African Media Development Initiative

Nigeria

Research findings and conclusions

Dr Jenkeri Zakari Okwori and Akeem M. Adeyanju

Dr Jenkeri Zakari Okwori

Associate Professor

Dr Jenkeri Zakari Okwori is an Associate Professor of Development Communication at the Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, Nigeria.

From November 2004 – April 2005, Dr Okwori was a Fulbright African Senior Research Fellow at New York University. He has also worked on projects with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the World Bank Poverty Alleviation Development Committee, UNICEF, DfID, the British Council, and the Nigerian NGO Policy Development Committee.

Akeem M. Adeyanju

Lecturer

Akeem M. Adeyanju is a Lecturer with the Department of Mass Communication, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, Nigeria. He has been teaching Mass Communication for over eight years and has been involved in a number of communication-related research projects in Nigeria.

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Nigeria

About this report

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

In order to inform these efforts, the BBC World Service Trust – in collaboration with Rhodes University (South Africa) and Ahmadu Bello University (Nigeria) – has undertaken an extensive, pan-African research effort in 17 African countries, of which Nigeria is one. Data presented in this report is based on both secondary research gathered by local researchers in Nigeria 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 Nigeria 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 Nigeria; and,

☐ Case Study: a case study from Nigeria 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.

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BBC WORLD SERVICE TRUST

Acronyms

ABU Ahmadu Bello University

AIT African Independent Television

AMSI Africa Media Support Initiative

ACD Advanced Congress of Democrats

ARDA Africa Radio Drama Association

BBC British Broadcasting Corporation

CAC Corporate Affairs Commission

CDC Centre for Development Communication

CFS Centre for Free Speech

CIA Central Intelligence Agency

CIDA Canadian International Development Agency

CNN Cable News Network

DAME Diamond Awards for Media Excellence

DBI Digital Bridge Institute

DEVCOM Development Communication Network

DfID Department for International Development (UK)

FRCN Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria

FWLA Fixed Wireless Licence Auction

IDS Institute of Development Studies

IPC International Press Centre

MCD Multimedia Centre for Democracy

MRA Media Rights Agenda

NAWOJ National Association of Women Journalists

NBC National Broadcasting Commission

NCC Nigerian Communications Commission

NGE Nigerian Guild of Editors

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NPAT Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance

NPC National Press Council

NTA Nigerian Television Authority

NUJ Nigerian Union of Journalists

MRA Media Rights Agenda

OSJI Open Society Justice Initiative

OSIWA Open Society Initiative for West Africa

PSBs Public Service Broadcasters

SABC South Africa Broadcasting Corporation

UN United Nations

UNIC United Nations Information Centre

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNILAG University of Lagos, Nigeria

VOA Voice of America

WACC World Association of Christian Communication

**African Media
Development
Initiative**

Contents

Country Report Context

Country Report Way Forward

Country Report Case Study

Nigeria
Country Report
Context

1. Introduction

The researchers encountered several difficulties in their data collection efforts, including excessive bureaucracy, a lack of coherent data, the vastness of the country, power cuts and even the effects of extreme heat, which hampered the operation of computer equipment at certain times. The researchers found themselves shuttling between Abuja and Lagos in an effort to negotiate access to data held by state agencies. The various types of data and information needed for the research are distributed among several government ministries, agencies and parastatals, most of which are not networked with each other. The relevant website links for these institutions are often not operational. Many letters had to be written, followed up by in-person visits and negotiations[1]. Eventually census data from 1991 was secured, as well as a list of licensed and operating TV and radio stations. However, there were inconsistencies in the documents provided on the TV and radio stations, and there was no detailed information available on unlicensed broadcasters. As well, no reliable information on media audiences was available from state agencies. Most of the data and information presented in this report is therefore based on information compiled by non-state private organisations[2]. Some of the data is only recent, and does not take into account trends over the five-year timeframe specified in the research brief.

The data collection methodology consisted of initial meetings and consultations with media practitioners and knowledgeable people in the communications sector, in order to identify sources for the desktop web-based research. Following the web research, requests for information were made to various organisations in writing and in person. The data and information presented in this report are based on published and unpublished materials, web-based materials and information provided verbally in interviews. Due to the many constraints just outlined, the researchers wish to caution that not all of the information provided in this report was fully verifiable within the timeframe of the research project.

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[1] The work of the Nigerian Databank and National Documentation and Information Centre is hampered by a lack of information supply from the state agencies that are supposed to provide statistical information. The researchers thus focused their efforts on contacting some of the state agencies directly, including the Federal Office of Statistics, the National Planning Commission, the National Population Commission and the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC). The National Population Commission was able to provide 1991 census data. The CAC, which is responsible for registering all NGOs in the country, was unable, by the deadline for the writing of this report, to provide any data. The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the state-run broadcast regulator, had very little data to provide beyond listings of stations. The federal state-run broadcasters, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), could not provide any verifiable audience numbers. More useful was the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), which was able to provide communications sector data for 2000 and a detailed 2004 Annual Report.

[2] These private organisations include mediaReach OMD Nigeria and the Diamond Awards for Media Excellence (DAME) Trust Fund.

2. Country Overview

The West African nation of Nigeria is the most populous on the continent, with an estimated population of 134 million, based on an estimated growth rate of 2.8% from the 1991 census figure of 81 million (National Population Commission, 2002). The country has roughly 370 different ethnic groups and the same number of languages. The four most common mother-tongue languages are Hausa (21% of mother-tongue language share), Yoruba (21%), Igbo (18%) and Ijaw (10%) (National Population Commission, 2002). However, the most widely-spoken language is English (see Figure 1), followed by Pidgin (a language mixing English and vernaculars), Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and Ijaw[3]. English is the official national language.

Figure 1: Widely Spoken Languages

Languages

English	76
Pidgin	74
Hausa	37
Yoruba	30
Igbo	21

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90
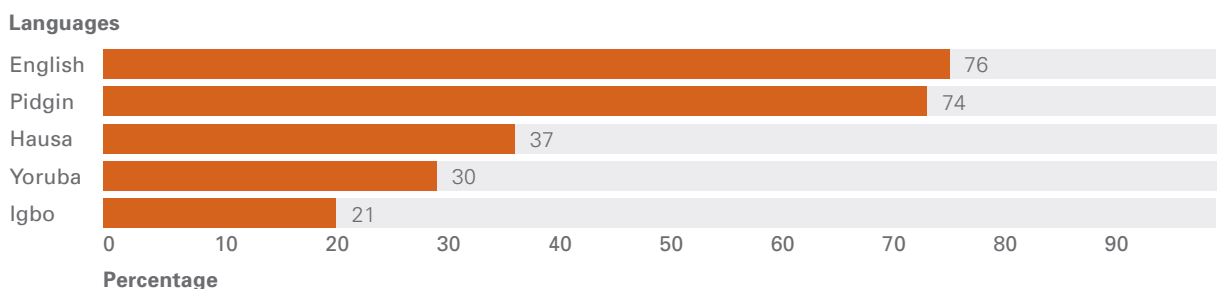
Percentage

Source: National Population Commission, 2002

The largest ethnic groups are the Hausa and the Yoruba (see Figure 2).

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[3] Note that percentage totals in Figure 1 add up to more than 100% because many people speak more than one language.

Figure 2: Main Ethnic Groups
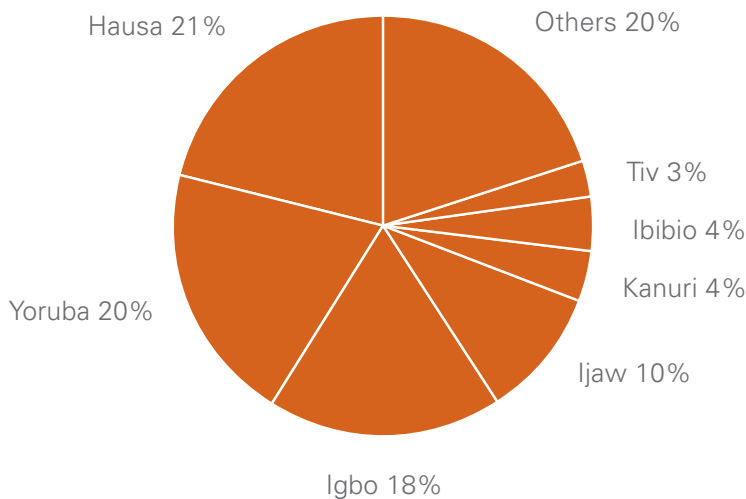
Source: National Population Commission, 2002

Nigeria has a very young population. Out of the total population of nearly 134 million people, around 34 million (25%) are aged 15-34 and nearly 68 million (51%) are aged 14 or younger (National Population Commission, 2002).

Over half the adult population (68%) is literate, with more males (74.4%) than females (59.4%) being literate (CIA, 2006; World Bank, 2006) (see Figure 3). As would be expected, a much higher percentage (72%) of the population is literate in urban areas, compared with 48% in rural areas (National Population Commission (NPC), 2004b). The Nigerian population is dominated by two religious groups – Muslims 50% and Christians 40% – with 10% holding indigenous beliefs (CIA, 2006).

Figure 3: Literacy Levels Age 15+
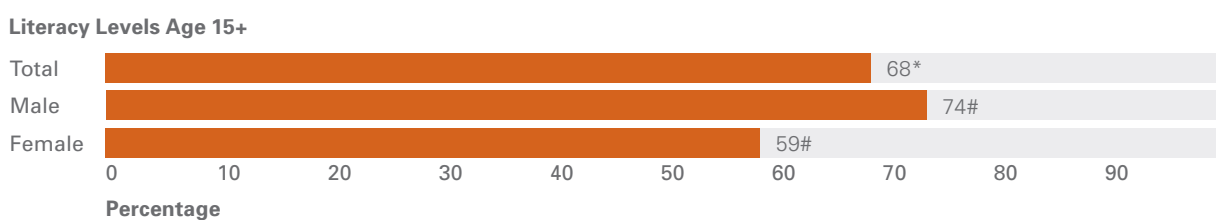
Sources: * CIA, 2006, # World Bank, 2006

The majority of Nigerians reside in rural areas (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Urban vs Rural population

Rural population 53%   Urban population 47%
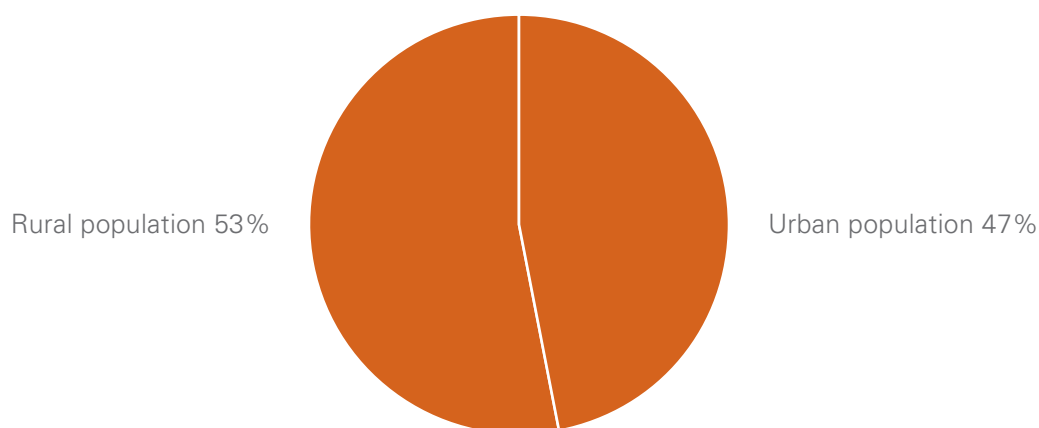
Source: UNDP, 2006

Nigeria has 36 states and one federal capital territory, Abuja. After many years of military dictatorship, since 1999, the country has been operating as a civilian-run presidential democracy, with the most recent presidential, federal and state elections held in 2003.

There are seven regions, with the largest population, 34.4 million people, being in the North West Region, according to 2002 estimates (National Population Commission, 2002). The regional population breakdown in 2002 can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Population by Region in Millions

Regions	Total Population in Millions
North West	34.4
South West	26.2
South	19.9
North Central	18.3
North East	17.9
South East	16.2
FCT	0.6

Source: National Population Commission, 2002

Key findings

- Nigeria's population is ethnically and linguistically diverse, with roughly 370 ethnic groups and 370 languages/dialects.

- The country has the largest population in Africa (134 million), of whom around half (68 million) are aged 14 years or younger and another quarter (34 million) are aged 15-34.

- Nigeria returned to civilian rule guided by a democratic constitution in 1999.

3. Media Health

3.1 Status of the laws regarding rights and access to information

There are no laws dealing with rights and access to information apart from the provisions of the 1999 Constitution, which, in Chapter IV, Section 39, stipulates that: "(1) Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference". However, a later sub-section (sub-section 3) of section 39 suggests possible limitations on the right to receive information, as follows: "(3) Nothing in this section shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society: (a) for the purpose of preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of courts or regulating telephony, wireless broadcasting, television or the exhibition of cinematographic films; or (b) imposing restrictions upon persons holding office under the Government of the Federation or of a State, members of the armed forces of the Federation or members of the Nigerian Police Force or other Government security services or agencies established by law" (Republic of Nigeria, 1999b).

In practice, since 1999, the constitutional right to information has been interpreted narrowly, and there are several laws preventing civil servants from releasing official information. Media and public accountability activists have been pushing for a dedicated piece of legislation compelling freedom of information, and a Freedom of Information Bill was submitted to the National Assembly in 2000 (S. Usman Lema, personal communication, 13 April 2006; Kabiru Yusuf, personal communication, 12 April 2006). The Bill has passed second reading, but has not yet been put into law.

3.2 Status of the laws regarding criminal defamation and insult

Two state-controlled bodies, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and Nigerian Press Council (NPC), have wide-ranging powers to sanction broadcasters and newspaper bodies, primarily through the enforcement of Codes of Conduct. Section 7 of NPC Amendment Decree 60 of 1999 states that: "(1) The Council shall adopt the Code of Conduct of the Nigerian Union of Journalists to guide the Press and Journalists in the performance of their duties. (2) The Council shall cause to be published in the *Press Journal* the Code of Conduct as adopted under subsection (1) of this section which shall be binding on every Journalist in Nigeria" (Republic of Nigeria, 1999a). In terms of the NPC Decree and journalists' Code of Conduct, the National Press Council has the mandate to investigate cases of insult and defamation, and to impose penalties.

The National Broadcasting Commission also has wide-ranging powers of investigation and sanction in relation to cases of perceived defamation, usually exercised in terms of the National Broadcasting Code. The NBC Act of 1992, in Section 2 (1), outlines the NBC's duties in: "(f) receiving, considering and investigating complaints from individuals and corporate bodies, regarding the contents of a broadcasting station and the conduct of a broadcasting station" and "(n) determining and applying sanctions including revocation of licences of defaulting stations which do not operate in accordance with the broadcast code and in the public interest" (Republic of Nigeria, 1992b). The NBC Decree of 1999 confirms the Broadcasting Commission's wide powers, in Section 19A: "Any station which contravenes the provisions of the National Broadcasting Code or any other order of the Commission shall be liable to the sanctions prescribed in the Code" (Republic of Nigeria, 1999c).

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

There are no provisions for the independence of Nigeria's two main media regulatory bodies, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and the Nigerian Press Council (NPC). Both bodies are funded by government and sit under the Federal Ministry of Information, with the NBC reporting directly to the Presidency in many cases, including recommendation of applications for broadcasting licences. The president must physically sign all broadcast licences. There have been frequent examples over the past five years of the National Broadcasting Commission and Nigerian Press Council acting in accordance with the partisan interests of the federal government, with private or state-level (non-federal) media outlets being subjected to sanctions and even being shut down after contradicting or opposing federal government views and activities.

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

The existing broadcasting and newspaper laws do not directly protect the independence of publicly-owned media (i.e., government-owned, as there are no public-service broadcasters (PSBs). The only concrete suggestion of the need for media independence (both private and government-owned) is contained in the Constitution. As mentioned above, Chapter IV, Section 39 of the Constitution stipulates that: "(1) Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference". Meanwhile, Chapter II, Section 22 would appear to uphold the right of media to criticise the state in order to hold it accountable: "The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people" (Republic of Nigeria, 1999b).

However, in practice, the media freedom protections of the Constitution are routinely undermined by the wide-ranging powers of the National Broadcasting Commission and Nigerian Press Council, both of which, as outlined above, are directly controlled by the federal government.

