

African Media
Development
Initiative



Uganda

Research findings and conclusions

Dr John Wotsuna Khamalwa



BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

DFID
Department for
International
Development

IFC
International
Finance Corporation
World Bank Group

 Irish Aid
Government of Ireland
Rialtas na hÉireann

Dr John Wotsuna Khamalwa

Senior Lecturer

Dr John Wotsuna Khamalwa is a Senior Lecturer and Co-ordinator of Social Anthropology and Religion at Makerere University in Kampala. His research in this area of study has been widely published.

Dr Wotsuna Khamalwa holds a PhD in Science of Religion, Sociology and Anthropology from the University of Bayreuth in Germany.

Acknowledgements

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

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

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

Credits

BBC World Service Trust

Research Director: Dr Gerry Power, Director, Research and Learning

Research Team: Debbie Glen (Project Manager), Nathalie Goad, Patrick McCurdy, Reena Nakrani, Thane Ryland, Kate Saunders

Administration and Finance: Hatul Hindocha, Pareena Khairdin, Laura McQuillan, Alice Mercanti, Helena Merriman, Nitu Panesar, Kevin Wilson

Research Officers: Barnaby Smith, Sonia Whitehead

Published by the BBC World Service Trust, 2006

BBC World Service Trust

Room 310 NE

Bush House

PO Box 76

Strand

London

WC2B 4PH

UK

ISBN 1-906086-15-X



Uganda

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

The research was funded by a generous grant from the UK Government's Department for International Development. The research was conducted by Dr John Wotsuna Khamalwa in association with the BBC World Service Trust Research and Learning Group.

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

Acronyms

- ACHPR** African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
- BBC** British Broadcasting Corporation
- CBS** Central Broadcasting Service
- CIA** Central Intelligence Agency
- CNN** Cable News Network
- CONOB** Coalition on the Non-Governmental Organisation Bill
- CSO** Civil Society Organisation
- CSMT** Civil Society Media in Transition
- DENIVA** Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations
- DICTS** Department of Information and Communication Technology
- DRC** Democratic Republic of Congo
- EATV** East African TV
- FDC** Forum for Democratic Change
- GPRG** Global Poverty Research Group
- ICCPR** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- ICT** Information and Communication Technologies
- IDRC** International Development Research Centre
- IJN** International Journalists Network
- LRA** Lord's Resistance Army
- MTN** Mobile Telephone Network
- NGO** Non-Governmental Organisation
- NIJU** National Institute of Journalists of Uganda
- NOCEM** National Organisation for Civic Education and Monitoring
- NRM** National Resistance Movement
- NUJU** National Union of Journalists in Uganda
- NVPPCL** New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Ltd.

RCDF Rural Communications Development Fund

RFI Radio France Internationale

RSF Reporters Sans Frontières (Reporters Without Borders)

SDC Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

SIDA Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

TASO The AIDS Support Organisation

UBC Uganda Broadcasting Corporation

UBOS Uganda Bureau of Statistics

UCC Uganda Communications Commission

UJSC Uganda Journalists Safety Committee

UMI Uganda Management Institute

UMWA Uganda Media Women's Association

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

USAID United States Agency for International Development

UNSTATS United Nations Statistics Division

UPTC Uganda Posts and Telecommunications Corporation

USE Uganda Securities Exchange

UTL Uganda Telecommunication Limited

WBS Wavah Broadcasting Services

WNA World Association of Newspapers



Contents

Country Report Context

1. Introduction	2
2. Country Overview	3
Key findings	6
3. Media Health	7
3.1 Status of the laws regarding rights and access to information	7
3.2 Status of the laws regarding criminal defamation and insult	8
3.3 Status of the laws that exist to enable media regulatory bodies to function independently	8
3.4 Current provisions that aim to secure the independence of publicly-owned media	10
3.5 Current provisions to support community or alternative media	10
3.6 Regulatory obligations for public or state broadcasters to fulfil a public-service broadcasting remit	11
3.7 Regulatory obligations for private broadcasters to fulfil a public-service broadcasting remit	11
3.8 Journalism	11
Key findings	12
4. State of the Media – Literature Review	13
Key findings	13

5. Radio	14
5.1 Key changes and developments in the radio marketplace in the past five years	14
5.2 Investment and growth in the radio sector in the past five years	16
5.3 Plurality, ownership and control	16
5.4 Diversity	17
5.5 Quality of radio output and programming	18
5.6 Specific challenges	18
Key findings	19
6. Television	20
6.1 Key changes and developments in the television marketplace in the past five years	20
6.2 Investment and growth in the television sector in the past five years	21
6.3 Plurality, ownership and control	21
6.4 Diversity	22
6.5 Quality of television output and programming	22
6.6 Specific challenges	22
Key findings	22
7. Newspapers	23
7.1 Key changes and developments in the newspaper marketplace in the past five years	23
7.2 Investment and growth in the press in the past five years	23
7.3 Plurality, ownership and control	24
7.4 Diversity	24
7.5 Quality of newspaper reporting	25
7.6 Specific challenges	25
Key findings	25
8. Media Support	26
8.1 Key changes and developments in new media technologies in the past five years	26
8.2 Key changes in media support in the past five years	29
8.3 Audience and readership research data	29
Key findings	29

9. NGO Activity	30
9.1 Key changes and developments in NGO activity in the past five years	30
9.2 Key NGOs involved in media development activities	31
9.3 Climate of opportunity for media development activities	31
Key findings	32
10. Conclusions	33
10.1 Media Statistical data	33
10.2 Media health	33
10.3 Broadcasting	33
10.4 Newspapers	33
10.5 Media support	33
10.6 NGO activity	33
Key findings	34
11. Appendices	35
Appendix 1: Bibliography	35
Appendix 2: Individuals/organisations consulted during the research	40
 Country Report Way Forward	
12. Introduction	42
13. Media Development: an organisational perspective	44
13.1 Key organisations	44
13.2 Impact of media development initiatives	44
14. Media Development Initiatives	47
14.1 Review	47
14.2 Success and impact	49
14.3 Lessons learned	50
15. Developing the Environment for Success	51
15.1 Key factors	51
15.2 Political and economic influences	51
15.3 Donor communities' role	53
15.4 Other issues	55

16. Future Strategies	56
16.1 Strategic priorities	56
16.2 Focus of support	57
16.3 Media sector focus	57
16.4 Type of support most needed/useful	58
16.5 Appropriate organisational framework	58
16.6 Pan-regional versus country-specific initiatives	59
16.7 Initiatives related to developmental content	59
16.8 Initiatives to develop independent media	60
16.9 The role of media development in the country's democratisation process	60
17. Summary and Conclusion	61
17.1 Media development: an organisational perspective	61
17.2 Media development initiatives	62
17.3 Developing the environment for success	62
17.4 Strategic priorities	63
18. Appendices	64
Appendix 1: Interviewees	64
Appendix 2: Media development projects/activities described in Section 14	65
 Country Report Case Study	
19. Case Study	68
Regional Training Programme on Environmental Journalism and Communication for Eastern Africa	68



Uganda

Country Report

Context



1. Introduction

The media in Uganda has come a long way since the dark days of dictatorship and anarchy in the 1970s and early 1980s. Transformation of the Ugandan media sector began in the late 1980s following the coming to power in 1986 of President Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM). Prior to 1986, the media was used as a conduit for government propaganda. Over the past 20 years, a process of liberalisation has seen the newspaper, radio and TV sectors grow, with the Internet and mobile phones more recently adding to the way the news media in Uganda operate.

However, there is little systematic information available on media and media-related activities in the country. The Uganda Broadcasting Council, which should have such information, unfortunately does not. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) has compiled information on a variety of issues, but when it comes to comparing the state of media in the country between 2000 and 2005, the data is thin. Steadman Research International seems to be the only body that has carried out any appreciable research on media in the country, but its information is only available on a fee-paying basis, at high prices. Another obstacle encountered by the researcher was the reluctance to divulge information on the part of stakeholders, who feared such information falling into the hands of their competitors.



2. Country Overview

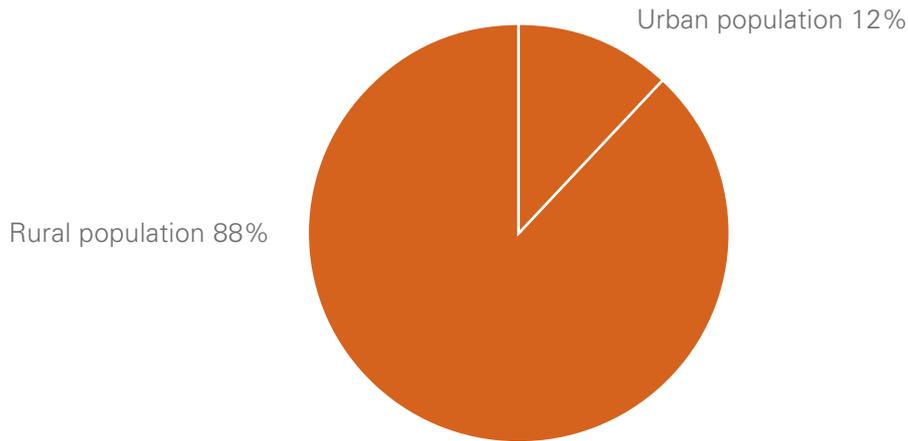
The Republic of Uganda covers a total area of 236,040 sq kms. It lies east of Kenya, south of Sudan, north of Tanzania and east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Uganda derives its name from the Buganda kingdom, which encompasses a portion of the south of the country, including the capital Kampala. Though landlocked, Uganda has access to significant water bodies, with the River Nile having its source in Uganda and Lake Victoria (*Nalubale*) also partially in the country. Uganda is fertile with good rainfall most of the year, sparing it the food security problems experienced by other nations in the region.

The last national census, carried out in 2002, estimated the population would reach 26.8 million by the end of 2004 (UBOS, 2005). This figure is believed to have grown to just over 28 million in 2006 (CIA, 2006). Uganda has a young population, with the United Nations estimating in 2005 that 50% of the country's population was under the age of 15 (UNSTATS, 2006). Life expectancy is roughly 46 years at birth (UNDP, 2005).

The country is divided into four regions with similar population sizes – north, east, west and central – and further split into 77 administrative districts (UCC, 2006a).

The central region, home to the capital city Kampala, is the most urbanised of all the regions, but the 2002 census found the western and eastern regions catching up, partly due to decreasing family size among urban central region dwellers (UBOS, 2002). Uganda still, however, has a primarily rural population, with only 12% of the population living in urban areas, as shown in Figure 1 (UBOS, 2002; UNDP, 2006). Around 40% of this urban population lived in Kampala, according to the 2002 census (UBOS, 2002).

Figure 1: Urban vs Rural Population

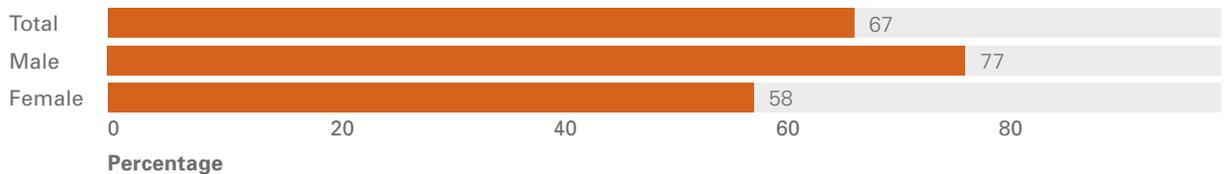


Source: 2002 estimate in UBOS, 2002; 2003 estimate in UNDP, 2006

According to the World Bank (2006 a/b), 67% of the adult population was literate in 2004, with literacy rates of 77% for the male population and 58% for the female population. The Ugandan National Household Survey found a much higher rate of literacy in urban areas (87%) compared to rural areas (65%) in 2003. This same survey found the literacy rate in Kampala for the population aged 18 and over to be as high as 93% (UBOS, 2003).

Figure 2: Literacy Levels

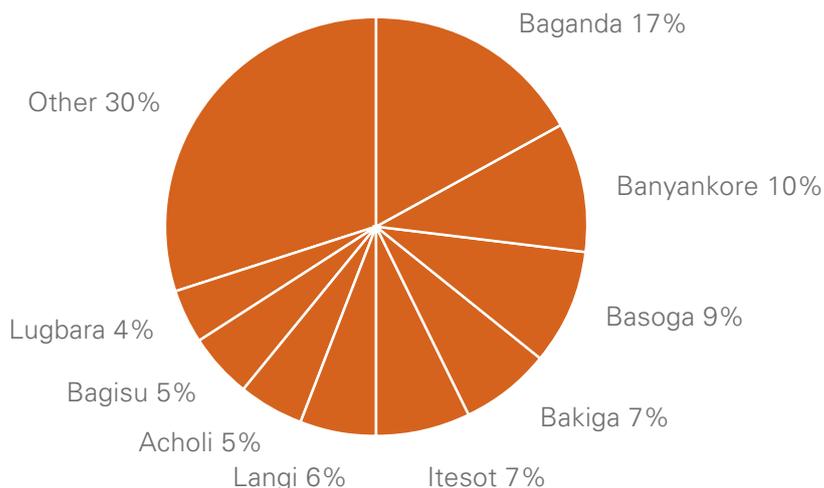
Literacy Levels Age 15+



Source: 2004 data in World Bank, 2006a and World Bank, 2006b

Uganda is a culturally and ethnically diverse country. There are roughly nine ethnic groups in Uganda with a population of over one million people. These groups make up roughly 69% of the country's population. The largest ethnic group (see Figure 3) are the Baganda people, estimated to make up 17% of the population according to the 2002 census (UBOS, 2002).

Figure 3: Main Ethnic Groups



Source: UBOS, 2002

It is estimated that there are around 40 different languages regularly and currently in use in the country. English became the official language after independence and is taught in schools, used in courts of law, and used by most newspapers, and by some radio broadcasters. Swahili is also widely spoken and is used as a trade language throughout the East African region. Thanks to Uganda's important economic bonds with Kenya and Tanzania, Swahili has grown in popularity, and was designated in 2005 by the Ugandan Parliament as the country's second official language. Ganda, or Luganda, spoken by the Baganda people, is thought to be the most widely-spoken vernacular language. Other significant vernacular languages spoken are Luo, Ateso and Runyakitara (UBOS, 2002).

In terms of religious beliefs, Catholics (33%) and Protestants (33%) dominate, followed by Muslims (16%) and indigenous beliefs (18%), with some people holding both traditional beliefs and belief in one of the other religions (CIA, 2006).

Uganda's independence from the United Kingdom in 1962 was followed by a 20-year period of military rule, under the dictatorships of Idi Amin and Milton Obote. Since coming to power in 1986, Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) have been credited with bringing back relative peace, and for initiating democratic reform. Once in office, President Museveni introduced the "Movement" system of politics, which is broadly described as an alternate system of democracy in which parliamentarians are elected as individuals rather than as members of a party. In the President's eyes, multi-party politics are divisive and have the potential to split underdeveloped countries like Uganda along ethnic and religious lines (BBC, 2006a).

The President received criticism in the late 1990s for the country's involvement in the civil war in the DRC and, more recently, for failing to disarm the militant Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the north of the country. Also, Museveni's 2001 presidential election victory was marred by state-sponsored violence, and Dr Besigye, Museveni's main rival, fled the country claiming his life was in danger. In 2005, the Constitution was amended to allow Museveni to run for a third term in office. He subsequently won the 2006 presidential election, albeit with fewer than 60% of the votes, a smaller margin compared to the past when he won with over 80% of the vote (Electoral Commission, 2006).

