

Because of this history, the media are no longer trusted by the public and government, and most people are suspicious of the journalism profession generally. Under the new government, a few journalists who had survived the genocide and other Rwandan journalists who were living in Uganda went back home and resumed working.



RWANDA

Rwanda lost almost all its journalists during the 1994 genocide; they were among the roughly one million Tutsi and moderate Hutu Rwandans who were killed by extremist armed militia known by the name *Interhemwa*. The genocide came after the death of then-President Juvenile Habyarimana in a plane crash suspected to have been caused by rebels hiding out in Uganda. During this genocide, which lasted for a period of about 100 days, the media stood accused of acting as a tool of hate. Some local radio stations and print media encouraged neighbors to turn against each other. Hutu extremists used the radio to mobilize the Hutu majority, coordinate killings, and try to ensure that the Tutsi were systematically eliminated. Rwandans are still bitter that it occurred with little intervention from Western governments, and it finally ended when the rebel group Rwanda Patriotic Front and the Ugandan Army wrested power away from the perpetrators and stopped the massacres.

Some journalists who are believed to have actively participated in the genocide were investigated by international human-rights groups and were arrested and charged by the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Other journalists chose to go into exile. Among those convicted of genocide, incitement, and crimes against humanity were Hassan Ngeze, the owner of *Kangura* newspaper, and Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza, Ferdinand Nahimana, Valerie Bemeriki, and a Belgian journalist, Georges Ruggiu Omar, of Radio Television des Mille Collines (commonly known as “Hate Radio” in 1994). The UN Tribunal sentenced them to terms ranging from 12 years to life.

Because of this history, the media are no longer trusted by the public and government, and most people are suspicious of the journalism profession generally. Under the new government, a few journalists who had survived the genocide and other Rwandan journalists who were living in Uganda went back home and resumed working. However, the government came up with a new constitution and other laws to ensure that what happened during the genocide could not occur in the future. Rwandan government officials have been heard publicly warning journalists against violation of laws in the name of press freedom.

Rwanda’s overall score of 2.29 reflects fairly strong scores in Objectives 1 and 3, freedom of speech and plurality of news. On the lower end, Objectives 4 and 5, business management and supporting institutions, scored just above and just below a 2, respectively.

