Zambia

Research findings and conclusions

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Acknowledgements

Credits

Zambia

About this report

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

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

☐ Media Sector Developments: an examination of developments in the media sector in Zambia over the past five years;

☐ Challenges for Future Media Development Activities: an analysis of the perspectives of a range of key informants on media development challenges in Zambia;

☐ Case Study: a case study from Zambia illustrating good practice in media development.

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

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BBC WORLD SERVICE TRUST

Acronyms

ACL Africa Lakes Corporation

AFRISPA African Internet Service Providers' Association

AMID African Media Development Initiative

AMPS Audience and Media Patterns Survey

AU African Union

BBC British Broadcasting Corporation

BDS Business Development Services

CASAT Cable and Satellite Technologies Limited

CAZ Communications Authority of Zambia

CEO Chief Executive Officer

CIA Central Intelligence Agency

CNN Cable News Network

CSO Central Statistical Office

DANIDA Danish International Development Agency

HIPC Heavily Indebted Poor Countries

IBC Independent Broadcasting Corporation

ICT Information and Communication Technology

IFJ International Federation of Journalists

ILO International Labour Organisation

IMF International Monetary Fund

ITT Indian Institute of Technology

MDDA Media Development and Diversity Agency

MECOZ Media Council of Zambia

MIBS Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services

MISA Media Institute of Southern Africa

MMD Movement for Multiparty Democracy

MTF Media Trust Fund

NEPAD New Partnership for Africa's Development

NGO Non Governmental Organisation

NGOCC Non Governmental Organisation Coordinating Council

NORAD Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

ORC Opinion Research Corporation

OSISA Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

PAZA Press Association of Zambia

PISA Panos Institute Southern Africa

PRSPs Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

SABA Southern African Broadcasting Association

SAIMED Southern African Institute for Media Entrepreneurial Development

SAMDEF Southern African Media Development Fund

SARDC Southern African Research and Documentation Centre

SRS Steadman Research Services

SSZJ Society for Senior Zambian Journalists

TBN Trinity Broadcasting Network

TIZ Transparency International Zambia

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNIP United National Independent Party

UNZASU University of Zambia Student Union

ZAMCOM Zambia Institute of Mass Communication

VoA Voice of America

ZaCoMeF Zambia Community Media Forum

ZAMNET Zambian Internet Service

ZAMWA Zambia Media Women's Association

ZANA Zambia News Agency

ZANIS Zambia News and Information Services

ZCCM Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines

ZIMA Zambia Independent Media Association

ZIS Zambia Information Centre

ZNBC Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation

ZUJ Zambia Union of Journalists

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1. Introduction

The researcher had difficulty in collecting data. There were several reasons for this. First, little statistical data on the media is generated in the country. The under-resourced research unit of the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) produces most of the available statistics on broadcasting trends. What little data the Central Statistical Office (CSO) has generated, mainly covers how often people consume media products, largely through its Demographic and Educational/Health Surveys (CSO, 1998; 2002; CSO, Central Board of Health & ORC Macro, 2003). Few private sector organisations have undertaken serious, long-term statistical research. The Panos Institute Southern Africa and the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication have done some issue-focused studies, which have produced percentages on, for example, how women are covered in the media (PISA, 2004; Gender Links & Zamcom, 2004).

On the international front, Steadman Research Services undertook a study in 2003 to monitor various media trends, such as statistics for readership, listening and viewing. In 2002, ORC Macro conducted an Intermedia National Survey in Zambia, which it repeated in 2004 (ORC Macro, 2002; 2004). Although these surveys generated useful statistics on the media in Zambia, their main aim seems to have been to capture statistical data about consumption patterns of international media, including the Voice of America (VoA), the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service, Radio Netherlands, Channel Africa, and so on. Thus, the research data generated has tended to be so commodified that its availability in the public domain is severely limited. Moses Odhiambo, the manager of Steadman Research Services in Zambia, confirmed this in an interview with this researcher.

Another difficulty with the data is that it tends to be represented in a 'standardised' way that is inconsistent with the statistical categories developed by the AMDI research group. For instance, the number of telephone lines is usually expressed as a proportion per 1,000 of the population. Data therefore had to be manipulated to fit the research categorisation used in this study.

Finally, the data is not available in one place, making it a tedious task to collect and collate such data from myriad sources. Had the researcher had more time, it is possible that more data could have been located. Also, what data is available may not be reliable because of the lack of sustained effort in Zambia to collect such information.

2. Country Overview

Zambia, a sub-Saharan African country, is landlocked. It covers an area of 752,614 kilometres (CIA, 2006) and shares borders with eight countries: Malawi and Mozambique to the east; Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia to the south; Angola to the west; and the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) and Tanzania to the north.

The 2000 Christian Population and Housing Census registered a population of 9,885,591 people. The projected population figure for 2005 was 11,441,461, a percentage increase of about 15.7% (CSO, 2002). The World Bank lists Zambia's population as 11.5 million (World Bank, 2004). Eighty per cent of the population in Zambia are under the age of 34. Forty-five per cent of the country's population are under 14 and 35% are 15-34 years old (CSO, 2002). More than 65% of Zambia's population live in rural areas (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Urban vs Rural Population
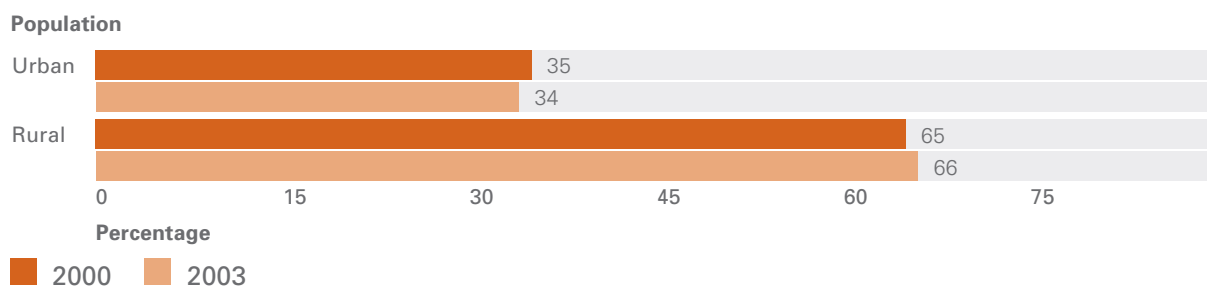
Source: Figures for 2000, CSO, 2002

Source: Figures for 2003, CSO Populations Projections Report, 2003

Figure 2: Main Ethnic Groups
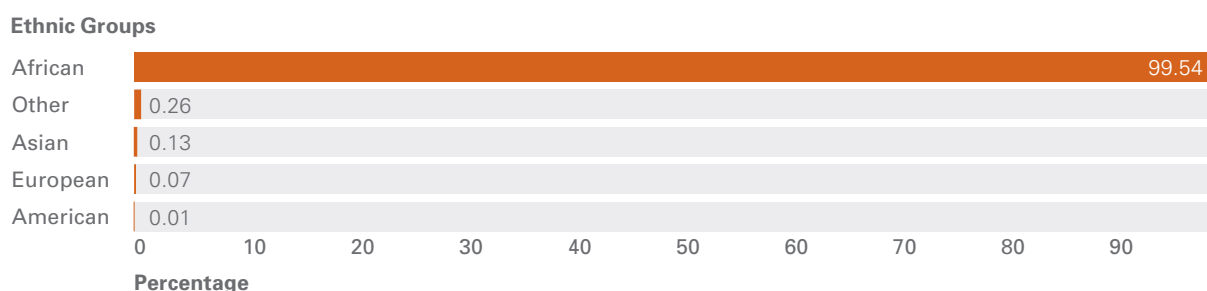
Source: CSO, 2002

The ethnic groups that make up the country are: African (99.54%), Asian (0.13%), European (0.07%), American (0.01%) and other (0.26%) (CSO, 2002). The most widely spoken languages are Bemba (spoken by 34.2%), Nyanja (17.4%) and Tonga (10.6%) (CSO, 2002). English is the official language, but it is spoken by only 1.7% of the population (CSO, 2002).

Figure 3: Widely Spoken Languages

Languages
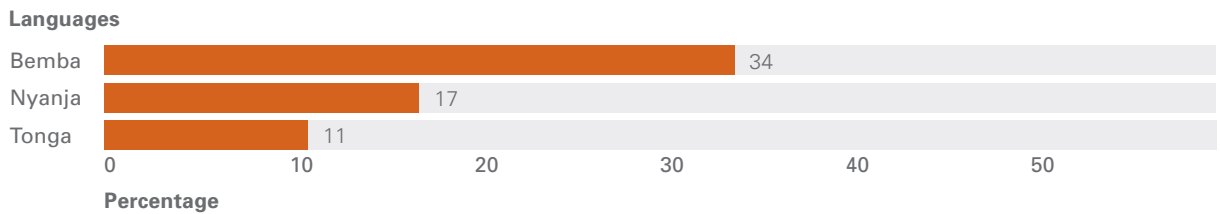
Source: CSO, 2002

The country is mainly a Christian-based country with Catholics and Protestants making up 59% of the population (Ethno-Net Africa Database Zambia, 2006). The remaining religions include Evangelical, traditional animist, African indigenous and Islam.

Zambia's literacy rate has risen from 68% in 2004 (World Bank, 2004) to 80.6% (CIA, 2006). In 2002, in urban populations, the literacy rate was 84.65%, whereas in rural populations it was 61.75% (CSO, Central Board of Health & ORC Macro, 2003). In 2000, 70% of the population lived below the poverty line (Cabinet Office, 2000) and in 2005 the figure was little changed, at 67% (CSO, 2004). The country GDP per capita in 2003 was US$800 (CIA, 2006).

Figure 4: Literacy Levels Age 15+

Literacy Levels Age 15+
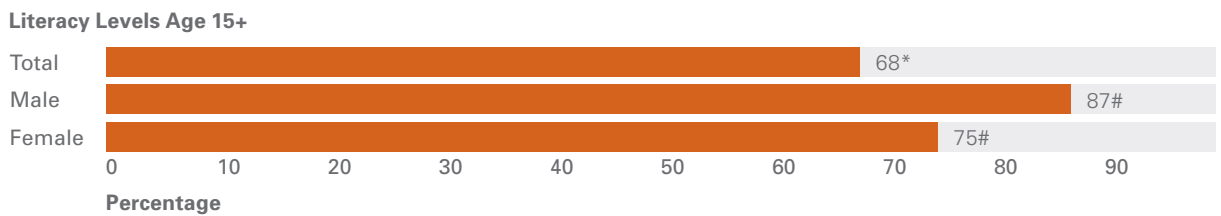
Source: *World Bank, 2004; # CIA, 2006

For administrative purposes, Zambia is divided into nine provinces and 72 districts. The nine provinces are Central, Copperbelt, Eastern, Luapula, Lusaka, Northern, North-Western, Southern and Western. The number of people living in each of these provinces is shown in the Table 1.

Table 1: Provincial Populations

Province	Population
1. Central	1,012,257
2. Copperbelt	1,581,221
3. Eastern	1,306,173
4. Luapula	775,353
5. Lusaka	1,391,329
6. Northern	1,258,696
7. North-western	583,350
8. Southern	1,212,124
9. Western	765,088

Source: CSO, 2002

Zambia's economy is dominated by copper exports, accounting for more than 70% of its export earnings (Ministry of Finance and National Planning, 2002). In collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, a series of measures are aimed at implementing the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Among these measures are the liberalisation of the economy, privatisation of state firms, deregulation of the exchange rate and public service restructuring. The average per capita annual income in 2005 was US$900, a 2.22% increase on 2000 (Bowman Gilfillan, 2004; CIA, 2006).

Zambia has been a multiparty democracy since 1991 when the then ruling United National Independence Party (UNIP) was voted out of office and replaced by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD). The MMD has been in power since 1991, initially under President FTJ Chiluba, and now under President Levy Mwanawasa.

Key findings

☐ Vernacular languages are still widely spoken.

☐ Despite being the official language, English is not widely spoken.

☐ The population is growing – it has registered a growth rate of 15.7% since 2000.

☐ Overall literacy rates are increasing, both in rural and urban areas.

☐ Copper continues to be the mainstay of Zambia's economy.

3. Media Health

3.1 Status of the laws regarding rights and access to information

There is as yet no Freedom of Information Act in place. This is despite the fact that the government had tabled the FOI Bill before Parliament, only to withdraw it to "consult further". The process of consultation, started in 2001, appears to have no end in sight.

Article 20 of the 1991 Constitution, amended in 1996, guarantees freedom of expression. Even so, this freedom is subject to curtailment on such "reasonably" justifiable grounds as those relating to the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health. The Constitution does not expressly guarantee press freedom, although Article 20 (1) does state that "subject to the provisions of this Constitution no law shall make any provision that derogates from freedom of the press" (Republic of Zambia, 1996). These grounds are so broad and vague that virtually any decision to override the guaranteed freedom can be justified.

At the time of this study, the so-called Wila Mung'omba Constitutional Review Commission had submitted a draft Constitution that guaranteed the freedom of the media, including the editorial independence of the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC). It also provided for the regulation of broadcasting by an independent, impartial agency.

3.2 Status of the laws regarding criminal defamation and insult

The Penal Code, inherited from the colonial government, criminalises such acts as sedition, blasphemy, defamation of the president, publication of false news with intent to cause fear and alarm to the public, and defamation of foreign princes. Section 53 of the Penal Code confers powers upon the president to prohibit a publication or series of publications if, in his opinion, such publication either within or outside the country is contrary to public interest. The power to make such a declaration is vested in him in his absolute discretion (Sangwa, 2000). In other words, he is not obliged to explain his actions. Associated with the Penal Code is the State Security Act, which classifies official documents and makes it almost impossible for the media to penetrate the veil of official secrecy. The concept used for invoking this Act is that of the amorphous "national security". The sum effect of these pieces of legislation is what commentators have referred to as the "chilling effect" on the media, rendering them unsure about how far to go in seeking out information and disseminating it.

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

Independent Broadcasting Authority Act, 2002

This Act sets up the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) to regulate the broadcasting industry in the country. Its specific functions include:

- promoting a pluralistic and diverse broadcasting industry;

- establishing guidelines for the development of broadcasting through a public process to determine the needs of citizens and social groups;

- providing guidance on the issuing of licences, giving regard to the need to discourage monopolies;

- issuing advisory opinions on broadcasting standards and ethical conduct in broadcasting;

- ensuring broadcasters develop codes of practice.

The Act provides for the issuing of licences for public, commercial, community, religious and subscription broadcasting services.

While the IBA is expected to be responsible for regulating broadcasting *per se*, the Act leaves much of the technical-infrastructural aspects of broadcasting within the domain of the Communications Authority, which is itself accountable to the Ministry of Transport and Communications and is set up under the Telecommunications Act of 1994.

Clause 6 of the IBA Act provides that "except as otherwise provided in this Act, the Authority shall not be subject to the direction of any other person or authority". It then spells out how the IBA board is to be selected.

- Nine part-time members should be appointed by the minister responsible for information and broadcasting, on the recommendation of the appointments committee, subject to ratification by the National Assembly.

- Members must be committed to fairness and freedom of expression. The board as a whole should be representative of a broad section of the population.

- The minister will draw up an *ad hoc* appointments committee responsible for appointing people to the board with a representative each from the Law Association, an NGO active in human rights, religious organisations, a media support organisation and the ministry responsible for information and broadcasting. Once the committee has selected candidates for appointment to the board, its recommendations should be submitted to the minister.

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

The independence of publicly-owned media is designed to be secured through two pieces of legislation: (i) the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act, 2002; and, (ii) the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) (Amendment) Act, 2002. In both cases, there is provision for the establishment of independently appointed boards of directors to govern the IBA and the national broadcasting institution (ZNBC). However, these laws are not yet in operation as the state is challenging their application within the context of the Constitution. Subsequent discussions take up this issue in some greater detail.

Another important piece of legislation to consider in the independence of public-service broadcasting is the Telecommunications Act, 1994. This Act regulates the provision of telecommunication services to, from and within Zambia. It provides for the establishment of a Communications Authority, the functions of which include:

☐ taking all reasonable steps to extend the provision throughout Zambia of telecommunications services (including, in particular, emergency services, public call boxes, directory information and maritime services);

☐ promoting the interests of consumers, purchasers and other users of telecommunications services (including, in particular, those who are disabled or of pensionable age) with regard to prices charged and the quality and variety of services and apparatus;

☐ promoting and maintaining competition and efficiency in the provision of services; and,

☐ promoting research into telecommunications and the development and the use of new techniques.

Although the Act does not specify any structural relationship between the Communications Authority and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services, there is a functional relationship between the two entities. The Communications Authority, under the Radiocommunications Act of 1994, is responsible for the overall management and administration of the frequency spectrum so it, like the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), sits on the screening committee set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services for the purpose of determining the suitability of applicants for radio and television licences.

3.5 Current provisions to support community or alternative media

There is no specific law that supports community or alternative media. The IBA Act recognises community media as a specific sector but does not expand on its functions in Zambian society. There is, however, the non-statutory Zambia Community Media Forum (ZaCoMeF), housed within the Panos Institute, which provides a platform for supporting community media initiatives throughout the country. It is involved in developing guidelines for the self-regulation of the sector, including undertaking research and advocacy activities in support of community media.

