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## Community Media Sustainability: Strengthening Policies and Funding

14 – 15 September 2015

International  
seminar

**BACKGROUND PAPER<sup>1</sup>**

### ***Community Radio Sustainability***

### ***Policies and Funding***

<sup>1</sup> Prepared by Venus Easwaran Jennings, Programme Specialist, with the assistance of Victoria Weidemann. Section for Media Development and Society (CI/FEM/MAS), UNESCO (2015).

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## Executive summary

UNESCO, pursuant to its constitutional mandate, contributes not only to the building of peace and eradication of poverty but also to sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture and last, but not least, communication and information. In that latter field of competence, the Organization strives to promote freedom of expression and media development through projects and programmes planned and implemented within Major Programme V (Communication and Information), with support in the shape of grant allocations from its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Expected result 2 of the Major Programme is the facilitation of pluralistic media, “including by adoption of gender-sensitive policies, and through support for strengthened community media policy”.

The international seminar on “Community Media Sustainability: Policies and Funding” has been organized within UNESCO’s Programme and Budget for 2014-2017 (37 C/5) and is directly linked to efforts to achieve expected result 2. The objective is to pave the way for policies, funding and regulations in favour of stronger community media by providing a forum for the sharing of experience and knowledge on the complementarities with the public service and commercial tiers of the media landscape. The outcome – the compiled papers and recommendations – should provide guidance for decision-makers to promote informed policy initiatives and the partnerships and priority actions required to implement them.

The regulatory bodies introducing or improving community broadcasting policy or legislation have been invited to present their experience, views and concepts alongside the practitioners operating community radio stations. Public service broadcasters will be able to highlight the complementary strengths of community radio and Universal Access Fund (UAF) experts can provide a clearer grasp of innovative ways to mobilize resources.

This background paper provides a non-exhaustive overview of the current state of community media around the world to stimulate open discussion among seminar participants and an exchange of views and ideas to facilitate expeditious policy-making and resource mobilization for the strengthening of community radio.

Emphasis is placed on community radio rather than other media in view of its comparative advantages in terms of affordability and reach, with a particular focus on analogue rather than digital radio as, regardless of overlaps with the information and communication technologies, it is still the predominant, most widely used, radio broadcasting format.

Sustainability is a complex question, fraught with challenges. In the interest of clarity and objectivity, this paper therefore confines itself to observing the strengths and shortcomings of recent policy-making and funding.

The central tenet of community radio is rooted in empowerment and the continuing pursuit of basic needs, the rule of law and a better life. The empowerment of all communities to own, operate and finance their own radio stations is an ideal that reflects aspirations of independence, self-sufficiency and sustainability.

UNESCO strongly advocates support for an enabling environment for community media and the alignment of practices with international broadcasting standards. Community radio, in the context of the post-2015 agenda, is crucial to democratic participation and sustainable development in an inclusive and pluralistic media landscape, in both urban and rural settings.

## Introduction

### **Community radio: the third tier of radio broadcasting**

The broadcast landscape can be said to consist of three tiers – public service, commercial and community broadcasting – each of which differs from the others in terms of ownership, purpose and audience relationship.

Community radio has evolved into a means of asserting local interests, mitigating impacts in post-disaster situations, complementing education in schools and universities, facilitating information flows in restrictive environments, such as prisons, hospitals and refugee camps, and enhancing access to communication and information in both urban and rural settings. The concept of *community*, which is defined by the local context, is becoming increasingly significant with the proliferation of radio stations, including online. Community radio, given its direct access and proximity to grass-roots populations, is seen as complementary to the work of public service broadcaster.<sup>2</sup> It is recognized as a means of advancing social inclusion by creating spaces to broaden public debate and amplify a local voice largely ignored by the mainstream media.<sup>3</sup> As such, community radio provides a specific means of achieving developmental goals and targets, including those of the post-2015 development agenda; target 10 of goal 16, at the time of writing, is to enhance “public access to information and fundamental freedoms”.

Many factors have influenced change in the broadcast media landscape from the 1940s through the 1970s to the present-day, and new technologies continue to offer an ever-wider and more diversified range of affordable options, as well as new challenges. Standard-setting for the implementation of international conventions and human rights has facilitated opportunities for community radio start-up initiatives and, hence, for more voices to be heard on the airwaves. The ideal is for all communities to start up, run and finance their own radio stations; it reflects aspirations of independence, self-sufficiency and sustainability. The regulatory environment for community radio is crucial. While much has changed and the number of stations is growing their sustainability continues to be beset by multiple challenges, especially in the areas of regulatory support and funding.

### **Sustainability**

The challenges to the sustainability of community radio range from confusion as to its purpose and role through top-down initiatives that facilitate editorial control by political and commercial interests to an absence of effective policies and fair regulatory practices. The challenges, according to a UNESCO comparative study of more than 30 countries, can occur in the four critical areas of legal, financial, technical and human resources-related issues.<sup>4</sup> The presence of any or all of these calls for the enforcement of policies that recognize community radio and facilitate fair regulatory practices and financing.

UNESCO has long recognized the significance of community radio in providing audiences with a distinctive choice and opportunities for participation within a wider landscape of pluralistic and independent media. This is also increasingly recognized in other fora with a developmental remit, such as the international Forum on Communication for Development and Community Media on Family Farming convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2014.<sup>5</sup> One reason is the value of community media in promoting transparency and demanding accountability from public officials and private companies, which is key to equitable development. Rural communities, too, should benefit from pluralism. With the right type and level of investment, specific challenges should be addressed to facilitate access to broadcasting that delivers local content and gives voice to the community.

