenchment of a pluralistic media landscape in Mozambique, one that is strong and is relevant to society. If sustainability is not guaranteed, the end result is that projects will run for as long as they are funded, but once funding stops, the projects will collapse. The Secretary General of the Mozambique Union of Journalists, Eduardo Constantino, noted that projects need to be given enough time to firm up before donors stop funding them. This could be related to the widely held view by some of the interviewees, in many cases, donors are driven by their own agenda, an agenda which often fails to address the specific needs of their beneficiaries. As such, sustainability is often given less priority, as donors are preoccupied with the need to keep their own constituencies satisfied rather than providing appropriate assistance.

“ What often happens is that once the formal period established by the donors for a project expires, funding comes to a stop. This is, in my view, linked to questions of ownership. Do beneficiaries own these projects, or are these projects that are imposed upon them? If there is no ownership there can be no sustainability, because right from the phase of conceptualisation and needs assessment it is important for beneficiaries to be involved, so that they know fully what the project is about. But sometimes one is left with the impression that donors have money to spend, and that there is a short period within which they have to account for that money to their own donors as well, but that may not exactly coincide with the needs or the capacity of the beneficiary to implement a given project within a certain period of time. ”

(**Eduardo Constantino**, Secretary General; Media Support: Mozambique Union of Journalists, Mozambique)

Rogério Siteo observed that a lack of success in media development initiatives could be attributed to insufficiently strong cooperation among editors:

“ I think editors have to assume that they are a single body, and they have to unite to face those issues that are of common interest to them. It will be difficult for anyone to give assistance to the media if they cannot find a valid interlocutor in the form of a united group of editors. ”

(**Rogério Siteo**, Editor; Media Practitioner Public Sector: *Noticias* daily newspaper, Mozambique)

None of our interviewees mentioned this, but, according to my own observation, lack of success in media development projects, particularly in so far as it concerns investment, can also be linked to a provision in the Press Law that restricts foreign ownership of the media to 20%. The local business community largely lacks the capital for media development initiatives, and potential foreign investors would not think it worthwhile to bring in their capital when they then had to assume a minority shareholding. This could change if current initiatives by the Department of Information to amend the Press Law come to fruition.

14.3 Lessons learned

No one spoke in absolute terms about lessons learned from the relative success (or lack of success) of projects/activities. Success (or lack of success) was described in relative terms. There were obviously cases of success with the establishment of media training institutions at the Eduardo Mondlane University and at the Higher University and Polytechnic Institute. In the latter case, for example, the Rector related how, initially, the decision to set up the school was greeted with scepticism, but it later proved to have been a great success. It was, after all, a clear example of how personal commitment in the face of adversity can be a key factor in the building of institutions:

“ My colleagues were insisting that the course was not viable because the break-even point for the viability of the course would be 15 students. I do not know whether it was an instinct, but I insisted that we should not give up. ”

(**Professor Lourenço Do Rosário**, Rector; Educator: Higher Polytechnic and University Institute [ISPU], Mozambique)

However, nothing came out of the interviews in terms of organisations setting up measurable objectives, even though, as described above, the issue of sustainability was mentioned as extremely important. There seems to be an open agenda with most institutions taking pride in the fact that their efforts are producing good results, even though long-term objectives may not have been outlined in specific terms. Américo Xavier said that one lesson he has learned is that for media development initiatives to be meaningful,

“ It is important that they are sustainable... first because this trains people, and second because people know the environment well and this builds identity and/or self-esteem. ”

(**Américo Xavier**, Director; Educator: School of Journalism, Mozambique)

There was unanimity among the interviewees as to the importance of an African cultural bias in the designing of projects. It was noted that for a country such as Mozambique, with a rich and diverse cultural heritage, there was a big deficit in the manner in which the media deals with cultural issues. The cultural component was seen as critical in the development of the media. In the words of Professor Lourenço Do Rosário, failure to take this into account can hardly enable us

“ to negotiate with our partners, and we will have everything imposed on us, without being able to challenge that. ”

(**Professor Lourenço Do Rosário**, Rector; Educator: Higher Polytechnic and University Institute [ISPU], Mozambique)

However, Eduardo Siteo had a slightly different view. While regarding the cultural component as important, he felt that it was not absolutely vital given that, in the global environment in which we increasingly live, cultural traditions are facing continuous erosion. When asked about the importance of a strong cultural component in the designing of media development initiatives, he said:

“ I think this is important but not absolutely relevant. We are living in a global world, and a world where there is a continual erosion of traditions, a world where human beings’ capacity for self-reflection (according to the English sociologist Anton Guideons) is growing, which means that the cultural aspect is important but not determinant for training a professional of the future. ”

(**Eduardo Siteo**, Senior Lecturer; Analyst: Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

This was a view that was partially subscribed to by Rogério Siteo, when he said that, from the point of view of the content itself, it is important that the African cultural context be taken into account. However, he pointed out that:

“ There is no European, African or Asian journalism... journalism is journalism. The precepts that make me decide what is news must be technical... journalism is a social science, so why don’t we give emphasis to cultural issues? I think it is because we are globalised both as journalists and as social individuals. ”

(**Rogério Siteo**, Editor; Media Practitioner Public Sector: *Noticias* daily newspaper, Mozambique)



15. Developing the Environment for Success

15.1 Key factors

All the interviewees hailed the prevailing political environment in Mozambique, which is characterised by tolerance, as ideal for a successful media development initiative that is all-encompassing, and for the development of a pluralistic media landscape. Special reference was made to provisions of the Constitution, which make media freedom a fundamental right, and the Press Law, which was generally regarded as progressive. It was the general view of interviewees, including that of Eduardo Namburete who is also an opposition Member of Parliament, that the existing legal framework does influence the development of the media positively in Mozambique, as it provides for an atmosphere of freedom that allows journalists to express themselves in a free manner, thus enabling them to shape and influence public opinion in a multitude of ways.