3.5 Current provisions to support community or alternative media

There are no specific provisions to support community or alternative media, other than provisions of the NBC and NPC Decrees. Non-profit, campus-based, UNILAG FM, was granted an experimental licence only.

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

Public-service broadcasting provisions and institutions – as developed in Western Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and post-apartheid South Africa – do not presently exist in the Nigerian context. There are no public-service broadcasters (PSBs) in radio or TV, but rather government-owned radio and TV outlets directly accountable not to the public but to state officials.

There are, however, some references to a notion of the "public interest" in the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Decree of 1992, which, in Section 2 (1), tasks the NBC with, among other things: "(g) Upholding the principles of equity and fairness in broadcasting"; and "(i) Promoting Nigerian indigenous cultures, and moral and community life through broadcasting"; and "(n) Determining and applying sanctions, including revocation of licences of defaulting stations, which do not operate in accordance with the broadcast Code and in the public interest" (Republic of Nigeria, 1992b).

As seen above in Section 2 (1) (n), the need for protection of the public interest is directly linked to the need for the NBC to apply "sanctions, including revocation of licences of defaulting stations", where the NBC determines that the public interest is not being upheld. Thus the notion of the public interest is positioned primarily as a tool of sanction.

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

Non-state private broadcasters, like their state counterparts, are not subject to public-service conditions, and are subject to the National Broadcasting Commission powers to protect the "public interest", as outlined above in Section 3.6 of this report.

3.8 Journalism

In Nigeria, journalists are required to be registered with their professional body, the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ). There are an estimated 30,000 journalists practising in Nigeria currently, up from an estimated 20,000 in the year 2000. Out of this number, 25,000 journalists are registered with the NUJ, meaning that there are several thousand journalists practising without being registered with the NUJ (S. Usman Lema, personal communication, 13 April 2006). It is estimated that about 5,000 of registered journalists are women (E. Onyilo, personal communication, 13 April 2006). However, the relevant NGO, the National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), does not know the precise number of women journalists because not all of those women registered with the NUJ are members of NAWOJ. There has been a growth (see Figure 5) in the number of university departments offering journalism training, from roughly 20 in 2000 to around 30 in 2005 (NBC, 2006b).

Figure 5: Number of Journalism Training Institutes

Institute

University departments	20 (2000) / 30 (2005)
Other organisations	17 (2000) / 17 (2005)
Vocational training schools	4 (2000) / 4 (2005)

Number

■ 2000 ■ 2005
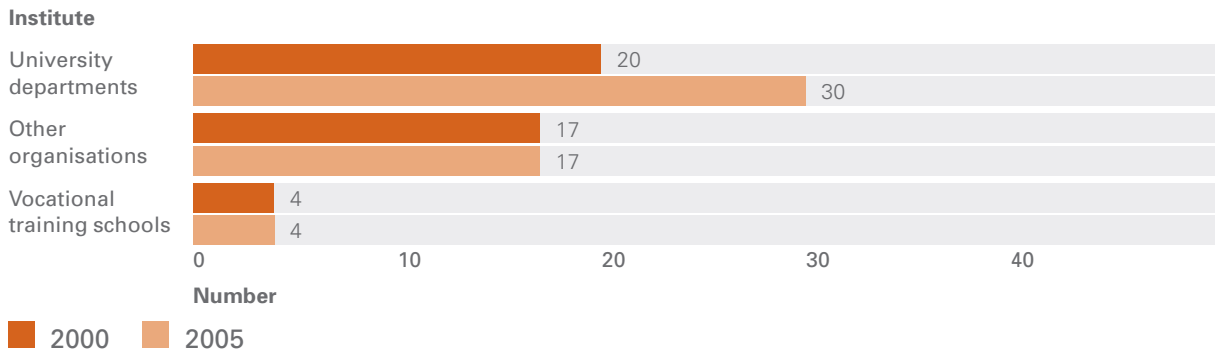
Source: NBC, 2006b

Journalists are not required to be licensed. They are only required to be registered with the NUJ. Membership of a trade union is voluntary, and the NUJ serves as a regulating body of some sort as well as a trade union. Journalists' pay packages are generally on par with pay levels in the public sector, particularly the pay of those journalists working for state media, with some private media said to pay slightly higher wages than their state counterparts. However, in the print media, many journalists often go unpaid for months, and it is said that some are thus forced to use their media identity cards as their 'meal tickets', meaning they seek payment from the people and organisations they report on. Overall, the average pay for journalists is said to be between N25,000-N30,000 per month (N300,000-N360,000 per year). This translates to about US$167-200 per month (US$2,000-US$2,400 per year)[4].

Key findings

☐ The 1999 Constitution recognises access to information, but the 2000 Freedom of Information Bill has yet to be passed into law.

☐ There are no provisions for the independence of the two media regulators, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and Nigerian Press Council (NPC).

☐ The 1999 Constitution calls for media freedom, but the state-controlled regulators, the NBC and NPC, use their powers to sanction media outlets that go against government views.

☐ By one estimate, there are 30,000 journalists in the country, many of whom receive low pay and are thus susceptible to offers of payment in return for writing favourable reports.

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[4] These pay figures based on researchers' enquiries.

4. State of the Media – Literature Review

Scholarly writing on the state of Nigerian media has flourished since the return to civilian rule in 1999.

4.1 Akinfeleye (2003)

Akinfeleye (2003) examines a wide range of issues, including: journalistic standards; journalism education; newspaper freedom;, newspaper responsibility; the Constitution's provisions on the media (including ownership); tensions between notions of the national interest and the public right to know; freedom of information; media philosophy; and, professional ethics. Akinfeleye finds that while the number of journalism training institutions and the status accorded to journalism in society have both increased, the quality of journalism in the country remains low. The percentage of trained journalists is still low, negatively affecting quality, professionalism and ethical standards. The state and private media sectors both lack policies on journalist training. The author also bemoans the fact that only 30% of registered journalists are women.

Akinfeleye stresses the need for a strong, symbiotic relationship between the four media stakeholders – the people, politicians, media owners and media practitioners – as the basis for effective social responsibility of the media. He argues that some journalists abuse the Nigerian constitutional provision that gives the media the duty to monitor government, using the provision to 'witch-hunt' public officials and to enrich themselves through the seeking of payments for journalistic favours. On the other hand, the author argues, the media freedom and information freedom provisions in the Constitution are too weak to allow the media to play their essential role in society. The Freedom of Information Bill, stalled after second reading in the National Assembly, is necessary to make public records and official information more freely available. Akinfeleye argues that media owners and media professionals need to aspire together to journalistic excellence, and that governments at all levels should rid themselves of media ownership stakes, with the exception of the overseas-focused Voice of Nigeria service.

4.2 National Broadcasting Commission (2005a)

The first volume (2005a) of the National Broadcasting Commission's *African Broadcast Journal* looks at Nigeria's position within the contemporary world of broadcasting.

Mohammed Musa's contribution in the report analyses the globalisation of media, arguing that the liberalisation of broadcasting tailored along the American version of advertising- and profit-driven media is not suitable for Africa and Nigeria. Church Akpan's article considers the role broadcast media can play in the elimination of child labour in Nigeria. Karita Ngbale's paper focuses on the role of IT in national planning, looking in particular at IT use in relation to the centralisation of statistical information in the National Documentation and Information Centre. Ngbale describes the lack of availability of necessary human resources and tools to manage information collation, and also the lack of awareness of, and access to, official statistical information.

The fourth paper, by Gerard Amengerrigyor, discusses the status of web-casting as beyond the purview of national regulation, a vexed issue for many governments in Africa that are interested in controlling media content. Enumerating the many advantages of web-casting, the paper argues that national governments should not be given the opportunity to control web-casting in the same way they have controlled traditional media. The final paper, by Mustapha Nasir Mallam, focuses on the need for a more developmental philosophy of news among Nigerian journalists, based on a survey of journalists and content analysis of six selected Nigerian newspapers.

4.3 Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) (2004a)

The 2004 Annual Report of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the telecommunications regulator, provides a useful outline of the Commission's dual mandate to support market-driven growth in the telecommunications industry while at the same time promoting universal access. To these ends, the Commission promotes market liberalisation, sets and monitors standards, enforces operator licence conditions, protects new entrants from dominant operators, encourages deployment of new advanced services and aims to maintain transparent regulatory processes and protects consumer rights and interests. The NCC report also outlines key recent events in the telecommunications sector, including the commissioning of the Digital Bridge Institute (DBI) training centre; the ban on the importation of cellular telephony re-charge cards; and, the approval of 731 applications for licensing of various communications services.

4.4 Akinfeleye & Okoye (Eds.) (2003)

This volume covers a century of Nigerian media history from 1900 to 2000. The chapter by Olubunmi Ajibade looks at the contributions of religious publications to the development of Nigerian journalism, acknowledging the pioneering role of missionaries in the establishment of modern media. The author argues that in a morally compromised society such as Nigeria's, religious instruction via the media is still needed.

The chapter by Akinfeleye provides reflections on Nigerian television's historical, sociological and philosophical evolution, arguing that effective use of television for development is a pre-condition for sustainable democracy and development. Ogu Sunday Enemaku's chapter covers the deregulation of the Nigerian broadcast industry and the ensuing challenges and opportunities, arguing that deregulation became necessary because the previously state-controlled dispensation could no longer satisfy the media and information needs of the people.

Okoye's chapter provides an historical overview and analysis of government-media relations since 1900, arguing that the relationship between the government and the mass media is of utmost importance in any society. He tasks the government with creating an enabling environment for the media by removing debilitating legislation and ceasing the exercise of arbitrary government power. The chapter by Ifedayo Daramola examines the weakness of Nigeria's constitutional protection of media freedom, and the absence of a specific legal instrument for media freedom.

4.5 Soola (Ed.) (2002)

This volume of scholarly papers probes the history of development communication and is of particular interest for its indigenous perspective and focus on the local needs of development. Many scholars have devoted their time to criticising the theoretical postulations of Western thought, such as modernisation theory, and the way development is defined by the development agencies. This volume's development communication angle posits that to be effective in communicating for development, "our media choice must be predicated on a sound knowledge base of what is needed, what each available medium can do, what combination of media is complementary, how much it costs to deliver messages through the media, and what the culture and characteristics are of those we are trying to reach" (p.22).

The book sees radio as particularly relevant to the needs of the rural, marginalised and disadvantaged poor, recommending that the use of radio should be "community-specific and situation-relevant; it must be dialogic and participatory, rather than being hierarchical and top-down" (p.24).

The book also examines the importance of the Internet and recommends that for Nigerian communities to reap the full benefits of the Internet, rural radio stations must be connected to it, so as to gain from the pool of global knowledge. In terms of television, the book concludes that its use for development must be based on programming and content that show respect and concern for the viewer. Meanwhile, the book gives newspapers the job of sensitising policy-makers to developmental needs. The book favours development of community-based newspapers, owned partially or fully by local people and writing in local languages to promote their interests. Finally, the book recommends a synergy between mass and small-scale media as a way of guaranteeing effective communication in the development process.

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Key findings

- Training needs to be increased to address the dearth of quality, and to promote ethical journalism.

- The Freedom of Information Bill needs to become law.

- The American profit-driven model of media is not serving Nigeria's needs.

- A developmental philosophy is needed among journalists.

- State interference in media activity must come to an end in order for the media to play their full democratic and developmental roles.

- Community-based radios with Internet connectivity could play an important role in democratic development.

- Television output must respect the needs of the viewer in order to fulfil its potential.

5. Radio

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

Prior to 1993, all broadcast media in Nigeria were owned solely by government. Starting in 1993, the military government began awarding private radio licences, but the real liberalisation began upon the country's return to civilian rule in 1999, with a growth from 53 stations in 2000 to around 100 in 2004 (NBC, 2004). However, only 17 of the 100-odd stations are outside government ownership, and only one is a non-profit community-oriented station (NBC, 2004).

Radio listening culture is huge in Nigeria, especially in the northern parts of the country. Of all the media, radio remains the most accessible and available to the ordinary, non-literate Nigerian living in a rural area with unreliable electricity access. Research in 2002 found that around 96% of the population had listened to radio in the past 12 months and, of these, 88% had listened in the past week at the time of the survey (InterMedia, 2005).

Only one station, the state-run Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) has national coverage. The other roughly 100 stations broadcast to regions, provinces, states or urban centres. Of these sub-national stations, 17 were privately- or community-run in 2005, up from the figure of eight private stations in 2000. Sixteen were being run by private individuals on a for-profit basis, and one was a non-profit "experimental" community station, Radio UNILAG FM, based at the University of Lagos. UNILAG's experimental licence specifies that it is to be non-profit and used for academic purposes.

The new political and economic environment since 1999 has allowed for the almost doubling in the number of radio stations, from 53 to roughly 100, in the period 2000-5, reflecting an increase in both the state-run and private radio sectors. Even with the abundance of stations, some observers feel the number is still inadequate for the large population of the country. Most of the private radio stations are FM, thriving on light entertainment programmes that can easily be funded or sponsored. They all run virtually the same kinds of programmes and, as a result, there is a great demand for community radio stations, a demand that the government seems reluctant to meet.

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

Since the return to civilian rule in 1999 and particularly since 2000, the general investment space in Nigeria has been tremendously widened, and this includes the media sector. The increase in the number of privately-owned radio stations shows that, with deregulation, there has been an increase in the number of people wanting to invest in the sector. As well, the deregulated environment has led to more people being eager to have their products and services advertised on radio, and more people wanting to have their ideologies and political interests served by the medium. Private investment has to this point been 100% local, with foreign partnerships existing only at the level of programming and programme exchange. The private radio stations are giving the state radios stiff competition, so much so that the initial arrogance with which the state stations looked upon the new entrants is waning. The new private stations tend to have better, more modern equipment than that used by government stations.

Establishing a radio service is relatively affordable, making the stations easy to set up once a licence is granted. However, government remains the largest radio advertiser and political affiliation and political correctness can determine whether or not a private station gets government advertising. With many licence applications pending, and the clamour for community radio increasing, it is likely that even more stations will emerge in the near future.

There are no verifiable sources of audience reach figures for radio in Nigeria, with no official listener figures from NBC, or even the radio stations themselves. What does seem clear, however, is that people are beginning to trust the private stations more than the government-owned ones. The largest listenership continues to belong to the federal government-run FRCN, the network news programming of which is forced onto all stations, state or private. While the regional station with the largest audience share, OSBC, is also government-owned (see Figure 6), the second-highest audience reach estimate goes to the regional private station, Freedom FM, in Kano (mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005).

