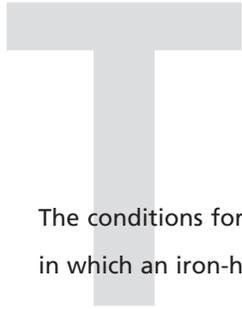

But after a nearly successful uprising in February 2008 reached the gates of the Presidential Palace in N'Djamena, the capital, Deby's government has cracked down on the political opposition and some journalists.



CHAD



The conditions for media sustainability in Chad reflect the country's larger political and security situation, in which an iron-hand regime beset by constant rebellions imposes repressive measures to stay in power.

Since taking power in a coup in 1990, President Idriss Deby has since instituted elections and allowed an opening of the media landscape. But after a nearly successful uprising in February 2008 reached the gates of the Presidential Palace in N'Djamena, the capital, Deby's government has cracked down on the political opposition and some journalists. It banned coverage of the armed rebellion and any information "endangering national unity," as part of a nationwide state of emergency, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

The police investigated opposition circles and even journalists. Some of them were forced into temporary exile in neighboring countries. Two particular members of the opposition disappeared after the authorities, according to several witnesses, questioned them. They are Ngarleji Yorongar and Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh. The former resurfaced in Cameroon before leaving for France and the latter is still missing. The investigation committee appointed by the government has yet to get to the bottom of this case.

CHAD AT A GLANCE

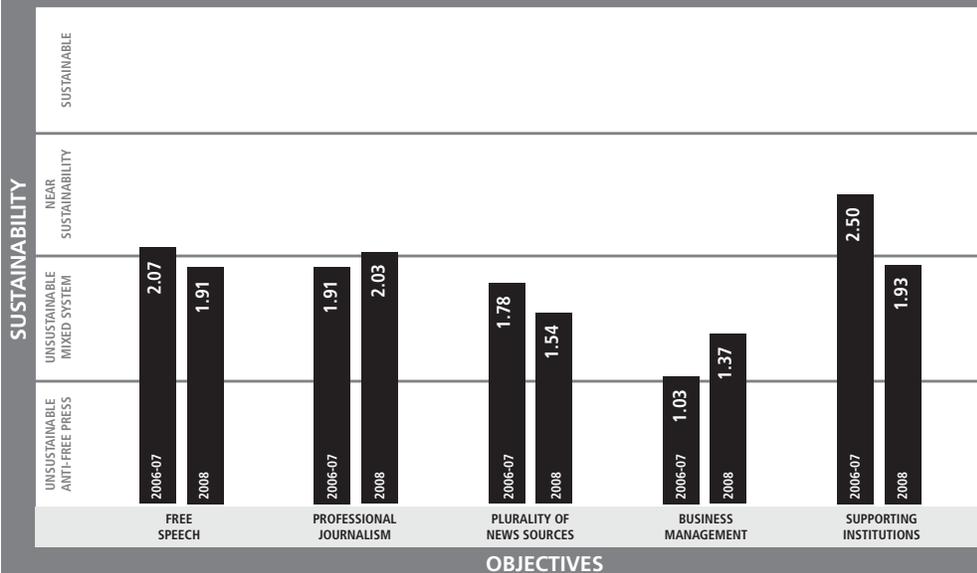
GENERAL

- > **Population:** 10,329,208 (July 2009 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** N'Djamena
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Sara 27.7%, Arab 12.3%, Mayo-Kebbi 11.5%, Kanem-Bornou 9%, Ouaddai 8.7%, Hadjarai 6.7%, Tandjile 6.5%, Gorane 6.3%, Fitri-Batha 4.7%, other 6.4%, unknown 0.3% (1993 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Muslim 53.1%, Catholic 20.1%, Protestant 14.2%, other 12.6% (1993 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages (% of population):** French (official), Arabic (official), Sara (in south), more than 120 different languages and dialects (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2007-Atlas):** \$57.60 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2009)
- > **GNI per capita (2007-PPP):** \$1,280 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2009)
- > **Literacy rate:** 25.7% (male 40.8%, female 12.8%) (2000 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** President Lt. Gen. Idriss Deby Itno (since December 4, 1990)

MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active print outlets, radio stations, television stations:**
Print: 1 daily newspaper, 4 other weeklies; Radio stations: 6; Television stations: 1
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** Top three by circulation: *Le Progres* (daily), *N'Djamena Hebdo* (private weekly), *L'Observateur* (private weekly)
- > **Broadcast ratings:** Top three radio stations: Radiodiffusion Nationale Tchadienne (state-owned), FM Liberte (private), La Voix du Paysan (Catholic station)
- > **News agencies:** Chad Press Agency (CPA)
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** N/A
- > **Internet usage:** 60,000 (2006 est., *CIA World Factbook*)

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: CHAD



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

Chad Objective Score: 1.91

Chad's constitution—specifically, amended Article 27, adopted in 2006—and Law No. 029/1994 regulate the media. In theory, they guarantee freedoms of expression and the media, but “this freedom has no application in reality. Journalists work in a permanent state of fear,” said Evelyne Fakir, a journalist with Radio Nationale. The country's state of emergency law and Order No. 05 limit freedom of expression, said freelance reporter Edouard Takadji, who noted that contradictions between Order No. 05 and Law No. 029/1994 “complicate journalists' work.”

Panelists said Chad's system of licensing media through the Higher Communication Council was generally fair. The council has nine members: three representatives of the media and six political appointees. “No medium is marginalized; all are subject to the same regime,” said Kalde Lwanga Dingamnaël, reporter and editor-in-chief for Radio Soleil. Fakir cautioned, however, that “in this country, the creation of media is not prohibited, but its development, its editorial content and orientation, and the management are subject to strict control from local political authorities.”

The media are heavily taxed, according to Takadji. The print media must pay Chad's value-added tax, said François Djekombe, a reporter with Radio Sarh, and broadcast media outlets pay rent for their frequencies. “They operate just like any other business venture,” he said. Fadassa Djibrine, a reporter with DJA FM, said that the government's failure to provide tax relief has spurred media companies to increase prices.

Several panelists said that journalists are sometimes attacked. “Violent acts against journalists keep occurring, and those responsible for these crimes go unpunished,” said Nadingui Maitol from the Union of Private Radio Stations. Fakir said: “Journalists' motorcycles and their reporting equipment are sometimes confiscated when they are out in the field. This happens regularly to journalists. The authorities do not really care, and investigations usually lead to nothing.” Djekombe, however, asserted, “There are no real crimes against journalists.” The government, Takadji said, frequently harasses journalists despite the press freedoms established by law. “Journalists are arrested all the time,” he said. “Newspapers and radio stations are shut down.” Djibrine agreed, saying, “Journalists are persecuted and severely punished.” Arrests of journalists often spark popular protests, said Lwanga, “but the executive power in Chad reigns supreme, and the authors of such barbaric acts go unpunished.”

Chad's state-run media is clearly favored by the government, panelists agreed. “The state-run media are not independent, and the media-related legislation gives them privileges,” said Djourtangue Amas, secretary general of the Association of Editors. Fakir said, “Journalists in the public sector are privileged to the detriment of others because they are their boss's mouthpieces or spokespersons.”

Panelists differed over how frequently journalists are accused of libel, but all concurred that the penalties can be severe. While Amas said that there are few cases of journalists being arrested for libel, others disagreed. “Libel is a recurrent complaint against journalists,” said Bénéloum Baïdomti, member of the Union of Private Radio Stations. “Journalists are often given prison sentences. It all depends on the judges' interpretation of the legislation and how rich or powerful the defendant is.” Lwanga complained that, “Journalists are convicted and held responsible for their actions, but the judicial process is not independent. The executive decides the fate of the defendant.” The burden of proof lies with defendants in libel cases, Djibrine said, adding that even when journalists can satisfy that burden, they still can be punished. “Despite providing evidence exonerating them, they are not released from prison,” he said.

Access to information “remains the greatest problem in Chad, both for journalists from the public and private media,” said Souleymane Yacoub, secretary general of the Chad Association of Radio Broadcasters. Lwanga said that “public information is not equally accessible to all journalists,” and several panelists

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.

concluded that state-run media are given greater access than private media. Fakir said access to news sources “depends on the budget of each media outlet, the journalist’s social connections and their address books... Communication is still far from being a priority for our leaders.”

Anyone wishing to become a journalist in Chad “is not hindered,” Benelum said. Maitol said “one must have a degree to be a journalist, but there are persons who work as journalists after being trained on the spot.” Fakir, on the other hand, maintained, “in the private sector, everyone can become a journalist, but in the public media one must have a degree to get hired.”