Uganda's economy is largely dependent on agriculture, with the traditional cash crops of coffee and cotton in the forefront. Fish and vanilla are also becoming significant exports. The GDP per capita for 2005 was estimated at US\$1800 (CIA, 2006). With an estimated 88% of the population categorised as rural, small-scale agriculture and subsistence farming provide the main forms of income for many people (UBOS, 2002). The rural areas are characterised by high levels of poverty, as soils have become less productive due to over-use. Fluctuations in cash crop prices have also served to undermine rural economies. It is thought that around 55%¹ of Uganda's population lives below the national poverty line (UNDP, 2006). Many people migrate to urban centres in search of work.

Key findings

- The country has been relatively stable since the coming to power of President Yoweri Museveni's government in 1986, with the notable exception of the ongoing Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency in the northern region.
- Official languages are English and Swahili, with Baganda the most-spoken vernacular language.
- Uganda is a fertile country, with key cash crops being coffee and cotton.
- Uganda has a largely young and rural population.

¹ The UNDP specifies that this data refers to the most recent year available in the period 1990-2002.



3. Media Health

3.1 Status of the laws regarding rights and access to information

The Ugandan media are regulated by laws, including the Constitution of 1995; the Press and Journalists Act of 1995; the Electronic Media Act of 1996; and, the Access to Information Act of 2005. Article 29(1) of the 1995 Constitution states that every person has the right to “freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media” (Republic of Uganda, 1995a).

The Press and Journalists Act of 1995 was promulgated to ensure freedom of the press, to provide for a Media Council responsible for the regulation of mass media, and to repeal the Newspaper and Publications Act and the Press Censorship and Correction Act. The Press and Journalist Act put into place provisions for the licensing of journalists (issuance of practising certificates) and a statutory journalists’ association called the National Institute of Journalists of Uganda (NIJU). The overall mission of the statute, according to the government, was to recognise journalism as a profession in Uganda. A provision of the Act was to empower the Media Council to register and licence only those journalists with university degrees. Other practising journalists without degrees are not regarded as journalists according to that provision (Republic of Uganda, 1995b). The Media Council established by the Press and Journalists Act arbitrates disputes between the public and the media and between the state and the media, and also promotes the flow of information. It is in charge of distributing operating licences to journalists and has the power to suspend newspapers and restrict information.

The Electronic Media Act (Republic of Uganda, 1996) provides for the setting up of the Uganda Broadcasting Council to licence and regulate radio and television stations and to deal with all matters relating to the electronic media.

Finally, access to information is protected by the 2005 Access to Information Act, which states that: “Every citizen has a right of access to information and records in the possession of the state or any public body, except where the release of the information is likely to prejudice the security or sovereignty of the state or interfere with the right to the privacy of any other person” (Republic of Uganda, 2005b). The wording of this clause in the 2005 Act is identical to the wording of the guarantee of access to information contained in Article 41 of the 1995 Constitution (Republic of Uganda, 1995a). Up until 2005, in the absence of an enabling piece of legislation, the public and media had not been able to benefit from the Constitutional right of access to information.

3.2 Status of the laws regarding criminal defamation and insult

The Penal Code Act and the Anti-Terrorism Act present challenges to the way journalists and media houses report on state institutions. Section 50(1) of the Penal Code Act states that “Any person who publishes any false statement, rumour or report which is likely to cause fear and alarm to the public or to disturb the public peace is guilty of misdemeanour” (Republic of Uganda, 1998). Journalists are therefore at risk of facing criminal charges for printing allegedly false news or allegedly seditious material.

In February 2004, there was a major change to libel laws in Uganda with the Supreme Court ruling that Section 50 of the Penal Code, which allowed journalists to be charged with “publishing false news”, was unconstitutional².

In 2005, police arrested independent radio and print journalist Andrew Mwenda under the Penal Code Act, charging him with sedition. The charges were based on his criticism of President Museveni’s leadership and his blaming of the government for the helicopter crash that killed Sudanese Vice President John Garang. The government claimed these remarks threatened national security, relations with the country’s neighbours and the security of its citizens abroad (UNHCR, 2006).

This Penal Code was amended in 1998 to create the additional offence of sectarianism for; “any person or group of persons who prints, publishes, utters or does any act which degrades, exposes to contempt, creates alienation, raises disaffection or promotes ill feeling among or against any group or body of persons on account of tribe or ethnicity” (Republic of Uganda, 1998).

The 2002 Suppression of Terrorism Act (which defines any act of violence or threat of violence for political, religious, economic or cultural ends as a terrorist act), imposes harsh penalties on suspected terrorists and has raised fears that it could be used against political opponents and against freedom of the press. Publishing news that is “likely to promote terrorism” can result in up to ten years’ imprisonment. The Act virtually outlaws any form of coverage of any person or organisation gazetted as engaged in terrorism and also establishes the death penalty for acts of terrorism or financial support for terrorist organisations (Republic of Uganda, 2002b). This law has arguably had the effect of forcing the media into self-censorship. David Ouma Balikowa, the Editor of the privately-run *Daily Monitor*, has criticised the Act for preventing journalists from accurately reporting clashes between government forces and rebel groups without risking a prison sentence (Balikowa, 2002). To the knowledge of this report’s author, the terrorism law has not yet been applied. However, by discouraging the victims or witnesses of clashes from talking, the depth and quality of reporting in Uganda is arguably weakened.

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

The Uganda Broadcasting Council is the main regulatory body responsible for the licensing of broadcasting services in Uganda. It is an independent statutory body set up by an act of Parliament to regulate the electronic media. According to the Electronic Media Act (Republic of Uganda, 1996), the Council’s mandate includes:

- ❑ coordinating, exercising control over, and supervising broadcasting activities;
- ❑ taking responsibility over the standardisation, planning and management of frequency spectrum dedicated to broadcasting;

² For more information see: <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/56778/>

- allocating and ensuring optimal utilisation of the broadcasting spectrum;
- coordinating communication on electronic media with relevant international and national organisations;
- receiving and considering applications for broadcasting licences;
- setting broadcasting standards;
- arbitration, in case of disputes in the industry; and,
- advising government on broadcasting policy.

It can be argued that the Council enjoys hardly any autonomy from the executive, as the Minister of Information has direct supervisory powers over it. The Council consists of 12 members appointed by the Minister of Information. These include the Chairman, the Secretary, a representative from the Information Ministry, a senior officer from the Uganda Revenue Authority, two representatives of the public, two representatives of media operators, a senior official from the Education Ministry, a senior official from the Ministry of Gender and Culture, a senior lawyer and a representative of video operators. Council members hold office for three years, after which they may be reappointed by the Minister responsible.

A second regulatory body, the Uganda Media Council, functions as the regulatory body for journalists and arbitrates in disputes. Its critics, however, argue that it lacks the independence necessary to make it objective. The Minister of Information, by appointing members to the Council, has a considerable amount of control over its activities.

A third regulator with impact on the media, the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), has its independence guaranteed by its founding legislation, the Uganda Communications Act of 1997 (Republic of Uganda, 1997). It is the regulatory body in charge of all the technical aspects of telecommunications and broadcasting in the country. Among other duties, the Commission has to lay down specific regulations regarding frequency allocation and licensing, the overall operations of the telecommunications sector, radio communications and technical rules regarding the broadcasting sector.

Section 6 of the Act specifies that “(1) The Commission shall consist of seven members as follows: (a) the Chairperson of the Commission; (b) a representative of professional engineers recommended by the Institution of Professional Engineers; (c) a prominent lawyer recommended by the Uganda Law Society; (d) a member of the Broadcasting Council established under the Electronic Media Statute, 1996, recommended by the Council; (e) two eminent persons of good repute from the public; (f) the Executive Director of the Commission” (Republic of Uganda, 1997). This Section further states that “(2) The members of the Commission, other than the Executive Director, shall be appointed by the Minister with the approval of Cabinet” (Republic of Uganda, 1997).

Despite this apparent ministerial control over the composition of the Commission, Section 12 of the Act provides that “the Commission shall exercise its functions independent of any person or body” (Republic of Uganda, 1997).

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

Parliament passed the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Act in 2005, which transformed the former UTV and Radio Uganda (established in 1963) into the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation. The Corporation started its activities on 16 November 2005. Its stated aims include:

- ensuring the provision of broadcasting services that contribute to the social and economic development of people in Uganda;
- being a medium that shall showcase the vision of the public;
- providing quality local programming and adapting foreign programming for local consumption;
- maintaining a reasonable editorial independence and setting exemplary national broadcasting standards (Uganda Broadcasting Corporation, 2006).

3.5 Current provisions to support community or alternative media

The Chairman of the Ugandan Broadcasting Council, Godfrey Mutabazi, has said that the Council is determined to encourage development of a strong community broadcasting sector in Uganda, through ensuring frequencies are made available, setting reasonable licence fees and conditions, and providing other forms of public support for community broadcasters (Uganda Broadcasting Council, 2004).

One policy that supports community media development is the Uganda National Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy Framework (Republic of Uganda, 2002a). This framework covers broadcasting as one element of ICT. The chapter on "Investment in ICT Industry" warns that "Communication is one of the basic human rights, and access to communication channels should not be left entirely to market forces. This creates a situation of information dualism, with a minority urban 'information rich' and rural majority being 'information poor'. [A] conducive environment for investment in communication infrastructures should be promoted to narrow the information gap between the urban and the rural areas" (Republic of Uganda, 2002a, p.21). The framework goes on to call for "the establishment of community radio stations so as to increase levels of information dissemination and public participation" (Republic of Uganda 2002a, p.25).

The Draft National Broadcasting Policy of 2004 also contained support for community broadcasting, calling for "broadcasting which is for, by and about specific geographical communities or communities of interest, whose ownership and management is representative of those communities, which pursues a social development agenda and which is not-for-profit" (Uganda Broadcasting Council, 2004, p.8).

At the time of the writing this report, however, mechanisms for support of community broadcasting were still uncertain.

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

The Draft National Broadcasting Policy of 2004 called for “a public-service broadcaster with a view to providing access to programming of both a local and national character, with specific licence obligations, which reflect the priorities of the Ugandan public (Uganda Broadcasting Council, 2004, p.8). The policy also calls for “a broadcasting system based on access to, and diversity of information, promotion of national unity, democratisation of the airwaves, education of communities and strengthening of the moral fibre of society” (Uganda Broadcasting Council, 2004, p.7)

The Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Act in 2005 (mentioned above in 3.4) was an attempt to further entrench the idea of a public-service broadcaster.

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

The Draft National Broadcasting Policy 2004 called for commercial broadcasters “to contribute to the promotion of culture and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable groups in society while remaining commercially viable” (Uganda Broadcasting Council, 2004).

3.8 Journalism

It is estimated that there are fewer than 1,000 practising journalists in Uganda, even though there are an abundance of people with journalism training. Each year, approximately 150 trained journalists graduate from Makerere University alone, and about 150–200 graduated from various other universities (D. Malingha Doya, personal communication, 15 August 2006).

There is a requirement for journalists to be registered with the government, licensed and affiliated to a professional association, according to the Press and Journalists Act of 1995. The Ugandan Journalists Union estimates it has approximately 5,000 members, though only about a fifth of these members are practising journalists (D. Malingha Doya, personal communication, 15 August 2006).

Some of the major institutes that currently train journalists are as follows:

- Makerere University, Kampala (Diplomas, Degrees, Masters);
- Christian University, Mukono (Degrees);
- Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi (Degrees);
- Islamic University in Uganda (Degrees);
- Uganda Management Institute (Certificates, Diplomas); and,
- Kampala International University (Degrees)

(D. Malingha Doya, personal communication, 15 August 2006).

The NGO sector is also undertaking journalism training programmes in order to improve and strengthen the media in Uganda. Panos Eastern Africa, in particular, is conducting a region-wide project to train journalists to report accurately on terrorist activities and to relate together the issues of terrorism, poverty, governance and democracy. The organisation is also looking to replicate a Tanzanian programme, which creates regional press centres to strengthen and improve the local media. A separate Panos project aims to increase the coverage of development-related issues by training journalists to monitor the implementation of Uganda's poverty reduction objectives (IJN, 2005).

Journalists are paid relatively well compared to other occupations, such as teaching. The monthly salary in 2005 for a Grade 5 secondary school teacher was approximately US\$165 per month (BBC, 2005), while pay for journalists can range from US\$190 (shs350,000) for a freelancer to US\$380 (shs700,000) or even US\$3200 (shs6 million) for salaried employees. The scale of journalist pay varies greatly between media houses (D. Malingha Doya, personal communication, 15 August 2006).

Key findings

- Access to information is now enshrined in a dedicated law, the Access to Information Act of 2005.
- Alleged defamation still carries the possibility of criminal charges, in terms of the Penal Code Act.
- The Uganda Broadcasting Council and the Uganda Media Council regulatory bodies lack full independence from the state.
- The Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Act of 2005 calls for the state broadcaster to become editorially independent.
- The country's ICT Framework and Draft Broadcasting Policy both call for an enabling environment for community media.
- There are a range of training opportunities for journalists, and many who secure salaried positions in the media sector are relatively well paid.



4. State of the Media – Literature Review

Based on a review of contemporary literature on the media in Uganda, the author was able to extract the following key findings (please refer to the bibliography for a complete list of the literature consulted during the research).

Key findings

- The media in Uganda have expanded tremendously in the past five years, made possible by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government's liberalisation of the airwaves and the print media from the mid-1990s onwards (starting with the 1995 Press and Journalists Act and the 1996 Electronic Media Act).
- Initially, there was a dearth of institutions to guide media activities, until 1998 when the Broadcasting Council came into place.
- The media have in general become more independent, with only a few outlets still under government ownership and control.
- The media tends to cover more segments of society than in the past, eg, women's issues now get wider coverage.
- More women have joined the journalism profession in the past five years.
- The media are still largely urban-focused.
- The radio sector, with more than 80 stations, is the most geographically spread of the media, with stronger presence in rural areas than TV and the print sector.



5. Radio

Being largely an agricultural country, radio fits with the lifestyle of many people in Uganda. It is a popular media channel because it does not require electricity, and because people can listen to the radio while they work, walk or drive. By broadcasting in local languages, radio goes a long way in addressing the information, education and entertainment requirements of its localities and audiences. For many people, especially in rural areas, radio remains the main source of information and entertainment.

Listenership in Uganda is very high, with InterMedia estimating in 2005 that 100% of the population had listened to the radio in the past year, 92.8% in the past seven days, and 73.7% as recently as the day before (InterMedia, 2005). The 2002 census showed that about half of households (49.2%) in the country reported that “word of mouth” was their main source of information, followed by radio (47.8%). This is compared with less than 1% of households who reported the print media (newspapers and magazines) as their main source of information and 1% for TV (UBOS, 2002).

Some stations are funded by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), while others are commercial and depend on advertising revenue. Only the stations of the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) depend on state subsidy. The number of community stations has picked up in recent years, especially in the northern part of the country where, due to the war with the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), commercial radios have not ventured. But due to the situation in the north of Uganda, these radios have to be careful with the content and style of their broadcasts, lest they anger the LRA or the government.