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

National Broadcasting Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2002

This Act had a dual intent: to re-institute the state-owned ZNBC as a public broadcasting service *par excellence* and to introduce television licences for the viewing public to help fund ZNBC. The Act reformulates the public-service mandate of ZNBC and includes the following directives:

☐ to provide varied and balanced programming for all sections of the population;

☐ to serve the public interest;

☐ to offer programmes that inform, entertain and educate;

☐ to contribute to the development of free and informed opinions and, as such, constitute an important element of the democratic process;

- to reflect and promote Zambia's national culture, diversity and unity;

- to respect human dignity and human rights and freedoms and to contribute to the tolerance of different opinions and beliefs;

- to contribute to equal treatment between men and women; and,

- to broadcast news and current affairs programmes that are comprehensive, unbiased and independent, and commentary that is clearly distinguished from news.

The ZNBC (Amendment) Act, like the IBA Act, incorporates the process for selecting members of the ZNBC board. The process has the same elements as those for selecting the IBA Board. The setting up of the ZNBC board *ad hoc* appointments committees occurred at the same time as that of the IBA board.

3.6.1 Rule of law

The two appointments committees (IBA and ZNBC boards) completed their tasks and submitted the names to the then minister Hon. Mutale Nalumango. The minister said that some names were not suitable, and told the appointments committees to remove them, or add more names. The implication of the minister's latter request was that she needed greater latitude to make her own choice as to who was 'suitable' to sit on either the ZNBC or IBA board.

The appointments committees would have none of this. After all, the Acts clearly stated that the appointments committees "shall determine their own procedure". The state functionaries had been so used to appointing members of the ZNBC board that it was unusual for them to hand over that power to an appointments committee composed of people over whom they had no direct control. Worse still, given the configuration of the National Assembly, they were not sure if some of the more 'unsuitable' names proposed by the appointments committees would be rejected.

The minister would not listen to the arguments by the appointments committees that the intent of the two Acts was to place the regulation of broadcasting in the hands of an independent body, and one that would not be answerable to any political, state or commercial interests. Things came to a head when the minister announced that she was going to take some names to Parliament for ratification and leave out those that she did not find 'suitable'.

The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia (formerly ZIMA), the Press Association of Zambia (PAZA), the Zambia Media Women's Association (ZAMWA), the Society for Senior Zambian Journalists (SSZJ), the Zambia Union of Journalists (ZUJ) and *The Post* newspaper took the matter to court to challenge the legality of the government's refusal to take all the recommended names to Parliament for ratification. On December 23, 2004, the Lusaka High Court ordered the minister to present to Parliament the names of board members recommended to sit on both the IBA and ZNBC boards.

The state appealed to the Supreme Court. The IBA Act and the ZNBC (Amendment) Act have thus not been given full effect. Interestingly, the ZNBC (Amendment) Act is being selectively applied in the enforcement of television licences.

Four observations may be made here. First, it is clear that the state in Zambia is fearful of the direction private broadcasting might take. The IBA will have overall regulatory authority over all forms of broadcasting, including public-service broadcasting. Since ZNBC, the sole provider of public-service broadcasting, has hitherto been in state hands, it is unsettling for the state to realise that it will not be able to control access to this channel of mass communication.

Second, as a corollary of this, the state is fearful of letting of an unfettered board of directors to govern ZNBC. It is not just concerned about ceding general regulatory control over the broadcasting landscape to the IBA, but also the specific loss of executive and political control over ZNBC. The fact that the state deregulated the airwaves for private participation meant that it was prepared to at least share the broadcasting platform with other stakeholders. However, the fact that the state refused to privatise the state-run ZNBC and retained overall control in issuing broadcasting licences meant that it was not keen to cede complete control to others. The IBA Act and the ZNBC (Amendment) Act proposed to remove regulatory authority from the state and place it with an independent regulator. It can be argued that the state was so pressured to enact these laws that it did not painstakingly read through the Bills that were a product of negotiations between the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services and the media support institutions referred to above. It is only now that the state is beginning to realise the extent of 'state powerlessness' that the two pieces of legislation entail.

However, the two laws are not entirely devoid of state intervention or, more diplomatically, *state participation*. The ZNBC (Amendment) Act provides for some "regulatory powers" for the minister. The minister may, by statutory instrument, make regulations to prescribe matters that are necessary for the better carrying out of the purposes of the Act (such as those regulations prescribing the registration for dealers with the corporation and the information to be supplied to the corporation, the keeping of books, records and documents, the furnishing of returns and the supply of information to the corporation relating to the dealings in television receivers, the fees to be paid under the Act, etc).

The IBA Act provides for the minister to approve grants or donations from foreign sources. It also provides for the minister's involvement in the process of preparing the IBA's annual financial and narrative reports, empowering the minister to demand such other information as he or she may "require". A cynical approach to this "oversight" role might construe it as "interference" by the state. The state can easily demand such information for fear that the IBA might portray the state in a negative light with the public. On the other hand, a more positive or liberal-pluralistic approach to this might suggest that this be treated as merely the ministry's oversight role on behalf of the public – the taxpayers.

Third, the court action by civil society organisations suggests there is a growing public movement that expects the state to uphold minimum principles of good governance and, in this instance, public participation in the regulation of the broadcasting terrain. The fact that these organisations did not budge under political pressure from the state means there is an entrenching of democratic values within the country. This augurs well for the promotion of democracy in Zambia. This also means that the state will be compelled to "negotiate" with such civil society actors, and not always have its way.

Fourth, the decision by the High Court is a clear manifestation of the doctrine of the separation of powers. The executive branch of government, represented by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services, attempted to assert its agenda of political-party hegemony. However, this was checked when the judiciary asserted that the decision by the state to veto some names proposed for the IBA and ZNBC boards was undemocratic and amounted to something of a usurpation of the legislature's power to ratify such public appointments. This judgement was well received by most opposition MPs and civil society activists. To conclude, the ZNBC and IBA Acts 2002 jointly pressure the ZNBC to observe a public-service mandate – they clearly require the state broadcaster to be impartial in its programming and reflect the diverse social and political interests in Zambian society.

However, as noted above, the state machinery, through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services, has not implemented the provisions of these two Acts. To this end, the state broadcaster has remained under the control of the ruling party.

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

The IBA Act of 2002 has spelt out some public-service obligations for all broadcasters, including private commercial broadcasters. The law emphasises the need for increased local content quotas and the avoidance of partiality. To a large extent, these legal obligations are adhered to. But this adherence to impartiality tends to work against the interests of the state. It is not unusual for the state to flex its muscles and chide private broadcasters who give attention to opposition voices. The Catholic Radio Icengelo and the commercial Radio Phoenix, for example, have both been threatened with having their licences withdrawn. In fact, Radio Phoenix did have its licence revoked for a short while, ostensibly because it had not abided by the so-called 'conditions of the licence'.

3.8 Journalism

3.8.1 Printed Publications Act, 1994

Under the Printed Publications Act (Zambia, 1994c), a newspaper simply has to be registered with the Director of the National Archives. It is also necessary to supply the full names and addresses of the proprietor, editor, printer and publisher and a description of the premises where the newspaper will be published.

While it is easy to set up a newspaper, problems ranging from the high cost of newsprint to low sales figures have continued to bedevil the sector (Lush, 1999). This explains why most of the private newspapers set up in the aftermath of the Third Republic subsequently folded. In fact, most of them, notably the *Chronicle*, depended so heavily on donor funding that when the donations dried up, they ceased their operations.

3.8.2 The welfare of journalists

Journalists in Zambia do not have to be registered by law – they do not require a licence to operate. They are free to affiliate with any professional associations or trade unions. According to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), in 1999, there were roughly 700 journalists in the country, 200 of whom were unionised. Trade unionism in the country is mostly confined to those journalists working in state-owned media organisations. Freelance journalists, and those working for privately owned media companies, are not as organised (IFJ, 1999).

Figure 5: Number of Journalism Training Institutes

Institute

Other organisations	4 (2000), 4 (2005)
University departments	1 (2000), 1 (2005)
Vocational training schools	5 (2000), 3 (2005)

Number (axis: 0, 2, 4, 6, 8)

■ 2000　■ 2005
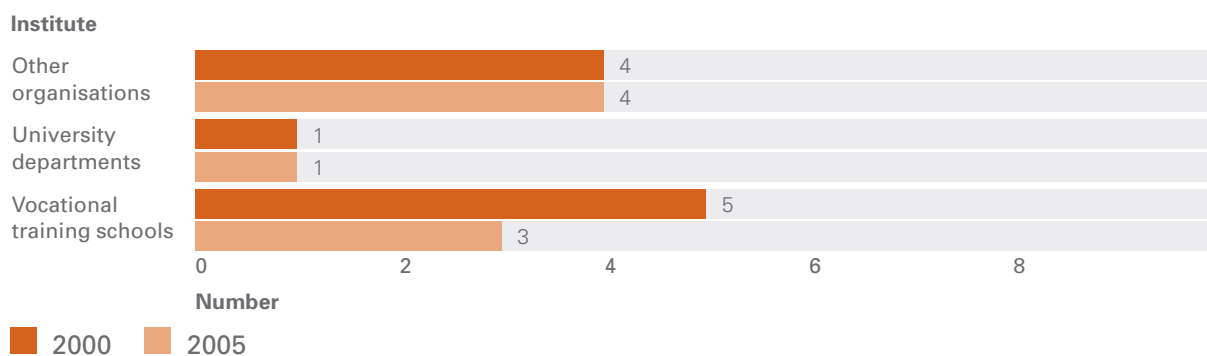
Source: Banda, forthcoming

There were three journalism training schools in 2005, down from five in 2000, and the number of university departments offering a journalism programme has stayed constant at one. Four other organisations provided training in 2000 and this number has also stayed the same (Banda, forthcoming).

Journalists are among the lowest-paid workers in Zambia, both in state and private media companies. However, the privately-owned *Post* newspaper has made attempts to improve the working conditions of its journalists. According to M'membe (Banda, 2004), the lowest paid worker at *The Post* gets no less than US$300 per month. This is compared to an approximate average teacher's pay of US$250 per month. Generally, however, journalists are paid less than most other workers in the civil service bracket. This has resulted in the most talented of them leaving for the private sector.

Key findings

☐ The period between 2000 and 2005 has seen increased advocacy activity by media support organisations in the country.

☐ Broadcast media law reforms are evident in this period, particularly the enactment of new legislation focusing on the creation of an independent broadcasting regulator as well as on turning ZNBC into a public-service broadcaster *par excellence*.

☐ The state continues to be reluctant to implement media law reforms, as is evidenced in the stalling of the implementation of the IBA Act.

☐ Perhaps the most disquieting finding is that there is still a plethora of laws inherited from British colonialism that continue to haunt journalists – ranging from the Public Order Act to the Penal Code.

☐ Journalists are among the lowest-paid workers in Zambia, forcing some of the most talented to leave for the corporate sector and NGOs.

4. State of the media – literature review

The following reports are some of the more comprehensive research works on the media in Zambia since 2000.

4.1 Banda (2004)

This book discusses the sustainability of private newspapers and magazines. It gives a socio-economic profile of Zambia to put the analysis in context. It presents a historical contextualisation of the media in the country, and raises theoretical issues about the sustainability of print. There are case studies of 14 newspapers and magazines, followed by a discussion of the key conclusions. The study was based on a literature review, interviews with media executives and author observations. It concludes that the poor viability of the print medium in Zambia is a function of four factors: structural institutional weaknesses; environmental and political constraints; poor operational pragmatic routines; and strategic business inadequacy.

4.2 Panos Southern Africa (2004)

This study was conducted between January and February 2004. Its aim was to analyse the content of three state and three privately-owned media organisations with regards to issues such as gender, poverty alleviation, geographical spread, HIV/AIDS and business.

The key findings of the study are as follows:

☐ the media should broaden its sources on gender-related issues rather than restricting itself to gender-based NGOs. Other organisations and individuals, including men, can be good sources on some issues that are currently put to the women's NGOs for responses;

☐ reporters should take time to research and be creative when reporting on HIV/AIDS issues rather than just relying on speeches from workshops;

☐ the media should put a human face to the coverage of HIV/AIDS, gender, human rights and other issues, which tend to be reported in an abstract manner;

☐ the media had done a lot to sensitise the public on HIV/AIDS and other issues, but rural areas have not benefited because of the way messages have been packaged;

- the coverage of local court cases relating to divorce and other marital issues is mostly gender insensitive and portrays women in a negative way;

- there is too much information on politics at the expense of development issues, such as the environment, gender and human rights;

- the coverage of important national issues reflects the views of the same people at the top, be it in government, NGOs or the church;

- the omission of facts, the use of anonymous sources and deliberate blacking-out of people in some media tend to make readers, listeners and viewers doubt the veracity of what is reported;

- the media should broaden its geographical coverage to include more issues from rural areas rather than concentrating on urban centres and, in particular, Lusaka.

4.3 Gender Links and the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication (2004)

This was a survey of 179 men and women in Kafue, Kabwe and Lusaka. The findings suggested that:

- radio is the main source of news for the majority;

- more women than men get their news from television;

- newspapers are still battling for market share, especially among women;

- the Internet is virtually unheard of;

- the correlation between the level of education and sources of news is blurred by low incomes;

- women and men prefer the short news report genre;

- women have a stronger preference for interactive news-opinion and commentary lag behind among women;

- women and men would find news more interesting if the views and ideas of women were reported; and,

- there should be gender equality in the newsroom.

4.4 Kantumoya (2004)

This report is based on analysis of documents, interviews and case studies relating to investigative reporting in Zambia and elsewhere. The key finding is that investigative reporting is constrained in the country. Major constraints include:

- unclear media institutional editorial policies;

- a lack of institutional support for individual reporters attempting investigative journalism;

- a lack of resources, even where institutional support is present, particularly with respect to transport, communication facilities, equipment and low salaries;

- sources not willing to divulge information; and,

- legal impediments, such as the State Security Act and the absence of a Freedom of Information Act.

Recommendations that the study advances include:

- educating superiors in media institutions to encourage their commitment to investigative journalism projects;
- specialised investigative reporting courses to further sharpen the skills of reporters;
- country-wide sensitisation campaigns by civil society organisations to foster a sense of awareness about the evil of corruption;
- building alliances with reform-minded bureaucrats and policy-makers enabling journalists to circumvent government red tape and bureaucracy;
- enactment of media-friendly laws, especially laws providing access to public information; and,
- encouraging media institutions to give incentives to investigative reporters.

4.5 Bibliography

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Key findings

Recent research has concentrated on:

- the economic sustainability of media institutions;
- gender and media representation;
- investigative journalism; and,
- media content.

5. Radio

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

There has been no development in national broadcasting – this has continued to be the preserve of the state-owned Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC). Radio Phoenix has continued to broadcast in four provinces throughout the country. Its long-term plan is to reach the whole country, but its applications for a national broadcasting licence have so far been thwarted by the state.

Although there has been no major improvement in national broadcasting, radio has generally seen much growth. With the introduction in 1994 of the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation Regulations Act, the sector became more liberalised, with new entrants appearing on the scene. Whereas there were only 12 radio stations in 2000, there were about 26 in 2005, an increase of about 117% (Banda, 2003; MISA, 2005a). Compared to other media, radio is more widespread.

The liberalisation of the airwaves has thus prompted private investments in the sector, so there is a profit-driven impetus to the continual rise of radio. But, I would argue, there is also a practical and ideological impetus, namely that individuals and social movements want to reach out to the populations, particularly the illiterate, with messages pertaining to issues such as HIV/AIDS, social mobilisation and governance. This trend is evident in Lusaka, the Copperbelt, Southern and Eastern provinces, where new radio initiatives have emerged over the past five years.

There has been a 250% increase in the number of privately-owned, commercial radio stations in the country (MISA, 2006). Other private radio stations have largely been those owned by the Roman Catholic Church, which has emerged as a dominant actor in Zambian broadcasting, given its ownership of a number of FM radio stations throughout the republic. This brings out a strong correlation between Catholicism and broadcasting. I would argue that this points to an increasing interest by the Catholic Church in influencing the socio-political agenda of nation-states. Also evident is the rise of the community radio sector in Zambia. Of the 26 licensed radio stations, 14 are designated "community" (see Figure 6) (Banda, forthcoming). These tend to serve a specific community – defined geographically or as a community of interest, or both. Community radio is now recognised as a distinct sector both in legislation and in practice. The Independent Broadcasting Authority Act of 2002 acknowledges the sector in its own right. The formation of the Zambia Community Media Forum (ZaCoMeF) in 2004 was an attempt at operationalising "community radio" and other forms of community media.

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

As noted previously, there has been increased investment in the radio broadcasting industry, resulting in a growth of more than 110% in the number of radio stations in the country (MISA, 2005a; Banda, forthcoming). The investment has largely been local, although some local-foreign partnerships are also emerging. This can be explained by the fact that radio broadcasting does not require such a large capital outlay as television. It has also been easier to get radio licences as a consequence of the adoption of liberal, market-led trade policies by the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) since the 1990s. In most cases, donor agencies have stepped in to supply entrepreneurs with capital equipment and funding for some initial running costs. These include UNESCO, Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) and some embassies within the country. Even with this investment in privately -owned radio stations, the ZNBC radio channels continue to enjoy economic hegemony in the market.

5.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Before 2000, there was one private-for-profit radio station and a religious radio station (Banda, forthcoming). Since then, the ownership structure has changed, with more private owners emerging, including religious, commercial, and community modes of ownership and control. The state has become a less important player. It has continued to hold on to ZNBC, but there has been no expansion in the number of radio channels available to the state. In that sense, its hold on broadcasting is becoming less significant, but as ZNBC channels have the largest market share, the state is still a factor to contend with.