RWANDA AT A GLANCE

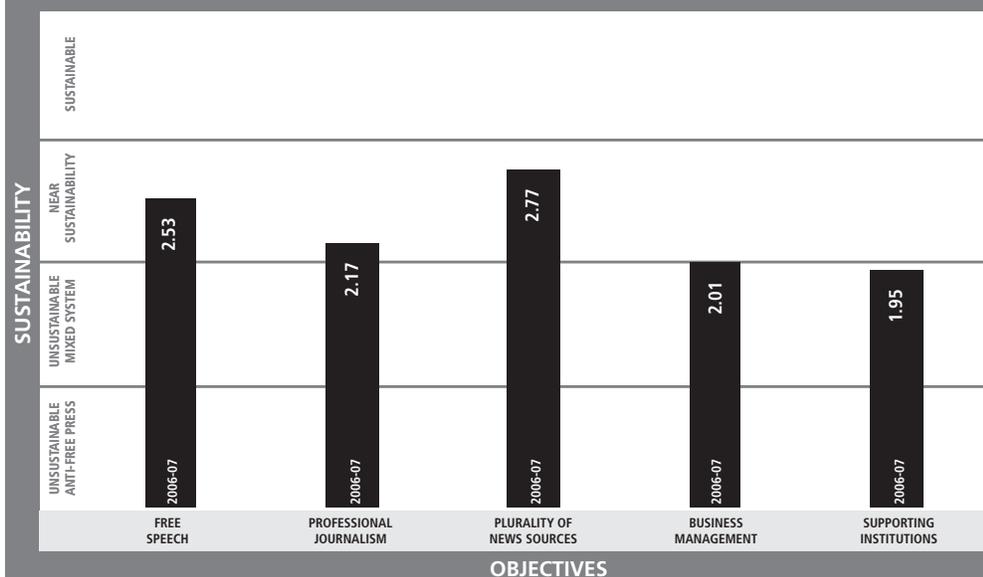
GENERAL

- > **Population:** 9,907,509 (July 2007 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** Kigali
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Hutu 84%, Tutsi 15%, Twa 1% (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Roman Catholic 56.5%, Protestant 26%, Adventist 11.1%, Muslim 4.6%, indigenous beliefs 0.1%, none 1.7% (2001, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages (% of population):** Kinyarwanda (official) universal Bantu vernacular, French (official), English (official), Kiswahili (Swahili) used in commercial centers (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2006-Atlas):** \$2.341 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2007)
- > **GNI per capita (2006-PPP):** \$1,270 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2007)
- > **Literacy rate:** 70.4% (male 76.3%, female 64.7%) (2002 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** President Paul Kagame (since April 22, 2000)

MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active print outlets, radio stations, television stations:**
Print: 62 newspapers (but only 15 active), 51 other registered print outlets; Radio: 16 registered and active; Television stations: 1
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** Top three by circulation: *Imvaho Nsya* (government owned bi-weekly newspaper, 8000 circulation), *Umuseso* (private daily newspaper, 7000 circulation), *Izuba* (private daily newspaper, 6000 circulation)
- > **Broadcast ratings:** Top three radio stations: Contact FM (private), Radio Rwanda (government-owned), City Radio (private)
- > **News agencies:** Rwanda News Agency (private)
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** N/A
- > **Internet usage:** 65,000 (2006 est., *CIA World Factbook*)

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: RWANDA



Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press (0-1):

Country does not meet or only minimally meets objectives. Government and laws actively hinder free media development, professionalism is low, and media-industry activity is minimal.

Unsustainable Mixed System (1-2):

Country minimally meets objectives, with segments of the legal system and government opposed to a free media system. Evident progress in free-press advocacy, increased professionalism, and new media businesses may be too recent to judge sustainability.

Near Sustainability (2-3):

Country has progressed in meeting multiple objectives, with legal norms, professionalism, and the business environment supportive of independent media. Advances have survived changes in government and have been codified in law and practice. However, more time may be needed to ensure that change is enduring and that increased professionalism and the media business environment are sustainable.

Sustainable (3-4):

Country has media that are considered generally professional, free, and sustainable, or to be approaching these objectives. Systems supporting independent media have survived multiple governments, economic fluctuations, and changes in public opinion or social conventions.

OBJECTIVE 1: FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Rwanda Objective Score: 2.53

With a few exceptions, most indicators fell close to the overall objective score. The main outliers were Indicators 7 and 8, the low and high, respectively. On the low side, panelists were critical of the ability of journalists working for private media to access public information and obtain comments from, and interviews with, government officials. However, they noted that there are no legal restrictions on media access to foreign news sources.

Over the past decade, Rwanda has put some of the framework in place to support freedom of speech and press freedom, and the government promises to do more in the near future. However, as elsewhere, implementation of good laws is lackluster, some damaging laws remain on the books, and old conventions remain on the role of the press and treatment of the media and journalists; these are exacerbated by the memories of how some media acted during the tragedy of 1994. The strongest indicators were the two involving media access to foreign news sources and freedom of entry into the journalism profession; the weakest was the one covering access to information.

Provisions in Rwanda's constitution guarantee press freedom and freedom of speech. However, these rights are hardly enjoyed by the Rwanda media and the public in general because other laws contradict the constitution. The panel pointed to the Press Law of 2002, the penal code, and others. The Press Law restricts media access to some public information and cabinet minutes. Under the penal code, libel is still treated as a criminal offense. The government has used such laws to close down some media outlets like *The Weekly Post*, *De-Liberations*, France's RFI, and others with little justification. Panelists told stories of government officials harassing journalists and, at times, calling editors to ask them what kind of stories they have for the day and which reporters are writing them.