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

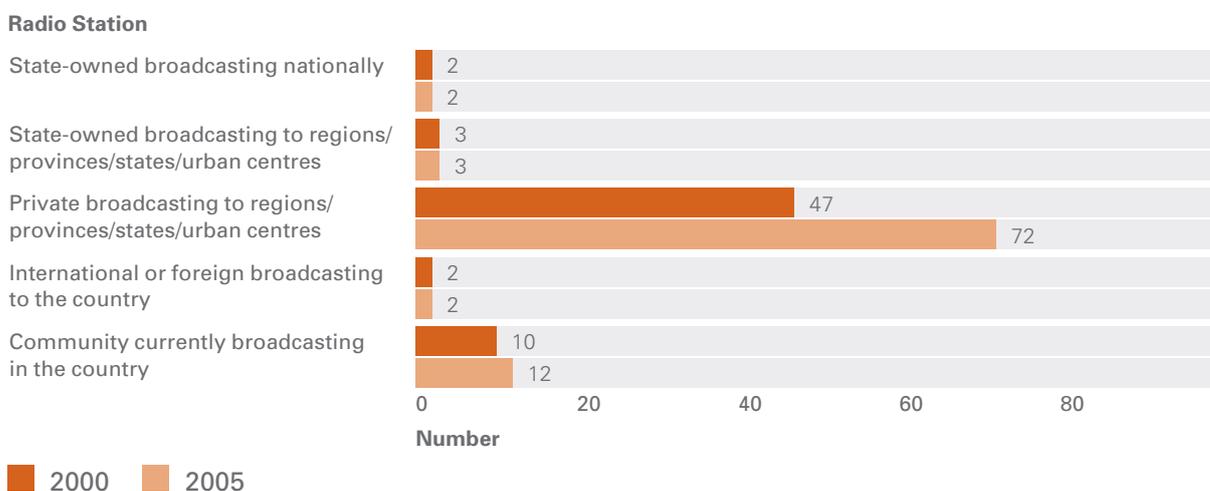
Since 1986, there has been liberalisation of the radio airwaves, with new community and commercial stations entering the market to compete with the state-funded radio broadcaster. Liberalisation has thus entailed the establishment of several FM stations across the country, with several of them concentrated in Kampala. Today, in 2006, there are 92 radio stations registered with the Ugandan Broadcasting Corporation, with 37 booster/repeater stations. Seven further stations are licensed but not operating (Uganda Broadcasting Council, 2006b). There are also two international stations available in the country: Radio France International (RFI) and the BBC World Service.

There are only two stations with national footprints, both state-funded and run by the UBC – UBC Radio and Star FM. The newly-named UBC Radio, established in 2005 by the provisions of the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Act. This Act effectively merged Radio Uganda and Uganda TV into the current Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC). The Corporation operates five stations in total, including the commercial Star FM (BBC, 2006c).

At regional/local level, there are more than 70 private commercial FM stations (see Figure 4). There are also three state-run UBC stations at regional/local level, and around 12 local community-run stations. The majority of the regional/local FM stations are located within Kampala City in central Uganda, where they fight for market share in the city. Also in central Uganda, there are stations targeting the towns of Masaka (Buddu Broadcasting Service) and Mityana (Radio Skynet). In eastern Uganda, the town of Mbale has, among others, Top Radio, Impact, Open Gate and Mbale FM. Also in the east, the town of Jinja has Kiira FM and Nile Broadcasting Service (NBS). In western Uganda, the most popular radio station is Radio West, with its headquarters in Mbarara and broadcasting on several frequencies, allowing it to cover most districts of the western region. Other stations target the towns of Hoima (Hoima 88.6 FM), Kasese (Radio Messiah) and Kabale (Voice of Kigezi). Stations in the northern region include Radio Lira, Radio Paidha, Radio Wa, Radio Apac and Radio North.

All of the new stations since 2000 have either been private commercial or non-profit local community stations. The private commercial sector has increased by about 25 stations since 2000, from 47 to 72³. The community radio sector has seen an additional two stations go on air since 2000, raising the total number of broadcasting community stations from ten to 12 in 2005⁴.

Figure 4: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Radio Stations



Source: Uganda Broadcasting Council, 2006b; BBC, 2006c; Author's personal research

³ The 2000 figure of 47 commercial stations is drawn from the author's personal research.

⁴ These figures for the number of community stations are based on the author's personal research.

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

Privately-owned stations derive their revenue largely from announcements and advertising. The advertising market is small and dominated by a few economic giants, such as the Mobile Telephone Network (MTN), Makerere University, Uganda Telecommunication Limited (UTL) and Celtel.

Radio broadcasters like the Central Broadcasting Service (owned by the Buganda Kingdom), Capital Radio, Radio Simba, KFM (owned by Kenya's Nation Media Group), Dembe FM and Radio One have customers who sponsor some of their programmes. Well-known companies that sponsor programmes on those radios include MTN, Celtel, Nile Breweries and Coca-Cola to mention but a few. These radios generally realise higher revenue than others.

5.3 Plurality, ownership and control

The majority of radio stations in Uganda are now privately/individually-owned. Over the past five years, there has been a wider range of independent radio station owners, with proprietors coming from various sectors of Ugandan life: individual businessmen, church leaders, scholars, educationists, and others.

The liberalisation process has also encouraged more transparency in ownership. The trend is towards freedom, as seen in the transformation from the state-run Radio Uganda into a more independently-run UBC Radio, controlled by the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation. This was a result of the government's realisation that most people did not listen to the government-owned Radio Uganda, and the government found itself having to advertise in the private media to reach the majority of the population.

In spite of granting a greater degree of independence to its radio stations, the government still attempts to muzzle radio programming not favourable to the state. For instance, on election day (23 February 2006), government operatives stormed KFM, which was reporting election results at variance with the state-owned Star FM. KFM's radio frequency was jammed for several days, and the website of KFM's sister paper, *The Monitor*, was blocked. The station and website were unblocked only after protracted negotiations between management and government (BBC, 2006b).

As a further point, several radios are linked to private newspaper groups. KFM, as mentioned earlier, belongs to *The Daily Monitor Newspapers*, an affiliate of the Kenyan Nation Group. This Group also owns Uganda's main private daily newspaper, *The Daily Monitor*, *The East African* and the *Weekly Advertiser*. Another link between the radio and print sectors is via the Chief Executive Officer of the government-funded newspaper *The New Vision*, who owns Capital Radio. Consequently, *The New Vision* repeatedly runs promotional stories about Capital Radio.

The first community radio station – Kibale Kagadi Community Radio – was launched in the late 1990s by the Uganda Rural Development and Training Trust (Mwangi, 1999). By this time, the state-funded radio station, Radio Uganda, was experiencing heavy funding cuts resulting in a loss of morale, loss of quality in programming and reduced regularity in equipment maintenance. Irregular maintenance meant that the radio signal of the station was weak in many parts of the country, especially those far from the capital city. For their part, commercial radio stations were more concentrated in urban areas where people's purchasing power was much higher and promising in terms of attracting advertisements (Ojiambo, 1999). Thus, there was a gap in certain remote rural areas to be filled by community radio.

Most community radio stations in Uganda are owned and operated by NGOs. Development practitioners recognise the value of radio as a communication channel that can be used to tailor the specific development needs of the communities in which they operate (Nattimba, 2004). The community stations include:

- Kibale Kagadi Community Radio – This station is fully owned by the local community who selected a committee to take care of all the interests of the different stakeholders in the running of the radio station. It provides information to the local community of Kagadi sub-county in western Uganda. The Uganda Rural Development and Training Trust launched the radio station in 1999 to enhance its training programmes in rural sustainable development, in areas such as education, agriculture, small-scale business development, human rights awareness and advocacy, among others (Mwangi, 1999).
- Radio Apac – This is an example of a community radio station operating in northern Uganda where a civil war has been raging for the past 18 years. Its efforts are geared towards peace-building in the region and at improving the livelihood of the local community of Apac and neighbouring districts affected by the war, mainly Gulu, Kitgum and Pader (SDC/Panos, 2005).
- MAMA FM – This is a community station that specifically addresses itself to gender and women’s issues. It was launched in 2001 as the first radio station started and run by women in Africa to bridge the gender gap in addressing development needs of the people (SDC/Panos, 2005).

A further handful of stations are owned by religious organisations, mostly Christian ones. Power FM is owned by the Kampala Pentecostal Church and the Church of Uganda (Anglican); Super FM is owned by Pastor Peter Sematimba, who contested and lost the Kampala mayoral seat in the recent elections.

5.4 Diversity

The net beneficiary of the liberalisation of radio has largely been the Ugandan listener, as radio stations now exist across the width and breadth of Uganda. The language of programming has shifted significantly towards the local dialects that the people in the area where the radio is located can understand. Particularly because of the multiplicity of languages used for broadcasts, there is relative diversity between the regions. For instance, Central Broadcasting Service (CBS) broadcasts mainly in Luganda for the central region, and Radio Paidha broadcasts in Luo dialects.

The emergence of *Ebimeeza* (open air discussions broadcast live on radio) has raised much interest and controversy. The discussions centre mainly on the political issues of the day. It is Radio One that pioneered *Ebimeeza* (singular for *Ebimeeza*), every Saturday 3pm to 5pm, before other radio stations adopted the concept.

In some cases, what started as diversity has become replication, as the same format of programming is duplicated by various stations in the same locality: For instance, KFM’s *Andrew Mwenda Live* is aired at the same time as Radio One’s *Spectrum*. Both programmes have the same format (live phone-in, interactive talk-show) and at times have the same focus and subject of discussion.

In 2002, the government, weary of the criticism it was fielding from the *Ebimeeza*, attempted to ban them. Information Minister Basoga Nsadhuh announced that *Ebimeeza* would be banned on the grounds that the licences issued to radio stations only allowed them to broadcast from “indoor”, rather than from “outdoor” studios, and thus they were not consistent with broadcasting regulations. A vigorous defence of the *Ebimeeza* by sections of the general public and civil society allowed many of them to outlive the government threat. However, the sting has gone out of the discussions, as a lot of radio owners prefer to avoid raising issues, that may attract government threats and compromise their business interests (RSF, 2004).

5.5 Quality of radio output and programming

In the view of the researcher, many stations are lacking in quality. Stations try to cut across educational, informational and entertainment needs, but often it is entertainment that dominates. KFM, which started as Monitor FM, altered its name, format and content after it realised that audiences were more inclined towards music than news and analysis.

On many stations, programmes tend to be full of drama created by comical presenters, with a lack of systematic flow from programme to programme. Another problem, in the researcher’s view, is the mixing up of local languages with English, making language use inconsistent. And there is frequent use of slang and jargon, which may not be understood or interpreted by many listeners. As well, music dominates most of the programmes and, as a result, entertainment surpasses education and information dissemination.

5.6 Specific challenges

One key challenge for the radio sector is the fierce competition for the Kampala market, with several stations striving for listeners in this affluent area. Often music-dominated programming is used in an attempt to draw listeners. The interests of advertisers are of primary importance and commercial interruption, even during news broadcasts, is pronounced. Indeed, for several radio stations, news reporting is concentrated on inner-city news (where the cost of collection is cheaper), or just taking the news out of the newspapers.

Another challenge for radio broadcasters is the payment of licence fees to the Broadcasting Council. Many stations are hard-pressed to afford these fees, given their other costs for equipment and staffing, and may feel compelled to employ low-wage, poorly-trained workers. This eventually affects the quality of the stations’ broadcasts. The Broadcasting Council currently charges between 1-3 million shillings per year (US\$530 – US\$1600) for a radio licence (Uganda Broadcasting Council, 2006b).

A final challenge is government interference. In 2004, the government closed down Radio Kyoga Veritas FM for several weeks. In this case, the government was incensed over the reporting of the civil war in northern and eastern Uganda at the time (RSF, 2004). And as already mentioned, in August 2005, KFM radio was closed for a week. The government also refers continually to the use of its power of licensing, via state-appointed regulators, to bring order and “professionalism” in the broadcasting industry. Broadcasting licences in Uganda are renewed annually (RSF, 2003).

Key findings

- The state-funded stations are now under an independent agency, the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC), but they do not yet have the complete editorial independence needed for them to operate as public-service broadcasters.
- Only two of the country's stations (state-owned UBC Radio and Star FM) have national footprints, with the rest of the stations targeting regions or local areas; all four regions have their own regional and local FM stations.
- Content diversity is lacking, but a measure of diversity is achieved from region to region through regional and local stations using local vernacular languages in their broadcasts.
- State interference in the operations of private stations is practised, as evidenced by the temporary shut-down of Radio Kyoga Veritas FM in 2004 and KFM in 2005 over reporting that was apparently not 'favourable' to the government.



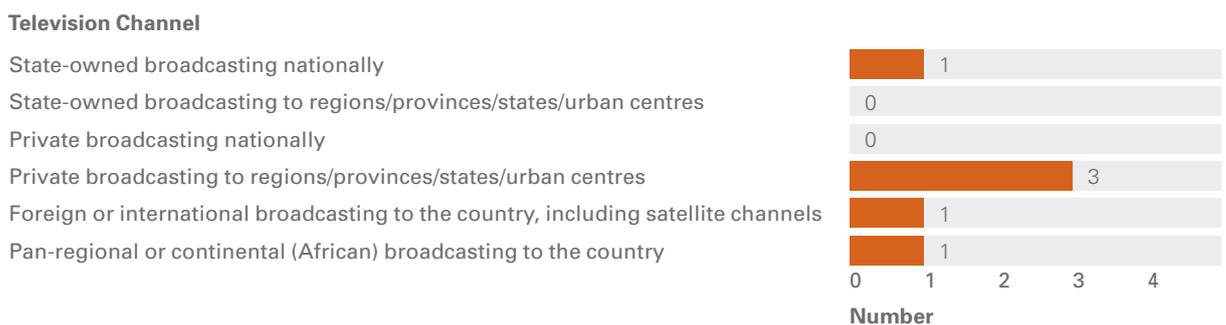
6. Television

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

The 2002 census put ownership of a television at 4.5% of the population, with roughly 144,000 viewers across the country. Broken down, these figures show that 19.6% of ownership is urban as opposed to 2.1% rural (UBOS, 2002). According to research carried out by InterMedia (2005), 21.8% of the population had watched television within the past 12 months⁵.

There is one state-owned TV channel in Uganda, called UBC-TV (formerly U-TV), and several private services: Wavah Broadcasting Services Ltd (WBS), which transmits to the Kampala area and to Jinja, Masaka and Mbarara; Top TV (owned by Christian Life Ministries) in Kampala; Lighthouse TV (part of the global Trinity network) in Kampala; the MultiChoice Uganda pay-TV bouquet of channels (based in South Africa) available via satellite throughout the country; and the pan-African TV broadcaster East African TV (EATV), which broadcasts from Tanzania (UCC, 2005).

Figure 5: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Television Stations



Source: UCC, 2005

⁵ This InterMedia study was not nationally based, and was carried out only on a small sample population of 1,941 people.

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

Of all media, television is the least developed channel of communication in Uganda. The countryside is still in darkness as far as TV broadcasting is concerned. However, almost all the TV services now available in the country are new since 2000. The only free-to-air Ugandan TV station with near-national coverage is the state-funded UBC-TV, which is based in the capital Kampala but has booster transmitters in the regional towns of Mbale (eastern region), Mbarara (west), in Kabale (southwest), Masaka (central) and Lira (north).

In terms of transmission outside Kampala, the only free-to-air Ugandan station besides UBC-TV with transmitters outside the capital is WBS TV (with coverage in Jinja Masaka and Mbarara).

There is relatively little available data on audience share and viewing figures. Most research that has been carried out is available only on a fee-paying basis. Some information, however, can be drawn from a 2005 study carried out by InterMedia on audience reach (as opposed to audience share). In this study, which was not national and only surveyed 1,941 people, those surveyed were asked if they had watched a particular channel in the past four weeks. It was found that 14.2% of those interviewed had watched U-TV (now UBC-TV) in the past four weeks, 10.7% WBS-TV and 4.2% MultiChoice pay-TV (InterMedia, 2005).

6.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Of the available TV stations, all but one are privately-owned. State – owned UBC-TV, formerly UTV when it was run directly by the government, now has a measure of independence through its operation by the independent state-funded agency the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation.

A prominent businessman named Gordon Wavamuno owns the advertiser-funded Wavah Broadcasting Service (WBS). UBC-TV and WBS are the only stations without some foreign ownership. A Pentecostal Church, known as Christian Life Church, which also operates a radio station known as Top Radio, owns Top Television. Lighthouse Television is essentially a local re-broadcast of an international Christian service (US-based Trinity Broadcasting), with some participation from the local Miracle Centre Church. EATV is a Tanzanian-based service.