Figure 6: Estimated Audience Share for Regional Radio Stations

Radio Station

South West OSBC — 21
North West Freedom FM — 12
South East AKBC — 11
North East FM94 Lokoja — 8

Percentage
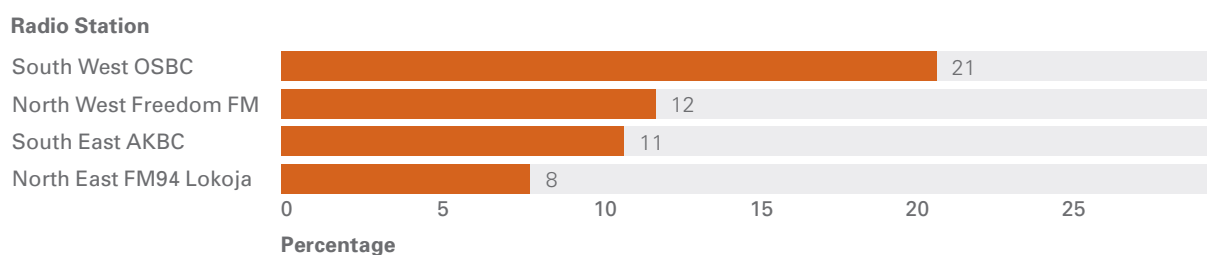
Source: mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005

5.3 Plurality, ownership and control

As indicated above, the initial breaking of the government monopoly on radio service provision began in 1993, escalating with the return to civilian rule in May 1999. However, government ownership of stations still far exceeds that of private ownership. Out of the roughly 100 stations officially documented as operating, roughly 80 stations belong to the government, either at federal or state levels (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Radio Stations
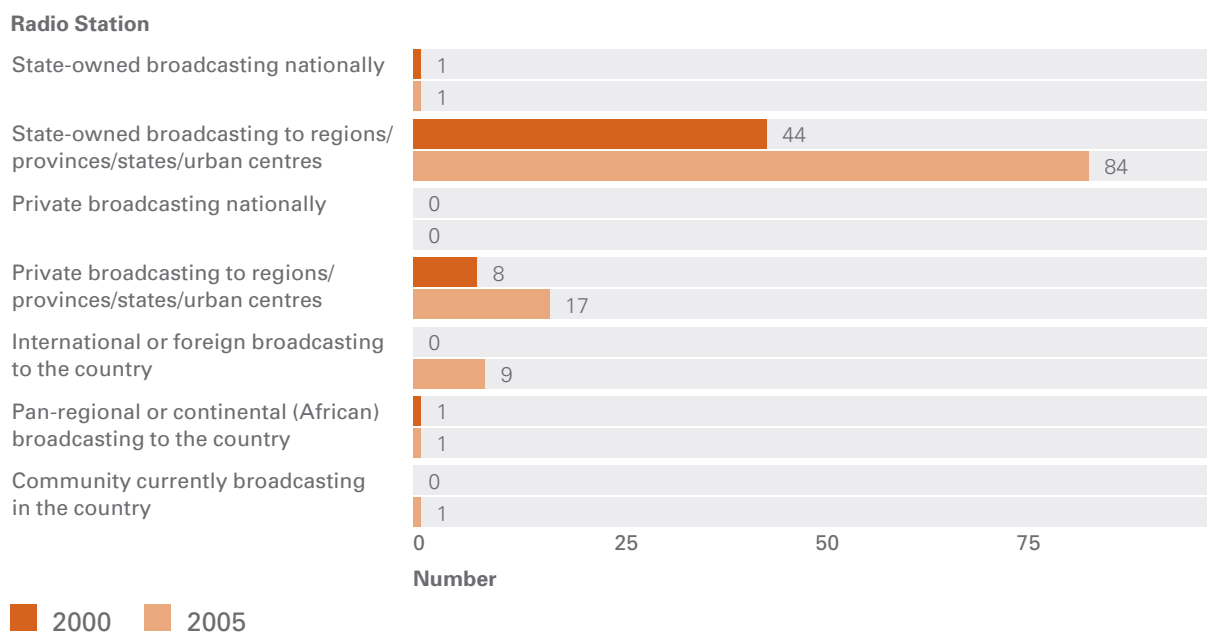
Source: NBC, 2002; 2004; 2006c

In addition to dominating the ownership landscape, the government performs licensing and regulatory functions through the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). The NBC is housed in the presidential villa complex and its chief executive is appointed directly by the federal government. The President of Nigeria personally signs all radio licences on the recommendation of the NBC. The federal government is thus able to exert direct pressure on both privately-held and government radio stations via the NBC. One illustration of this interference was the NBC's quick suspension of the private station, Freedom FM, in Kano in March 2006 over the station's "anti-third-term" programming (the third-term campaign is a push to extend the tenure of President Olusegun Obasanjo beyond the current constitutionally stipulated limit of two terms) (Freemuse, 2006). This illustrates the tenuous existence of stations when they run afoul of government interests. Thus, the plurality and diversification of ownership of radio stations has not yet fully translated into freedom and independence.

5.4 Diversity

The content of radio output and programming among the state and private stations continues to follow the patterns broadly set by the state media from the beginnings of radio broadcasting in Nigeria in 1957. Targeting all strata and age groups of society and both male and female listeners, the main genres of programming remain news, current affairs, talk, music and entertainment. However, while state media is heavily skewed in favour of uncritical coverage of government officials and government activities, private stations are critical of government activities and more diverse in their coverage of topics. When differing and critical opinions are frequently expressed on private stations, these stations are often threatened with withdrawal of government advertising or suspension of their licences by the NBC. A measure of overall government influence on content is the fact that all stations, whether private or government-owned, are compelled to carry the government-owned national FRCN's news bulletins daily at 7am and 9pm. These bulletins are largely about what the federal government is doing, told from the perspective of the state. However, a noticeable trend at present, as observed by the researchers, is the attempt by state stations to offer some muted critique of government actions or activities in order to compete for credibility with private stations.

All stations, both private and state-owned, broadcast in the major languages of the areas they cover, and even minority languages are given air-time. A climate of deregulation has also encouraged independent producers to make programmes targeted at specific interests and issues – programmes that they buy air-time to broadcast. Sometimes state stations accept such programmes and broadcast them with a disclaimer, but by and large air-time for independent programmes critical of government is provided by private stations.

5.5 Quality of radio output and programming

The quality of programming and of news and current affairs reporting have improved slightly from what they were before deregulation, partly due to the influence of access to international programming, and partly due to improved equipment and facilities, especially among the newly-established stations. Lots of programmes try to imitate existing offerings from the BBC, Voice of America (VOA) and other foreign stations, but usually without the requisite insight, debt, balance or rigour. This is partly due to the paucity of funds to enable journalists and producers to invest in, plan and develop quality. Instead, journalists make do with what is available, and often have to improvise.

There is a great problem with the quality of journalism. Professionalism is low and employment in the profession is not necessarily incumbent upon qualification, skill or merit, but is rather often a function of patronage considerations. Add to this the lack of adequate training and outdated facilities, especially at state stations. The consequence is that most programmes are of poor quality in terms of both conception and delivery.

5.6 Specific challenges

The challenges and obstacles facing radio in Nigeria are political, economic, legislative and professional. On the political front, deregulation has not been matched with effective freedom. Radio is still subject to the NBC laws of 1992 and 1999, which give the federal government, via the NBC, a great deal of latitude to interfere in the operations of stations. By retaining the power to give or remove licences, the federal government maintains an overbearing influence that poses a threat to the establishment of a truly deregulated, free media.

The radio sector is also impacted negatively by an insecure investment environment engendered by unrest in oil-producing areas, religious and ethnic unrest, uncertainty over potential manipulation of the Constitution, and fear of a military comeback. Despite the deregulation of the economy and the anticipation that foreign investors would invest massively, Nigeria is still treated with suspicion and suffers from lack of investment. Some radio stations may eventually fold or become dependent on political patronage to survive. Also, the absence of a truly independent judiciary means that opposition voices may fear prosecution and decide against going on air. Finally, the chronic crisis of professionalism, caused by a lack of state-of-the-art equipment and a shortage of training opportunities for journalists, means that the quality of the programmes continues to be generally poor.

Key findings

☐ The number of radio stations nearly doubled in the period 2000-5, from 53 to around 100, but only 17 of the stations were outside of direct government ownership in 2005.

☐ Demand is growing for community-owned, community-run radio.

☐ There is only one national radio service, the state-owned FRCN.

☐ A measure of the growing popularity of private radio is the fact that the second-highest audience reach estimate among regional radio stations goes to the private commercial station, Freedom FM, in Kano.

☐ The Office of the President signs off on all radio licences, based on recommendations from the state-controlled regulator, the National Broadcasting Commission.

☐ All radio stations, whether government-owned or private, are compelled to carry the news bulletins of the state-run national FRCN service every day at 7am and 9pm.

6. Television

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

There has been tremendous growth in the number of television stations in the past five years (see Figure 8), but most of the growth has been in government-owned services, up from 58 government-run stations in 2000 to 130 in 2005 (NBC, 2002; 2004; 2006c). The federal state dominates the television landscape, with 98 stations (one national channel and its 97 local affiliates) controlled by the federal government via the state Nigerian Television Authority (NTA). A further 32 stations are controlled by federal state governments. In terms of privately-run TV, there are only 14 private free-to-air stations, with the rest of the private firms involved in TV delivery consisting of cable services and pay-TV services via (DTH) satellite and MMDS (NBC, 2004, 2006c). Most Nigerian television-viewing is free-to-air, with all of the state-owned stations and most of the private firms funding their operations not through subscriptions but through advertisements. There is no TV licence fee in the country. Government is a major source of advertising revenue, as are certain private commercial sectors such as the mobile telephone firms. The main satellite offering, the DStv service provided by South African-based MultiChoice Africa, charges N9,000 (US$59) per month for 54 channels.

Figure 8: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Television Stations

Television Channel

	2000	2005
State-owned broadcasting nationally	1	1
State-owned broadcasting to regions/provinces/states/urban centres	58	130
Private broadcasting nationally	0	0
Private broadcasting to regions/provinces/states/urban centres	10	14
Foreign or international broadcasting to the country, including satellite channels		13

Number

■ 2000 ■ 2005
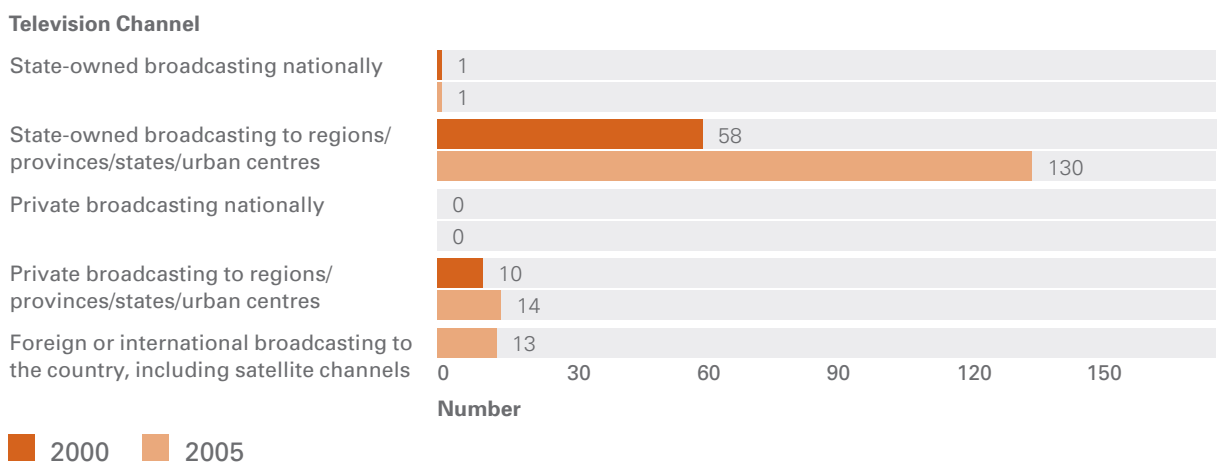
Source: NBC, 2002; 2004; 2006c

Table 2 below shows the estimated percentage audience share for regional television channels.

Table 2: Regional Television Audience Share

Regional Channel	% audience share in region
Lagos Silverbird (STV)	51.2%
South West OSBC	10%
South East DBS/Delta TV	7.68%
North West NTA Katsina	6.8%
North East NTA Bauchi	10.04%

Source: mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005

In 2002, an estimated 50.8% of all households had a working television set (InterMedia, 2005). However, as with radio, TV audience estimates are unreliable. The NTA claims to reach 60 million Nigerians, but this is almost certainly high, given a mediaReach OMD Nigeria estimate of 51 million TV viewers (for the NTA and all other stations) (mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005, p.24). However, the mediaReach figure is also not verifiable, because the researchers were not told how the figure was arrived at. Within NTA and private stations, there is currently no system in place for measuring audience reach and the National Broadcasting Commission has only just begun to build a strategy towards developing such a system.

In sum, there is one national free-to-air television channel, the government-owned NTA, linked to its 97 NTA affiliate free-to-air stations throughout the country. It is widely believed that political expediency is behind the proliferation of federal/government-owned stations. The power of television in Nigeria is great, as illustrated by the Miss World riots in Kaduna in 2003.

At state and local level, apart from the 97 NTA affiliates, there are 32 free-to-air stations owned by state governments and a further 14 private stations. In Lagos state, the second most populous state, viewers have access to 11 locally/regionally-based stations (mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005, p.31).

Even with the huge growth in the number of channels in the period 2000-5 there may still be room for television sector expansion in Nigeria.

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

The space for plurality that began opening up during the dying days of the military regime has ballooned since the return to civilian rule, particularly since 2000 when the new civilian government embarked on deregulation and privatisation of all public enterprises. The economic policy created the enabling environment that saw the granting of many licences and the setting up of more government television stations. The main source of revenue for both government-owned and private stations is paid advertisements from government or private firms. Deregulation and privatisation of government-owned enterprises in many sectors has generated keen competition among companies to market their products and services via television, a trend most starkly illustrated by the mobile phone firms that focus their marketing efforts throughout the country. However, the regulatory role and control by the state through the National Broadcasting Commission acts as a partial brake on private investment.

6.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Even though the federal and state governments control a huge proportion of the stations, the various types of private television operations (regional, local, free-to-air, subscription or satellite services) now number more than 50, indicating the extent of diffusion of ownership in the sector. Only one of the private firms, the satellite pay-TV provider MultiChoice Africa, has ownership outside Nigeria.

However, because television licences are issued by the federal government through the state-controlled NBC, which recommends licencees to the President for approval, political or "national interest", considerations are often present in licensing decisions. In addition, the knowledge that licences can be suspended or withdrawn by the NBC acts as barrier to investors who might otherwise have been inclined to run their stations based on a philosophy of freedom and independence. The private stations feel that the state-owned stations have an advantage over them because they are subsidised by government, while at the same time they are competing with private stations for advertisements. However, private stations have the advantage of better programming and credibility, which is forcing state stations to begin critiquing some state and federal government actions (M. Ojiah, personal communication, 13 April 2006; G. Omole, personal communication, 13 April 2006). People tend to believe private stations more than state-owned ones, which people see as the mouthpiece of the administration. This competition for the trust and loyalty of the viewer can be expected to have an impact on audience figures, and in turn on advertising revenue, with advertisers not wanting to place their messages on channels that nobody watches. It is hoped, therefore, that competition for audience and advertising will result in better programming across all channels.

Licensees are required sign up to the Broadcasting Code, which can be invoked by the NBC to sanction them, meaning that stations have to tread cautiously. For example, when the Belleview plane crashed in late 2005, the government stations broadcast a government-crafted position on the crash, including an erroneous impression of where the crash happened. When private station AIT aired pictures of the wreckage and provided information that contradicted the stand of government, its licence was quickly suspended (OSJI, 2005). Only public outcry led to withdrawal of the suspension.

6.4 Diversity

There is evidence of a greater range of views and expression finding their way onto the federal government's NTA stations, with private stations performing even better in this regard. All stations broadcast news and current affairs, talk, music and entertainment, with no particular specialisations. Some stations however, provide a regional focus, broadcasting in local languages and representing local content and flavour. Prior to 1999, television broadcasting was restricted to what government and state officials were doing or what they wanted the population to see. With the entrance of private competition, state stations are also becoming critical of official conduct as part of their struggle to earn credibility amongst viewers and advertisers. For example, despite the President's adverse feelings towards his opponents, the NTA covered the inauguration of the newest political party, the ACD, in April 2006 – a party formed to oppose the President's push for a third term in office.

A significant development since the introduction of private stations has been the practice of 24-hour broadcasting. Prior to deregulation, state stations only broadcast for 6-12 hours a day. Now, in order to generate programmes to fill the 24-hour schedule, there is hunger for programming, building a market for independent production. In independent productions, non-mainstream interests and issues tend to be pursued with greater vigour, attention and detail. Some NGOs devoted to specific causes sponsor programmes on women's issues, reproductive rights and HIV/AIDS through talk shows, drama programmes and music.

The quest for programmes has also helped to boost the now-famous "Nollywood", the booming Nigerian video drama production industry that sells its films to some of the stations. There is another sense in which the need for programming impacts on diversity. Many stations, including the NTA stations, are airing more foreign programmes, including Mexican soap operas, Hollywood films and music. The subscription cable and satellite stations also bring in various forms of programming and channels, including Movie Magic, Channel O, MTV, CNN, BBC, the SABC and SuperSport.

6.5 Quality of television output and programming

Television programming in Nigeria is of poor quality compared to the international channels offering the same kinds of programming. Even though private stations are trying hard to improve standards, they, like the national carrier NTA, are constrained by a lack of funding and a lack of professionalism. Unlike at the BBC or CNN where reporters are sent to scenes as they unfold anywhere in the world, or where reporters are given the money, equipment and assistance needed to do thorough investigations before packaging programmes, many Nigerian stations simply copy, adapt and re-broadcast news from the BBC, CNN and other foreign services. In terms of entertainment and talk programming, there are several examples of Nigerian stations trying copying overseas talk shows, soap operas, game shows, reality TV and other entertainment programming, eg, *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*? and *Big Brother.*

Most of the NTA stations, except for the recently-opened ones, have severely outdated equipment. Or where there is new equipment, there is not nearly enough of it. Most reporters do not have access to computers, and those who do have to contend with a few desktops assembled in a pool for everyone's use. Very few TV workers can boast of using laptops. Most stations, because of the high cost of quality cameras, only have one or two and there is always a long waiting list to use them. When a producer secures a camera, she or he has to rush to finish shooting because others are waiting. In many cases, producers do not have access to cameras for days, weeks or even months on end.

