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Swiss Peace Foundation



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**K O F F**

Media and Peacebuilding  
Concepts, Actors and Challenges

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peace**

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Concepts, Actors and Challenges**

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## About the author

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Objectives of report

While recognizing the destructive role media have played in many conflicts, clearly seen in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, and holding in mind the potential of free and independent media for fostering democracy, international organizations and NGOs have concluded that media have a crucial role to play in peacebuilding.

Starting in the nineties, this has led to major media interventions in conflict-prone or transitional regions (Africa, Balkans and Central Asia). Many actors were involved – from international organizations and bilateral donors, to local and specialized media NGOs – with a broad spectrum of activities – ranging from training to provision of equipment, from launching media regulation initiatives to enhancing professional associations, from supporting individual media to transforming former state radios into public service broadcasters.

The interest for media's role and its impact on peacebuilding is rising. Against this background, the government of Switzerland is reflecting on how media can become a core theme in its peacebuilding efforts.

Therefore, this report summarizes the basic concepts of media and peacebuilding. It focuses on media assistance in conflict regions, mainly in a short- to a medium-term perspective. It aims to:

- present a clear picture on the concepts,
- provide an overview of the strategies applied by different actors,
- highlight the actual trends and future challenges.

## 1.2 Definitions

*Media:* will refer to all types of print media such as newspapers and magazines as well as electronic media (including radio and TV programmes). This definition will exclude theatre, school and other educational institutions.

*Journalism:* covers all activities conducted by journalists, reporters and editors. It is not limited to "news" journalism or "news agency" journalism; it includes all types and formats of reporting (larger stories, analysis, background features, comments, opinions), editing (selection of news, controlling), and designing programmes (formats, series, supplements).

*Peacebuilding:* is seen in the strict sense, used by peace research, "The overall aim of peacebuilding is to prevent violent outbreaks of conflicts or to transform violent conflicts in a sustainable manner into peaceful means."<sup>1</sup> The specific aims vary according to the different phases, i.e. pre-conflict, open conflict or post-conflict situations.

*Media and Peacebuilding:* this report will deal mainly with *media in the socio-political sphere* – especially in the pre-, ongoing or post-conflict phase – not with media in development sectors such as health, agriculture, HIV campaigning or rural radios. However, the long-term perspective of media assistance, for example supporting *good governance*, is included, as it plays a role for strategy and project design in the different conflict phases.

<sup>1</sup> Paffenholz, Thania 2002. *Community-based Bottom-up Peacebuilding*, The Life and Peace Institute's Horn of Africa Program's Approach to Peacebuilding, Lessons from Somalia, Uppsala, Sweden (forthcoming)

### 1.3 Justification of media intervention

The Balkan and African atrocities in the 1990s have encouraged a growing consensus that preventing hate speech, ethnic cleansing and genocide activities are justifications for external intervention. However, the legal questions around *international humanitarian intervention* with coercive power remain a complicated and heavily discussed issue.<sup>2</sup> As this report will focus on media actors and activities these legal considerations will not be addressed further.

In contrast, for media intervention, the commonly acknowledged justification is, “to promote the fulfilment of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”<sup>3</sup> Article 19 states, “Everyone has the right to the freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” Although mainly referred to as *journalists’ or editors’ rights*, whose freedom is restricted in many countries, Article 19, nevertheless, must also be read as the *recipients’ right* to “receive” information.

Against this background, various NGOs stress that access to information is a human right and not a privilege.<sup>4</sup> This “recipients’ right” would not only apply to humanitarian crisis, when information to the affected population becomes equally essential as food, water or shelter, but also to any under-developed situation with poor media environment and infrastructure.

For peacebuilding activities, there might be other justifications; the use of media as a tool for peacebuilding might be based on additional grounds as the ones mentioned. According to the relationship between the respective countries, the activities of external actors or externally funded assistance in the field of media and peacebuilding may be based on contracts of cooperation between governments or on international mandates in the context of peace operations.

In a similar light, media assistance in development cooperation is based on inter-governmental contracts. Many donors see “free and pluralistic media” as an important pre-condition for democracy and good governance. It is therefore incorporated as a condition for, and as part of, development cooperation.

### 1.4 Clarifications

#### Diversity of activities

There is a wide variety of actors, including all major donors, international broadcasters and specialized media NGOs, all of whom employ and initiate different approaches and programmes. This kaleidoscope of actors and activities results in a challenge to form a coherent picture. In many countries, the picture becomes further agitated as media projects are run by different organizations and quite often there is no clearing established between their activities. Regarding only the media projects of governments, they are frequently run by different departments or under different programmes. For example, the funding of a

<sup>2</sup> For details: see Price, Monroe & Thompson, Mark 2002. *Forging Peace*, Edinburgh, UK

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO 2000a. *Recommendations for Future Actions – Round table on Media in Conflict and Post Conflict Areas*, Geneva, Switzerland, page 14, Recommendation no.1; Geneva 2000

<sup>4</sup> See Media Action International 2002. In a Humanitarian Emergency, No News is Bad News, concept papers, Geneva, Switzerland

journalist training might be supported under the title of “good governance” (within development cooperation), from a special programme for “freedom of expression” or “human rights” of the foreign ministry, or be funded by the “conflict prevention” programme of an NGO funded by another department of the same ministry.

Media activities can also take the form of objectives, for example the establishment of a free and independent media, and classified as a by-activity aiming at other objectives (anti-corruption, strengthening civil society and reviving traditional mediation mechanisms). Therefore, not all the projects with a media component are classified as media projects<sup>5</sup>.

Nevertheless, various generalizations can be made about the wide range of activities in the field. They usually comprise one or more of the following areas:

- training (for journalists: professional and issue-based, as well as for media managers),
- media production (news, reports),
- production of specialized programmes (soaps and series),
- support for individual media,
- support for establishing a conducive legal framework (laws, media regulation),
- technical assistance for equipment (printing facilities and transmitters),
- transforming state broadcasters into public service broadcasters,
- promoting coordination and networks among media outlets,
- promoting professional associations,
- security training for journalists,
- legal defence,
- support for audience response systems and media monitoring.

### **Areas of attention**

As a first step for clarification, this report makes a distinction between different areas of attention; it is useful to distinguish between the coverage of conflicts by the Western media and coverage by the media in the conflict region itself. Regarding the latter, it is beneficial to separate the short- and medium term phase from the long-term phase.

Chapter 2 will describe the concepts resulting from the difference between Western media and media in conflict regions, chapter 3 will be addressed to the approaches and activities of media in conflict regions according to the different timeframes.

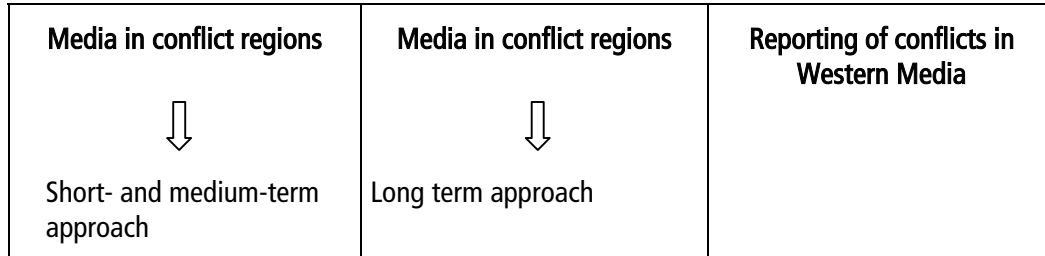
<sup>5</sup> This explains partly the difficulties to get detailed information from donors on their “media” projects and its funding, see Chapter 5.



## 2 Concepts of Media Assistance in Peacebuilding

According to these areas of attention, there are different concepts of media assistance to peacebuilding.

**Illustration 1: Areas of Attention in Media and Peacebuilding**



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### 2.1 Improving the coverage of conflicts in Western media

The coverage of conflicts by Western media has an indirect link to peacebuilding as it is a main source of information and opinion building for Western societies, their NGOs and governments. The media have a heavy influence upon the perception of conflicts and thus the ability and readiness to support for peacebuilding initiatives.

The reporting of all phases of violent conflicts by Western media has often been criticized as at least inappropriate – if not completely wrong. It has been seen as creating or conveying false images. This is mostly attributed to a lack of professional practice in reporting conflict, which can be seen in the hordes of inexperienced reporters that are sent to crisis regions with hardly any background knowledge. It is also marked as a usual shortcoming, that Western media only broadcast superficial day-to-day factual news without any strive to highlight background factors or analysing the root causes of the conflict, thus often repeating traditional images and ethnic prejudices of the people involved. Furthermore, the selection of news by Western media focuses on the explosive events of catastrophes and conflict – not on the long slow changes of reconstruction. Good news, such as the progress on reconstruction in post conflict zones, must compete and is often drowned by any catastrophe which might come up during the day.<sup>6</sup>

Further discussions are required in order to judge if these failures result from individual faults, for example a lack of appropriate training for journalists, or whether they stem from deeper systematic shortcomings of commercial and public service media and their programmes, for example conceding less space and airtime for serious political programmes, or ignorance and misinterpretation of the consumers' will.

Some NGOs, political foundations or professional media associations try to open a public debate on the issue of war reporting in Western media. Other initiatives aim at direct

<sup>6</sup> This point has been raised by, among others, Martin Bell, former BBC correspondent, in his critique to the BBC World Service. Martin Bell has proposed "journalism of attachment" as an alternative to the usual war reporting.

improvements. To counter the mere factual reporting and to improve coverage and understanding of conflict issues in the Western world, some organizations and foundations have set up special services. For example, the Panos Institute, or the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), both based in London, have established large networks of trained correspondents in many countries. These networks enable them to offer in-depth analysis of conflicts as well as supporting large coverage.<sup>7</sup> Thus, they are in competition with reporters of the international news agencies or special correspondents of other media, who also try to concentrate on substantial background reporting.<sup>8</sup>

## 2.2 Assisting media in conflict regions

The media within conflict regions have attracted the attention of donors and NGOs because they have been manipulated to fuel or incite conflicts by broadcasting hate speech and partisan reporting. This study will focus on how the internal media can be assisted to move towards a positive influence on peace and conflict.

### General goals and assistance

In general, the role of media for peacebuilding is twofold:

1. Professional media by their mere existence can execute a positive influence towards peacebuilding through:
  - providing non-partisan news and reports,
  - informing about different opinions and views (including the views of the “others”),
  - contributing to knowledge (mechanism, people, causes) about politics, local issues and conflictive issues,
  - building well-informed and unbiased opinion,
  - enabling people to take care of and decide on their own issues.
2. Professional media are able to contribute additionally towards peacebuilding by addressing issues concerning peace and conflict. This supports
  - improving knowledge of people in peace and conflict relevant issues such as elections, causes of conflict, inter-ethnic understanding, discrimination, truth commissions and war crimes,
  - providing incentives for changing behaviour or attitudes,
  - countering false images or propaganda from biased media,
  - enabling societies to deal with the past and build a common future.

This second role requires the trust of the people in the respective media. Otherwise, it is in danger to be interpreted as poor propaganda and will be either ignored or discredited.

### Assistance according to time perspectives

As the usual context of media in peace and conflict is a country or society in violent conflict (latent, ongoing or shortly after the cessation of violence), the role of the media can work along two timeframes: a short- and medium-term perspective, or a long-term perspective. The former refers to initiatives between a few weeks and up to three years, while the latter applies to development sector projects that normally run longer than two or three years.

<sup>7</sup> In Switzerland, the press bureau “Infosud”, Bern and Lausanne, covers particularly issues of developing countries and development cooperation and offers them to Swiss media for publishing.

<sup>8</sup> To my knowledge, there is no systematic evaluation of the differences in quality of reporting by these agencies.

However, there is no exact boundary and a zone of overlapping between these time perspectives.

In the *short- and medium-term perspective*, the role of professional media is mainly to provide non-partisan news, report and analyze context of the conflict and its background factors, gather different views and opinions, focus on specialised peace and conflict issues and prepare the ground for a sound media sector development in the long run.

In the *long-term perspective*, the general role of media in democracies comes into focus. This is to establish a sector that provides a free flow of information ensuring that citizens have the opportunity to make responsible informed choices about their future, as well as to provide a watchdog function.

The detailed role media can play in peacebuilding must be determined by the particular conflict setting and the characteristics of the media sector in this society (weak or authoritarian states, different conflict lines, dominance of root or proximate conflict causes, fragmented societies, media control by government or political parties). Under this general umbrella, various activities evolve through different phases. The next section will discuss these phases and activities.