Although the state has no more radio channels than it had in 2000, it still has legal authority over the licensing of radio stations. This authority, which would have been removed from the state had the IBA Act of 2002 held sway, continues to amount to a degree of unhealthy state control over the rest of the radio stations. This was demonstrated when the state revoked the licence from Radio Phoenix on 19 August 2001, ostensibly for non-renewal of its broadcasting licences for Lusaka, the capital city, and Kabwe, a neighbouring town, which were due in February and April 2001 respectively. Officials at Radio Phoenix said the amount involved was about K4 million (US$1,000), which the station had, but inadvertently forgot to pay to the Ministry of Information. Efforts to pay the money owing to the Ministry of Information on 19 August were unsuccessful because government offices were closed for the weekend. In addition to such overtly hostile actions, the state, through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services, continues to issue threats to radio stations against "political" news broadcasting[1]. So, while there is now a plurality of radio channels, and while the ownership structure is more diverse, elements of state control are still evident.

The Roman Catholic Church is emerging as a dominant owner of radio stations throughout Zambia, contributing to what appears to be a doubling of the number of community radio stations since 2000, from seven to 14. The extent to which this is narrowing the range of broadcast content is not clear. What is apparent is that the church attempts to propagate its social justice message on air, inviting a variety of societal opinions and perspectives on the subject. One might need to do an analysis of all the content to determine its diversity.

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[1] This is evident in statements issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services to the effect that religious radio stations, such as Radio Icengelo on the Copperbelt and Yatsani Radio in Lusaka, should desist from political broadcasts.

Figure 6: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Radio Stations

Radio Station

State-owned broadcasting nationally	2 / 2
State-owned broadcasting to regions/provinces/states/urban centres	1 / 1
Private broadcasting nationally	1 / 1
Private broadcasting to the country	1 / 6
International or foreign broadcasting to the country	0 / 2
Community currently broadcasting in the country	7 / 14

Number

■ 2000 ■ 2005
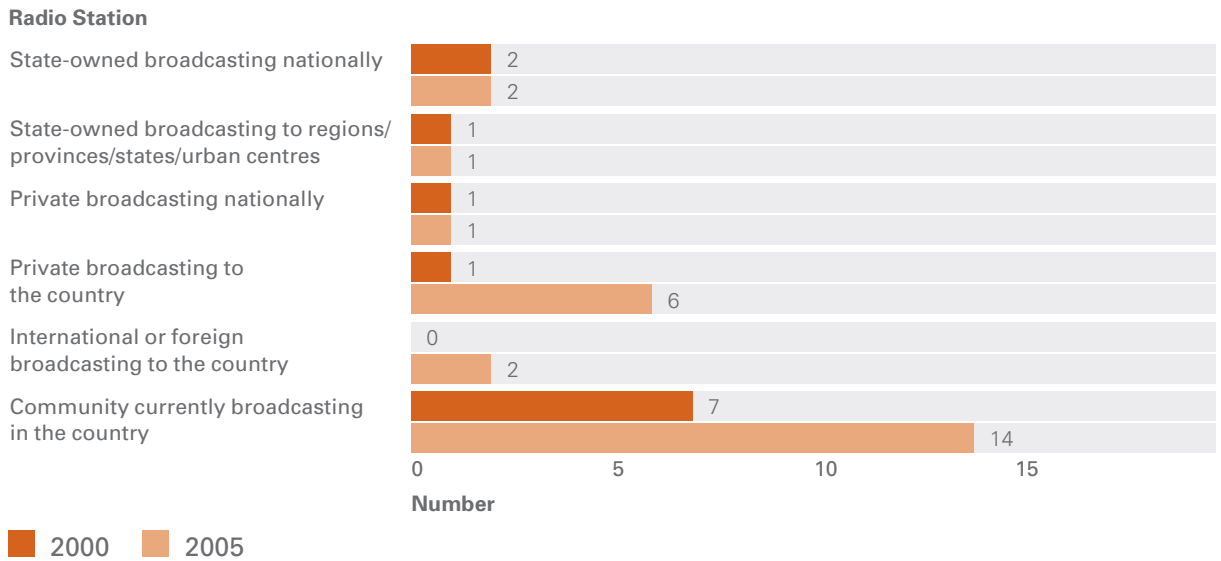
Source: Banda, forthcoming; Panos, 2006; MISA, 2006

Among the different privately-owned radio stations, there is some competition for audiences with the ZNBC channels.

Figure 7: Percentage of Audience Share for Regional Stations

Radio Station

Breeze FM	70
Radio Phoenix	7
Radio Icengeio	7

Percentage
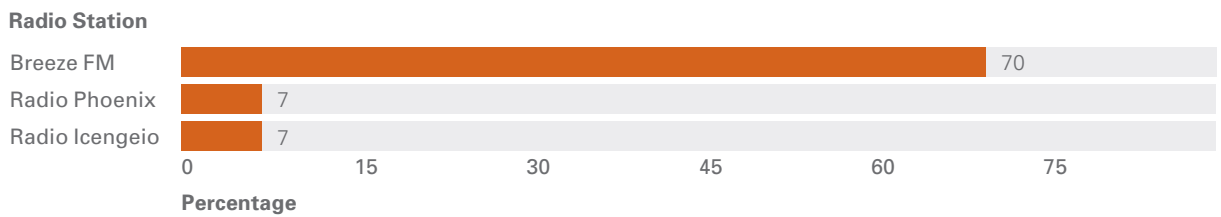
Source: ZNBC, 1998; Breeze FM, 2005

However, this author warns that these figures must be viewed with caution[2].

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2 There is a tendency to inflate these audience figures. Also, survey respondents may feel a sense of "community solidarity" and want to say that they listen to the community-based medium more than to the urban-based, centralised ZNBC.

In 2002, 53.4% of the population could receive FM radio broadcasting (ORC Macro, 2002) and 50% of the population listened to the radio at least once a week in 2003 (CSO, Central Board of Health & ORC Macro, 2003).

5.4 Diversity

The ZNBC radio channels have continued to project the news and views of the ruling political elite. Studies conducted in earlier periods by this researcher demonstrate the inequality in news reporting (Banda 1997). The situation has remained unchanged. However, there is a caveat to this. While the general conclusion is that ZNBC radio channels have not diversified their sourcing of news and views, some programmes appear to reflect a diversity of content. Radio 1, broadcasting in local languages, has a series of sponsored programmes that cater for some marginalised sections of society. For instance, the channel runs a programme based on content generated by rural women (for example, rural radio listening clubs' programmes).

The new radio stations, on the other hand, appear to provide a more diverse content. In part, this is explained by the fact that not many ruling party officials actively seek their coverage. This is also partly because these stations are sought out by those wanting programming that is different to that of the state. In addition, these stations are more accessible to the many issue-specific non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that seek to advocate specific policies. Thus, these programmes feature a variety of alternative voices – from politics to economics to the environment. However, this researcher's observation would seem to suggest that these "voices" tend to be the same "media pundits" – urban-based, literate, vocal, structurally linked to the NGO and political movements in the country.

5.5 Quality of radio output and programming

Quality is difficult to define. However, in terms of the more "normative" elements of news reporting, one can conclude that there has been little improvement in the quality of radio broadcast news content overall. State radio relies more on official government sources of news and views than on others thus, often not producing reports that are balanced. Privately-owned radio stations seem to adhere to ethical principles up to a point. They attempt to balance news stories; they sometimes invite state functionaries to attend their phone-in programmes (although these rarely turn up), and they often apologise whenever they are wrong.

The issue of quality in terms of non-news content is different. The new radio stations are beginning to use state-of-the-art technology for musical programmes. Their advertising gimmicks are cleverly expressed. Some of them are even audio-streaming, a phenomenon that was unheard of in 2000. The more technical aspects of quality are evident in most of the privately-owned, commercialised radio stations, such as Radio Phoenix in Lusaka and Breeze FM in Chipata.

5.6 Specific challenges

Zambia has a small economy, with an average per capita annual income of US$900 (CIA, 2006). The challenges of new investment in the radio broadcasting sector can therefore be looked at in terms of economic, political and legislative factors. Since the sustainability of media initiatives is predicated on a strong economic framework, the radio sector has some way to go. Audiences are not such that the media can easily sell to advertisers. This is especially so for the emerging radio outlets, which have to compete for audiences with the nationally placed ZNBC. Community radio stations are struggling for sponsorship and advertising to keep afloat, so donor funding will continue to be the mainstay of their economic survival.

However, some commercial and community radio stations have found a niche market. Breeze FM is appealing to local businesspeople, as well as benefiting from some NGO sponsorship of issue-focused programmes. Radio Phoenix has also found an unassailable market for its products, and continues to enjoy a reasonable market share, which has arguably increased from a documented 6.5% audience share in 1998 (ZNBC Audience Survey, 1998) to 9.3% in 2004 (ORC Macro, 2004).

Politically, all the privately-owned radio stations face challenges, not least the incessant state encroachment on their freedom to broadcast. The fact that the power to issue licences is still wielded by the ruling political elite means that most such radio stations must do their work with a degree of fear. For instance, Radio Phoenix was subjected to a withdrawal of its licence and, because of that, has become careful in the way it handles itself, especially by ensuring that its *Let the people talk* programme tones down its critical stance. The political elite tend to issue veiled threats, which may or may not be carried out. These have a chilling effect on the way the owners of such media operate.

While legislation has generally liberalised the broadcasting sector, and placed its overall control into an independent agency, this has had little effect. The proposed IBA has not taken off, largely because of the machinations of the ruling political elites, who want to see the sector run under their control and direction. There is certainly a need for a strong adherence to the rule of law here, with the state taking the lead. Indeed, given the uncertainties that attend this kind of political interference, would-be investors might reconsider their investment in radio broadcasting.

Key findings

☐ There has been an increase in radio outlets between 2000 and 2005.

☐ There is now less state involvement in radio broadcasting.

☐ There is greater ownership of radio outlets by the Roman Catholic Church.

☐ There appear to be significant injections of investment into the sector, although investor confidence will depend on the economic, political and legislative actions of the state in the years to come.

6. Television

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

Television has registered little growth in comparison with radio broadcasting. Television ownership in Zambia is at roughly 36.5% (ORC Macro, 2004).

The ZNBC television channel continues to provide free-to-air broadcasting and claims to be a public-service broadcaster. However, many commentators argue that it is run as an extra arm of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services (MIBS) (Banda, 2003; Banda, forthcoming; Makungu, 2004). Subscription digital satellite television (DStv) has provided an alternative to the ZNBC TV channel since 1995. Its share of the market, about 6.7% in 1998 (Banda, 2003), has been growing steadily among those who have some money to spare. Subscription fees can be as high as US$63 per month, effectively making satellite television an elitist medium.

There has been some competition to both the ZNBC TV channel and MultiChoice Africa (DStv providers). In 1998, the free-to-air Christian Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), allied with the American TBN, was set up, mainly to "spread the Gospel". Then, in 2002, Muvi TV, another free-to-air television channel, was established. One more free-to-air TV channel, CASAT TV, was, by 2005, carrying out test transmissions before its demise in 2006. The sustainability of Muvi TV has not yet been tested, but it is definitely a competitor to ZNBC. However, that competition is restricted to the Lusaka Province, where people can receive signals. Beyond urban Lusaka, signals, if not boosted by powerful aerials, cannot be received. Added to this is the fact that ZNBC has entered into a partnership with MultiChoice Africa, whereby the latter has granted the ZNBC TV channel access to its satellite platform. This has given ZNBC an even greater penetration into the most remote parts of the country. Even so, for the satellite signal to be received there must be some form of decoding technology, which most people in both urban and rural areas do not have. Nevertheless, the free-to-air ZNBC TV has the greatest viewership figures across the country. The main conclusion to note here is that television is unlikely to grow at any faster rate, given its huge capital outlay and that the state seems reluctant to have a multiplicity of television channels.

As noted, there is some private ownership of free-to-air television emerging in the country. This is evident in the establishment in 2002 of Muvi TV. At the same time, there has been some decline in the overall development of private television, given the demise of CASAT TV in 2005/6. Also noticeable is the collapse of indigenous ownership of cable and satellite television. Although the CASAT Technologies company did not last long, it did demonstrate that local entrepreneurs could run a satellite TV subscription company and anticipate the deployment of first-world technology, such as cable. By 2005/6, this company had collapsed, entering into negotiations to sell off its assets, including transmitters located in several rural areas, to the ZNBC (Kangwa, 2006). The financial sustainability of private business is clearly a problem. It is clear, from this, that private television has a long way to go before it becomes entrenched in a country so economically backward that advertising revenue is hard to come by.

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

As suggested above, there has been insignificant investment in the television industry. In part, this is because of the slow rate at which TV licences are issued by the state; in part, it is because of the phenomenal costs involved. If private television hopes to survive on the basis of advertising, it is hard to see how it can dislodge the ZNBC TV channel from its dominance in the market. ZNBC has a reach that many private television stations might not have and, largely as a historical legacy, it has the moneyed audience that many advertisers might target. Beyond that, many transnational corporations with huge ad-spend budgets want to be seen to be advertising with the state-owned broadcaster because this association has political advantages for them. Therefore, newcomers find it hard to compete with an entrenched ZNBC.

Figure 8: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Television Stations
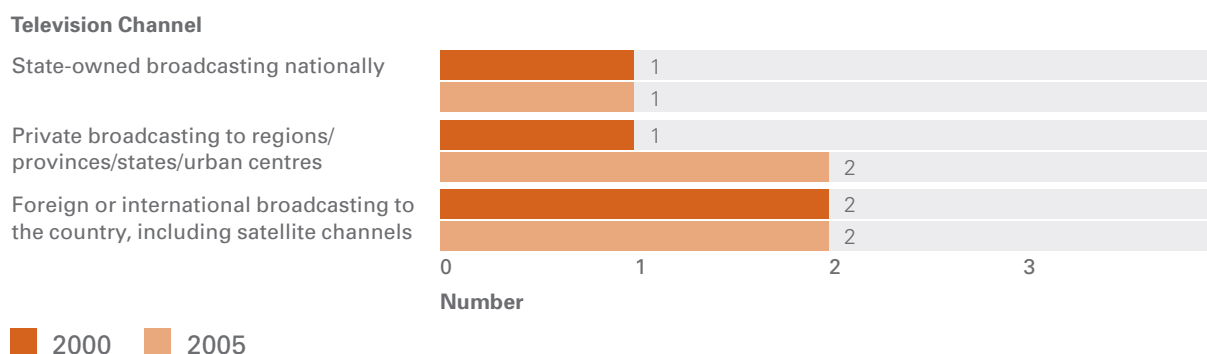
Source: Banda, forthcoming

6.3 Plurality, ownership and control

State ownership of television has been confined to the ZNBC. The liberal trade policies have, in a way, ensured a more pluralistic ownership structure, but not on a large scale. Private capital has come on board and so has religious capital. Private capital has been injected into satellite television ownership, but on the state's terms. For instance, ZNBC has a 30% shareholding in the private-capitalised MultiChoice Africa of South Africa (Banda, 2003). One can see here evidence of continuing interest by the state in owning and controlling television outlets. Although not specifically outlined in a policy declaration, one can conclude that foreign ownership of media outlets in Zambia is subject to a degree of local participation in

the governance structure of those outlets. Hence, the ZNBC board of directors has some representation on the board of directors of MultiChoice Africa. Even then, this "local participation" is more apparent than real. ZNBC does not exercise any significant executive decision-making power in MultiChoice Africa.

Where ownership is religious, as in the case of TBN, the state appears to exhibit little or no interest. Some have argued that this is because the state feels that owners of a Christian persuasion are likely to be less keen on producing political content that is inimical to state interests.

It is instructive that the first private television to be licensed in Zambia was the entertainment-oriented MultiChoice Africa. The rationale, it has been argued, is that DStv is so entertainment-based that its potential to engender critical political content is undermined. Indeed, most of the news channels carried in the DStv programme bouquet are foreign, with little or no political content relevant to Zambia.

6.4 Diversity

Unlike radio, television holds a special appeal for the ruling party. Hence, its content is frequently monitored by state functionaries. Because of this, ZNBC executives find themselves overly preoccupied with what goes out on the channel. The main news bulletin at 7pm comes under the eagle eye of the ZNBC executives, the state and the opposition political parties. Studies have demonstrated the channel's biased nature (Coalition 2001, 2001). Even before that, Banda (1997) had demonstrated the numerical bias evident in its news content.

As early as 2004/5, a Panos Southern Africa media monitoring project (PISA, 2004) showed how women's voices were marginalised from ZNBC TV's news agenda. Less than 5% of the content revolved around women. Even where it did, women's voices were largely urban-based and event-centred (such as *Sixteen Days of Gender Activism*, and so on). Clearly, then, it can be demonstrated that the dominant voices on the ZNBC TV channel are governmental – ruling party politicians and state officials. Alternative voices are paid lip service.

Private TV channels have problems of their own. TBN is too religiously inclined to have any meaningful political content; indeed, it is not actively sought by politicians, because they know it will not afford a platform for their ideologies.

Muvi TV's audience is concentrated in Lusaka. Its content is therefore urbanised. It can be said to be elite-focused, as its sources of news and views are largely drawn from the pool of commentators used by ZNBC TV.

6.5 Quality of television output and programming

ZNBC has few local productions, except for news bulletins and current affairs programmes. If the definition of quality is extended to these, the conclusion is that there is low quality in terms of the range of voices represented. There is no multiple sourcing of news and current affairs reports. A very real process of self-censorship takes place, with one-sided stories carried through if the state is involved as the primary source of the story.