It was also pointed out by all interviewees that the political pluralism that exists in the country (with different political parties operating at the level of parliament) was a key factor in ensuring that a diversity of views filters through to the media. However, in the case of one interviewee, while agreeing that the political environment was positive, he felt that the subordination of the state/public media to a government department did impose limitations on its ability to exercise editorial independence, since security of tenure for state/public media managers was not entirely guaranteed. This may be linked to the manner in which state media managers are appointed at the discretion of government.

In economic terms, the broad view was that with the current market-oriented system, the economy of Mozambique growing satisfactorily and business expanding, conditions did exist that could help to develop the media, with the possibility of expanding advertising revenue. However, one of the interviewees expressed the view that most of the economy was concentrated in the hands of a few individuals with strong links to the ruling party. This quasi-monopolistic nature of the economy was viewed as potentially dangerous for the development of an independent and pluralistic media in Mozambique, as it could be used to twist the arms of non-compliant media organisations. Hence there is a need for greater involvement by independent/private organisations in supporting the media.

“ Unfortunately, in Mozambique politics and the economy go hand in hand. It is difficult for you to become an entrepreneur if you are not sympathetic to the government of the day. ”

(**Eduardo Namburete**, Senior Lecturer; Educator: School of Communication and Art, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

15.2 Political and economic influences

The political and economic environment is influential in the degree of success of media development. The level of autonomy given to independent/private players to play a role in media development greatly depends on the extent to which the political establishment is open to private initiatives. A government that is under siege will obviously regard any independent/private initiative as part of a growing conspiracy against it, and will therefore try to put in place all sorts of controls that make such initiatives almost impossible to implement. This point did not come out in specific terms in the interviews, but it was inferred from the way interviewees saw the possibilities of successful media development initiatives as dependent on the degree of openness and freedom that prevails in Mozambique.

Generally, interviewees were of the view that state support for the media in Mozambique existed in so far as there is a democratic system in place that respects the freedom of journalists and civil liberties, with overall far less state intervention in the media (including the state media) than was the case before. However, the role the state played in providing economic support for media development was viewed as insignificant, although some cases were mentioned of the state supporting the state radio and television, as well as the Institute of Mass Communication (ICS). Asked specifically about the issue of state support for the media, Eduardo Constantino, Secretary General of the Mozambican Union of Journalists, was emphatically negative, saying:

“... there is very little state support for the media, even for the state media. I do not think that the government has any meaningful policy in terms of media development in this country. ”

(**Eduardo Constantino**, Secretary General; Media Support: Mozambique Union of Journalists, Mozambique)

15.3 Donor communities' role

There was a mixture of views about the role of donors in the development of media initiatives in Mozambique. While some interviewees agreed that there was adequate donor support for media development in Mozambique, others felt otherwise. The indisputable fact, however, is that, generally, donors do not see media development as warranting the same priority as the development assistance they provide to the government. There is also a general view among donors that the media plays a political role that often falls outside their mission, which is to provide economic development assistance. One of the interviewees, Eduardo Namburete, said he had come across what he described as “*some disturbing news*”, which indicated that

“ *consciously or not, the donor community has acted in ways that do not offer much help for the development of the media in Mozambique... very often we hear the donor community saying that funding media development projects, especially in the private sector, is not their priority.* ”

(**Eduardo Namburete**, Senior Lecturer; Educator: School of Communication and Art, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

In view of that, Namburete pointed out that since donors fund the state budget they were, in fact, indirectly funding the state media, to the detriment of the private media.

“ *The private media plays a critical role in social development, and I think it would be advisable for the donor community to take a fresh look at their attitude towards this sector.* ”

(**Eduardo Namburete**, Senior Lecturer; Educator: School of Communication and Art, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

However, this was not a view shared by Eduardo Siteo, who, when asked about the role of donors, replied:

“ *Donors have done several things; now we are here, in the headquarters of the National Journalists' Union (SNJ) and there is a European Union project that helped assemble that communication centre downstairs, upgraded this library, acquired the vehicle that allows transport here; an initiative of the same sort also exists in Zambézia. We also have the UNESCO project which, as I mentioned earlier, provided great stimulus in the area of training and established community radio stations... the donors are doing a lot of work.* ”

(**Eduardo Siteo**, Senior Lecturer; Analyst: Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

There was a general feeling among interviewees that the impact of donor support for media development activities has been somewhat modest. A new approach by donors in media development would focus on the technological development of the media and in strengthening training activities and management capacity. One suggestion that came out clearly was that donors could help to set up a special media development fund from which media organisations could borrow at concessional interest rates, with a reasonable repayment period.