## 3 Approaches and Activities of Media Assistance in Peacebuilding

This section will outline the main activities of media assistance based on various project documents and concept papers. It will aim to provide and review a spectrum of activities and not to produce a list that could be blanketly applied to all situations. The choice of specific activities must be governed by the specific context within which the programme will be applied. This must be determined by a thorough needs analysis and hardcore planning.

### 3.1 Short- and medium term assistance

#### 3.1.1 Objectives

From the short- and medium-term perspective, media assistance should aim to support peacebuilding activities by:

- providing non-partisan information and balanced news,
- ensuring conditions for receiving and imparting information,
- preventing the incitement of conflict through hate messages,
- assisting victims and refugees,
- creating a platform for all people to voice opinions,
- laying the ground to develop structures for a free and independent media.

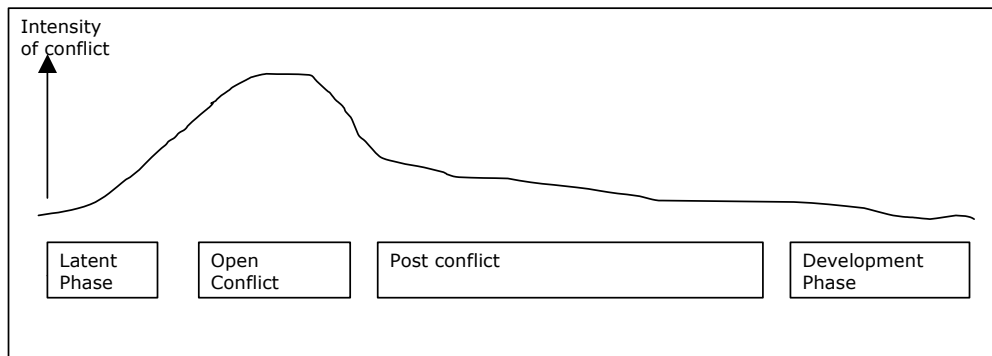
The short- and medium perspective is the point where the strict media and peacebuilding focus starts. As a guiding notion, all media activities should be embedded within the overall strategy of peacebuilding, which targets at the root and proximate causes of violence.

According to the conflict phase, it is possible to see different needs and detect a variety of possible roles for the media.<sup>9</sup>

#### 3.1.2 Phases of violent conflict and activities

The short- and medium-term approach applies to three conflict phases: pre-conflict, open conflict and post-conflict. Some of the activities described below are general and can occur at all stages of conflict, but in different intensity, some are unique to each phase. In the following section, these activities will be nevertheless listed in total according to phases. This comprehensive picture will allow the appropriate activities for the specific conflict setting to be chosen.

<sup>9</sup> The differentiation of conflict phases has been inspired by DfID (Department for International Development) 2000a. *Working with the Media in Conflicts and Other Emergencies*, London, UK

**Illustration 2: Phases According to Intensity of Conflict**<sup>10</sup>**Pre-conflict phase (latent)**

In a pre-conflict setting (characterized by tensions between rival factions, unrest, weak state and press censorship), most actors agree that the need for greater access to impartial information and human rights information is crucial. Some actors further believe that it is paramount to raise awareness of conflict resolution or transformation mechanisms such as a dialogue processes between the government and the people or re-establishing communication between rival factions. If these needs are met – activities might be very restricted due to the status of the conflict - it might contribute to reducing the intensification of the conflict and prevent violent outbreaks. Media intervention in this phase could provide:

1. Research and assessment  
Existing news and information sources should be analysed and research efforts directed towards the information needs of the people in conflict areas. Moreover, existing media laws should be reviewed as well as the situation of professional associations.
2. Access to non-partisan news  
Support is especially needed to provide, or to strengthen, balanced news programming as well as to specialized programming with a focus on human rights, causes of conflict or aimed at promoting mutual understanding, communication and tolerance.
3. Media monitoring  
In this phase, it might be helpful to establish media monitoring that looks especially at hate messages or other forms of biased reporting and review possible counter measures.
4. Training  
Training in all aspects (journalism, media research, media law and monitoring) is seen as a support to all these activities.

**Open conflict phase**

In an open conflict situation, the needs and interventions vary according to the intensity of violence and level of conflict. In acute phases (open violence, forced migration, destruction of homes, food insecurity, deterioration, high media regulation), the need for humanitarian information for the vulnerable groups (refugees, IDP) is of the highest priority such as information concerning where and how to get access to shelter, food, water, camps and

<sup>10</sup> This figure simplifies reality for conceptual purposes and analytical clarity. In conflict settings, the phases might overlap, oscillate or be much longer than shown here.

medicine. As a result, it is crucial to secure information channels by the provision of radios and the investment of transmitters. The need for balanced reporting, i.e. non-partisan and accurate news, is paramount and, concerning violence inciting messages, might include active hindering or jamming of the broadcasts. In phases of low intensity of violence in the open phase, there might be some additional room for more intense reporting on news stories or peace and conflict orientated programming, for example at the community or local level. This specialized programming includes a variety of different themes, for example support for covering background information on the causes of conflict or examples of traditional reconciliation, and problems of inter-ethnic understanding.

Media intervention in this phase should:

1. Continue activities of latent phase  
The activities of the latent phase, such as the research of news and information needs, the media monitoring and the initial support for balanced news, should be continued where possible and appropriate.
2. Attempt to establish non-partisan news and humanitarian information  
Support to local or international media should be provided for dissemination of balanced news and humanitarian information.
3. Provide equipment  
It might be necessary to provide equipment (transmitters, production facilities, radios etc.) as a pre-condition for broadcasting, producing and/or receiving information.
4. Training  
If conditions allow, training in objective reporting, humanitarian reporting and conflict-orientated programming should be intensified.
5. Hinder misuse  
Where possible, the hindering or even suppression of the misuse of mass communication for conflict inciting programmes might be appropriate.<sup>11</sup>
6. Support media production  
Support for media production to specialize in peace and conflict-orientated programmes on print media, radio and TV.

#### **Post-conflict (or transition phase)**

In a post-conflict setting, characterized by implementing peace accords, reconstruction, expanding infrastructure and civil society, relaxing regulation of media, there is the same overall need as in the phase of open conflict. However, the activities can be strongly intensified and focused. As there is a cessation of open violence, there are more opportunities, for example: to systematically establish local media capacity, put higher emphasis on training in conflict areas, support to strengthen the media environment, and build both media pluralism and regulatory framework.

<sup>11</sup> This form of “information intervention” is a contentious issue as it intervenes with freedom of expression issues. It includes various activities from the bombardment of transmitters over jamming techniques to other tools that external actors can use to force authoritarian states to stop transmitting hate messages. The question of legal justification for this kind of information intervention (as part of “humanitarian intervention”) and the implications for international efforts in management of media sector in post-conflict countries is largely addressed at in *see* Price, Monroe & Thompson, Mark 2002. *Forging Peace*, Edinburgh, UK. This book reviews major media intervention efforts mostly by UN missions in Cambodia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo to extract lessons learnt.

In addition to the measures already implemented in the open-conflict phase, the main types of assistance in this post-conflict phase might include:

1. Intensifying support to provision of humanitarian information  
This might comprise the provision of radios, the setting up of transmitters and temporary radio production as well as support to news and other programmes about health, food, activities of relief organizations and humanitarian law.
2. Intensifying support to non-partisan news services and independent reporting  
After the termination of violent conflict, support for non-partisan news services is of high priority. This may take various forms; many prefer to give support to local media, for example with the provision of equipment to start or re-establish production after conflict, or to extend coverage and enhance quality of production. The exchange between local media actors also needs support. If local media cannot fully do this, it might be necessary to fund international broadcasters to bring or to extend news to particular regions.
3. Intensifying training  
Training plays a major role, especially for the development of local media capacity. It covers training in non-partisan reporting, awareness of international law, in humanitarian programming and initial media management.
4. Targeted peacebuilding initiatives  
Specialized programmes and productions can be a useful tool to counter misconceptions, build confidence (radio forums), promoting dialogue (radio drama), facilitate communication (call in listeners), and propose options and solutions to the conflict (report series). Soap operas encouraging inter-ethnic understanding, cross-border communication, and conflict resolution are special tools that are the task of special drama writers than journalists.<sup>12</sup> Training may cover conflictive or contentious issues; there is a wide range of themes, such as elections, constitutional review, land ownership, implementation of peace accord, poverty, inter-ethnic understanding, corruption, minorities and truth commissions.
5. Starting efforts for a free and independent media sector  
This comprises support for regulatory frameworks, to initiate support in building associations or establishing a community media development strategy.

The following table summarizes the phasing of these possible activities.

<sup>12</sup> Their product might be checked by journalists on language, content, design and course of the story to ensure both interest of the audience, entertainment, information quality and validity of editorial guidelines of the respective medium, on which the drama is broadcasted. This will have an influence if this programme is seen as useful or as propaganda.

Illustration 3: Needs and Activities of Media Assistance in Different Conflict Phases

Latent conflict		Open conflict		Post-Conflict	
<i>Needs</i>	<i>Intervention</i>	<i>Needs</i>	<i>Intervention</i>	<i>Needs</i>	<i>Intervention</i>
<b>Access to non-partisan and accurate information</b>	<b>Support dissemination of balanced news programmes via local or trans-national media</b>	As in latent phase plus...	As in latent phase plus... (if possible)	As in open conflict plus...	As in open conflict plus...
	Analysis of existing news and sources, research of information needs of people in conflict areas	Targeted info on health, food, shelter, mines, NGO activities	<b>Disseminating Humanitarian information</b>		
Access to background information and analysis	<b>Training in professional reporting</b>		Provision of radios, broadcasting equipment	Full access to non-partisan and accurate information	<b>Intense support of balanced news programmes; hindering misuse of media for inciting conflict</b>
Dialogue between government and people; Communication between rival factions	Support programming aimed at public dialogue	Peacebuilding at community level	Support of peace and conflict issues programming; training in conflict reporting	<b>Development of local media capacity</b>	Support to build local media pluralism
Human rights based information Awareness	Support programming aimed at conflictive issues (tolerance, justice, poverty)		Intense Media monitoring		Support to development of a new media environment and regulatory framework
Support to local media	Research on media laws, associations			<b>Consolidation of Peace-building strategies</b>	Emphasis on training in peace and conflict issues ; <b>Wider Support for programming in conflictive issues</b>
Prevention of violent conflict	<b>Media monitoring</b>				Establishing Media monitoring

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The table should be considered as a menu of options. What is appropriate to the situation on the ground and what should/can be realized, should be decided by a proper analysis of the:

- conflict setting,
- media situation,
- “fitting” of media activities into the overall strategy for peacebuilding,
- actual needs of the population in the media sector.

### Criteria for suspension

From a donor’s perspective, there should be some hard criteria in place to decide under which circumstances or conditions media activities are definitely excluded from the menu of options for external assistance. To my own knowledge, only a few donors have developed these criteria. DfID for example identifies that support to media is best avoided, where the government is restricting the freedom of the media to operate.<sup>13</sup> Supporting purely government-controlled media would give additional legitimacy to them, thus hindering the long run development of civil society and independent media sector.

## 3.2 Long-term assistance

### 3.2.1 Objectives

The long-term perspective of media assistance applies to the development situation, which starts sometime after the post-conflict phase, when intensity of conflict has come down to levels which allow for reconstruction and continuous development efforts. Since support for strengthening democracies has become a core activity of almost all “development” efforts<sup>14</sup>, objectives for media in the long-term have been defined and mostly agreed upon. These are:

- free flow of information ensures that citizens make responsible, informed choices rather than acting out of ignorance or misinformation,
- information serves a “checking or watchdog function” by ensuring that elected representatives do their job according to democratic rules.

In this ideal view, free, pluralistic and independent media are an intermediate result that serves the final objective of a fully functioning and fledged democracy with a “politically active civil society”. Thus media, once directed or overtly controlled by state or government, should become a diverse, open sector that provides different views and has a degree of editorial independence that serves the public interest. The goal is to have a range of various credible voices and a sector that promotes such outlets.

<sup>13</sup> It recommends not to embark on media assistance, when government is restricting the freedom of the media, for example by denying

- local broadcasters proper legal access to frequency band,
- journalists and the public access to legislative debates,
- other parties access to the media,
- journalist the scope to report freely,
- or form independent associations,
- the media and journalists equitable allocations of material resources (licences, frequencies, newsprint capacity, paper supply, scholarships).