The technical quality of programmes in terms of image quality, composition and conception is generally poor. Most editors and cameramen were trained in analogue systems and have not had the opportunity to re-train in new digital systems. Those trained in digital editing and the handling of sophisticated equipment are few and are overwhelmed by work, meaning their capacity to take creative decisions is hampered. There is a tendency towards improvisation and accepting whatever shots are available, regardless of their quality. As more and more stations are being established, more and more journalists are required to take positions that they have not been adequately trained for. A huge number of TV journalists today have no training in journalism at all.

However, in terms of sensitivity and balance, there have been some improvements due to competition between private and state stations.

6.6 Specific challenges

The challenges for the TV sector are nearly identical to those for radio, with the same political, economic, legislative and professional factors undermining the sector's progress: government interference via the NBC; political instability undermining investment; the lack of a truly independent judiciary; reliance on political patronage; and, the crisis of professionalism engendered by shortfalls in equipment and training.

Key findings

☐ The one national free-to-air TV service is the state-run NTA, which has 97 affiliate stations throughout the country.

☐ TV sector growth has been rapid in the period 2000-5, with the number of TV services more than doubling, from 58 to 130.

☐ As with radio licences, the Office of the President controls the issuing of TV licences via the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC).

☐ The "Nollywood" video drama production sector is a prominent source of local content.

☐ TV journalistic and production standards are generally low, revealing the need for training and improved equipment.

7. Newspapers

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

The coming of a more democratic political climate has buoyed people's participation in public discourse, but the newspaper sector has witnessed a mixed reaction in terms of size. While there has been an increase in the number of daily newspapers, the number of weeklies has declined at both national and regional level. The only increase in weeklies has been at local level. No comparative readership figures were available for 2000 and 2005, and thus Figure 9 below simply provides readership percentages for the ten most widely-read papers.

Figure 9: Percentage Readership Amongst the Ten Largest Newspapers

Newspaper

Newspaper	Percentage
The Sun	4
The Punch	4
The Guardian	2
Vanguard	2
Complete Sports	1
Nigerian Tribune	1
Daily Times	1
Today's Sports	1
This Day	1
Daily Trust	1

Percentage
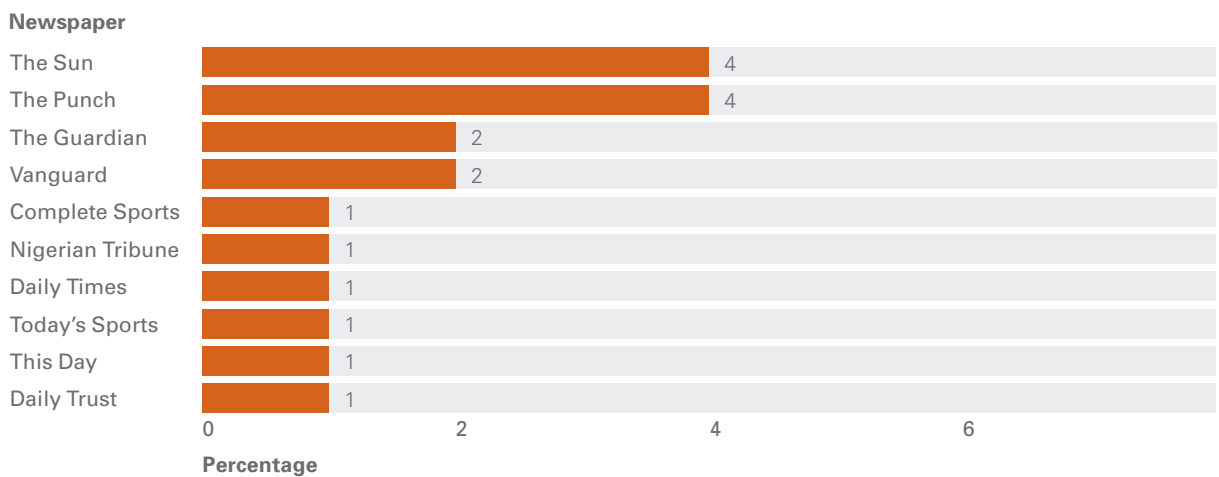
Source: mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005

As mentioned above, there are no figures measuring changes in readership levels of newspapers over the 2000-5 period. The most significant change has probably been the arrival of some strong new dailies, such as *The Sun* and *The Daily Trust*, both of which are in the top ten papers in terms of percentage of national readership (see Figure 9). *The Sun* has the highest percentage of national readership and the *Daily Trust* is in tenth spot, a strong showing given that it is a regionally-focused daily in the north of the country. As Figure 10 below reveals, at the national level, the number of daily papers increased from 16 to 20 between 2000 and 2005, but the number of national weeklies shrunk from 28 to 23.

At regional level (see Figure 10), the number of regional dailies increased between 2000 and 2005 by one, from nine to ten, while the number regional weeklies dropped from 26 to 19. At local level, there are now six dailies, compared with four in 2000. Meanwhile, there has been huge growth in local weeklies in the past five years, from seven to 17.

As Figure 10 below shows, the new titles that have emerged over the past five years have been mainly among the national dailies and the local weeklies, with the largest increase (ten new titles over the past five years) being in the local weekly category.

Figure 10: Total Number of Newspapers

Newspaper

National daily: 16 (2000), 20 (2005)
National weekly: 28 (2000), 23 (2005)
Regional daily: 9 (2000), 10 (2005)
Regional weekly: 26 (2000), 19 (2005)
Local daily: 4 (2000), 6 (2005)
Local weekly: 7 (2000), 17 (2005)

Number

2000   2005
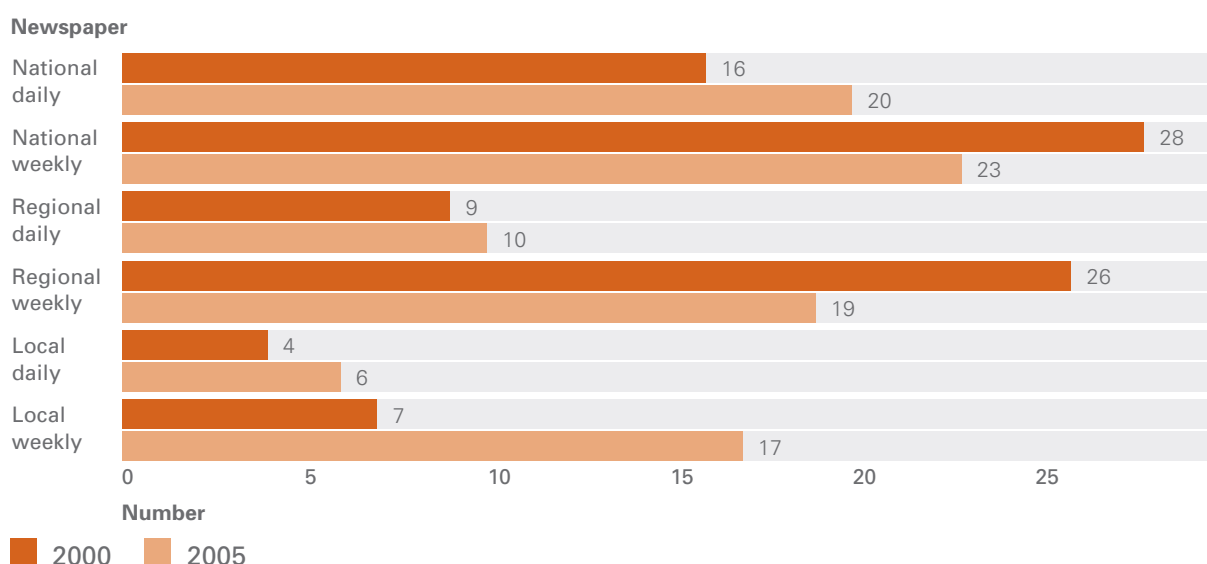
Sources: Diamond, 2004; researcher findings

7.2 Investment and growth in newspapers in the past five years

Traditionally, investment and growth in the newspaper sector has been sporadic. One reason is the tradition in Nigeria of the media being used as a political tool, with some wealthy politicians feeling that ownership of a paper is a way of making their voices and political agendas heard. Once the agenda is thought to have been realised, or perhaps not realised, there is a tendency for such politicians to turn their backs on the paper, which is why some newspapers die off prematurely. Another linked problem has been that many papers are not run as businesses and are expected to turn a profit or break even; instead they are kept alive through the continued expenditure of their politician-owners. The advent of civilian rule and a

more democratic dispensation appear to have changed this pattern of instability to some extent. There has been a growth in newspaper investment by non-politician investors willing to put the money in and allow media professionals to work with a measure of independence. Two examples are *The Sun* and *Daily Trust* newspapers, both established between 2000 and 2005. These have had a great impact on the Nigerian media scene. *The Sun* newspaper had the highest national readership percentage estimate in 2005 (mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005).

The emergence of strong new titles, such as *The Sun,* in the past five years has engendered healthy competition for readers and advertisers, and there is evidence that the newspaper advertising market is growing strongly. According to mediaReach OMD Nigeria, the total money spent on adverts in Nigeria rose from US$63.076 million in 2001 to US$117.537 million in 2004, an increase of more than 50% over that period. These figures are for all media sectors combined, not just newspapers (mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005).

7.3 Plurality, ownership and control

The trend towards concentrated newspaper ownership in the 1990s has dissipated since 2000, with it now being unusual for one owner to own more than two papers, notwithstanding a paper's sister Saturday or Sunday editions. There is a wider pool of owners compared with five years ago. There is a promising trend towards newspapers operating independent of government, made possible by the decreasing reliance on government subscriptions and adverts, and by the deregulation reforms of the present administration. Governments, particularly the federal government, have been divesting themselves of shares in newspapers, with papers such as the *Daily Times* and *New Nigerian* sold to interested buyers. Less positive is the continuing lack of transparency around ownership, with, for instance, the actual owners of *The Sun* and *Daily Trust* remaining a mystery.

7.4 Diversity

The increase in the number of newspapers and, in turn, competition, has led to efforts by papers to increase the diversity of their content and the diversity of the views captured in their content. Papers are now looking for new and grey areas so as to gain advantage over other titles and capture greater market share. In addition, the level of advocacy around gender and children's rights in the country, with efforts being made to educate journalists on these issues, has led to increased inclusion of the voices of women in media coverage. Meanwhile, the establishment in 2003 of a viable newspaper, the *Daily Trust*, in the north of the country has increased religious coverage and coverage of previously neglected ethnic groups. The *Daily Trust* is helping to break the concentration of newspapers in what is derisively referred to as the "Lagos-Ibadan axis".

7.5 Quality of newspaper reporting

There has not been a significant improvement in the quality of print journalism over the past five years. This can be seen as the result of a number of factors, including the continuing after-effects of the constricted journalistic environment under military rule and the slowness of transformation of training institutions (R. Akinfeleye, personal communication, 19 April 2006).

7.6 Specific challenges

While parts of the newspaper market have shown growth over the past five years, there are a number of factors inhibiting investment in the sector. The first, and probably greatest problem is the increasing intolerance of the present administration towards differing opinion. There are increasing instances of harassment and intimidation of journalists, despite the advent of a more democratic era under civilian rule since 1999.

Key findings

☐ The print media had mixed fortunes in the period 2000-5, with an increase in dailies and local weeklies, but a decrease in national and regional weeklies.

☐ The success of a new private regional daily in the north of the country, the *Daily Trust,* is helping to break the "Lagos-Ibadan axis".

☐ Government intimidation of print journalists has continued in spite of the return to civilian rule under a democratic Constitution in 1999.

8. Media Support

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

The past five years have seen increased access to Internet services and telephony, particularly mobile telephony. Growth in these new media sectors can be attributed to a range of factors, including the new democratic environment and the drive towards privatisation, commercialisation and deregulation. A new telecommunications policy was released in 2000, resulting in the removal of restrictions on the level of foreign equity participation in the sector; reduction in the level of import duties on telecommunications equipment; simplification of procedures for the importation of telecommunications equipment and development of related software; and, the granting of preferential status to qualified investors and fiscal incentives to encourage local manufacture. Prior to these liberalisation measures, the teledensity (ratio of fixed telephone lines per 100 people) was extremely low, with most lines concentrated in government and corporate offices.

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) was set up in 1993, but full liberalisation of the ICT sector did not really begin until the late 1990s; it was finally the Nigerian Communications Act 2003 that firmly entrenched liberalisation. Among other things, the 2003 Act mandated a Universal Access Fund to provide additional access for rural communities and other under-served areas. As well, the NCC has liberalised Internet service provision (ISP) licensing. A successful Fixed Wireless Licence Auction (FWLA) has allowed licensees to use their assigned spectrum for any activity – voice or data – and in the process has encouraged increased ICT activity. There are now several bandwidth options for ISPs, including both local and international carriers. The NCC has also begun to study regulatory options for the emerging voice over IP (VoIP) market. However, even with all of the enabling policy and regulatory steps taken, some elements of new media penetration in Nigeria are still abysmally low. For instance, computer ownership numbers are low for the country, and it is estimated that only around 1.7 million people, out of a population of 134 million, are Internet users (CIA, 2006). What little growth in Internet use that there has been in recent years, is typically attributed to the increase in the number of Internet cafés.

In contrast, mobile telephony use has risen exponentially in the past five years, at a rate of several thousand per cent, with there being an estimated 9.1 million cell phones in the country in 2004, compared to one million fixed-lines (CIA, 2006). There were no mobile telephone firms operating in the country in 2000, and by 2005 there were four: MTN, VMOBILE, MTEL and Globacom. Out of the four, only Globacom is wholly locally-owned. VMobile and MTEL are joint ventures, while MTN is foreign-owned (South African) (NCC, 2005).

8.2 Key changes in media support in the past five years

Particularly since 2002, the media business environment has become much more open. There has been expansion in television production, and an increase in the number of advertising companies. According to one estimate, there were 128 locally-based advertising agencies in 2005, up from 87 in 2000 (Diamond, 2005). As well, there are now said to be around 25 media monitoring agencies (Diamond, 2005), and a growing number of locally-owned media marketing and research companies. Organisations involved in researching media audience reach and circulation include mediaReach OMD Nigeria, Diamond Publications Ltd, Market Research Consultancy Ltd, Market Trends Research International, Mar Research Limited, First Research Nigerian Limited, Research Solutions Ltd and Research and Marketing Services Ltd (Diamond, 2004). In the researchers' view, the availability of mobile GSM telephony has made media support businesses much easier to conduct, reducing the time and cost previously expended on unnecessary travel.

8.3 Audience and readership research data

The generation of audience and readership data is still in its infancy in Nigeria, with the data currently produced lacking the comprehensiveness and delineation necessary for effective reading of the media landscape. The most consistent media marketing research outfits producing data in Nigeria over the past few years have been mediaReach OMD Nigeria and Diamond Publications Limited. Audience measurement data is available annually for radio, television and newspapers via mediaReach. However, as is apparent in some of the data gaps in this report, the products of these agencies are still not comprehensive.

Among media and telecommunications sector regulatory agencies, only the NCC seems to be abreast of the trends within its own sector (telecommunications/ICT), with very little reliable data being held by the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC).

Key findings

☐ Mobile telephony use has expanded massively, with an estimated 9.1 million mobile phones in the country in 2004, compared to only one million fixed-lines in the same year.

☐ There are now four competing mobile phone operators.

☐ While there has been strong growth in recent years in the number of local advertising, marketing and media monitoring firms, there is still a dearth of reliable audience and readership data available for the media in Nigeria.

9. NGO Activity

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

It is difficult to establish the actual total number of NGOs – national, regional, local and international – working in Nigeria that are officially registered. Several organisations have attempted to produce a directory of NGOs, with one of the most comprehensive and respected being the 2002 UNICEF *Directory of NGOs and CSOs in Nigeria*. This directory lists some 648 NGOs and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), but this was undoubtedly far fewer than the actual number in 2002 (UNICEF, 2002). The federal Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) is the only legal body charged with registering NGOs but, as indicated in the introduction of this report, the researchers encountered difficulty in trying to extract information from the CAC. Because of the difficult and cumbersome processes of registration, some NGOs affiliate themselves to other registered NGOs or simply carry on un-registered while their registration processes are underway, sometimes taking five to ten years to complete.

