

---

---

*In response, President Museveni has on several occasions openly attacked the media. He has criticized the state-owned New Vision newspaper, charging that it is writing “lies” and being used by the opposition to fight his government.*



UGANDA

In 2008, several new threats against the media sector emerged in Uganda. The situation has changed significantly since last year's survey, and signs indicate that the government is determined to stifle the freedom that journalists have enjoyed for the last 20 years.

The government has been reluctant to put regulations in place to aid implementation of the access to information act, passed two years ago. Uganda President Yoweri Museveni has set up a cabinet committee to review and amend the constitutional provisions that guarantee freedom of the press and freedom of speech. With stepped-up pressure from the media and human rights groups, Minister for Information Kirunda Kivejinja has promised that the committee will consult all the stakeholders before amendments are made to the law. Journalists are skeptical, however.

This comes at a time when the media has been critical of the ruling party, the National Resistance Movement (NRM), exposing accusations of corruption against its leaders. In response, President Museveni has on several occasions openly attacked the media. He has criticized the state-owned *New Vision* newspaper, charging that it is writing "lies" and being used by the opposition to fight his government. He has threatened to close down papers and radio stations for "misleading the peasants" and has said that media members should face charges for lying. The police have summoned journalists, mainly from private media, to the police Criminal Investigations Department (CID) headquarters, where the journalists have been interrogated and threatened.

Leaders of journalist associations have many times condemned the president, government, and police for their actions against the media. Activists have called on the authorities to not impede press freedom and to abolish media laws and any other laws that infringe on journalists' rights. The associations' efforts have been supported by local and international human rights groups, which have been issuing protest statements regarding the Ugandan government's actions against the media. And their efforts do pay off: on a positive note, the constitutional court recently abolished the law on publishing false news, after a petition filed by the media challenging the law.

Despite the mounting government interference, the media has continued providing coverage to Ugandans on all issues: political, business, development, human rights, and many others. A plurality of news sources of different types—particularly print and radio—has developed over the years to support what has come to be recognized as one of Africa's stronger media sectors.

