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KENYA

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Kenya's constitution guarantees the freedom of expression, yet there is no specific provision within the national constitution guaranteeing freedom of the press. A positive development is that a new draft constitution, if endorsed, includes press freedom. However, other restrictive laws prohibit freedom of speech and of the press. The state security forces use these on many occasions to muzzle opposition voices. For example, the controversial Communications Amendment Bill of 2008, which journalists and media owners highly contested, remains in force, with no changes in the offending provisions. The government enacted the Communications Amendment Bill into law over strong objections by journalists and media owners. The Bill gave the Minister of Internal Security excessive power to raid media houses and to seize equipment in "emergency" situations.

Last year's MSI panel described arrests, harassment, and intimidation of journalists, but those incidents declined in 2010, and panelists agreed that the media environment improved notably overall. Still, while no journalists died this year, the panelists surmised that journalists are adopting less aggressive reporting tactics, succumbing to self-censorship after years of intimidation. On a positive note, however, the judiciary is regaining independence and control, separating from KANU, the ruling party. Of late, the judiciary is moving in the right direction, and certain judgments have fallen in favor of the media houses. In 2010 alone, the panel members counted four cases in favor of the media houses.

Improvements in media plurality are evident as well. The media are attracting new investors, who have helped launch many new print and electronic media houses. Online media and news blogs continue to grow, and media training institutions are mushrooming as well, all as a result of the improved press freedom climate. At the same time, panelists expressed concern that these developments have compromised overall media quality due to a lack of a central control and legal framework for training institutions. Panelists also said that with improvements in media freedom, the specter of abuse grows, especially by practitioners entering the profession from other sectors (e.g., disc jockeys and comedians employed as radio producers and presenters by some FM stations) who lack professional training in journalism.

Despite such lingering concerns, the prevailing media improvements have helped unify media professionals. The journalists' associations and their developing partners are busy providing training and equipment, such as cameras and small recorders, in preparation for the forthcoming elections in 2012.

KENYA AT A GLANCE

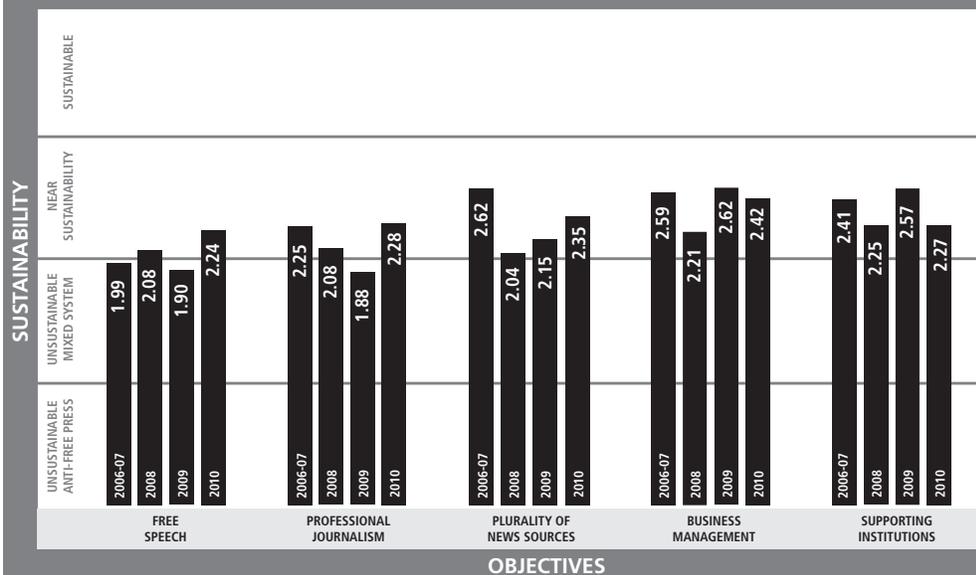
GENERAL

- > **Population:** 41,070,934 (July 2011 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** Nairobi
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Kikuyu 22%, Luhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6%, Meru 6%, other African 15%, non-African (Asian, European, and Arab) 1% (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Kikuyu 22%, Luhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6%, Meru 6%, other African 15%, non-African (Asian, European, and Arab) 1% (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages:** English (official), Kiswahili (official), numerous indigenous languages (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2010-Atlas):** 31.8 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2011)
- > **GNI per capita (2010-PPP):** \$1,610 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2011)
- > **Literacy rate:** 85.1% (male 90.6%, female 71.7%) (2003 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** President Mwai Kibaki (since December 30, 2002)

MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active print outlets, radio stations, television stations:**
Print: 6 daily newspapers, 5 weekly newspapers, 2 weekly magazines;
Radio Stations: over 100; Television Stations: 17
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** Top three by circulation: *Sunday Nation* (private, circulation 250,000) *Daily Nation* (private, circulation 150,000), and *Standard* (private, circulation 70,000)
- > **Broadcast ratings:** Top three radio stations: Classic Radio (private), Kiss (private) and Citizen Radio (private)
- > **News agencies:** Kenya News Agency (state-owned)
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** KES 12 billion (2010)
- > **Internet usage:** 3.99 million (2009 est., *CIA World Factbook*)

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: KENYA



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

Kenya Objective Score: 2.24

As noted above, Kenya's constitution is relatively strong in terms of freedom of speech and press freedom. With recent amendments drafted, Kenyans are likely to enjoy news freedoms as well. And yet, other laws on the books that contradict the new constitution pose a stubborn challenge. The panelists underscored cause for hope, though, noting that the parliament is set to address these laws, and if it follows through, the situation will improve.

Among the many laws that need amendment or outright repeal, according to the panelists, are the Communications Act 2008, the Kenya Film Censorship Board Act, an act on defamation, the State Security Act, the penal code act, the official secrets act, and laws on libel.

Furthermore, holes in the legislation also delay progress in the media sector. "In absence of the Freedom of Information Act, however good any new constitution is, it may not reach the objective of guaranteeing the freedoms aspired to," commented Ibrahim Oruko, a panelist and a leader of the Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ). The panelists reported that the judiciary, which was once seen as an arm of government, is regaining its independence, based on a number of judgments the media and other civil-society organizations deem as fair. "We have seen the judiciary condemning violations of people's rights, which is a positive development. We pray for continued improvement," added another panelist.

Difficulties surrounding broadcast licensing persist, however. Two bodies, the Ministry of Information and the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK), are charged with overseeing the process—but they coordinate poorly. The Ministry of Information issues licenses, and the CCK allocates the frequency. In some cases, the Ministry of Information issues a license, but the CCK denies frequencies, while bestowing multiple frequencies on other applicants.

The panelists concluded that, much as the law on licensing is very clear on fairness, such principles are not upheld in practice, especially when politicians are prioritized over other applicants. The independence of the licensing body is in question, especially because the minister for information—a political appointee of the president—appoints its members. In conclusion, the panelists outlined the need for a unified policy; they feel that a single institution should handle licensing. Stakeholders are pushing for this in an amended bill prepared by government.

Taxation policies remained the same as in 2009, with all media houses paying the same fees to acquire licenses, despite their relative size. However, high taxes on the importation of broadcasting equipment and newsprint are prohibitive to those investing in electronic media. Similarly, panelists said the requirement that publishers pay a bond of KES one million (close to \$10,000) to launch a newspaper is unfair, as no other businesses are asked the same. Also, the Kenyan media do not benefit from tax holidays, unlike other sectors.

The slowdown on attacks on journalists this year—compared with 2009, when torture, arrests, intimidation, and media house invasions by security organs were common—is a positive development. However, panelists could not ignore the probability that this is partly due to their impression that the media are cowed, pursuing investigative leads or critical coverage far less aggressively than in previous years.