However, on a positive note, the government has agreed to amend the existing press law to remove sections that are considered to hinder press freedom. In the new draft, there are provisions that guarantee access to public information; if passed, they would end the restrictions that have been in place for decades.

The panel agreed that the government instituted wide consultations on these changes, and journalists in Rwanda are anxiously waiting to see whether their views are reflected in the new law. "True, we were consulted, but we are not sure of the government's accommodating our views in the

draft, and, if this is not done, we shall find a way of lobbying members of parliament, who will soon debate and pass it as law," said James Munyaneza, news editor at *New Times*. He went on to say that as of now the media are threatened, with some government officials insisting that journalists should be forced to reveal their sources of information if the need arises, but he added that this is unacceptable to them.

Advising the government on media matters is the High Council of the Press. Of its five members, three are nominated by the private media through their professional association, one is nominated by the state media, and one is nominated by the Minister of Information to represent the state's interests. In theory, the High Council of the Press helps regulate the media by reporting and making recommendations on disciplinary actions to the president, but it can take no further action. Its power has been waning recently, as the government has ignored it and undertaken actions without consulting it. The new media bill proposes that the High Council will have powers to sanction and withdraw the licenses of media outlets that act contrary to the laws of the country.

Panelists agreed that licensing of both broadcast and print media is fair and very transparent. They indicated that anyone who wishes to start a radio and television station or newspaper is free to apply for a license and that it takes only a few days to be issued. A department in the Ministry of Information oversees such licensing, and its director has final authority to make decisions.

LEGAL AND SOCIAL NORMS PROTECT AND PROMOTE FREE SPEECH AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION.

FREE-SPEECH INDICATORS:

- > Legal and social protections of free speech exist and are enforced.
- > Licensing of broadcast media is fair, competitive, and apolitical.
- > Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries.
- > Crimes against journalists or media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare.
- > State or public media do not receive preferential legal treatment, and law guarantees editorial independence.
- > Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and offended parties must prove falsity and malice.
- > Public information is easily accessible; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Media outlets have unrestricted access to information; this is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Entry into the journalism profession is free, and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

Libel is treated as a criminal offense, and it is up to the accused to prove innocence. The panel, however, agreed that the judiciary in Rwanda has maintained its independence; this is evidenced by a number of cases that journalists have won against the state and individuals or politicians who take them to court.

Market entry and tax structure for the media are fair and no different from any other sector. The government has waived taxes on all imported media equipment.

Panel members said that there are isolated cases of violent crimes against journalists. In a few cases, the government has investigated them and has successfully prosecuted those behind them. Editor Jean Bosco Gasasira, of the *Omuhunguzi* newspaper, was brutally attacked with iron bars after receiving death threats because of his critical coverage and charges of corruption by top officials. A suspect was arrested, charged, and eventually sentenced to life in prison by the court.

The panel reported that although the public media are guaranteed editorial independence by law, this is not observed in practice. Editors are appointed by the government and have to protect their jobs by publishing or airing what they think favors their employers—the state. However, there are no laws that favor or give a competitive edge to public media at the expense of private media.

Libel is treated as a criminal offense, and it is up to the accused to prove innocence. The panel, however, agreed that the judiciary in Rwanda has maintained its independence; this is evidenced by a number of cases that journalists have won against the state and individuals or politicians who take them to court. In cases that the media have won, they are acquitted by the courts after proving the truth. In cases that media outlets have lost, they are both fined and ordered to make apologies. The panel reported that they have not seen incidents where journalists have been held liable for publishing critical statements against the president.

The existing media law supposedly applies the same way to both private and public media; however, this is not the case in practice. Public information is restricted from private media, but state media can easily access it. The government tends to feed information that it wants the public to receive to its own media. When private media manage to access public documents that are not considered secret, they do not have any problems, but if the documents are secret, the media

outlet may be exposed to sanctions by the government. While some government officials have granted interviews to private media in the past, they are very selective in choosing the media outlet, preferring ones they feel comfortable with. Panelists were hopeful that these barriers to freedom of information would end if the proposed law is passed by parliament, as it guarantees access to public information.