Having said this, fairly positive programmes have been broadcast in the past, such as *Your Constitution*, in which the moderator invited a cross-section of Zambian society to debate issues of constitutional review. However, this may have been down to the programme being sponsored. Even so, the fact that it was allowed to run was a commendable feat on the part of ZNBC executives. The programme had a discussion panel drawn from various walks of life, and it was opened up to viewers to phone in with their views. There was also a text messaging service for those who wanted to send in SMS messages. This proved popular, depending on which issue was under discussion. Clearly, this was evidence of public participation in a television programme.

6.6 Specific challenges

The challenges facing TV broadcasting are mainly economic, political and legislative. Given the small market for advertising, it is difficult to see the extent to which newcomers can dislodge the ZNBC TV channel from its near monopolistic position. Most companies want to advertise with ZNBC TV, no matter what the nature of its content. Television already suffers from the unenviable position of being the least consumed medium among the population, so any entrant will have to contend with this. Politically, television attracts greater state regulation than either radio or newspapers; the state is keen to see fewer competitors to the ZNBC TV channels who might peddle opposition politics. For example, the state has refused to let parliament ratify the people appointed to sit on the ZNBC and IBA boards of directors. This overriding political interest is likely to deter most private financiers from contemplating investment in the sector, for fear of victimisation. The political becomes enmeshed with the legislative in the sense that independent regulation has suffered a set-back as a result of the above.

Key findings

☐ Television has registered insignificant growth since 2000.

☐ The only new entrant still broadcasting is Muvi TV.

☐ The state is still the major player in the television broadcasting terrain.

☐ Content, whether on state or private television stations, has continued to be elitist, reflecting the news and views of urban-based political and other elites.

☐ Problems relating to the growth of the medium have to do with political, economic and legislative impediments.

7. Newspapers

7.1 Key changes and development n the newspaper marketplace in the past five years

The newspaper industry, on the face of it, might appear not to have registered any growth between 2000 and 2005. There are still three operational national daily newspapers and four national weekly newspapers. There are still no regional daily newspapers, but there were two regional weekly newspapers in 2005, up from one in 2000. There is still one local weekly newspaper (Banda, 2004; MISA, 2005a). However, the study by Banda (2004) entitled *Newspapers and magazines in Zambia; a question of sustainability,* lists more than 200 newspaper titles registered with the Director of the National Archives between 1993 and 2003.

With the advent of economic and political liberalisation in the 1990s, there was a flurry of activity to register newspaper titles. Indeed, some took off, only to fold later. This shows that, in theory at least, the newspaper industry is the most progressive of all media of mass communication in the country. Having said this, newspapers, while easy to set up, are the most difficult to sustain. This is attributable to the low level of market buoyancy to absorb any more print media.

In general, the widest read papers are: *The Post* (0.39% readership); *The Times of Zambia* (0.26% readership); *The Zambia Daily Mail* (0.20% readership); *The Monitor and Digest* (0.07% readership); and, *The National Mirror* (0.07% readership) (CSO, 2002; Banda, 2004)[3].

Figure 9: Total Number of Newspapers
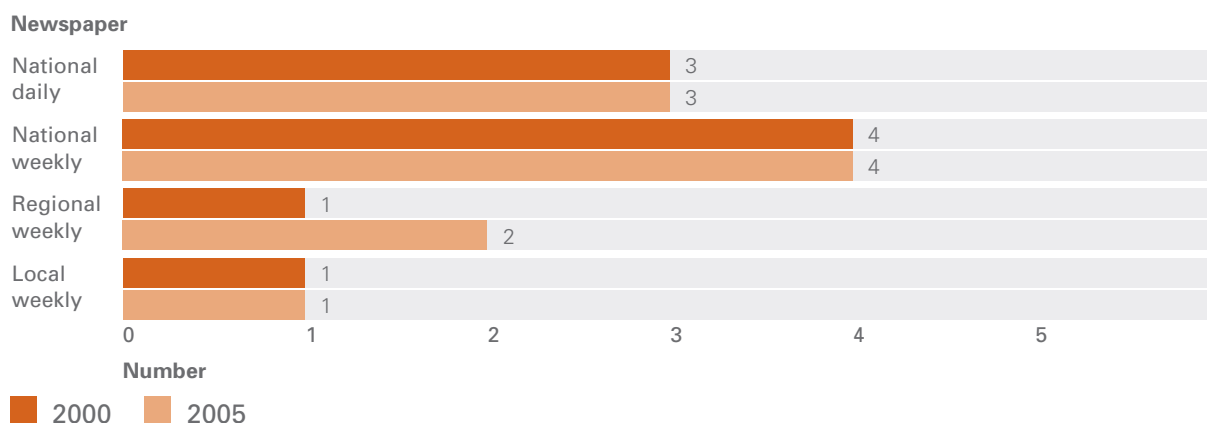
Source: Banda, 2003 and 2004; MISA, 2000 and 2005a

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[3] The calculation is based on circulation as a percentage of national literacy. It is to be noted that circulation figures are often inflated and circulation does not reflect readership as such.

State-owned daily newspapers account for more than 50% of the existing titles (MISA 2005b). There is only one daily private newspaper, which has been in existence since the 1990s.

The only strong community newspaper is the Kanyama Community Voice, the existence of which is buoyed up by the Media Trust Fund, a conglomeration of media support organisations set up by NORAD and other donors in the country to provide financial support to emerging media, in addition to the existing state and private media outlets (Media Trust Fund, 2000).

7.2 Investment and growth in newspapers in the past five years

There has been little or no growth in the newspaper sector. The situation has remained static, not for lack of attempts but because such attempts have proved unsuccessful. There is still only one commercial news agency in Zambia. The number of state-backed news agencies has dropped from two in 2000 to one in 2005, although in fact what happened in 2005 was simply a merger between the Zambia News Agency (ZANA) and the Zambia Information Services (ZIS) into the new Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS).

Newspaper circulation figures, computed from information supplied by the newspapers themselves and not subjected to any independent verification, demonstrate the low level of newspaper penetration in the country, with the highest circulation figure being 0.39%[4] for *The Post* newspaper (CSO, 2002; Banda, 2004).

The newspaper industry is heavily dependent on advertising – not many NGOs, for instance, sponsor content in the newspapers. The small ads section attracts much revenue from small-scale businesses, but the market is proving too small to accommodate new entrants. It is largely because of this that there has been little or no visible investment and growth. The study by Banda (2004) gives a variety of reasons for this, among which are issues to do with depressed economic activity, the lack of entrepreneurial skills among media owners, low literacy levels, cross-media competition and the lack of proactive and effective financing mechanisms with bank and other financial institutions.

Figure 10: Ownership of Newspaper Agencies
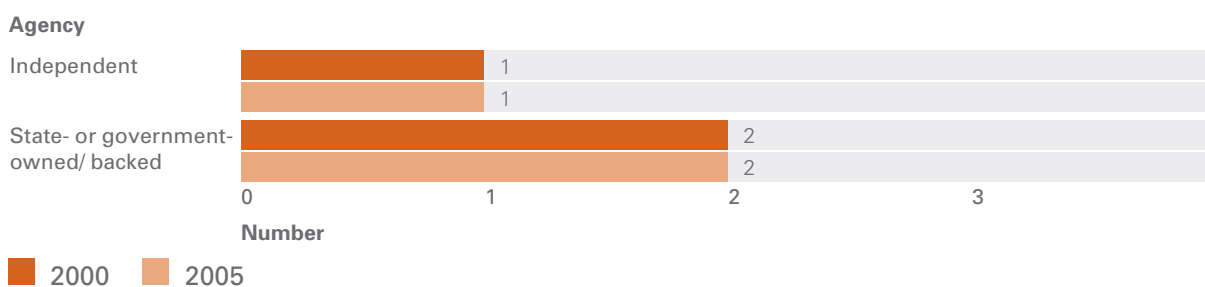
Source: MISA, 2005b

7.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Ownership of newspapers has always been diversified. As early as 1972, church groups owned the *National Mirror*. However, with political liberalisation, the tendency towards private newspaper ownership had a new impetus. There is thus a multiplicity of newspaper titles the owners of which are private individuals and organisations.

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4 Calculation based on newspaper circulation as a percentage of national literacy rates. Circulation figures are often inflated. Also note that circulation does not reflect readership as such.

The state has failed to exercise any fundamental control in the newspaper sector. The power to control is far removed from the state because of the legislative ease with which one can set up a newspaper. It is simply necessary to lodge the particulars of one's publication with the Director of the National Archives. This is not a cumbersome process. Government control is thus not an issue here, except in more subtle forms, such as the withdrawal of government advertising from what are seen as irresponsible or erring newspapers. This particular behaviour was witnessed during the reign of President FTJ Chiluba, whose MMD regime instructed government ministries, departments and parastatal companies not to advertise in the privately owned *Post.* That position has since been reversed by the new MMD president, Levy Mwanawasa.

7.4 Diversity

Newspapers are read by 37.10% of the population, compared to 50% who listen to the radio. Even so, the number of people who read newspapers once a week has increased by 8% between 2000 and 2005 (CSO, Central Board of Health & ORC Macro, 2003; CSO & ORC Macro, 2003)[5]. Several factors may account for this, including improved literacy among the population (there has been a 16% increase in the adult literacy rate between 2003 and 2006, from 66.9% to 80.6% in 2006)[6] and wider distribution of newspapers across the country. *The Post*, for instance, has even launched a courier service, suggesting that its own capacity to distribute *The Post* newspaper has grown exponentially.

In a sense, an expanded readership entails an expanded sourcing of news stories and reports. While the state-owned media have remained largely undiversified in terms of their political reportage, the privately-owned newspapers, most notably *The Post* and the *Weekly Angel*, have sought to focus on alternative voices. But one must be cautious even here: most of the alternative voices are those of people in privileged positions – NGOs, political parties, businesses, etc. As a business strategy, *The Post* now publishes an educational supplement targeting teachers and pupils. It also publishes the *Business Post*, an initiative born out of the Business Development Services (BDS) project of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The BDS project injected some funding into *The Post* for it to conduct an assessment of the potential "market" for a new product that would target "small scale to medium businesses" (Banda et al. 2005). It could be concluded, on the basis of this, that *The Post* is more inclusive of hitherto unheard voices. The Panos media monitoring project, however, indicts *The Post's* statistically insignificant reporting of gender issues, as it does that of other newspapers (PISA, 2004).

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[5] The first study by the Central Statistical Office, the Central Board of Health and the ORC Macro was published in February 2003 and covered the period 2001/2002, while the second study was published in April 2003 by the Central Statistical Office, the Ministry of Education and ORC Macro and covers the period 2002. The first set of statistics would seem to be more representative of the base year of 2000 for this study.

[6] The 2003 literacy rate is based on UNDP figures (UNDP, 2003 http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm), while the 2006 literacy rate is taken from CIA, 2006.

7.5 Quality of newspaper reporting

The quality of newspaper coverage of political news is not balanced in the case of state-owned newspapers. However, the state-owned newspapers do make an attempt to balance stories other than those of a political nature in which the ruling party has overriding interest. Thus, it is not unusual to find well-written features on environmental issues. There is no scientifically established data to substantiate this point, but anecdotal evidence abounds.

Privately-owned newspapers, on the contrary, tend to lean towards opposition political parties in their coverage of political news. But even here, some opposition parties are not covered in the best light, nor do they get large quantities of coverage.

The Post newspaper has not signed up to join the newly established Media Council of Zambia (MECOZ), which is designed to be an ethical watchdog for the press in the country. Although this is an indictment against the newspaper, those newspapers that are members do not seem to treat the Council with any seriousness. This poses an ethical challenge, even as it poses an issue of quality control.

7.6 Specific challenges

Newspaper publishing, despite registering the largest number of would-be investors, has not registered any real growth. The economic environment is not conducive to media business. At the same time, there is a lack of bullish business skills among media owners. Where owners have demonstrated these, as in the case of *The Post*, some success has resulted. Added to the poor economy is the state's subtle undermining of newspapers that publish content that goes against its political interests.

There is also a lack of newspaper infrastructure in the country. There are few or no *reliable* printing presses and those that are available tend to be expensive and over-subscribed. The case can be made that state newspaper companies have tended to monopolise printing presses, although this is no longer the case. *The Post*, for instance, has invested in its own printing press. The *Monitor and Digest* has also invested in its own printing press, although it has generally not been doing well.

Key findings

☐ In theory, newspapers have been the most progressive sector in the media industry since 2000.

☐ Legislation surrounding publication of newspapers is not as restrictive as that relating to radio and television broadcasting.

☐ Despite many registrations of titles, there are increasingly fewer newspapers being published.

☐ The problems attending this sector range from depressed economic activity to competition with other media forms.

☐ Newspapers continue to be politically inclined either towards the ruling or opposition political parties, depending on whether or not they are state-owned.

8. Media Support

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

Issues of new media technologies in Zambia can best be framed in terms of "technological convergence" as spelt out in the National Information and Communication Technology Policy document of 2005. The policy defines "convergence" as "the culmination of traditional services in telecommunications, online media, broadcasting and information technology into platforms and services making the ICT sector" (Ministry of Transport and Communications, 2005).

In Zambia, the process of technological convergence has given rise to a form of "narrowcasting" referred to as "webcasting" – many broadcasting stations are now online via audio or video streaming. Radio Phoenix, Q-FM and ZNBC are both online, with audio-streaming capabilities. Several newspapers – *The Post*, the *Zambia Daily Mail* and the *Times of Zambia* – have an Internet presence. This new production technique serves to distribute content widely as well as to compete for audiences with the older, conventional broadcasters.

Zambia's broadcasting and telecommunications regulatory regimes have largely developed un-converged. This problem is what the policy referred to above seeks to address. In particular, the policy proposes the restructuring and transforming of "the existing regulatory agency(ies) into an independent and autonomous Converged Regulatory Agency for the ICT sector, with clear specifications of responsibilities and powers, taking into account the relevance and functions of existing regulatory agencies (where applicable) in sub-sectors including telecommunications, information technology, and broadcasting and postal services, to ensure a smooth transition to full convergence. However, care shall be taken to ensure minimal disruption and policy conflicts" (Ministry of Transport and Communications, 2005, p.58).

In proposing the transforming of the existing regulatory agencies in the communications sector into a "converged regulatory agency", the policy recommends the repealing and/or amending of the following pieces of legislation: (i) the Telecommunications Act 1994; (ii) the Radiocommunications Act 1994; and, (iii) the IBA Act 2002.

Among other functions, such a converged regulator would be expected to:

☐ ensure universal access to basic communication and information services;

☐ ensure the provision of affordable, adequate, high-quality and cost-effective ICT services that meet the diverse needs of consumers in order to promote economic growth and social development;

□ facilitate the development of a seamless national, regional and international ICT infrastructure connectivity;

□ manage the Internet as a national resource.

These policy developments testify to the emergence of broadband Internet connectivity in the country and the possibilities it presents for online media content. As noted below, Africonnect (an ISP) and Muvi TV are in a strategic alliance to develop the so-called "SMS Suite" discussed below. This is a new development, and was not an issue in 2000. Indeed, Celtel, a cellular telephone company, has been piloting Celpay, an initiative in which customers use Celtel to pay their various bills, including those for electricity. These developments are raising possibilities for the use of such media to enhance the content delivery platforms of traditional media.

Access to a personal computer rose from 0.71% of the population in 2000 to 8.5% in 2005, with Internet access rising from 0.24% to 6.1% over the same period (UNSTATS, 2005). In 2000, 0.8% of the population had access to a fixed-line phone (Jensen, 2002) and in 2003 this figure had increased to 2% (CSO, 2004). Those owning mobile phones went from 0.92% in 2000 (Jensen, 2002) to 4% in 2003 (CSO, Central Board of Health & ORC Macro, 2003). There were two mobile phone companies in 2000 and three in 2005 (AFRISPA, 2005).

8.2 Key changes in media support in the past five years

Media support has increased in the past five years. This is largely deducible from the fact that there are more local and international organisations working in the media sector. Among the local organisations active in this field are: the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia; the Press Association of Zambia (PAZA); the Zambia Union of Journalists (ZUJ); the Media Trust Fund (MTF); the Zambia Media Women's Association (ZAMWA); e-Brain Forum; Press Freedom Committee (of *The Post*); and the Society for Senior Zambian Journalists (SSZJ).

Among the international media support organisations are: Panos Institute Southern Africa; Business Development Services (BDS)/International Labour Organisation (ILO); Pact Zambia; Commonwealth Press Union; the Zambia Centre for Communication Programmes; and, Steadman Research. These are donor-funded organisations working to promote communication programmes around policy debate, public health, entrepreneurship, journalistic skills training, the environment and other issues. They represent a definite increase in the donor budgetary allocations to the media development sector.

Having said this, the BDS/ILO project is the only one that is overtly concerned with encouraging *business* media development initiatives, in this researcher's estimation. For instance, they worked with *The Post* newspaper to conduct a baseline audience needs assessment to establish if there was a market among small- to medium-scale businesses for a new business information product. As a result of this initiative, the *Business Post* has since been launched as a weekly business news product targeting small- to medium-business entrepreneurs (Banda et al. 2005).

Steadman Research appeared on the scene largely as a market survey company. While there is now statistical data on media audience consumption patterns generated by this company, at least for 2003, it is very expensive to access that data. The extent to which this can form part of studies of media reception analysis thus depends on one's financial resources. Even

then, the data is more demographic than sociological, hence its usefulness for critical media audience understanding is limited.