Furthermore, previous crimes against journalists, though some of them were reported to the authorities, were not followed up, either because they involved big government personalities or because of a lack of state interest in the cases. For example, the suspects arrested in connection with the 2009 death of Francis Nyaruri, a *Citizen Weekly* reporter who was murdered and beheaded, were still remanded in a government prison with little hope of trial or conviction. Nyaruri's family lawyer and the arresting officer fled into exile for fear of their lives after anonymous threats by phone. Some cases have caused public outcry, attracting the attention

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.

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of a few civil-society organizations, but most citizens are not concerned with violations of journalists' rights.

Public media are fully funded by government, and top management in the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KCB) and Kenya News Agency (KNA) are appointed by the minister and, therefore, fully controlled by the state. Though laws governing the media are the same across the board, access to public information favors government media. There are also private media friendly to the state, especially media owned by ministers and politicians linked to those in power.

Libel remains both a civil and criminal offense, depending on the inclination of the "aggrieved party." The burden of proof is entirely on the media, reported the panelists. However, KUJ is lobbying for an amendment to make libel a civil offense only.

Access to public information by the independent media remains a serious problem. The government refuses to pass a freedom of information bill drafted three years ago, despite the media's lobbying efforts, led by KUJ. Civil-society organizations have been very supportive of the media in this cause. And yet, the panelists are pessimistic that the bill will ever pass. As it stands now, panelists complained that private media have little access to public information, but for state media it is somehow simple. However, government media are fully controlled by the state and gain easy access to any information that the leaders deem "useful," which amounts mainly to nothing more than propaganda. Panelists cited the example of appointments of new ambassadors: journalists tried in vain to get information about the changes, but officials pointed to the official secrets act.

There are no restrictions on international news and news sources; the only prohibitive factor is cost. On a positive note, the panel reported that Internet costs have gone down, attracting more people to access greater information, including foreign news sources. Additionally, Internet facilities have spread to small urban centers outside the main cities, further increasing access. The media can reproduce or reprint whatever they like of foreign media without trouble.

Entry into the profession is fairly free, with required qualifications such as a certificate of a degree. The government does not control journalism training institutions.

Although the 2007 media act requires every practicing journalist to obtain a license, the Media Council of Kenya and the Department of Information mandated to police it have not enforced this regulation. Local journalists are required to pay KES 2,000 (\$20) for a license, and foreign media KES 4,000 (\$40) for annual accreditation by the Ministry for Information.

Journalists continue to enjoy the freedom of association, evidenced by the several national and regional professional associations and a number of niche associations.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Kenya Objective Score: 2.28

Avoiding subjectivity in reporting has proven a Herculean task for reporters and editors, and while a variety of sources help expand horizons and add perspective, there is always a tendency by reporters and editors to lean toward or promote one side or another, for reasons ranging from political to ethnic to financial.

Journalists regularly engage technical experts to provide perspective on technical issues, but reporters rarely verify or cross-check facts. Research is an area of abysmal failure for Kenyan media. And yet, the panelists agreed, in the mainstream media some journalists have improved their objectivity. A journalistic code of ethics, developed in 2001 by a joint effort between the donor community and the media stakeholders, is still in place. By adopting the code, the media fraternity demonstrated the intent to deflect the government's desire to stifle media operations through legislation and the persistent complaints of public officials

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).

and others of what they consider to be unethical journalists and media houses.

The panelists deemed the code acceptable, but recent studies show that most journalists are ignorant of its content and application, leading to serious violations. The problem of journalists receiving gifts in exchange for favorable coverage has become one of the major challenges to objective journalism in Kenya. The problem knows no age, color, or gender. "So bad is the problem that the Nation Media Group has been forced to launch an Integrity Center to discourage gifts to its reporters. There is a telephone number and e-mail address where journalists who demand gifts can be reported," noted one of the panelists.

The panelists confirmed that self-censorship is common among editors and reporters. There have been cases where editors refuse to publish solidly confirmed stories out of apparent self-censorship. In other cases, reporters kill stories in exchange for money or other self-interest. The panelists noted that reasons for self-censorship range from fear of losing jobs to the fear of being killed for their work.