DfID 2000b. The Media in Governance, A Guide to Assistance, London, UK, page 8

<sup>14</sup> See DfID (Department for International Development) 2001. Making Government Work for Poor People, London, UK; EU Cotonou agreement; USAID 1999. Center for Democracy and Governance, The Role of Media in Democracy: A Strategic Approach, Washington, USA

This long-term approach can be applied either as a continuation of the media assistance in post-conflict phase or as media assistance within development cooperation in countries where no former violent conflict has taken place.

### 3.2.2 Approaches or areas of activities

There are five areas of media activities in the long-term perspective. Some country programmes undertake a combination of all five areas thereby ensuring a mix of activities with higher probability of having an impact. For political or other restrictions it is also possible to work only in one or two of the following areas with optimism of impact.

#### 1. Shaping and improving the legal enabling environment

This approach comprises two elements: first, dealing with the laws and regulations for the media sector, second, other legal restrictions which affect the sensitive issues as the freedom of expression. This option deals with free access to information, government control, licensing procedures for electronic media, media–government relations, regulatory bodies, Codes of Practice, complaints, anti-monopoly-regulations, laws regarding libel, slander, contempt and copyright.

#### 2. Strengthening the media sector and its environment

This approach aims to promote a working media environment. This is characterized by not only effective media law, but also the existence of media watchdogs, research institutes, think-tanks, advocacy organizations and professional associations, press councils and networks. This includes all efforts to establish common effective training facilities, open to the whole media sector.

#### 3. Removing barriers to access and other obstacles

Access for information is one of the first requirements for a participative democracy. However, there are many more barriers than legal obstacles. Economic barriers create weak distribution channels, especially outside urban areas; consequently, it is a valid aim to support more efficient distribution systems. Decentralization of media might be appropriate to reach a wider audience – community radios can be an alternative source of information. Additionally, all measures for improving the economic viability of media further eases access. Improvement of regulations in the advertising market or the enhancement of advertising by for example media monitoring comes into attention.

#### 4. Supporting individual media to be more effective

This option aims at enabling individual media institutions to provide better output and to become increasingly economically viable. The objective is to promote good quality media output which is relevant and useful to the audience and which allows the expression of a full range of opinions on matters of public concern. This requires well-trained managers as well as professional journalists aware of the needs of their audiences. This area includes support for individual media to clarify their strategies, for choosing the appropriate infrastructure and equipment, providing skills and management training, implementation of audience research systems. Further supporting this, all forms of individual training will contribute largely to the aim of this area.

#### 5. Reform of public service media

The reform of state broadcasters into public service media can be seen as an area in its own right or as a combination of the efforts within reform laws (area 1) and supporting individual media (area 4).

This long-term approach is clearly aiming at establishing media as a pillar for a functioning democracy. By fulfilling this goal, it will contribute to peacebuilding in itself. However, it should be borne in mind, that free, independent and pluralistic media must remain an ongoing objective that will be a struggle of every day – even in the countries with developed democracies, the ethics of journalism are in danger or they cost money and need to be defended against market forces, pure commercial interests and political intentions.<sup>15</sup>

Only a few specialized peacebuilding elements are necessary within this long-term perspective – for example media monitoring, especially in the case of suspicion that the country enters a new “latent” phase. Generally, a fully developed media system should be sufficiently equipped to inform its audience about the contentious issues to be addressed.

### 3.3 Coherence between short- and medium term, and long-term media assistance

Media intervention in short- and medium term phase, especially in the post-conflict phase, has a direct link to the long-term media assistance, which normally runs under “good governance” or “strengthening democracy”. Therefore, activities in short-term media assistance to peacebuilding must be coherent with the long-term objectives as the post-conflict phase prepares the ground for an efficient media system. For example, the short-term decisions in legal questions (media law, media regulations) must hold in mind the long-term goal of media pluralism as well as of an economically viable sector.

There might be contradictions between these short- and long-term goals if, for example, there is only one critical voice opposing the government in the actual post-conflict phase. In this situation, it would be better to support one opposition media outlet rather than none at all. However, caution should be exercised in order to prevent a monopoly that is artificially sustained by donor funds. In the case of a former state monopoly accessing major sources of funds for its transformation into a public-service broadcaster, measures must be undertaken with the view that other private media will not be suffocated. Furthermore, the new public-service broadcaster needs to be prevented from being taken over by old or new political factions. Concerns similar to this may have convinced some donors to avoid funding single media outlets and to increase investment for media sector support.

According to Mark Thompson, researcher on the media situation and intervention in the Balkans, media freedom in many instances cannot be fully installed in one package.<sup>16</sup> In particular situations, content regulation (prevention of incendiary propaganda, zero-tolerance to hate speech) must be in the short-term much stricter than in a normal, democratic society. In his view, it also needs careful consideration, whether media should be completely liberalized and left to the market economy in the post-conflict phase or if there should be a set of public institutions.

Again, it depends on the concrete conflict analysis and the assessment of the media situation in the respective country what to do to ensure coherence between the short- and long-term activities.

<sup>15</sup> see the examples André Loersch mentions in his workshop contributions, like the reaction of US media after September 11<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> For details, see Mark Thompson’s contribution in the Report of the Media Workshop in Berne, [www.swisspeace.ch/KOFF](http://www.swisspeace.ch/KOFF)

## 4 Contentious Issues

As media assistance for peacebuilding is a new field, many issues require further discussion to be clarified. In the following section, two issues will be highlighted for further consideration: the roles of journalists for peacebuilding and the measurement of the impact of media assistance to peacebuilding. Other issues will be addressed in section 6 under “challenges”.

### 4.1 Roles of journalists

In many activities of media assistance for peacebuilding, journalists play a major role. They are involved in providing or receiving training, conducting enquiries, writing news, analysis and background stories or participating in the design of programmes.

There is a common consensus that the “products” of journalists, especially in media assistance within short-term peacebuilding, are generally:

- news and other forms of reports,
- analysis and background information,
- specialized products in peace and conflict issues, such as:
  - print series about elections, or constitutional review,
  - programmes on dealing with the past and war crimes,
  - reports on causes of conflicts (poverty, land distribution, corruption),
  - practical questions like de-mining or de-militarization.

In practice, there is an ongoing discussion if conventional professional journalism can contribute sufficiently to fulfil the above-mentioned tasks, especially in violent conflict settings, or if it requires alternative roles and approaches. There are mainly two contradictory points of view: professional journalism versus alternative forms of journalism.

#### Professional Journalism

According to received understanding, the role of professional journalists is to:

- provide non-partisan information,
- support opinion building,
- gather different views and opinions,
- provide background information and in-depth analysis.

By increasing the overall knowledge of the consumers, it will enhance them to make decisions about their issues. This should contribute to change their attitudes towards open debates on contentious issues and, consequently, support transforming conflicts into a non-violent tackling of issues.

According to the supporters of professional journalism, this role as outlined above is highly efficient, if fully realized. It should be kept as it is and not be weakened by other commitments than to be “neutral” or “non-partisan” in the sense of gathering the views of all sides, if possible, thus enabling the audience to build their own point of view.<sup>17</sup>

It must be seen, and this has been previously mentioned, that this is an ideal concept – more a kind of a promise than a reality. It is a continuous challenge for journalists; they

<sup>17</sup> According to the Principles on Conduct of Journalists by the International Federation of Journalists they are committed to respect for truth, right of the public to truth, accountability, not suppressing essential information etc., [www.ifj.org](http://www.ifj.org)

must fulfil it every day. Sometimes, they do; other times, they do not. Therefore, this concept cannot be seen as a status that has been reached, it is more a process that should be followed daily.

### Alternative Journalism

The above-described role of professional journalists has been criticized by researchers<sup>18</sup> as well as former professional journalists.<sup>19</sup> According to the critics, it fails in war and conflict situations because of:

- keeping the myth of objectivity,
- maintaining the attitude of not taking sides,
- being neutral in a conflict situation,
- reporting just factual news on the waging of war,
- avoiding to raise the causes of war,
- omitting insights of the victims of war,
- lacking responsibility for the outcome of its reporting.

As an alternative, it is recommended to modify journalism into an approach which the founders call “peace journalism”, characterized by its orientation to an intended outcome. Journalists of this type are supposed to report on the background of conflicts, have the perspective of the vulnerable groups, seek “stories which maximize the chance for peacebuilding”, and get out “messages crafted to foster peaceful resolution of conflict”.<sup>20</sup> Finally, journalism will be “intended outcome programming” designed for transforming attitudes, promoting reconciliation, putting the conflicting sides together for resolution.

Others claim additional roles for journalists, namely as facilitators in conflict resolution. They maintain a duty for journalists to use their potential for mediation between conflicting parties.<sup>21</sup>

### Discussion

There is no doubt that the supporters of *peace journalism* and *journalism of attachment* have some valid points in their critique of the coverage conflicts by Western media, especially regarding the selection of news (bad news versus good news), the limitation of space and airtime for background reporting or the sometimes poor and superficial factual reporting. However, the stance as a whole remains somewhat dubious<sup>22</sup> and questionable.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Ross Howard, Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society (IMPACS), Vancouver, Canada; it is also partly reflected in contributions in Hieber, Loretta (ed.) 2001. *Lifeline Media: Reaching populations in crisis, A Guide to Developing Media Projects in Conflict Situations*, Geneva, Switzerland, pp. 129-134

<sup>19</sup> Martin Bell, former BBC correspondent, claimed that journalists in war zones cannot be neutral bystanders. He is the founder of the “Journalism of Attachment”.

<sup>20</sup> Howard, Ross 2001. “Media and Peacebuilding: Mapping the Possibilities”, in: Activate, Winter 2001, Page 12-13, Vancouver, Canada

<sup>21</sup> Baumann, Melissa & Siebert, Hannes 2001. “Journalists as Mediators” in: Paffenholz, Thania & Reyhler, Luc (eds.) 2001. *Peacebuilding – A Field Guide*, London, UK and New York, USA pp. 319 – 321

<sup>22</sup> For example, “objectivity” is not longer seen as a myth in conventional journalism. Every desk editor knows that selecting news is far from being objective. It might be done to best knowledge, professional standards or editorial guidelines, but it remains to be subjective. However, in many Western media the term “objective” is kept as a synonym for striving at providing non-partisan news and taking all sides into consideration.

<sup>23</sup> According to Rudi van Meurs, journalism trainer from the Netherlands, many tasks of journalists like conflict analysis, background information, stimulating inter-ethnic relations etc. are automatically served by good journalism, quoted in the minutes of the Seminar “Role of Media in Peacebuilding”, page 14, The Hague, February 2002

In short, both stances acknowledge the shortcomings of the practice of professional journalism but differ in how they can be addressed. For professional journalism, these shortcomings are only the “usual” differences between the ideal and reality. This gap should be closed by adapting practice closer to the concept. For alternative journalism, the shortcomings are failures immanent to the system that cannot be cured unless a new form of journalism is adopted – for example outcome oriented peace journalism. Nevertheless, it needs to be clarified if the proclaimed “alternative” forms of journalism can maintain and uphold their claims.

For this discussion, the argument should be kept in mind that journalists intending to have a particular outcome are generally in danger to jeopardize their credibility, at least insofar as their hidden agenda could prevent them from doing their job, which is providing the full range of essential information to the public. Credibility seems to be essential, not only for journalists but also for short-term media assistance in peacebuilding in particular, as well as for the coherence between short-term and long-term perspective.

From my personal point of view, desired outcome should belong more to the tasks of NGOs or other civil society organizations. Journalists generally should not become involved, besides their contribution to specialized formats like radio drama or educational soap operas which have a clear orientation and sometimes openly declared desired outcome. For credibility, these formats require a check on style and bias, as the audience normally regards the broadcasting on any media as a support for the content.

The supposed additional journalists’ roles as mediators are also questionable. Again, from my personal point of view, they do fit neither with the capacities of journalists nor with their role. These tasks should remain with specialists such as diplomats or specialized NGOs. Journalists are free to report on these activities, but should not be directly involved.

## 4.2 Impact of media assistance on peacebuilding

Contrary to the intensity of the debate on the role of journalist, there is hardly any discussion on the effects or impact of media interventions on the peacebuilding process and conflict.