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<sup>2</sup> World Commission of Culture and Development. 1996. *Our Creative Diversity. Report of the World Commission of Culture and Development*. Paris: UNESCO, p.55.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cclho/Documents/UsingMediaToAdvancePHAgendas.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Mendel, T. 2013. *Tuning into development. International comparative survey of community broadcasting regulation*. Paris: UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002246/224662e.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> International Forum on Communication for Development and Community Media on Family Farming (Rome, 23-24 October 2014). <http://www.ccomdev.org/index.php?Itemid=475>

This paper, in order to focus objectively on the many strands with which to build the case for sustainability, seeks to observe the practical position of community radio in a given national media landscape, its complementary public service role in broadcasting, and the availability of donor support and funding mechanisms. An overview of the Universal Access Funds (UAFs) is provided to stimulate discussion on the potential for mobilizing those resources to extend access to community radio to rural populations.<sup>6</sup>

Part one of the paper takes a brief look at the international standards applicable to community radio: their sources, their implementation at the regional level and their relevance to national legal frameworks. It goes on to consider the dynamics and complementarities between community radio and commercial and public service broadcasters with a view to exploiting fully the potential of an enabling legal environment. It also provides examples of the experience of Member States.

Part two provides an overview of the existing financing mechanisms established at the national level to support and sustain community radio operations, taking into account the funding provided by international donors and channelled through government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

In conclusion, the paper underscores the benefits of community broadcasting and the need for stronger, more equitable, policies.

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<sup>6</sup> See the recommendations of the International Forum on Communication for Development and Community Media on Family Farming: <https://www.hogeschoolvhl.nl/photoShare/8556.nl.0.o.Eindeclaratie.pdf>

## 1. International standards for an enabling legal environment

The international standards governing community radio derive from the guarantees of freedom of expression provided under international law. In addition to defining the right to freedom of expression, they underscore the need to ensure access to communication for communities with little or no means to amplify their voice. Community media make an essential contribution within that framework, which is rooted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Principles for media pluralism, established in 1991 in the Windhoek Declaration on promoting independent and pluralistic media, have been echoed in the African Charter on Broadcasting 2001 and endorsed by UNESCO, which addresses the plurality and diversity of communication media in its Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. They have been further strengthened by the Council of Europe, in the recommendation on media pluralism adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2007 (CM/Rec(2007)2), the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the international special rapporteurs on freedom of expression. This has set the stage for the emergence of community media as the third tier of a national media landscape.

The general international standards pertaining to community radio require the state to promote media diversity and protect freedom of expression. They serve to inform and assist decision-makers in developing policies and laws to recognize, define and regulate community broadcasting, and their application is crucial to the fostering of pluralism and an enabling environment.<sup>7</sup>

Steps have been taken at the global level to enforce international standards through a regional approach, drawing on the decisions and statements of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the American and European conventions on human rights, which has led to the establishment of internationally recognized regional standards. At the same time, the fact that there is no universal definition of "community radio" means that the relevant national legislation varies depending on the country and the multiple strands that define the local context. Its enactment in any given country depends, in turn, on the extent to which its laws are enforced and policies implemented. Neighbouring countries, even if they are following recommendations adopted at the regional level, do not necessarily implement their policies in an identical manner.

Countries as far apart as Australia and South Africa legally recognize community broadcasting but others, such as Chile, do not. Pioneering community radio movements in the Philippines and Nepal, for instance, continue to operate within poorly defined legislative frameworks contrary to Ethiopia, for example, where community radio is recent but backed by legal provisions. India has increased its support for this third tier of broadcasting, albeit in an environment where it aspires to the revenue generated by commercial FM radio stations. In Indonesia, community radio is legally recognized but lacking in enabling policies.

Australia and South Africa both have vibrant economies and a viable advertising market, Community broadcasting is clearly defined in their laws and supported with policies and financial resources but its sustainability is not necessarily free from challenges. Ethiopia may have the relevant legislation in place, but its fledgling market economy limits the potential for community radio operations to be fully sustained through advertising revenue. Business prospects are better in neighbouring United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda but those countries lack the policy direction to sustain community broadcasting.

The challenges and complexities occur at many levels and to varying degrees, depending on the extent to which the media landscape has been defined and developed at the national level. To highlight the elements that facilitate an enabling environment for community radio, the next parts of this paper look into the underlying forces in various broadcasting environments.

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<sup>7</sup> The human rights organization Article 19 defines pluralism as follows: "the availability of a wide range of content serving the needs and interests of all different groups in society – is a fundamental concept both to democracy and to the protection of free expression. A State in which only a privileged few can effectively express their opinions cannot be said to be a free society. Such a situation breaches not only the rights of those who are unable to make themselves heard, but also the right of each individual citizen to be well-informed and to receive information from a variety of sources. For these reasons, international law requires States to take steps to safeguard pluralism". <http://www.article19.org/resources.php/resource/3022/en/international-standards:-regulation-of-broadcasting-media-sthash.4qmOcvpG.dpuf>

## 1.1 Complementarities with commercial radio

Radio is a preferred medium of communication in the developing world because of the low production and operational costs, accessibility and extensive reach within the population. Its reach and local relevance also make it a highly cost-effective generator of advertising revenue in developed countries such as the United States of America where, as the leading supplier of audio, radio reaches the vast majority of domestic market consumers.<sup>8</sup>

While commercial radio is driven by the need to generate profits, community radio has a mission to serve geographic communities and communities of interest on a non-profit basis. Unlike commercial stations and public service radio, its primary purpose is to provide a local platform that serves to crystallize the identity of citizens and amplify their voice at the grass-roots level. To operate effectively, community radio relies on an enabling legal environment that provides it with legal recognition and, at the same time, fosters political appreciation of its role and facilitates resource mobilization and the establishment of adequate support mechanisms.

The speed of change in the overall radio broadcasting sector, especially with the emergence of multi-platform technology and the pressures on the commercial sector, has given rise to an interesting challenge. In an advanced media environment, commercial managers can no longer afford to consider the world of radio as a whole and, when planning their advertising budgets, they segment it into traditional, digital and satellite platforms and analyse behaviour patterns to see whether the consumers can be made to respond to new sales approaches, such as streaming and mobile applications.<sup>9</sup> Against that backdrop, and as if echoing the maxim that “90 per cent is in the community and 10 per cent in radio”,<sup>10</sup> one school of thought continues to argue that radio is not so much about making use of the technology as about materializing a value defined by its audience. Either way, the optimum arrangement for all sectors of radio to generate commercial revenue would appear to consist in a mix of traditional and digital advertising opportunities and the staging of socially beneficial local events and promotional activities. While community radio seeks to generate revenue to sustain its broadcasting operations, however, the business model of the commercial sector regards broadcasting as a means of generating profits for shareholders. Having said that, the community and commercial models – in spite of their differing business focus, with the former relying on co-operative ownership and audience participation – both tend to strive for the common goal of delivering local content that is relevant to their audience.

