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SENEGAL

Since 1974, Senegalese media has evolved from a state monopoly on both broadcast and print media to a situation of real media plurality. Today, there are more than 20 private radio stations and more than 15 publications under the leadership of the Sud Communications Group and Walfadjri Group.

Journalists working in the private media turned out to be major players in Senegal's socio-political changes. The election of the "liberal" Abdoulaye Wade as president in 2000, ending the 40-year reign of the Socialist Party, was very much due to the role played by private media. They provided correct and true information leading to a transparent election. Despite this, the reforms of the media sector once promised by the current regime, such as the decriminalization of press offenses, the lifting of the state monopoly on television broadcasting, and free access to public information, have not been realized.

On the contrary, according to the 2006/2007 MSI panelists, in Senegal the private press operates in a very constrained political and social environment. No journalist is safe from hassles at the hands of the Criminal Investigations Department of the National Police in the name of preventing or investigating "offenses against national security." The public media, particularly Radio-Television Senegal (RTS) and the government-run daily newspaper *Le Soleil*, obey the president's direct orders.

Significant constraints have appeared within the profession: a large number of journalists lack real training, access to the profession is often determined more by necessity than calling, the ethical values of journalism are ignored or deliberately sidestepped, a globally accepted self-regulatory body has proved difficult to establish, media companies are unprofitable, and press owners and publishers are incapable of uniting to protect their own interests. The panel concluded that the dynamics of media outlets built up in recent years has been seriously compromised.

Despite the challenges, Senegal still scored well in Objectives 3 and 5, plurality of news and supporting institutions; scores here were 2.60 and 2.81, respectively. The scores for Objectives 1, 2, and 4, free speech, professional journalism, and business management, all lagged behind, however, with scores in the low 2 range.

SENEGAL AT A GLANCE

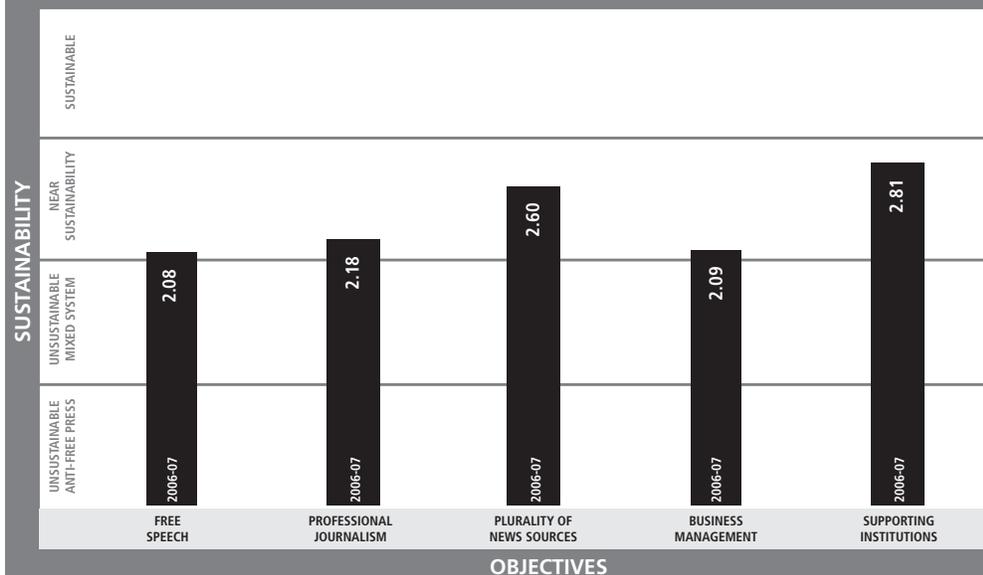
GENERAL

- > **Population:** 12,853,259 (July 2008 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** Dakar
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Wolof 43.3%, Pular 23.8%, Serer 14.7%, Jola 3.7%, Mandinka 3%, Soninke 1.1%, European and Lebanese 1%, other 9.4% (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Muslim 94%, Christian 5% (mostly Roman Catholic), indigenous beliefs 1% (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages (% of population):** French (official), Wolof, Pulaar, Jola, Mandinka (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2006-Atlas):** \$9.117 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2007)
- > **GNI per capita (2006-PPP):** \$1,560 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2007)
- > **Literacy rate:** 39.3% (male 51.1%, female 29.2%) (2002 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** President Abdoulaye Wade (since April 1, 2000)

MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active print outlets, radio stations, television stations:** Print: N/A; Radio: 28; Television stations: 1
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** N/A
- > **Broadcast ratings:** N/A
- > **News agencies:** Senegalese Press Agency
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** N/A
- > **Internet usage:** 650,000 (2006 est., *CIA World Factbook*)

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: SENEGAL



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: FREE SPEECH

Senegal Objective Score: 2.08

Whereas most Francophone African countries with long ruling authoritarian regimes started their democratic reforms at the beginning of the 1990s, Senegal began that process in 1974. This allowed the early emergence of a pluralistic local press. This democratic advance with respect to other countries has always made Senegal look, from the outside, as a country where journalists can practice their profession being muzzled, coerced, or even assassinated, as in Burkina Faso (the Norbert Zongo affair).

However, the Objective 1 score does not really confirm this image. Instead, Senegal appears as a country where journalists may be seriously hampered while doing their job by political and social forces who strongly oppose freedom of the press. According to panelists' scores, this objective showed strength in Indicators 8 and 9, media access to international news sources and free entry into the journalism profession. However, Indicators 2 and 3, broadcast licensing and market entry, lagged behind the other indicators by a little more than half a point.

Article 8 and the following sections of the constitution situate Senegal among the law-abiding countries in terms of freedom of the press legislation, according to Ndiaya Diop with the Information and Communication Professionals' Union (SYNPICS). The freedom of the press is not obstructed at the level of laws, but rather by their application, he asserted. Panelist Pape Cheikh Fall, correspondent of Radio Future Medias (RFM) in Mbacké, said that he was beaten with iron bars by five disciples of a Mourid religious leader as a result of his report on the latter's debut on the political stage in support of President Wade's re-election in 2007. His aggressors were identified but never arrested, he claimed. "The judicial system that is supposed to watch over the observance of the law proves to be repressive when a journalist must be punished but very lenient when dealing with cases of violations of the freedom of the press by the ruling regime and the religious brotherhoods," he concluded.

Bouna Manel Fall, a professor of media law, pointed out that the law does provide some constraints, particularly article 255 of the Criminal Code concerning "false news" propagation, which falls within the competence of article 139 of the Criminal Procedure Code; according to this article the judge must remand any accused journalist.

While the panelists said that access to radio frequencies is generally free, they criticized the application of the legislation that covers broadcast licensing, as it is

considered to be inequitable and non-transparent. The Telecommunications and Postal Services Regulatory Agency (ARTP), which is supposed to grant the licenses, is dependent on the Ministry of Information, the panel pointed out. They strongly decried the fact that news organizations that have been recently launched by politicians close to the government, like the News Channel (a television channel owned by Macky Sall, former prime minister and current president of the National Assembly), Ocean FM (a radio station owned by Pape Diop, former president of the National Assembly and anticipated future leader of the Senate), and FM radio station Ann nù (owned by Minister Farba Senghor) were granted licenses in short order, while other outlets not as politically connected have waited years for licenses.

At the time of the panel discussion, ARTP, with the assistance of the Gendarmerie, suspended the license of Première 92.3 FM for 45 days, sealing the premises and equipment. Première FM's owner, Avenir Communications, had just bought Iso Trading Technology, former owner of the frequency 92.3 FM, and Première had started broadcasting on that frequency. ARTP accused Première of operating without a license, saying that 105.9 FM had been allocated to them instead. The panel saw this as another sign of the Ministry of Information pressuring ARTP on licensing matters: Avenir Communications media outlets have, in the past, been critical of the president. Panelists recalled the case of Madiambal Diagne, general manager and proprietor of Avenir Communications, who was imprisoned in July 2004 for "undermining state security," following a state complaint about an article appearing in Avenir's daily newspaper that included information from documents stamped "state secret."