Completely independent broadcasting is seen as impossible because stations will inevitably not air anything that might endanger their advertising profits. Also, the editorial policies of media houses tend to be slanted towards the leanings of the owners. Finally, the state has become increasingly less tolerant of criticism, making it impossible to have independently-minded broadcasts. Television stations came under sharp criticism from the government when, during the run-up to the 2006 elections, they aired pictures of rioters in Kampala protesting the arrest of presidential aspirant Dr Kiiiza Besigye. Journalist Apunyo James was beaten for photographing jubilant soldiers celebrating the victory of the NRM candidate. The studios of WBS television were also raided for airing promotional material that allegedly maligned the NRM government (UJSC, 2006).

Section 67, Clause 2 of the 1995 Constitution, declares that, “no candidate shall be denied reasonable access and use of State-owned communication media,” while Clause 3 adds: “all presidential candidates shall be given equal time and space on the state-owned media to present their programmes to the people” (Republic of Uganda, 1995a). However, according to independent research, this was not the case during the 2006 presidential elections. The Uganda Journalists Safety Committee monitored print and broadcast media coverage of the main parties and candidates from 16-29 January 2006. In the print media (both state and private), Besigye and the opposition Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party received slightly more coverage than the NRM (49.2% to 47.4%), and other parties got only 3.4%. On UBC-TV, however, the coverage was heavily in favour of the ruling NRM, which received almost ten times as much coverage as the FDC: 62.4% for the NRM compared to 6.4% for FDC, and no coverage at all for other parties (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

6.4 Diversity

There is a wider range of TV programmes available compared to five years ago, such as interactive talk shows that cover a wide range of topics.

6.5 Quality of television output and programming

The quality of factual programmes has improved greatly, possibly because most of the reporters are university graduates, as required by the law set out in the 1995 Press and Journalists Act. However, unlike major networks such as CNN and the BBC, which have veteran journalists presenting programmes, Ugandan stations tend to employ young and inexperienced journalists who do not have much field experience. It is hoped that as they gain more experience, their programmes will improve accordingly. Tanzanian-based EATV is mostly focused on music, which tends to compromise the quality of its journalistic output.

6.6 Specific challenges

Challenges faced by the TV sector in Uganda include an unreliable power supply for many viewers, the inability of many households to afford a TV set, and the huge capital cost for investors wanting to establish stations.

Key findings

- The only free-to-air station with near-national coverage is the state-funded UBC-TV.
- UBC-TV’s main free-to-air competitor is WBS, which is available in four regions.
- The other free-to-air Ugandan-run stations are focused on the central region around the capital Kampala.
- There has been growth in recent years in the interactive talk-show format.
- The government showed intolerance of private TV news coverage when it clamped down on coverage in February 2006 of the arrest of opposition presidential candidate, Dr Kiiza Besigye.



7. Newspapers

The print media, liberalised to private participation since 1983, serves as the most extensive and vibrant source of political news coverage in Uganda.

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

The two leading national daily newspapers are the government-owned *The New Vision* and the privately-owned *Daily Monitor*, both of which publish in English. *The New Vision* is the largest paper, with a daily circulation of 35,000. Its sister, the *Sunday Vision*, has a circulation of 40,000. It also has other sister newspapers in local languages – *Rupiny*, *Etop*, *Bukedde* and *Orumuri* – which publish in Luo, Ateso, Luganda and Runyakitara respectively. There are no significant regionally-based papers in the country. The most-read local-language publication is the Luganda-language paper *Bukedde*, with a daily circulation of 15,000 (World Association of Newspapers, 2003).

The Daily Monitor is published by the Nation Media Group of Kenya and has a daily circulation of roughly 15,000. The Kenya-based weekly, *The East African*, and the daily *The Red Pepper* are also popular. Several journalists have left the main newspapers to open up their own, such as the weekly *Observer* and *Sunrise*. The *Mirror* (which has soft-pornographic material and attracts the attention of the young population) and *African Woman* also have a wide audience. The monthly sports magazine *Premiership* has a circulation of 15,000; the quarterly *Bride and Groom* has a circulation of 8,000. *City Beat* (published by *The New Vision*), also a quarterly, has a circulation of 4,000.

7.2 Investment and growth in the press in the past five years

Key new newspapers to emerge since 2000 are *The Red Pepper*, *The Observer* and *The Sunrise*. The main newspaper advertisers are breweries, mobile phone companies and government departments. From the observations made by the researcher, the mobile phone companies, eg, MTN, Celtel and Uganda Telecom, are significant advertisers. Their adverts are particularly common in the most well-circulated and well-read newspapers, *The Daily Monitor* and *The New Vision*.

The buy-out of *The Monitor* by the Nation Group in 2000 was the first-ever major takeover in the media market in Uganda. It is expected that more such buy-outs or mergers will happen in the future.

7.3 Plurality, ownership and control

The New Vision Printing and Publishing Company Ltd (NVPPCL) was set up in 1986 after Yoweri Museveni and the National Resistance Army captured state power in Uganda. Its initial line of business was the production of an English-language newspaper, *The New Vision*. It succeeded previous government-owned newspapers (*Voice of Uganda*, *Uganda Times*) that had collapsed for a variety of reasons. The company is listed on the Uganda Securities Exchange with 80% of the shares owned by the government and the other 20% owned by numerous private shareholders (*New Vision*, 2006). Although largely owned by the government, it is enjoined by the NVPPCL Act of 1997 to remain independent (USE, 2006).

The Nairobi-based Nation Media Group owns 60% of Monitor Publications Limited, publisher of *The Daily Monitor*. The Group also publishes the *Daily Nation*, a prominent newspaper in Kenya. *The Monitor* newspaper is frequently critical of the government and of President Yoweri Museveni. Subsequently, it is often labelled by the government as an 'enemy of the state'. In the run up to the 2006 presidential election, the police allegedly harassed *The Daily Monitor* for a week in November and threatened to close it down. Around 20 armed policemen raided the newspaper's offices shortly before midnight on 17 November after the publication of an issue that contained FDC publicity (RSF, 2006). *Reporters sans Frontières* (RSF, 2006) also reports that a *Daily Monitor* employee, Lawrence Nsereko, was beaten up on 29 December 2005 by two members of the ruling NRM who were enraged to see that he had removed a Museveni poster that had been pasted on a display stand where the newspaper showed advertisements. And as already mentioned, one of *The Daily Monitor's* leading journalists, Andrew Mwenda, has been charged with sedition under the Penal Code Act for hosting a programme on Radio 93.3 KFM about the death of Sudan's former rebel leader, John Garang, in a helicopter crash.

The weekly *Observer* is another national newspaper in Uganda, formed and independently owned by a cooperative made up mostly of journalists formerly working with *The Monitor*. The paper has established itself as an informed and daring newspaper, breaking and publishing stories that other media in Uganda will not cover. It also prides itself on being the "only truly independent newspaper in Uganda with no political baggage associated with some of the newspapers on the market" (*Observer*, 2006).

7.4 Diversity

The national dailies, *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor*, have the widest range of content, aiming to cater to all segments of society. For example, they have special inserts for women, young people, education and health. These papers also include columns for political and analytical stories, where different journalists and members of the public contribute. For instance, Mulera Munini and Onyango Obbo are popular columnists in *The Daily Monitor*, while Kakande, Opiyo Oloya and others are popular columnists in *The New Vision*. As well as local and international news, *The New Vision* and *Daily Monitor* cover business, agriculture, sport, technology and other typical newspaper subjects.

7.5 Quality of newspaper reporting

In contrast to the broadcast media, the press are more balanced in their information dissemination. The papers try to cut across the interests of all sectors in society. Also, unlike in the broadcast media where the programmers mix up words – i.e., use Luganda and English interchangeably – the reports stick to a particular language in which the paper is published, and non-standardised words or phrases are properly explained or highlighted. However, some newspapers, such as *The Red Pepper*, have been criticised by some sections of Ugandan society for publishing photographs of topless women and for trading in sex-related gossip (*Guardian*, 2004).

7.6 Specific challenges

Challenges for the newspaper industry include small readerships, high production costs, a small advertising sector, the existence of criminal libel laws and occasional interference from government. The 2002 census showed that less than 1% of households reported the print media (newspapers and magazines) as their main source of information (one per cent of households also reported that the TV was their main source of information). This is compared with about half of the households (49.2%) in the country reporting that “word of mouth” was their main source of information, followed by radio at 47.8% (UBOS, 2002).

Moreover, the costs of running a newspaper business are high. The materials for printing have to be procured and the staff who compile information, the editors, and the transporters have to be paid. There is also the threat of arrest or closure, based, as previously mentioned, on sections of the Penal Code Act relating to sedition, libel and treason.

Key findings

- The most-read papers are two English-language dailies: the state-owned *The New Vision* and the private *Daily Monitor*, which is owned by the Kenyan Nation Group.
- The state paper *The New Vision* has four sister papers published in the main local languages.
- *The New Vision*'s Luganda-language sister paper, *Bukkede*, is the most-read non-English-language paper.
- Criminal sanctions from the Penal Code Act are used by the state against the private press.



8. Media Support

The introduction of the Internet has changed the media landscape in Uganda. It has eliminated the need for reporters to rush back to their respective editorial rooms to type their news reports. Journalists simply look for the nearest Internet café and file a story from there, allowing for reporting from anywhere in the country. In addition, Ugandan reporters can now report for media houses across the globe. Mobile phones are also helping reporters, allowing them to relay messages to their respective editors from wherever they may be.

Many Ugandan media outlets are now on the Internet, which internationalises reports. For instance, the arrest in November 2005 of presidential aspirant Dr Kiiza Besigye received global attention. In another case, a story about the situation in Northern Uganda by a Communications Officer with the NGO, World Vision, published online via *The Daily Monitor* website, attracted the attention of two Canadians who launched the GuluWalk demonstration in Canada⁶. International Internet exposure not only puts Ugandan journalists in the limelight, but also challenges them to live up to global standards and expectations.

Meanwhile, mobile telephony has increased audience participation in interactive broadcast talk shows.

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

Up until the early 1990s, all telecommunications services in Uganda were provided by the Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (UPTC), a government-owned provider. In line with its broader policy of liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation, the Ugandan government embarked in 1994 on a strategy of liberalisation of the telecommunications sector, beginning with the licensing of Celtel, a private company that provides mobile cellular service. A second cellular service provider, MTN, started in 1998 while Posts and Telecommunications, the government-owned service that had a monopoly over all telecommunications services, was broken up into two and privatised (Minges, 2001; Mwesige, 2004).

This process has since resulted in a rapid increase in the number of fixed telephone line subscribers, from 45,145 in 1996 to 61,462 in 2001 to 100,777 in December 2005. However, the biggest leap has been in mobile phone subscription, from 188,658 in February 2001 to 1,525,125 in December 2005. UCC information for March 2006 says that there are now 107,922 fixed phone lines and 1,937,109 mobile cellular subscribers (UCC, 2006c). There are two national telecommunications operators and three mobile cellular operators.

⁶ For more on the Toronto-based GuluWalk campaign, go to <http://www.guluwalk.com/news>

The Internet started in Uganda in 1993 although commercial email services did not become available until 1994. By the year 2000, there were an estimated 60,000 Internet users in Uganda, and this had jumped to an estimated 200,000 in 2004 (CIA, 2006).

According to the latest Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) figures, as of March 2006, there were 17 Internet service providers (ISPs), an increase from 11 in 2001 (UCC, 2006c).

In recognition of the growing demand for new media technologies, in 1997, Parliament passed the Uganda Communications Act, which sought to “develop a modern communications sector” by, amongst other things, “enhancing national coverage of communications services and products; expanding the existing variety of communications services available in Uganda to include modern and innovative postal and telecommunications services; introducing, encouraging and enabling competition in the sector through regulation and licensing competitive operators; and establishing a fund for rural communications development” (Republic of Uganda, 1997). The fund established is known as the Rural Communications Development Fund (RCDF), and is administered by the UCC, which acts as the independent regulator for the telecommunications sector and provider of licences for telecommunications operators and service providers, including Internet cafés.

The objectives of the RCDF are to:

- ensure that all sub-counties with at least 5,000 people have access to basic communication services by 2005;
- support the establishment of an Internet ‘Point of Presence’ (PoP) in every district of Uganda where each PoP shall be associated with at least one Internet café;
- support the introduction of ICT use in at least one “vanguard” institution in every district of Uganda by 2004; and,
- promote the provision of communication services in rural areas as a profitable business (UCC, 2001).

In 2002, the Uganda National ICT Policy Framework (Republic of Uganda, 2002a) was put in place with the aim of facilitating a comprehensive and coordinated development of Uganda’s ICT sector and bridging the rural-urban divide in information accessibility. Other significant developments in the ICT sector are as follows.

- Uganda is a participant in the SchoolNet Africa project, which “seeks to enhance education and learning outcomes across Africa by progressively extending sustainable access and use of information and communications technologies to teachers and learners”. The project’s long-term objective is to have all schools in Africa connected by 2020 (SchoolNet Uganda, 2006).
- Uganda is also part of the Acacia Initiative, an international effort led by Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to empower sub-Saharan African communities with the ability to apply ICTs to their own social and economic development. One Acacia project, on the use of ICT to empower women in Uganda, is involved in the creation of online and offline databases and other information sources on a variety of issues to increase women’s entrepreneurial opportunities (IDRC, 2003).

Although the online population in Uganda is slowly growing, the Internet is not yet a communication medium for the masses. While there has been a boom in Internet cafés in Kampala, they are yet to spread to the other parts of the country, especially to the rural areas where 90% of the population lives. Poverty, high infrastructure costs and high connection costs all limit Internet penetration in Uganda. Furthermore, only a very small percentage of the population owns a personal computer, and computer literacy is low. Electricity supply remains a further problem, as many parts of the country still do not have access to reliable electricity. According to Robbins (2002, p.237), “the typical profile of an Internet user in Africa – educated, wealthy, and male – has not changed since the continent began to go online in the early 1990s”. This profile is supported by Mwesige’s (2004) survey of Internet café users in Uganda. The results from his sample found that the typical Internet café user in Uganda was a 25-year-old single male with no children, who had completed high school at the very minimum.

Table 1. Statistical Profile of the “Typical” Uganda Internet Café User

Category	Profile
Median age	25 years
Single	73%
Male	60%
Graduated from high school	91%
Graduated from university	39%
Graduated from some other tertiary institution	17%
Has landline at home	44%
Has a mobile cellular phone	77%
Has a computer at home	30%
Has alternative access to the Internet	60%
Median experience with Internet	2 years

Source: Mwesige, 2004

These sources (Robbins, 2002; Mwesige, 2004) also describe how the Internet is largely used for personal communication: to check email, to surf, to play computer games, or to look up entertainment sites.

Mobile telephony is providing a viable solution to problems arising out of inadequate spread of fixed-line infrastructure and the need for quick deployment and ease of installation. All mobile phone operators offer pre-paid and post-paid/contract services. Competition between the operators has brought some advantages to the users, including lower airtime charges and increased areas of coverage.

8.2 Key changes in media support in the past five years

International advertising agencies in Uganda include LoweScanad and Saatchi & Saatchi, and there are many national ad agencies (K. Kizito, personal communication, 11 August 2006). The Ugandan Yellow Pages lists 24 advertising and marketing service firms (Yellow Pages, 2006). Mandy's Film and TV Production Directory for 2006 lists three firms, all in Kampala: Creative Key, Ginger Ink and iVAD international (Mandy's, 2006).

The author was not able to determine the degree of change in these media support sectors over the past five years.