In that context, regulators and other decision-makers may not be aware of the difficulties facing the non-profit community radio sector. On the one hand, community radio may be clearly acknowledged as having the potential to facilitate dialogue, foster citizen participation, safeguard cultural diversity and play a role in post-disaster situations. On the other, however, neither national broadcasting nor the related laws draw any distinction between community and commercial radio, expecting the former to be sustained through the same market mechanisms as the latter. Regardless of the complementarities, community radio is expected to compete with commercial radio to deliver audiences to advertisers as the primary rationale for its programming choices. In some cases, there are also policies that allow commercial sector actors to obtain community radio licences for profit-making purposes. Even when there are policies in place that cater for the specificity of community radio, the necessary funding is not always available for their implementation, thereby jeopardizing its sustainability.

The common examples mentioned below illustrate the complex interplay between community radio activities, the relevant policies and inadequate resources and support mechanisms, such as community radio station networks. The first two examples show how the community sector often struggles in a predominantly commercial media landscape, and the latter two highlight policies that have facilitated co-existence between the sectors.

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example, the findings of the United States radio network audience ratings survey (RADAR 102) conducted by the Arbitron Inc. research company in September 2009: <http://newradio.com/NRS/22441>

<sup>9</sup> Paragon Consulting Network. 2009. *The New Radio Business Model*. [http://www.paragonmediastategies.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/New-Radio-Model\\_061909.pdf](http://www.paragonmediastategies.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/New-Radio-Model_061909.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Zane Ibrahim, late founder of Bush Radio, Cape Town (South Africa), cited in Mansell, R. and Raboy, M. (eds.). 2011. *The Handbook of Global Media and Communication Policy*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

- In Brazil, the fact that it can take up to 10 years to obtain a community radio station licence has not prevented thousands of community radio stations from going on air, even before the sector was officially recognized in 1998. There are an estimated 4,500 licensed stations in Brazil and a further 10,000 operating without a licence. They are prohibited by law from establishing a single network, quotas are imposed to limit their transmission and access to electric power, and they “may not carry advertising and may only accept sponsorship ‘in the form of cultural support for the programs being transmitted’ and only from entities based in the service area. They are also prohibited from selling broadcasting services or even their programmes. There is no national public system of funding support for community radios in Brazil”.<sup>11</sup>

The community radio movement in Brazil accuses political and religious groups of undermining editorial independence, over-emphasizing the need to rely on advertising, and manipulating the law for their respective interests.<sup>12</sup> International donors, including the European Union, support community radio in Brazil and acknowledge that the sector facilitates the broadcasting of programmes relevant to the local areas that they serve: generally operated by local volunteers and catering to small geographic areas, the stations tailor their programmes to the needs and interests of the people using their facilities.

- A slightly different example can be seen in India, which has introduced reforms that empower community radio by reducing licensing fees and easing application procedures.<sup>13</sup> Non-profit organizations and educational institutions are both eligible to operate a station as long as they acquire approval for a licence and frequency allocation from the ministries of information and broadcasting and communication and information technology. India also provides public funding through the Community Radio Support Fund administered by the information and broadcasting ministry. The centralized management of the Fund has raised concerns about community media becoming an extension of government media. Some members of the country’s Community Radio Forum have called for an independent and autonomous funding mechanism but it has not been considered.<sup>14</sup>

Radio in India is commercially competitive and revenue generation is undoubtedly a priority, with the overall radio sector managed through a number of policies and action plans. The so-called Phase III policy for the expansion of commercial FM stations, for example, has set out to allocate FM frequencies to all cities with a population of 100,000 so as to extend the medium’s reach and increase its share of advertising revenue from four to 12 per cent by means of a convergence of technologies. Localized information and programming for grass-roots audiences is expected to strengthen digital audio broadcasting via Internet Protocol networks. There are concerns that the size of the fees will undermine the policy’s success in a number of resource-strapped cities, however, and no proper studies are available on the potential relevance and impacts or how the interplay between commercial radio and the hundreds of community radio actors might narrow the gaps.

- Mali, according to community media scholars, has among the most democratic broadcasting laws in Africa. There are few bureaucratic and financial hurdles to overcome to set up and operate a station thanks to the fact that licences are issued free of charge, frequency allocation fees are affordable and operators are eligible for tax exemptions. Furthermore, the country’s many radio stations and community radio networks, which belong to the national free radio and television broadcasters union, URTEL, are not required to submit their editorial content for scrutiny to a state or independent regulatory body. Licensing and frequency allocation are nevertheless managed centrally by the Office of Radio and Television Broadcasting at the Ministry of Communication, and the rules and definitions are set out, together with a prescriptive requirement for the stations’ organizational structure, in a government decree issued in 2002.

<sup>11</sup> Mendel (2013).

<sup>12</sup> Hervieu, B. 2013. *The Country of Thirty Berlusconi*. Reporters Without Borders. [http://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/brazil\\_report.pdf](http://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/brazil_report.pdf)  
See also Spuldar, R. 2013. “Brazil’s Community Radios Struggle to Survive”. Article published by Index on Censorship.

<http://www.indexoncensorship.org/2013/04/brazils-community-radio-stations-struggle-to-survive>

<sup>13</sup> Pavarala, M. and Malik, K.K. 2007. *Other voices: the struggle for community radio in India*. New Delhi, Sage Publications India.