15.4 Other issues

It is difficult to provide an exhaustible list of the issues that can influence the success of media development initiatives. However, what came through in the interviews was the interviewees' emphasis on the need for media development projects to be based on a long-term perspective, with the goals to be achieved at the end of each project being clearly defined so as to be easily understood by all concerned. For example, the training of journalists was considered to be extremely important as a long-term process that could be undertaken at the workplace over a long period of time divided into various stages. For example, when asked what in his view should be the strategic priorities for future donor initiatives to support the media in Mozambique, Eduardo Siteo responded that, among other priorities (such as a new focus on technological development), there was a need to encourage a training process that focused both on journalists and media managers. More significant was the idea that media development initiatives or projects should be home-grown, with donors playing the role of facilitators at the planning stage, during implementation and in the process of evaluation, and with the results of such projects matching the level of resources that would have been made available.



16. Future Strategies

16.1 Strategic priorities

Strategic priorities for new donor-backed media development initiatives were described in general terms. It was pointed out by all interviewees that future donor-backed strategic priorities should be aimed at improving the capacity of the media to fulfil its role in the development of democracy in Mozambique, as a pre-condition for the main objective of supporting the country's overall economic and social development. One area that Rogério Siteo (of *Noticias* daily newspaper) described as important (but lacking in Mozambican journalism), and which he believed donors could assist in developing, was investigative journalism. The development of this sector, he said, could help the Mozambican media gain more credibility. Dr Felizberto Tinga said that strategic priorities for future donor initiatives in support of the media in Mozambique should be in sympathy with the country's development strategy; he emphasised the importance of developing media initiatives at the community level:

“ Let the donors help us set up media at district level, which is where we have great problems. ”

(Dr Felizberto Tinga, Director; Government: Department of Information, Mozambique)

We can summarise key areas for future intervention by donors as follows:

- training of journalists and other related professions;
- investment in new information and communications technologies;
- financial assistance for the private media;
- development of community media; and
- investigative journalism.

16.2 Focus of support

16.2.1 Media frameworks

There was little mention of this as an area that requires attention.

16.2.2 Developing local content

This came out as a priority area. Indeed, development of local content was extremely important for the interviewees. In general, they saw all the activities that relate to the development of the media as aimed at strengthening its ability to produce content that is relevant to Mozambican society.

Local content was seen as key in the context of its relation to the issue of identity. At least one of the interviewees, Professor Lourenço Do Rosário of the Higher University and Polytechnic Institute, regarded the media as concentrating excessively on politics, while neglecting those aspects that concern Mozambique's cultural heritage. He pointed out that, for a country like Mozambique, with a rich and diverse cultural heritage, it was a serious omission on the part of the media that it had so far failed to channel its resources into activities that would help develop local content. Professor Do Rosário linked this to the need for the media to develop into specialisation, which so far is patently lacking.

16.2.3 Supporting growth of independent media

This was an area that most interviewees felt needed more support. It was not that the public or state media did not need any support, but it was generally felt that the private media sector was far worse off than the state or public media sector, which already received a relatively more significant level of support from the state. All those interviewed defended press freedom, which entails the ability of journalists operating in an environment that is free from any kind of editorial interference.

The ability of journalists to maintain independence in their coverage of issues was supported by all interviewees. The point was made that, in order for the media to gain public confidence, it not only needed to be independent in its editorial coverage, but it also needed to be seen as such by the public. However, depending on which side of the state-private divide the interviewee stood, growth of the private media attracted a different response. Those in the private sector openly supported this prospect, while those in the public (or state) sector maintained that in the current political environment in Mozambique the distinction between state and private (or independent) media is blurred, given that even in the state sector the media exercises a considerable degree of independence. But overall, all interviewees agreed that there should be a permanent attempt to strike a balance between the private and state media, so as to ensure that the two sectors complement one another.

16.2.4 Raising standards of journalism

This also came out as a key issue. Indeed, not a single interviewee failed to mention the training of journalists as one of the priority areas for improving the standard of journalism in the country. Also, the fact that two universities considered it necessary to establish communications and journalism schools demonstrated the importance placed on the need to elevate the standards of the profession.

Indeed, none of the interviewees failed to link a powerful, trustworthy and independently minded media to the need for professionals not only to acquire but also to consolidate their knowledge base through continued training activities, including at the workplace. The Principal of the School of Journalism, Américo Xavier, said that one of the priorities at his institution was to improve the standards of teaching so that graduates of the school could be well equipped to meet new challenges, especially in the field of new information and communications technologies. He further emphasised that, in order for journalists to remain up to date with new developments and the the shifting trends in the profession, the training of journalists demands a systematic approach.

Speaking about the importance of training journalists as a major tool for raising the standards of journalism in Mozambique, another educationalist and media analyst, Eduardo Siteo of the Eduardo Mondlane University, remarked:

“ Without doubt, this [training] will raise the quality of journalism; training is fundamental. Someone who has daily practical experience, as well as scholarly and scientific experience, has much more to offer society than someone who does not have the combination of these two factors. ”

(Eduardo Siteo, Senior Lecturer; Analyst: Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

16.2.5 Any other areas

As indicated in 16.2.1 above, there was very little mention of the need to focus support on media frameworks. Interviewees generally regarded all media-related areas as important, and in a way closely interrelated. When interviewees were asked to make a choice, the view expressed was that all areas were equally important, and that no single area can develop without the other. However, in all the interviews it was stressed that the legal framework is key to the development of the media. In the case of Mozambique, this framework was already in place in the form of the Constitution and the Press Law.