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Chad Objective Score: 2.03

Panelists expressed a wide range of opinions about the professionalism of Chadian journalists. “The social, political, and economic situation of the country makes it hard for journalists to do their job. Working conditions do not allow for the journalists’ professional development,” Lwanga said. “However, we must admit that efforts are being made every day to professionalize the work of journalists in Chad. We must also point out that people do make mistakes because no human activity is perfect.” Djekombe said that “reports are fair in some cases, but not in others.” Fakir, however, was pointedly critical: “News is processed poorly, superficially, and in no depth. The news that reaches the public is indigestible.” Lack of professionalism can carry a high price, warned Djibrine, who said “reporters do not always double-check the information they release, which is often enough to send them to prison.”

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).

Ethical standards were established in 2002 by the Union of Chad Journalists, and Maitol said they “are available and recognized, but in reality they are often infringed.” Amas estimated that “at least three-fourths of all journalists observe the accepted and recognized” standards, but Djibrine said bluntly: “Journalists do not observe ethical codes.” Ethical breaches, said Kenneth Djaoune Gueryau Madji from *Ndjamena Hebdo*, can be blamed on “the poor living and working standards of journalists. This explains why a large number of journalists in various media tend to accept payments or gifts as a result of their work.”

Self-censorship is “a rule in Chad,” Fakir said. “We are a sensitive society in the grip of armed conflicts. Because of that, news is carefully scrutinized before it is released.” Journalists practice self-censorship “either because their conscience dictates it or due to the pressure of their superiors,” Djibrine said. Takadji suggested another reason: “fear that they might be thrown into prison.” Two panelists contended that recent developments in Chad had made self-censorship a bigger problem than it once was. Madji blamed the perceived trend on “the recent evolution in the country’s domestic policy. Writing a much-too-daring article exposes the author to the leaders’ claws, and the gates of prison are opened.” Djekombe said it was “a result of the political events that have shattered the country. Journalists do address key topics, but certain issues concerning politics and the rebellion are silenced.”

Likewise, Chad’s political situation affects how journalists cover different kind of news, panelists said. “Journalists do not cover all the events. Certain political issues are addressed with too much caution,” Maitol said. Djibrine said such choices were made “to avoid trouble from the authorities in wartime.” Lwanga noted, “Journalists are not sufficiently free to cover military-related events. Reporters’ safety is not guaranteed.” Amas added, “Key issues are addressed more prudently to avoid libel lawsuits or other trouble from the country’s security services.”

Panelists’ assessment of journalists’ salaries ranged from poor to “completely ridiculous,” as Takadji put it. “In Chad, journalists have no consistent salaries,” Fakir explained. “Some of them have no salary at all. They practice their trade to survive and live off of gratuities.” Benelum said, “Their so-called salary does not even cover food, not to mention health care. Journalists live in less than human conditions which push them to adverse alternatives.” Those alternatives include corruption, several panelists said, or the decision to, in Fakir’s words, “abandon the profession and do something else.”

Panelists agreed that entertainment programs take precedence over news, and that outdated equipment is a

problem that plagues all media. "Equipment is wanting," Djekombe said. "Some radio stations use digital equipment, but sound processing is a problem. Therefore we are in need of quality training programs for sound technicians. Quality shows and reports are rare."

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS

Chad Objective Score: 1.54

A variety of news sources are available but not necessarily affordable, panelists said. "The government does not restrict citizens' access to the media," Maitol said, but the citizens "lack the financial means for access." Madji said that 20 percent of the population has the means to buy or read a newspaper. Moreover, the media are concentrated in the capital, N'Djamena. "Access to objective and reliable news is difficult," Lwanga said. "The written and audio press do not cover the entire nation. The expansion of the written press is limited due to the fact that a large part of the population is illiterate. Access to the Internet is very limited. Underdevelopment affects the work of journalists." The journalists themselves, said Sama, "are not really in touch with the world and receive domestic and international news with a delay."

None of the panelists disputed that government-owned media are partisan and are not independent.

"The public media are the voice of the government: they convey the government's propaganda and policies always showing its positive side to the public," Fakir said. "Reports

are biased: the state must always come across as good. The opposition is muffled." Madji agreed: "The public media serve the interests of the government and the ruling party. They sing of their generous acts and justify their actions and gestures."