The panel stated that there is no restriction on accessing foreign news sources by media outlets and that the Internet can be used freely by those who can afford it (typically those in urban areas). Some media depend on international news agencies and the Internet as their primary sources of international news, and they are free to publish or air this information in a language of their choice.

Panelist George Kalisa, supplements editor with *New Times*, indicated that entry into, and exit from, the journalism profession is free as long as one is able to write or report. Press cards are issued by media outlets to their reporters, and these cards are asked for by organizers of the government functions, including press conferences.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Rwanda Objective Score: 2.17

In this objective, only Indicator 5, pay levels for journalists, stood out with a score one point lower than the average.

“A good number of our colleagues are not qualified and lack objectivity while carrying out their duties,” said Didas Gasana, managing director of *Newsline*. He added that qualified journalists who do have the knowledge and skills to do a perfect job lack the resources and facilities to do their work professionally. Other members of the panel agreed with Gasana on the lack of objectivity and attributed this to poor pay levels that tempt journalists to receive gifts and payments in exchange for favorable coverage. However, they agreed that there are some journalists who live to the requirements of the profession. The panel members also raised the issue of media owners who come up with editorial policies that suit their own interests, therefore compromising objectivity.

While discussing ethics, panelists referred to the 2005 Code of Conduct developed by the Association of Rwanda Journalists. The Code is on par with other international codes, such as those found in the UK, USA, Germany, and Uganda. The Association has been involved in promoting the code of ethics through workshops and seminars in Kigali, but they have not been able to expand this to other parts of Rwanda due to lack of funding. There are also some media outlets that have adopted this code and strictly enforce it among their staff.

However, panelists expressed surprise that more journalists do not follow the Code. “Many journalists depend on bribes for survival, contrary to what is stated in the Code,” added Muramila Gasheegu, a newspaper and radio correspondent.

Panelists agreed that self-censorship exists at all levels. The main cause, they said, is fear of losing one’s job. This is especially true in the public media. Self-censorship is less of a problem in the private media, particularly the most respected newspapers. Panelists also pointed out that some editors force reporters to drop certain stories related to sensitive political or security matters, as these may cause problems for the media outlet. Panelists also said that self-censorship is a result of poor remuneration of journalists: they will accept bribes from sources to kill stories.

The media have had no problems covering key events and issues, provided they are invited. However, panelists said that there are some events to which certain media outlets are left out because their policies may not be in line with the organizers. Kalisa added that “it all depends on the organizers, who may prefer particular media outlets against others. There are those who think electronic media are more effective than print. But also we should not ignore the history of the media in Rwanda in relation to the genocide in which over a million people were killed. We are undergoing reconciliation, and the media are seen as a negative force in this effort; that’s why some people still shun them.” Panel members agreed that where the media are indiscriminately invited to key events, they are well covered in all media—electronic and print. The news is dominated by political news because it sells.

JOURNALISM MEETS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF QUALITY.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM INDICATORS:

- > Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced.
- > Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards.
- > Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship.
- > Journalists cover key events and issues.
- > Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption.
- > Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming.
- > Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient.
- > Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political).

Most journalists are poorly paid, leading to elevated levels of corruption in the media. Some media outlets do not pay their reporters, especially freelance journalists, and they must depend on the sources they interview. This results in stories that are essentially paid placements.

Most journalists are poorly paid, leading to elevated levels of corruption in the media. Some media outlets do not pay their reporters, especially freelance journalists, and they must depend on the sources they interview. This results in stories that are essentially paid placements. Some journalists kill or sit on stories in exchange for money to supplement their income.