As for the advertising terrain, Zambia has been home to several advertising agencies. Among the main ones are Young & Rubicam, D. Saatchi & Saatchi, Adworks, Jeff Sitali, Goman and Errol Hickey. Mostly, these advertising agencies also act as independent television/film production companies. Their role tends to be opportunistic.

There were three television/film companies in Zambia in 2005, all of which are locally-owned, and the number has remained stable since 2000 (MISA, 2006). There are also three locally based advertising agencies that are part of a multinational framework, and again this number remained unchanged over that period (MISA, 2006). In addition, in 2000 and 2005, there were ten locally based ad agencies that are not part of a multinational franchise (MISA, 2006). The number of international or foreign-owned advertising agencies has stayed the same between 2000 and 2005, at three (MISA, 2006). By 2005, one media monitoring organisation had been set up and there were two international or foreign-owned media or market research companies (up from one in 2000) (Odhiambo, 2006).

8.3 Audience and readership research data

Since 2000, there has been no solid research data on audience and readership, except that generated by Steadman in 2003. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, Steadman conducted an audience and media patterns survey (AMPS) based on selected broadcasters and newspapers. However, as noted above, this is highly inaccessible data, generated for profit.

8.4 Media support, ISPs and ownership

Now that mobile telephony penetration is outstripping land line telephone penetration (see figures given in 8.1), this might mean there are opportunities for media support projects to spin off from mobile telephony, such as that between Africonnect and Muvi TV further explained below.

Since 1995, there have been three main cellular phone companies in the country: the state-owned Cell Z (with 21% market share); the privately-owned MTN, formerly Telecel (31%); and, the privately owned CelTel (48%) (AFRISPA, 2005).

Zambia has nine licensed Internet service providers (ISPs). However, only six are operational: ZAMNET Communications System, wholly owned by the University of Zambia; ZAMTEL Online, owned by a state corporation; Coppernet Solutions, owned by Cavemont Merchant Bank and a team from Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM); UUNET Zambia, a joint venture between UUNET South Africa and Africa Lakes Corporation (ALC); Microlink Zambia, owned partly by a foreign entity (AFRISPA, 2005); and, Africonnect, a partnership between local and foreign interests.

Africonnect is working on developing an SMS Suite – a platform on which the broadcaster Muvi TV supply can information about its programming. In fact, as of 2005, Muvi TV and Africonnect had already started to experiment with this, with the latter carrying the former's programme details. It is important to note that this is in part an initiative of the BDS/ILO project referred to above.

Clearly there are opportunities here for strategic alliances that might deliver some profits to both companies and help strengthen them.

Key findings

☐ The debate about "technological convergence" has emerged as a key policy "frame" for the issue of ICTs and development in the country.

☐ In part, the above is a testimony to the major technological developments in the country, not least the rise of broadband Internet connectivity as offered by such new ISPs as Africonnect.

☐ Since 2000, several broadcasters and newspapers have gone online, exemplifying the blurring of lines between traditional and new media.

☐ ISPs and traditional broadcasters are increasingly entering into strategic business partnerships in which one provides the platform and the other the content.

☐ There were more ISPs in 2005 than there were in 2000.

☐ Cellular telephone is on the increase, outstripping fixed lines.

☐ Internet connectivity and usage remain marginal.

9. NGO activity

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

Figure 11 gives some idea about how many local NGOs are involved in media development activities. The research could not establish how many national NGOs are registered in the country, partly because this information is not readily available. Ordinarily, there are two sources for such data – the Registrar of Companies (companies registered with "charitable" or "not-for-profit" status) and the Registrar of Societies (NGOs, political parties, etc). Obtaining information from these entities is very difficult. Even if one were to get *some* indication of how many NGOs there are, this figure would almost certainly leave out a hundred or more others, largely because of the non-synchronised manner in which such data are maintained by the two agencies.

Figure 11: Overview of National NGOs
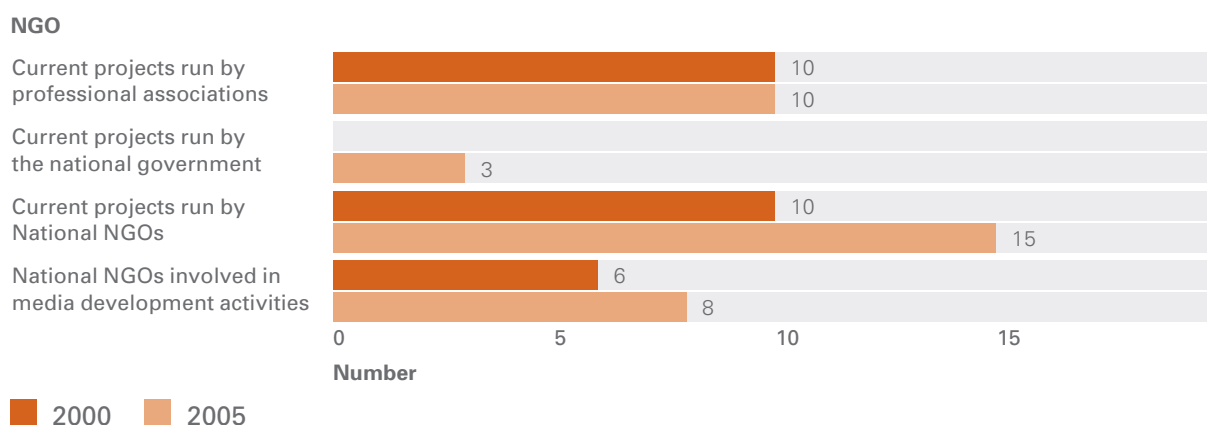
Source: Researcher estimates, 2006 [7]

Clearly, there were more NGOs in 2005 than in 2000. This is extrapolated from the researcher's observation that such NGOs have been on the increase. The emergence of NGO activity is more often linked to more sources of funding, both internal and external. However, the unintended consequence of this trend is that older NGOs tend to receive less and less funding as competition for donor financial support intensifies.

There is greater harmonisation of donor funding for media activities. This is seen in the way some donors are jointly financing media-related activities. As a result of this, there are more joined-up approaches towards developing project proposals by media support organisations.

9.2 Key NGOs involved in media development activities

Local organisations involved in media development activities include: the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia; the Press Association of Zambia (PAZA); the Zambia Union of Journalists (ZUJ); the Media Trust Fund (MTF); the Zambia Media Women's Association (ZAMWA); e-Brain Forum; Press Freedom Committee (of *The Post*); and, the Society for Senior Zambian Journalists (SSZJ). Of these, the last three were set up in or after 2000, indicating an increase in the number of such NGOs.

As already mentioned, among the international media support organisations are: the Panos Institute Southern Africa; Business Development Services/International Labour Organisation; PACT Zambia; Commonwealth Press Union; the Zambia Centre for Communication Programmes; and Steadman Research. They represent a definite increase in the donor budgetary allocations to the media development sector. The Zambia Centre for Communication Programmes (supported largely by USAID) and Steadman Research, sometimes commissioned by donors and media support organisations, both emerged after 2000 and represent an increased volume of media development activity.

Another trend to note is that most local NGOs that traditionally had little to do with media are now moving into some form of media support. For example, they try to educate the media on ways to cover their particular issues and concerns. This is certainly the case in the area of gender and media representation. As it happens, there is more competition for donor funding, resulting in the illusion that donor financial support to the media sector has dwindled.

9.3 Climate of opportunity for media development activities

The increase in funding for media activities in general means NGOs can now design activities specific to media development. Along with this is a process of raising awareness about the possible roles the media can play both in strengthening themselves as institutions and in supporting any general developmental processes unfolding in the country. In other words, the media are likely to become more sensitised to their role as catalysts of society-wide development. In turn, that outcome can serve to benefit the media, especially when there is definitive economic growth.

The increase in the number of NGOs is helping to create a critical mass to push for a more enabling political, economic and legislative environment within which the media can perform effectively and efficiently. There is strength in numbers. This is increasingly being demonstrated in Zambia. For instance, the minister of finance and national planning introduced value-added tax (VAT) on the cover price of newspapers in the 2006 budget. This would have further crippled the print media. But a united public campaign by MISA-Zambia, PAZA, ZAMWA, SSZJ and others compelled the minister to rescind the decision. Clearly, politicians are being persuaded to think in terms of laws and policies that can strengthen, rather than weaken, the media.

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7 This is based on a headcount of media NGOs working in the country known to this researcher, after years of working within and with them.

Key findings

☐ Local and international NGOs are on the increase.

☐ Gathering statistics on the total number of NGOs in the country is problematic, not least because of the lack of conceptual clarity about what constitutes an NGO.

☐ Arguably, there were more NGOs working in media development in 2005 than in 2000, partly because there were more donor resources.

☐ There is increased donor coordination of support to media support organisations, as evidenced by the Media Trust Fund.

☐ There is greater harmonisation among recipient NGOs of project proposals for different aspects of media activity.

10. Conclusions

10.1 Media Statistical data

Statistical data on the media are hard to come by. The CSO does not specifically collect such statistics so there is no systematic statistical information on various aspects of media and communication. Neither are there any private research institutions dedicated to generating media statistics. Those that produce such data do so only as part of a broader media project. In other cases, such data is generated by profit-oriented research companies, making it difficult for such data to be accessed for public research usage.

10.2 Media Law and regulation

Legislation is problematic. Some laws have been passed to make broadcasting freer of state control, but they have not been effected, largely because of the state's recalcitrance. This raises questions about the rule of law and the extent to which the state adheres to it. While it is easy to set up newspapers, there is still the problem of state impunity in dictating the terms of trade in media inputs, such as newsprint and computers.

10.3 Investment and growth

There is evidence that radio has grown since 2000, demonstrating a significant injection of investment into the sector. This investment has come from individuals, donors and the church, especially the Catholic Church. Television has received little investment, particularly considering the huge capital outlay and running expenses it incurs. In addition, it is clear that the state is keener on controlling television than other forms of media of mass communication.

Newspapers are the easiest to set up, in theory. While there are more than 200 newspaper titles registered with the National Archives, fewer than five are actually publishing. The difficulties facing newspapers include economic slow-down, lack of entrepreneurial skills, competition and unwillingness by financial institutions to provide start-up loans.

10.4 Plurality, ownership and control

There has been diversification of media ownership since 2000. The state is no longer the sole owner. However, it still "owns" those media that have traditionally been under its control since independence. The emergence of more radio and television outlets has meant that there are now more players on the scene. However, this masks the controlling influence the state still exerts on the media. There is no law to ensure that state interference is kept at bay. Indeed, the state has refused to recognise the provisions of the IBA and ZNBC (Amendment) Acts of 2002, a clear indication that it is still keen to control the media industry.

10.5 Content

The content of the media has itself become diversified, reflecting the diversified media ownership structure, but there is still a preponderance of urban-based, elite voices clamouring for attention, particularly in urban-based radio and television outlets. There is a semblance of varied voices on community radio stations, and some commercial FM radio stations across the country. For instance, Breeze FM's Gogo Breeze is attracting rave reviews from listeners in Eastern Province and is clearly providing a platform for people hitherto marginalised from mainstream media.

10.6 Media Support

New business models are emerging that draw together ISPs and broadcasters in which the former are platform providers and the latter content suppliers. This is still in early stages, but it is likely to make business sense in the long run. Technological convergence is thus increasingly becoming the norm, with more traditional media going online to stream audio, etc. Policy at this level is also being articulated in the country, showing that policy-makers are beginning to catch up with the rapid technological advances.

10.7 NGO Activity

More NGOs have emerged since 2000. Coordinated approaches towards fundraising and implementing activities are preferred. There are more resources going towards media support organisations, particularly those that link communication to specific themes, such as HIV/AIDS and gender diversity. This presents opportunities for greater collaborative work, apart from more sharply defining the problem areas for such joint action.

11. Appendices

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11.2   Individuals/organisations consulted during the research

☐ B. Kangwa, Director of Programmes, ZNBC, Lusaka

☐ M. Odhiambo, Country Manager, Steadman Research, Lusaka

Zambia
Country Report
Way Forward

12. Introduction

The interviewees were selected on the following basis: their familiarity with the question of media development in general, their official position (for example, NGO leader, state media executive, and so on), their ease of accessibility, and their gender.

All 15 of the interviewees identified were readily available, except for two. The first was the Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services, for whom a response was not received within the timeframes of this study. The second was the Chief Executive Officer of Radio Phoenix, who delegated the responsibility to his deputy. It turned out that his deputy had more hands-on knowledge of issues relating to media development. All the interviewees agreed to their responses being audio-recorded. In general, it was relatively easy to arrange the interviews, indicating that the interviewees felt that the research project was important enough to be a part of.

The interviewees answered the questions with frankness. At no time did it seem that an interviewee was holding back vital information. However, in some cases, as the findings demonstrate, the interviewees' responses indicated their positions in society. For instance, those nearer to the state apparatus appeared rather ambivalent about questions seeking to assess their perspectives on the government's commitment to media development.

The fieldwork was conducted between 7 and 11 May 2006. The researcher travelled to Zambia from South Africa to carry out the interviews.

13. Media Development: an organisational perspective

13.1 Key organisations

The interviewees were drawn from various organisations involved, in some way or other, in media development activities. Areas in which the interviewees worked were: state and private media; research and advocacy organisations; student movements; media, gender and development activists; anti-corruption initiatives; and, media trust funds.

The organisations sampled, in no particular order, were: the Zambia Community Media Forum (ZaCoMeF); the Media Trust Fund (MTF); the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC); *The Post* newspaper; Radio Phoenix; the Press Association of Zambia (PAZA); the Communications Authority of Zambia (CAZ); the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)-Zambia; the Zambia Media Women's Association (ZAMWA); the Non-Governmental Organisations Coordinating Council (NGOCC); the University of Zambia Student Union (UNZASU); the University of Zambia's Department of Mass Communication; Steadman Research; and, Transparency International Zambia (TIZ). In addition, one media commentator was interviewed.

13.2 Impact of media development initiatives

All 15 interviewees suggested that media development initiatives have had a significant impact on the media sector over the past five years. All the interviewees indicated the plurality of media outlets, and the diversity of voices evident in the media, as indicators of this impact. More specifically, the interviewees pointed to the growth in the radio broadcasting sector, especially the emergence of commercial and community-based FM radio stations all over the country. This growth was also detectable in the television broadcasting sector, with the establishment of Muvi TV and others running test transmissions at the time of the study.

All the interviewees singled out legislative developments as another key media development. In particular, they noted the enactment in 2002 of the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act and the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (Amendment) Act. These were seen as important media development milestones in the country. However, the majority of the interviewees were unanimous in their disappointment at the state's failure to uphold the implementation of these laws. It was interesting to note that those closer to state institutions either spoke favourably of the government or were ambivalent about its role in media development. Apart from these changes, the interviewee drawn from the government sector identified the "growth in the mobile sector" as the most important development in that it had begun to "bridge" the information gap between rural and urban areas.

All the interviewees agreed that the legislative reforms had created more opportunities for communicative space in the country. All agreed that the plurality of media outlets, and the associated diversity in media content, had helped to create an informed citizenry, who were able to project alternative voices to those that had dominated the airwaves. In addition, according to the one government-sector interviewee, the legislative reforms, such as those relating to the broadcast media, had engendered a new policy trajectory towards "technological convergence".

One interviewee said that media development had resulted in increased internal capacity, with the employment of more than 200 people (Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia).

With regards to community media, Alias Banda put it aptly:

" *The change has been that, with the introduction of community media, there has been a lot of focus on specialisation of the media sector, specialisation in terms of training and programming and even in the topic or language that the media uses in this country.* "

(Elias Banda, Coordinator; NGO: ZaCoMeF, Zambia)

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

With regards to strategic changes within their own work arena, there was a divergence of responses. For some, the opening up of the political space had enabled their organisations to become more expressive on national issues. Four interviewees drawn from the NGO sector reported that the mushrooming of media outlets, especially community radio, had enabled them to expand their voices to rural areas. In one case, the change in the media environment entailed greater business opportunities in terms of audience research and media monitoring.

" *When we came into the country in 2003 the main entry point for us was a media study, which was what we call AMPS – All Media Products Survey. It was the first time that study was done in Zambia; it had never been done before.* "

(Moses Odhiambo, Country Manager; Media Entrepreneur: Steadman Research, Zambia)

One interviewee representing the private media sector noted that media development had had "very little" effect on their area of work. A senior official from an NGO involved with influencing legislative and regulatory change pointed out that some developments in the media sector, such as those elaborated above, had resulted in a closer working relationship among the media activist organisations.

14. Media Development Initiatives

14.1   Review

The interviewees indicated different kinds of activities, largely depending on the nature of their work. For instance, the Press Association of Zambia (PAZA) highlighted the setting up of a newspaper – *PAZA News* – designed to "promote good governance" by advocating on issues of constitutional and electoral reform as well as ethics. This activity seemed to chime with one of the projects initiated by the University of Zambia's Department of Mass Communication, namely the introduction of a teaching newspaper and radio station, meant to prepare students for the media industry in terms of managerial and other skills. Transparency International Zambia stressed its project on investigative reporting of petty corruption. This project was conducted in conjunction with the Panos Institute Southern Africa.

The Post pointed to the setting up of a training department to impart specialised skills to new recruits. According to Fred M'membe:

" *Most of the people who run training programmes have very little newspaper experience. They have read books written by other people. But books on journalism are limited in a lot of ways and most of them are written purely by academics who have never run a newsroom. We had this experience.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

Similarly, another interviewee working in the private media (Radio Phoenix) singled out in-house training as a key project it had embarked on. Zambia Community Media Forum (ZaCoMeF) has also been involved in training, with a special focus on community radio station board members. This was because ZaCoMeF believed that part of the problem facing community media lay in members of the board who did not understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the management of the radio stations. ZaCoMeF, in addition, pointed to its assessment of the needs of the community radio sector, focusing both on sociological and technical needs.