# UGANDA AT A GLANCE

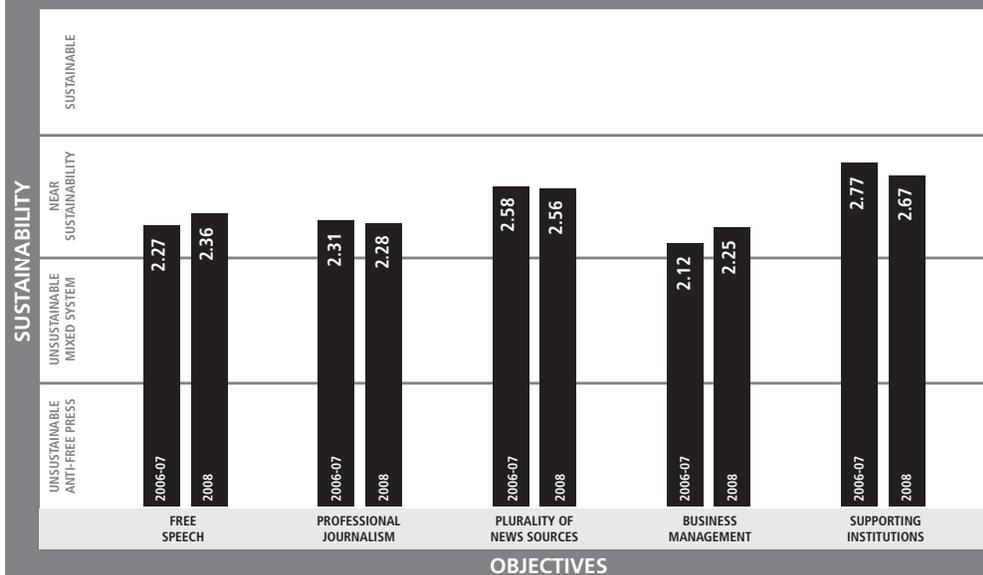
## GENERAL

- > **Population:** 32,369,558 (July 2009 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** Kampala
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Baganda 16.9%, Banyakole 9.5%, Basoga 8.4%, Bakiga 6.9%, Iteso 6.4%, Langi 6.1%, Acholi 4.7%, Bagisu 4.6%, Lugbara 4.2%, Bunyoro 2.7%, other 29.6% (2002 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Roman Catholic 41.9%, Protestant 42%, Muslim 12.1%, other 3.1%, none 0.9% (2002 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages (% of population):** English, Ganda or Luganda, other Niger-Congo languages, Nilo-Saharan languages, Swahili, Arabic (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2007-Atlas):** \$11.31 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2009)
- > **GNI per capita (2007-PPP):** \$1,040 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2009)
- > **Literacy rate:** 66.8% (male 76.8%, female 57.7%) (2002 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** President Lt. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (since January 26, 1986)

## MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active print outlets, radio stations, television stations:** Print: 4 daily newspapers, 5 weekly newspapers, several magazines; Radio Stations: 165; Television Stations: 45
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** Top three by circulation: *The New Vision* (60% state-owned, 40% public share holders, 40,000 circulation), *The Monitor* (privately owned, 35,000 circulation), *Bukedde* (60% state-owned, 40% public share holders)
- > **Broadcast ratings:** Top three radio stations: Central Broadcasting Service FM (private), Simba FM (private) and Uganda Broadcasting Service Radio (public)
- > **News agencies:** Uganda Radio Network (private)
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** KSH 17.4 billion (2007)
- > **Internet usage:** 2 million (2007 est., *CIA World Factbook*)

### MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: UGANDA



#### 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

### Uganda Objective Score: 2.36

Constitution Article 29 (1) (a), which guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of the press, may soon turn into a hindrance, as the government plans to amend it in its move to crack down on the media. This may also violate several international human rights treaties to which Uganda is a signatory.

Panelists agreed that Uganda has pro-media constitutional provisions and human rights treaties, but the government has frequently violated them, leading to abuse of freedom of the press and freedom of speech. Oppressive laws, such as the Press and Media Law of 1995 and the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2002, contradict constitutional provisions but remain on the books. The state uses them regularly to intimidate and harass the media and the public. The government plans to introduce even more draconian press laws to suppress media freedom.

At one time, the current government promised to abolish legacy colonial laws it regarded as contrary to media freedom, but this later turned out to be an empty promise. Worse, the government passed legislation targeting the media, as described above. But after protests by the media, the government is in the process of amending some of these laws. The minister of information has asked for input to better inform this process, but no one, not even journalists' associations, has responded with anything concrete.

Panelists noted that the state's acts of persecution, harassment, and intimidation of the media continue unchecked. "We have no protection as journalists," said David Muwanga. "We are at the mercy of security personnel. Instead of protecting us, they are the ones who harass us all the time."

Ahmed Kateregga agreed. "Several of our colleagues have been battered intentionally by security personnel during political and civil riots," he said.

Muwanga Kakooza reported incidences of torture and harassment, including cameras being confiscated or destroyed. Journalists like Andrew Mwenda of *The Independent* magazine and Ibrahim Semujju Nganda of *The Weekly Observer* are frequently summoned to CID headquarters for interrogation, and their cases drag on for years without resolution, he said.

Another panel member, Malinga Doya David, told the panel of his own experience. Fox Odoi, a presidential assistant, pulled out a gun during an election and threatened to shoot him. The matter was reported to police, but nothing was

done to Odoi. Panelists Areerenge Micheal and Wokulira Ssebaggala said that they and a group of other journalists were held at gunpoint at the high court and ordered out; nothing was done in response. Other cases were named: Nkalubo was beaten at Kisekka market and his camera destroyed; Rebecca Wilbrod Kasujja from community radio station Buwama FM was raped and killed, and police took no action; Kiggundu Joseph of *The Independent* was kidnapped, blindfolded, and later on dumped. Panelists said that they plan to take legal action against the state and the police given the government's failure to assist them.

All these abuses are carried out without discriminating between journalists working for private and state/public media.

Arrests of journalists—especially those working for private media, and those who host political talk shows on private FM stations—have become more frequent. Panelists said that several opposition politicians, some civil society members, and journalists have faced arrests for organizing "illegal" assemblies and demonstrations to advocate for their rights. Journalists are grilled by police investigators and released without any charges against them, but others have ended up in courts, charged, and sent to prison. Some have been imprisoned on a Friday evening, when banks are closed and with no way to post bail.