The panelists did not think payment of bribes to ARTP occurs to help acquire a frequency, rather traffic in mutual influence between the state and friends of the state in terms of granting licenses and the subsequent editorial bias at that station.

In terms of nationwide television broadcasting, the state has a monopoly through RTS. RTS2 has been privatized and is now 2STV, although this is only broadcast in Dakar. Panelists seemed to think that owners have entered into direct negotiations with the government to receive forthcoming television licenses. For panelists, proof came when Sidy Lamine Niassé, owner of the media company Walfadjri, recently announced that his group would soon launch its television channel (Walf TV) following an audience he had with President Wade. These direct negotiations are not transparent.

Newspapers require no licensing. To publish a newspaper, one simply declares this to any prefecture administration.

Entry into the market for media companies is free and subject to the same legal framework as any other business. However,

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panelists lamented that there is still no preferential tax regime for the press. All companies in Senegal are subject to the same general tax regime. The panelists argued that media is not a business in the traditional sense, as it is engaged in serving the public interest. They believed that media outlets should receive preferential tax treatment over other types of businesses. The panelists speculated that another reason why the media do not receive favorable tax treatment is because the government is aware of their precarious financial situation and are keeping the burdensome tax structure in place in order to undermine private media.

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.

Attacks on journalists are rarely prosecuted, the panelists said. Attacks on journalists and media outlets have become common since the “liberals” came to power in 2000. In 2001, the headquarters of Walfadjri was burned. It is widely suspected that the new regime was behind this act. Under the current regime, journalists—like Pape Sheikh Cheikh Fall—have been beaten by individuals or groups close to the government. Recently in Mbacké, government lawyer Moustapha Cisse Lô, wielding a pistol, and a group of supporters stormed a local radio station in the middle of a live interactive broadcast in response to listener comments against him.

The press does cover violence toward journalists, and has in some cases tried to exact justice in lieu of state action. In the case of Moustapha Cisse Lô, the Information and Communication Professionals Union (SYNPICS) issued a press release, calling on all media outlets in the country to cease coverage of his political activities, and not to invite him to be on their programs. To date, this request is still being honored throughout the country.

In this respect, Bouna Manel Fall lamented the passivity of the general public in Senegal, as opposed to the popular protest demonstrations that took place in Venezuela in 2007 when the regime of Hugo Chavez closed the RCTV in an “authoritarian” fashion.

In discussing preferential legal treatment of public media, panelists mentioned the CFAF 400 million received by the public media from the government for coverage of the 2007 legislative elections. In addition, journalists in the public sector generally have access to information before it is circulated to the private media. Ndiaya Diop head of international relations with SYNPICS, explained that this kind of treatment is inequitable. Racine Kane with Sud FM noted however, that this discrimination is a lesser evil. She said it can avoid compromising freedom of the private media and keep them from becoming politicized as their counterparts in public media.

The leadership of the public media is appointed by the government, and their job security depends largely on maintaining strong relationships with key ministers and others in positions of power within the government. Under these conditions, they are obliged to respect and maintain an editorial line that is largely pro-government.

The Criminal Code continues to criminalize press offenses. The two most common “crimes” are “spreading false news,” applicable to a media outlet, and defamation, applicable to both individuals and media outlets. It is difficult for journalists and media outlets to get a fair trial because the judiciary is appointed by the executive branch. The defendant in these cases is the only one forced to produce evidence in support of

an alleged defamatory text or broadcast. In defamation cases, media outlets are sometimes required to pay a fine for lack of evidence, although many cases are dismissed.

Moreover, in some cases brought by individuals, such as powerful businessmen, against a newspaper, one often sees the shadow of the state. One example occurred in 1997 and 1998, when the newspaper *Sud Quotidien* was sued for defamation by powerful businessman and industrialist Jean Claude Mimran, ally of the socialist government and owner of Compagnie Sucrière Sénégalaise (CSS). CSS holds the monopoly on the production and the marketing of sugar in Senegal. *Sud Quotidien* accused Mimran of skirting tariffs, costing the Senegalese economy billions of CFA francs. Mimran won the case.