8.3 Audience and readership research data

There are several research companies which collect audience and readership data in Uganda, including Steadman Group, K2 Consult, Research International and Omnicom (K. Kizito, personal communication, 11 August 2006). Finally, the Makerere University Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICTS) studies Internet usage patterns.

Key findings

- Reporters can now use Internet cafés to file stories via e-mail from anywhere in the country.
- A strong Internet presence by some Ugandan media outlets is increasing international awareness of Ugandan issues and exposing local journalists to global standards.
- The spread of telephony access via mobile telephony use is increasing audience participation in broadcast talk shows.



9. NGO Activity

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

Originally, most NGOs in Uganda were charity-driven religious institutions. However, since the NRM government came into power in 1986, there has been rapid growth in the number of all kinds of NGOs, especially in service delivery sectors such as health, education, micro-finance, water and sanitation, and agriculture.

At present, there is little reliable data on the number and nature of NGOs in the country. The GPR Group (2006) reported that the total number of NGOs registered in 2000/1 was around 3,500.

Ugandan NGOs are funded primarily through international NGOs and donors, with the average NGO generating only about 2.5% of its funding from members and individual donations (Uganda National NGO Forum, 2006). Some specifically rural-based CSOs – such as burial associations, credit clubs and women’s digging associations – raise their sources through membership contributions. In Uganda, it is apparent that, apart from rural organisations such as these, most other NGOs look for external funding. Hence, it can be argued that most NGOs are more or less like local managers of foreign aid.

Two umbrella organisations have been set up to provide some coordination to the NGO sector in Uganda. These are the Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations (DENIVA) and the Uganda National NGO Forum. Both aim to encourage self-regulation and to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences amongst members.

Some NGOs have declared objectives of engaging the state or influencing its political activities. Some of the NGOs in Uganda that have worked towards this end include: Foundation for African Development (FAD), National Organisation for Civic Education and Elections Monitoring (NOCEM), Uganda Think Tank Foundation, and Uganda Joint Christian Council. Reputable international NGOs such as Plan International, World Vision, Oxfam and Red Banner are known for helping communities that have suffered losses from war (LRA victims in the north), famine, floods, drought and poverty. They extend their services via food, shelter, medical care, education and more. Local NGOs, such as TASO (The AIDS Support Organisation), offer care and counselling services to people living with HIV/AIDS.

9.2 Key NGOs involved in media development activities

Two of the international agencies most actively involved in developing media in Uganda are not strictly speaking NGOs, but rather the international development arms of the Swedish and US governments: the Swedish International Developing Agency (SIDA) and USAID.

In terms of actual NGOs, two key international players are:

- MS Danish Association for International Co-operation (MS Uganda), a Danish NGO; and,
- Panos Eastern Africa.

As mentioned earlier in Section 3.8, Panos Eastern Africa (2005) is conducting a region-wide project to train journalists to report accurately on terrorist activities and related issues.

A key national NGO involved in media development is the Uganda Media Women's Association (UMWA). Its aim is "to empower society to appreciate the issues of the least heard women, children, people with disability, the youth... through the active use of media for sustainable development" (UMWA, 2006). UMWA supports MAMA FM radio, which seeks to broadcast gender-sensitive educational programmes and offers training/practical experience for female journalists (UMWA, 2006).

9.3 Climate of opportunity for media development activities

While the state has shown support to NGOs as "gap-fillers" in development, it also treats the activities of NGOs with suspicion.

The state decided to manage the sector through a registration system established by the 1989 National NGO Registration Act. NGOs must register with the NGO Registration Board and pay a fee, with failure to comply being a criminal offence.

The 1989 Act was recently amended (NGO Registration Amendment Act) to allow the government greater ability to "monitor" the activities of NGOs. This move has received much criticism from NGOs in Uganda. The Coalition on the NGO Bill (CONOB) was set up to engage actors against this Act, and to resist it on the grounds of its "regressive" nature (Sustainability Watch, 2006). CONOB claims the Amendment Act is inconsistent with the autonomy of civic organisation and the guarantees of freedom and liberty embedded under the 1995 Constitution. It also contends that the nature of the restrictions imposed by the Act are grossly inconsistent with Uganda's commitments under several international charters. Uganda is party to both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), and is therefore enjoined to protect and promote the enjoyment of all rights contained therein, including the freedom of association through civic organisations.

Time will tell how this Act will be implemented in practice and what long-term consequences it will have on NGOs in Uganda.

Key findings

- There is a lack of reliable data on the number and nature of NGOs in Uganda.
- While the sector has greatly expanded, the NRM government has been eager to hold NGOs within its confines, as evidenced by the provisions of the NGO Registration Amendment Act.
- Key international supporters of media development in Uganda are the government international development agencies of Sweden (SIDA) and the US (USAID).
- International NGOs working in media development include Panos and MS Danish Association for International Cooperation (MS Uganda).
- A key national NGO is the Uganda Media Women's Association (UMWA).



10. Conclusions

10.1 Media statistical data

One difficulty in painting a portrait of media development in Uganda is the lack of reliable data on the sector.

10.2 Media health

The continued existence of criminal sanctions for alleged media offences is a repressive element of the Ugandan media landscape. The state has in recent years shown its willingness to make use of these criminal sanctions against journalists.

Also, recent years have seen government-sanctioned raids on a private TV station and state-ordered temporary closures of private radio stations – due to alleged anti-government sentiment at these outlets.

10.3 Broadcasting

The government appears to be taking steps towards converting the Ugandan state broadcaster into a public-service broadcaster, newly-renamed the Ugandan Broadcasting Corporation (UBC).

The community radio sector is growing, and appears to have the support of government.

10.4 Newspapers

The newspaper sector is relatively dynamic, with some strong competition between state-owned and private papers.

10.5 Media support

The mobile telephony sector is showing healthy growth. The Internet sector is growing but with a focus on the capital city, Kampala. The state's ICT framework includes goals for rural rollout.

10.6 NGO activity

Better data is needed on NGO activity, and the government's NGO Registration Amendment Act's provisions for the state to "monitor" NGO conduct are worrying to many in the sector.

Key findings

- More and better media sector data are needed.
- State interference in private media is still present, particularly in the broadcast sector.
- Internet and ICT access need to be improved in rural areas.
- NGOs are concerned by apparent state attempts at closer monitoring and control.



11. Appendices

Appendix 1: Bibliography

- Africa Legal Network (2006) *The laws of Uganda*. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.africalegalnetwork.com/downloadfile.asp?filename=statutues_uganda.pdf
- Afrobarometer (2003) *Afrobarometer paper no.27. Insiders and outsiders: varying perceptions of democracy and governance in Uganda*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.afrobarometer.org/papers/AfropaperNo27.pdf>
- Article 19 (2000) *Uganda: Onyango-Obbo and Mwenda v. Uganda*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.article19.org/pdfs/cases/uganda-onyango-obbo-v.-uganda.%20Uganda>
- Baguma, R., Lugalambi, G., and Zawadi, D. (2000) *Up in the air: The state of broadcasting in Eastern Africa*. Panos: Nairobi
- Balikowa, D. O. (2002) MPs dug grave for journalists. *Monitor*, April. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200204050463.html>
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (2005) *Ugandans desperately seeking education*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4112560.stm>
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (2006a) *Profile: Uganda's Yoweri Museveni*. 25 February 2006. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4124584.stm>
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (2006b) *Press urges calm in Uganda row*. 26 February 2006. Retrieved April 2006 from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4752546.stm>
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (2006c) *Country profile: Uganda*. 19 July 2006. Retrieved August 2006 from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1069166.stm#media
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2006) *The World Factbook – Uganda*. Retrieved August 2006, from <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ug.html>
- Coalition on the NGO (Amendment) Bill (CONOB) (2001) *The Non-Governmental Organisations Registration (Amendment) Bill 2001: A Challenge to constitutional guarantees and the democratisation process in Uganda*. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.wougnet.org/Documents/HURINET/NGOs_Response_to_NGO_Bill_Committee_ReportII.doc

- Commission for Africa (2005) *Our Common Interest: Report of the Commission for Africa*. March. Retrieved March 2006, from http://www.commissionforafrica.org/english/report/thereport/english/11-03-05_cr_report.pdf
- DENIVA (2006) *Home*. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.deniva.or.ug/files/_h_index.php?pageName=home.html
- Electoral Commission (2006) *Republic of Uganda: Full results for 2006 presidential elections*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.ec.or.ug/detail.php?p=14#>
- Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) (1998) *Human rights reporter: Human rights, monitoring and documentation project*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.ned.org/grantees/fhri/98annual/toc98.html>
- Gariyo, Z. (1993) *The media, constitutionalism and democracy in Uganda*. Kampala: Centre for Basic Research
- Global Poverty Research Group (GPRG) (2006) *Institutions and development in Uganda*. Retrieved June 2006, from <http://www.gprg.org/themes/t5-govrn-norms-outcms/inst-dev-ugan.htm>
- Guardian (2004) *Ugandan tabloid breaks AIDS taboo*. Guardian online, 5 April 2004. Retrieved June 2006, from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/aids/story/0,7369,1185851,00.html>
- Human Rights Watch (2006) *In hope and fear: Uganda's presidential and parliamentary polls*. February. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://hrw.org/backgrounder/africa/uganda0206/5.htm>
- InterMedia (2003) *Uganda: Media and opinion survey data for developing countries*. Washington, DC: InterMedia
- InterMedia (2005) *Uganda: Media and opinion survey data for developing countries*. Washington, DC: InterMedia
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC) (2003) *Economic empowerment of women through ICTs in Uganda*. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.idrc.ca/acacia/ev-88847-201_055449-1-IDRC_ADM_INFO.html
- International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2004) *HIV-AIDS and work; global estimates, impact and response*. Geneva: ILO. Retrieved June 2006, from http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/trav/aids/publ/global_est/
- International Journalists Network (IJN) (2005) *Panos dedicates money to training Ugandan journalists*. 29 July 2005. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://ijnet.org/Director.aspx?P=Article&ID=303231&LID=1>
- Kagwa, I. (2000) An overview of the Internet in Uganda. Presentation to the African Internet and Telecom Summit, Banjul, The Gambia, 5-9 June 2000. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.itu.int/africainternet2000/countryreports/uga_e.htm
- Kemigisha, R.M. (1998) *A Handbook on the state of the media in Uganda*. Kampala and Nairobi: Eastern Africa Media Institute & Freidrich Ebert Stiftung
- Makara, S. (2000) *NGOs in Uganda: Their typologies, roles and functions in governance: The limited expansion of Uganda's third sector*. London: Civil Society and Governance Programme, Institute of Development Studies

- Mandy's Film and TV Production Directory (2006) *Uganda: Producers and production companies*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.mandy.com/1/services.cfm?t=ugan&c=0prd>
- Minges, M. (2001) *The Internet in an African LDC: Uganda case study*. International Telecommunication Union Study. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/cs/uganda/material/uganda.pdf>
- Mwangi, W. (1999) We are on air. *Community Media News*, Issue 5, October. Nairobi: Community Media Network for Eastern and Southern Africa
- Mwesige, P. G. (2004) Cyber elites: a survey of Internet Café users in Uganda. *Telematics and Informatics*, Vol. 21 (1): 83-101
- My Uganda (2006) *Non-government organisations*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.myuganda.co.ug/ngos/>
- Nattimba, N. (2004) Policy implications for the sustainability of community radio in Uganda: The case of MAMA FM Radio. MA Thesis: University of Leeds. Unpublished. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://ics.leeds.ac.uk/pg-study/mashow/files/Nattimba.doc>
- New Vision* (2006) *About us*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.newvision.co.ug/V/Observer>
- Observer* (2006) *About us*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.ugandaobserver.com/new/about/index.php>
- Ojiambo, R. (1999) Development of community media in Uganda. Paper presented at Regional Seminar on the Promotion of Community Media in Africa, 8 June, Kampala. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.isis.or.ug/docs/1999_community.rtf
- Reporters sans Frontières (RSF) (2003) *Uganda: 2003 annual report*. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=6457
- Reporters sans Frontières (RSF) (2004) *Uganda: 2004 annual report*. Retrieved August 2004, from http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=10210
- Reporters sans Frontières (RSF) (2006) *Government continues to tighten its grip on the press with elections now 50 days away*. 2 January 2006. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=16075
- Republic of Uganda (1995a) *Constitution of the Republic of Uganda*. Kampala: Government Printers
- Republic of Uganda (1995b) *Press and Journalists Act*. Kampala: Government Printers
- Republic of Uganda (1996) *Electronic Media Act*. Kampala: Government Printers
- Republic of Uganda (1997) *Uganda Communications Act*. Kampala: Government Printers. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/webs/ucc/uca1997.pdf>
- Republic of Uganda (1998) *Penal Code Act (Amended)*. Kampala: Government Printers
- Republic of Uganda (2002a) *National Information and Communication Technologies Policy*. Kampala: Government Printers. Retrieved August 2006 from http://www.logos-net.net/ilo/195_base/en/init/uga_1.htm
- Republic of Uganda (2002b) *Suppression of Terrorism Act*. Kampala: Government Printers
- Republic of Uganda (2005a) *Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Act*. Kampala: Government Printers

- Republic of Uganda (2005b) *Access to Information Act*. Kampala: Government Printers
- Robbins, M. B. (2002) Are African women online just ICT consumers?
Gazette, Vol. 64 (3): 235-249
- SchoolNet Uganda (2006) *About us*. Retrieved August 2006 from
<http://www.schoolnetuganda.sc.ug/homepage.php?option=aboutus>
- SDC/Panos (2005) *Information and communication technologies and large-scale poverty reduction: Lessons from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean*. Warnock, K. and Wickremasinghe, R. (Eds.), in cooperation with G. Weigel. London: Panos
- Sustainability Watch (2006) *Uganda: Civil Society may lose ground under a new Amendment Act*. 25 July 2006. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.suswatch.org/uganda/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=1
- Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (2006) *Brief of the Corporation: Main Activities*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.ubc.ug/about.html>
- Uganda Broadcasting Council (2004) *National broadcasting policy: A new aspiration for Uganda, (Draft)*. Retrieved August 2006, from
http://www.wougnet.org/ICTpolicy/ug/docs/TheNewBroadcastingPolicy_Final.doc
- Uganda Broadcasting Council (2006a) *Council profile*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.broadcastug.com/profile.php>
- Uganda Broadcasting Council (2006b) *Station registration*. Retrieved June 2006, from <http://www.broadcastug.com/faq>
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2002) *The 2002 Uganda population and housing census – main report*. March. Kampala: UBOS. Retrieved on August 2006, from <http://www.ubos.org/2002%20Census%20Final%20Reportdoc.pdf>
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2003) *Uganda national household survey 2002/2003: Socio-economic survey*. Retrieved August 2006, from
<http://www.ubos.org/unhslI%20socio.pdf>
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) (2005) *2005 statistical abstract*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.ubos.org/2005StatAbstract.pdf>
- Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) (2001) *Rural communications development policy for Uganda*. Kampala: Government Printers. Retrieved June 2006, from <http://www.ucc.co.ug/rcdf/rcdfPolicy.pdf>
- Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) (2005) *Operational FM radio stations as of May 2005: Radio and television stations*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.ucc.co.ug/spectrum/operationalFmRadioStations.pdf>
- Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) (2006a) *District information portal*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.dip.go.ug/english/>
- Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) (2006b) *Licensed Internet service providers*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.ucc.co.ug/licensing/isps.php>
- Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) (2006c) *Communications sector comparative figures for the period December 1996 to March 2006*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.ucc.co.ug/marketInfo/marketstatistics.php>