For its part, Steadman Research has implemented an interlinked project focused on monitoring the media and surveying media audiences. The Media Trust Fund (MTF) pointed out its project to promote and develop community media, especially rural radio, arguing that it was doing this from scratch by "identifying communities and developing with them the ideas". This would be followed up by the supply of equipment and the provision of training and sustainable support for one to two years. For the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, the key emphasis would seem to be on electoral television productions that the station is involved in and from televising parliamentary debates.

MISA Zambia's activities include media literacy and advocacy for legislative changes. In particular, it was credited with initiating the public campaign on the IBA and the ZNBC (Amendment) Acts.

14.1.1 Approaches to media development

Approaches to media development were reportedly similar. Four NGO-sector interviewees spoke of promoting good governance through constitutional, legislative and policy reforms. It was clear that there was a convergence of programmatic objectives in the area of advocacy. Two NGOs, the two private media practitioners, as well as the academic interviewed, emphasised training or capacity building in various forms.

Interestingly, the two private media personnel argued that most formal journalism training institutions in Zambia (for example, universities) were not providing the right kind of training for the media industry. However, this view was not shared by the one academic, who asserted that most experienced media industry leaders were seeking training opportunities with his institution.

❝ *In the 1980s, people were very sceptical about coming to do the BA at the University of Zambia because they felt that they didn't need it. But now we have so many people from industry, some of them in good positions, coming to study.* ❞

(Kenny Makungu, Head of Department; Academic: Department of Mass Communication, University of Zambia, Zambia)

14.1.2 Funding of media development

For three of the NGOs, the consensus was that funding levels for media development-type activities were dwindling. Overall, three interviewees answered that they were involved in funding media development activities. An NGO involved with implementing organisational change reported spending more than 90% of their budget on media development. An NGO network involved with lobbying reported an expenditure of about 80%, while yet another NGO concerned with influencing legislative change reported an expenditure of 70%. However, one private media practitioner reported that his organisation's funding for media development activities, including training, had actually increased "substantially". This particular interviewee could not disclose what percentage of the funding was devoted to media development activities.

Interestingly, interviewees whose organisations are donor-dependent seemed to suggest that there has been, and would continue to be, a decrease in their funding to media development activities. The one interviewee who reported a substantial increase in media development funding was a private commercial newspaper. This could, with due care, be extrapolated to suggest that media development will remain heavily dependent on the sustainability of private media enterprises.

14.2 Success and impact

14.2.1 Evaluating the success of media development projects

In six interviews, institution-based interviewees reported some form of evaluation of their projects/initiatives/activities. However, the frequency, intensity and method of such evaluation exercises seemed to vary from organisation to organisation. For instance, while the one interviewee drawn from the public media sector reported the use of a survey to assess the "impact" of broadcast content on the audience, one of the two private media practitioners reported having their projects evaluated through internal processes; "management meetings" held twice weekly, monthly staff meetings, and, quarterly board meetings. It was interesting to note that this particular interviewee observed that formal evaluation exercises were usually produced by those organisations that were donor-dependent in order to meet donor conditionality. The public sector media interviewee mentioned above added that his institution's programmes were regularly subjected to an internal review procedure in which the Controller of Television, for instance, evaluated the quality of programming. Although one senior NGO personnel admitted that no formal evaluations were conducted, he reported that his organisation always administered a questionnaire to solicit the views of those participating in their programmes, such as workshops.

The academic reported being externally evaluated, although he did not specify what methods were used, noting instead that the evaluators "looked at the objectives at the start and then tried to see how far we went in meeting those set objectives". A grant-giving NGO reported conducting evaluations of any organisation wishing to benefit from the fund. Such evaluations often took the form of an "institutional analysis" to assess the potential viability of a project. Another NGO leader noted that his organisation engaged in some form of "institutional analysis" to assess how the institutional structures were responding to the external environment. However, there did not appear to be regular evaluation in this case. Yet another NGO senior personnel, in what appeared to confirm an observation by the private media practitioner above, noted that his institutional donors often commissioned evaluations of the projects they had supported, in addition to those undertaken by themselves. The methods thus used were based on interviews and focus groups with the stakeholders.

14.2.2 Factors contributing to the success of media development projects

All 15 interviewees pointed to some successful projects, citing several factors perceived as having contributed towards this success. For instance, one enduring theme explaining the success of most media development activities cited by all the four NGOs interviewed was that of civil society activism. This was a view shared by the one commentator and the one public media official interviewed. In one case, an interviewee singled out "the coverage of Zimbabwean elections" as a success, citing "good journalism" as a factor. Pressed to explain "good journalism", the interviewee from the private sector media mentioned the elements of "accuracy, balance, objectivity and fairness".

The projects/initiatives/activities rated as successful can be summarised in the following table.

Table 1: Media Development Projects by Success Factors

Project/Initiative/Activity	Success Factors	Category of Interviewees
Removal of VAT from cover price of newspapers	☐ Civil society activism ☐ "Critical mass" created by actors united in a common cause	NGO x 4 Media Practitioner Public Sector Analyst
Curriculum review	Multi-stakeholder input (lecturers, students, industry, donors, etc.)	Academic
Broadcast media legislative and policy reform	Civil society activism	NGO x 4 Media Practitioner Public Sector Analyst
Electoral coverage; Development-Through-Radio (DTR)	☐ Public participation ☐ Independent production (by people not working for state media) ☐ Rural communities' participation ☐ Collaboration with other issue-focused organisations	Media Practitioner Public Sector
Electoral coverage	☐ Good journalism (balance; fairness; objectivity; etc.)	Media Practitioner Private Sector
Investigative reporting	☐ Academic research ☐ Journalistic (investigative) research ☐ Strategic partnership (TIZ & PISA)	NGO
Rural/community radio	☐ Clear focus ☐ Community participation and ownership ☐ Partnerships	NGO
The Media Council of Zambia	☐ Partnerships ☐ Activism	NGO x 2

14.2.3 Factors undermining the success of media development projects

Table 2 demonstrates the factors that inhibit the success of a media development project.

Table 2: Factors Undermining the Success of Media Development Projects

Project/Initiative/Activity	Inhibiting Factors	Category of Interviewees
The collapse of the *Lusaka Star*	☐ Lack of funding	Academic
The collapse of newspapers given grants	☐ Lack of business acumen ☐ High production costs, including tax on newsprint	NGO
Religious content on television stations	☐ Public discontent ☐ Too narrow ☐ Inopportune scheduling	Media Practitioner, Public Sector
Non-implementation of media laws enacted since 2002	☐ Lack of government commitment to the rule of law	NGO x 4; Media Practitioner, Public Sector x 2; Media Practitioner, Private Sector; Analyst
Inappropriate training	☐ Irrelevant ☐ Impractical ☐ Academic	Media Practitioner, Private Sector x 2

14.3 Lessons learned

With regards to lessons learned, one interviewee reported the need to involve more actors in the design and implementation of media development activities.

" *When there are so many voices, one is able to get good results.* "

(Fanwell Chembo, National Director; NGO: MISA-Zambia, Zambia)

The public media practitioner spoken to agreed with this and cited "partnerships with other organisations" as a lesson worth learning. In three interviews, consisting of two from NGOs and a public media practitioner, interviewees cited sustainability as "the greatest lesson", arguing that it should form an integral part of the objectives of any project design.

However, an NGO as well as a private media personnel and an academic interviewed did not think all projects were amenable to the criterion of sustainability because some projects were designed to last for a specific period. In that sense, another NGO leader argued, one had to look at such other factors as the impact of the project on the beneficiaries and how they were responding to it. This interviewee, and one other in the same NGO category, went on to suggest that community involvement was an important lesson for anyone designing media development projects. The interviewee from academia added that non-profit institutions, such as universities, could not be expected to become self-sustaining.

An interesting finding was the suggestion by one private media interviewee that "independence of thought and action" was a key lesson learned, adding that "to attain that independence you need to be in a position to fund your activities rather than depending on donors."

14.3.1 The Importance of the cultural context in planning and designing an initiative

All 15 interviewees were unanimous that the cultural context had to be taken into account in media development activities. One interviewee referred to the ZNBC (Amendment) Act and cited its provisions on promoting the country's cultural heritage, adding that;

" *… unless broadcasting addresses the local contexts in which media development plays out, it will remain irrelevant to the people that it is supposed to serve. That is also true of newspapers and other forms of media. They must be very sensitive to the local needs and contexts of African society.* "

(Amos Chanda, President; NGO: Press Association of Zambia, Zambia)

Another cited a local television soap opera, *Kabanana,* as fulfilling the cultural mandate of public service broadcasting (Ben Kangwa, Director of Programmes; Media Practitioner Public Sector: Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), Zambia). Yet another interviewee pointed to the insistence on the use of local languages and the elevation of folklore in community media initiatives as a cultural imperative (Elias Banda, Coordinator; NGO: ZaCoMeF, Zambia).

More responses in support of building local culture within the design of media development programming were forthcoming. One interviewee saw culture as a defining feature of being African, noting:

" *We cannot be BBC, we cannot be CNN, we will still remain African and as such even our level of development will be determined by the development of the continent.* "

(Bestone Ng'onga, Executive Director; NGO: Media Trust Fund, Zambia)

Yet another interviewee postulated the link between media development and cultural heritage as follows:

" *Any media organisation exists in a specified environment. It does not exist in a vacuum. For it to succeed it should meet the people on their terms. It should be able to reflect their way of life. In that way, they will relate to it meaningfully. But you see there has been so much importation of western projects without adapting them to our own realities and, in some cases, it has made the media irrelevant because even the values being propagated are western values, not our own values.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

15. Developing the Environment for Success

15.1   Key factors

There was a consensus among all the interviewees that a thriving economy was an important factor in media development. There was agreement that a conducive political environment – in which legislation and policies supported the growth of media – was also a key factor.

In addition, there was a recognition registered by most of the interviewees that appropriate training accounted for successful media development. However, it was clear that the interviewees were also supportive of investment – private or public – in the media sector, in addition to all the fundamentals cited above.

One interviewee proposed the need for a clear "vision" about what one wanted to contribute to successful media development initiatives.

> " *It is the abilities of human beings that make projects succeed or fail. So we are very careful in what we undertake. First, we have to assess our own abilities. If we don't have the abilities to do it, then we don't do it.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

15.2   Political and economic influences

On the political front, all 15 interviewees mentioned the following as important factors for the success of media development:

☐ state commitment to media law reforms;

☐ government commitment to upholding the rule of law. This was cited in relation to the failure by the state to uphold the IBA and ZNBC (Amendment) Acts;

☐ overhaul of the constitutional and legal regime to allow for greater media freedom;

☐ societal support for media development activities, arising out of civic activism; and,

☐ media activism and diversity.

It is worth noting that the media commentator laid more stress on the "economic" rather than on the "political" factors for the success of media development, arguing that the legal regime was not "very much [of] an impediment". He said "administrative problems" accounted for some of the failures in the media system, giving the example of "the issuance of frequencies".

Another interesting observation proffered by a private media practitioner, suggested that media development practitioners needed to be politically astute to,

> " *… navigate your way around what is happening in your society and you can only do that when you have the experience, and when you have the experience, you can predict the outcome of everything you do. You can come up with good strategies and tactics. I think we have created space for ourselves as a result of our experience.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor & Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia);

On the economic front, consensus among the interviewees seemed to revolve around the following key issues:

☐ economic policies that supported investment in the media industry;

☐ the removal of value-added tax (VAT) on essential equipment relating to the media industry;

☐ "the purchasing power of the public", with its attendant rise in "circulation figures and advertising income" – this was particularly emphasised by the public sector media personnel.

> " *Good salaries for people to stay in the media for a long time and gain the experience or else your publication will be working with cub reporters permanently.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor & Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia); and,

☐ sufficient "corporate support" for local or community media development initiatives.

15.2.1 State support for media development initiatives

The responses to the question about whether or not there was state support for media development provoked different answers. Those who answered in the affirmative advanced various arguments.

> " *The government has been quite supportive in creating an enabling media law regime that doesn't really stifle public opinion or that doesn't deliberately stifle development of media initiatives.* "

(Leonard Kantumoya, Analyst: University of Zambia, Zambia)

> " *We have seen a lot of enthusiastic attitudes from government in terms of accepting proposals being forwarded by interested parties, key stakeholders.* "

(Moses Odhiambo, Country Manager; Media Entrepreneur: Steadman Research, Zambia)

> " *I think given what was there five years before, definitely there is some great improvement and one has to look at the new ICT policy which was adopted by the government last year. It is a very progressive policy which supports rapid diffusion of information.* "

(Shula Habeenzu, CEO; Government: Communications Authority of Zambia, Zambia)

For those who answered in the negative(five NGOs and two private-sector media personnel) the lack of state support for media development was evident in the following actions:

☐ the state's refusal to implement the IBA and the ZNBC (Amendment) Acts;

☐ the state's reluctance to enact a Freedom of Information Act;

☐ the state's interference with state broadcasting; and,

☐ the state's interference with community radio stations, through the requirement that they pay K60,000,000 (US$15,000) before they can become operational (Elias Banda, Coordinator; NGO: ZaCoMeF, Zambia).

15.3   Donor communities' role

Views on the role of donors in media development were varied. In three interviews, (two private media officials and a media entrepreneur) there was evidence of very little involvement with the donor community. One interviewee, Fred M'membe, characterised donors as dealing with "us on their own terms", adding that "every country serves its own interests, even those with deep pockets, funding this and that; they are doing it for themselves".

The media commentator observed that the donors "have been right in noticing deficiencies in terms of training", citing such examples as the University of Zambia and the Evelyn Hone College. He noted, however, that there was reduced attention to state media.

There was also a general feeling that donor funding to media development activities had reduced over the years. However, the one public media practitioner spoken to, as well as an NGO involved with advocacy on legislative and regulatory issues, felt that donor funding was adequate.

15.3.1 Donor agendas

There was also a general view that donors tended to impose their own agenda on media development projects, with one NGO official characterising this as "technical advice" and another suggesting that donors tended to keep half of their funding through imposing their own consultants on projects. This, it can be concluded, demonstrates that donor conditionality is frowned on.

15.3.2 A different donor approach

A student NGO – the University of Zambia Student Union (UNZASU) – called on the donor community to be more "critical" of the political regimes as a way of making them more open. Another senior NGO interviewee lamented the donors' attitude of giving "money in piecemeal" because "that affects planning", adding that "they don't seem to realise that the capacity they have created over a period of, say, ten years will just go down the drain".

All the interviewees, even those who do not think donor funding can help, are unanimous in their proposal for increased funding but, as one private media practitioner and a gender advocacy NGO put it, in a way that gives the media "independence and initiative". In this regard, two interviewees (one private media practitioner and a community-media NGO network) referred to the useful role of SAMDEF (Southern African Media Development Fund) and SAIMED (Southern African Institute for Media Entrepreneurial Development) in providing loans, as opposed to grants, to the media. In particular, all the interviewees agreed that donor support needed to be long-term to ensure the sustainability of the projects, unlike, as the academic put it, "the current situation where they will come in during a given period and provide some funds for workshops to upgrade skills and so on".

15.4 Other issues

In general other issues identified by the interviewees, in varying degrees of importance, were as follows:

- ☐ levels of business skills;

- ☐ a supportive constitutional architecture;

- ☐ privatisation of the state media.

- ☐ the establishment of a fund to support media development, on the lines of the MDDA (Media Development and Diversity Agency) in South Africa; and,

- ☐ political will.

16. Future Strategies

16.1 Strategic priorities

The responses to the question about strategic priorities for any new donor-backed initiatives reflected the diverse interests of the interviewees.

16.1.1 Support for training and capacity building

Ten interviewees identified capacity-building/training as a key strategy for any donor-backed initiative. Although capacity building and training were frequently mentioned, all the proponents of it seemed to emphasise "relevance" and "appropriateness", arguing that such a strategy needed to be targeted, long-term and holistic.

16.1.2 Financial sustainability

One interviewee identified institutional financial sustainability as a key issue. He was supported by another interviewee who saw the need to strengthen media institutions in terms of their financial base, infrastructure and human resources as a way of preparing them to face an uncertain future.

A private media practitioner stressed the importance of access to capital in any donor-backed initiative, affirming that media institutions needed to be treated as proper businesses that could be trusted by financial and banking institutions. This could be seen against the backdrop of media institutions that have generally lacked any investment by the business sector. Media business is held to be so risky that many local and foreign investors avoid it. This mistrust has extended to lending institutions, such as banks, which are hesitant to advance loans to those who would invest in private media. The very establishment of the MTF to give grants was recognition of the depth of this problem of lack of access to capital. It would appear, then, that the proposal by the private media practitioner above is designed to elicit some donor mechanism that can ease would-be media investors' access to loans at affordable rates.

A rather unexpected proposal from a gender-advocacy NGO interviewee, who served on a ZNBC board recruitment panel, was that the Japanese government should include in its funding strategy of media development the cancellation of the debt owed to it by the ZNBC.

16.1.3 Constitutional and legal reforms

Two interviewees suggested the need for further constitutional and legal reforms to support freedom of the media.

16.1.4 Developing information and communication technologies

A particularly specific proposal was one based on infrastructural roll-out and capacity building in ICT applications of e-learning, e-health, for example, as proposed by the interviewee representing a quasi-state regulatory agency. Added to this was the suggestion by the media commentator for ICT-based "multi-skilling" for media practitioners. The public media interviewee went so far as to propose the idea of "exposing" media practitioners to donor country cultural environments as a way of sharing professional experiences.