<sup>14</sup> Prof. Vinod Pavarala, UNESCO Chair on Community Media at the University of Hyderabad (India), speaking at the fifth National Community Radio Sammelan in New Delhi in March 2015. <http://ucommmedia.in/news/cr-in-india-whose-vision-whose-voice/>

With just five per cent of the population enjoying access to the Internet, and notwithstanding a mobile penetration rate of 80 per cent, radio remains the primary medium for mass communication in Mali.<sup>15</sup> The country's community broadcasting sector continues to face challenges with respect to professional standards and, in spite of the above-mentioned advantages, financial sustainability.

- Uruguay's Community Broadcasting Law allows eligible practitioners to generate revenues from a number of sources, such as government grants, donations, sponsorship and advertising. It is a legal requirement for the revenues generated to be reinvested in the stations, whose operations are monitored through an annual audit.<sup>16</sup> Thirty-three per cent of radio frequencies are reserved for non-profit radio stations, in contrast to other highly restrictive regulatory environments that limit a station's content, range, advertising and funding. All the same, effective implementation of the positive policies has been impeded by lengthy licensing procedures and the limited operating budget of the country's Honorary Commission on Community Broadcasting.

### 1.2 A complementary public service role

Public service broadcasting is traditionally defined as being neither commercial nor state-owned but produced, financed and controlled by the public.<sup>17</sup> It has to meet a number of basic requirements to justify support in the shape of government grants funded by licence fee revenues and other public funding schemes, such as reflecting fairly and impartially a country's regional, cultural and political diversity and delivering programmes that inform, educate and entertain the public, covering news and current affairs, sports and religious and cultural activities.<sup>18</sup> The public service broadcaster often has nation-wide reach, targeting a large and socially, economically, culturally, linguistically and politically diverse population. There is a growing debate as to whether commercial and community broadcasters, among others, should be able to compete for grants to deliver public service programming, which would put paid to a dedicated public service broadcast institution's claim to be the only body capable of delivering public service.

Regardless of that debate, however, it has long been acknowledged that community radio, by its very nature, provides a public service that differs from the service usually associated with a public broadcaster. Community radio, as a third tier of broadcasting, has a narrower focus in terms of its target population, geographic coverage and thematic scope. It is also characterized by a close and interactive relationship with its listeners, providing them with opportunities to help shape the service menu by volunteering to participate in the running of the station.

The focused approach of community radio facilitates a participatory, bottom-up, process through which grass-roots populations are able to pinpoint and take steps to address priority issues in manner conducive to their empowerment. Many women's groups around the world have benefitted from gaining access to a public forum where they can have their voices heard and demand accountability to ensure that basic needs are met and rights are respected. This is hard to achieve at the grass-roots level through public service broadcasting.<sup>19</sup> In some countries, community radio actively complements the public service broadcaster. This can be strategically advantageous for the broadcasting sector as a whole and, hence, can lead to formal collaboration with the public broadcaster, as illustrated by the examples below.

- A study of the Australian community broadcasting sector published in 2008 provides evidence to suggest that "listeners are challenging globalised views of the world", and that "[t]hey see community radio as 'theirs' and the only media able to accurately reflect Australia's cultural

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Leveraging mobile to empower communities in Mali*, a report posted on the website of the Internews non-profit organization on 9 July 2014. <http://www.internews.org/research-publications/leveraging-mobile-empower-communities-mali>

<sup>16</sup> Mendel (2013).

<sup>17</sup> For more on that definition and on public service broadcasting in general, see UNESCO's web page on the subject: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/media-development/public-service-broadcasting/>

<sup>18</sup> Cf. the Irish Public Service Broadcasting Charter, for example: <http://www.rte.ie/documents/about/public-service-broadcasting-charter.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Buckley, S. 2009. Third pillar of media pluralism: community broadcasting in the UK and Europe. Conference paper available at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/events/MeCCSA/pdf/papers/SteveBuckley.pdf>

diversity”.<sup>20</sup> The authors also argue that “the community broadcasting sector in Australia is providing citizens with services that are largely being ignored by commercial media and to some extent the publicly-funded Australian Broadcasting Corporation”. The strength of the community broadcasting sector in Australia and its ability to campaign and lobby assertively to bring attention to people’s needs and rights are shared by its counterparts in countries such as Canada, France and the United Kingdom.

- At the beginning of 2015, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Community Media Association (CMA) signed a memorandum of understanding for a national pilot project to help deliver on their respective public service objectives. With 13 BBC local radio stations taking part, the project builds on earlier cooperation between the two organizations at the local level and seeks to facilitate greater content-sharing, nurture promising journalistic talent and support community and public service media as a vehicle for positive social change. Meanwhile, the Department for Media, Culture and Sport announced Government plans to relax the funding rules for community radio stations – allowing them each to raise up to £15,000 in advertising revenue before the rules took effect – and to extend their licences by up to five years.<sup>21</sup>

### 1.3 Complementaries with public and private broadcasters

Community radio has a history of filling a niche inadequately addressed by the other broadcast media in the aftermath of a disaster or the outbreak of an epidemic, when reliable information is at a premium, as in the examples below.

- Japan’s community broadcasting law, introduced in 1992, was instrumental in enabling community radio stations to rapidly deliver information to the populations affected by the massive Kobe earthquake of 1995. The response was effective because the information disseminated, unlike the news provided by the mainstream media, was tailored to the highly specific contexts and needs of the disaster-struck communities.<sup>22</sup>
- More recently, in 2014, 40 of the 75 radio stations taking part in Liberia’s national Ebola awareness campaigns were community-based. Along with their commercial FM radio counterparts, they covered areas not reached by the public service broadcaster and played a significant role in delivering emergency health information to the affected populations.
- Similar interventions have helped to alleviate the impacts of disaster, such as in the aftermath of the earthquake that hit Haiti in 2010, the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004, the floods in Mozambique and Pakistan, among others, and the recent influx of Syrian refugees into Jordan.

Each emergency has exposed the lack of preparedness of – and under-investment in – the media landscape, in spite of the tributes paid to the many good practices of community radio in areas such as peace and tolerance programming in Chad, Mali and Niger, as well as in conflict prevention, peace-building and intercultural dialogue in countries such as Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Somalia.<sup>23</sup> Societies should invest in community capacity-building so that the infrastructure and institutions are readily available in the event of a disaster.