What is not in doubt, however, is that, NGOs have flourished, largely due to the number of foreign funders wanting to take advantage of the more democratic space in which to work in Nigeria. Prior to the return to civilian rule, human rights and media development activity by NGOs was facilitated mostly by foreign embassies. Since 1999, the focus of NGO work has changed, with more emphasis on democracy, good governance, accountability and transparency. There has also been more emphasis on voter education, electoral and constitutional reform and budget monitoring. However, in the view of the researchers of this report, media development activities seem to have receded into the background of NGO work in the past five years.

9.2 Key NGOs involved in media development activities

The researchers found only ten NGOs operating in the country that are involved, at least to some extent, in media development as it is defined by this research project. However, most of the ten do not undertake media development as their main area of operation. Seven of the NGOs – Development Communications Network (DEVCOM), African Media Support Initiative (AMSI), MCD (Multimedia Centre for Democracy), Centre for Development Communication (CDC), the Nigerian Popular Theatre Alliance (NPTA), African Radio Drama Association (ARDA), National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) – are primarily involved with issues such as reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, human rights, democratic development and good governance.

Only three of the ten – the Centre for Free Speech (CFS), the International Press Centre (IPC) and Media Rights Agenda (MRA) – have media development concerns as their central focus, including emphasis on media freedom advocacy, training, publications, capacity building and ICT. Specifically, the CFS advocates for media freedom, undertakes training, holds workshops and seminars and produces publications. The IPC is affiliated to the West African Journalists Association and focuses on capacity building for the media and Internet services/training for journalists. MRA, also based in Lagos, is involved in research, publications, training, legislative advocacy and media monitoring.

DEVCOM is engaged in capacity building for journalists and NGO personnel, strategic communications technology, science and health communications and reproductive rights issues. AMSI does capacity-building for the media and research. MCD focuses on human rights and governance, transparency and accountability, advocacy, mobilisation and awareness creation. CDC, in Kaduna, is engaged in education (advocacy and policy, mass literacy, skills acquisition/vocational training, non-formal education), human rights and governance, micro-credit/enterprise and community development. NPTA promotes participatory development and sustainable human resource management through theatre and exchange of knowledge on development. ARDA is involved in radio drama productions on socio-economic and development issues. NAWOJ is committed to the protection of the rights of women journalists in Nigeria.

9.3   Climate of opportunity for media development activities

Nigerian NGOs are heavily donor-dependent, meaning that they do not, in most cases, have budgets of their own to allocate to media development activities. Thus, what money is spent on media development depends on what is approved by the funders. The ten identified NGOs in this study are all donor-dependent and do not have discretionary budgets of their own. It is therefore difficult to determine the top-performing NGO players in media development activity, or to estimate their spending profile and degree of activity.

In terms of contributing to stronger and more independent, pluralistic media in the past five years, it is difficult to credit NGO activity with developments in the media sector during this period. Rather, developments in the sector seem to be more a product of political and economic liberalisation. Where NGO media development activity can take more credit is in playing a central role in laying the groundwork during the 1990s for the deregulation that has engendered the expansion of media in the past five years.

Key findings

☐ Of the ten NGOs identified by researchers as working in media development, only three have media development work as their central focus.

☐ The researchers have detected a recent decline in the emphasis on supporting media development within the NGO sector.

10. Conclusions

Drawing on the information gathered for this report, the following themes emerge.

10.1 Media statistical data

More statistical information on the media needs to be readily available. The media in Nigeria have not developed the practice of keeping data on themselves, and most of them do not have research mechanisms for generating statistics and data. Some of the newspaper representatives admitted frankly to the researchers that they inflate their circulation figures, and are not ready to provide actual figures for fear that this could scare off advertisers. The broadcast media outlets' claims of audience reach are mere speculations, not verifiable and without basis in rigorous research. Developing a system of data collection for all aspects of the Nigerian media is therefore a necessary media development initiative.

10.2 Media law and regulation

Though the media environment is highly liberalised, the government still exerts undue control and regulation through the National Broadcasting Commission, the Nigerian Press Council, the National Communications Commission and various laws and edicts. As well, the judiciary is far from independent, making people wary of expressing themselves freely. Information is still very difficult to access in Nigeria, as there is no enabling law, and the Freedom of Information Bill put before the National Assembly in 2000 has still not been passed into law. Developing media freedom frameworks, supporting the removal of restrictive laws and the enactment of the Freedom of Information Bill are clearly directions that need to be pursued for effective media development in Nigeria.

10.3 Media investment and growth

There has been relatively commendable growth in the media sector since 2000, with significant investment by private individuals. There also appears to be great potential for further growth. However, major sources of worry for potential media investors in Nigeria are persistent government intervention and the cumbersome processes of licensing. Until government hands over control of media regulation to an independent body, investment in the media will continue to be risky.

10.4 Media diversification

Unlike in the newspaper sector where the government has now divested itself of most ownership stakes, the state still dominates in the electronic media. This is partly because of the power of the electronic media, and partly because of the large amount of money needed to set up these services, particularly TV. Nevertheless, with many private stations now succeeding, more entrants into the field can be expected. The presence of private players has led to more local content production and a greater diversity of viewpoints being represented. Support should be given to the establishment of private broadcast stations and community broadcasters in order to improve the reach of the broadcast media. The success of mobile telephone companies in penetrating every rural area and recording huge growth rates can serve as a model for other media.

10.5 Critical interventions – equipment and skills

Two media development areas beg for intervention in Nigeria. The first is the need for improved media equipment and facilities. Unless these are upgraded, programmes and outputs will continue to be of poor quality. The second area is training. Without the requisite skills, journalists will at best be imitators of what they see, without having the creative, innovative skills and thoroughness necessary to produce professional journalistic outputs.

Key findings

☐ More and improved media sector research is needed.

☐ Government control is still too prevalent within media sector regulation.

☐ Media sector investment is undermined by government interference and the volatility of broadcast licensing processes.

☐ More diversification is needed in radio and TV to dilute state domination.

☐ Improved skills and equipment are urgent priorities in order to increase output quality and professionalism.

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Appendix 2: Individuals/organisations consulted during the research

- ☐ Angela Agoawike, Secretary, Nigerian Guild of Editors

- ☐ Lanre Arogundade, Coordinator, International Press Centre

- ☐ Osazuwa Charles, Officer in Charge of Media, UNIC Nigeria

- ☐ Lanre Idowu, Editor-In-Chief, *Media Review*

- ☐ Usman Magawata, Executive Director, Training, Nigerian Television Authority

- ☐ Mark Ojiah, Deputy Director and Head Research and Planning, National Broadcasting Commission

- ☐ Godwin Omole, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Press Council

- ☐ Evelyn Onyilo, National President, National Association of Women Journalists

- ☐ Kabiru Yusuf, Editor-In-Chief, *Daily Trust* newspaper

- ☐ Mary Udumah, Head Corporate Planning and Research, Nigerian Communications Commission

- ☐ Shuaibu Usman Leman, Secretary General, National Union of Journalists

- ☐ Silas Yisa, Director General, National Broadcasting Commission

Nigeria
Country Report
Way Forward

12. Introduction

The researchers' approach to sampling in Nigeria was dictated by the country's peculiarities. Nigeria is a vast country with many agencies and contending forces operating in the context of media development. It was indeed a difficult task trying to identify 15 key players spread across regional, ethnic, religious, gender and sectoral divisions. In arriving at the names, the researchers began by drawing up a list of all possible interviewees believed to be key players in the media in one way or the other.

The researchers also consulted with colleagues in the media across Nigeria for names and contacts, then categorised the list into the various sectors required by the research: NGO, government/civil service, media practitioners, commentators/academics, educators and miscellaneous. The researchers then narrowed the list down to 15, ensuring the following breakdown: women (5), faith-based (2), community media (1), print (1), youth (1), new media (1), government and regulatory agencies (3), trade union/professional bodies (2), North (3), South West (4), South East (4) and minorities (4).

Most of those selected for interview were eager to participate. Only two proved reluctant but in the end provided good interviews. All the interviewees agreed to be audio-recorded. In the researchers' view, most of the interviewees were able to be very frank, with the exception of the interviewee from the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), who felt constrained by civil service regulations on giving out information on Nigeria. The Freedom of Information Bill, which many of our interviewees spoke of, and which is still to be passed by the National Assembly, is definitely a necessity in Nigeria in order to liberate information. Fourteen of the interviewees agreed to have their attributed quotes included in the report, with only the NTA interviewee declining.

The fieldwork was conducted in March and April 2006. The first two pilot interviews were done on 30 and 31 March, in Kaduna and Abuja. Subsequently, a third pilot interview was done on 6 April in Port Harcourt. The remaining interviews were conducted from 13 to 21 April in Lagos, Abuja and Awka. There was much travel and logistics involved in completing the interviews.

13. Media Development: an organisational perspective

13.1 Key organisations

The 15 interviews conducted around Nigeria were with the following organisations and representatives.

Four media sector NGOs

The four NGOs chosen operate in the media sector or use the media extensively and could comment effectively on developments in the media field, especially within the past five years from 2000-5 are listed below:

☐ Father Victor Yakubu, Director General of the Catholic Media Service Centre in Kaduna, is involved in training journalists and media practitioners in various aspects of media in the context of new trends and developments.

☐ Tony Iyare of *Gleaners News Online* is the pioneering publisher of the first online newspaper in Nigeria.

☐ Alison Data-Phido is the Programme Director of the African Radio Drama Association (ARDA) Nigerian Chapter, involved in the innovative use of radio drama for development communication.

☐ Adesuwa Onyenokwe runs Universal Communications, an organisation that produces women-centred media programmes.

Three government/civil service organisations

Critical insiders were interviewed at three key government/civil service organisations that are also regulatory bodies, making these bodies an essential feature of media development in Nigeria:

☐ Godwin Omole, Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Press Council (NPC), an ombudsman and regulatory body for the print media in Nigeria;

☐ Mary Udumah, Head of Corporate Planning and Research at the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the regulatory body in charge of licensing and monitoring the communications sector in Nigeria; and,

☐ Mark Ojiah, Head of Planning and Research at the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), which is responsible for recommending prospective broadcast operators for licensing by government and for monitoring and regulating those in operation.

Three media practitioners

These were:

☐ one media practitioner from the public sector;

☐ Angela Agoawike, Secretary of the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), concerned with the maintenance of the quality and professionalism of editors; and,

☐ Adeniyi Bello, General Manager of UNILAG FM, the only community radio station in Nigeria.

Three commentator/academics

These were:

☐ Ralph Akinfeleye, Professor of Mass Communications at the University of Lagos;

☐ Mallam Kabiru Yusuf, media commentator and Editor-in-Chief of Media Trust, publisher of the *Daily Trust* and *Weekly Trust* newspapers (which have an Islamic and Northern bias); and,

☐ Stella Okunna, long-standing Professor of Mass Communications at Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka.

Two interviewees in miscellaneous category

These were:

☐ Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge at the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Nigeria.

☐ Shuaibu Usman Leman, Secretary General of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), a professional trade body, and the umbrella organisation responsible for registering journalists in Nigeria.

13.2 Impact of media development initiatives

The four adjectives or concepts that dominated the interviewees' description of the most important changes in the media sector over the past five years were: liberalisation, deregulation, diversity and privatisation. More than half of the 15 interviewees (nine) located the most important change as the deregulation/liberalisation/diversity/privatisation of the media, followed by four interviewees who focused on democratic transition as the key driver of media change.

One interviewee attributed the media sector changes to:

" *The culture of inquisitiveness and craving for community broadcasting amongst Nigerians.* "

(Adeniyi Bello, General Manager; Media Practitioner: UNILAG FM, Lagos, Nigeria)

Another, Mr Iyare of *Gleaners News Online*, attributed the changes to what he called:

" *More and more governors owning newspapers, and… these have grave implications for independent media, freedom of opinion and expression.* "

(Mr Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief; NGO: *Gleaners News Online*, Nigeria)

Based on the interviews and on the author's personal observations, it seems clear that the return to civil rule paved the way for deregulation and privatisation, which consequently engendered interest in investing in the media. People became convinced that the days of military rule were over. However, as rightly noted by Professor Stella Okunna in her interview, it is only the deregulation of the broadcast media that is really new; the print have always had private participation. While many may attribute media changes to the new democratic space, it is important to point out that the political and special interests of powerful individuals have also played a significant role in the establishment of some of the new media concerns. For example, the governors of most of the states distrust the federally-controlled radio and television stations and, as noted by Mr Iyare of *Gleaners News Online*, most of the governors are establishing their own newspapers. So, in a sense, we can partially attribute the development of the media in the past five years to attempts to sell or propagate particular political and special interests, not just to attempts to fulfil a public-service remit or to protect the public good.

13.2.1 Strategic changes within the interviewee's own area of work

All the interviewees agreed that media development initiatives in the past five years have had significant impact on the media sector and on their own areas of work. Ten of them viewed the impact as positive, while the remaining five viewed the impact with mixed feelings.

Training

Five interviewees touched on training. Adeniyi Bello of UNILAG FM noted that students of mass communications now receive hands-on practical studio training, which equips them for the job market. Data-Phido of ARDA talked about the increase in institutions offering journalism courses and institutions offering new, more diverse training content. Godwin Omole of the Nigerian Press Council (NPC) spoke of the critical training the NPC is providing through seminars and conferences, while Professor Okunna said training is becoming more professionalised. However, Professor Ralph Akinfeleye said that the journalism training institutions, while proliferating, are producing weak products.

" *You will understand that before this time the classrooms were way ahead of the newsroom. But now it has changed in the past five years or so… newsrooms are now way ahead of the classrooms in terms of technology, in terms of infrastructure, in terms of policies, in terms of media unit pluralism. That is to say, if you get a BSc Mass Communication, you go and work with the Guardian or… with NTA or FRCN, they have to re-train you. So, we don't think that it's a very good thing.* "

(Professor Ralph Akinfeleye, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: University of Lagos, Nigeria)

Distribution, access to policy-makers, digitisation, online media, and mobile telephony

Four interviewees talked about the widened spectrum for reaching people, either in terms of the wide market for distributing information or in terms of independent production, i.e., distributing programmes.

One interviewee highlighted the importance of the decentralisation of the state TV, NTA, which saw new stations being established in every senatorial district. Agoawike of the Guild of Editors, and Shuaibu Usman Leman of the NUJ, said that deregulation had enhanced public access to the realm of policy-makers. Mark Ojiah of NBC and Father Yakubu of the Catholic Media Services Centre claimed that digitisation and the resulting high-quality pictures and audio were the major spin-off of the changes in media development in their respective organisations. Tony Iyare of *Gleaners News Online* pointed to the spread of online media culture as the most important strategic change, while Mary Udumah of the NCC pointed to the proliferation in the use of mobile GSM telephony as a 'liberator of voices' and noted the potential for media participation through phone-in programmes on radio and TV.

Audience research, competition and falling standards

Alison Data-Phido of ADRA and Adesuwa Onyenokwe of Universal Communications, both producers of media, pointed to audience research as one area where impact has been felt. They argued that the need to know the reach of a station has become critical, due to the presence of private stations. They also agreed that plurality and healthy competition have to some extent, broken the monopoly of state-owned TV (NTA) and radio (FRCN). Adesuwa Onyenokwe acknowledged however, that the NTA still exerts a great deal of control via its national network.

A less positive impact of media development, said Data-Phido, is the fact that, as a result of the deregulation and the increase in the number of stations, standards are falling, stations are not giving serious consideration to content quality, and journalistic staff are largely unskilled.

More employment, but a lack of ethics and adequate training

For Professor Okunna, a key impact has been the increase in opportunities for employment of journalism graduates.

" *You know when there are private media, there are more avenues for employment for those who you are teaching. My job is to produce journalists.* **"**

(Prof. Stella Okunna, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka, Nigeria)

Nosa Osazuwa of UNIC echoed Professor Okunna, stating that media development has expanded the space for job searching and provided employment opportunities for journalists. Shuaibu Leman of the NUJ confirmed the increase in jobs in the journalist profession, saying that media development has meant the registration of 25,000 members for the NUJ, but Leman expressed concern that most of the media seem to be set up to promote selfish interests. Professor Akinfeleye, meanwhile, cautioned that the proliferation of journalists may have created a crisis because there is inadequate training and funding.

Local content, scrutiny of government, growing interest in media

Mary Udumah of the NCC pointed to the rise in local content and the fact that the private media have put government on their toes, as the major impacts of media development in the past five years. Agoawike of the Guild of Editors saw the impact in terms of the ease with which journalists can now access information compared with before.