16.3 Views on media sector focus

If there was any unanimity on this point, it was that none of the interviewees mentioned the state or publicly owned media as a priority. This is because the public media already have some level of support from the state, which is not the case with the private or community media. The opinion of the interviewees about private and community media was divided, which is understandable. For example, there is a widely held view that the private media sector is more independent and, therefore, with its unfettered dissemination of news and views, is most likely to keep the government on its toes, making it more accountable and demanding explanations on its policy actions. Those who believe in this notion (notably those in the non-state sector), obviously choose the private media sector as the area that should receive more focus.

However, there are what might be termed the more “common good” interviewees who, while not believing in the state media sector’s ability to be more inquisitive, see the private media as more profit-driven, potentially more inclined to be compliant with the business establishment, and not necessarily driven by the aspirations of the majority of the people. These interviewees said a more community-focused media should be given priority. The inference here is that community media, deeply rooted in the less advantaged members of society, are less prone to be dictated to by outside influences.

16.4 Support most needed/useful

Business has largely been seen as disinclined to be involved in media development activities in Mozambique. None of the interviewees contemplated the possibility of a strong business-sector driven media. Some saw this as a positive thing, believing this meant the editorial independence of the media was more likely to be preserved. However, the downside of that is that the media will have to continue to struggle in an environment where it is deprived of a strong financial base. The only area where the business sector was seen as more likely to make a contribution was in the provision of advertising, a situation that was often cited as hugely dependent on the growth of the country's economy.

16.5 Appropriate organisational framework

All interviewees believe there is a strong interdependence between what happens at the national level and developments regionally and continentally. It was pointed out that there are regional organisations involved in activities related to media development. These include the Southern Africa Journalism Trust (NSJ), the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA) and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA). In the opinion of some of those interviewed, although these organisations are regional, they take root at the national level through their respective national chapters. It is worth noting the view expressed by Professor Lourenço Do Rosário who, while recognising the importance of the regional dimension, believed that a meaningful participation at regional level would have to be deeply rooted in national initiatives first:

“ We need to consolidate the nation first, before we think of building a region. So I think, at this moment, national initiatives would be more effective. ”

(**Lourenço Do Rosário**, Rector; Educator: Higher University and Polytechnic Institute (ISPU), Mozambique)

The widely held view was that it was necessary to strengthen these organisations and enable them to function more efficiently. It would also be necessary to help develop existing initiatives at a national level, including those that are chapters of regional organisations.

It was noted that the creation of new bodies at national, regional or continental level, where necessary, would have to follow a more pragmatic approach. However, not all interviewees agreed with this, with some expressing the view that regional or continental initiatives have meaning only if they are deeply rooted in the national sphere, so there is a need to develop and consolidate national initiatives first, before moving on.

16.6 Pan-regional versus country-specific initiatives

This issue is somehow related to the comments in part 16.5 above. Mostly, interviewees were supportive of regional and continental initiatives. However, the general view was that such initiatives stood a better chance of success when they were rooted in the national context, where national, regional and continental initiatives complement one another.

For example, when asked about this issue, the Deputy Minister of Education and Culture (who is also the Cabinet spokesperson) commented:

“... What we have to do is develop national capacity, so that at least at national level we are able to collect information on what is happening in the 128 districts of this country, information on things that are relevant for Mozambicans. If possible [we must] also launch it onto the market... we can't be in the position of consuming what comes from outside while we are almost completely ignorant of what is going on inside the country. We have to raise our level of penetration nationally. This involves the presence of our collaborators, those who can send us news. This can help us give some information to the world about our reality. Internationally, the sources of information are more or less known, and the great problem is to bring information from within for our own consumption.”

(**Luís Covane**, Deputy Minister; Government: Department of Education and Culture, Mozambique)

It is clear from this response that, while Luís Covane felt national initiatives are important, they cannot exist in isolation and there should be interplay between national, regional and pan-African initiatives.

Similarly, Eduardo Siteo, recognising the existing regional framework on media development (as represented by such organisations as NSJ, MISA and SABA), said that while they may be regional in character they also have national scope because they have chapters in all the countries. He said,

“ These two dimensions already exist, and this is the correct way to advance. ”

(**Eduardo Siteo**, Senior Lecturer; Analyst: Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique)

16.7 Initiatives relating to developmental content

This is an issue that all interviewees in general thought were related to specialisation. When dealing with this issue, the overwhelming response was that it was necessary for the media to deal with development-related issues, but it was also stressed that this can only be achieved through the implementation of training programmes aimed at elevating the capacity of media professionals to address such issues. The best way to achieve this is by developing training programmes that would allow journalists fully to understand such issues and thus place them in a position that enables them to report on these issues from a well-informed perspective.