16.2   Focus of support

Most interviewees did not seem to be sure about how to rate the relative importance of the areas of focus recited to them. In general, there was consensus that all the areas were important. The following table summarises the interviewees' rough rating of the variables presented to them.

Table 3: Relative Importance of Area of Focus

Area of Focus	Rating	Justificatory Comments
Media frameworks	Ten interviewees said it was "very important"; five said it was "important"	Most interviewees felt that a supportive constitutional and legal system would ensure a strong public service media system
Developing local content	Six said it was "very important", while nine said it was "important"	There was general consensus that all media forms needed to espouse local content to promote local culture
Supporting growth of independent media	Six said it was "very important"; four said it was "important"; one said it was "not so important"; and two were not sure	Those who said "not so important" were not sure about the discursive meaning of the word "independent"; for instance, they did not think some private media were necessarily "independent"
Raising standards of journalism	13 rated it "very important", while one said it was "important"	There was agreement that training was cardinal to any media development initiative. This point is repeated in different responses by the interviewees
Supporting trade-related bodies	Three rated it "very important"; five said it was "important"; five rated it "not important"	There was a general confusion about the role of trade-related bodies. It was clear that some interviewees did not see the media as "traders"
Local capital	One rated it "very important"	This was raised by the one media commentator as a key issue, particularly for private commercial media
Media management	One rated it "very important"	This was mentioned by two NGO personnel, one of whom stressed the need for training to focus on "management skills" for media personnel

16.3 Media sector focus

In 13 interviews, the interviewees were in favour of supporting "community media" on a larger scale than any other media. One interviewee suggested that support should depend on which media were capable of sustaining themselves.

" *I have my serious reservations with community radio stations in this country because they are incapable of self-sustenance. I don't know for how long they will be funded by donors of one sort or another. It is a nice concept, but its sustainability is questionable, given our economic situation.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

One NGO leader, involved with developing/influencing legislative and regulatory change, expressly favoured support for "private" media.

Although 13 interviewees favoured "community media" over and above other media, a closer examination of their responses showed a tendency towards support to the whole national media system because, as the academic interviewed argued, "each media has its own role to play".

The reasons for supporting community media were varied, among which could be discerned the following:

☐ they are incapable of taking care of themselves;

☐ they are responsive to the people in the community;

☐ they act as an alternative to mainstream state and commercial media;

☐ they provide diversity; and,

☐ they are cheaper to support.

16.4 Type of support most needed/useful

The types of input suggested for the realisation of a media development agenda were diverse. To the extent that they were mostly generic, they are catalogued below without any specific attribution, according to analytical categories developed by this researcher.

16.4.1 Architectural inputs

☐ Support towards a continued public campaign to build a more open society founded on a sound constitutional and legal regime.

☐ Support towards a continued public campaign for the reduction of the crippling tax system, such as import duty on the means of media production, computers, newsprint and transmitters.

☐ Support towards securing infrastructure for the media system in the country, such as printing presses and transmitters.

☐ Support towards a public campaign to facilitate ease of access to financial and banking institutions.

☐ Support towards public advocacy for fair trading in media products, for example non-discriminatory government advertising in media institutions.

☐ Support to research institutions working in the media sector.

16.4.2 Capacity-building inputs

☐ Targeted training, catering for both technical and managerial skills needed to run media institutions as business enterprises.

☐ Special training in advocacy and provision of corresponding materials.

16.4.3 Financial inputs

☐ Funding to media institutions, so designed as to promote "initiative and independence".

☐ Institutional support for media development projects.

16.4.4 International media partnerships

☐ Facilitate the building of more enduring and mutually beneficial partnerships between national and international media organisations.

16.4.5 Public-private sector partnerships

☐ Building the confidence of commercial/business concerns to invest in media markets, as evidenced by what *The Post* had achieved, according to the media commentator.

☐ Facilitating access to financial and banking institutions for media investors/operators.

☐ Instituting measures to ensure that commercial/business interests operated their media "in the public interest".

16.5 Appropriate organisational framework

From the responses to this question, what emerged clearly was the fact that the majority of the interviewees were not well-informed about the debate surrounding the proposal to set up a media development initiative. In a majority of cases, the researcher had to recite to the interviewees the recommendation of the Commission for Africa to set up an "African media development facility". Even this did not seem to invoke any recognition, pointing to the fact that the debate has not yet filtered down to the majority of Africans, even the well-educated class.

The media entrepreneur saw the organisational form of such an initiative in terms of "incorporating different skills" and catering for "both private and public media". The media commentator, for his part, saw it in terms of "a partnership, something involving government, civil society and private business coming together" so that "no one donor will have the leverage to dictate the agenda of the media".

One interviewee was particularly dismissive of the whole idea, saying:

" *These organisations are a waste of time. We have seen them. What have they achieved? What is needed is our own organisations, arising from our own needs. That African Commission is not owned by Africans; it is owned by those who set it up and fund it. It is only the name that is African, nothing beyond that. Even research like this, they will design the format themselves and get Africans like yourself to implement it for them. But the whole thing is theirs.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

He was supported by another interviewee, who said:

" *There is already the e-Commission for Africa under NEPAD, Africa has already signed a lot of agreements – Economic Commission for Africa, Africa Communication Society Initiative and there has been so many of them. What are they achieving? Talking about harmonisation at a continental level when you can not even harmonise at a bilateral level between two countries? Every two weeks they call for meetings; let's discuss this, let us discuss that. Look, it's costly!* "

(Shula Habeenzu, CEO; Government: Communications Authority of Zambia, Zambia)

Other responses, broadly summarised, suggested that the organisational structure should:

☐ have country representatives;

☐ be placed within an existing structure working on media development issues, perhaps linked to the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA);

☐ be constituted as a forum but led by the people on the ground;

☐ be constituted in such a way as to have less dependence on donor funding and more reliance on African governments' financing;

☐ build into the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD);

☐ have a physical office located in Africa, in a country that is generally acceptable to all Africans;

☐ be something like the MTF in Zambia, but with intellectual resources to help train human resources and research the media; and,

☐ be all-encompassing.

Of those who responded, only one actually named some African-based institutions with which such a structure could be aligned, such as the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU).

16.6 Pan-regional versus country-specific initiatives

The responses were diverse. While one NGO interviewee supported the idea of a pan-African initiative, he was emphatic that its mandates should be informed by what is happening at the country level because "that is where the stuff is happening". He also cautioned that such an initiative should not deprive national initiatives of the much-needed funding.

Another NGO interviewee wholeheartedly supported a pan-African initiative, arguing that the kinds of problems to be addressed needed to be resolved at a continental level, with input from the SADC and the African Union.

" *Unless you address African problems in a general term then you will not succeed. For instance, if you have a problem related to Zimbabwe, unless that problem has an interface, say, between Zambia, Botswana it is better it is addressed in a regional form rather than a country.* "

(Amos Chanda, President; NGO: Press Association of Zambia; Zambia)

Two NGOs and the quasi-government communications regulator preferred a country approach, with the government representative citing the examples of Botswana and Mozambique. He also gave the example of Kenya, which had decided to go it alone on issues of ICT infrastructure roll-out because they were fed up by the never-ending talking at the continental level, with little evidence of concrete action. One NGO noted that a country-specific initiative was more localised and had benefits because one could easily monitor it and make follow-ups. The other NGO was concerned about the actual benefits that would accrue to the country in which such an initiative would be "headquartered", arguing that such a country would benefit more than the rest.

One interviewee assumed a neutral position, arguing that both pan-African and country-specific initiatives were beneficial.

> " *What matters is how they are designed and on what basis that cooperation is extended. There is no country that can solve all its problems all by itself in the world today, even the most powerful ones. Even the United States cannot solve all its problems by itself. We need to engage each other.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

This response was partially shared by one NGO interviewee, who said he supported both types of initiative, but noted that "the advantage with a pan-regional initiative or perspective might be that there are certain cross-cutting issues in most of these countries which might be beneficial not only to one country but to other countries as well and that might also be cost-effective".

Although there appeared to be general support for pan-African initiatives, there were, as indicated in some responses already, some caveats. These can be summarised below.

☐ Pan-African initiatives needed to reinforce country-specific media development activities, as suggested by one private media practitioner.

☐ Pan-African initiatives would only be useful when "grappling with a problem that was already solved in another country", and thus serve as a forum for the "sharing of ideas and experiences among countries," according to one NGO personnel.

☐ Pan-African initiatives would be useful as a point of cultural interaction, according to the academic.

☐ Pan-African initiatives could serve as a forum for harmonising trading practices to the benefit of media businesses, as suggested by the media entrepreneur.

One interviewee assumed a particularly wary attitude towards pan-African initiatives, saying that:

> " *The problem with pan-regional or continental bodies is the tendency for the headquarters to begin to grow as an entity in and of itself, growing interests that might begin to be at crossroads with the interests of other members. I think if you are going to have something like that, you can have a regional/continental secretariat but I think the core activity must be lodged within specific countries. The funding must be controlled by the chapters of the specific country with the regional/continental body merely playing an oversight role.* "

(Leonard Kantumoya, Commentator; Analyst: University of Zambia, Zambia)

16.7　Initiatives relating to developmental content

The initiatives proposed on the question of development-related media content were just as varied as any so far dealt with. One NGO interviewee stressed the necessity of involving "the locals". This view was shared by the media entrepreneur, who said there was a need to involve "community members, so that issues that concern them are addressed by the media, as opposed to the media/stakeholders sitting somewhere and deciding on their behalf".

Another NGO official viewed "specialised training" for journalists as a necessary component. This was shared by three other interviewees, including two NGOs and the media commentator. One NGO interviewee suggested that such specialised training could help towards providing "critical or analytical stories on issues". The second NGO leader had a more cautious approach, saying that media practitioners needed to "develop an interest which they like and which they are able to respond to. And then follow through on that. I think training initiated like that would be very useful". The media analyst had an all-embracing approach and warrants being quoted at length:

> " *I am not sure, but again I think it has to do with capacity building, strengthening training and exposing media players already in the field to new skills and orienting them to developmental issues so that they can begin to devise programming that is development-oriented or that facilitates development because, at the moment, the tendency is to just produce media fare that may be oriented towards entertainment or towards just quoting who said what and not really relating that to the wider development agenda. I think people need to be trained to improve their analytical skills because it is when people are able to analyse issues that they are then able to devise programming that tackles developmental issues.* "

(Leonard Kantumoya, Commentator; Analyst: University of Zambia, Zambia)

The quasi-state regulator interviewed suggested a specific initiative: the creation of "a universal access fund" for, among other things, content development on ICT-and-development issues that would benefit "more than one community". He gave the example of the Indian Institute of Technology (ITT) as a model that could be emulated to cultivate "centres of excellence" in ICT.

Another more specific response came from the public media practitioner, who cited the setting up of the Broadcasters Union against HIV/AIDS by SABA as a good example of how the media could initiate development content. He was quick to recommend that any new initiatives should be undertaken through existing structures as, in his words, "you don't want a situation where you are forming too many of them".

In one interview, the interviewee was not convinced that there was a problem of developmental content. The problem, he argued, lay with the media managers.

> " *If we change the people who make decisions as to what goes into the paper, I think we would be able to see a lot more of this kind of stories.* "

(Kenny Makungu, Head of Department; Academic: Department of Mass Communication, University of Zambia, Zambia)

This view seemed to have another proponent, although this one was more interested in what might be termed "mutual agenda-setting in content development". To quote him at length:

" *You know, that fragmentation to me has not made much sense, the so-called developmental journalism. It is an interesting concept, but it is empty. It is similar to 'sloganeering'. A media organisation should reflect all aspects of the life of the community in which it is inserted. If HIV is a reality in a community… that awareness will arise from the activities going on in that community. Yes, the media can table its own views of the agenda for discourse on those issues, but the primary driving force is the activities in the community. The media is just a component of that, whose job is to seek the views, opinions and works of other people, blend them and transmit them.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

16.8   Initiatives to develop independent media

Responses reflected a variety of perspectives on this issue. One interviewee representing the Press Association of Zambia (PAZA) argued that "media that is financed through advertising revenue is extremely independent from a political angle. I know that advertisers do have an influence, sometimes, on media content. But the issues that concern them normally do not undermine the broader development values of society as the political dimension would". He then concluded that there was a need to support an enabling environment in which advertising would flourish. This opinion was shared by the semi-government regulator, who did not want to see "independent" media saddled with "developmental issues", saying that they were not a charity. He noted that advertising was important to the survival of independent media because "it is a business".

Several interviewees, ranging from public media, NGOs, to commentators, suggested training as one way of supporting an independent media. This view was elaborated on by another interviewee drawn from the private media sector, who noted that there had been very little training in advertising.

" *You hardly find advertising sales executives being trained. We are running a training programme right now. I am teaching sales executives whom we have just recruited. We have a programme to train them. In the past we just used to get those people, introduce them around and throw them on the field without training them. You don't get much out of it.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

Leonard Kantumoya (University of Zambia) elaborated on the above point, saying there was a need to "strengthen their business skills. They need business skills, management skills. I think if they are equipped with business skills, then they should be able to run their businesses as viable business concerns, and they should be able to do their budgeting, their costing, cost control, and the rest. I think they do need training in business management."

One NGO interviewee, representing the media-and-gender sector, did not think it was suitable to create any initiative to support private media because "it will mean that the level of support given to community or public media will be also reduced". This interviewee saw independent media as answering to their own internal profit-oriented logic and did not need financial support from elsewhere.

In two interviews, consisting of a public media practitioner and an NGO official, the respondents concentrated on the importance of relevant content that would attract a sufficiently large audience to "sell" to the advertisers.

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

In 13 interviews, covering all the sectors interviewed, interviewees stated that any media development initiative needed to incorporate notions of democratisation. Two interviewees, a government regulatory agent and an academic, were ambivalent, interrogating the nature of democratisation implied in the question. One of the two asked:

> " *Do countries get more democratic due to free flow of information or free flow of information encourages democratisation…? So for me, really, it is just more to do with… ensuring people's freedom of access to information. Now if that's democratisation, that is well and good, but it must be linked to that element of enabling people to access information.* "

(Shula Habeenzu, CEO; Government: Communications Authority of Zambia, Zambia)

The other one expressed his ambivalence in these terms:

> " *Yes, if we define democracy as people being free in general. No, if we standardise democracy and say the only true democracy is the democracy that exists in such and such a place and then try to say that everybody should adopt that model.* "

(Kenny Makungu, Head of Department; Academic: Department of Mass Communication, University of Zambia, Zambia)

The variability in the responses of those who answered in the affirmative can be expressed in the following direct quotations:

> " *The media actually keeps us informed about what those we have elected are doing with our taxes, how that is being used. I think it is an essential part of the democratisation process.* "

(Lucy Muyoyeta, Chairperson; NGO: Non-Governmental Organisations Coordinating Council, Zambia).

> " *At MTF, we are trying to encourage, and we are even thinking of trying to enshrine in the conditions, some requirements that the institutions that are applying for support or new projects that we are developing will dedicate certain time to governance issues and democratisation. This is more important because from the trips that we have made in the rural areas sometimes it is very surprising to find that people don't even know anything about this so-called democracy we talk about in towns.* "

(Bestone Ng'onga, Executive Director; NGO: Media Trust Fund, Zambia)

" *Democracy is the cornerstone for any developing country which wants to be accepted by the world.* "

(Ben Kangwa, Director of Programmes; Media Practitioner, Public Sector: Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, Zambia)

" *Unless democracy survives, then these other issues of development will fall apart.* "

(Amos Chanda, President; NGO: Press Association of Zambia, Zambia)

" *Media is a very powerful tool in the emancipation of people. Any source of information is important in educating an individual and the way democratisation can take root is by using media to help the masses understand the vital ingredients of democracy.* "

(Moses Odhiambo, Country Manager; Media Entrepreneur: Steadman Research, Zambia)

" *Democracy is all about popular participation in national issues, in national affairs, national politics and in decision-making on issues that affect everybody. So the sharing of information is crucial.* "

(Leonard Kantumoya, Commentator; Analyst: University of Zambia, Zambia)

" *Democratisation is important and the media is a critical factor in democratisation.* "

(Bestone Ng'onga, Executive Director; NGO: Media Trust Fund, Zambia)

" *Democracy depends on the media. The moment the media doesn't bring out correct information, then it will distort democracy, or the moment the media brings out a picture that even a dictator is a democrat, then that is the direction that the country might take.* "

(Goodwell Lungu, Executive Director; NGO: Transparency International Zambia, Zambia)

" *The two are inseparable. It is just different sides of the same coin. Both meet each other and feed into each other. It's very difficult to develop the best media system without strong democratisation. And if the media is bogged down into fighting for freedom, other things suffer.* "

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

" *Democracy is so important; it is actually a key to media development.* "

(Fanwell Chembo, National Director; NGO: MISA-Zambia, Zambia)

17. Summary and Conclusions

The key findings of this study are summarised below.

17.1 Media development: an organisational perspective

☐ The past five years have seen a mushrooming of media development organisations and media outlets.

☐ The period has also seen greater and better-coordinated civic activism in support of media development.

☐ There has generally been a diversity of media content, reflecting the plurality of media outlets.

☐ There has been more legislative and policy change, although, in some cases, the state has proved to be a stumbling block in the implementation of the laws.

17.2 Media development initiatives

☐ There is evidence of a diversity of media development initiatives in Zambia – some of these are originated and financially supported by the media themselves while others are a partnership between media support organisations and donors.