> " I think it's not [as] difficult for you to get information as it used to be, because… you can call or reach these people now. Sometimes, if you want to clarify some stories with the Minister of Information, even when he is in an Executive Council meeting, you send him a text, he replies to the text "

(Angela Agoawike, Secretary, Media Practitioner, Private Sector, Nigerian Guild of Editors, Nigeria)

Agoawike also mentioned the growth of public interest in the media, as did Kabiru Yusuf of Media Trust, who said there was more debate and that the political and economic climate has been supportive of media.

Equipment, community radio, investment, Press Law

Ojiah of the NBC and Father Yakubu of the Catholic Media Services Centre both pointed to the positive impact of modern equipment, which is ensuring better quality pictures and sound. Meanwhile, Adeniyi Bello of community radio, UNILAG FM, pointed to the existence of the UNILAG station as the clearest impact of media development. Tony Iyare of *Gleaners News Online* pointed to the impact of investment made by local, wealthy investors, while Omole of the Press Council applauded the facilitation of the Press Law, which he said is soon to be passed.

14. Media Development Initiatives

14.1 Review

The 15 interviewees have all been involved in media development projects of one kind or another. The following is a brief overview of the kinds of key projects the interviewees identified.

Training

Quite a number of the interviewees' organisations are involved in training and re-training of both media personnel and students in different ways. The Catholic Media Services Centre trains practising journalists, particularly in specialist subjects, such as editing and use of digital technologies. Students and information officers from relevant government ministries have also been trained by the centre. Most of the current training by the centre is connected to new broadcast technologies. The Nigerian Press Council (NPC) has also been involved in re-training practitioners, in particular through seminars and conferences. The Press Council recently organised a conference for newspaper editors and proof-readers.

The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) is involved in training in all aspects of radio and television production, including technical training. In addition, the NBC has been giving out financial awards as a form of encouragement to the best mass communication graduate students from tertiary institutions. Further, the NBC organises student visits to media houses. The Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) runs specialised seminars and conferences for its members in order to make them better equipped and more efficient in their jobs. The NGE also organises editors' conferences in the form of retreats, encouraging editors to look back to re-assess the practice of journalism, and to devise means of moving forward. For its part, the Media Trust, publisher of the *Daily Trust* and *Weekly Trust* newspapers, claims to have an elaborate programme of re-training of the workforce. Meanwhile, the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), as the umbrella body for all journalists, has been at the forefront of training, in the hopes of building professionalism. The NUJ bid for and won the rights to run the International Institute of Journalism in Nigeria. The Institute is involved in training journalists in different areas and is affiliated to the University of Maiduguri. Meanwhile, the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) collaborates with several organisations and bodies, such as Media Rights Agenda (MRA), in the training of journalists. For example, UNIC recently sponsored 49 journalists to attend a training programme abroad.

Two interviewees are Professors of Mass Communications, and are involved in training students in their respective universities. In addition, these academics have also been involved as resource persons and consultants in other training organised by bodies such as the Nigerian Press Council, the Nigerian Population Commission and the UN children's agency UNICEF.

Online media, empowerment TV, developmental radio, consumer protection
While the bulk of media development projects, initiatives and activities taking place in Nigeria focus on training, re-training and capacity building, there are some notable exceptions to this rule. Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief and founder of *Gleaners News Online*, started his project when many believed it was not possible to publish a newspaper online, and thus is an example of media development. Also, Adesuwa Onyenokwe, formerly an employee of the state TV, NTA, is now at the forefront of women's empowerment with the company she set up, Universal Communications. An independent producer, she has a popular programme, *Today's Woman*, running on the NTA national TV network. She also has another TV programme, *The Will to Survive* that is also popular. Meanwhile, Alison Data-Phido and her organisation, ARDA, organised a conference called "Who Owns the Airwaves?" to encourage the use of radio for development. ARDA, uses audience research, monitoring and content-building for developmental purposes. Finally, Mary Udumah of the NCC highlighted the Commission's "Consumer Parliament" project, through which aggrieved consumers and service providers are brought together in a forum to resolve disputes.

14.1.1 Approaches to media development

The overarching objectives and goals of the organisations from which the interviewees were drawn can be summarised as follows:

☐ capacity building for practitioners and would-be practitioners (students);

☐ the enhancement of the practice of journalism and promotion of professionalism and journalist welfare;

☐ advocacy for change, including changing attitudes and perceptions around development issues;

☐ audience/consumer rights, such as the NCC's Consumer Parliament programme; and,

☐ programme production and distribution.

14.1.2 Funding of media development

Ten of the 15 interviewees were involved in funding media development. While seven interviewees were sure that the proportion of funding for media development has been increasing in recent years, and were optimistic about increases in the years to come, two were categorical that funding was actually decreasing. Six were not sure. Reasons given for the increased funding included:

☐ the present democratic era:

" *… because democracy is waxing stronger, new needs for journalism.* "

(Professor Stella Okunna, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka, Nigeria)

☐ an improvement in the business environment;

☐ increasing public interest:

" *I am sure it's as a result of the increased public interest in the use of media to circulate public information.* "

(Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge; Media Support: United Nations Information Centre Lagos, Nigeria)

☐ better fundraising strategies:

" *We come up with programmes and we go to them – corporate bodies – or even any agencies we think will be interested in what we are doing. We sell the idea to them and the good thing is that there is no idea that we sell to them that they rejected.* "

(Angela Agoawike, Secretary, Media Practitioner, Private Sector, Nigerian Guild of Editors, Nigeria)

Those of the opinion that funding is decreasing and is likely to continue to decrease cited as one reason, the wrong impression by donors that Nigeria is a rich country:

" *… most often when we try to locate sponsors or any agencies that are sympathetic… we don't find them… Some of the funding agencies are beginning to say that Nigeria is a rich country, [and that] we can undertake the sponsorship of our programmes, and things like that.* "

(Father Victor Yakubu, Director General; NGO: Catholic Media Services Centre, Kaduna, Nigeria)

Another reason cited for a possible decrease in funding was a lack of understanding of the importance of media in democratisation.

14.2 Success and impact

14.2.1 Evaluating the success of media development projects

The interviewees said some of their organisations do not evaluate projects and, in cases where evaluation is done, it is not systematic or scientific, and may therefore be difficult to generalise from. In all, ten out of the 15 interviewees *do* evaluate projects while three do not evaluate at all. Two of the interviewees did not respond to the question. The methods of evaluation cited include:

- forms or simple questionnaires;
- invited comments at the end of projects;
- end-of-year assessments; and,
- basic feedback from end-users through text messages, email and phone calls.

Only three interviewees of the 10 that do evaluations confirmed using scientific procedures including interviews, questionnaires and the commissioning of monitoring agencies. In this category are UNIC, ARDA and Professor Okunna. Osazuwa of UNIC said:

" We have an in-house survey instrument. We return it to New York at the end of the year. We call it annual performance appraisal for our activities. "

(Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge; Media Support: United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), Lagos, Nigeria)

ARDA's Data-Phido said:

" One of the key methods is that we subscribe to a media monitoring company. They have an omnibus survey… And so, every two months we get some kind of… audience response to our programmes. "

(Alison Data-Phido, Programme Director; NGO: African Radio Drama Association, Nigeria)

Some of those who are not doing systematic evaluating see the need for it, but say they cannot afford to pay for it.

14.2.2 Factors contributing to the success of media development projects

Key success factors mentioned by interviewees were:

- funding from supportive donors;
- commitment and professional standing of staff; and,
- proper planning and inclusion of local stakeholders.

In terms of supportive funding relationships, UNILAG FM cited the invaluable support given to them by OSIWA.

> *They made money available for us to buy parts of our equipment, and that is a very major contribution coming from an international organisation, and we are forever grateful to them.*

(Adeniyi Bello, General Manager; Media Entrepreneur: UNILAG FM Community Radio, Nigeria)

Successful funding, in the view of the UN, often requires contributing to projects that have multiple players.

> *One of the things we look out for in the UN in giving support is counterpart ideas, initiatives, or arrangements. The UN will hardly go solely with anybody if there are no other people that are interested.*

(Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge; Media Support: United Nations Information Centre, Lagos, Nigeria)

ARDA attributed some of its success to funding and monitoring support from the US Embassy in Nigeria.

> *I will say that the monitoring by partners is important. There is a system that funders or some funders, have put into our programmes that helps us to stay on course. For me, one such programme is the one sponsored by the Embassy of America; the sort that makes you write reports and [have] the monitoring indicators, and so on. And that helps organisations like mine to discipline resources and funds and everything…*

(Alison Data-Phido, Programme Director; NGO: African Radio Drama Association, Nigeria)

In terms of commitment and professional standing of staff, many of the interviewees noted that staff are key assets to all successful projects.

> *For the Commission you have here a crop of people who… live, breathe [and] eat broadcasting, and for them it is just a challenge in making sure that we do what is right.*

(Mark Ojiah, Head of Planning and Research; Government: National Broadcasting Commission, Nigeria)

Another interviewee said:

> Having staff members who are working within teams that are committed to, rather than claiming ownership of, a programme… must be a critical factor as well.

(Adeniyi Bello, General Manager; Media Entrepreneur: UNILAG FM Community Radio, Nigeria)

Alison Data-Phido of ARDA had a similar view to Mr Bello's.

In terms of good planning and including local stakeholders, one interviewee said:

" For you to take on any kind of course, you need to do a lot of planning. In planning, you recruit, so to say, students; because we are not so much an institution that will say that we have everything being systematised… If funding is from the external body, then, it is better for us. But if it is from internal arrangement, whereby people will have to come and pay, then it becomes a difficult situation. So, one of the things that have made for success in our activities is planning. "

(Father Victor Yakubu, Director General; NGO: Catholic Media Services Centre, Kaduna, Nigeria)

He emphasises, therefore, that the local context must be taken into account when planning a project.

14.2.3 Factors undermining the success of media development projects

When citing examples of failed projects, the lack of commitment, or of organisational capacity and of enabling regulations were key themes. Tony Iyare of *Gleaners News Online* talked about his failure to make information available to Nigerians at a reduced cost because of lack of funds and awareness. ARDA's Alison Data-Phido spoke of the failure to achieve behaviour change due to the attitudes and reception of radio stations approached to air ARDA programmes. Meanwhile, Mr Omole of the Nigerian Press Council said the Council has not been able to carry out its regulatory and accreditation roles for journalism training institutions due to the lack of an enabling instrument and poor funding of journalism institutions which, if accreditation were to be carried out, would all fail to meet the minimum standards. UNIC says the failure of its Programme on Peace Building and Conflict Resolution was due to the lackadaisical attitude of the local partners.

14.3   Lessons learned

Interviewees identified the following key lessons based on their organisations' experiences:

- [ ] both funds and equipment/infrastructure are needed for a media project to be successful;
- [ ] no project can succeed without a committed and dedicated staff;
- [ ] government cannot be trusted to provide support for good projects or initiatives;
- [ ] monitoring and planning are pre-requisites for success;
- [ ] Nigerians, when given the opportunity, can design and implement good and effective projects; and,
- [ ] no matter how good the intentions of donors, without projects being needs/demand-driven, and based on astute understanding of the local context, they are bound to fail.

In terms of factors that inhibit the success of media development projects, interviewees identified the following:

- [ ] the involvement of politicians;
- [ ] pandering to government interests, or government interference; and,
- [ ] a lack of professionalism among journalists.

14.3.1 The importance of the cultural context in planning and designing initiatives

All 15 interviewees agreed that the Nigerian cultural context is unique and must be given a prime place in the process of designing and planning any media initiative. This is probably the area where opinions and perspectives converged most among interviewees.

" *One, they should understand African cultural peculiarities [and] particularities. If they match the two, the project will be successful. For instance, take what has happened in the US to former President Bill Clinton. To us in Africa it is not news, it happens every hour here; but you can see how they subjected the president of that powerful nation to questions and all those things because of inappropriate action or whatever. So, there is need for African definition of what is or what is not news.* "

(Professor Ralph Akinfeleye, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: University of Lagos, Nigeria)

" *From my own experience, without [knowing] the culture of the people, you are just not communicating. You know, communication has to take off from the understanding of where the person is coming from, and for me, audience research helps me to appreciate and… make it a front seat initiative in anything I am doing. You know, I think any media development initiative should take off from where the people are.* "

(Alison Data-Phido, Programme Director; NGO: African Radio Drama Association, Nigeria)

Despite the congregation of opinion on the importance of cultural considerations in the designing and planning of media initiatives, the reasons given were varied and so did the perspectives on how to achieve cultural appropriateness. Some of the reasons given for the need to consider cultural elements were as follows:

☐ correct decisions can be made in the packaging of messages for maximum effect; and,

☐ many of the hitherto under-exposed cultures can become exposed for the good of all the people.

" *You see, we want to see more of Africa on African media, but we are paying lip service to developing African media…. People should come and invest… they would be able to see content that is truly African.* "

(Adesuwa Onyenokwe, Independent Producer; NGO: Universal Communications, Nigeria)

In terms of how to achieve cultural appropriateness in media development initiatives, interviewees cited the following:

☐ avoid dependence on foreign sponsors;

☐ put more investment into the production of Nigerian local programmes;

☐ support government local content polices; and,

☐ emphasise local content in journalism training.

15. Developing the Environment for Success

15.1 Key factors

The interviewees generally agreed that there were improvements in the development of media in Nigeria over the past five years. Many factors were seen as responsible for this.

15.1.1 Availability of external funding for training and equipment

It was said that, even during the trying periods for the media under military rule, funds made available were used for training, provision of equipment and new technology.

15.1.2 Democracy

The most-cited factor given for media development initiative success was the democracy, Nigeria.

" *Things that have pushed for media development… I will say democracy… even though it is not perfect yet, people see the potential in it, and are fighting for it* **"**

(Alison Data-Phido, Programme Director; NGO: African Radio Drama Association, Nigeria)

" *Working for… democracy has been one big catalyst. Because Nigerian media, they've seized the requirement of democracy and the important role they play as the Fourth Estate of the realm… I think that is why they can even talk about the Freedom of Expression Bill… That is why you can even talk about workshops. So, I think democracy is working for the media… because once you are democratic, the outside world… their eyes are on you.* **"**

(Professor Stella Okunna, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka, Nigeria)

" *Democracy, no matter how malfunctioning, it is something that one should commend… before 1999, we have not seen these changes, and I think things will continue to change. The whole issue now rests with us and I believe we will make progress; definitely we will make some progress.* **"**

(Shuaibu Usman Leman, Secretary General; Media Support: Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigeria)

> *The democratic environment also creates that expansion… the media industry is so robust now that if you have enough money tomorrow, you can get the right licences to set up. It was not there when it was not democracy.*

(Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge; Media Support: United Nations Information Centre, Lagos, Nigeria)

15.1.3 Private sector participation

The next factor cited was private sector involvement, which has helped create a plurality of media.

> *Privatisation at least makes it more plural… we have more than 15 national dailies in the country… privatisation has thrived in the electronic media. Radio, for example… no radio can afford to sit back.*

(Adesuwa Onyenokwe, Independent Producer; NGO: Universal Communications, Nigeria)

> *The first thing is the deregulation policy of Nigeria in 1992. Prior to that, all radio and television stations were owned and controlled by the government, either federal or state.*

(Professor Ralph Akinfeleye, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: University of Lagos, Nigeria)

15.2 Political and economic influences

Interviewees cited political and economic influences on the success of media development initiatives in four distinct but inter-related ways.

15.2.1 Return to democracy

Thirteen interviewees cited the return to democracy and the dividends of democracy – i.e., deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation — as the major political and economic galvaniser of media development in the past five years.

15.2.2 Expanded business environment

Participants also pointed to the expanded business environment, which has generated more advertising revenue, and a more conducive atmosphere for doing business. In particular, the mobile telephony GSM revolution has been a contributor to the burgeoning of media development in Nigeria. The telecommunications boom in general has meant more job opportunities, and more advertisements for media establishments.

15.2.3 A 'hunger' for informaiton

The third point mentioned had to do with what is described as Nigerians' insatiable quest for information.

> " *For instance, it is said that Nigerians have an aggressive spirit and [that] aggressive spirit is translated to the media, and that is why, when you [look at] the level of independence in Nigerian newspapers today and compare it with that of countries like Kenya and Senegal that have not had one minute of military coup… Unlike those countries where media laws are better, they have not experienced military coup for even one day… their newspapers are more timid than the Nigerian [ones].* "

(Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief; NGO: *Gleaners News Online*, Nigeria)

15.2.4 New technology

Some also pointed to the Internet and computers as contributing to media development by making the practice of journalism, publishing and writing easier:

> " *Some went abroad and saw that this is the age of citizen journalism. The age of all kinds of blogging. It is an age where an editor is no longer king, because people can put stories [out] by themselves… we are seeing the waning of the so-called powerful editor, who determines what is published and what is not published* "

(Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief; NGO: *Gleaners News Online*, Nigeria)

15.2.5 State support for media development initiatives

Linked to the political and economic issues just cited is the issue of the state's role in media development.