This trial was very important to the future ability of media to conduct investigative reporting, becoming the trial of the CSS and the state, on the one hand, against Sud Communications Group, on the other. Sud Communications Group claimed to have all the evidence, including customs documents, but they could not show the judge for fear of another lawsuit brought by the state against them for “concealment of administrative documents,” and because they did not want to damage the careers of customs officials who shared the documents with the newspaper.

Many journalists have been sent to prison for publishing government documents, the panel pointed out. Even today, when journalists publish “sensitive” articles concerning the state, they are accused of “false news” propagation. There is a project seeking the establishment of a national committee for access to government information to facilitate access to public information. Bouna Manel Fall noted, however, that the law to accomplish this was passed in June 2006, but the respective decree to implement it has not yet been signed. Media professionals consider this law to be very good, even revolutionary. It will, they hope, prevent criminal trials and prison sentences for journalists and improve professionalism. In the past, since journalists have not enjoyed access to public information and documents, they have often resorted to guesswork, leading to both poor quality reporting and defamation suits when they were wrong (and preventing them from proving their innocence when they were right, as in the CSS case).

There are no legal restrictions on media outlets’ access to international news. Thanks to the Internet, this is now more accessible. Media also have access to international news agencies, such as AFP and Reuters.

According to the collective bargaining agreement signed by media owners, SYNPICS, and the government, the criteria for obtaining a press card (the professional media credential)

are a degree from a school of journalism and drawing at least 50 percent of one’s income from the profession. There are also levels of seniority based on years of experience and publications of articles and reports. Lack of a press card does not prevent anyone from covering nearly any event as a journalist.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Senegal Objective Score: 2.18

The score in Objective 2 shows that the media are generally more solid in terms of reporting, the balance between entertainment and news, and the coverage of key events. All indicators were close to, and in most cases better than, the average score. Indicator 5, pay levels for journalists, brought down the average with a score that was a point lower.

According to Racine Kane with Sud FM, “when they work on their reports, Senegalese reporters try their best to get reliable information, although they can be misled by an unreliable source; also it often happens that Senegalese reporters use experts’ opinions.” But he had reservations concerning the choice of experts on technical issues. He concluded that more efforts must be made to improve the understanding how to choose experts when gathering news.

While news reports are credited as relatively reliable, the profession faces a huge ethical vacuum. “The Senegalese journalism charter is very recent, since 2006, but I would be surprised if anyone among us is familiar with it. Secondly, what editorial team has its own charter, a kind of group consciousness? Not many. We know there are practically no

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).

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limits in terms of gifts, privileges, etc.,” Bouna Manel Fall declared. Broadly speaking, indeed, there has been no clear effort among media outlets to encourage the establishment of a journalistic code of ethics. This is not an accident, as not all media outlets appear to be serving the interests of democracy.

Moreover, to avoid paying regular wages to their employees, there are media managers who do not look down upon journalists from receiving third-party money for the preparation of reports. Generally, ethical issues, which can be cloudy at times, are left to journalists to decide for themselves because the Council for the Observance of Ethics and Deontology, the self-regulatory body set up by SYNPICS, is dormant for lack of legitimacy. Part of the reason for this is that its members are appointed, not elected, by their peers.

The panel unanimously agreed that self-censorship is a common practice in editorial rooms at both radio stations and newspapers, especially with regard to business and religious issues. The debt that media outlets owe to various businesses was mentioned as sources of self-censorship. For instance, highlighting technical problems and unorthodox commercial practices at SONATEL, the country’s main telecommunications company, is an unofficial reason for firing a journalist: a number of media companies have unpaid telephone bills of up to CFAF 80 million.

Touty Séye with Sud FM in Diourbel mentioned that in regions such as Touba, the stronghold of the Mourid religious community, journalists must practice self-censorship concerning issues related to this community to avoid being lynched.