☐ There is a need for the involvement of multiple actors in any media development initiative, as evidenced in the success of a multi-stakeholder campaign for legislative reforms and the withdrawal of VAT on newspapers and magazines.

☐ Media development activities need to have an inbuilt sustainability plan in order to have a lasting impact.

☐ Donor support needs to have less conditionality and promote the recipient's independence and innovativeness.

☐ Culture must be built into any media development initiative for such an initiative to have resonance among the beneficiaries.

☐ Commercial interests are increasingly seen as an important part of any media development initiative, particularly if they can be persuaded to invest in the media sector.

17.3 Developing the environment for success

☐ A thriving economy is a must for the success of media development initiatives, especially if it provides an enabling environment for, among other things: (i) investment in the media sector; (ii) less taxation on the means of media production; and, (iii) increased remuneration for media practitioners.

☐ An enabling political environment is needed for the growth of the media, especially if it is underpinned by: (i) positive media reforms; (ii) adherence to the rule of law by state agencies; (iii) an overhaul of media-unfriendly laws and policies; (iv) civic activism; and, (v) media activism.

☐ There is an evenly split perception that there is state support for media development, indicating the discursive nature of the discourse of media development in the country.

☐ There is a strong view that donor funding to media development projects has been on the decrease in the past five years.

☐ There is consensus that such donor funding must be scaled up and reconfigured in such a way as to promote sustainable media and media support institutions.

17.4 Strategic priorities

☐ Capacity building/training is identified as a key priority for any donor-backed media development initiative.

☐ Other priorities mentioned include the following: (i) media-institutional sustainability; (ii) constitutional and legal reforms; (iii) infrastructural development, especially in the area of ICTs; and, (iv) access to capital.

☐ Areas of focus mentioned frequently as needing attention are: (i) developing media frameworks; and, (ii) the development of local content.

☐ The focus of support identified by the largest number of interviewees with regard to media is "community media", followed by "public media".

17.5 Other findings

☐ The type of support most needed includes: (i) architectural inputs (general external environment that includes improvements in the economic, political and other spheres of society); (ii) capacity building inputs; (iii) financial inputs; (iv) international media partnerships inputs; and, (v) private-public partnerships inputs (commercial interests working in tandem with public interests to support investment in media development).

☐ There is consensus that pan-African initiatives would be more effective than country-specific initiatives, with the proviso that any such initiative must be informed and influenced by the priorities at country level.

☐ Appropriate training is generally viewed as a panacea for enhancing development content in the media, just as it is seen as an antidote for sustaining media that are dependent on advertising and sponsorships.

☐ The notion of "democratisation", contested by some interviewees, is generally viewed as a positive aspect of any media development initiative.

Most of the findings of this study generally agree with those reported in the section of this report. In that sense, they can be taken as "validating" the findings of this.

It must be acknowledged, at the same time, that some interviewees did not have specialist knowledge about the subject of media development. This might account for what appear to be generic answers to some of the questions. In addition, some interviewees were tempted to speak from their particular areas of expertise. In one instance, it was evident that the interviewee wanted to speak about media development from their own discursive position as an ICT expert.

18. Appendices

Appendix 1: Interviewees

Elias Banda, Coordinator; NGO: Zambia Community Media, Forum (ZaCoMeF), Zambia

Amos Chanda, President; NGO: Press Association of Zambia, Zambia

Fanwell Chembo, National Director; NGO: Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), Zambia

Margaret Chimanse, Chairperson; NGO, Zambia Media Women's Association

Shula Habeenzu, CEO; Government: Communications Authority of Zambia, Zambia

Ben Kangwa, Director of Programmes; Media Practitioner, Public Sector: Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, Zambia

Leonard Kantumoya, Commentator; Analyst: University of Zambia, Zambia

Goodwell Lungu, Executive Director; NGO: Transparency International Zambia, Zambia

Kenny Makungu, Head of Department; Academic: Department of Mass Communication, University of Zambia, Zambia

Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia

Lucy Muyoyeta, Chairperson, NGO: Non-Governmental Organisations Coordinating Council, Zambia

Antonio Mwanza, President; NGO, University of Zambia Student Union

Bestone Ng'onga, Executive Director; NGO: Media Trust Fund, Zambia

Moses Odhiambo, Country Manager; Media Entrepreneur: Steadman Research, Zambia

Elizabeth Pemba, Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: Radio Phoenix, Zambia

Appendix 2: Summary of media development projects/activities described in Section 14

Interviewee name and organisation	Specific media development project: title	Key purpose/ aim of project/ initiative/ or activity	Project time span (dates or length in months/years of project) and status (ongoing etc)	Outcome sought	Target audience	Evaluation method used (if any)	Result of evaluation	Is/was this project/activity considered by your organisation to be a success? On what basis?
Moses Odhiambo/Stead man Research Services	All Media Products Survey	Monitor media audience consumption patterns	2003/ongoing	Produce data on consumption patterns for use by media and advertisers as well as other users	All users of data, especially media operators and advertisers	None	None	Successful, as media houses made use of the data to justify their case before advertisers and develop new strategies
Fred M'membe/ *The Post*	Training of new recruits	Impart journalistic, sales and other skills to new employees of *The Post*	2003/ongoing	Well-trained cadre of journalists for *The Post*	New recruits	Informal, internal evaluation	Positive	Coverage of the newspaper improved, including marketing, etc.
Fanwell Chembo/MISA Zambia Fred M'membe/ *The Post* Margaret Chimanse/ ZAMWA Amos Chanda/ PAZA	VAT removal campaign	To compel the minister of finance to remove VAT on newspapers and magazines	Feb 2006-Mar 2006	To compel the Minister of Finance to withdraw the imposition of VAT on the cover price of newspapers and magazines	Minister of Finance; MPs and other policy-makers; ordinary citizens	None		Successfully completed, as VAT was removed by the minister in question
Goodwell Lungu/ Transparency International Zambia	Investigative reporting	To provide financial, logistical and other support to selected journalists to report on petty corruption	2005-6/on-going	To provide investigative skills, funds and other logistical support to enable selected journalists to report on petty corruption	Media; public officials and citizens	None		Journalists trained; but overall impact of project not ascertained, as project on-going at the time of the interview

Appendix 2: Summary of media development projects/activities described in Section 14 – continued

Organisation	Activity	Aim	Date	Objective	Participants/target	Evaluation	Rating	Success
Elias Banda/ Zambia Community Media Forum	Training	To provide training for board members of community radio stations	2005-6	To ensure that board members understand their roles vis-à-vis the management of community radio stations, and hence reduce conflict between the two structures	Community media governors; community media managers	None		Anecdotal evidence of success, as there is less conflict among ZaCoMeF member community radio stations
	Needs assessment for community radio stations	To generate data on the functional and technical needs of the community radio stations in the country	2005/ongoing	To ensure provision of reliable data on the needs of community radio stations, so as to better support them	Community radio stations; ZaCoMeF	None		Successful, as research undertaken, although some aspects of it needed to be re-done
Kenny Makungu/ University of Zambia	Curriculum review	To review the curriculum of the department	Ongoing	To review the undergraduate and Master's curricula to bring it in line with the demands of industry	Lecturers; students; alumni; DANIDA; industry leaders	Yes	Positive	Successful, as more people from industry enrolling in the study programmes
	Lusaka Star – teaching newspaper	To set up a newspaper as a teaching tool	Date not recalled/ ongoing	To set up a teaching newspaper (Lusaka Star) for use by staff and students	Students; staff; Lusaka community members	Yes	Positive	Successful, as it achieved its objective of being used as a teaching tool. Unsuccessful, as it never became sustainable as donor funding ceased

Bestone Ng'onga/Media Trust Fund	Rural radio	To develop rural radio stations	Ongoing	To give grants to rural radio operators	Rural radio operators	None		Successful, as radio stations set up and operating
	Training for grantees	To develop management skills	2003	To impart skills to media owners who had got grants from MTF	Grantees	Yes	Positive	Successful, largely because it was the first of its kind
Shula Habeenzu/Communications Authority of Zambia	Universal Access Fund for content development	To facilitate the development of local content on ICT issues	2006/ongoing	To set up a "universal access fund" in support of content developers	Content developers, including media practitioners	None yet		Not yet assessed, as it was in the pipeline
Amos Chanda/Press Association of Zambia	PAZA News	To set up a newspaper within PAZA circles	Ongoing	To set up a tool to be used for advocacy on issues of good governance	PAZA members; other NGOs; embassies	None		Successful, but hard-pressed for donor funding
	Institutional analysis	To do a SWOT analysis of PAZA	Actual date not recalled, but a one-off project	To assess the board-management relationship in PAZA	PAZA members; staff; board; donors	Yes (the project was an evaluation in itself)	Both negative and positive	Bloated board structure and too powerful; served to streamline the organisation
Fanwell Chembo/MISA-Zambia	"Freeing the airwaves" campaign	To enact legislation to liberate broadcasting from state control	2000-6/ongoing	To persuade the state to enact IBA, Public Service Broadcasting, and Freedom of Information Acts	Parliamentarians; government policy-makers; the President; the public	None		Successful, as the IBA and ZNBC (Amendment) Acts were passed in 2002. Non-implementation of the Acts seen as government's "failure". Freedom of Information Act campaign not successful, largely because of state reluctance

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19. Case Study

Media activism in Zambia: the case of the value-added tax (VAT) that never was

On 3 February 2006, the Zambian Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, the Hon. Ng'andu P. Magande announced in his budget speech the introduction of value-added tax (VAT) on the cover price of newspapers. More specifically, the minister argued that "in an effort to broaden the tax base and reduce the cost of production, the Government proposes to amend the VAT Act so as to standard rate the supply of newspapers and magazines. This measure will result in a revenue gain of K5.2 billion[1] (Magande, 2006).

The extension of VAT to media production must be understood against the backdrop of a regime pressured to reduce tax in most other areas of economic activity and increase its spending on social services. In turn, this was a consequence of the country having reached the so-called Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) 'Completion Point', a situation whereby Zambia's foreign debt stock was significantly reduced and its debt servicing thus lessened.

Under pressure from labour unions, the minister was forced to increase the exempt threshold of Pay As You Earn (PAYE) and increase the tax bands. By so doing, the Government was set to lose about K39.5 billion. In addition, to make it "possible" for Zambians to borrow from commercial banks so as to enable them to participate in economic activities, the minister reduced the lending interest rates and incurred a loss of K4.1 billion (Magande, 2006).

Subjecting newspapers and magazines to VAT, the minister reasoned, would help to recoup most of the losses he had incurred elsewhere. Clearly, this demonstrated that the minister viewed newspapers and magazines as legitimate profit-making businesses that needed to be "caught" in the tax "net".

For their part, media practitioners complained that this measure would entail a sharp increase in newspaper and magazine prices, putting them beyond the reach of a large section of the already over-taxed Zambian citizenry. They feared that there would be job losses following the introduction of VAT because newspapers and magazines would have difficulties sustaining their operations under the new tax regime.

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[1] On 14 June 2006, the exchange rate between the Zambian Kwacha and the US Dollar was roughly K3400 to US$1.

It was for this reason that media houses, together with media support organisations, resolved to mount a public campaign to compel the minister to rescind his decision. The enormity and urgency of this campaign was such that several interviews in the transcripts kept referring to this issue as a classic case of how politico-technocratic decision-making could be thwarted by civil society pressure. This must be viewed against the background of the mushrooming of NGOs, the net effect of which was to help create a critical mass to advocate for a more enabling political, economic and legislative environment within which the media could perform effectively and efficiently. There was strength in numbers. In a nutshell, this is what this case study is about.

The perspectives on this issue were varied. It was not clear who started the campaign; what is patently clear, however, is that there was united activism that saw the Minister of Finance back-track on his proposal which, as a matter of fact, had already been effected into law. What this meant was that Parliament had been deprived of the opportunity to debate the matter at the committee stage, where there would be the possibility of influencing law-makers. As chairperson of the Parliamentary Estimates Committee, Emmanuel Hachipuka observed that the case brought to his attention by the campaigners could not be heard by his committee because the VAT on newspapers and magazines was already in effect. He explained that the Finance Minister had used his delegated authority to introduce the tax measure. The solution was to take the matter to the Speaker, who would in turn table it before the Parliamentary Committee on Delegated Legislation.

The Minister of Finance *did* rescind his decision. What were the key factors that might have accounted for this turn of events? The follow points explain.

A common goal

Both media practitioners and media support organisations joined hands to pursue the matter in unison. Although no funding was secured from any donor for this activity, confirmed by Fanwell Chembo, National Director of MISA-Zambia, in the transcript, the groups were persuaded to use their own resources to push for the removal of the VAT.

Six organisations came together. These were: MISA-Zambia; the Press Freedom Committee of *The Post* newspaper; ZAMWA; the Press Association of Zambia PAZA; the Society for Senior Zambian Journalists (SSZJ); and the ZUJ.

A common strategy

All the media groupings presented their case before the Parliamentary Estimates Committee and other committees of the National Assembly. Their *presence* communicated the gravity of the case to the authorities. According to Margaret Chimanse, Chairperson of ZAMWA, in the transcript, the fact that the groups were united and involved other stakeholders, including ordinary citizens, was a sign of their common strategy. The "false" boundaries between "state" and "independent" media were broken down. For example, the *Zambia Daily Mail* allowed one of its members of staff, Amos Chanda, President of PAZA, to take the lead in championing the campaign.

In a rather lengthy quotation, Amos Chanda, in the transcript, narrates the events leading up to the decision by the minister to scrap the VAT:

> *We did meet very key Parliamentary Committees: Committee on Information; Committee on Delegated Legislation; and Committee on Estimates of Expenditure. They did tell us that the Minister went behind them and signed an instrument, so we were wasting our time before those committees. They could only deal with things that were not law. The Minister used a statutory instrument and effected that [decision] at midnight… So we were advised by Parliamentarians to petition the Speaker, which we did. The Speaker did not write to us but we knew that that pressure was getting into other offices. Diplomats did encourage us and they were saying the campaign we were doing was very genuine and in their own way, they were using those arguments (they later told us) to put pressure on government. But above everything else, I think the Minister of Information, Vernon Mwaanga, did a very commendable job. He did assure us three times and he showed us again in confidence things that he was doing to argue our case. And he told us that… we didn't need to go to the street. I had to… say, look… seven days from now, we are going to the streets and he [the Minister of Information] told me that we would just stifle the negotiations within government which were getting somewhere. I had to return to my friends and tell them that this man says… the President was on his side, after agreeing that the Minister of Finance was out of order. That's how we got it, it was a high-pitched campaign. In terms of the media, we were everywhere in newspapers, we were everywhere on radio and also in terms of riding behind the scenes…*

(Amos Chanda, President; NGO: Press Association of Zambia, Zambia)

A citizens' agenda

The campaign assumed a crescendo that resonated with ordinary members of the public. The arguments were pitched in favour of freedom of expression, not necessarily freedom of the media. Although one might legitimately argue that the media practitioners saw the VAT very much in terms of the economic impact it might have on their sales, they positioned it as an issue of the state against the citizens. This "framing" of the issue could be said to have resulted in the ruling party (the MMD) wanting to be seen to be siding with the citizens.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the news media availed their pages to any ordinary member of the public who wanted to express an opinion in support of the media. This, in a sense, could be said to have reinforced the "gate-keeping" role of the media. There is evidence, in different interviews, to suggest this ideological disposition. For example, Fred M'membe argues:

> *We engaged everyone. We did not work in isolation. We had a strong case which we had articulated. So explanations were given, **we used everybody we could in the system and outside the system** [my emphasis].*

(Fred M'membe, Editor and Managing Director; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post*, Zambia)

Fred M'membe goes on to state:

" *We were the initiators of that because we were the most affected. We were the target, so to speak. But we realised that, on our own, no one would listen to us, so we mobilised our Press Freedom Committee. We generated the materials, the arguments… and we encouraged the Press Freedom Committee to coordinate with PAZA, MISA-Zambia and other stakeholders and it worked.* "

The above point is important to note because *The Post* has traditionally not cooperated with other media bodies. It must indicate that the newspaper felt the need for an organised, jointly supported initiative in order to prevail against the minister's decision.

As Amos Chanda further elaborates in the transcript:

" *We raised very serious questions of a government that was restricting the democratic space available, because if they went ahead and kept the tax on newspapers, then there would be fewer newspapers that we would be able to afford. Therefore the divergence of opinion was going to be narrowed to three newspapers. In our view, the* Times of Zambia *was going to manage, the* Daily Mail *and even* The Post. *Now what happens to these other newspapers that would not? It was going to knock out a lot of people, a lot of newspapers, and along with that it means the democratic space was going to be limited and a government that claims to be democratic cannot do that. So we had to put up those arguments.* "

(Amos Chanda, President; NGO: PAZA Press Association of Zambia, Zambia)

In the name of activism, and not donor funding

Another point to note about the success of this campaign is that it did not rely on donor funding as such. Fanwell Chembo did confirm that they were in the process of submitting a project proposal to the donors to support what they had anticipated would be a country-wide campaign. Before this could be done, the government had conceded under mounting pressure. It is important to underscore this point because it exemplified the use of their own resources by media organisations to bankroll this campaign. Fred M'membe's quote above points to the fact that *The Post* contributed in kind to the initiative. Amos Chanda as well points to the fact that the state media contributed their own resources. This demonstrates that the success of a media development initiative need not be evaluated in terms of the amount of donor funding available.

Thus was the fight against the introduction of VAT won by media practitioners in Zambia.

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