However, despite threats by the president and other politicians, no media house was closed down last year.

#### 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.

---

---

The panel members said that the public has started losing trust in the judiciary, given how it handles cases of members of the opposition. More ruling party cadres have been appointed in the judiciary, which is seen as compromising its independence. Panelists said that the president boasted publicly of these new young judges, who he referred to as “our children” that will help “clean up” the judiciary.

Corruption in the judiciary has also increased. According to the recently released report by the Inspector General of Government, the judiciary is ranked as the number three most corrupt institution in the country.

The Uganda Broadcasting Council and the Uganda Communications Commission carry out radio station licensing. Members of these bodies are appointed by the president through the minister for information, so the licensing process can hardly be fair, the panelists said. The process needs to be streamlined as well as balanced, they said; government should designate one body for licensing and the body should include private stakeholders. Further, because most private broadcast stations are city-based, the government now enforces a policy that all new entrants to broadcast media must be in rural areas.

In some areas, especially where ministers own radio stations, licensing has been politicized and some applicants have been denied licenses, according to panelists. They gave an example of James Musinguzi, treasurer of the main opposition party Forum for Democratic Change. He wanted to set up a radio station in his area of Kinkinzi, but was denied a license. His rival, Amama Mbabazi, a cabinet minister and member of NRM, was granted a license for his radio station Kinkizi FM.

Uganda has liberal laws that clear the way for citizens wanting to start a business, including a media house. Taxes for the media industry are similar to those for other sectors; however, foreign and local investors in other businesses are given tax breaks at times. Kateregga said that given the media’s positive role, the government should provide these tax benefits to the media as well as reduce the tax on newsprint.

The panel agreed that although state media are supposedly independent, this is not the case in practice. In most cases, state radio and television outlets run stories that favor the government, which appoints all its editors. However, the panel noted that the public print media has long shown a sense of independence, despite the fact that the government appoints all the top editors and managers. The state-owned paper *The New Vision* and its sister papers have remained independent and write stories which are critical of government without any fear or favor. The president and other government officials have many times come out and

complained against articles written in these publications, noted Muwanga.

The panel noted that the laws that govern the media treat state and private outlets the same, but in practice, the state media are favored. One example is the relative easier access to public information by state media. In addition, powerful businesses do interfere with both state and private media’s editorial content, as they provide advertisements that are a major source of revenue.

Libel is handled by both criminal and civil laws. A journalist that loses a criminal case serves a prison sentence, after which the complainant is free to file a civil case for damages. The complainant has the burden of proving guilt beyond reasonable doubt. Very few libel cases have resulted in guilty verdicts against journalists. Panelists were concerned, however, that some journalists abuse freedom of speech to injure others.

Article 41 of the constitution guarantees citizens the right to access most information in possession of the state and authorizes parliament to promulgate laws to allow for such access. These laws have helped media outlets obtain needed information. However, the panel noted that these laws do not cover the files of the cabinet and that the procedure for acquiring information is too cumbersome and should be revised.

The government also needs to create a regulation to expedite implementation of the access to information act, panelists said. The act calls for the government to appoint spokespersons for all its departments, but this has only been done in a few ministries (the army, the police, and the prisons department).

Access to international news and news sources is unhampered, and several media outlets use stories from foreign news agencies such as AP, Reuters, and AFP. The panel noted that Internet access is not restricted and is available in most cities, towns, and urban areas.

In the past, the journalism profession was completely free to enter, but the Press and Media Law passed in 2005 put conditions in place. The law spells out who a journalist is, and requires journalists to have a diploma and to register with the National Institute of Journalists of Uganda (NIJU), an entity put in place by the government to oversee the media. “We have rejected NIJU because it’s a government body, and we shall continue to do so,” Kakooza said. “Under the law, NIJU has been directed to register not only us as journalists, but our addresses—which we are suspicious of, and we think is improper.”

## OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

### Uganda Objective Score: 2.28

The panelists agreed that most journalists do their work professionally and provide balanced and fair stories to their audience, but with multiple challenges. They said that most journalists could perform better if their bosses, the media owners, were professional as well—but owners are most concerned with profit-making.