### Models of impact

Currently, a very simple model of media’s impact is *implicitly* applied in the sector of media in peace and conflict: a stimulus (message, news) causes an immediate direct effect (hate, violence, understanding). However, it is common knowledge of media research that this simple stimulus-response model does not work sufficiently to predict the results of campaigns/messages or to explain effects of daily media consumption.<sup>24</sup> Taking into consideration the individual reactions and choices of consumers, more complex models are currently used to deepen knowledge about media’s impact. However, they are up to now rarely applied to the field of media in peace and conflict, which might be even more difficult as there are different cultural settings and values. Only some programmes are supported by social research for example soap operas work with a more complex model. Soap operas create various positive role models for the viewers.

However, media project design is frequently conducted on the grounds of the “reverse” assumption alone: the opposite to what is assumed to have worked for inciting hate and

<sup>24</sup> Heinz Bonfadelli – Medienwirkungsforschung I, Grundlagen und Perspektiven, Konstanz 1999

conflict is supposed to work in the same way - only with the opposite/positive impact- to foster reconciliation or peace. However, this is at least questionable. Attitude and behaviour changes, such as a move towards greater tolerance or inter-ethnic understanding, would appear to be more difficult to achieve than spreading a hate message, which in a particular situation might immediately provoke violent acts.<sup>25</sup> It is still not well known, what is required for a sustainable contribution to peacebuilding via media. It seems therefore appropriate to conduct and encourage more research on the whole question of impact (chains and attribution, indicators and measurement) in order to improve design and implementation of media assistance in this field.<sup>26</sup>

Various NGOs have already begun investing more research on these questions, for example the recent programme evaluations by Search for Common Ground in Liberia (1999) and in Burundi (1999-2001). The question of impact<sup>27</sup> was addressed by audience surveys and interviews with key informants. The report confirms an overall impact on peacebuilding, saying that "Studio Ijambo [a major radio programme in Burundi] has contributed to creating a new vocabulary of peaceful coexistence, dialogue and negotiation in the country". However, the report does not provide indicators for measurement and data on the extent of this impact.

### Limited and adverse effects

It is necessary to be aware of the limited effects of media. In pre- or post-conflict settings, media are not able to change the underlying causes of conflict. The uneven distribution of land, jobs and income might be, for example, an issue of intense reporting, but cannot be altered by the media, only by other means. Nevertheless, media can create adverse effects. Intense reporting can provoke revenge or inciting a new outbreak of violence. This needs careful consideration by editors, broadcasters and donors. Support to media therefore needs to be integrated into a coherent peacebuilding strategy.

<sup>25</sup> Moreover, even this view might be over simplified as outlined in the Workshop by André Loersch citing a study on the genocide in Rwanda. See report on Media Workshop.

<sup>26</sup> The KOFF (Center for Peacebuilding)-workshop "Media and Peacebuilding", held in Berne at 25 June 2002, stressed the need to develop tools for monitoring outcome and measuring impact of media activities, even if it seems to be more difficult than in other areas, see KOFF 2002 "Media Workshop Report".

<sup>27</sup> Abdalla, Amr 2002. Independent Programme Evaluation – Search for Common Ground in Burundi 1999-2001, Washington D.C., USA

## 5 Actors and Activities

This section will provide an overview and description of the main activities of selected major actors involved in the field of media and peacebuilding. It will not provide an evaluation of their activities but rather draw attention to who is doing what. Where possible, the various budget lines will be indicated.<sup>28</sup> This section is based upon interviews, project documents and public information.

It would have afforded more time for research to address important questions such as the conceptual differences between various donors and to determine the factors for differentiation.<sup>29</sup> To conduct such a research, it is necessary to undertake a review that clarifies which projects contain media elements, considers their underlying assumptions and hypotheses on impact chains, assesses results and draws conclusions on best practices.

### 5.1 Donors

#### 5.1.1 Governmental donors

##### United Kingdom – Department for International Development (DfID)

The United Kingdom is one of the few donors that places strong emphasis on media development. DfID sees media as a core activity in the field of good governance, and its “Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs” department is trying to develop the subject of media and peacebuilding. For both issues, DfID has produced two leading documents.<sup>30</sup>

DfID has participated in many of the well-known projects in media and peacebuilding such as:

- Talking Drums Studio in Liberia (news and soap opera radio production), with Search for Common Ground (SfCG),
- Nashe Maalo in Macedonia (TV series, soap opera style) – also with SfCG,
- Soul City in South Africa (TV, radio and print) – support for independent media,
- BBC Great Lakes Lifeline Service – providing impartial news,
- BBC World Service – Radio New Home, new Life in Afghanistan,
- Operation SPEAR – Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo - provision of humanitarian information with Media Action International.

A look into the current project list shows that DfID is engaged in a wide range of countries from Sierra Leone to Bangladesh, implementing and funding a broad variety of activities.

- training,
- launching radio stations – impartial news,
- equipment for setting or upgrading stations,
- support for or the transformation into public service broadcasters (Kosovo RTK),
- funding Schools of Journalism, press houses,

<sup>28</sup> All figures will appear in Euro based on the conversion rates at the time of editing (September 2002)

<sup>29</sup> For example: are there common approaches in media assistance to peacebuilding of countries like Sweden, the Netherlands or Denmark, which have focused quite early in their development cooperation to good governance and human rights? Are there major differences between an US approach and an European approach, regarding the preference for private or public service media? Do the US favor strict campaigning and the Europeans do not?

<sup>30</sup> DfID (Department for International Development) 2000a. Working with the Media in Conflicts and Other Emergencies, London, UK



- regulatory institutions concerned with media law (licensing),
- special programming towards peace and conflict issues.

Their approach cannot be strictly divided into peace and conflict-related projects and projects for long-term media assistance. An approximate calculation of the total project budget can be placed at £22.5m. (€36.0m.). However, it is not indicated for how many years.

### **Denmark – FRESTA Programme and DANIDA**

Denmark has also a focus on media. The Danish Foreign Ministry has launched the Danish Programme for Peace and Stability (FRESTA). It clearly sees regional collaboration as its key priority. Its fundamental idea is to build civil society networks across national or ethnic borders. In these networks, people will cooperate because this cross-boundary collaboration is the approach to overcome misunderstandings and ethnically driven enemy images and stereotypes. Through these measures, it aims to promote conflict prevention and democratic development in four segments of civil society: human rights, media, youth and refugees.

At present, FRESTA concentrates on South Eastern Europe. *In the period 1999 to 2003, €8.3m. were dedicated to media projects.* FRESTA funds the Public Broadcasters Network, Network of Local Media Associations and the South East European Network for Professionalization of the Media (SEENPM; which is co-funded from the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)). The SEENPM is engaged in training (election reporting, media management, investigative journalism, reporting diversity, human rights) and the collaboration of regional media and press centres. Cross-cutting activities (refugee radio network, repatriation, human rights) complement the programme. FRESTA implements these programmes with other Danish institutions such as the Danish School of Journalism and the Baltic Media Centre (*see below*).

In development cooperation (DANIDA), Denmark stresses democratization and respect for human rights, and their links to peacebuilding: "Denmark's development policy will promote good governance and administrative practices free of corruption as an essential element in the creation of pro-poor growth and in fostering stable societies that possess effective mechanisms for peaceful resolution of conflicts."<sup>31</sup> The development of a free press is considered as a means to achieve these objectives. However, media are not explicitly mentioned in the chapter of "preventing armed conflicts" of the same strategy.

DANIDA finances media projects in developing countries. An approximate estimation is €7.3m. for a ten year period in developing countries (from 1995 – 2004).<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Denmark's Development Policy- Strategy, October 2000, [www.um.dk](http://www.um.dk)

<sup>32</sup> I like to thank Hanne-Rie Madsen and Lotte Statta from the Foreign Ministry for her assistance in compiling the data on funds.

## Switzerland

Switzerland's media assistance is funded mainly by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), the development cooperation division of the Foreign Ministry, and by the political departments (PA IV) of the same ministry. As media are not a core activity of SDC in the Balkans, media are funded under "conflict prevention" as a main activity. The regional projects are within the framework of the Stability Pact (see below).<sup>33</sup>

*Regional projects in South Eastern Europe (SEE) are:*

- SEENPM – South East Europe Network for Professional Media – supporting a network of media institutes  
*€220,000 (330,000 CHF) for 1.5 yrs*
- AIM – Alternativna Informativna Mreza – a network of independent journalists in former Yugoslavia  
*€67,000 (100,000 CHF) for 9 months*
- Bridges for the New Balkans – production of print, radio and TV series regarding conflictive and peace issues – with SfCG  
*€1.0m. (1.5m. CHF) for 3 yrs*

*Bilateral projects<sup>34</sup> in SEE are:*

- Training radio journalists– Albanian Media Institute  
*€334,000 (500,000 CHF) in 2 yrs*
- Support to Radio FERN in Bosnia – with OSCE  
*€260,000 (390,000 CHF) in 2 yrs*
- Support to Radio Television Kosovo (RTK)  
*€800,000 (1.2m. CHF) in 1 yr*
- Support to independent media in FRY – with Medienhilfe  
*€133,000 (200,000 CHF) in 1 yr (funded by PAIV)*
- Crisis assistance in Macedonia – with Medienhilfe  
*€400,000 (600,000 CHF) in 1 yr (co-funded:240,000 CHF from PAIV & 364,000 CHF from SDC)*
- Improving programme quality in FRY  
*€133,000 (200,000 CHF) in 2 yrs*
- Soap opera production Nashe Maalo in Macedonia with SfCG  
*€1.0m. (1.5m. CHF) in 3 yrs*

*Other areas:*

- Altapress Russia – with Media Development Fund  
*€667,000 (1.0m. CHF) in 6 yrs*
- Central Asia Media Project – Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan  
*€800,000 (1.2m. CHF) in 2 yrs*
- Media Institute Caucasus – with Cimera  
*€173,000 (260,000 CHF) in 1 yr*

<sup>33</sup> Data are those available in May 2002.

<sup>34</sup> Education project with children (with SfCG) is said to be conflict-orientated, but not mentioned here, nor is the Children Theatre Project of Open Society in Macedonia.

- Angola – support to media production (SfCG)  
*€133,000 (200,000 CHF) in 2 yr<sup>35</sup>*
- Angola - support to Radio Ecclesia  
*€350,000 (525,000 CHF) in 1.5 yr (from PAIV)*
- Israel – support to media rights organization  
*€27,000 (40,000 CHF) in 1 yr (from PAIV)*
- Radio Okapi Democratic Republic of Congo<sup>36</sup> – UN / Fondation Hironnelle:  
*max. €633,000 (950,000 CHF) in 1 yr<sup>37</sup>* (co-funded: 600,000 CHF from PAIV and 350,000 CHF from SDC)

An approximate calculation<sup>38</sup> demonstrates that *Switzerland invests €4.2m. (6.4m. CHF) in the current 1 year period* for media assistance. Thereof €3.3m. (4.9m. CHF) comes from SDC, and the remaining €950,000 (1.4m. CHF) comes from PA IV. In comparison to other donor organizations or countries, this amount is already quite substantial for a small country like Switzerland.

### Germany

Up to now, Germany's Ministry of Development Cooperation (BMZ) has no media focus, mainly because media projects have been outsourced. This is due to a strategic decision to omit "government sensitive" issues such as media from official development aid. These were undertaken by the political foundations, which are funded by the government, but still have more a non-governmental character. Due to financial restrictions, the foundations have reduced their engagement in media.

On the other hand, the Foreign Ministry has developed some major activities in media. Within the framework of the Stability Pact, Germany is funding 63 projects in South Eastern Europe with a volume of €3.4m. in 2002. There are many different implementing agencies, mostly German radio and TV producers. Activities range from training, provision of equipment, and programme cooperation to workshops and seminars. Officially, there is no special focus or concept for these media initiatives besides "support for development of democracy".

New initiatives will be launched in Afghanistan (€1.1m.) and for the European-Islamic dialogue (€2.3m.). This adds up to *€6.7m. (10.1m. CHF) in 2002* for media projects in conflict-related regions.

### US Government - USAID

The US Government is funding media activities generally through its Agency for International Development (USAID). Large funding for long-term transition, including media assistance, has been channelled through their regional offices. For conflict-regions, there is the Office for Transition Initiatives (OTI), which belongs to the USAID Bureau for Democracy,

<sup>35</sup> It was estimated that 20 to 25 per cent of the total funding of €600,000 (900,000 CHF) in 2 years was dedicated to media activities.

<sup>36</sup> Co-funding with DfID, total budget for first year: €1.8m. (2.8m. CHF).