When it comes to stories about government or political matters, the media generally does not engage in self-censorship, except when covering matters involving national security or state secrets. For example, in 2005, Sud FM journalists were imprisoned after broadcasting an interview with separatist leader Salif Sadio, who fought for the independence of Casamance, an area in southern Senegal that has been the scene of an armed rebellion since 1982. The interview was described by the Ministry of Interior as undermining state security.

As a general rule, the media cover the country’s key events, but only private media reports both sides of an issue. For example, public media coverage of a recent demonstration against enduring and repeated power cuts across the country focused only on the government perspective (and coverage was pro-government), while the private media also covered the protesters’ point of view. However, as mentioned in the case with Sud FM and its interview with Salif Sadio, on matters of national security, the government has taken actions to deter journalists from covering certain key issues.

The economic and financial crisis affecting most private media companies forces many owners to provide low—according to the panelists—salaries to some journalists and no salaries at all to others. That is a source of corruption. Touty Séye asserted that a low salary is not necessarily a source of corruption, given that numerous editors-in-chief and publication managers are corrupted in spite of their relatively high salaries.

Speaking about the balance between entertainment and news, the panel indicated that there are differences according to each media outlet’s policy. In the 9 pm to 12 pm primetime, newscasts come first in the Sud FM schedule, whereas entertainment is paramount on Walf FM, panelist Ndiaya Diop noted. In general, both public and private radio broadcasting is a mixture of information and entertainment. The panel lamented an excess of entertainment programming on RTS1 television.

There are pages in newspapers or broadcasts dedicated to issues such as health, economy, trade, and environment, and written by professional journalists, but these are often overshadowed by the political section. Also, newspapers that do cover more hard news are more expensive than other papers that focus on less important issues, and are therefore losing out to the cheaper competition. In Senegal, Latif Coulibaly, a journalist with Sud Communications Group and director of the Higher Institute of Information Sciences and Communication (ISSIC), is the only investigative journalist. His many books on corruption in Senegal won him, in 2006, a distinction from Transparency International.

The panel estimated that the newsgathering, production, and distribution facilities and equipment are relatively modern. However, two problems were mentioned. One is the proximity of numerous frequencies often affecting good reception (examples mentioned included Sud FM and Océan FM). The other was the strong disparity between Dakar and the regions. For instance, the regional correspondents claim that they are not as well equipped in terms of means of transportation for news gathering as are their colleagues in the capital.

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS

Senegal Objective Score: 2.60

The only problems identified with respect to Objective 3 were balance at the state media and the lack of transparency regarding private media ownership. Indicators 3 and 6, therefore, were the lowest in the Objective by a significant margin. However, several indicators showed strength, including those gauging the amount of news sources, access to the media, and operation of news agencies. In particular, Indicator 5, private radio news production, scored noticeably higher than the average.

The panel noted that Senegal now enjoys a plurality of media sources. However, they pointed out that apart from the public media, radio stations are confined to urban areas, lacking the power necessary to cover the entire country. Installing community radio stations in the rural areas is a viable solution in theory, but most villages cannot offer sufficient financing or potential sources of revenue to support a station. Print media readers are generally in the cities, but readership is limited due to economic constraints on the average citizen. Print media outside of the cities is a less important source of news and, as Timéra with AFIA FM said, daily newspapers may take 24 hours to get to Bakel (in northern Senegal) it is very far from the capital and there is no modern distribution service for the press.

Because of the low literacy rate, the Internet is only accessible to a small minority of educated people. Furthermore, Touty

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.

Sèye with Sud FM in Diourbel noted that connectivity is poor in rural areas.

Panelists concluded that citizens' access to national media is limited only for economic, and not legal, reasons. The panelists also saluted the free access to foreign media. "RFI broadcasts freely here, this is not Guinea," Ndiaya Diop boasted. Voice of America and the BBC also retransmit some of their programs on local partner stations.