- Uganda Journalists Safety Committee (UJSC) (2006) *Report on the state media coverage of the 2006 elections*. January 2006. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.osservatorio.it/download/Uganda%20Election%20Coverage.pdf>
- Uganda Media Centre (2006) *Information, communication and technology*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://mediacentre.go.ug/index.php?obj=59>
- Uganda Media Women's Association (UMWA) (2006) *Professional journalists working together to make a difference*. Retrieved August 2006, from http://www.interconnection.org/umwa/community_radio.html
- Uganda National NGO Forum (2006) *A country-wide study*. Retrieved June 2006, from <http://www.ngoforum.or.ug/focus/index.htm>
- Uganda Securities Exchange (USE) (2006) *Local listings*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.use.or.ug/content.asp?contentid=14&category=listed%20securities&contenttitle=Local%20Listings>
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2005) *Uganda human development report: Linking environment to human development: A deliberate choice*. Retrieved June 2006, from http://hdr.undp.org/reports/view_reports.cfm?year=0&country=C248®ion=0&type=0&theme=0
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2006) *Human development reports – country sheet – Uganda*. Retrieved August, from <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=UGA>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2006) *Human rights watch world report 2006 – Uganda*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendoc.htm?tbl=RSDCOI&page=research&id=43cfaea2>
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2005) *Uganda: Population, health and socio-economic indicators/policy developments*. Retrieved June 2006, from <http://www.unfpa.org/profile/uganda.cfm>
- United Nations Statistics Division (UNSTATS) (2006) *Indicators on youth and elderly populations*. Retrieved June 2006, from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/youth.htm>
- World Newspapers Association (WNA) (2003) *Circulation: A 'visionary' approach to boost sales in Uganda*. Retrieved April 2006, from <http://www.rap21.org/article18817.html>
- World Bank (2006a) *World development indicators database*. Retrieved May 2006, from <http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/CPProfile.asp?PTYPE=CP&CCODE=UGA>
- World Bank (2006b) *GenderStats: Thematic data: Capabilities and human capital: Uganda*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://devdata.worldbank.org/genderstats/genderRpt.asp?rpt=capability&cty=UGA,Uganda&hm=home2>
- Yellow Pages (Uganda) (2006) *Advertising & marketing agencies & services*. Retrieved August 2006, from <http://www.yellowpageskenya.com/uganda/search/catid.asp?whichpage=1&pagesize=15&sqlQuery=select+%2A+from+ugbusiness+where+ugbusiness%2ECategoryID+%3D+700+order+by+Name%2CTown>

Appendix 2: Individuals/organisation consulted during the research

- D. Malingha Doya, Special Correspondent, Uganda Journalists Union, *The East African Newspaper*, 15 August 2006
- K. Kizito, Communications Manager, British Council, Uganda, 11 August 2006



Uganda

Country Report

Way Forward



12. Introduction

Interviewees were selected from two main categories of media organisations in keeping with the codes provided by the BBC and based on the following criteria:

- official positions within the media organisations, such as a director of information or a public relations officer; and,
- knowledge of media development initiatives in Uganda.

Care was taken to represent both women and youth in the interviews, leading to a total of six women and two young persons being included. At the end of the project, 16 interviews were carried out but 15 were included in the report to maintain the balance of sector representation. Fourteen interviewees gave consent to have their names published in this report.

The interviews covered key media persons, such as: public relations officers or information officers in NGOs; senior lecturers and heads of departments in the Mass Communication Department at Makerere University and elsewhere; the Executive Director of the Uganda Media Women's Association; the Country Director of the Uganda Radio Network; senior editors in different print media houses (including *The Weekly Observer* and *The Daily Monitor*); the Director of the Uganda Media Centre; prominent presenters on radio; communication managers from the private media sector; the Director of Information in the Ministry; and the Minister of Information and Broadcasting.

One interview was conducted with an army spokesman, and was important for the researcher since the army is a crucial player in the affairs of this country. It influences media independence, especially as many of the cases where journalists are taken to court are concerned with reporting on the sensitive issue of security. Several top brass army officers are seconded to and sit in the Ugandan Parliament. Perhaps we are seeing not the "militarisation" of the parliament, but the "parliamentarisation" of the army. The army has its own spokesperson, distinct from the government spokesperson, and anybody with even elementary knowledge of the history of Uganda would not casually dismiss the role of the army in the affairs of this country. Many Members of Parliament have argued in vain that these military officers should be excluded from the Parliament of Uganda (August House). The history of this country is replete with army involvement, and it is perhaps better to debate or argue with the army on the floor of parliament than elsewhere.

It was very hard to get interviews with the selected people, as most of them were very busy. A lot of telephoning and cajoling, mostly through personal friends of those selected, was required. Many of the prospective interviewees have several telephone numbers, only in the possession of people known to them.

The most difficult groups of interviewees to get were those in the media and media commentators. Those from government departments were easier to interview, although also very busy. Towards the end of the schedule of interviews, some potential interviewees made appointments that, it was suspected, they had no intention of keeping! One person made four appointments over 48 hours, none of which he kept, and that cost the researcher many hours of waiting and running around in vain. Indeed, many appointments turned into disappointments!

By and large, all persons interviewed gave their views in a friendly manner, but all of them found the interview took too long. Many interviewees kept on fine-tuning the questions, some because they genuinely did not understand the long questions, but others evidently wanted to buy time so as to choose their answers accordingly. All interviewees accepted that they would be audio-recorded.

From the time this work started, which was towards the end of March 2006, the researcher and field assistants were busy virtually every day, including Sundays and public holidays. Because of the acute power shortage in Kampala, most places, on average, have power only three days a week. It was necessary to travel around to find an open cyber café to surf, print, photocopy or write something. While the first interviews were carried out as early as the 26 April 2006, the last ones were done as late as 12 June 2006.



13. Media Development: an organisational perspective

13.1 Key organisations

Organisations spoken to during this process included, inter alia: Makerere University Department of Mass Communication; several United Nations departments; the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting; Uganda Radio Network; the Institute for War and Peace Reporting; the Uganda Army through its spokesperson; *The Weekly Observer*; *The Daily Monitor*; Mobile Telephone Network (MTN); Radio Star; Mama FM; Uganda Media Women's Association; Uganda Media Network; World Vision and Uganda Red Cross.

13.2 Impact of media development initiatives

All interviewees agreed that there have been many changes in the media in Uganda over the past five years. Two interviewees (one educator and an NGO worker) described the media as having become more vibrant, with the NGO interviewee noting that there had been:

“ ... liberalisation of the media especially in the radio spectrum. ”

(**Charlotte Ntulume Kawesa**, Information Officer; NGO: United Nations Development Programme, Uganda)

Two interviewees felt there was more freedom of expression overall, notwithstanding the many cases where the government has clamped down on particular journalists and media houses perceived to have overstepped their freedoms.

The changes in the media sector in Uganda have been gradual, but the watershed was about 1992/4, when the airwaves were liberalised. For three interviewees the most important changes in the media in Uganda were the opening up of media space and the subsequent proliferation of private newspapers, private radio stations and private television stations, as well as the introduction and eager embrace of the Internet and mobile phones by many people, including the media fraternity. All of these changes have led to the improvement in media.

One interviewee from government and one media entrepreneur thought that there has been increased competition amongst the print media houses for key journalists, while the Nation Media Group, which bought a majority shareholding in and ultimately took over the *Monitor*, described by NMG as the only daily independent newspaper in the country at that time, facilitated the flow of information and levels of interaction between the public and the media.

Five interviewees pointed out that between the general election of 1996 and that of 2001, people realised that they had to campaign for elective office. Through the media, people could now ask the candidates what they wanted to promise and about promises that they had not kept in the past.

Another interviewee said investigative journalism had been improved since last year, when Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD), DfID and others gave funds to Makerere University to organise awards for investigative journalism on an annual basis.

“ This has had the effect of giving journalists courage and recognising them for their efforts in exposing social ills, fighting corruption, and the promotion of good governance. ”

(**Monica Chibita**, Senior Lecturer; Educator: Mass Communications, Makerere University, Uganda)

One interviewee from government explained that in the absence of regulatory frameworks to guide and govern them:

“ The sudden proliferation of media players on the scene within a short time, has caused tensions and friction between government and the media. ”

(**Dr James Nsaba Buturo**, Former Minister of State for Information; Government, Ugandan Government, Uganda)

Practising journalists pointed out that there are still many draconian laws on the books. Some are active but others lie dormant, and may be activated at any time by government functionaries. They felt that as much as the new legal frameworks may be an improvement, they are still a long way from being fair to the media industry.

Two NGO interviewees felt that it is significant that there are now more youthful and formally trained media practitioners than in the past, and the number of female media practitioners has increased considerably. An example of the difference on the gender landscape was given by Charlotte Ntulume who, besides working with the UNDP, lectures at Makerere University, pointed out that

“ ... out of 28 students in my public relations class in Makerere, only five were men. ”

(**Lydia Mirembe**, Lecturer; Educator: University of Makerere and UNDP, World Food Programme, Uganda)

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

One interviewee gave as the most strategic change in his own area of work over the past five years, as

“ ... the recognition by the media that there was a need to move their relations with government to a level that is more professional and more engaging, rather than accusing the latter of control and denial of access. ”

(**Robert Kabushenga**, Director, Uganda Media Centre; Government: Office of the President, Uganda)

Another interviewee thought that over the past few years there has been

“ ... a consensus that the broadcast industry is critically important to the country. ”

(**Samuel Nabasa Gumah**, Country Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Uganda Radio Network, Uganda).

For one interviewee, the impact of media development on his sector in Uganda has been:

“ Specifically within the legal framework of the Uganda justice system for the first time in the history of this country, the media fraternity went to court and helped to strike a law off the law books of Uganda. ”

(**Samuel Nabasa Gumah**, Country Director; Media Practitioner. Private Sector: Uganda Radio Network, Uganda)

He was referring to Section 41 of the Penal Code, under the heading “Publication of False News”, which made it an offence for whoever published “false news”, defined as any news, rumour, or information intended to cause fear, panic and public insecurity. On conviction, the publisher of such material was liable to two years in jail and a fine, or both. This piece of legislation was struck off the Law books in 2002 after the media stakeholders successfully challenged it.



14. Media Development Initiatives

14.1 Review

Media organisations in Uganda have been involved in several recent initiatives projects and accreditation schemes, such as the ones discussed in this section.

- The Highway Africa Conference is an Information and Computer Technology conference, initiated by Mobile Telephone Network (MTN). In this initiative, which has been in progress for the past four years, the company is encouraging journalists to understand the mobile phone industry and business, so as to report authoritatively on these issues. Last year, MTN sponsored some 20 journalists for a journalism workshop in conjunction with Uganda Management Institute (UMI), where they were trained in business reporting. In conjunction with the British Council, MTN has also sponsored a programme facilitating women writers and female journalists, and is also a co-organiser and co-sponsor of the 'Golden Pen Awards'.
- The Investigative Journalism Award was launched by the Mass Communication Department at Makerere University to encourage a competitive environment for reporters.
- The Uganda Media Women's Association (UMWA) installed Mama FM radio station to champion women's issues and encourage women to participate more in matters affecting them. UMWA also introduced a newspaper called *The Other Voice* to influence government policy.

14.1.1 Approaches to media development

The overarching objective of the Uganda Media Centre is the,

“ ... general development of a culture where government and the opposition talk to each other. ”

(Robert Kabushenga, Director, Uganda Media Centre; Government: Office of the President, Uganda)

For the UMWA, the major goal of all their activities is

“ ... to raise awareness of and have people participate effectively in matters affecting them, thus enabling them to make informed choices. ”

(Robert Kabushenga, Director, Uganda Media Centre; Government: Office of the President, Uganda)

The overarching objective for the Uganda Radio Network was described as ensuring that the big commercial community and private broadcast sectors begin to play a role in enabling Ugandans to participate fully in issues of governance, development and democracy. The network gives people information that they can use to make choices, and participate in shaping their destiny. One media entrepreneur felt that these may include political choices or selecting the alternatives available for development.

14.1.2 Funding of media development

Only a few of the interviewees were responsible for allocating funding or for funding media development directly. One of these was Philip Besiimire of MTN. MTN funds sports and media activities in the country, as a way of giving value back to the public, and also for advertising purposes. The proportion of funding devoted towards media development varies depending on the availability of media development programmes that they can partner with.

One media entrepreneur disclosed that being a media body, the entire budget of the Uganda Radio Network was devoted to activities directly related to media development initiatives.

According to the interviewees, the Government has cut its budget on media by semi-privatising Radio Uganda and Uganda Television, which have become the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC), to compete more favourably with the other private radio and television stations in the country, if not for business, at least for audience.

14.2 Success and impact

14.2.1 Evaluating the success of media development projects

Five interviewees reported having formal evaluation, while the rest said that their projects were ongoing and have yet to be evaluated. The methods varied, even within the same organisation. For example, Margaret Masagazi Sentamu recounted how the Uganda Media Women's Association evaluates activities through reviews and workshops, and sometimes in conjunction with their development partners who use a consultant to carry out an impact assessment survey for them.

Steadman, an independent organisation, evaluates the project activities of the Uganda Radio Network, especially the training section (Samuel Nabasa Gumah, Country Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Uganda Radio Network, Uganda).

14.2.2 Factors contributing to the success of media development projects

The factors, which foster successful media development were discussed solely in the context of the prevailing political and economic situation of the country, and appear in section 15.2.

14.2.3 Factors undermining the success of media development projects

Factors thought to inhibit the success of media development projects, were also discussed mainly under the prevailing political and economic situation of the country. These include:

- the Government's unwillingness to recognise that media is a key partner;
- a policy environment where the media is stifled, press freedom is limited, and diversity is not allowed to thrive; and,
- the view of one government interviewee, who felt that media houses do not have the same levels of understanding that the government has, especially when they see themselves simply as businesses, and do not see the national calling that requires investment in training their staff.

Interviewees stated that there is poverty among media workers because business owners pay them low salaries.

Two interviewees (one NGO and one Educator) pointed out poor funding mechanisms, especially for the weaker media. The community media in particular was singled out as struggling with funding, because they are not allowed to take advertising (as they are supposed to be non-profit). It was felt by these interviewees that since donor funding normally comes with strings attached, this often compromises the mission and the vision of the community that is being served.

Some journalists pointed out that the survival of newspapers and radio and television stations in Uganda depended mainly on adverts from government ministries. They felt that even adverts from private citizens could potentially be compromised as government has a lot of sway over them. Therefore, whenever a media house falls foul of the establishment, it cannot survive. Examples were given of the embargo imposed upon *The Monitor* when it was accused of publishing negative stories about the government.

According to a government interviewee, some media houses sometimes take political sides, causing internal friction with their own staff, who hold different positions. Prospective customers who may have divergent political views or who view such a media house as a political risk do not buy products from such a house.

Two interviewees, an analyst and one from an NGO, indicated that the low income of the population also works against successful media development, as media houses cannot be sustainable when few people buy their products, and not consistently. For example, there is a fall in the paper sales when schools reopen and when parents thus have little money.

14.3 Lessons learned

One media support interviewee said that having dealt with many organisations, they now know how to measure impact, and what the indicators of success are. Dealing with different partners has also helped them in the way they account for the money they are given.

One of the lessons learned is that having different agendas and seeking to benefit from a project works against its successful implementation. Lack of a good strategy and lack of good and committed executors lead to project failure. Lack of funding and bad government policies were cited as being among the most serious factors behind project failure. The uniformity of fees for private and community media, and the prices of fuel – especially where media houses have to use generators to remain on the air – were given as examples by one media support interviewee of bad government policies.

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

It was agreed that for media content to be relevant it must be within a cultural context. Media development initiatives are mostly designed without African cultural heritage in mind, as the majority of initiatives have basically looked for successful models elsewhere and tried to adjust them to fit the situation. One media entrepreneur identified the way forward as involving experts and people who are within this context at the design level rather than waiting to involve them when the projects have already been designed.