The long-term sustainability of the stations, and their capacity to make a tangible contribution to the development of their communities, calls for appropriate policies, laws and regulations. These need to be incorporated into national development planning, together with national-level indicators to assess progress in their implementation and impact on society.

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<sup>20</sup> Foxwell, K. et al., 2008. Sounds like a whisper: Australian Community Broadcasting hosts a quiet revolution. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> See the British Government’s press release entitled “Government announces boost for community radio stations”, published by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on 22 January 2015. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-boost-for-community-radio-stations>

<sup>22</sup> Kanayama, T. 2007. Community ties and revitalization: the role of community radio in Japan. *Keio Communication Review*, No. 29.

<sup>23</sup> Aldrich, D.P. 2012. Radio as the voice of God. Peace and Tolerance radio programming’s impact on norms. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 6, No. 6. [http://works.bepress.com/daniel\\_aldrich/20/](http://works.bepress.com/daniel_aldrich/20/)

## 2. Financial support for sustainable operations

One of the particularities of community radio stations is that they are tailored to the specific conditions and needs of the community served. National funding mechanisms have to take that diversity into account, even if it results in as many individual business plans and solutions as there are stations.<sup>24</sup> They support a wide variety of radio stations. Some have proven capabilities in the effective long-term planning of independently sustained activities. Others struggle to make best use of the funding they receive because of poor planning or unforeseen challenges, such as those arising from their reliance on volunteer, hence non-professional, staff. Some do not survive.

The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) promotes the concept of mixed funding sources, rather than a single source, to ensure the independence of the community radio stations supported.<sup>25</sup> That concept is endorsed by a number of regulators such as the French *Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel* (CSA) and New Zealand's Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA), which provide up to 50 per cent of public funding.<sup>26</sup>

National funding mechanisms, where they exist, are managed by state regulators or independent bodies. Their terms and conditions for the disbursement of funds are determined by the directives of their respective governing bodies, in compliance with the prevailing legislative framework. The funding disbursed is supplemented by advertising revenues, where allowable, as well as by voluntary contributions, grants and donations from, among others, international development agencies and non-governmental organizations. In most cases, community radio relies on the participation of unpaid volunteers to complement the core staff, which amounts to a meaningful "subsidy" on the part of the community itself.

In the absence of a national funding mechanism, community broadcasters have to seek support from community interest groups, philanthropists, international development organizations, United Nations agencies and bilateral and multilateral donors. That support is relatively unstable, hence unreliable, and generally uncoordinated at the national level. The introduction of national media development strategies could be the answer.

### 2.1 National funding mechanisms

- In South Africa, resources from the Government, the media industry and donors are disbursed by the independent Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA).<sup>27</sup> The 1993 Independent Broadcasting Act and 1999 Broadcasting Act allow full control of radio by non-profit bodies for non-profit purposes, with financing generated from donations, grants, sponsorship, advertising or membership fees, or a combination of any of the above.<sup>28</sup>
- In Australia, the funding for community radio stations derives from a wide variety of sources but a large percentage is generated by the stations themselves in the shape of voluntary sponsorship, donations, grants and subscriptions. Around five per cent of the overall resources is public money from the Federal Government allocated by the Community Broadcasting Foundation, which also provides an additional allocation to indigenous community radio stations through the Indigenous Broadcasting Programme.
- In France, funding is distributed by the *Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique* (FSER). Until 2008 FSER relied on cross-subsidization, using advertising revenues from commercial radio and television services, but since 2009 its has been financed by a direct government

<sup>24</sup> Fairbairn, J.. 2009. *Community media sustainability guide: The business of changing lives*. Acarta: Internews, p.5. [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADO691.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADO691.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> See the Community Radio Charter for Europe (paragraph 7). <http://www.craol.ie/images/resources/the-amarc-charter-the-community-100715173900.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> See "Licensing Community Radio", statement issued by the United Kingdom Office of Communications (Ofcom) in 2004,. <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/radio-ops/CommRadstrategy.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Buckley, S. et al. 2008. *Broadcasting, Voice, and Accountability: A Public Interest Approach to Policy, Law, and Regulation*. Washington D.C.: World Bank Institute, pp.224-225 . [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2013/06/24/000442464\\_20130624112930/Rendered/PDF/787490PUBox30e00and0Accountability.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2013/06/24/000442464_20130624112930/Rendered/PDF/787490PUBox30e00and0Accountability.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> Fairbairn (2009), p. 8. The 1993 and 1999 acts may be downloaded at <http://www.icasa.org.za>

grant. To be eligible for the funding, a radio station must be run by a non-profit association and receive no more than 20 per cent of its revenue from commercial advertising and sponsorship.

- In Spain, broadcasting is regulated through a number of laws at the national and regional levels but not every region has a specific legal regime for community broadcasting. Diversity and public-interest content are priorities and five per cent of frequencies is reserved for community broadcasters. Catalan law prohibits advertising but allows sponsored programming. Support is available to community broadcasters through the financing generated by a tax on the spectrum usage fees charged to commercial broadcasters.<sup>29</sup>

## 2.2 State financing policies

- In Uganda, public funding is provided under the Uganda Broadcasting Act (section 14(1)) in the shape of government grants and loans, also drawing on the revenues generated by commercial activities, donations, licence fees and advertising. The national broadcasting policy objectives specific to community broadcasting promote increased access to the airwaves for poor and rural communities. The Uganda Communication Commission, the authority responsible for regulating broadcasting and telecommunications, however, does not recognize the distinctive characteristics of community broadcasting. Licensing requirements, for example, are the same for both community and commercial broadcasters.<sup>30</sup>
- In Ethiopia, the broadcasting sector is regulated by a specialized government authority that has oversight of community radio but no funding or training support mechanisms. The Broadcasting Service Proclamation of 2007 (Proclamation no. 533/2007) states that community radio stations should use “income derived from different sources for the operation of the broadcasting station”.<sup>31</sup> Advertising revenue is one possible source but it can only be exploited for 15 per cent of daily transmission time, which most community broadcasters are unable to fill on account of the limited potential of commercial revenue streams. This has led to a dependence on direct government funding, a practice that is largely discouraged by community media advocates.<sup>32</sup>
- In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the communications and information ministry reports that about 25 per cent of the country's radio and television companies are community media organizations.<sup>33</sup> Many receive state support through the so-called communal councils,<sup>34</sup> and are seen by some observers as pro-government.<sup>35</sup> Others, however, tackle the funding issue independently, with or without occasional state support, and manage to engage local audiences in the running of the stations.<sup>36</sup> Some receive small monthly payments from local shops and service providers to help them sustain their operations over the long term, thereby becoming a key component of the informal economy.<sup>37</sup>