Professor Do Rosário was more emphatic about this point:

“ That [initiatives relating to developmental content] goes towards what I mentioned before; the need for training, the need for media professionals to become more specialised and knowledgeable about specific issues. Our journalists are very 'generalistic'. A journalist can write about education, but soon after that there he goes to parliament to try and analyse a debate about the budget. With the best of intentions, however, that journalist cannot be well versed in all issues. So, we need journalists who follow specific issues, studying them and being able to inform the public from a deep knowledge point of view. ”

(**Lourenço Do Rosário**, Rector; Educator: Higher University and Polytechnic Institute [ISPU], Mozambique)

When asked further whether he meant that journalists needed to be more specialised, Professor Do Rosário replied:

“ I think it is important because it makes the journalist more solid in dealing with issues. A more solid journalist is more secure about him/herself and likely to be more effective. ”

(**Lourenço Do Rosário**, Rector; Educator: Higher University and Polytechnic Institute [ISPU], Mozambique)

16.8 Initiatives to develop independent media

Most of the interviewees understood the need for the private media to remain viable and sustainable through the development of business-oriented initiatives. Advertising came out strongly as the most common way for the private media to generate revenue to sustain it. However, it was also noted that the capacity of the media to generate greater advertising revenue was inextricably linked to a constant improvement in the quality of their products. This was because, in the view of the interviewees, business will only pay for advertising in products that have a large circulation, are widely read and are considered credible by their readers.

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

All interviewees acknowledged without reservation that media development plays a part in the democratisation process. It was pointed out that the media plays a critical role and that, without the media, democracy as it relates to people's ability freely to debate issues and make free choices from an informed point of view, would be almost impossible. For example, it was highlighted that it is the media that informs the electorate about elections and the political platforms of each party or individual candidate.

One view was that people learn through the media about what is happening in other countries, enabling them to draw comparisons with their own situation. Furthermore, media plurality contributes to the entrenchment of democratic values in that, given a sufficient range of information, people can be in a good position to make an informed choice.

From another perspective, media development initiatives were seen as playing a significant role in the consolidation of the democratic process in Mozambique, because traditionally they have an important civic function in shaping public opinion, which in turn is a structuring element of the country's political agenda. It was thus felt that the exclusion of the media in this democratic process would undermine the role of public opinion in forming the political agenda.

As Américo Xavier put it, the media not only informs people about what goes on in their midst, but it also influences the way people think. He concludes that if the media has the capacity to influence and shape the way people think, then it also has an educational role, which contributes to society's stability:

“ I think the media has a role in bringing to everybody's attention what is going on in society. The media has a role to play in letting people know the various possibilities; the journalist presents the various hypotheses and the person chooses. ”

(**Américo Xavier**, Director; Educator: School of Journalism, Mozambique)

Dr Felizberto Tinga believes that, unlike under a dictatorship, people and social groups in a democratic system have their own way of thinking and seeing things, their own faith and beliefs, which are not suppressed:

“ The media has to reflect this because, if all these ideas that exist in society do not come to the surface, then this democracy is amputated... I think the media has a very important role because it allows all ideas, all viewpoints and all opinions to be shared among all, and in the midst of this sharing we manage to see the synthesis to go forward. And then, when there are, let us say, divergent and differing opinions, that is very good, and it is good that the public should know how society thinks. This is where one notes the importance of the media for democracy. I can risk saying that, without the media, there is no democracy, and vice versa. ”

(**Felizberto Tinga**, Director; Government: Department of Information, Mozambique)

Dr Covane expressed similar sentiments, saying,

“ It has been more than proven that without the media, it would be very difficult to conduct the democratic process in Mozambique. ”

(**Luís Covane**, Deputy Minister; Government: Department of Education and Culture, Mozambique).

He said this was because much of what formed the body of knowledge for the people in terms of democracy was due to what they see or hear in the media. He believes competition in the media plays an important role by giving people a wide choice of options that help them make their own political decisions.

Refinaldo Chilengue, Chairman of the Association of Media Companies and a practitioner in his own right, stressed the importance of media development in the context of the country's democratisation process, saying:

“ Media freedom is a function of the democratic process. No media development initiative can succeed where democracy is failing. Media development is only meaningful if it aims at strengthening the democratic process by giving the people the voice they need to question those who govern them when the need arises, or to offer suggestions on how to improve the governance system. ”

(**Refinaldo Chilengue**, Chairman; NGO: Association of Media Companies [AEJ], Mozambique)



17. Summary and Conclusions

It has been a rare privilege to discuss these important issues with some of the most brilliant people in Mozambique's thinking landscape. More so because their views on issues related to the development of the media, and by implication the development of the democratic process in this country, were extremely insightful.

While acknowledging that the situation is not entirely ideal, most of the interviewees believed a lot has been achieved in terms of the development of the media in Mozambique over the past five years. This was mainly due to relatively stable political conditions, underpinned by a liberal constitution that enshrines media freedom and the freedom of expression as fundamental rights. In as far as press freedom is concerned, the Constitution is complemented by a Press Law that the interviewees in general considered to be fair, balanced and progressive, allowing for a diversity of views that play an important role in shaping public opinion. An informed public opinion is key for a political system that is deeply rooted in the people, and is in turn the basic condition for long-term stability, which in itself leads to sustainable social well-being and economic prosperity. It was interesting to note from the interviews that there is a general awareness of the important role of the mass media in Mozambique's development process, and in the consolidation of the country's nascent democracy. Despite this awareness, however, and although there is understanding of the need to develop the media, the issue has not been fully exploited either by government or by the donors.

This is not to say that there has been no progress. On the contrary, progress has occurred, and the interviews reflect this position. What is worth noting, however, is that despite any progress, the interviewees highlighted some serious areas of concern, particularly regarding the need for the media to improve on the quality of the information it provides to the public. It is against this background, and in pursuit of this goal, that within the period under consideration two universities found it necessary to introduce courses on media-related studies.