<sup>37</sup> PAIV financial contribution is comprised by a fund of €233,000 (350,000 CHF) in 1 year plus the costs for experts from Swiss Expert Pool, which might be send and cost €166,000 (250,000 CHF). DEZA has committed €600,000 (900,000 CHF) for 3 years, disbursement will be handled flexible.

<sup>38</sup> All figures on funding over larger periods were divided by the years to obtain an annual figure, these annual figures were added.

Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance.<sup>39</sup> The OTI mission is to assist local partners advance peace and democracy in conflict-prone countries, by providing fast, flexible short-term assistance targeted at key transition needs. The strategy paper “OTI Guide to programme Options in Conflict Prone Settings” of September 2001, outlines major activities:

- expanding democratic political processes (election, civil society, good governance),
- building citizen security (police reform, mine awareness, military),
- promoting reconciliation (human rights processes, conflict management),
- supporting peace negotiations (advisors, peace initiatives).

In this setting, media play a major cross-cutting role in all stages of a conflict - before, during and post-conflict. The media have a two-fold approach:

- *classical news journalism* provides neutral factual information, multiple viewpoints, opinions, thus encouraging people to decide on their own, and keeps the watchdog function to government
- *campaigning* for peace or other important messages of public interest (election, anti-corruption)

OTI recommends gaining local media professionals who are willing to work with USAID and to fund broad-scale national media campaigns to accelerate democratic transition.

Here is one major difference in protocol to that of other donors. To my knowledge, no other donor provides explicitly strict guidelines what kind of messages should be transferred to the audience and always claims visibility as a priority. Other donors, for example Sweden and the Netherlands, rely upon the local media to find their own way on how to reach their audience and what kind of “messages” fit with the cultural setting.

OTI’s country programmes in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Indonesia, East Timor and Kosovo included large media components, for example voter campaign in Croatia, voter education in Indonesia, independent alternative media in Bosnia, Serbia and Montenegro, including provision of technical equipment. In Liberia, OTI was co-funding Star Radio and Talking Drums Studio; in Rwanda, it focuses on giving information on the proceedings of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. In Angola, OTI funded Voice of America radio programming.

OTI is currently funding activities in Afghanistan (€16.5m. in 2002) , East Timor (€10.0m.), Indonesia (€4.0m.), Burundi (€2.0m.), Democratic Republic of Congo (€4.0m.), Zimbabwe (€3.0m.), Macedonia (€7.0m.), Serbia and Montenegro (€10.0m.) and Peru (€7.0m.). There is no breakdown of which proportion of these funds were dedicated to media assistance. In former years, OTI has heavily funded the Balkans.<sup>40</sup>

In other countries (not covered by the OTI programme, due to conflict status), assistance to independent media is given by the USAID regional or country offices. For example, strengthening independent media is held as a priority in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Another institution, involved with media assistance is the Centre for Democracy and Governance, which belongs to the USAID – Bureau for Global Programmes. It has a supporting role in designing and implementing democracy strategies. In 1999, it has

<sup>39</sup> Price/Noll/de Luce 2002 (Mapping Media Assistance) clarifies the structure of USAID and states that another substantial reordering of USAID is taking place which will be finalized during 2002, page 6.

<sup>40</sup> Evaluation of the Balkan programmes was conducted; the results will be presented in the annex of this report.

elaborated a Strategy Paper, "The Role of Media in Democracy: A Strategic Approach", recently it has co-financed the study, "The Enabling Environment for Free and Independent Media" and is working with the World Bank to broaden donor interest in media assistance.<sup>41</sup>

### Sweden

Sweden was one of the first countries to give culture (of which media is a part) a special position in governmental development cooperation. In the nineties, Swedish support to media has expanded. Already in 1995, the Swedish Development Agency (SIDA) had published a strategy for their media assistance.<sup>42</sup> It recommends a strong focus on protecting freedom of speech by supporting the reform of legislation, contributing to research, making freedom of action possible for journalists and the media, and supporting networks between journalists.<sup>43</sup> Media support is seen as an integral part for the promotion of democracy and human rights. The specific goals are "to support the development of journalism in order to ensure that the general public has access to information and the social debate."

It is stated clearly that media activities are crucial for good governance. For this objective, SIDA aims to:

- stimulate the growth and vitality of media that are characterized by pluralism, and
- promote the growth and vitality of individual media.

It therefore supports:

- media organizations which work for freedom of speech,
- local media which contribute to diversity and pluralism and which extend popular influence,
- the education of journalists,
- public service activities with a focus on the radio and film media.

SIDA's contribution to media assistance in general has been *approximately €9.3m. (87.0m. SEK) in 2001*.<sup>44</sup> This figure includes media activities from the Eastern Europe Department and from the Department of Democracy and Human Rights. Sweden supports organizations like the Panos Institute, International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX) and Article 19. A regional focus is the Balkans. A total of €5.4m. are budgeted for media activities in the Balkans over a two year period (2001 – 2002). This figure includes the funds for the Swedish Helsinki Committee.

To some extent only, media projects were started to be seen as contributing to peacebuilding, as SIDA supports some organizations with explicit conflict-related projects (Panos Institute in West Africa, media training in Sierra Leone with IFEX and Canadian Journalists for Free Expression CJFE). For example, the projects with the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR, *see below*) are listed under a "conflict management perspective". These media projects add up to €2.0m. and are classified according to the status of the conflict and to the type of intervention in the conflict.

<sup>41</sup> Mapping Media Assistance, page 7

<sup>42</sup> SIDA 1995. *Freedom of Expression*, Stockholm, Sweden

<sup>43</sup> SIDA 2000. Policy for SIDA's Development Cooperation in the Field of Culture, Stockholm, Sweden

<sup>44</sup> SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) 2002. *Facts and Figures 2001 Culture and Media*, Stockholm, Sweden p.3

## Netherlands

The Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands has also stressed the role of good governance and democracy in their development assistance programmes. Civil society must be allowed to develop. Government must tolerate, if not foster, an enabling environment as part of good governance. Freedom of association is seen as a clear condition. No less important, however, is access to sufficient, independent resources, and channels of communication, unrestricted information, scope for negotiation and independent bodies to settle disputes. In this manner, freedom of expression and development of free and independent media play a vital role.

The Dutch government has given media activities a high ranking position on the agenda for good governance and has fostered many media initiatives. The "Memorandum on the Promotion of Platforms for Independent Broadcasting in Africa", published in March 2002 can be seen as an example for its strategy:

On the one hand, it demonstrates a less restrictive (European?) style of approach, which states, "Dutch policy on communication and development is geared to strengthening ownership and demand orientation. This means that the media organizations in developing countries take responsibility for themselves for programme identification, management and execution. Within the framework of the agreed policy, the actors involved set priorities..."<sup>45</sup> While on the other, it states that the Dutch policy acknowledges and understands the importance of independent media as well as wanting to support the media structure.

The Memorandum states that the Dutch government intends to continue its support for African media initiatives with a new emphasis on strengthening national and regional media platforms. This decision means that the Dutch government will focus its support not on stimulating a single platform but on the development of multiple networks which could ultimately result in an African platform.

Their focus can also be deduced from the Memorandum's list of the major problems of media in Africa:

- no responsible media policy,
- restrictive legislation upon the media,
- lack of converting state media into independent broadcasters,
- poor quality of media.

The main points of Dutch media policy in Africa are:

- creating media platforms for consultation between government, public and private media,
- supporting press councils, observatories, regulatory bodies,
- promoting a free media culture,

The Ministry sees a growing role that media can play in contributing to peacebuilding and the prevention of renewed conflict. As the specific role of the media is often less known and not always transparent, the Netherlands has recently convened a conference on the role of the media in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.<sup>46</sup> This focused on a discussion about

<sup>45</sup> Memorandum on the Promotion of Platforms for Independent Broadcasting in Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands 2002. Memorandum on the Promotion of Platforms for Independent Broadcasting in Africa, on: [www.minbuza.nl](http://www.minbuza.nl)

<sup>46</sup> Netherlands Association of Journalists 2002. The Role of the Media in Conflict Prevention and Peace Building, report of a seminar, The Hague, Netherlands

"Peace Journalism" and the proposal to have worldwide Media Monitoring with the focus on Early Warning in order to detect and to prevent similar cases like Rwanda.

Dutch funds to media assistance have been substantive, although they can only be estimated. In 1995, Dutch media assistance through NGO and bilateral channels has already amounted to €13.0m. (28.0m. hfl.)<sup>47</sup> In 2001, assistance for media in Africa was around €7.0m.,<sup>48</sup> according to the Ministry roughly the same amount was given to the Balkans. As the rest of the regions has received only small amounts in media projects, total media assistance is estimated at *€15.0m. in 2001*<sup>49</sup>.

### 5.1.2 Multilateral donors

#### European Union

Conflict-related media projects of the European Union (EU) are funded under the programme "*European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights*" (EIDHR). Programming and conceptualisation for EIDHR are supervised under the EC's Directorate General for External Relations. Appraisal, implementing, and monitoring of projects is conducted by EuropeAid – a unit for implementing assistance programmes.

EIDHR has several budget lines; the most important segments are "promotion and protection of human rights" (€20.0m. in 2001), "support for democratization" (€19.4m.) and "prevention of conflict and dealing with the consequences of conflict" (€5.9m.). A special budget line covers the "rehabilitation centres for the victims of torture" inside and outside the EU (€12.0m.). Additionally, there are urgent projects identified by the EC for specific objectives. These "targeted" projects amounted to €36.0m. in 2001.

Media projects fall under various segments, mostly "support for democratization and protection of human rights". Major projects with a strong media component under EIDHR are:

- promotion of independent, free and responsible media in Southern Africa, with Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA), Namibia,  
*€780,000 for 3 yrs*
- promoting independent journalism, training and capacity building in the Southern Mediterranean Region (Tunisia, Morocco Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, Algeria, Egypt) with International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Brussels  
*€840,000 for 2.5 yrs*
- global programme of prize competitions to promote Excellence in Media Reporting of Actions to combat racism and discrimination – 5 regions (South Asia, South East Asia, Africa, Latin America)  
*€670,000 for 2 yrs*
- freedom of expression and of information in ASEAN region (base-line study, pending legislation, training, advocacy campaign with Article 19)  
*€525,000 for 3 yrs*
- using media to promote human rights in the Sierra Leone peace process with European Center for Common Ground  
*€1.5m. for 3 yrs.*

<sup>47</sup> I have to thank Michiel van Geelen, who studies mass communication at the University of Amsterdam, for this figure, which he had calculated from a report by Ank Linden: "Communication policies and human rights in third world countries".

<sup>48</sup> See Memorandum

<sup>49</sup> According to van Geelen this seems a good guess as it is a little bit higher than in 1995. No exact figures available.

- establishment of Children's Rights News Agency (ANDI) with ANDI, Brazil  
*€2.0m. for 3 yrs.*
- Information Documentation and Training Agency for the International Criminal court for Rwanda (publicizing activities of the ICT Rwanda within the area of Great Lakes), broadcasting, website, magazine with Fondation Hironnelle  
*€590,000 for 1 yr*

*This reaches €6.9m. for conflict related projects with an explicit media component in 3 yrs.*

For the period 2002 - 2004, EIDHR has identified 29 focus countries that should involve four thematic priorities:

- support to strengthen democratization, good governance,
- abolition of death penalty,
- fight against torture, international tribunals,
- combat racism and discrimination against minorities.
- Focus 1 is the major source for funding of media projects.<sup>50</sup>

### **World Bank**

In the perspective of the World Bank, the media have just recently started to play a major role. This is due to their contribution to growth and the positive relation between free and independent media and World Bank goals such as market development and institutional change.<sup>51</sup> The World Development Report 2002 stresses that competition between the media, access to public information and broadening the media's reach are essential. The Report compiles the newest data and derives recommendations how to ensure the framework conditions for developing an independent high quality media sector.

From a conflict perspective, the World Bank's efforts have been driven by the concept that reconstruction serves for conflict solving.<sup>52</sup> The Bank's Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit deals with projects of the Post-Conflict Fund. Various projects were given grants – from transitional support strategies to demilitarisation, employment for displaced women, rehabilitation of the health sector and community development. Out of a total of €35.0m. for the years from 1998 to 2002, the project list reveals only three media projects:

- Liberia: documentary on the conflict and its impact, with European Television  
*€25,000*
- Study on Media in conflict regions, with Media Action International  
*€26,000*
- Nigeria: Media and National Identity Formation, with Panos Institute  
*€68,000*

The figure of 0.34% of the total post-conflict budget illustrates that media projects play a minor role.