However, panelists added that even some well-paid journalists also take bribes, but they attributed this to individual character. Panelists said that such reporters get money whenever their stories are run in the papers or on radio or television and that they get it from the people or organizations they report on or write about. Panel members said that the few highly paid journalists at the reporter level get RWF 250,000 (\$500) a month, and editors get RWF 500,000 (\$1,000). Poorly paid journalists get RWF 50,000 (\$100) per month. Emma Nshekanabo, the panel moderator, said that journalists have been trying to address this problem through their association. They believe that when they get a journalists’ union, it will strongly advocate for fair working conditions and better salaries for all journalists in the country.

Panelists agreed that allocation of time for news and entertainment at radio and television stations depends on the individual outlet’s policy. Some media outlets allocate more time to entertainment programs than news, as Rwandans generally prefer to listen more to music than news. Panelists added that radio stations that have excelled in news presentation and allocated more time to it have lost audience share.

The panel felt that most media outlets have modern equipment that they rely on to gather, produce, and distribute news. Media owners have effectively used the tax waiver that the government put in place to import modern equipment. For the few media outlets with poor facilities, their product is definitely impacted negatively. Panelists noted that equipment alone is not enough: better skills are required to improve media content overall. To benefit all media, panelists said that equipment should be channeled through the professional associations.

“A good number of our colleagues are not qualified and lack objectivity while carrying out their duties,” said Didas Gasana, managing director of Newline. He added that qualified journalists who do have the knowledge and skills to do a perfect job lack the resources and facilities to do their work professionally.

Panelists agreed that some media outlets do a better job than others in covering niche topics. This is because some media outlets have invested more in training their reporters and editors in specialized reporting and editing while others have done little in this direction. Quality investigative journalism exists, and a few specialized journalists report on issues of health, education, and business in consultation with the proper experts on these issues.

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES

Rwanda Objective Score: 2.77

All of the indicators fell close to the final objective average. Panelists felt relatively confident in the number of news sources available to the public and the public's ability to access at least some of them. However, panelists agreed that the degree of objectivity of the news varies considerably.

There are several news sources—ranging from radio and television to newspapers and the Internet—that provide information to citizens, although more so for those in cities. All parts of the country receive radio signals, and state-owned Radio Rwanda reaches the entire country, but television is available only in towns. The government has helped to set up community radio stations and newspapers by providing initial funding and equipment. The government has used this kind of media to mobilize people at the grass-roots level to engage in development projects, and at the same time people use such media to address their own needs.

“Very few people—like 20 percent of our literate population—can afford to buy newspapers. The majority of our people depend on radio for information because radio and television sets are cheap and affordable,” said Gasana. A small radio costs about \$6, while television sets (black and white) cost between \$120 and \$150. Panelist Sam Rubulika said that the government recently gave out radio sets to various local officials in charge of information to enable them

to better receive and disseminate information to citizens. The reading culture among Rwandans is low. Panel members agreed that although there is no restriction on the Internet, it is accessible only in urban areas and the cost is high; most citizens cannot afford it.

As with Internet access, there are no legal restrictions on accessing domestic and international media. The panelists said that everything depends on affordability. For example, foreign newspapers are available on market, but only a select few can buy them. Some citizens also subscribe to foreign television channels, such as CNN and BBC, which are relayed by local television stations without any interference from the state. However, most of these facilities are in urban areas and are hardly found in rural areas.

State media are fully controlled by the government and rarely air views of the opposition. Their editors and senior management positions are appointed by the government and do not enjoy editorial independence. Panel members agreed that it was only during the 2003 presidential election campaigns that the opposition was given equal space on public media because it was regulated by the High Council of the Press. Though this body is still in place to monitor air time and space distribution in public media, its presence is no longer felt. As more and more private radio stations have been established, opposition politicians do not see the need to fight for air space on Radio Rwanda. Panel members added that despite the fact that state media report a lot on government activities, they also produce educational and other useful programs for citizens that are not otherwise aired by private media.

MULTIPLE NEWS SOURCES PROVIDE CITIZENS WITH RELIABLE AND OBJECTIVE NEWS.

PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES INDICATORS:

- > A plurality of affordable public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet) exists.
- > Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted.
- > State or public media reflect the views of the entire political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
- > Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for print and broadcast media.
- > Independent broadcast media produce their own news programs.
- > Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates.
- > A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.

Panelists said that there is only one local news agency, the government-run Rwanda News Agency. They felt it has little to offer to media outlets, as they all share the same source of information. Munyaneza said that some media outlets have more information than the Rwanda News Agency because they have correspondents in most parts of the country. He also added that some media outlets depend on foreign news agencies like Reuters, AP, AFP, MENA, and others for their foreign news.

Private broadcast media produce most of their own programs, typically of high quality, but also air purchased news and entertainment programs. Private broadcast news is different from state news, which is mainly one-sided in favor of the government.

Media ownership is not a secret to the public. According to the panel, it is very easy to know the people who own radio stations and newspapers by noting those who have interest in it. There are several news sources that readers depend on for factual news. Typically, people rely on particular newspapers or radio stations to get specific information.

Social issues are widely covered in all media without restriction, including issues related to women's and minority interests. Use of minority languages does not exist in Rwanda, as all people use Kinyarwanda to communicate, in addition to French and, recently, English.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Rwanda Objective Score: 2.01

Indicators in this objective were spread out, with a few poor performers, a few more somewhat above the average, and one, Indicator 5, related to government subsidies, scoring well. The poorest performers were Indicators 3 and 7, related to advertising agencies and audience and circulation figures.

The panelists agreed that private media are run purely as profit-making businesses and managed in a generally efficient way. Panelists also admitted that a few media outlets have been mismanaged by their bosses and hence find it difficult to compete.

Panel members agreed that different media outlets have common sources of revenue, ranging from sales of their products and advertising to sponsorship and loans from financial institutions. The advertising sector is not well developed, but media outlets depend on companies, the government, and individuals who may need advertising space. Some big companies have used this chance to influence

editorial policies of some media outlets, and as such certain media end up not reporting objectively on these advertisers.

Rwanda has not had advertising firms apart from public-relations companies that work for big companies, but moderator Nshekanabo said that recently firms like Creative Communications, Data Pro, and Creaxio have emerged. These firms are new, and it is hard to tell how effective they will be because they do not have any relationship with media outlets at the moment.

Panelists agreed that most media outlets, especially electronic media, allocate more time to running commercials than news items because it is a major source of their revenue. Even print media sometimes sacrifice space for news stories and place in advertisements; however, print media better balance news and advertising space.

Panelists agreed that private media do not receive direct subsidies from the government, but some of them are seen to be loyal in order to receive advertisements placed by government agencies. This compromises editorial independence of these media outlets since they fear losing this revenue.

Panelists said that no media outlet has ever carried out research to find out what their readers or listeners want. They do not know their most popular programs or columnists. No specialized firms exist in Rwanda to do this work.

It is not easy to get reliable circulation figures for newspapers or broadcasting ratings because of the lack of professional firms to carry out this work. Hence, every media outlet, electronic and print, regularly makes claims that they are most popular.

INDEPENDENT MEDIA ARE WELL-MANAGED BUSINESSES, ALLOWING EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:

- > Media outlets and supporting firms operate as efficient, professional, and profit-generating businesses.
- > Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources.
- > Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market.
- > Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards at commercial outlets.
- > Independent media do not receive government subsidies.
- > Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor products to the needs and interests of audiences.
- > Broadcast ratings and circulation figures are reliably and independently produced.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Rwanda Objective Score: 1.95

The majority of indicators fell close to the average. However, the lack of any trade associations resulted in a low score for Indicator 1. On the high side, panelists gave a high score to Indicator 7, as they felt that channels of media distribution are relatively unrestricted.