The most common problem cited by the interviewees as hindering a more meaningful, large-scale media development initiative was the scarcity of financial resources. Media organisations, especially those in the private sector, were said to be experiencing great financial difficulties, which in turn limited their ability to fulfil their mandate as providers of quality information to the public. To this end, a specific proposal that came out of the interviews was the establishment of a Special Media Development Fund, from which media organisations could borrow at concessional interest rates over a favourable repayment period.

From my own knowledge, a similar fund exists regionally in the form of the Southern Africa Media Development Fund (SAMDEF). However, not many of the interviewees seemed to know much about this facility, which in itself is a reflection of the modest impact that it has had in the region.

The key findings that can be drawn from the interviews are that:

- media freedom is relatively strong and underpinned by a positive political and legal framework;
- the Press Law is supportive of pluralism in the media;
- editorial independence for state-owned media is guaranteed by law;
- there has been significant growth of the media industry over the past five years, as evidenced by the emergence of new media initiatives;
- there has been a phenomenal development of the concept of community media, spearheaded by the surge in the number of community radio stations;
- more media-related training opportunities have emerged. These count as some of the most notable strategic changes that have occurred during the period;
- specific media development projects are hard to trace (with the exception of one by the Union of Journalists on human rights and civic education);
- there has been no formal planning or evaluation of media development projects;
- donors should improve their approach by working more closely with the beneficiaries of media development projects;
- strategic priorities for future donor-backed media development initiatives must focus on: 1) training; 2) investment in new information and communications technologies; and, 3) financial assistance for private media (through the establishment of a soft lending fund);
- lack of ownership is a key factor in the lack of success in media development initiatives;
- donors should fund media development projects based on priorities defined by the recipient;
- while sustainability of media development projects is desired, it should not be viewed in economic terms alone, but also in terms of the project's relevance to society, its knowledge transfer ability and its impact on the development of a democratic process that is deeply rooted in the participation of people at all levels;

- despite statements by government officials to the contrary, the government does not seem to have a deliberate policy on the development of the media in Mozambique. What it has is a statement of good intentions, but one that is not strongly backed by allocation of significant resources;
- there is seldom a formal evaluation of projects, and where institutions carry out some media-related activities these are only part of their overall mandate and budgets for such activities are drawn routinely from their overall budgeting processes, with no specific allocation for full-scale media development activities;
- there is a big cultural gap in the way media development projects are designed and implemented. This must change in order to strengthen Mozambique's capacity to interact in a more useful way with its partners;
- the current market-oriented economic system coupled with the growth in the economy form the basis for media development based on advertising. However, a note of caution was heard: there is a lot of concentration of the economy on a small number of individuals, a situation that is not healthy in the long term as business can potentially compromise the media's ability to exercise editorial independence;
- political and economic environment is influential in the degree of success of media development. The level of autonomy that is given for independent/private players to have a role in media development greatly depends on the extent to which the political establishment is open to private initiatives; and,
- existing regional media initiatives can form the institutional framework for the development of future media initiatives. Most of these organisations have a national dimension in that they have national chapters in the individual countries. However, for regional initiatives to be secure, they must depend on strong national frameworks.



18. Appendices

Appendix 1: Interviewees

Marcelino Alves, Senior Lecturer, Analyst, Higher University and Polytechnic Institute (ISPU), Mozambique

Simão Anguilaze, CEO, Media Practitioner Public Sector, Mozambique Television (state), Mozambique

Refinaldo Chilengue, Chairman, NGO, Association of Media Companies (AEJ), Mozambique

Eduardo Constantino, Secretary General, Media Support, Mozambique Union of Journalists, Mozambique

Luís Covane, Deputy Minister, Government, Department of Education and Culture, Mozambique

Lourenço Do Rosário, Rector, Academic, Higher University and Polytechnic Institute (ISPU), Mozambique

Lourenço Jossias, Editor, Media Practitioner Private Sector, *Zambeze* weekly newspaper, Mozambique

Fernando Lima, Chairman, Media Practitioner Private Sector, Board of Directors, Mediacoop, Mozambique

Salomão Moyana, Chairman, NGO, MISA-Mozambique, Mozambique

Eduardo Namburete, Senior Lecturer, Educator, School of Communication and Art, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique

Eduardo Siteo, Senior Lecturer, Analyst, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique

Rogério Siteo, Editor, Media Practitioner Public Sector, *Noticias* daily newspaper, Mozambique

Felizberto Tinga, Director, Government, Department of Information, Mozambique

Palmira Velasco, Chair, NGO, Association of Women in Media, Mozambique

Américo Xavier, Director, Educator, School of Journalism, Mozambique

Appendix 2: Media Development Projects/Activities described in Section 14

Interviewee name and organisation	Specific media development project: title	Key purpose/ aim of project/ initiative/ or activity	Project time span (dates or length in months/years of project) and status (ongoing etc)	Outcome sought	Target audience	Evaluation method used (if any)	Result of evaluation	Is/was this project/activity considered by your organisation to be a success? On what basis?
UNESCO	UNESCO Media Project	Provision of assistance to the media in general, but with a special focus on the development of community media, particularly radio	Five years	Strengthening the media. Establishment of community radio stations and developing community media centres	Mainly rural populations	Existing capacity for community media management	Not specified	Yes
European Union/ Mozambican Union of Journalists	Human Rights and Civic Education		Three years	Contributing to the development of strong and active civil society and strengthening civil society on human rights issues	Journalists, teachers, NGOs, community leaders and students	Not specified	Still ongoing	Still ongoing



Mozambique

Country Report

Case Study



19. Case Study

Developing community radio

Access to information is key for the political, economic and cultural development of any given society. Individuals who have access to information are most likely to intervene more meaningfully in the management of the affairs of their respective societies than those who possess no information. Hence, the expression “information is power” (Asia Sales, 2006).