Panelist Ouma Stephen, the Uganda Journalists Union (UJU) general secretary, said that the few weaknesses in the quality of stories published might be because of freelance reporters, who aim to publish more stories for better pay rather than focus on content. He added that some journalists might not bother checking their sources.

The Ugandan media sector has a code of ethics that aligns with international standards and was developed and agreed upon by all journalists' associations. However, panel members said that some journalists have violated the code by taking gifts for coverage and accepting bribes to kill stories. They said that this practice is more common in broadcast media. Those who have been caught have been punished through suspension of association membership, and others have been terminated from their positions.

The panel members gave examples of some politicians who have been paying some journalists to write stories featuring them while debating in parliament, while some women members of parliament have been complaining about the media ignoring them.

Self-censorship has persisted at different levels, but the panelists attributed this to different reasons: political pressure, business interests, fear of persecution or arrest, or losing a job when a story would go against the media outlet's editorial policy or bias. Most newsmakers have contacts for all media managers and owners, on whom they put pressure to drop or use a particular story; in turn, the bosses pressure the journalists, said panelist Ssebaggala Wokulira. He added that some media houses have been forced by government to drop certain stories, especially those related to security.

No legal restrictions prevent journalists from covering most key events. But in order to cover the president's functions, the first family, and all visiting heads of state, journalists need clearance or accreditation from security. The military restricts coverage by the media but only in war areas. Nonetheless, the panelists said that the media does not cover all key issues, but this is a weakness of the media, not a function of the state.

The panel agreed that pay levels for journalists, especially freelancers, have remained poor to the extent that some of them have been turned into volunteers. But they added that this is a regional problem that needs to be addressed nationally. In addition, the disparity between editors and journalists is too big, panelists said. Some editors are paid as high as USH 5,000,000 (\$3,000) per month, a highly paid reporter receives USH 1,500,000 (\$800), and the majority of reporters are paid an average of USH 100,000 (less than \$100).

Some panelists said that low wages have contributed to the increased corruption in the media. There are journalists that survive on attending parties where they get free food and drinks and brown envelopes. But Kateregga said that some journalists engage in corruption not because they are poorly paid, but because they are naturally dishonest. "I know of media managers who are well paid but are corrupt," he said.

Panelist Sarah Muwanga said that though the pay levels are not sufficient, pay levels have generally increased compared to 20 years ago. She said that the cost of living has also gone up, however.

When the Trade Union Act of 2006 is fully implemented, it will empower the government to set a minimum wage in consultation with the trade union leaders. The UJU is negotiating with media houses regarding their workers' remuneration, which has resulted in the signing of collective bargaining agreements, Ouma said.

Due to fierce competition with electronic media for music listeners, FM stations have allocated more time to entertainment programs than to news. About 80 percent of airtime is dedicated to entertainment programming, up from about 60 percent last year, and about 20 percent to news.

### 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).

Muwanga gave the example of the news station Monitor FM, which failed and was re-branded as K-FM, a music station. Arerenge, a television news editor, said that age group matters when determining radio listening trends—the older generation prefers news and youth prefer music. Radio managers need to study the listening habits of the audience, he said.

The facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news have improved gradually but have not reached the required standard. Most of the equipment is imported cheaply from third world countries and wears out quickly. Some television stations, such as Wava Broadcasting Service (WBS) and Nation Television (NTV), have managed to buy good cameras, but other studio equipment is still poor, thus affecting the quality of the programs produced.

Panelists said that some print media houses have acquired modern printing facilities and computers but lack good cameras and recorders for their reporters. Journalists, especially freelancers, need more modern equipment (still and video cameras, recorders, and laptops).

Panelists said that assistance groups that provide equipment should be channel their efforts through professional associations such as the UJU and the Uganda Journalists Association (UJA), which can devise better methods of distribution to beneficiaries.

Some media houses have trained and encouraged their reporters to specialize in particular issues. The UJU and UJA have also organized some seminars for the media on specific topics, but their efforts have been limited by lack of funds. The panel members welcomed any assistance in terms of training in niche and investigative reporting, but again through the trade union.

### OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS

#### Uganda Objective Score: 2.56

Ugandans have access to several affordable state and private news sources. Media can be accessed easily in all parts of the country, and there are no restrictions on citizen access to domestic or international media. Viewers subscribe to cable or satellite television in areas that receive coverage. Some citizens depend on radio stations for information, while others prefer television and newspapers. In some villages and small towns, public address systems have been installed in order to relay news and programs from the large radio stations, Katerega said.

Uganda has more than 15 newspapers and about 10 magazines, both private and public. Four are published daily, five weekly, and the rest monthly.

Uganda has 45 television stations, including cable channels. No new television stations have been founded since last year's MSI, but more foreign channels have been linked to existing television stations.

Internet facilities are available, and at fair rates, but mainly in urban areas and small towns. The panel agreed that the number of internet users has gone up, as facilities spread out beyond towns. Users have also started appreciating the importance of the Internet as a source of information.

Currently, Uganda has 200 licensed parent radio and booster stations, but only 165 are in operation—mostly private, commercial FM stations. The panel agreed that community media exist in some areas and the number has continued to grow year by year. They include the stations Maama FM, Radio Kagadi, and Tiger FM, among others, and they are doing well. Community print media outlets, however, have been forced to close down for economic reasons.

Businesspeople and politicians have also started regional and district-level radio stations, which they use for both their political mobilization and developmental issues. These are mistakenly referred to as community media; in actuality, they are operated as profit making/commercial enterprises and only air a few programs aimed at the community.

Media houses with staff stationed throughout the country have continued to do well and are expanding into new areas,

#### 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.

which has helped them increase sales as well as listenership, panelists said.

Areas that are not covered by private and commercial media are covered by the state media, which allocates more time to developmental, health, and educational issues than other outlets. However, state electronic media provide limited coverage of opposition or alternative views, allotting more time to governmental programs on development and politics. This breakdown is within their editorial policies, which must be followed both by editors and reporters. The panelists noted that state print media try to give equal coverage to all sectors.

The panelists were disappointed with the decline in provision of news services by the Uganda Radio Network (URN), the country's only private news agency. The shift has forced some media houses to stop using URN's services and resume recruitment of their own reporters. The government closed its Uganda News Agency in 2008.

Most private radio outlets produce their own programs, and the content differs greatly from state radio. Private radio's news broadcasts tend to be produced more for the benefit of the public, while those of state media are biased toward the government. Most television programs are produced externally, but some television stations, including WBS and NTV, are trying to produce their own programs.

The panelists said that in the past, information on media ownership could be obscured. Today, ownership of outlets is transparent and the information is available to any interested party. Doya said that the Eastern Africa Media Council published a book late last year listing all radio stations in the country and their owners, but the book was not widely read. Findings show that 75 percent of the registered FM radio stations are owned by politicians, and 75 percent of these are members of the ruling party. Those stations are private but broadcast many stories to promote NRM and mobilize their constituencies.

The concept of media conglomerates is new in Uganda, but it poses a threat to the sector, according to the panelists. They named the Nation Media Group, owned by Aga Khan; IPP Media, based in Tanzania; New Vision Group, and; Spear Group Media as companies that have started to dominate media in the region.

Social issues are covered well by the media, and the government does not restrict any aspects of this type of reporting. Panelists said that minority issues are not taken seriously in the media, and as such, minority-language speakers are at a disadvantage and have to read or listen to other media.

## OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

### Uganda Objective Score: 2.25

The panelists noted that the level of professionalism in business management remained the same as in the last MSI study. Both public and private media operate as profit-generating businesses without direct support from the government, and are generally run efficiently. All sales outlets and distribution channels are in private hands, and managed as professional businesses. At times, transportation problems cause delays in newspaper distribution to remote areas, but in those cases, media houses have acquired their own transport. The panelists agreed that printing houses also are very well managed, and are numerous enough to support the needs of print media.

Although independent media do not receive any subsidies from the government, they do receive government advertising that is stopped at times when they run stories that are critical of the government. Kateregga gave an example of the *Monitor*, which lost government business for running stories seen as critical by the state. Big businesses also exercise influence over editorial content, as they threaten to hold back their advertisements from any media house that prints or broadcasts a critical story about the business.

Media are supported by different sources of revenue, including sale of copies, advertising, commercial printing, and sponsored programs. State broadcast media depend on both the government and revenue generated from advertisements. The public print media depend entirely on own-source revenue, and therefore government influence is much less effective.