Two interviewees were categorical in saying that there was no state support for media development in Nigeria, while four said support only existed to a small extent. The remaining interviewees said that there is state support but mainly for government-owned media, where the state provides salaries and infrastructure.

15.2.6 State regulation

It was pointed out that the government's regulatory activities do not augur well for effective media development. For example, the government is reluctant to grant licences to community media operations and to release its hold on national broadcasting.

> " *I know the role the NBC is playing now in ensuring that the federal government gives licences to some people who have applied for community broadcasting. The NBC is now strong, but it is only the President that can approve a licence. So, what can the NBC do? The NBC has short-listed some names which they passed on to the Minister of Information, and I am aware that some of these applications have gone as far as the table of the President. But everybody is waiting for the President to one day approve the licences. So, what can you say?* "

(Adeniyi Bello, General Manager; Media Entrepreneur: UNILAG FM Community Radio, Nigeria)

Professor Akinfeleye argued strongly for the state to open up the airwaves to community broadcasters.

> *Open the air. Let all birds fly without collisions with one another. Let us imitate other countries like Ghana… There is a need, especially in a country where the literacy level is not very high… community radio stations, community television stations can help in terms of development, in terms of knowledge of governance, and the like… NTA cannot do all, FRCN cannot do all.*

(Professor Ralph Akinfeleye, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: University of Lagos, Nigeria)

Some participants also pointed to the disparity in licence fees, whereby the government-controlled media pay extremely low fees while private operators are made to pay high fees, and yet all the media outlets compete for the same advertising market opportunities.

15.3 Donor communities' role

Interviewees noted strong donor support for fellowships and training experiences for journalists, as well as equipment donations and grants. Donors were generally applauded for following through well on schemes they initiated, and in many cases donors make admirable use of local people to choose programmes for support. However, there were some concerns expressed about certain elements of the donor role.

15.3.1 Donor agendas

Interviewees agreed that most of the donors have set agendas that they force upon Nigerian NGOs or groups they sponsor. While this is frowned upon, interviewees reason that the donors are justified because, as they say, "he who pays the piper dictates the tune". The implication, however, is that some projects do not cohere with the needs and aspirations of the people.

> *Sometimes they have their own issues that they want to address and therefore, that becomes a constraint for you, like the MDGs [Millennium Development Goals] for example. I found out what Nigerians are interested in. Ideally that is what I should do… And yet, if I go to a donor whose priorities are not the same… it won't work.*

(Alison Data-Phido, Programme Director; NGO: African Radio Drama Association, Nigeria)

There is a belief that some of the donors are deceived by pre-conceived notions of Nigeria and Nigerians, and sometimes end up not supporting the groups they should. For instance, one of the interviewees said,

> *They just talk down [to] people… they generally assume that people do not know anything. And they have a very false Euro-American conception of history.*

(Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief; NGO, *Gleaners News Online*, Nigeria)

There is also the feeling that donors only concentrate on the formal media, while neglecting indigenous media and the potentials that such media offer.

Another feeling is that some donors bring in their own people to implement projects and because such people are ignorant of the terrain, they end up undermining the project.

" *Some of the donors may allow you to select who you want to execute the project, but some others, they are finding jobs for their people, that is where they get it wrong…* "

(Mary Uduma, Head of Corporate Planning and Research; Government Department: Nigerian Communications Commission, Nigeria)

15.3.2 Donor understanding of cultural and economic realities

Only two of the 15 interviewees said the donor community understood the cultural and economic contexts of Nigeria, while two were of the view that donors did not fully understand, but tried their best. The remaining 11 interviewees said they strongly believed that donors did not understand the terrain because they could only understand what Nigerians wanted them to understand. The situation is compounded by the perception that Nigeria is a corrupt country, which apparently makes donors distrust virtually every Nigerian.

" *How can they understand? First of all, our image is being battered daily. So, they come with a mindset that there is nothing good in this place… When they come, they are wary of the fact that these are not people to be trusted, so I think they don't understand that there are capable people.* "

(Mary Udumah, Head of Corporate Planning and Research; Government: Nigerian Communications Commission, Nigeria).

15.3.3 A different donor approach

Participants recommended that the donor community should de-emphasise its relationship with government. In the words of one participant,

" *I have just finished looking at how the approach of working with or through the government work… it's never going to be too much for them to look at their strategies again and identify areas where they can start to give trust to some of these organisations and say, let them do this directly with us.* "

(Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge; Media Support: United Nations Information Centre, Lagos, Nigeria)

15.4 Other issues

Apart from all the success factors already recorded, there are others mentioned by the interviewees that are worth explaining.

15.4.1 New technology

Expansion in the acquisition of modern technologies that make the switch from analogue mode to digital possible has contributed greatly to media development.

" *In the last five years, I think one of the most important things that has happened to us is digitalisation. Because you know, both radio and television have been operating in the analogue system for quite some time now… Our organisation has for the past five years or so, been undertaking debuts in the issue of digitalisation, trying to acquaint producers of radio and television stations on how to… use certain software that will enhance their work.* "

(Father Victor Yakubu, Director General; NGO: Catholic Media Services Centre, Kaduna, Nigeria)

15.4.2 Increasing local content

It was observed that increased local content and its rising popularity have also led to success in media development. The case of the NBC's insistence on local content on broadcast stations was cited as positive. Another positive local content phenomenon has been the "Nollywood" video drama industry, which has become known around the world.

15.4.3 Role of professional associations

Codes are being put in place by professional associations for the effective practice of journalism and, as a result, the practice of media. Many used to see this as a job for drop-outs, but it is now becoming respected.

15.4.4 Healthy competition, job growth

Another positive phenomenon identified was the healthy competition among media organisations, which is forcing media houses to seek new talent, thus creating more jobs for graduates.

16. Future Strategies

16.1 Strategic priorities

There was overwhelming agreement that a new donor-backed media development initiative in Nigeria should address:

- ☐ training;
- ☐ infrastructure;
- ☐ private small-scale ownership;
- ☐ community media; and,
- ☐ legal reform.

16.1.1 Training

Seven interviewees mentioned training directly, while five mentioned support for training institutes. In the words of the Media Trust's Kabiru Yusuf:

> " *Now we have all sorts of 'cowboy journalists'… We need the basic skills, we need training in terms of the ethics of the profession. Many people are shocked by what we publish in Nigerian papers… It is as if there is no law, nobody is afraid of anything.* "

(**Kabiru Yusuf**, Editor-In-Chief; Commentator/Academic: Media Trust Nigeria Ltd, Abuja, Nigeria)

16.1.2 Infrastructure

Following training closely as a priority cited by interviewees was infrastructure, and facilities and equipment in particular. Seven interviewees mentioned this as a strategic priority. According to Father Yakubu:

> " *In one of the [radio] stations that we visited some time ago, there was a stone that was used to hold the console. A stone was pushed to hold the console. And the person, who was there, didn't even take it as anything. It was… a shock to us. This is a powerful media organisation that has given so much to the public… So I should say that, funding organisations, if they can concentrate on helping people acquire equipment… [it] will actually be good for the future.* "

(**Father Victor Yakubu**, Director General, NGO, Catholic Media Services Centre, Kaduna, Nigeria)

16.1.3 Private small-scale ownership

Four interviewees specifically called for an arrangement that would encourage direct ownership of the media by practitioners, such as establishing a pool of funds or a facility where practitioners could draw money. Mr Ojiah of the NBC envisioned a company that practitioners could have shares in, through which they could share the same facilities, such as the same transmitter and so on.

16.1.4 Community media

Four interviewees also mentioned community media (radio, television, newspapers) as an area that requires strategic intervention.

16.1.5 Legal reform

Two interviewees called for support for policy or legal reform. Mrs Data-Phido of ARDA talked about backing initiatives that would support bills on media and freedom of information, while Mary Udumah of the NCC talked about new legislation that would enable private sector media to perform effectively.

16.2 Focus of support

Interviewees were asked to rank in importance the need for support in particular areas: media policy-legal frameworks, developing local content, supporting growth of private media, raising standards of journalism, and any other areas they deemed important.

16.2.1 Media frameworks

Thirteen participants regarded this element as important or necessary. However, only four (Mrs Data-Phido of ARDA, Mr Omole of the Press Council, Mr Ojiah of NBC and Nosa Osazuwa of UNIC) chose it as their number one priority. Of these four, two are from regulatory bodies: Mr Ojiah of NBC and Mr Omole from the Press Council. The remaining two are media users.

Kabiru Yusuf, who spoke eloquently on media frameworks, was torn between frameworks and training, in the end placing training first, but his words on the need for support for media frameworks are a good testament.

> " *When you say 'media framework' you are talking of policies maybe at the level that will affect all the media. I know for example, we have at the National Assembly, the Freedom of Information Bill. If that were passed then we have a huge input on the work of the media. A policy framework. It has been sitting in the National Assembly for the last six years. Because it will empower the media.* "

(Kabiru Yusuf, Editor-In-Chief; Commentator/Academic: Media Trust Nigeria Limited, Abuja, Nigeria)

16.2.2 Developing local content

Fewer than half of the interviewees viewed local content as very important. Some of the interviewees said that if training and the policy-legal frameworks are handled correctly, then increased local content will follow naturally. Ms Agoawike of the Guild of Editors said that international donors are not needed to help develop local content. Only three (Father Yakubu of the Catholic Media Services Centre, Shuaibu Usman Leman of the NUJ and Adesuwa Onyenokwe of Universal Communications) voted for local content as their number one priority.

16.2.3 Supporting the growth of independent media

Most of the interviewees agreed that supporting independent media is a necessary area. More than two-thirds of the interviewees rated it as very important or important. Three (Ms Udumah, Mr Iyare and Mr Agoawike) made it their number one priority.

Even though only three ranked independent media support in first place, the author is of the view, based on extensive discussion with the interviewees, that there is a strong backing for this kind of support. There was a general feeling among interviewees that the state-controlled media cannot be trusted to tell the truth or to keep the government on its toes. The recent crisis of the President's consideration of a third term revealed this eloquently. While the government-controlled media sang the praises of tenure extension for President Obasanjo, AIT provided live coverage of the debate in the Senate. Being put in the public glare made many Senators support the will of the people, ie, made them oppose tenure extension.

16.2.4 Raising standards of journalism

There was unanimous agreement by all 15 interviewees on the importance of raising the standard of journalism through training and re-training, though different interviewees gave this area different emphases. Five interviewees rated training/raising standards highest on their scale of importance.

16.2.5 Any other areas

None of the interviewees considered any other area important enough to score a first over the four above-mentioned areas, though some acknowledged the importance of industry support structures such as trade bodies.

16.3   Media sector focus

There was almost an even spread of responses on the question of which sector – community, private or state/public – should be the key focus of future initiatives. Five interviewees favoured community, five favoured support for all three sectors, and four argued for support of private commercial media. Only one interviewee, Adesuwa Onyenokwe, argued for exclusive support of state/public media, reasoning that such support might encourage the state media to shun pro-state subjectivity.

The five interviewees who argued for local community media based their reasons on the functions such media can serve for society.

" *… it will educate… the local people, it will bring governance to them; they will be able to express their own views. Communication is not only one-way, it is two ways. So, we know about HIV, some people that are HIV positive, they are in their villages, and they don't know that there is a programme the government is doing for them, and it is only when you say it in their local language [that] they will be able to get to know.* "

(Mary Udumah, Head of Corporate Planning and Research; Government: Nigerian Communications Commission, Nigeria)

The five who voted for supporting all three media sectors were Nosa Osazuwa of UNIC, Data-Phido of ARDA, Ms Agoawike of the Guild of Editors, the NTA trainer and Mr Omole of the Press Council.

The four interviewees who argued for support of private commercial media were Mark Ojiah of NBC, Shuaibu Lema of NUJ, Tony Iyare of *Gleaners News Online* and Father Yakubu of the Catholic Media Services Centre. According to Mr Iyare,

" *… the private media have shown more bite throughout the history of Nigeria. All the struggles that have been fought, have been fought at the level of the private and commercial media. It's far more competitive, it takes issues [in] a more pluralistic manner.* "

(Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief; NGO: *Gleaners News Online*, Nigeria)

Father Yakubu echoes this reasoning saying that:

" *if you give it to private individuals, they know how to make things… really go forward. I think they are better managers compared to government in terms of radio/television and other media outfits.* "

(Father Victor Yakubu, Director General; NGO: Catholic Media Services Centre, Kaduna, Nigeria)

16.4   Type of support most needed/useful

Five types of support were ranked as potentially most useful. The highest ranking went to training, which was cited by six interviewees, followed by equipment/facilities, which was cited by four of the interviewees. Community media, funding and media frameworks all got two votes, leaving the following ranking:

☐ training;

☐ equipment/facilities; and,

☐ community media, funding, media frameworks.

Fourteen of the interviewees said that business or commercial interests have contributions to make to the development of media in Nigeria. Only one interviewee, Mr Iyare of *Gleaners News Online*, did not see a strong role for commercial interests.

" *Because media is considered an endangered species. Quite a lot of banks and so on that have gone into it have not found it very profitable.* "

(Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief; NGO: *Gleaners News Online*, Nigeria)

But Professor Okunna pointed to;

> *… the new initiative by the Obasanjo administration with private-public partnership… the banks are funding so many things now… they are beginning to support the public sector because the government alone can never do anything… and as the Nigerian private sector rises to the challenge, donor agencies are gradually going to withdraw.*

(**Professor Stella Okunna**, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka, Nigeria)

16.5 Appropriate organisational framework

Interviewees had varied opinions on the appropriate framework for a new media initiative in Nigeria. Some favoured strengthening of existing networks and the need to generate more networking among existing groups, while others called for a new body or network to be created.

Father Yakubu argued for a new body, but only if the existing ones are incapable of being strengthened to perform. Adesuwa Onyenokwe supported utilising existing agencies, while Mr Ojiah of the NBC would prefer having something new for Nigeria that could cater to Nigerian peculiarities. Nosa Osazuwa did not;

> *… support throwing away existing agencies. I would rather fine-tune their operations [and harness] African networks… I think we need that, because, in Nigeria… we have not fully internationalised. If you go to East and Southern Africa, what we are talking about is already on the ground there.*

(**Nosa Osazuwa**, Officer-in-Charge; Media Support: United Nations Information Centre, Lagos, Nigeria).

16.6 Pan-regional versus country-specific initiatives

Eight interviewees supported the idea of pan-regional initiatives, four wanted the focus to be country-specific, and three supported a mix of pan-African and country-specific. Shuaibu Leman of the NUJ supported a pan-regional initiative because;

> *… we have a lot to learn from one another and if you look at it critically, we thought poorer countries like Mali, Niger have not done much in terms of the development of the media, but we discovered with exchange visits [that] there are areas we can learn from them, particularly in the broadcast industry, where they have created so much awareness that you easily see that the ordinary person across Niger is more politically conscious than somebody in Lagos or Kaduna.*

(**Shuaibu Usman Leman**, Secretary General; Media Support: Nigerian Union of Journalists, Nigeria)

Ms Udumah of the NCC also argued for a pan-regional approach:

" *I believe in regional integration… and it will also attract investment, if they [investors] know that we have a harmonised regional market, that what you do in Nigeria is the same thing you practice in Ghana, is the same thing you practise in Côte d'Ivoire… that the legal frameworks don't change, the policies are the same.* "

(Mary Udumah, Head of Corporate Planning and Research; Government: Nigerian Communications Commission, Nigeria)

Tony Iyare of *Gleaners News Online*, Mark Ojiah of NBC, Ms Agoawike of the Guild of Editors, and Professor Akinfeleye argued for country-specific initiatives. Tony Iyare pointed to the differing needs of different countries, saying;

" *… unlike Nigeria the problem in Ghana may not be… power supply, water, and may be [other] infrastructure… so it's better to be country-specific; if not, we use a generalisation that may have problems.* "

(Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief; NGO: *Gleaners News Online*, Nigeria)

Nosa Osazuwa, Data-Phido and the media practitioner argued for a mix of both pan-regional and country-specific. For Nosa Osazuwa;

" *… if you are looking at the regulating or coordinating of conduct or practice of journalism, there is no reason why it should be regional… but if you are to look at networking for the purposes of relaying the products and services, it can be both [regional and national].* "

(Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge; Media Support: United Nations Information Centre, Lagos, Nigeria)

16.7 Initiatives relating to developmental content

There were varied suggestions for how to support developmental content. Shuaibu Leman of the NUJ called for support of 'beat' journalism, whereby journalists specialise in certain areas of interest. Support could be given to journalists to specialise in developmental goal areas. Professor Okunna advocated a kind of 'clearing house' of communication on developmental matters, with a database from which journalists or researchers could extract information on all sectors. Ms Agoawike of the Guild of Editors called for building developmental content skills into curricula.