In most developing countries, as in Mozambique, most of those with access to information are educated people and professionals who live in urban areas. Historically, poor people living in rural communities have been largely excluded from the information society, which means they have been deprived of the power to know what goes on in their own country and are thus unable to make a meaningful contribution to issues relating to governance. It was with the idea of changing this state of affairs in Mozambique that the concept of community media, centring mainly on community radio, has developed over the past few years.

As a result, community radio has seen a rapid expansion in Mozambique, primarily (but not solely) due to two initiatives undertaken by the UNESCO Media Project and the government-owned Institute of Social Communication (ICS).

Mozambique is emerging from a decade and a half of conflict and economic stagnation, and community radio is increasingly being seen as a critical instrument for development, and the means through which disadvantaged, rural-based communities can get involved in the consolidation of the democratic process. Community radio plays an important role in informing people about national, local and international issues, and during electoral processes provides a key platform for debate on issues that are of major concern to particular communities, as well as informing people about the various aspects related to the process itself, such as the location of polling stations and legal issues.

UNESCO is linked to the development of community media through its project, *Strengthening Democracy and Governance through the Development of the Media in Mozambique*. Its mandate consists of helping to set up rural community radio stations to provide communities with information, training, education and entertainment.

Essentially, there are four different types of community-oriented radio stations in Mozambique: 1) those initiated by the government Institute of Social Communication; 2) those that belong to church organisations (mainly Catholic); 3) those established independently by community-based associations; and, 4) those established by local municipal authorities.

Defining the content and the operational framework

The importance of community radio in Mozambique goes far beyond the notion of being just another channel for debate on a variety of issues. With literacy levels estimated at 62% for men and 31% for women (World Bank, 2006), community radio, with its ability to use the country's various local languages, is providing a public service to a large section of the population who cannot communicate in the official Portuguese language that is often used by the mainstream media, including radio and television.

Some of the programmes aired on these radio stations are gathered locally, but others are part of opt-ins with, or pre-recorded from, the state broadcaster, Radio Mozambique.

A survey conducted by the UNESCO Media Project found that the preferred programmes from the radio stations are those that offer news, educational information, recreation, drama, comedy, women's and children's issues, agricultural and livestock-related information, sport and debates.

Part of the strategy of these stations is to include in broadcasts a significant presence of the communities themselves – through, for example, letters, live debates, taped interviews and phone-in programmes, which allow listeners to have their names or voices heard on radio.

Although the state broadcaster (Radio Mozambique) does air programmes in local languages through its provincial stations, the fact remains that the information it provides needs to be complemented by other, more independent sources of information. This is an essential prerequisite if people are to be exposed to other views, which will bring meaning to their participation in the country's governing process.

Rural community-based radio stations were founded on a weak financial basis, so from the outset questions were raised about their sustainability, management capacity and ability to maintain their equipment. In response to these legitimate concerns, the UNESCO Media Project took measures to limit the level of vulnerability, devising an operational strategy based on the following factors:

- strong community ownership – it was necessary to give communities a sense that their stations belong to them, and that they have a responsibility for managing them and a role to play in producing programmes for dissemination. To achieve this, it was essential to mobilise the community and train staff before the arrival of the equipment and commissioning of the station;
- effective training and capacity-building – initiatives were undertaken to ensure that local people involved in different professional activities were given the necessary tools to provide them with the knowledge to manage the station effectively in terms of community relations, programming, administration and technical maintenance;
- technical sustainability system – this was to ensure that appropriate technology options were made, taking into account the available technical capacity for equipment maintenance; and,
- financial viability – this aimed to explore all available options in terms of securing local sources of revenue that would allow stations to remain viable long after the initial stage of the project had passed and UNESCO had pulled out.

The challenges of sustainability

According to Asia Sales, Chairperson of the Forum of Community Radios (FORCOM), there are about 50 community radio stations in Mozambique. However, she admits that despite all the initiatives undertaken to ensure their viability, 80% of these community-run stations are faced with serious financial problems that threaten their future existence now that the UNESCO Media Project is about to end.

Another problem facing these stations is outdated equipment, which Sales said could not be replaced in view of the financial problems already faced.

Most of the community radio stations do not have adequate human resources, as the majority rely on volunteers who have no other occupation. This creates a problem of sustainability and consistency in programming, due to lack of continuity, institutional memory and experience; volunteers will always seize the first available opportunity to earn money, taking with them the knowledge learned during their training.

The idea that community radio stations could be sustained through advertising revenue is proving unworkable, so new models of financing and sustaining these initiatives need to be explored. The point that needs to be made is that these initiatives are in areas where there is little economic activity, and they are designed to serve people who are so poor that they cannot even meet their basic survival needs.