Kenyan media do not cover all key national issues and events. Limited reach in certain areas and bias are to blame, reported the panelists, who added that the Kenyan media are obsessed with politics at the expense of other important issues, misguided by the belief that politics sells newspapers and increases viewership.

For example, development issues that are key to the country and its citizens have been ignored by almost all media, who write about them only when a problem crops up. Experience shows that stories related to official corruption have terrible consequences for journalists, editors, and media houses. State agents lashed out at *The Standard* on the pretext that it planned to publish materials exposing the first family's complicity in corruption. And, Nyaruri was killed when he continued to detail corruption by police in the Nyamira district of western Kenya, panelists said.

They also noted that covering serious security issues is not easy. Journalists risked censorship or even arrests and prosecution for covering an example of an army recruitment exercise that was carried out in Limulu last year, where the media were blocked from accessing certain areas. In addition, panelists noted that the speaker of parliament is empowered to dismiss journalists from chambers when matters of discussion are sensitive.

Pay remains low for most journalists, but correspondents and freelancers are most affected, which the panelists say has pushed some into soliciting bribes. The panelists also expressed concern about the disparity in pay among disc jockeys, news anchors, comedians, and the journalists in

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broadcast media. One panelist commented, "These people are paid higher than the journalists, yet their work is very simple, without any qualification required." Poor pay, coupled with poor working conditions, has promoted corruption in the media and triggered the exodus of journalists from newsrooms to public-relations and managing communications departments in government ministries and other corporations.

The panelists agreed that there has been some improvement in the reach of news and information to the people as more media houses, especially electronic media, have opened. In terms of the balance of news and entertainment, panelists said, "Television and radio allocate more time to entertainment than news, while in print media it is the opposite." This has not stopped people from getting information and news whenever they want, thanks to the prevalence of media houses. Panelists noted that some radio stations have ceded more time to news—leading their audiences, especially the younger people, to flee to other stations. In response, a few have concentrated on entertainment in a calculated bid to retain more listeners.

Equipment and facilities at media houses have improved, and many of the journalists have gone digital, contributing to improved production quality. The panelists noted, however, that there is a need for media owners to invest in training journalists to improve their skills in handling modern equipment.

Panelists expressed concern about freelance journalists, in particular, as well as those working in rural areas, where they lack good facilities and equipment for news gathering and dissemination. They need video and still digital cameras, digital audio recorders, and laptops. If they get assistance, it will go far in terms of improving their status and working conditions. The panelists recommended that any assistance should be channeled through KUJ, as it is best placed to identify journalists most in need of some assistance.

Compared to last year, more journalists are showing interest in niche reporting, but editors still need to encourage

“Listeners enjoy local programming more than foreign; that’s why we have more programs produced locally,” reported the panelists.

expansion. There is also a need for training in specialized reporting; although some media houses have improved their offerings, more is needed. The panelists reported that television outlets have recently joined their counterparts in print media in encouraging journalists to engage in niche reporting, especially in investigative reporting. Accordingly, Kenyan journalists have won international awards. For example, Fatuma Noor of *The Star* won CNN’s African Journalist of the Year award for her investigative series on Al Shabaab, and three other Kenyan journalists picked up awards in other categories.¹

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS

Kenya Objective Score: 2.35

The panelists agreed that many news sources provide information when available and affordable: newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television, SMS media, and Internet. There used to be many community radio stations in Kenya, but panelists say some closed down due to lack of money and others became commercial, leaving only Mangerete as a fully community station.

Most media are concentrated in big cities, but people in rural areas depend on radio for information because it is more affordable than print. Others who prefer television must walk long distances and, at times, pay to enjoy their favorite programs. Panelists said that buying a radio is cheaper, but batteries are expensive; thus, a single radio can serve as a gathering place for an entire village.

Access to domestic and international media remains the same as last year: no restrictions at all. Foreign media channels and publications are available in many parts of the country, but the cost may be prohibitive.