On the other hand, the panel was not impressed with the functioning of the public media, accusing them of covering the president exclusively. The major problem, according to the panelists, is RTS television. According to Amadou Kah, "the Senegalese television is a catastrophe; there is no equivalent in West Africa other than Mali." "The current general director of the RTS television continues to be the head of the state's communication advisor," said El Hadji Ndiaye, RTS correspondent in Mbour, trying to explain this situation. Viewpoints that go against official government policies and actions are virtually absent from state media. While there is no explicit policy on omitting opposition views, media officials who are appointed by the government almost automatically follow a black-out policy on opposition views, particularly before elections. This has been the case since the country's independence in 1960. The public had hoped that this pattern would change after the regime change in 2000, but this has not been the case.

There is only one national press agency, the state-run Senegalese Press Agency. The panel credited it with real professionalism and neutrality. Panelists added that there is a working partnership between the media and the international press agencies. Even though it has happened that local newspapers have used an AFP dispatch without "sourcing" it, as a general rule the press agencies always quote their sources.

Private radio stations produce their own newscasts, the panel pointed out. Ndiaya Diop said that the press insists so much on producing their own shows that Sud FM radio refuses to "accommodate" RFI programs despite constant requests offering financial considerations to do carry their programming. This refusal, he said, is justified by Sud FM's desire to protect its identity. In reality, Ndiaya Diop added, RFI realized that it ranks first in audience share in all the African countries where it broadcasts except Senegal and that it needs to go through a successful radio station in order to increase its local audience.

Media ownership is generally characterized by relative opacity, the panel noted. Bouna Manel Fall said that research on the ownership of communication companies has always come up against a total lack of disclosure. Racine Kane

recognized that journalists are the only ones who have a more exact idea about the identity of the communication companies' main shareholders. The general public ascribes ownership of the Sud Communications Group to Babacar Touré, that of Walfadjri to Sidy Lamine Niasse, but informally, Bouna Manel Fall detailed. The panel commented that knowing the identity of a media owner affects the credibility of the news. Therefore, they said, Sud's credibility capital is immeasurable, unlike that of a radio station or newspaper unofficially ascribed to Farba Senghor, a minister in the current government.

The journalists on the panel said that, with the exception of the RTS television, issues of social interest are generally covered in the broadcast media, including relevant cultural issues important to the various ethnic groups in the country. Amadou Kah, professor of administrative law at Gaston Berger University, did not share this view. Rather, he felt there is excessive political coverage in the media, that they only reflect the feuds among the politicians. He invited the press to address issues that really carry an interest among the population.

Radio stations make an effort to broadcast in different languages. In addition to Wolof broadcasts, there are also transmissions in Pulaar, Diola, Serer, Mandingo, and other languages spoken in the country. Newspapers are primarily written in French, although there have been unsuccessful attempts in the past to launch newspapers in other local languages, particularly Wolof. However, there is little government support for honoring diversity and reporting in different languages, as a policy of national unity has been in effect since the country's independence in 1960.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Senegal Objective Score: 2.09

This objective shows that all the media companies face highly significant economic and financial constraints compromising their editorial independence. Overall, the panel concluded the more they use marketing as a means of development, the more solid they can become. In this objective, all indicator scores hovered near the average.

The panel pointed out that all media companies are unprofitable. One of the reasons mentioned by Ibou Lissa Faye with *Sud Quotidien*, speaking about the print media, is that—apart from the low readership—the cost of producing one copy is CFAF 250, while its cover price is CFAF 200. In the case of radio, Touty Séye added, a station's profitability depends on the market where it is located. Thus, the

radio station where she works in Diourbel is unprofitable compared to the stations based in Touba, a city with a high economic potential.

Many media outlets find themselves in poor condition financially because their management does not have the proper skills to run a business. Some private outlets have begun recruiting leaders with marketing and management expertise, and this in turn is putting pressure on public outlets to improve their management.

The panel commented that the media companies are financed by their shareholders, advertising, sponsorships, and sales of copies for print media. Some media companies have managed to land CFAF 50 million per year advertising contracts with Orange, SONATEL's cellular branch. This affects their independence. For instance, the panel told the story of how Orange recently forced RFM radio to rectify an unfavorable piece of news using the contract signed with this station as a basis for blackmail. In fact, in order to confront their economic and financial constraints, the media companies appeal more and more often to shadowy sources of financing, such as politicians, businessmen, and other lobbies, in exchange for favorable coverage.