## 2.3 International donor support

Bilateral donors, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies provide varying degrees of support for community broadcasting, either through direct assistance or within the framework of wider development assistance programmes. While some critics point out that the direct assistance has tended to be presented in purely financial terms,<sup>38</sup> others recall that the wider initiatives in agriculture or disease

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Mendel (2013), p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Re-thinking the workings of community radios: how community is a community radio in Uganda*, a study published in 2014 by the Unwanted Witness initiative (p. 9). Available online: <https://www.unwantedwitness.or.ug/rethink.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> Article 16 (e). Cf. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4ba79aae2.html>

<sup>32</sup> Mendel (2013), p. 54.

<sup>33</sup> See the BBC article “Media in Venezuela”, posted on the organization's website in 2012: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-19368807>

<sup>34</sup> Fuentes-Bautista, M. and Gil-Egui, G.C. 2011. Community media and the rearticulation of state-civil society relations in Venezuela. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 250-274.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. the above-mentioned BBC article on the media in Venezuela.

<sup>36</sup> Fröhlich, J. et al. 2012. *Community participation at local and community radio stations. An explorative study in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific*, pp. 8-10. A survey by the Catholic Media Council (CAMECO): <http://www.doc4net.com/doc/831326696419>

<sup>37</sup> Fernandes, S. 2005. The growing movement of community radio in Venezuela. <http://venezuelanalysis.com/analysis/1543>

<sup>38</sup> Da Costa, P. 2012. The Growing Pains of Community Media in Africa. *Emerging Lessons Towards Sustainability. Nordicom Review*, Vol. 33, special issue, pp. 135-148.

prevention, for instance, might not regard media development per se as a fundamental long-term objective.<sup>39</sup>

A holistic approach embracing social, institutional and financial sustainability is required by the donors emphasizing the need for outputs that promote gender equality, active engagement on the part of local audiences, and financial accountability.<sup>40</sup>

United Nations agencies sometimes provide media development assistance in line with their respective mandates. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), for instance, in order to fulfil its core mandate to protect and support children, communicates the priorities and informs mothers of the wide-ranging basic needs and rights through a number of channels, including community radio stations. Funding is disbursed to the stations and training is provided to ensure that the right message is delivered to the relevant audience. Community radio is a particularly effective channel because of its grass-roots proximity and ability to provide a public, interactive, platform that fosters the participation and eventual empowerment of the communities served. In the absence of an integrated community radio sustainability plan, however, such support is unlikely to have a lasting effect in the long term.

Progress in media development is difficult to gauge when the assistance is embedded in wider initiatives. Goals and indicators designed for specific issues, such as HIV/AIDS prevention, are not, by their very nature, relevant to community radio within a framework of media development. The identification and monitoring of tangible contributions may require innovative planning that takes into account the basic conditions of the media landscape.<sup>41</sup> On current evidence, the community radio stations receiving assistance through wider development initiatives risk falling into decline once they have achieved their objectives and concluded their work without setting out a strategy for the stations to transition to other sources.<sup>42</sup>

UNESCO, as the only United Nations agency with a direct mandate to promote media development, has produced a number of indicators and tools to strengthen the capacity of Member States in that field, and it also works closely with a wide range of stakeholders to harness their experience and forge partnerships. The new media viability indicators developed by UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) may be useful for mapping the overall media landscape or specific sectors such as community radio, and for identifying the gaps to be addressed through corrective action.<sup>43</sup>

The Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD), an international network of relevant civil society organizations, is lobbying for the media and freedom of expression to be included as core components in the post-2015 development agenda in the hope of securing recognition of the importance of media development as a measure of success in achieving the future sustainable development goals.<sup>44</sup>

#### **2.4 Untapped resources: Universal Access Funds<sup>45</sup>**

Many developing countries have established a Universal Access Fund (UAF) (also known as the Universal Service Fund) to provide total or partial funding, or subsidies, to the private sector to encourage "the roll-out" of ICT services to rural communities. Most UAFs are funded by variable or fixed-rate levies on the gross revenues of telecommunication service providers (usually 1-5 per cent), although revenue derived from fees, such as radio spectrum fees and operator licenses; resources for those in Chile and Mexico, on the other hand, come directly from the national treasury.

UAFs are ideal for management and dispersal by a public body, independently of political interference or pressures from the telecommunications sector.

<sup>39</sup> Myers, M. 2014. *Africa's Media Boom: The Role of International Aid*. CIMA. <http://www.cima.ned.org/resource/africas-media-boom-the-role-of-international-aid/>

<sup>40</sup> See the 2012 annual report of UNESCO's Empowering Local Radio with ICTs project: [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/publications/2012\\_report\\_empowering\\_local\\_radios\\_with\\_icts.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/publications/2012_report_empowering_local_radios_with_icts.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> Myers (2014), p. 14.

<sup>42</sup> Da Costa (2012).

<sup>43</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/IPDC/ipdc59\\_Media\\_viability\\_indicators.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/IPDC/ipdc59_Media_viability_indicators.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> <http://gfmd.info/en/site/pots2015/185/About-our-campaign.htm>

See also the Paris Declaration, World Press Freedom Day 2014, UNESCO.