<sup>50</sup> Funding of media development in general is sometimes done through other programmes like TACIS for technical assistance to 13 countries in Eastern Europe or by MEDA the development programme in 12 Mediterranean states.

<sup>51</sup> World Bank 2002. World Development Report 2002, The Media, chapter 10, page 181 – 193, Washington, USA p.181ff.

<sup>52</sup> According to "World Bank Efforts in Bosnia – Conflict-solving through Reconstruction" ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)), the Bank develops a transitional support strategy for conflict regions, where priorities include strengthening of public institutions, demining operations and reintegration of refugees.



However, the World Bank Institute has conducted training<sup>53</sup> of over one thousand journalists during the last five years, and sponsored conferences. According to Dutch sources, there will be a common major effort by World Bank and UNDP to promote media and peacebuilding initiatives and develop indicators for them.

## UNESCO

Media and communication belong to the core activities of United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Besides its political initiatives,<sup>54</sup> UNESCO funds the development of independent and pluralistic media by a special programme; the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Since 1980, more than nine hundred projects were funded, among others various news agencies, independent newspapers, community radio stations and multimedia centres, TV channels and public service broadcasters. Various training programmes were established as well as special approaches for women, youth media education and research.

IPDC is funded by voluntary contributions of UN members, and the special fund-in-trust to attract resources from countries that want to support domestic initiatives. It is reported that many donor countries are withdrawing from these multilateral projects. Therefore, funds for UNESCO are becoming scarce.<sup>55</sup> In 2001, IPDC had to declare a moratorium for already approved projects, the moratorium has been lifted recently in April 2002; the budget for 2001 was €2.4m. for projects and assistance secretariat. IPDC has decided on reforms of its working methods, adopting established priorities of IPDC, professionalizing approval, preparation of projects and improving transparency. A new procedure has been announced regarding evaluation of terminated projects by independent consultants. Additionally, UNESCO has created the "Information for all Programme" for funding ICT initiatives.

For peace and conflict related issues and conflict-prone regions, UNESCO has created "UNESCO SOS Media", a programme of emergency assistance to help in reconstruction, mainly by expanding access to non-partisan information and promoting diversity during and post-conflict. The programme started in 1992 in former Yugoslavia. After the 1995 Dayton Accords, UNESCO switched from emergency help to building infrastructure for media and long-term diversity, its emergency operations were then extended to Rwanda and Burundi, and in 1998 to Angola and Indonesia. These activities are wide ranging including: provision of equipment, training, and establishment of TV stations and radio production centres.<sup>56</sup>

The total funds of UNESCO SOS Media is €9.2m. (€490,000 came from Switzerland). Numerous international organizations and NGOs have given their support to the UNESCO SOS Media programme.

UNESCO has also fostered cooperation and knowledge sharing among those concerned with media in conflict regions. The UNESCO Round Table on Media in conflict areas, held on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day 2000, in Geneva in May 2000 has given recommendations for future actions in this field.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See further information in Mapping Media assistance, page 15. It also mentions the World Bank's involvement in advice and counselling on projects for the privatisation and transformation of state controlled media.

<sup>54</sup> Breunig, Christian 2000. *50 Jahre Kommunikationspolitik der UNESCO*, in: Neue Medien und Öffentlichkeiten, Band 1, Hamburg, Germany

<sup>55</sup> In 1996, IPDC had only a budget for €2.3m. in comparison to projects for €8.0m., see Breunig, page 111

<sup>56</sup> UN Missions sometimes provide frameworks for the media to evolve, by drafting regulations on telecommunications and broadcast laws, licensing etc; see Mapping Media Assistance.

<sup>57</sup> Recommendations for Future Actions, UNESCO Geneva 2000, brochure

The list of recommendations refers to situations where the international community intervenes in a conflict or post-conflict situation. The list stresses the fulfilment of Article 19, clear priority to support the international community, independent local media, both private media or public service media, establishment of the rule of the law, consultation with NGOs, and coordination of donor efforts. It highlights that any entity set up by an Inter-Governmental Organization (IGO) should function *ab initio* as an independent public service broadcaster and that IGOs themselves should set an example in respect for the rule of law in their own actions. It recommends to work out a specific strategy for restructuring the media and to develop an agreed handbook with general principles and defining the main strategic choices that must be made in media assistance in conflict regions.

### **Stability Pact**

The Stability Pact, founded in June 1999, is a political declaration of commitment and a framework agreement on international cooperation to develop a shared strategy for stability and growth in South East Europe. However, it is not an international organization nor does it have its own independent financial resources. In the Stability Pact, more than 40 partner countries (EU, G8, Norway and Switzerland, countries of SEE) and organizations (UN, OSCE, World Bank, IMF, regional initiatives) are committed to foster peace, conflict prevention, democracy and economic prosperity. The EU, including its member states, has a leading role and is the most important donor.

The Stability Pact acts in three Working Tables. Working Table No. 1 deals with Democratization and Human Rights and focuses on four priority areas:

- inter-ethnic dialogue and cross-border cooperation,
- refugee matters,
- media,
- education and youth.

As media is one priority area, a Media Task Force (MTF) was built – a collaborative effort of donors, NGOs and recipient countries. It adopted the Charter for Media Freedom and a Strategy for Media Assistance. By cooperating with media professionals and state authorities (within National Working Groups of seven SEE-countries), MTF works to provide assistance to the development of free, independent, professional and diverse media in SEE. Its activities are determined by the phases of conflict in context, which it has categorized into actual conflict, post-conflict, and rehabilitation phases.

Generally, the MTF has four main areas of activity:

- implementing the Charter of Media Freedom by cooperating with State Authorities,
- designing a comprehensive strategy for media assistance to ensure a common focus of donors,
- stimulating targeted support to media development,
- generating carefully selected projects.

In the first funding phase of Stability Pact (March 2000), 33 media projects were funded with €20.1m. to run over long-term periods. For the period 2001-2004, a new Strategy for Media Assistance has been adopted. It summarizes problems, objectives and areas of action very concisely.

*Strategy*

It states that the major problems facing the media in SEE are: political influence, economic dependence, lack of sound journalism training, weak professional structures and an unfinished legislative framework.

The document identifies principle objectives:

- a legislative framework,
- relevant institutions are solid, independent and indispensable,
- raised journalistic professionalism,
- balanced coverage of ethnic and religious minorities,
- survival of private media with proven track record and continuation of their work,
- long-term consistent assistance for initiatives that will benefit the media as a whole.

*Areas of action are:*

- laws and regulation,
- transformation of state to public media,
- support to private and independent media (conditional),
- regional cooperation,
- professionalism (training, universities, institutes, job contracts),
- minorities,
- content (quality),
- archives.

The Strategy Paper and the Action Plans for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia contain a thorough analysis of the political situation as well as of the media sector, assess achievements, formulate priorities, detect obstacles and give recommendation for future action.

As the Stability Pact has no independent financial resources, all programmes will realize that some donors have already cut or are in the process of withdrawing funds from SEE. This will result in less support, especially from donors like USAID, the World Bank, and Soros Foundation. Not all the media that have been supported, will receive further help. Therefore, there is a process of identifying the quality media that deserve continued support. Much more scrutiny will be placed on projects and on assessing feasibility and viability of individual media.

**Council of Europe**

The Council of Europe, one of the first European institutions, founded in 1949, is an intergovernmental organization of more than forty countries, working in the area of human rights, culture and social development. Under its Directorate for Human Rights, a Media Division was established. It deals mostly with: legislative reform, implementing laws and training (freedom of expression).

In the nineties, the Council has focused its assistance to its priority areas SEE, CIS (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus) and the South Caucasus.<sup>58</sup> Its programmes are implemented with governments or NGOs.

<sup>58</sup> Further details of its work, authority and political influence are outlined in Mapping Media Assistance.

### 5.1.3 Foundations

Political foundations play a major role in media assistance.<sup>59</sup> In Europe, the Open Society Foundation is one of the most important.

#### Open Society Foundation (Soros)

The Open Society Institutes (OSI) of the Soros Network Foundation has provided aid to independent media in many post-communist countries. Overall sums of their commitment in the media sector are not available, but it is clear that large sums have been spent. In Russia, for example, €5.0m. were dedicated to media, only in 2000. It is acknowledged that its continuous support for independent radio stations such as Radio B92 in Belgrade and other initiatives has contributed to the defeat of the authoritarian regimes in the Balkans.

However, it has been confirmed<sup>60</sup>, as a result of the changing political environment, funding will be decreasing in the years to come. Assistance will not be given up, but focused. It is the aim to promote the media with proven record and to look for more coordination with other donors.

## 5.2 Implementing agencies

Media assistance is often implemented by the wide variety of specialized media international or national NGOs and professional associations. For reasons of space and time, the following section will consider only a highly subjective selection of them with special attention to Swiss-based NGOs.

### 5.2.1 International agencies and NGOs

#### Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)

The London-based IWPR, founded 1992, is specialized both in intensive reporting on conflict and humanitarian issues, and in journalist training. Through its emphasis on training, it transfers professional skills to countries in conflict and thereby raising the level of quality reporting. The news and reports are published nationally and internationally on the IWPR's website (allowing free downloads) and as a result, it provides Western media with an alternative source of obtaining reports on conflict regions. The training is very strict and focuses on guidelines for styles of writing and editing by international experts.

IWPR also monitors the media in conflict regions thus adding to the political debate. Over the years, it has extended the geographical reach from the Balkans to crisis zones in the former Soviet Union and Central Asia. Currently, it is undertaking projects in Afghanistan, the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia. A special focus is their permanent regular reporting on the proceedings of the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

The IWPR is staffed by around 20 personnel in London and a further 20 in various regional bureaus. One of the major donors is SIDA and cooperation partners include Media Action International in Afghanistan.

<sup>59</sup> Mapping Media Assistance describes in detail the activities of various private and public foundations in the USA, like Freedom Forum, Markle Foundation, Rockefeller, Ford, MacArthur, Independent Journalism Federation Mapping Media Assistance, page 18

<sup>60</sup> By the Network Media Programme (NMP), a unit in OSI Budapest, which acts as a consultant and liaison for Soros-sponsored media programmes.

### **Search for Common Ground (SfCG)**

The US-based organization, founded 1982, and its European arm European Center for Common Ground, Brussels, is a conflict resolution NGO. Its "toolbox" has various parts that work with media and SfCG has become one of the leading producers of television and radio programmes for the reduction or prevention of violent conflict. Their work can be exemplified by:

- Studio Ijambo (Radio) in Burundi (with currently 25 news, documentary or cultural programmes),
- Nashe Maalo (children TV series) in Macedonia,
- Bridges for the New Balkans – regional media in Macedonia, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo.
- Talking Drums Studio (Liberia) - radio production facility,
- Vozes que Falam - conflict prevention radio soap opera, Angola.

### **Baltic Media Centre (BMC)**

The Baltic Media Centre, founded in 1993, is an independent NGO that supports democratic development and promotes peaceful international cooperation through the active participation of the media. It is funded primarily through the Danish government. It provides training, consultancies and legal advice for radio, TV, production companies and print media. The regional focus has been expanded from the Baltic States to include Russia, South East Europe, Asia and Africa. Their focus is: institution building (associations, networks, transforming state into public broadcasters), raising professionalism (training), supporting media policy (democratic media policy, legislation) and programme cooperation (with all kinds of media, state, commercial, and grassroots). BMC participates in the FRESTA programme of Danish government and runs the "Good Morning Afghanistan" news service radio in Afghanistan funded by the EU.

Its budget for 2001 was €3.8m. The staff is comprised of 18 personnel in Denmark and 20 in the specific regions.

### **5.2.2 Swiss-based NGOs<sup>61</sup>**

#### **Media Action International (MAI)**

Media Action International, based in Geneva, has evolved out of the International Centre for Humanitarian Reporting (ICHR) and specializes in setting up humanitarian information programmes in conflict- or disaster-prone regions and countries.

Media Action International highlights information as a fundamental human right for the recipients. It requires all organizations engaged in humanitarian operations to incorporate an information policy with the affected civilians in order to fulfil their obligation to communicate with the population they are assisting.<sup>62</sup> MAI criticizes international agencies that are more interested in providing information to improve their profile and visibility rather than imparting information to the population.

<sup>61</sup> More detailed information on the Swiss-based NGOs can be found in the KOFF 2002 Media Workshop report.