Community radio stations that are financed by the government, through the Institute of Social Communication, can survive on government funding. However, this poses another problem because it defeats the notion of pluralism and diversity that was at the centre of the initiative. In such circumstances, therefore, government-funded community radio stations essentially become local replicas of the state broadcaster, toeing the government line. This is not to say that they are instruments of propaganda, but it is hard to see how strong, independent community voices can gain pre-eminence in such situations. The fact that community-based radio initiatives are often seen as critical partners in the dissemination of the government development agenda is sometimes viewed by local government officials as an argument for government-funded community radio stations to be uncritically compliant with the government. Therefore, there have been instances where the local government officials have tried to interfere with the editorial policies of community radio stations.

According to Asia Sales, with 80% of the country's electorate living in rural areas, this pressure becomes even more evident during elections, when political parties turn to community radio stations to disseminate their campaign messages.

Indeed, the challenges facing community radio stations are enormous. In a paper entitled *Creating and Sustaining ICT Projects in Mozambique*, Birgitte Jallo, then head of the UNESCO Media Project in Mozambique, observed that:

“... Of the seven community radio stations in Mozambique in 1999 and 2000, five were off the air for technical, financial or organisational reasons for periods ranging from five months up to the entire two years. Other media projects have proven equally difficult to sustain. For example, half of donor-supported independent print media outside the capital stopped publishing as soon as the donor funds ran out, while the other half struggled on with varying degrees of irregularity.”

(Jallo, 2002)

Future trends

Issues of sustainability apart, a debate has been going on with a view to achieving an integrated framework between community-based radio and Internet delivery service. This is already happening to some extent through the so-called “telecentros”, which are effectively community multimedia centres. However, the number of such centres remains small.

The debate about the future of multimedia centres is also partly in response to the dysfunctional mail system; multimedia centres could allow people in rural areas to communicate with the rest of the country, and the world, without the need to rely on the current mail service. Apart from the radio-related activities, basic equipment would consist of a number of computers linked to a main computer equipped with a modem and ready to receive the Internet. For a modest fee (that could contribute to the revenue for the centre), individuals could do research on the Internet and send and receive messages.

This development could see a rapid expansion in ICTs in Mozambique and help to narrow the current rural-urban divide in the country. Indeed, currently the government is working on the development of a national ICT policy, and community multimedia centres could use their experience to contribute to the formulation of such policy. In broad terms, the objectives of the proposed ICT policy are to extend the use of these technologies, improve the quality (and increase the number) of professionals in the area, modernise the support infrastructure and provide access to these technologies for the greater part of the population by means of telecentres, and to create an electronic government network that will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of state institutions.

Summary and conclusion

It is clear from the above that community radio can be an important tool for development, and a key factor in driving social change. In a society struggling to consolidate its infant democracy, community can play an important role in providing poor rural communities with a valuable instrument for active participation in the process of influencing policy, a platform for local debate and the sharing of information among people who for so long have been kept away from the centres of the decision-making process. In a country where, because of commercial considerations, the mainstream media is mainly based in urban areas, community radio takes a complementary position in the dissemination of important information that would otherwise not reach remote parts of the country.

Several initiatives for the development of community radio have been launched in Mozambique, but as this case study illustrates, their success will depend on the ability to put in place appropriate solutions and structures that take advantage of the favourable political and legal environment. This will entail the development of strategies that aim to strengthen the democratic process in Mozambique through a sustainable, independent and pluralistic media landscape in the country, with particular focus on community radio, which has the potential for wide coverage.

Such strategies must also be based on a more comprehensive and realistic approach that places the role of community radio within the context of its mission as a provider of an essential social service rather than entities that should be commercially viable. That will entail a deliberate government policy to invest adequately in the area, without such an investment being seen as an instrument for compromising editorial independence.

As indicated in the interview with the Director of Information, Dr Felizberto Tinga, the government of Mozambique has adopted a policy that will see the allocation of a special district development fund of \$US260,000 per annum for each of all the country's 120 districts. Part of this fund, he thought, could provide an important basis for launching rural-based media initiatives. In addition, FORCOM is currently working on a proposal for the government under which the government will fund 50% of the operational budget of community radio stations.

Community radio stations can also enter into synergies with public or private institutions that need to disseminate information that is key for the success of their own activities. For example, one such synergy was recently established with the Bank of Mozambique to disseminate information about the recent currency conversion, an operation that consisted of the removal of three digits from the national currency. According to Asia Sales, a new information campaign is to be launched by the health authorities on bird flu prevention, with the involvement of community radio stations.

Since many rural communities in Mozambique lack the necessary experience in crucial areas for the successful management of these community radio stations, appropriate training programmes would have to be included as part of a comprehensive project for the development of these stations, providing knowledge in critical functions such as management, organisational development, community relations, administration and financial management, project design, programming, production, technical operation and maintenance. To achieve these objectives, collaboration programmes can be established with the existing radio stations (both in the public and private sector), which could assist in developing some of the skills mentioned here.

In addition, because of their lack of appropriate knowledge, community radio stations remain highly vulnerable to lawsuits brought against them by individuals who feel that they have been defamed. To help avoid this, a programme of legal assistance could be developed with institutions such as MISA, whereby editorial personnel could be given training on the legal aspects relating to media operations. Armed with such knowledge, community radio stations would be in a better position to resist political pressures and any other actions that might compromise their editorial independence.

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