16.8 Initiatives to develop independent media

Again, views expressed on how to support an independent media varied. Many answers focused on support for private media. Mr Omole of the Press Council said that initiatives targeted at improving the quality of newspapers would help the papers attract readership and, in turn, advertisers. Mrs Data-Phido, Mr Iyare and others advocated aggressive marketing and audience research so that the private media could attract advertisers. A media practitioner recommended support for independent commercial programmes that have national appeal, such as programmes on the coverage of elections that will attract audience and advertisers. Ms Udumah of the NCC argued that support for quality programming is the best way to support commercial media.

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

All the interviewees agreed that media development is critical and vital to Nigeria's democratisation process. The media, said Shuaibu Lema of the NUJ, is at the forefront of the struggle to sustain Nigeria's young democracy, as it was in the struggle to force the military out.

17. Summary & Conclusions

17.1 Media development: an organisational perspective

☐ Nine of the 15 interviewees said the most important change in the media sector in the last five years has been the mix of deregulation/liberalisation/privatisation.

☐ Four interviewees said the newly democratic environment has been the key change.

☐ All interviewees agreed that media development in the past five years has had significant impact on their own area of work.

17.2 Lessons learned

☐ Interviewees identified the following key success factors for media development initiatives:

- funding;

- infrastructure;

- committed and dedicated staff;

- monitoring and planning;

- local Nigerian design and implementation; and,

- initiatives not driven by donors, but rather by locally-articulated needs and demands.

☐ Factors that inhibit success were identified as:

- the involvement of politicians;

- pandering to government interests or government interference; and,

- a lack of journalistic professionalism.

17.3   Developing the environment for success

☐ Four key political and economic factors were identified as allowing for successful media development in Nigeria:

- the return to democracy;

- Nigerians' desire for information;

- a better business environment; and,

- computer/Internet usage.

☐ In terms of the role of the state in media development, most felt the state cannot be relied upon to help all media, and will tend to support state-owned media.

☐ The donor community was applauded for its good work, but was urged to involve local people more, and to avoid imposing agendas.

17.4   Strategic priorities

Interviewees agreed on five strategic priorities:

☐ give support to journalism training institutions in order to raise professional standards;

☐ ensure greater investment in infrastructure;

☐ encourage small-scale private ownership;

☐ encourage local, community-owned media; and,

☐ implement legal reform.

In terms of an appropriate organisational framework, it was agreed that a network structure would be best. This would require a strengthening of existing networking among organisations, and expanding the scope of collaborations. In this light, many interviewees gave support to the idea of a pan-regional initiative, but warned that this should take into account the political, economic and cultural specificities of each country involved. Finally, all interviewees agreed that media development initiatives are vital to Nigeria's democratisation process.

17.5   Final thoughts

Even though the legal frameworks that have informed the nature and extent of media development in Nigeria began with the deregulation processes of 1992, it was not until the return to civil rule in 1999 that democracy allowed for full liberalisation, privatisation and pluralism of media to an extent never before seen in Nigeria. There has been a flurry of activities, granting of licences to private operators to run television and radio stations, and an explosion in the telecoms sector. This has created more job opportunities, brought out alternative voices, encouraged improved quality and more people-oriented programming, and provided robust monitoring of the processes of governance.

Meanwhile, there have been media development activities in the past five years, particularly in the area of training and capacity building. But these have been too few compared to the volume of journalists and media practitioners being employed (as a result of the expansion in the number of media operators).

It is true that the business environment and the space for media operation have significantly improved in Nigeria, but there is still an overbearing influence of the state in terms of regulation and control of national broadcasting. As such, there is not yet a level playing field for the state-controlled media and the private media, with government support skewed against the private media.

The role of the donor community in media development cannot be overemphasised, simply because the absence of government support and inadequate resources mean poor levels of operation by most media organisations. But while the donors have performed impressively, they still do not understand the local cultural context well enough. It is desired that donors continue to intervene, but with local partnerships based on local sensibilities.

Training, re-training and support for journalism institutions make up the main priorities expressed by interviewees for intervention to develop the media in Nigeria for the future. However, the interviewees also acknowledged that training without requisite infrastructure – ie, facilities and equipment – cannot lead to the desired stage of media development in Nigeria.

Even though the media has expanded greatly in Nigeria, there is a serious dearth of community media. Because they are not seen as profitable, the fear is that community media will never take off unless there is intervention by donors. Donor support is needed in this area, but in a manner that ensures stations are established in a sustainable way.

The interviewees also called for support of policy-legal reform processes, in order to ensure a healthy, fair environment in which all three media sectors (community, private commercial and state/public) can prosper.

18. Appendices

Appendix 1: Interviewees

Father Victor Yakubu, Director General; NGO: Catholic Media Services Centre, Kaduna, Nigeria

Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief; NGO: *Gleaners News Online*, Nigeria

Alison Data-Phido, Programme Director; NGO: African Radio Drama Association, Nigeria

Adesuwa Onyenokwe, Independent Producer; NGO: Universal Communications, Nigeria

Godwin Omole, Executive Secretary, Government, Nigerian Press Council, Nigeria

Mary Udumah, Head of Corporate Planning and Research; Government: Nigerian Communications Commission, Nigeria

Mark Ojiah, Head of Planning and Research; Government: National Broadcasting Commission, Nigeria

Media Practitioner; Public Sector: Nigeria

Angela Agoawike, Secretary; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Nigerian Guild of Editors, Nigeria

Adeniyi Bello, General Manager; Media Entrepreneur: UNILAG FM Community Radio, Nigeria

Professor Ralph Akinfeleye, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: University of Lagos, Nigeria

Mallam Kabiru Yusuf, Editor-in-Chief; Analyst: Media Trust of Nigeria, Publisher of the *Daily Trust* and *Weekly Trust* newspapers, Nigeria

Professor Stella Okunna, Professor of Mass Communications; Academic: Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka, Nigeria

Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge; Media Support: United Nations Information Centre, Lagos, Nigeria

Shuaibu Usman Leman, Secretary General; Media Support: Nigerian Union of Journalists, Nigeria

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/ 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?
Rev. Fr. Victor Yakubu, Director, Catholic Media Services Centre, Kaduna	Training of journalists drawn from media organisations, especially in areas of specialisation such as editing and digitalisation	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Journalists	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects End-of-year assessments Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand
Tony Iyare, Editor-in-Chief, Gleaners News Online	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Alison Data-Phido, Executive Director, African Radio Drama Association (Nigeria), Port Harcourt	Awareness Creation "Who owns the Airwaves"	To create awareness of radio use	Ongoing		Enhanced radio listenership	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects End-of-year assessments Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand
Adesuwa Onyenekwe, Independent Producer, *Today's Woman*, Lagos	Today's WOMAN	Women's empowerment	Ongoing	Women's empowerment	Women	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects End-of-year assessments Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand

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

Godwin Omole, Executive Secretary, Nigeria Press Council	Re-training of practitioners, in particular through seminars and conferences	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Journalists	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects End-of-year assessments Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand
Mary N. Udumah, Head, Corporate Planning and Research of Nigerian Communications Commission	Consumer Parliament	To give consumers justice	Ongoing	Consumers get their worth	Consumers	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects End-of-year assessments Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls		On the basis of feedback and demand
Mark A Ojiah, Head of Research and Planning, National Broadcasting Commission, Abuja, Nigeria	Technical training, Awards and Student Visits	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Journalists, Students	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects End-of-year assessments Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand
Media Practitioner Public Sector	Opening of NTA station in the USA.		Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Foreign/ nationals/ Journalists	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects End-of-year assessments Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand

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

Angela Agoawike, Secretary, Nigeria Guild of editors (NGE)	Specialised seminars and conferences	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled Professional Journalists	Journalists	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand
Adeniyi Bello, General Manager, UNILAG FM Station, University Of Lagos	Training	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Students of journalism	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	NIL
Professor Stella Okunna, Professor of Mass Communication	Training of students	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Students of journalism	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand
Mallam Kabiru Yusuf, Editor-in-Chief, Media Trust	Re-training of workforce	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Journalism	Forms or simple questionnaires Invited comments at the end of projects Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand

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

Professor Ralph Akinfeleye, Professor of Mass Communication	Training of students	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Students of journalism	NIL	NIL	NIL
Shuaibu Usman Leman, National Secretary of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ)	Training journalists in different areas	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Journalism	Forms or simple questionnaires. Invited comments at the end of projects. End-of-year assessments. Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand
Nosa Osazuwa, Officer-in-Charge, United Nations Information Centre, Lagos, Nigeria	Training of journalists	To enhance skills and professionalism	Ongoing	Skilled professional journalists	Students of journalism	Forms or simple questionnaires. Invited comments at the end of projects. End-of-year assessments. Basic feedback from end-users through text messages, e-mail and phone calls	NIL	On the basis of feedback and demand

Nigeria
Country Report
Case Study

19. Case Study

Glo-ing with pride: the story of Globacom Telecommunications in Nigeria

Nigeria, with an estimated population of 133 million is the 'giant' of Africa, but this adjective has been used more as a celebration of its population than anything else. In 2002, Nigeria accounted for 46% of the GDP of sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa. Yet in December 2001, Nigeria could only boast of 2.45% of sub-Saharan Africa's telephone lines. Nigeria's poor showing in the telecoms sector echoes its poor showing in several other sectors. For the telecoms sector, apart from the lack of an enabling environment, the major crisis was the refusal to allow private-sector entrants. There was only one telecommunications company and it was government-owned. As a result, there was no competition and the sector was grossly under-developed. The government-owned sole service provider, Mitel was characterised by obsolete equipment and poor performance. For example, to get connected, consumers had to wait for two to three years. And even when the telephone was eventually supplied, servicing was poor. In 1992, 30 years after independence, Nigeria had fewer than 400,000 connected telephone lines for the entire population. This was a major hindrance to economic growth and productivity. Investors were reluctant to come into an environment where the basic process of communication was inadequate and in short supply.

From 1992, the industry began to open up with the establishment of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC). But it was not until January 2001 that a landmark achievement was recorded, with the auction of four GSM mobile telephony licences. Acknowledged as successful, transparent, fair and competitive, the licensing process opened the floodgates for investments never before witnessed in Nigeria, recording an annual growth rate of 503% for mobile telephony by the end of 2002.

Telecommunications market

Yet even with the growth in 2002, Nigeria still lagged behind other West African neighbours in teledensity. It ranked behind Gambia (2.8%), Senegal (2.29%), and Côte D'Ivoire (2.04%). At the continental level, Nigeria's teledensity was lower than the African average of 2.78%. However, between 2001 and 2005, mobile telephony overtook fixed telephones as the most widely-used telephony access technology in Nigeria. It has become the primary and essential means of communication, accounting for over 70% of total telephone connections. Nine months after starting operations, mobile operators had already exceeded their business plan expectations for subscribers, making the country the dominant GSM market in West Africa.

With the deregulation and privatisation following the return to civil rule in Nigeria in 1999, the government has been courting investors. The investment has been slow to arrive, in part because of poor communications facilities on offer in the country. But since 2003, the waiting lists for telephone lines have not only disappeared but telephone tariffs for local, national and international calls have dropped. The total subscriber base for connected fixed and mobile lines jumped from 2.3 million at the end of December 2002 to 10.2 million by the end of 2004, an annual average growth rate of 125%. In total, nearly eight million new telephone subscriptions have been taken up since December 2002, a leap of 249%. The vast majority of these new users are using mobile telephony.

Yet it has not all been rosy for the mobile telephony industry in Nigeria. The demands for more subscriptions have at times, far outweighed the capacity of the operators to carry them. In no time, MTN and Vmobile exhausted their capacity, which led to line congestion, low call completion rates, unsolicited diversion of calls, wrong connections and failed calls.

In spite of these difficulties, however, mobile has become the strongest Nigerian telecoms sub-sector, with the four competing operators engaging the market more and more aggressively, and declaring robust profits.

Globacom

Globacom is owned by Otunba Mike Adenuga who is Chairman, with Paddy Adenuga as Executive Director of Glomobile and Bella Adenuga as Executive Director of Glo Gateway. Globacom's main suppliers are Siemens and Alcatel, supported by some Nigerian banks.

Of the four operators, Globacom was the last to be licensed, the last to begin operations and the only one that is 100% Nigerian privately-owned. From a modest 13% market share in 2003, it grew to 24% within one year of operations, shrinking the share of MTN from 52% to 42% and Vmobile from 31% to 24%. In the same period, Globacom rolled out its services to 64 towns, up from the five it began with in 2003. Within nine months of commencing operations, it had already built 400 base stations.

Before Globacom joined the fray in August 2003, MTN and Vmobile (then Econet Wireless Nigeria) were the major players of the GSM sector. Both sold their starter packs for as much as N20,000 (US$163 in 2001) and charged N50 (US$0.41) per minute for calls. There was a huge public outcry over the exorbitant charges, especially when the services were initially very poor in quality. Pressures from consumers for the two operators to introduce per-second billing were rejected on the grounds that it was not immediately feasible. When it entered the market in 2003, Globacom began with a much-reduced starter pack price. In addition, it provided per-second billing and introduced a mechanism whereby low-income earners could acquire starter packs through instalment payments taken off their air-time credit. This immediately changed the competitive landscape, as the other operators were forced to also begin per-second billing – Vmobile on 26 November 2003, MTN on 1 December 2003 and Mtel on 17 December 2003.

By 2004, Globacom had brought down the price of its basic pre-paid starter pack to N1 (less than 1 US cent). Others players were forced to reduce their starter pack costs to varying degrees: MTN and Vmobile to N1,000 (US$8.13) and Mtel to N2500 (US$20.3). Globacom brought the prices of its calls down further by starting the 80kobo (US$0.0065) per second billing on popular pre-paid and lowering tariffs on other products.

The keen competition provided by Globacom, and its rapid deployment of base stations, made the other operators roll out their services to cover more areas and, as a result, thousands of new jobs were created. Close to 4,500 people are employed directly by the GSM operators and an estimated 500,000 are benefiting from the indirect employment opportunities created by the GSM operations.

The competition introduced by Globacom also brought in professionalism and better quality services. Prior to the entry of Globacom, the other operators were reluctant to deploy state-of-the-art equipment and facilities.

Value-added services

Globacom has introduced a range of value-added products, including Txt2Email, Friends and Family, Pre-paid Premium, Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS), Talk Now, Magic Plus, Glo Direct, Glo Mobile Internet, ProfitMax Plus and GloFleetmanager. Within a year of starting operations, Globacom also launched Nigeria's first 2.5G (General Packet Radio Service, GPRS) network, supporting both voice and high-speed data transmission. Currently, GPRS service is available in all Glo coverage areas. Globacom has four GPRS gateways: in Port Harcourt, Abuja and two in Lagos.

Globacom has also moved into video phoning, and offers a phone – conferencing service, which can save businesses time and cost, reducing the amount of movement and travel needed to accomplish basic meetings and decision–making processes. Meanwhile, Globacom's mobile banking service is the only one of its type in Nigeria.

Video mobile phone use has great implications for on-the-spot coverage of news and events, since reporters using the service can now report from the field over their phones. GPRS-based Internet can also be used by reporters to file reports and pictures from remote areas.

After beginning operations in 2003, Globacom grew its subscriber base quickly to 1.9 million, making it the second-largest operator behind MTN. It was able to achieve one million subscribers covering 60 towns in just nine months of operation, thereby becoming the fastest-growing GSM Network in Africa. Currently its subscriber figure stands at around 2.7 million, with coverage extending to over 3,000 towns and along major roads, making it the network with the widest coverage in Nigeria.

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Chris Ehimen, Globacom Head of Consumer Marketing, Lagos, Nigeria

African Media Development Initiative Research

African Media Development Initiative Research Summary Report
Angola
Botswana
Cameroon
Democratic Republic of Congo
Ethiopia
Ghana
Kenya
Mozambique
Nigeria
Senegal
Somalia
South Africa
Sierra Leone
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Further information