<sup>62</sup> Media Action International 2002. In a Humanitarian Emergency, No News is Bad News, concept papers, Geneva, Switzerland

MAI was one of the first NGOs bringing forward the idea of using media for development as well as for conflict prevention and peacebuilding.<sup>63</sup> MAI has worked intensively in Afghanistan (Radio Education for Afghan Children, with BBC), Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia (youth and humanitarian information programmes, SPEAR), Mozambique (flood victims) and Africa (Lifeline Media).

### **Medienhilfe**

Medienhilfe, founded in 1992 in Zurich as "Medienhilfe Ex-Jugoslawien", is an NGO supporting independent media in the Balkans. These media are seen as important pillars in the fight against authoritarian regimes and as agents for democratic change and inter-ethnic understanding. Medienhilfe has the concept that media should be more than news and information providers. Additionally they should be quasi-NGOs producing specific content, campaigning actively for tolerance and reconciliation. In their current programme, Medienhilfe supports minority media in Kosovo, and local and community media in Macedonia (training, networking, production in conflict prevention). Moreover, practical media monitoring is part of their work.<sup>64</sup> The Swiss NGO works with the Media Task Force of the Stability Pact and cooperates closely with the International Media Fund, a network that brings together other European media NGOs (Press Now, Netherlands; Norwegian People's Aid, Norway; IREX Pro Media, USA; Media Development Loan Fund, Prague; Swedish Helsinki Committee, Sweden; Open Society institutes in the Balkans).

### **Fondation Hirondelle**

Fondation Hirondelle, Lausanne, is specialized in setting up radio programmes in regions of conflict and crisis. Its approach is to provide balanced information to a population in need. Balanced information is seen as a need and as a tool for enabling people to decide on their own issues and to calm tensions. This is to counter the propaganda instruments often used in conflict regions for inciting hatred, creating intolerance and manipulating people. Therefore, the core activity focuses on broadcasting neutral, non-partisan information and credible news.

*Major projects have been/are:*

- Star Radio Liberia (from 1997 onwards, closed by Liberian government in 2000),
- Radio Agatashya Zaire/Rwanda, refugee camps (since 1994, closed in 1996),
- Radio Blue Sky, Kosovo,
- Radio Ndeke Luka, Bangui,
- Radio Okapi, Democratic Republic of Congo (with UN), on air since February 2002,
- Hirondelle News Agency with International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

<sup>63</sup> MAI organized one of the early workshops on "media in regions of conflict", held in December 1998 in Cape Town, South Africa; see also Loretta Hieber (co-founder of Media Action): Lifeline Media: Reaching population in crisis, which gives a lot of examples of media projects in conflict situations.

<sup>64</sup> The book "Media and War" was co-edited by Medienhilfe's director Nena Skopljanac Brunner. It analyses the media's influence on the war, namely in constructing images of the others as enemies, the use of myths, the semantics of war and the presentation of reality by RTV Serbia.

### **Cimera**

Cimera is a Geneva-based NGO, founded in 1999, working in Central Asia, the Caucasus region and the Balkans. The organization focuses on civil society, media development, research and analysis.

Cimera stresses that its strength lies in their unique combination of projects in media development, cooperation between journalists and politicians, support for civil society development and in-depth analysis and research of the socio-political changes. In their view, media often fail to be an organ for public information and debate in the Balkans and the post-soviet countries. Training and institutional development should raise professional standards and contribute to conflict prevention.

*Central ongoing projects are:*

- Central Asia Media Project,
- Caucasus Media Institute,
- Central Asia Research Network (Media in Kyrgyzstan),
- Media development in Georgia and Armenia.

### **Others**

There are many other important implementers that could not be covered in this report, for example: IREX and Internews<sup>65</sup> or professional associations such as the International Federation of Journalists, the World Association of Newspapers (WAN), the European Centre for Journalists (ECJ), also media freedom NGOs, like Reporters Sans Frontiers, and Article 19.

<sup>65</sup>Mapping Media Assistance, pages 25 onwards.

## 6 Trends and Challenges for Media in Peacebuilding

### 6.1 Recent trends

There are currently two main trends in the debate of media and peacebuilding: greater attention to media and a stricter examination of media assistance.

#### **Greater attention to media in peacebuilding**

First, the issue of media assistance in general and especially in conflict situations is receiving more attention. One sign is that the World Bank has included for the first time a special Media chapter in the World Development Report 2002, with the overall result that free and independent media have a positive effect on other development objectives such as growth and building of democratic institutions. Another sign is that various international conferences have taken place recently on the issue, one in Paris organized jointly by the World Bank and USAID on the "Global Media Assistance Strategies - role of media in economic and democratic development". Another conference was convened in The Hague, Netherlands, with the topic of "The Role of Media in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding".<sup>66</sup> In the former conference, one of the three priority areas for discussion was dedicated to media in conflict situations.<sup>67</sup>

Additionally, various people interviewed for this report confirm that in their governments or organizations media assistance has gained in priority as a tool to influence peacebuilding.

#### **Stricter examination of media assistance**

Due to the difficulties in compiling reliable data on the volume of funding for media projects, it cannot be assessed if media assistance in general gets fewer funds or not. On one hand, it seems clear that the Balkans as a region will receive less funding. According to the statements made by interviewees the contributions for media support for this region will be reduced. This is due either to the more democratic development in the region which calls for greater self-reliance – at least this is the view of some donors – or due to donor fatigue with some media outlets. On the other hand, donor support is to be transferred to other geographical areas (Afghanistan, Central Asia) and, at the moment, the overall result on a global level is not clear.

This means that in the media sector of South Eastern Europe there will be more competition among projects, broadcasters and other media for less donor money. As donor support still is the major source of revenue, many newspapers, radio stations and media institutions will face difficulties. This calls for a stricter examination of media projects in order to select the ones for continuous support.

However, the pressure to review projects is not restricted to the Balkans. Based upon the interviews for this report, it can be concluded that this is an overall trend. Despite media in peace and conflict being a new and evolving field, donors are demanding a greater monitoring of outcomes, checking of results and examination of impact – as they do in other sectors of development cooperation.

<sup>66</sup> These conferences recommended to create a Media Monitoring Task Force or Network which detects early signs of hate propaganda by local media systems in potentially troubled areas, see minutes of the conference, quote of Prof. C. Hamelink of University of Amsterdam, page 5

<sup>67</sup> A draft summary of the conference report on Global Media Assistance Strategies, is available at <http://pcmlp.socleg.ox.ac.uk/mas/report>



## 6.2 Challenges

Considering these recent trends, the media and peacebuilding sector faces the following challenges.

### 6.2.1 Evaluation and impact measurement

There is a need for quality evaluation of media assistance projects and their impacts, not only urged by the donors but also positively seen by implementers in order to improve ongoing and future media support. However, it is a challenge to conduct professional impact measurement of media projects due to the young state of the field.<sup>68</sup> Only little conceptual work on media's impact has been done, up to now only a few in-depth case studies and evaluations are available.<sup>69</sup>

A review of those studies demonstrates that the sector requires more in-depth research and improved evaluation methodology. Many project reports simply describe quantitative results or outcomes (100 journalists trained, 40 programmes produced) and lack data on audience ("how many people have been reached?" or "how much the audience has increased?"), as well as qualitative indicators.

#### Need for research on impact measurement

It seems necessary to foster impact measurement in strategic projects. This will need more case studies and baseline surveys, as only a few existing projects have implemented activities, which make future impact measuring possible. As one USAID report mentions<sup>70</sup>, baseline surveys *before the project starts* are an indispensable instrument to assess the project's impact. However, this requires additional funds for research and data collection. These efforts could be coordinated within the peacebuilding sector, which actually develops qualitative indicators for impact measurement<sup>71</sup>. As a first step, it seems useful to create indicators for "contribution to peacebuilding" that can be used in questionnaires and interviews.<sup>72</sup> Donors are hopefully ready to spend additional funding and accept additional time for evaluation.

#### Lessons learned

Up to now, only a few efforts had been made to draw lessons from successful media assistance for peacebuilding. There is a need to compile already existing knowledge and to review good and bad practices of different donors and projects. One such review of media activities of inter-governmental organizations in peace operations has been recently published<sup>73</sup>, including the debate and assessment on the legal justifications of both supporting and suppressing certain media activities in a particular conflict situation.

<sup>68</sup> This need was already highlighted in the first "Lifeline Media in Regions of Conflict" conference in Cape Town, December 1998; see Report issued by Media Action/former International Center for Humanitarian Reporting, calling for redefining usual evaluation by quality indicators.

<sup>69</sup> A list with summaries is presented in the annex.

<sup>70</sup> USAID Evaluation Bosnia, see annex

<sup>71</sup> "Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment" (PCIA) is currently applied in many development projects in conflict regions, a debate on methodology is ongoing, see Gaigels/Leonhardt 2001, page 22

<sup>72</sup> the contributions of Jean-Marie Etter and Michael Lund to the Media Workshop in Berne (see Workshop report) hold many initial stages to clarify the impact chain of media assistance and to form such indicators.

<sup>73</sup> Price, Monroe & Thompson, Mark 2002. *Forging Peace*, Edinburgh, UK

## 6.2.2 Clarification of concepts and approaches

### Link to peacebuilding strategy

Often, projects aiming at contributing to peacebuilding require better link or orientation to the overall peacebuilding strategy. They are sometimes targeting only minor issues, not the core problems of the conflict (root and proximate causes). Therefore, a future necessity is to first identify the peacebuilding strategy and then to clarify how the media projects can fit into it.

As already mentioned, this needs thorough analysis of the media sector and its problems and opportunities. However, in reality these kind of feasibility studies “are often not conducted at all prior to the launch of a major project and little or no attempt is made by donor governments to conduct a systematic review of a country’s media sector”, states the Mapping Media Assistance report.<sup>74</sup>

### Role of Journalists

The actors in the Media and Peacebuilding sector need to *clarify the role they attribute to journalists*. As outlined, this holds consequences for project design in the short-term perspective as well as for the long-term orientation of the media sector. This is equally valid for any additional tasks journalists might or might not take over, for example mediation, facilitation or practical local peacebuilding.

### Local and/or international media?

Most of the actors in the field of media in peace and conflict agree that supporting existing local media is the best way to get access to the population and to foster free and independent media. Nevertheless, if local media do not exist or have not been fully developed in a particular conflict setting, there is a need to identify the alternatives.

It can be useful to describe the conditions under which international broadcasters are a “second-best” solution for giving access to non-partisan information for a population in need. What kinds of factors favour the setting-up of new stations or media outlets, primarily funded by external assistance? Alternatively, can local and international media coexist in particular phases?

## 6.2.3 Improving design and implementation

### Selection of partners

The *selection of the right partners* is a major challenge, especially in countries of conflict.

There are no general answers to the crucial questions: Which are the right media to support? Who has the potential of surviving in the long run without donor support? How to decide on partners in a different cultural setting with different models of the role of journalism? How to avoid relying on gatekeepers? It is paramount to have an open exchange on these questions among donors and NGOs to develop common procedures.

However, the analysis and inventory of the media sector, due before the initiation of every major media activity, should at least provide better insight into the local actors and thus help to clarify the larger picture of actors, their interests and goals. From this starting point, it should be easier to create some appropriate selection criteria.

<sup>74</sup> It mentions additionally, that these studies are sometimes written by NGOs with the vested interest in winning a development contract, page 36

### **Viability and sustainability**

Commercial viability has become a priority for media, as donors aim for sustainability. Up to now, this challenge was met by including training for media business managers and improving marketing skills. This is not enough. Media assistance projects must be integrated, where appropriate, with other development cooperation efforts, like the support for economic recovery - that will hopefully create jobs for journalists and other media professionals which were for example trained through media assistance.

However, it still needs further debate on how far the requirement of commercial viability is indispensable against the background of usually weak economies in post-conflict situations, where media can hardly survive on advertisement revenues alone. Based on the results of this debate, it can be decided, how much subsidies or external institutionalized support is still needed by particular media programmes.

### **Do no harm**

Nevertheless, media projects must be cautious to do no harm. An excessive presence of media NGOs can be counterproductive: Usually high NGO salaries can disrupt the local economy, attract journalists who are otherwise much needed by the local media, or can force promising journalists to leave every week for training in foreign countries.<sup>75</sup> Projects need to avoid this spoiling and hampering of the upcoming local media industry.