### 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.

The largest percentage of revenue for most media outlets comes from advertisements, although some print media depend on sold copies and they secure advertisements to supplement their revenue. Most media outlets, state and private, enlist advertising agencies to facilitate advertising sales. Advertising is well developed and is handled by local and international agencies that match favorably in competition. Advertising firms work with all media formats, but mainly in cities and towns. Panelists noted, however, that some agencies ask for bribes from media houses to bring them business. Some media houses have recruited their own sales representatives and marketers, rather than depend on advertising agencies.

Some media outlets, such as *New Vision*, *Monitor*, and some radio stations, conduct their own market research and at times commission survey companies. Some outlets use call-in shows, focus groups, or questionnaires distributed to readers and listeners to gather marketing information.

Two companies, the Audit Bureau of Circulation and Steadman, produce circulation figures and broadcast ratings. Their findings are available for a fee to any media outlet. The panelists agreed that figures produced by these companies have never been disputed by any media outlets, although that does not prevent several radio stations from claiming they alone have the widest listenership.

## OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

### Uganda Objective Score: 2.67

Uganda has several media associations. Organizations such as the Uganda Newspaper Editors and Proprietors Association and the Uganda Publishers Association work for the interests of owners and editors, but shy away from engaging in the fight for journalists' rights.

However, several other associations represent working journalists. In addition to the UJU and the UJA, the Journalists Safety Committee handles press freedom and media rights issues. The panel noted that many of these organizations have actively defended journalists' rights whenever they are threatened. Membership is determined by application and payment of membership dues. Panelists said that these associations should be left to develop their own programs and should not be directed by donors.

The panelists commended the two national associations for their continued struggle in defense of journalist's rights during this difficult time, when the government has tried to silence the press. They added that with this unity, the Ugandan media sector will be able to achieve total freedom.

Several NGOs in Uganda defend journalists' rights. Panelists said that the Uganda Law Society has been very helpful in areas of legal reform and has provided legal assistance for journalists arrested and taken to court. The Foundation for Human Rights Initiative has also been instrumental in defending journalists' rights when the media is attacked by the state. Other support comes from the Foundation for African Development and international institutions including Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and the Danish International Development Agency.

Uganda has many media training institutions that offer degrees and diplomas. Makerere University, a public institution, was the first to offer a degree program in journalism and mass communication in 1988. To date, 20 of Uganda's universities offer a degree in journalism and mass communication, though the quality of some programs is questionable.

Many other institutions offer diploma courses in journalism. The majority of these institutions produce high quality journalists, but graduates have difficulty entering the field because of a lack of vacancies in existing media houses. Some journalists have received scholarships to study abroad and then return to work in Uganda.

Some media outlets have designed and implemented short-term in-house training programs for their employees, and panelists said that these efforts have resulted in professional improvement.

Printing facilities are in private hands and are run as profit-making businesses without any government interference. The panelists agreed that even state printing facilities provide services to private media without any restrictions. Media distribution channels are also privately owned and are managed efficiently.

## 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

**Stephen Ouma**, general secretary, Uganda Journalists Union, Kampala

**Wokulira Ssebaggala Jr.**, program coordinator, Human Rights Network for Journalists, Kampala

**Robert Mugagga**, journalist, *Weekly Observer*, Wakiso

**Jane Nakyondwa Matovu**, journalist, Mama FM (owned by Uganda Media Women's Association), Kampala

**Ahmed Kateregga Musaaazi**, former president, Uganda Journalists Association, Kampala

**Sarah Muwanga**, journalist, Bukedde, Mukono

**Muwanga Kakooza**, Journalist, *The New Vision*, Kampala

**Malinga Doya David**, business writer, *East African*, Kampala

**David Muwanga**, freelance journalist, Jinja

**Arengenge Micheal**, editor, correspondent, WBS TV/VOA, Kampala

**Justine Waibale**, communications expert, Amiko Media Consultants, Mbarara Town

## Moderator and Author

**Muwanga Kakooza**, journalist, *The New Vision*, Kampala

## Coordinator

**Herbert Mukasa Lumansi**, vice president, Uganda Journalists Association, Kampala in cooperation with the Uganda Journalists Union