15. Developing the Environment for Success

The consensus among the interviewees was that a good political atmosphere and a growing economy were imperative in the development of media.

15.1 Key factors

One key factor important for the success of media development is the training level of managers, journalists and other personnel found in these media houses. The remuneration of these people also plays an important role in their motivation and ability to innovate. Moreover, such journalists are vulnerable to corruption as a means of survival. Another important factor is,

“ ... the perception by media proprietors that while the media houses are businesses, they also have a national calling and obligation relating to the way their country is governed, the way resources are managed, and indeed that they have a role to play in the cohesion of the country. ”

(**Samuel Nabasa Gumah**, Country Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Uganda Radio Network, Uganda)

15.2 Political and economic influences

Thinking broadly about the political and economic situation in Uganda, four interviewees (one government, one media practitioner and two from NGOs) felt that the healthy policy ushered in by the present government has encouraged the growth of media, both public and private.

“ Political will and stability have allowed people to go out and engage in different forms of enterprise, and has allowed debate to emerge. ”

(**Robert Kabushenga**, Director, Uganda Media Centre; Government: Office of the President, Uganda)

Similarly, a measure of economic recovery and growth has given people enough purchasing power to spend on the media, while a liberalised economy and booming business sector have supported media houses through advertising, giving them a lot of money to invest. Four interviewees felt that media has been understood as a business and, like other businesses in a liberalised economy, it has been given the freedom to sell its products and make a profit.

Four other interviewees, also felt that since the economy has been growing steadily over the years, employers in the media industry should be able to pay better salaries to their staff and put more emphasis on training them. The notion is that better trained and better paid personnel will be more motivated and more useful to their employers as their products and service will be better, leading to more profits for their employers.

The level of managerial competence of the media houses has improved as increasingly more people are trained in media skills, generating the required level of resources for media houses to remain in business and sustain themselves. Another factor is the political process, which its predecessors had violated with impunity. One government interviewee noted that if the ruling NRM continues to base its claims of legitimacy on political advancement and the question of human rights, including the political will to a free media, it has a specific obligation to advance an environment in which these things can thrive.

The political and economic situation of a country in the development of the media should be taken seriously, since politics informs virtually everything that happens in a country and will either promote or inhibit success. The most reported issue in the media, indeed the most lucrative aspect of media, is politics. In Uganda,

“ ... even business has a political angle as one can hardly survive if looked on with disfavour by the establishment. ”

(**Joachim Buwembo**, Managing Editor; Analysts: *The Daily Monitor*, Uganda)

15.2.1 State support for media development

Besides government's sponsorship for a few students of mass communication at state universities, coupled with a seminar once in a while, many interviewees, including state employees, did not think that there was any state support for media development activities in Uganda. Instead, four interviewees thought the government was only paying lip service to media development without any substance.

Interviewees advocated the following initiatives.

- Both a government interviewee and a media practitioner felt that a complete restructuring of the state-owned media into a public broadcaster was necessary. While this restructuring may not necessarily make money, it will serve a crucial community service, such as campaigning in specific areas. Examples included promoting literacy in the country or sensitising communities on the dangers of certain risky behaviour.
- A government interviewee noted that since the current level of support, consisting mainly in providing policy direction, is not tangible, government was urged to set aside funds to support training institutions, to sponsor journalists to receive better exposure outside the country, and to ensure that journalists are more professional in their reporting.

- One NGO interviewee called for more reforms in the laws on the statute books, especially the Penal Code and the Journalists' Press Statute, to bring them in line with modern trends. The interviewee argued that unless some of the legislation in the statute books, especially the sedition and defamation laws, were removed to provide more access to information of public interest, the media will not have the raw material needed to play their role.
- Another NGO interviewee felt that the government needs to see the media as a partner, and to realise that if the media is harnessed as a partner, it can act as a mirror in which the government can reflect itself in such issues as fighting corruption.
- One media support interviewee felt that good policies should be put in place, including the reduction of licence fees and taxes on newsprint.

15.3 Donor communities' role

The question of what the donor community gets right and/or wrong generated a lot of heat, and the following were some of the views expressed.

15.3.1 Donor agendas

The majority view that emerged seemed to be that the donor community does not normally liaise enough with the local media practitioners in selecting the projects to support. According to one government interviewee and one media practitioner, people who are scouting around for donor funds of any kind will write proposals to suit the donors' interests, but these are not necessarily active media practitioners and, contrary to what is reflected in the reports of these donor agencies, these monies do not promote media at all.

Interviewees who have worked with donors (two from NGOs and one from government) had a common view that these donor agencies exist to secure employment for themselves and for people from their own countries who cannot find jobs at home. These donors were said to pose as experts when they have no expertise whatsoever, since they do not understand the context of Uganda and, perhaps, never will.

The donor agencies were accused by the interviewees of normally arriving with ready-made packages from their respective countries, which they then thrust down the throats of the receiving countries without bothering to understand that the contexts are different, politically, economically, socially and culturally, since media does not operate in a vacuum. Two government interviewees felt that donors seem to think that there is a certain overriding media standard, so they are trying to promote and finance people to aspire to this particular standard.

When they make feeble efforts to understand the social-economic context within which these media houses have emerged, the donors end up responding to proposals from individual journalists and "quack" organisations to set up workshops and seminars for various issues, which seem to be just excuses for people to go for a nice break for several days and get paid allowances. In terms of preparing people for multi-party elections or civic reporting, it was the view of two interviewees (one from government, one media practitioner) that the donors are not analytical enough, and that they do these things just to account for money.

Some donor agencies were lauded for genuinely supporting training activities for journalists, but were criticised for pushing ideas and values, such as homosexuality, through the media. One government interviewee was of the opinion that such practices are viewed in Uganda as social perversions, which the government cannot allow, and while these may be permitted in the west, these agencies should remember that Ugandans, too, have their own values, which must be supported.

On the question of whether these donors follow projects through, unfortunately the majority view was that they do not, as that is not really their main aim. It was felt that these agencies are,

“ ... mainly interested in holding seminars in expensive hotels after which they can justify the use of the money to their countries without achieving anything worthwhile. The resource persons they bring in to facilitate and give input during these seminars are fellow Europeans and/or Americans so that they can share the money among themselves. They know nothing substantial about the media landscape in Uganda. ”

(NGO representative, Uganda)

An interviewee cited the former Minister of State for Health, who said that for any project supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 67% goes back to the donors (Julius Mucunguzi, Communications Officer; NGO: World Vision International, Uganda).

15.3.2 Donor understanding of cultural and economic realities

The donor community were seen as not understanding the media context, but it was not felt that they were to blame. Expecting the donor community to understand the Ugandan context was likened to expecting the coloniser to understand the situation of the colonised. The problem was presented as unwillingness on the part of the donors to accept that which they do not know. As pointed out by an interviewee who lived in the UK for many years, he would never claim that he understands that society. However, many donors come here for a short time and claim that they are experts. The view of three interviewees (one from an NGO, one from government and one media practitioner) was that the donor community should stop pretending that they are experts and should instead liaise with local experts, if they are really interested in making a difference.

15.3.3 A different donor approach

It was the considered view of several interviewees that the donor community should stop presenting media as part of what they call ‘democracy and governance’, and that they need to understand the history and evolution of the media industry in this country. They should have a more deliberate and more sustainable engagement with the projects and with the media institutions they support, have well-planned and long-term projects to ensure sustainability, instead of the ad hoc engagement that has hitherto been the case.

According to Peter Mwesige of Makerere University, one of the biggest problems with many donors is that they are interested in short-term projects and do not pay enough attention to the sustainability of the projects that they are putting forward.

15.4 Other issues

There were no other factors seen as influencing successful media development, except when extrapolated from the negative ones. These would include the political maturity of the media players and of the opposition parties. If they were able to distinguish between the interests of the sitting government and those of the state, then there would be successful media development. The forthcoming Commonwealth Heads of State and Government Summit to be held in Uganda in 2007 was specifically cited by one government interviewee as an example where people fail to distinguish between such interests, arguing that if the media is mature, it will contribute positively to the country's development.



16. Future Strategies

16.1 Strategic priorities

The questioning in section 15 generated a lot of opposition from interviewees, and some dismissed the idea of a donor-backed media development initiative in toto, arguing that there was no need for any donor-backed media initiatives whatsoever. They questioned the genuineness of these donor agencies, their sincerity and the real motives. It would appear that the greater the interviewees' exposure to the donor agencies (and presumably, as a consequence, the better they knew them), the more they were opposed to the latter's involvement in the media. Some of the interviewees felt strongly that it was,

“ ... better for the media in Uganda to go through the teething stages of development and evolve gradually, even if it takes centuries, rather than being frog marched or frog leapt through them. ”

(NGO, Uganda)

Such involvement was termed as 'neo-colonialism' and 'modern slavery'.

A government interviewee and an analyst, who favoured a new donor-backed media development initiative, identified development of skills through the quality of journalism and helping to provide opportunities for owners on how to manage a relationship with government as strategic priorities.

According to a media entrepreneur and a government interviewee, the donor community needs to develop better coordination within itself so that there is no duplication and consequent wastage of resources on small efforts scattered over different areas, and should also conduct in-depth research in media development. Donor support needs to be coordinated, possibly through a centralised information secretariat so that they do not have the same thing happening in different places at the same time. Duplicated training of the same media practitioners by different donor agencies was given as a recent example.

There was consensus that the strategic priority for a new donor-backed media development initiative in Uganda was in the area of training of journalists. While agreeing that training was strategic, Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda of *The Weekly Observer* was emphatic that training alone was not going to bring about much change in the media and did not put much premium on training. He argued that most trained journalists are not in the media anyway, as they have since crossed to other less risky and better paying professions. According to him, while training is important, professionalism in the media does not solely depend upon it. If journalists are underpaid, they are vulnerable to corruption and intimidation, and he wondered how we can expect such a poorly paid journalist to investigate and expose people who have become rich through criminal means.

16.2 Focus of support

The interviewees indicated that the focus of support for media development initiatives should be targeted in the areas described below.

16.2.1 Media frameworks

All interviewees saw media frameworks as the responsibility of the country, and that donors should keep away from this arena. It was pointed out that in terms of the kind of values and programmes, donors should not be seen to be the ones providing or explaining the direction that media should take or what they should do, since they have no capacity to do that. According to a government interviewee, donor support in terms of programme development should strictly be limited to resource mobilisation and training.

16.2.2 Developing local content

Local content was believed to be a part of a good policy environment because it is a fundamental part of diversity. It is, however, difficult to have local content because the funders do not deal directly with the audiences but with agencies like the UNDP or the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which handle the money. According to an educator and a media entrepreneur interviewee, since these programmes are in English and seldom translated into local languages, local content is often neglected.

16.2.3 Supporting growth of independent media

This question revived the debate about the independence of media and bore no new information except that it was not a strategic area for a donor-backed media development initiative.

16.2.4 Raising standards of journalism

This is the area all interviewees identified as strategic. For a media practitioner and a government interviewee, investment in training, exposure and infrastructure were identified as having the potential to make more impact than simply attending a seminar.

One of the suggestions about training emphasised the fact that there should be on-the-job training, where people do not leave the country, especially journalists who are practising without formal training. According to a media entrepreneur, donors could also look at funding some sort of accreditation programme, where the media works towards achieving certain levels of accreditation, probably through an organisation such as the National Union of Journalists in Uganda (NUJU). They should set certain standards to be met for membership.

16.3 Media sector focus

Concerning the type of media that should receive directed efforts, some interviewees felt that these distinctions were essentially donor distinctions and that these were a result of distortions made by them. It was the opinion of some interviewees that donors should stay away from state media as they have ideological ideas often incompatible with those of the country. They felt that the private media should generate money and fund itself as well as pay their own journalists and other professionals well enough. The state should also put money into public broadcasting and community media.

A government interviewee felt that if donors want to support media development, they should deal with umbrella organisations and not go to the grassroots organisations. They should ensure that these umbrella organisations are democratically run, so that the donors do not end up dealing with somebody's private business instead of dealing with an organisation to which every participant of the media belongs.

Another view was that donors should support community media:

“ Because this is where you get most of the voices of the small people... the small people whose voices have not been heard and yet their input is very important... commercial, they are the people who have been heard and they are the people who have actually been heard. ”

(Margaret Masagazi Sentamu, Executive Director; Media Support: Uganda Media Women's Association, Uganda)

16.4 Type of support most needed/useful

Most of the interviewees were wary about the contribution of commercial interests in media development. To some, both the donors and the commercial interests have a common denominator, namely that both have money and want to use it to achieve their own selfish objectives. In a nutshell, both would want to use money to bulldoze others, including the media, for their individual or collective selfish interests. They could address these areas but not as effectively as they might, because business is in itself an agenda. When talking about issues like governance, health, human rights and gender programming, a media entrepreneur and an NGO interviewee thought that business would see some of those issues as things that are not directly profitable. A businessperson will put money where returns are expected, but some of the things that are very important are not necessarily interesting or profitable. That is why there are non-profit organisations working in critical areas where businesspersons would not want to invest.

It was pointed out that an economically secure environment widens an advertisers' base so that people do not have to grovel too much for advertising revenue. Competition for advertising compromises the independence of media houses and blunts their critical reporting for fear of losing revenue.

One interviewee who was of the view that there is a big opportunity for business or commercial interests to take part, as the private sector has a big role to play. What is missing is a single central point where all these initiatives can be coordinated instead of each one doing their little bit oblivious of the others. This lack of centralisation results in duplication. The same interviewee believes that there is an opportunity to find that central point and it would make sense if it is identified as a neutral body, most likely people like donors and NGOs. Because all are consumers of what media give out, it would be important that their related areas of interest are developed.

16.5 Appropriate organisational framework

Organisationally speaking, the idea of harnessing other African networks and/or organisations coupled with that of setting up a new agency was the most preferred. Four interviewees (media entrepreneur, one from government, one from an NGO, and an analyst) pointed out that there is a need either for a new agency or an existing agency, which is a central point. Bodies such as the Uganda Management Institute (UMI) or the Makerere Mass Communication Department, which have some development programmes not yet readily

available, would make good choices. Other interviewees would want to see a renewed professional organisation of journalists, one that addresses questions of welfare and professional conduct and that is locally driven. This organisation should also address the interests of the media owners and other stakeholders.

16.6 Pan-regional versus country-specific initiatives

The idea of pan-regional initiatives as opposed to country-specific initiatives in media development also received mixed reactions from interviewees. Some welcomed pan-regional initiatives, arguing that these would bring about more exchange of ideas. One interviewee was emphatic that:

“ ... there should be pan-regional or even global [initiatives] but with a view of appreciating any media development into the region. There is a drive to the East African Federation, so, very soon the New Vision will not be relevant to Uganda because Ugandans will want to read everything happening in the whole region. ”

(**Philip Besiimire**, Marketing Communications Manager; Media Entrepreneur: Mobile Telephone Network, Uganda)

Those who had doubts about the feasibility of pan-regional instead of country-specific initiatives cited the threat of geopolitics, saying that if the pan-regional initiatives do not serve the interests of the western countries, especially those of the only superpower, they would not be allowed to succeed. Still, others favoured the promotion of both so that country-specific initiatives are subordinate to pan-regional ones.

Government, NGO, analyst and educator interviewees indicated that the benefits of pan-regional initiatives were seen as being more at the level of policy rather than the actual implementation. As such, a mechanism would be cheaper in the long run since it would cut down on the duplication of work by individual countries. What is important is that there is agreement on the needs of the region by all parties involved. Investment in such regional initiatives should start as country-specific initiatives, which are then networked for purposes of sharing not only experiences but also actual news.