Access to the Internet is free to those who can afford it, and government imposes no restrictions at all on users or providers. Still, very few people use it for news purposes, although many use it for communication. The panelists

¹ “Kenyans conquer the continent at CNN Journalism awards.” Internews in Kenya website, available at: <http://www.internewskenya.org/article.php?id=75>

reported that on a positive note, the cost dropped and coverage improved greatly, compared with 2009.

Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), the only state media, is used as a mouthpiece of the government and does not welcome opposition views. Government appoints top management of KBC and maintains direct control over it. Editors at KBC cannot do their work objectively and independently.

The panelists agreed, however, that KBC runs programs that are in the public interest, like education, culture, and many others not broadcast by private media. The panel also reported that efforts have begun to make KBC a fully public broadcasting corporation. It is not yet clear who will appoint the top managers when those changes occur.

Panelists noted that the only editorially independent local news agency is the Africa women and child feature services, which provides features to any media house at a modest fee. However, this service does not provide news stories, only features.

“The second local news agency, KNA, is government owned and not independent, but it also provides news to media houses that need it at an affordable fee,” noted the panelists, adding that there is a big array of foreign agencies (Reuters, AFP, AP) upon which the local media depend for foreign news, both print and broadcasting.

According to the panelists, private broadcasters produce their own programs, which are generally more lively, bold, and sensational than state-produced programs, which panelists find boring and promoting government opinions.

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.

"Listeners enjoy local programming more than foreign; that's why we have more programs produced locally," reported the panelists. They also said that some broadcast media air foreign programs, but ironically not very many refer to the regulation that limits the amount of foreign content allowed to all broadcast media. Panelists also noted that community media and bloggers produce most of their content and use only a little foreign content.

Ownership of big media houses (like KBC, KTN, and Nation Media) and FM radio stations started by politicians is known to many Kenyans, but it is not easy for all. The panelists noted that there is no law forcing people to disclose what they own. Additionally, owners have a lot of influence on editorial policies. Foreign investments in Kenya's media are generally weak; no major foreign investment in media came to the country in 2011.

The panelists agreed that there is no resistance to the inclusion of social issues in the media, but they noted that minority-language media are not needed in Kenya because all Kenyans speak Swahili as their national language. Social interests are reflected in the media, but the panel said that issues related to women and children are not well covered. However, the panelists highlighted a positive trend of media managers promoting women into more senior positions, such as editors and assistant editors, which could encourage more reporting about women's issues.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Kenya Objective Score: 2.42

Most media outlets and their supporting firms are profit-making businesses and operate efficiently, panelists said, although to a varying degree of professionalism. Some media houses successfully follow business plans, and professional executives manage the different departments at the media houses. Some smaller media houses, however, suffer from a lack of management skills, nepotism, and owner over-involvement.

There are multiple sources of revenue for most media houses, including copy sales, advertisements, commercial printing, and sponsored programs. Advertising, though, is the main source. Panelists noted that undue influence from these sources cannot be ruled out, especially from the big spenders (such as major advertisers).

Some small media houses depend on copy sales, while community media typically depend on sponsorship or donations. Under these circumstances, there is little chance of growth in these sectors.

The panelists noted that sometime this year, the government stopped advertising in The Standard, which the government considers critical. However, some ministries, headed by opposition politicians, countered this move and extended advertising to this newspaper.

Kenya has a well-developed advertising sector that works hand in hand with the media in the country, but it is mainly dominated by foreign companies and is based in the capital city, Nairobi, and other major towns. As the major source of revenue for most media houses, advertising has strengthened the bond between the advertising agencies and the media houses. Despite this bond, the panelists noted, some media houses have gone a long way and set up fully fledged advertising departments internally, with skilled staff to successfully outsource advertising. National Media Group and Royal Media Group are two media houses that perform well in this area.

In terms of the balance between news and advertising, editors face pressure to give more space to advertising than stories, thereby violating common international standards of 60 to 40 percent for news and advertisements, respectively. There are also cases where editors have dropped stories past news deadlines in favor of late advertisements, leading to conflicts between editorial staff and their colleagues in advertising because they cannot miss the money.