<sup>45</sup> The following part of the text is based, with permission, on relevant passages of Farming for the Future, the FAO background paper for the International Forum on Communication and Community Media on Family Farming: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4223e.pdf>

Globally, the UAFs have been used primarily to support the “roll-out” of physical infrastructure in rural areas, such as fixed-line public payphones and community Internet-access points. El Salvador is noteworthy in that its UAF has to date only funded electrification projects.

One common feature of UAF dispersal schemes is a “reversed subsidy” allocation: telecommunication service providers compete through public tenders for project funding and the bid requesting the lowest subsidy is awarded the contract; successful examples of this may be found in Chile,<sup>46</sup> and to some extent Brazil,<sup>47</sup> although critics point out that the elimination of political interference and efforts to foster maximum competition within the telecommunication sector allows private companies to compete aggressively to reach the farthest-flung communities.<sup>48</sup>

UAFs have been widely introduced in Africa, even though the telecommunication sector has not often been fully liberalized and former state-owned telecommunication companies remain the dominant service providers.<sup>49</sup>

Uganda is considered to have one of the leading UAFs in the region in terms of best practices.<sup>50</sup> After 13 years in operation, however, the fixed-line telephony penetration rate in rural areas remains at around one per cent while the mobile telephony rate is approaching 28 per cent.<sup>51</sup> One wonders whether, alongside telephony, the UAF can support community radio as a means of strengthening communication in rural areas.

In the United Republic of Tanzania, where fixed-line and mobile telephony reach 0.3 and 46 per cent of the population respectively, 97 per cent of the people taking part in a recent study said that they had used a public fixed-line payphone in the previous month.<sup>52</sup> Public payphones still represent critical infrastructure, especially for those who lack ready access to, or cannot afford to use, mobile phones – mainly women and poor farmers. This boosts the relevance of radio, particularly at the community level, as the most affordable and viable means of mass communication. Can a case be made to prioritize resources for community radio in line with the country’s telecommunications needs and within its broader communications policy framework?

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<sup>46</sup> Caspary, G. and O’Connor, D. 2003. *Providing Low-cost Information Technology Access to Rural Communities in Developing Countries: What Works? What Pays?* Paris: OECD Development Centre.

<sup>47</sup> LADCOMM Corporation. 2013. *Survey of Universal Service Funds: Key Findings*. London: GSMA.

<sup>48</sup> Caspary & O’Connor (2003).

<sup>49</sup> Calandro, E. and Moyo, M. 2010. Is the Universal Access Fund in Africa Creating an Enabling Environment for ICT Infrastructure Investment in Rural and Perceived Uneconomic Areas? Paper presented at the 5th Communication Policy Research Conference (CPRsouth5). <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1724465>

<sup>50</sup> OECD-DAC. 2004. Leveraging Telecommunications Policies for Pro-Poor Growth Universal Access Funds with Minimum-Subsidy Auctions. <http://www.oecd.org/countries/uganda/42702530.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Dorward, L. 2013. Universal Service Fund and Digital Inclusion for All Study. Paper presented at an ITU-D conference.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

## Conclusion

In many States' experience, and in the light of the international broadcasting standards, community radio is a core component of the media landscape and makes a unique contribution to development and democracy. Every State should arguably regard it as an obligation to create an enabling legal environment for the medium to flourish as a legally recognized core component of that landscape, in complementarity with the other – public service and commercial – broadcasters.

Indeed, as an increasing number UNESCO Member States take steps in that direction, it is useful to recall not only the differences but also the complementarities between this distinctive broadcast medium and the rest of broadcasting environment, and to provide it with specific policies, regulations and resource support within the wider framework of overall communications policy. Among the key issues to address, it is important to ensure:

- the provision of clear regulatory conditions and policies for the proper functioning of community radio, with broadcasting licences issued to the stations legitimately representing the community rather than interests of a political or opportunistically commercial nature;
- respect for the non-profit rationale of the medium, with measures to prevent the licences from being used for any purpose other than to serve the community. Tangible and realistic requirements should be set vis-à-vis issues of ownership, operational management, funding and programming, with an emphasis on structure, minimum programming quotas and the participation of community members as volunteers, as well as clear and transparent directives to meet the community's needs in terms of information and having a voice.

It is also necessary, in order to achieve that ideal, to ensure an equitable allocation of radio spectrum frequencies in both analogue and digital environments by writing the appropriate provisions into relevant laws and policies. Equally, community broadcasters should be allowed the latitude to disseminate their content using every available system and to develop networks to support and strengthen the radio broadcasting component of the community media sector.

Technical conditions regarding power, range or antenna height limitations should be applied through the licensing process, taking into account the size of the community and how it is defined in the context of the wider broadcasting environment.

Community broadcasting licence fees should comprise fee waivers or discounts and signal distribution costs should be reasonable and affordable, and the broadcasters should be permitted to sustain their operations with revenues generated, within specified limits, from advertising and other sources. At the same time, the authorities have to be aware of the risk of public advertising being misused as a subsidy or patronage mechanism, which is an unsuitable and unsustainable solution that encroaches on the community radio station's independence; state-mediated funding mechanisms, for their part, must be independent and transparent.

UNESCO regards community radio as a core component of a free, independent and pluralistic media landscape, and sees its presence in that environment as an essential marker of democracy and development. Indeed, its increasing importance to democracy and development at the local level has been the driver of the medium's increased prevalence around the world. Community radio, in serving marginalized and low-income populations, will be key to achieving progress towards the internationally agreed goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda .

UNESCO facilitates media development studies around the world by providing indicators for an objective assessment of media landscapes to resolve bottlenecks and the many other challenges that they face. Within the framework of the Media Development Indicators (MDIs), the newly developed IPDC media viability indicators, for example, will enable a sharper focus on a wide range of economic aspects of the landscapes, including their labour markets, financial health, capital environment and value added. Such diagnostic tools are made available to all Member States as well as to the development partners that appreciate the value of media pluralism and, hence, the need for a holistic approach to assessing the sustainability of community radio.

The variegated legal frameworks and funding models of Member States provide an invaluable pool of knowledge and know-how to meet the need for capacity-building based on experience-sharing and a clearer grasp of specific contexts.