There are no associations dedicated to media owners or managers in Rwanda at this time. However, panelists did discuss the work of professional associations, including the Rwanda Journalists Association (ARJ), Press House (set up by PANOS), whose members are journalists and junior editors, and the High Council for the Press, which has representation from all media stakeholders, including the government. Gasana, of *Newsline*, opined that “the High Council of the Press is...useless because it’s funded and controlled by the government and reports to the president’s office.” Most panel members said that only the ARJ has historically defended journalists and continues to fight for their rights whenever they are violated. ARJ is also involved in training programs for journalists.

However Sulah Nuwamanya, managing editor for *The Weekly Post*, disagreed with other panelists, saying that the ARJ has done little to help journalists in trouble. “When some media outlets were closed, the ARJ just kept quiet,” he added.

The panelists also said that Rwanda lacks nongovernmental organizations that promote freedom of speech or press freedom.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS FUNCTION IN THE PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS OF INDEPENDENT MEDIA.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS INDICATORS:

- > Trade associations represent the interests of private media owners and provide member services.
- > Professional associations work to protect journalists’ rights.
- > NGOs support free speech and independent media.
- > Quality journalism degree programs that provide substantial practical experience exist.
- > Short-term training and in-service training programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
- > Sources of newsprint and printing facilities are in private hands, apolitical, and unrestricted.
- > Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, Internet) are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.

Kalisa said that most media professionals are not formally trained, adding that many have dropped out of teaching or demobilized from the army. Panelists attributed the poor state of training to a lack of training facilities. The government has taken a step toward improving this by advising journalists to obtain training in the basics. It has also worked with PANOS to set up a media training institution, the Great Lakes Media Training Centre, to provide training to practicing journalists without formal qualifications and also to train new people with ambitions of becoming journalists.

The quality of academic journalism courses offered by the two existing institutions is very good, panelists said. Most graduates prefer to find public-relations jobs or to work with electronic media. The training is practical, and students who graduate from these universities are well trained and ready to start work without further training. Training opportunities abroad are also available but very competitive; some who opt for these programs end up not returning to Rwanda.

Panelists also agreed that short-term and in-house training opportunities are available for journalists to upgrade their skills. These programs are sponsored by media outlets and donors like PANOS. PANOS training is well respected because it is conducted by both local and foreign trainers. Panelists did feel that the duration of the courses, between one to two weeks, is too short; they suggested that this should be extended to between one and three months.

Sources of newsprint are in private hands. The only good printing facility is in the hands of the state and is not easily accessed by some media outlets, especially those seen as critical of the government. Private media also fear losing their good stories to the state paper or having their print run delayed deliberately by the state printer because of the stiff competition in the print sector. There are other facilities in private hands, but they are considered sub-par. The panelists said that because of the lack of enough quality printing facilities, some media outlets have found it better to print in neighboring countries like Uganda and Tanzania. Costs are reasonable, but delays are inevitable under such situations. The government is planning to buy a modern printing press that it has promised to make available without prejudice.

Media distribution channels, like kiosks, are in private hands and are managed efficiently. The Internet is not restricted. Private broadcasters control their own transmitters, though panelists decried political influence in the government process of determining area of coverage.

List of Panel Participants

George Kalisa, supplements editor, *New Times*, Nyagatare

Sulah Nuwamanya, managing editor, *The Weekly Post*, Kigali

James Munyaneza, news editor, *New Times*, Kigali

Godwin Agaba, freelance reporter, *Omuseso Newspaper*, Gishenyi

Magnus Mazimpaka, freelance reporter, *New Times and Ingazo*, Byumba

Didas M. Gasana, managing director, Newline (Rwanda Independent Media), Kigali

Sam Rubulika, reporter, *Focus Newspaper*, Kigali

Faruk Nduwumwe, reporter, Orinfo/Rwanda TV, Kigali

Julius Mbaraga, reporter, *New Times*, Nyagatare

Gasheegu Muramila, reporter, Rwanda National Radio, Kigali

Moderator

Emma Nshekanabo, media consultant, Kigali

The Rwanda study was coordinated by, and conducted in partnership with, the Eastern African Journalists Association.