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 panelists concluded that government has partnered with the private sector to improve the ICT, which they believe will go a long way to improving the communication sector.

The panel noted that there are no government subsidies to private media, although the government extends official advertising business to media friendly to its policies. With this indirect funding, government influences editorial coverage. Friendly media produce reports that praise the government's work even in sectors where it has performed poorly. The panelists noted that sometime this year, the government stopped advertising in *The Standard*, which the government considers critical. However, some ministries, headed by opposition politicians, countered this move and extended advertising to this newspaper.

Some media houses use market research and use the findings to improve business. Research takes many forms: call-ins, engaging professional companies, using questionnaires, etc.

Panelists said the outcome of broadcasting ratings and circulation figures are very subjective, even when carried out by independent and trusted firms. The best-known companies are Synovet and ABC, which produce periodic findings that are often contested by media houses that find them unfavorable. Advertisers, however, pay reportedly high fees for the findings of the independent firms. The government of Kenya, through the Ministry for Information, carries out research as well—but does not release findings to the public.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Kenya Objective Score: 2.27

Kenya's trade associations include the Media Owners Association and the Kenya Publishers Association, but their membership has declined—according to some panelists, because they cater to interests of only a few. These associations lobby only for the business and political interests of their members. They are not concerned with the professionalism of the industry; their interest is only in seeking profits using the media freedoms fought for by others. The panelists noted that when the new media bill (which is now law) was introduced, the media owners and publishers had a different agenda from that of the journalists. They were fighting to protect their companies; journalists were fighting to protect their rights.

There are several trade associations representing the interests of individual journalists. These associations promote media freedom and media development and also conduct training. They include the following: Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ), Kenya Educators Association, Kenya Correspondents Association, Association of Women Journalists in Kenya, Kenya Editors Guild, The Media Council of Kenya, Kenya Sports Press Association, and others.

Many of these associations are weak financially because members fail to pay fees. At the same time, leaders of these associations lack skills and need help with capacity-building programs. KUJ also faces opposition by media owners who block their journalists from joining, under penalty of losing their jobs. The panelists added that becoming a member in many of these associations is by application, but for some, simply showing interest in joining suffices. All these associations are independent of government.

Panelists reported that there are a number of NGOs operating in Kenya, including the International Commission of Juries of Kenya, Kenya Media Institute, Center for Law and Research International, Article 19, Amnesty International, and UN agencies. These organizations have helped the media greatly in areas of press-freedom advocacy and training in human-rights issues.

Regarding formal education for journalists, there are many media training institutions in the country, ranging from universities offering degrees, to colleges, which offer diplomas and certificates. However, the panelists noted that there is confusion at the government level, as the Ministry of Higher Education is charged with registering media training institutions, but it is the Attorney General's office that issues an operating license. Furthermore, each training institution

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.

has its own curriculum and examination policies. "There is a need for a standardized national training curriculum for all these media training institutions... with one examination body. The earlier this is achieved, the better for the profession," said the panelists.

Most of the training institutions are good at teaching theory, panelists said, but practical training is lacking because they do not have equipment for student use. The panelists agreed that many of the graduates are absorbed into the media houses, and even those who train abroad are given jobs when they return. Overseas training is often sponsored by the organizers or by the media house one works for.

Short-term courses exist in print and electronic media, in addition to in-house training provided by some media houses for their staff and freelance journalists. The most popular course is broadcast journalism, but the greatest need is for well-rounded students.

The panelists reported that newsprint and printing facilities remain in private hands, as in previous MSI surveys, but complained about the increasing taxes, like the VAT (value-added tax) on newsprint and ink. Channels of media distribution are in private hands, but some big media houses manage their own distribution channels, while small ones depend on couriers. Broadcast media have their own transmitters, but smaller ones must rent from Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC). The panelists concluded that government has partnered with the private sector to improve the ICT, which they believe will go a long way to improving the communication sector.

List of Panel Participants

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