UNESCO, in its capacity as the only United Nations agency with a direct mandate to support the development of communication and information, has a duty to foster relevant international dialogue on community radio. In organizing this international seminar, it is providing an opportunity for broadcasting regulators and policy-makers to share their views and concepts for the informed planning and implementation of actions by multiple stakeholders. The recommendations emanating from the seminar may be shared with parliamentarians, government ministers, grass-roots practitioners and the international community to facilitate the strengthening of community radio through partnerships and an enabling legal environment.

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## Annex I

### A driving force in rural communication and sustainable development

The Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) and its constituencies stress the need for inclusive communication policies to ensure access to information and communication in rural areas.<sup>53</sup> Consultations with the representatives of farmer organizations, community media, rural institutions, governments, academia and international development and human rights organizations, among others, have highlighted the importance of cross-sectoral alliances and improved coordination between telecommunication and agriculture ministries and media regulators. Their combined efforts should facilitate the implementation of inclusive, pro-poor, communication policies and the pooling of resources and expertise to enhance communication and information services for farmers and rural communities. Success in achieving those ideals calls for close observation and evaluation of the existing licensing processes, fee structures and funding mechanisms identified as prerequisite measures for community media development, especially in rural areas. In that context, it is worth considering a consultative frequency distribution policy-making process to promote multi-stakeholder engagement and to take into account the resultant recommendations. This may demand long-term confidence-building in the media environments subject to significant political influence, particularly through the consistent promotion of international norms and standards.

According to FAO, rural populations continue to suffer from numerous barriers to access, such as illiteracy, speaking a minority language, inadequate or non-existent infrastructure, including media or telecommunication services, and overly low purchasing power to acquire radio receivers, mobile telephones or computers. The situation is further aggravated, especially for women, by the socially constructed roles that inhibit public speech and participation in decision-making. Community media are often the only channels available in rural areas where “backbone infrastructure, such as fiber optic or copper cable networks and reliable electricity, are scarce and expensive to provide. [...] Overall, the limited revenue that could be reasonably recouped from the low-income people served by such facilities tends to discourage private operators and investors”.<sup>54</sup>

Community radio is a driving force for the facilitation of sustainable development even though it has little visibility in the role. Active national community radio networks, such as in the United Republic of Tanzania, recognize that those benefiting enjoy the fruits of an enhanced flow of information from a small percentage of the nation’s population, mostly in urban areas. The establishment and sustained practice of community radio is assumed to be key to national transformation in view of technological advancements in broadcasting, telecommunication and the Internet.<sup>55</sup> The United Republic of Tanzania is one of the only countries to have integrated community media development into its “One UN” reform operations. Its community radio network effectively participated in the 2014 national road safety and Ebola prevention campaigns.

Enshrining rights to communication and participatory development in international and national legal and policy frameworks does not necessarily lead to their actualization in the lives of family farmers. Disadvantaged populations require specific complementary conditions to effectively lay claim to their rights.<sup>56</sup> These include access to information; group solidarity in advocating for rights; skills and capabilities – including communication and organizational – to advance their claim; help from “allies”, such as larger non-governmental organizations or international agencies capable of assisting in leveraging the claim at the level of the national government; and recourse to a fair adjudicator to consider an appeal in the event of the claim being denied.<sup>57</sup> Often, family farmers and other marginalized communities are not fully aware of their rights. The international human rights framework can be “drawn down” by family farmers and their organizations in the absence of rights protection at the

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<sup>53</sup> Forum on Communication for Development and Community Media on Family Farming convened by FAO and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) (Rome, 23-24 October 2014): <http://www.fao.org/3/a-as888e.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> From a comment posted by a representative of AMARC during an FAO-AMARC online discussion on the occasion of World Radio Day (13 February) 2015 on the subject “Rural radio and community media: empowering rural youth for resilient livelihoods and improved food security and nutrition”: <http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/west-africa/re-rural-radio-and-community-media-empowering-rural-youth-resilient-livelihoods-and-improved-food-21>

<sup>55</sup> Lobulu, W. 2011. *The role of community Media in Tanzania: Challenges and opportunities for democratization and national development*. Research report submitted to Media Council Tanzania. [http://docsfiles.com/pdf\\_media\\_council\\_tanzania.html](http://docsfiles.com/pdf_media_council_tanzania.html)

<sup>56</sup> Conway, T. et al. 2002. *Rights and Livelihoods Approaches: Exploring Policy Dimensions*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

national level.

For urban populations, the use of media to promote transparency and demand accountability of public officials and private companies alike is common practice. This is one reason why independent and pluralistic media are seen as a pillar of modern democratic societies. However, rural communities rarely have access to broadcasters or newspaper journalists and their views are therefore simply not heard in government or corporate meeting rooms located hundreds or thousands of kilometres away. Rural residents receive most of their information through their social networks, such as relatives, neighbours, village leaders or their religious groups; news and information travels mostly by word-of-mouth and can be inaccurate. Even meeting with local officials can require many hours of travel. International standards have to be considered in relation to the different situations of urban and rural populations, as community radio is relevant to both.

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## **Annex 2**

### **Relevant international treaties and conventions, declarations, resolutions and symposia**

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (1990)

The Conference on Environment and Development, or the Earth Summit (1992)

UN General Assembly Resolution 41 on the Right to Development (1993)

The Vienna Declaration adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights (1993)

The People's Communication Charter (1993)

The Declaration of Santiago (1994)

The World Summit for Social Development (1995)

The World Commission on Culture and Development (1996)

The Millennium Declaration (2000)

World Summit on the Information Society (2003, 2005)

The Commission for Africa: Our Common Interest (2005)

The Rome Consensus from the World Congress for Communication for Development (2006)

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (adopted 1981)

The Arab Charter on Human Rights (adopted 2004)

The Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development (2002)

The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (UNGA/RES/60/1)

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)

The outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (2010)

The Istanbul Program of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (2011)

Outcome document of the 13<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (2012)

"The Future We Want": outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development ("Rio+20", 2012)

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