Panelists said that independent broadcast media produce their own news programs and, in doing so, exercise significantly more independence than state media.

Little was said about the transparency of media ownership. "The public is more or less aware of who owns the private media, but nothing is clear," Djekombe said. Benelum said lack of transparency "makes it impossible to analyze the almost nonexistent news objectivity."

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Chad Objective Score: 1.37

Panelists expressed divergent opinions about the management of media companies in Chad. Madji said they are "professional and profitable, but they have accounting and financial management problems. In the last two years, however, the Chad Private Press Publishers Association has started a process of normalization of the management system to further professionalize these companies." In contrast, Amas said media companies are not well managed, and Fakir described them as "... shady. The sheer poverty of journalists is evidence of that. Owners hesitate to hire competent people because they know their rights and ask for more money."

There are few sources of revenue for media in Chad, panelists said. Advertising is the principal source, but the market is underdeveloped. Lwanga said there are only two companies

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.

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.

that advertise in the media, both of them cellular telephone providers. There are no advertising agencies.

Madji said that in the print media, 60 percent of available space is covered by news and 40 percent by advertisements. "Against accepted rules," he said, "ads represent almost 80 percent of the sales figures of private press companies. This is dangerous in terms of their independence from advertisers."

Chad's media laws provide for government subsidies for private outlets, panelists said, but "such aid is rare and irregular," Maitol said. Lwanga said, "Subsidies drip in, but in a very biased fashion" and that they are regulated by the Higher Communication Council, "which tends to muzzle the media." "These funds are either misappropriated or confiscated," Benelum said.

Panelists described market research as either inefficient or nonexistent. Accurate circulation and ratings figures are not available.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Chad Objective Score: 1.93

Chad has "no commercial associations representing media publishers or radio station owners, but there are dynamic and efficient professional associations working to protect the rights of journalists," Yacoub said. Panelists put the number of professional groups at between three and 10.

International NGOs support the Chadian media, "working tirelessly for the freedom of speech. They collaborate closely with the media but unfortunately they are not implemented throughout the country, which makes their work less known,"

Benelum said. Fakir said, however, "Not too many NGOs do their job to protect liberties. If more are created, we can hope to create a larger movement in support of journalists." Civil society organizations, said Madji, "collaborate and support press companies to really implement the freedom of expression. They react to violations against fundamental liberties. Some of them offer legal support to the media."

Chad has no journalism school, though there is a communications sub-department within the Department of Language and Literature at the University of N'Djamena. "Most communication professionals in Chad were trained abroad," Madji said. "However, professionals that constituted the association called *MédiaExcel* do a remarkable job of training young persons who are interested in this profession and even retraining older professionals, allowing them to improve their competence or acquire new journalistic techniques." Benelum noted that while "it is true that short-term training may allow journalists to improve their output... it is preferable to push them a bit further to obtain university degrees and in turn become teachers so that foreign training might become less necessary."

The only printing plant available is Chad Printing House, Fakir said. "The identity of its owners is shady," he said. "One of its shareholders is the current minister of communication." Other panelists spoke of multiple printers, but said Chad Printing House has an effective monopoly.

Distribution is diffuse, panelists said. "There is no official newspaper distribution network other than hiring young peddlers and wandering salespeople," Djekombe said. "Each media outlet sets up its own distribution."

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.

List of Panel Participants

Evelyne Fakir, journalist, Radio Nationale, N'Djamena

Bénéloum Baïdomti, member, Union of Private Radio Stations, N'Djamena

Amas Djourtangue, secretary general, Association of Editors, N'Djamena

Kalde Lwanga Dingamnaël, reporter, editor-in-chief, Radio Soleil, N'Djamena

Maitol Nadingui, reporter, Union of Private Radio Stations, Ati

François Djekombe, reporter, Radio Sarh, Sarh

Yacoub Souleymane, secretary general, Chad Association of Radio Broadcasters, N'Djamena

Edouard Takadji, freelance reporter, N'Djamena

Fadassa Djibrine, reporter, DJA FM, N'Djamena

Kenneth Djaounsed Gueryau Madji, contributor, *Ndjamena Hebdo*, N'Djamena

Tchanguiz Vatankhah, editor-in-chief, Brakoss Radio, Moissala

Moderator:

Odjitan Maji Maji, journalist, FM Liberte, N'Djamena

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