16.7 Initiatives related to developmental content

There was a lot of convergence on the types of initiatives needed in order to develop the media's capacity to produce content, which is relevant to development goals such as health content and governance. Many interviewees felt that the media should educate people on such issues as health and environmental degradation through “infotainment”, where professionals treat these issues, especially the killer diseases like malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, in an easy-to-digest fashion. According to an NGO interviewee, training and the aptitude for media work was identified as being able to help provoke or to set agendas in particular directions.

However, four interviewees (one from government, media practitioner, one from an NGO, media support) expressed fears that since newspapers published material that would ensure sales, such issues would best be done if they were sponsored. Therefore, specialised writers are needed for specialised topics, so that readers get facts that have been broken down for easy consumption. Organising competitions and giving awards to people who have the talents needed for journalism, but work in specialised fields such as engineering, medicine and the environment, would go a long way to answering the current shortage of good articles on such topics.

16.8 Initiatives to develop independent media

Opinions were also divided on the question of initiatives needed in order to develop an independent media financed by advertising and/or sponsorship. While the media practitioners urged for more freedom, interviewees affiliated with government and/or non-government organisations questioned the definition of an independent media. An independent media where there is advertising was viewed with suspicion, as it was felt that it would be hard to mix advertisement with media independence, since business interests normally dominate. It was also pointed out that media houses need competent management, which is lacking in the media industry today as most editors in Kampala were not trained journalists. Training of the different cadres in the media was, therefore, a key factor in such a venture.

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

There was consensus on the impact media development initiatives should have on a country's democratisation process. Interviewees were emphatic that it would probably be a dictatorship if media were excluded from a country's democratisation process, but added that this role was dependent upon whether the media is truly seen as the fourth estate. It was also argued that people with divergent political persuasions should be encouraged to defend them instead of pretending that they are apolitical, as long as there is balanced pluralism and a level playing field. This calls for political will and economic security because these contribute to the flourishing of media, the platform from which people engage in dialogue and debate, but also a platform that provides information to the public, to government and to civil society.



17. Summary and Conclusion

17.1 Media development: an organisational perspective

- Changes have been gradual but the watershed was 1992/4 when the airwaves were liberalised, leading to the mushrooming of media institutions especially in the broadcasting area.
- In the past five years, the media in Uganda has become more vibrant, more liberated and there has been more freedom of expression overall.
- Opening up of media space led to the proliferation of private newspapers, private radio stations and private television stations, and the introduction and eager embrace of the Internet and mobile phones by many people.
- The horizon of news reporting has been widened to cover East Africa and the Great Lakes Region. There has been more diversity in what the media is reporting.
- The media has acquired prominence as one of the four pillars of governance.
- Investigative journalism has been improved, but there are many draconian laws on the books. Some are active but others lie dormant and may be activated at any time.
- There is a recognition by the media that there is a need to move their relations with government to a level that is more professional and more engaging, rather than accusing the latter simply of control and denial of access.
- More people are using the media as a tool for advocacy and development. Communities now actively participate in, and influence media programmes by contributing ideas.
- The changes have been the media's own reaction to the changing environment caused by both internal and external forces.
- The media has contributed to the present changes by questioning and helping the masses to question certain actions and policies.
- There are now widely available platforms on which issues can be aired, leading to better governance, accountability and the process of dialogue.
- The government acknowledges that the management of its media infrastructure can no longer be managed as part of the civil service.

17.2 Media development initiatives

- Recent initiatives and projects involving media organisations include:
 - the Highway Africa Conference, an Information and Computer Technology Conference by Mobile Telephone Network (MTN);
 - the 'Golden Pen Awards', which are open to all journalists;
 - the Broadcast Forum, which relates largely to the electronic media; and,
 - *The Daily Monitor's* independent election tally centre.
- The proportion of funding devoted towards media development is insignificant in all organisations that were sampled.

17.3 Developing the environment for success

- A healthy policy environment ensures pluralism and diversity, caters for both public and private media, protects journalists and fosters media development.
- Media owners often allow their political interests to spoil their businesses.
- Besides sponsoring a few students at the state universities, there is no significant state support for media development activities in Uganda.
- There should be a complete restructuring of the state-owned media into a public broadcaster.
- The attitude of the state media towards other media organisations was given as being generally 'friendly' and resulting in a healthy competition, even between the government newspapers and the private ones.
- Media organisations could do more to promote a healthy relationship with the government by having a mechanism that allows them to meet fairly regularly to discuss issues in the industry and how to advance them.
- The donor community does not normally liaise enough with the local media practitioners in selecting the projects they support, but instead fall prey to donor 'fund hunters' who write proposals and get funding.
- Donor agencies pose as experts when they have no expertise. They are in Uganda to secure employment for themselves and for people from their own countries who cannot find jobs at home. They fail to understand that Ugandan society is immensely different from theirs in terms of fundamental areas and values.
- Expecting the donor community to understand the Ugandan context was likened to expecting the coloniser to understand the situation of the colonised. Donors should have a more deliberate and sustainable engagement with the projects and the media institutions that they support. Projects should be well-planned and long-term to ensure sustainability, instead of the ad hoc engagements at present.
- In terms of the kind of values and programmes, donors should not be seen to be the ones providing or explaining the direction for the media to take, as they do not have that capacity. Instead, their support should be limited to resource mobilisation and training.

17.4 Strategic priorities

- Local content is believed to be part of a good policy environment because it is a fundamental part of diversity.
- Though education is important, professionalism in the media does not depend solely on it if journalists are underpaid and vulnerable to corruption and intimidation.
- Both donors and commercial interests have a common denominator in wanting to use their money to promote their interests.
- Organisationally speaking, harnessing other African networks and/or organisations, coupled with setting up of a new agency, were the preferred forms.
- Pan-regional initiatives would bring about cross-cultural exchange, but there should be care that these initiatives are applied at country level first.
- Media should improve its capacity to produce content relevant to development goals, such as health content and governance to create awareness among the people on these issues.
- Initiatives needed in order to develop an independent media financed by advertising and/or sponsorship is not realistic as these have their own vested interests.
- The role media development initiatives should have on a country's democratisation process cannot be overemphasised as the media cannot be divorced from democracy. This role is dependent upon whether the media is seen truly as the fourth estate.

This research has been an eye-opener in many respects, as far as the media landscape in Uganda is concerned. I trust it will benefit, first and foremost, Ugandans themselves – mother Africa as other Africans will read it – indeed the wider global village. The views raised are varied and wide-ranging, from persons with very different backgrounds: political, religious, socio-cultural and economic. It will, hopefully, contribute to more interest in media development on a sub-continental scale, and will spur Africa on to employ these media initiatives and processes to set the agenda that will facilitate the development of good governance and economic emancipation.



18. Appendices

Appendix 1: Interviewees

Philip Besiimire, Marketing Communications Manager; Media Entrepreneur: Mobile Telephone Network, Uganda

Dr James Nsaba Buturo, Former Minister of State for Information; Government, Uganda

Joachim Buwembo, Managing Editor; Analyst: *The Daily Monitor*, Uganda

Monica Chibita, Senior Lecturer; Educator: Mass Communications, Makerere University, Uganda

Samuel Nabasa Gumah, Country Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Uganda Radio Network, Uganda

Robert Kabushenga, Director, Uganda Media Centre; Government: Office of the President, Uganda

Kagole Kivumbi, Director of Information; Government: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Uganda

Charles Seruga Matovu, Head of Programmes; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Radio Star 100 FM, Uganda

Lydia Mirembe, Lecturer; Educator: Makerere University and Ugandan Red Cross, Uganda

Julius Mucunguzi, Communications Officer; NGO: World Vision International, Uganda

Dr Peter Mwesige, Head of Department; Educator: Mass Communications, Makerere University, Uganda

Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda, Political Affairs Editor; Analysts: *The Weekly Observer*, Uganda

Charlotte Ntulume Kawesa, Information Officer; NGO: United Nations Development Programme, Uganda

Margaret Masagazi Sentamu, Executive Director; Media Support: Uganda Media Women's Association, Uganda

NGO representative, Uganda

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?
Philip Besimire, Mobile Telephone Network	The Highway Africa Conference/ The Golden Pen Award/ The Broadcast Forum	To encourage journalists to understand the mobile phone industry and business, to report with authority on these issues and encourage female journalists.	Ongoing	More reporting on business	All journalists	Not yet	Not yet	Successful, by the number of journalists trained so far
Kagole Kivumbi, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting	Spectrum planning by Broadcasting Council	To shift from state to public broadcasting	Ongoing	Competitiveness of sector	All audiences	Not yet	Not yet	Unsuccessful, has no credibility
Dr James Nsaba Buturo, Ministry of Information	Giving information to media weekly	To manage information/provision of information to media better	Ongoing	Better reporting by media on government	All media	Not yet	Not yet	Successful, better media relations between the two. Reduced incidences of negative reporting on government activities
Charles Seruga Matovu, The Media Centre/ Radio Star	Ebimeza (small round tables)	To provide information to the population to debate current issues.	Ongoing	Better involvement in national issues by populace	All Ugandans	Not yet	Not yet	More awareness and interest in important issues
Monica Chibita, Makerere University Department of Mass Communication	Investigative Journalism Award	To encourage journalists to investigate and expose social ills.	Ongoing	More exposure of social ills in society	Government departments and civil society	Not yet	Not yet	Partly successful, more exposure of corruption in society

continued on next page

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

Julius Mucunguzi, World Vision International	Environmental Journalism Programme	To encourage journalists to report on the environment	Four years and ongoing	More and better reporting on environmental issues in the Great Lakes Region	All journalists with interest in the environment	Ongoing	Ongoing	More than a hundred journalists in region have been trained at the post-graduate level	Successful by the number of journalists trained and level of reporting on environment
Margaret Masagazi Sentamu, Uganda Media Women's Association	Mama FM Radio station/ <i>The Other Voice</i> Newspaper	To make the voice of women heard	Ongoing	Better understanding of women's issues	All Ugandans	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Successful, women's issues taken more seriously, more women employed in strategic positions
Joachim Buwembo, <i>The Daily Monitor</i>	Forum for all political parties	To furnish readers with different sides of the story	This year and ongoing	To provide balanced reporting	All political parties in the country	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Successful, views of opposition better represented.
Samuel Nabasa Gumah, Media, Uganda Radio Network	Uganda's first ever independent news agency	To lift the general standards of reporting and packaging information	Ongoing	To help people participate in shaping their destiny	All Ugandans	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Successful, journalists and others can access information more easily
Lydia Mirembe, Red Cross, University of Makerere and Red Cross in Uganda	HIV/AIDS awareness campaign through media	To inform more people on the causes and management of HIV/AIDS	Ongoing	To help people learn more about how to avoid infection	All Ugandans	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Successful, more people know basic facts about HIV/AIDS. The rate of infection has dropped

continued from previous page



Uganda

Country Report

Case Study



19. Case Study

Regional Training Programme on Environmental Journalism and Communication for Eastern Africa

The African world view is largely anthropocentric and many ontological myths in Africa have man created last to symbolise that everything else was created for and in preparation for man. But there is also the deep-rooted idea of *Cosmic Harmony*, where man has the obligation to utilise the resources placed at his disposal responsibly, while maintaining harmony with all and sundry. On the vertical axis he has to maintain a cordial relationship with the supernatural; on the horizontal axis with other humans and indeed with nature. For many people in Africa today, however, this second element of cosmic harmony has been lost, as they adopt the individualism and consumerism of the west. The environment is perceived as an inexhaustible resource at the disposal of man. As the populations of our countries have increased, so has the need to exploit the environment to the maximum, in terms of firewood, agriculture, fishing, and other resources.

The importance of the environment in African countries cannot be over-emphasised, since most of the economies of these countries are agriculture-based. Droughts are endemic in many of these countries, accompanied by serious famines, which have come to be characteristic of many countries in the region. Uganda is currently struggling with power blackouts blamed on the shrinking water levels in Lake Victoria. This has adversely affected its economy, as factories and offices cannot function normally. Indeed the general lifestyle of the people has been affected. At a regional level, many lakes are threatened with drying up as the shorelines continue to recede. These problems are clear symptoms of an environment, which is crying out for attention. But neither governments nor the general populace seem to be unduly perturbed. People continue to cut down trees for timber, for burning charcoal, for firewood, or for baking bricks in the hundreds of kilns dotted all over the country. Wetlands continue to disappear as skyscrapers and other structures or crops take their places. Plastic paper bags, locally known as *buveera* in Uganda, clog streams and rivers.

Problem

In 2001, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) commissioned a study on Lake Victoria, seen as an important resource for the three countries of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. The research also pointed out the need for including culture and media components in the project, as the environment received no coverage in the media then. If there is no media coverage of the environment, the result is that many stakeholders do not get well involved in these interventions, as they do not know what is happening.

The success of any conservation measure depends to a large extent on understanding a people's cultural landscape, as their active involvement is formed and informed by their understanding of the issue. The media is certainly a good vehicle to make people understand what is going on, as it helps in disseminating information to the different stakeholders, for purposes of mobilisation and active involvement.

Makerere University environmental programme

Makerere University was chosen because it has a well-established department of Mass Communication, offering many courses at both graduate and postgraduate levels. The main focus was placed on training environmental journalists for the region, comprising the five riparian countries of host Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. The training is done at different levels and for different duration, ranging from ten days for Community Outreach programmes, through three-week certificate courses to postgraduate programmes lasting a year. The certificate courses are offered at different places within the five member countries, and Makerere University provides the regional secretariat. The postgraduate programme sponsors five applicants from each of the five member countries and is tenable at Makerere University for one academic year. Most of these are recruited from among practising journalists, but graduates from other disciplines are also taken.

The programme started in 2002 for an initial three years, and it is now in its fourth year. The overall purpose of these courses is to ensure that there is better reporting about the environment. It goes without saying that in order to be able to communicate better about the environment, journalists and other stakeholders need to understand the environment better.

Achievements and findings

The achievements of this programme are as follows.

- This programme is now in its fourth year and has been extended to July 2007. Over a hundred students have so far been trained at postgraduate level, and many more at the lower level of certificate.
- Capacity has been built in the different beneficiary countries of the region on environment.
- Newspapers want to publish what the public wants to read, and neither environmental nor developmental issues are appealing to readers. But over the years, there has been more reporting about the environment in the press. This has been due partly to the fact that deliberate efforts have been made to sensitise and influence editors and media owners about environmental issues, especially through 'media breakfasts', to which they are invited twice a year.

- People trained at the different levels understand such issues as environmental law, key issues about the environment, environmental pollution, wetlands, global warming and related issues.
- The media have tried to come up with popular language for reporting on the environment.
- Networks around environmental issues have been set up in the East Africa region.

Case study interviewees

Monica Chibita is Senior Lecturer and Former Head of Department in the Department of Mass Communication at Makerere University. She was interviewed by the researcher on 22 June 2006.

John Mary Kanyamurwa is Project Administrator at Makerere University. He was interviewed by the researcher on 12 June 2006.

Isa Agaba Mugabo is a Journalist and Deputy Editor for the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, which is part of the Uganda Radio Network. He was interviewed by the researcher on 20 June 2006.

Alphonse Nkusi is Senior Lecturer and Programme Co-ordinator for the Regional Training Programme in Environmental Journalism and Communication for Eastern Africa at Makerere University. He was interviewed by the researcher on 19 June 2006.

African Media Development Initiative Research

This report is one of 18 produced as part of the African Media Development Initiative Research Project, completed in 2006. To obtain a copy of any of the following reports, please visit: www.bbcworldservicetrust.org/amdi

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

For information on this report, contact:

Dr John Wotsuna Khamalwa
Senior Lecturer
Institute of Languages
Makerere University
PO Box 7062
Kampala
Uganda

For other queries:

www.bbcworldservicetrust.org
ws.trust@bbc.co.uk