The panel pointed out that in Senegal the advertising market is on the order of CFAF 10 billion per year. It is considered significant, but Ndiaya Diop raised the problem of distribution: between CFAF 4 and CFAF 5 billion is directed to RTS (both radio and television), CFAF 1 to CFAF 2 billion to Hors Média, and the rest to the private media. Furthermore, there is still no advertising agency, which would help smaller media access advertising. Advertising, which is officially the main source of funding for media, is directly negotiated

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.

between advertiser and media company. Each medium has its own rate cards. Advertising is not allowed on community radios, which is a tough blow to their finances.

Bouna Manel Fall stressed that in terms of advertising time, there is no limit or quota policy as in France, where the law imposes a six-minute per hour advertising period on the radio. Ironically, here, in Senegal, he specified, a radio station can air commercials for 24 straight hours without objection. With respect to the print media, he noticed that the editorial space of *L'Observateur* has diminished to the benefit of advertisements. However, Ndiaya Diop mentioned that there is a 1983 law setting the advertisement space to a quarter of a page, but it is not observed.

According to the panel, the state offers CFAF 300 million per year to private print and broadcast media. To access this assistance, the media must apply or submit an application to the Ministry of Information. This does not affect editorial independence. This is proved by the fact that, when the head of state refused to release these funds in 2007 under the pretext that he would not finance journalists who insult him, all journalists mobilized to successfully oppose this stance, saying that the aid comes from the Senegalese taxpayers and that it is the result of a law voted by the National Assembly.

The panel lamented that the granting conditions of these funds are not transparent, to the extent that completely fabricated or marginal media companies benefit from it without observing the previously set criteria. This hurts legitimate, reputable media companies, such as Sud Communication Group. For example, *Wal Fadjri L'Aurore* consistently places as the highest circulating daily paper of more than 12 pages and selling for CFAF 200; it receives a subsidy of CFAF 7 million. A paper like *Le Courrier*, which in the same category is second to last in circulation, receives CFAF 8 million. Similar examples exist in the radio sector as well. This issue is being challenged by some in the industry.

In terms of using market research to establish strategic plans, improve advertising receipts, and personalize their product according to the needs and interests of the audience, the Senegalese media appeal regularly to commercial polls, the panel pointed out. In Senegal, the BDA Institute conducts surveys on the media through street and phone polls. These polls are primarily used by newspapers for commercial purposes, such as establishing advertising rates, and applying for foreign funding. That is how, according to Ndiaya Diop, Sud Communication Group won CFAF 150 million worth of American financing to cover the local elections.

The panelists mentioned that the media companies, by means of the BDA Institute, regularly produce reliable statistics based on radio listening indexes and newspaper runs.

The panel pointed out that all media companies are unprofitable. One of the reasons mentioned by Ibou Lissa Faye with Sud Quotidien, speaking about the print media, is that—apart from the low readership—the cost of producing one copy is CFAF 250, while its cover price is CFAF 200.

However, Yacine Diouf of the newspaper *Le Matin* doubted their reliability. "Some newspapers announce publicly that they print 10,000 daily copies in order to attract advertisers whereas they actually print 5,000," she said angrily. To support her claim, Diouf informally surveyed the workers at the company print shop, who indicated that circulation levels are lower than the newspaper's advertised statistics.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Senegal Objective Score: 2.81

The Senegalese media show the highest level of vitality with respect to this particular objective. The professional associations for journalists and those supporting the freedom of the press are credited with creating a dynamic media sector. The best scoring aspect of this objective was Indicator 4, covering academic journalism programs. However, the press publishers and owners are the only ones outside this dynamic, and Indicator 1 scored more than a point lower than the average.

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.