### **Ensuring quality**

Media projects are delicate tools. Their results depend largely on how well activities are conducted (training, news broadcasting, soap production, orientation to the needs of the targeted audience). Their outcome and impact on peacebuilding depends upon quality of design, form and content. Therefore, the challenge lies in ensuring this quality. As a consequence, media projects need greater monitoring. This must review:

- quantitative data, when available (circulation, audience figures, increase or decrease of reach, advertisement revenues)
- training
- content
- audience response

<sup>75</sup> Rudi van Meurs, quoted in Netherlands Association of Journalists 2002 (conference report "Role of Media in Peacebuilding and conflict prevention"), p. 14

## 7 Recommendations

Several recommendations and conclusions can be drawn from this study. The following section will focus on donors considering future media assistance for peacebuilding.

### Overall conclusion

This study assumes and has illustrated that media have a two-fold potential for contributing to peacebuilding by:

#### 1. Indirect activities:

Media, provided they fulfil basic professional and ethic criteria (non-partisan, balanced information, accountability, not government controlled, standard code of ethics), can contribute to peacebuilding – even without a specially designed peacebuilding element and only executing its “normal” role.

#### 2. Direct activities:

Media with special peace and conflict-related programmes can additionally contribute to peacebuilding – provided the media in question have already gained some credibility and are not seen by the audience as an external propaganda machine.

However, there is still not enough knowledge about these two effects and it is not possible to quantify them. Sometimes, the contribution by indirect activities might be even stronger than by direct ones.

### Preparation of media assistance for peacebuilding: ensuring accurate analysis

Keeping this two-fold approach in mind, donors planning to use media for peacebuilding efforts must conduct careful *preparation*, as much of the details concerning the programme design and implementation depend on the analysis of the two main issues in the specific country and context. These are:

1. The *analysis of the conflict* should yield in-depth findings about the: social and political environment, root and proximate causes of the conflict, and possible entry points for external peacebuilding intervention. The results of the conflict analysis will be the basis of the peacebuilding strategy of the donor.<sup>76</sup>
2. The *analysis of the media sector* comprises the:
  - number and types of media outlets (content, circulation, political connection),
  - ownership structure and media concentration (who, affiliation, relations to programming) ,
  - characteristics of journalists (number, level of training, economic and working conditions, security, professional associations),
  - technical resources, capacities,
  - legal framework (licenses, control of broadcasting and printing, freedom of expression status, protection of journalists, censorship),
  - media financing and advertising market,
  - size and profile of audience, media consumption figures.

This second analysis should provide data of the whole media sector, its problems, shortcomings and opportunities. The results should be double-checked by other sources; these may be NGOs with field experience in the country in question or other resource persons.

<sup>76</sup> Additionally, it will give some insight about the role media play/have played in the conflict.

### **General decision concerning intervention**

The media analysis will provide a first indication concerning whether media assistance is at all an appropriate tool for peacebuilding. For example, if the freedom of media in the country in question is very restricted – only one state broadcaster – it would be appropriate to avoid any assistance via media<sup>77</sup>, and to switch to a stronger support for civil society, freedom of expression or human rights organizations.

Two exemptions from this rule might be: first, the humanitarian emergency case, where the set-up of an information service is necessary. Second, if it is possible in a post-conflict situation to set-up an independent broadcaster – and to create political pressure for media freedom and/or transition of state into public service stations.

In cases with more media freedom, media assistance seems to be more appropriate, especially to independent media and local media outlets.

### **Media development**

If media assistance is considered favourably, the first need for the people in a conflict situation (*see* Illustration 3 on page 11 of this study) is an independent news service that broadcasts or imparts non-partisan information and is able to gain the credibility of the audience.

According to the situation in the country and under the objective of “free and pluralistic media are in itself a contribution to peacebuilding”, it is either recommended to install or support such a news service or – if that is already working – to focus on other issues of the media sector (*see* Illustration 3 on page 11 as a menu of options) such as:

- legal environment,
- professional associations,
- training,
- media management,
- support to individual media outlets.

### **Media producing specialised peace and conflict programmes**

If the base of a free media structure is laid, specialised peace and conflict related programmes come into focus. The type of programmes that should be supported must be governed by the initial conflict analysis. The support for this type of programming can have various forms, from support to special media outlets to production subsidies or to support of their distribution by broadcasting these products on as many media outlets as possible.

However, special caution must be exercised as the support to these specialised programmes is delicate. It requires high-quality and very sensitive production and it must be borne in mind not to spoil the local media professionals in the long-run. To financially support particular coverage (war crimes, minorities, cross-boarder reporting) can become necessary, especially when there is an under-developed media market, but it should not produce disincentives to cover these issues under “normal” circumstances, i.e. when there is no extra funding.

As a rule, it is recommended not to rely on one single partner or media outlet. A donor should avoid becoming too close to one partner. Therefore, if possible, a mixture of

<sup>77</sup> DfID recommends not embarking on media assistance, when the government is restricting the freedom of the media, and specifies these conditions in detail, DfID (Department for International Development) 2000b. *The Media in Governance, A Guide to Assistance*, London, UK, p. 6

activities seems appropriate i.e. to support more than one media outlet and at the same time to support the media sector (media monitoring, association building and training institutions).

### **Cooperation with implementing agencies**

It is recommended for donors to conduct the necessary conflict and media analysis before major decisions on projects are taken and to communicate them to the implementing agencies and other interested parties.

If these analyses are carried out with the support of, or are partly provided by, agencies submitting project proposals, they should be double-checked internally and/or by third parties, in order to get advice not only from the people involved but also from independent resource persons.

### **Assessment of projects**

Project proposals in media and peacebuilding must be checked for:

- coherence with the overall peacebuilding strategy,
- consistency with peacebuilding activities in other fields,
- coherence with the long-term objectives of free and independent media, i.e. sustainability / viability, ensuring pluralism and establishing laws and regulation that prepare or already fit with the requirements of free and pluralistic media structure,
- matching with the needs of the media sector,
- fitting in well with the activities of other donors,
- reasons given for selection of partners (are there alternatives?).

In the *project implementation*, there is a need for quality control<sup>78</sup> and proper monitoring. Outcomes should be defined and monitored. Therefore, project proposals should provide outcome figures and hypotheses about the impact chain of the programmes on audience.

### **Evaluation and impact**

Impact measurement is still a new field. Up to now, there are no generally approved tools. Therefore, it would be appropriate to launch an effort to develop such tools. Capacity should be built to gain detailed knowledge about the impact of media projects in peacebuilding.<sup>79</sup>

This effort should commission case studies with already existing or new projects. It is recommended as a first step, strategically to identify various projects where baseline surveys and evaluation can be integrated, in order that lessons for future projects can be drawn.

*In cooperation with selected projects this must:*

- propose and develop *indicators* for impact measurement of media projects regarding peacebuilding,
- submit or hold *baseline surveys* before project start that focus on these indicators (quantitative and qualitative data along the knowledge, attitudes, practices scheme),
- plan and apply for funds for *research on impact measurement* in these selected projects,

<sup>78</sup> This is mainly to ensure high quality in training, unbiased reporting, excellent content and production etc.

<sup>79</sup> This could be conducted by a common effort of media or communication experts and resource persons of development cooperation and/or peacebuilding.

- extract *lessons learned*,
- participate in the *international debate* on media and peacebuilding.

### **Research**

Many issues in the field of media and peacebuilding are still open, for example<sup>80</sup>:

- viability of media in weak economies,
- content regulation in post-conflict situation,
- elite-controlled media,
- media monitorino,
- monopolies in media,
- pluralism inside media or in media structure,
- journalistic ethics in practice worldwide.

These issues should be reviewed and priorities set. It should be further considered for future inter-disciplinary efforts with media research institutes and peace researchers.

<sup>80</sup> Many of them have been also raised by the Media workshop, see report on [www.swisspeace.ch](http://www.swisspeace.ch)

## 8 Annex

### Summaries of a selection of evaluation reports

1. *USAID – Evaluation of the Professional Media Programme in Central and Eastern Europe, 1998. An evaluation of the initiatives in ten countries, implemented by IREX and Freedom House*

The main results are:

- activities did not follow the agreed strategy,
- there was no systematic analysis of the situation in the respective countries,
- impact measurement wasn't possible, as there was neither systematic data collection nor a baseline study in the pre-project phase or indicators for impact,
- additionally, there were no comprehensive media assessments conducted, only fast appraisals.

The study finally recommends to put greater efforts on formulating a programmatic course between analysis and operational objectives, strengthens the business and viability focus of future projects and association building as a priority, and alternative to fund individual media outlets.

2. *USAID/OTI Evaluation of Media Transition grants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, April 1999 by Maureen Taylor, Rutgers University*

The evaluation was compiled from survey questionnaires with the public, focus group discussions with specifically targeted groups to gain an insight on the impact. The major findings are mixed.<sup>81</sup>

- Alternative media in Bosnia had a positive impact. Objective information was reported about the action and abuses of government officials, and offered the opportunity for independent political candidates to reach a large number of people.
- However, they lack credibility and public mistrust remains. The alternative media need to improve their standard of objectivity and fairness. There is widespread belief that alternative media are only the mouthpiece of international community.
- Many Bosnians are not ready for critical messages. It is difficult to transplant a free media system into a region that has only known state control of messages.
- Alternative media were unprofessional mainly due to a large number of young and inexperienced journalists. Many of the established journalists have worked for nationalist-orientated media outlets during the war.
- To reach large numbers of people, alternative TV stations as well as small radio stations in remote areas were found to be cost-effective.
- It criticizes the lack of data and failure to develop indicators.

3. *Search for Common Ground: Lessons from Nashe Maalo*

An examination of educational impact, lead by Dr. Najchevska, University of Skopje. The evaluation was conducted based on 240 interviews, held with children of four ethnic groups in Macedonia, and compared their attitudes "prior to viewing" and "after viewing". Macedonian children showed the greatest positive changes in perception of other ethnic groups.

<sup>81</sup> Other references mention that the media activities in Bosnia were not successful as too many outlets were financed, the main audience did not listen to the internationally sponsored sources, DfID 2000a, p.50



*Results:*

- positive recognition of other ethnic groups increased by 20%,
- willingness to invite children from other ethnic groups into their homes increased from 20 to 30%,
- recognition of minority languages improved across all ethnic lines.

4. *Studio Ijambo experience and impact, Media Intervention in Peacebuilding in Burundi*, study by Management Systems International (MSI), Washington The study intended to measure the impact of the programmes of Studio Ijambo (a variety of neutral news and tolerance-orientated soap operas) for inter-group relations, social and political mobilization, and public institutions. However, the style of questions was hardly appropriate as the interviewers used very complex meta-questions in an unfamiliar cultural setting. For example, marketers and housewives were asked if they agree that Radio Ijambo "gives useful advice on ethnic tolerance and coexistence?" or "that it has helped revitalize civil society by urging its role in the peace process."<sup>82</sup>

*Results:*

- positive impact in reducing rumour,
- tolerance level is high,
- gives access for NGOs to media,
- radio must be innovative and provide entertainment. Difficult to report on conflict in African societies.

5. *Search for Common Ground – Evaluation of Talking Drums studio Liberia, 1999*

This study was compiled from a survey based on: the listening patterns and station preference of the 400 interviewees. Some of the questions were impact-leading (same question-style as in MSI study, for example, "Do Talking Drum programmes make a useful contribution to post-war reconstruction?").

6. *Fondation Hirondelle - Star Radio – Audience Survey, July 1999*

An audience study on: access to radio, listening patterns, station preference and a section on impact of Star Radio. It is both a comprehensive report of the status at that time, as well as a very useful quantitative data about listening patterns and programme preferences. The section on impact is restricted to compiling responses of listeners.

7. *Independent Programme Evaluation – Search for Common Ground in Burundi, April 2002. Amr Abdalla et al., George Mason University*

This self-evaluation was conducted with focus groups, audience surveys and interviews with key informants. The report yields interesting information on the response and scope of the programmes to particular groups. However, there are reservations regarding the style of questions. Concerning peacebuilding, it states an overall impact "Studio Ijambo has contributed to creating a new vocabulary of peaceful coexistence, dialogue and negotiation in the country", which has been verified by interviews, but the extent or size of this impact on peacebuilding could not be specified.

<sup>82</sup> These questions are supposed not to reach ordinary poor people. It neglects all experience raised by social research in developing countries, i.e. precautions to take by asking questions, for example different use of language, tendency to please the researcher and so on. This might be even more difficult when it comes to attitudes or contentious issues. See Saxer, Ulrich & Grossenbacher, René 1987. *Medien und Entwicklungsprozess*, eine empirische Studie im westafrikanischen Benin, Köln, Germany

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