A Press Publishers' Association was created in order to help to unite the business associations of publishers and distributors. Yet the panel indicated that it is dormant because its members cannot work together. This failure illustrates how difficult it is to set up an association in this environment. In 1999, trying to confront the increase in newspaper prices, the Sud Communication Group, Walfadjri, and the government daily newspaper *Le Soleil* created a trading association so they could purchase supplies in bulk at lower prices. This experiment also failed.

On the other hand, the panel pointed out that there is supportive climate in terms of professional associations protecting journalists' interests. Such associations include SYNPICS, the most important press union in the country. This union frequently works to secure the release of journalists who are detained unjustly. In July 2004, their efforts expedited the release of Madiambal Diagne, jailed for "undermining state security." In 2006, when Pape Cheikh Fall of RFM radio was attacked with iron bars by followers of a cleric, SYNPICS supervised the filing of a complaint against his alleged attackers.

According to Bouna Manel Fall, ever since Diatou Cissé became the union's chairman, one of SYNPICS's strengths, apart from its role protesting against the state and the media owners, is its training of regional correspondents, who do not normally have access to training sources. SYNPICS is also lobbying the government to change laws unfavorable to journalists, particularly those that criminalize press offenses. The panel indicated that other associations such as the Young Reporters of Senegal Convention, the Political Journalists' Network, the Cultural Journalists' Network, and others are also providing training despite their limited means.

Among the NGOs working with journalists to support the freedom of speech and media independence, the most active are The Panos Institute for West Africa, Amnesty International, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Their role is considered to be positive, particularly in terms of organizing training seminars for journalists. Other organizations are also participating in the defense of journalists. The African League of Human Rights and Peoples' Rights and the Civil Forum have all mobilized their membership in defense of jailed journalists in the past.

With respect to the programs provided by training institutions, the panel commented that the Center for the Study of Science and Information Technology (CESTI), a state institution, and ISSIC, operated by the Sud Communications Group (the only press group owning a school) offer acceptable degrees of journalism given the scarcity of their resources: CESTI only receives CFAF 65 million per year from the state, a panelist lamented. The programs from CESTI and

ISSIC provide theoretical and practical training. ISSIC has the distinction of having students who are already carrying out some activities journalism. Both schools are well regarded in the country. The only concern in terms of training was that, in the context of an increasing demand for journalism training, some institutions offer their help without actually having the competence to give it.

For non-academic training, apart from training seminars financed by NGOs, the panel noted another opportunity: in-service training within the state aid for the press program. In 2005, CESTI and HIICS each received CFAF 30 million from the government to train 40 journalists each. The problem noticed by the panel was that such training was provided for only one month. Moreover, the training certificates granted were used by their beneficiaries to request promotions and salary raises, which generated work conflicts with the press owners. The owners thereupon started to refuse the journalists' leave applications to attend trainings.

Altogether, in-service training is very important to improvement of the journalism profession. According to the book *Miseries of the Press* (2001) by the former editor of the government newspaper *Le Soleil*, El Hadji Kassé, up to 95 percent of journalists are trained "on the job."

Speaking about newspaper distribution and printing houses, the panel pointed out that they are not restricted, while not being completely apolitical. Apart from Graphisol, the printing house of the government-owned daily newspaper, *Le Soleil*, there are private printing houses such as Tandian Printing. The panel specified that the only reason for refusing to print a paper could concern any arrears of payment and not its contents. No private printing house is subsidized by the state to the best knowledge of the panelists.

Regarding print distribution services, there is the Press Distribution Agency, that the government had shares in for a long time, and Marketing Press belonging to the Sud Communications Group. According to the panel, there is no discrimination here either. Given the geographical distance and due to the slowness of transportation, a newspaper appearing in Dakar will be read in Kolda, a town in the South of the country, the next day at 6 pm.

Ndiaya Diop pointed out one new phenomenon: the appearance of yellow kiosks (color of the ruling party) belonging to Minister Farba Senghor, who launched his own media group. This includes the newspaper *Express News* and the radio station Ann nù FM. But this new kiosk network does not discriminate in terms of selling newspapers, however vehement the tone they might take with respect to the authorities.

List of Panel Participants

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