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KENYA

At first glance, Kenya has one of the most sophisticated media sectors in Africa. Kenyan media companies, with long and distinguished histories of providing news, have developed into commercially successful companies. Kenya is one of the few Africa countries where market research and audience statistics are available and used with effect by the media.

However, Kenya is also troubled by recent political turmoil that hampered the work of independent media and threatened to overturn the media development achieved over decades. Corruption and economic problems plague the practice of journalism. Furthermore, the robust media scene that one finds in urban areas lies in stark contrast to rural areas, where state radio and one or two other stations are likely to be available to residents there.

Fortunately, dramatic changes for the better are afoot for freedom of expression and a free press now that the new Kenyan constitution, enacted in 2010, is in place. The new constitution contains a more thorough defense of these freedoms than the old one, and exceptions where the state can curb these freedoms are provided for in a less severe manner.

The Parliament has now embarked on amending all media laws and packaged them into omnibus legislation known as the Media Bill. In particular, lawmakers have targeted for change laws that have been on the books for years and contravene the provisions of the current constitution. Journalists are eagerly awaiting the outcome, which will determine the future of media in Kenya.

However, certain provisions in the law persist, and appear likely to do so, that impact the media's sustainability. High taxes on media equipment and materials used in printing remain in place, and efforts by media owner associations to lobby the government for a reduction have not yielded positive results.

KENYA AT A GLANCE

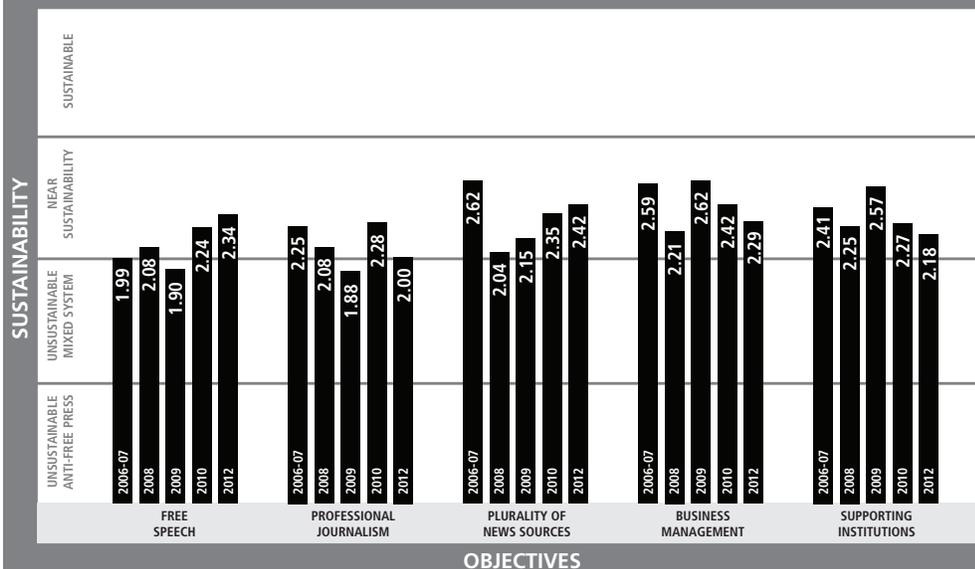
GENERAL

- > **Population:** 43,013,341 (July 2012 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 (2011-Atlas):** 34.211 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2012)
- > **GNI per capita (2011-PPP):** \$1,720 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2012)
- > **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; 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 (\$145 million) (2010 est.)
- > **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: 2.34

Kenya's media achieved another milestone after the enactment of the new constitution in 2010 in which a fully-fledged article on media freedom and its independence was inserted. The new constitution also gave clear guarantees on freedoms of expression and freedom of speech.

The adoption of the new constitution gave birth to the process of repealing all conflicting media laws and bringing them together under one roof, known as the Media Bill, which is still under consideration. However, the Media Bill has been tabled for so long that media professionals fear that it may not see the light of the day. Furthermore, the panel noted, despite the good intentions behind the new constitutional provisions and the Media Bill, there is skepticism that even if the Media Bill is passed that the laws will be respected, as has been the case in the past.

"We have had some good laws in this country however when it comes to implementation, they are abused by the same people who are supposed to protect them," noted one panelist. However, he added, if the Media Bill is enacted by Parliament and respected by the government, issues of government raids on media houses will be a thing of the past.

The panelists reported that the judiciary is independent and pointed to the handling of a number of recent media cases

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.

as evidence. However panelists noted that the Kenya Media Council has turned out to be the worst enemy of the media by imposing high penalties on media houses. "The Media Council is supposed to act as an arbitrator between the media and any aggrieved party, however on many occasions we have seen the Council ruling against the media and ordering it to pay heavy fines, which we think is unfair," complained one panelist. Big fines may lead to the closure of a media house and threatens, by way of cowering the media, to kill investigative journalism.

Panelists reported that protection of news sources is respected by law; however in some cases the government may use its weight to force journalists to reveal sources.

Licensing of electronic media in Kenya is a big problem, according to the panelists. This responsibility remains in the hands of two separate bodies: the Ministry of Information, which issues a license, and the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK), which allocates frequencies. The process remains unfair in the eyes of many who seek to set up media houses. The Ministry of Information has on many occasions granted licenses to applicants, who then are told by the CCK that there are no frequencies available. However, the panelists noted that for those with powerful political connections and with a lot of money, their applications are processed expeditiously.

As for print media, the Attorney General's office handles the registration process. The applicant is only required to deposit a bond of KES 1 million (\$12,000). The process, said panelists, is not as difficult as that of electronic media. Media using the Internet and SMS are also licensed; a committee has been put in place to monitor their operations, although the laws on the books do not provide for this.

All the bodies overseeing licensing and registration are within the government, and their personnel are appointed by politicians; therefore their independence is questionable. However, panelists expect changes to the process with the enactment of the new Media Bill into law.

The panel noted that taxes levied on media are very high compared with other businesses. For example, the government taxes highly imported equipment used by the media and other inputs like newsprint. Panelists felt that this serves to scare off would-be investors in the media. The panel also noted that the government continues to tax community media frequencies that should be tax-free. The panelists complained that other sectors in the country benefit from tax breaks, but the government so far has refused to grant these to the media.

The panel reported that there has been a lot of improvement in the area of crime against journalists. Few incidents were

reported over the course of the last year, and these were mostly perpetrated by individuals in government and not part of a concerted effort by the government. The panel noted that government has been working with the media on a number of issues aimed at improving the working environment of journalists, although some problem areas still persist. For example, panelists noted that some journalists who have tried to carry out serious investigative journalism either find their lives threatened or end up in court as a means of intimidation.

Further, one panelist said, there have been cases where journalists report the activities of their fellow colleagues to the targets of investigative reporting, hence putting the lives of their colleagues in danger. "We are our own enemies," added a panelist.

Cases of such violations receive poor coverage in the media and the public shows little reaction in defense of threatened or attacked media professionals. The panelists also showed concern that there is no follow-up by the authorities when culprits of such attacks are identified.

All the top managers of state media are appointed by politicians and they have little or no independence to carry out their work. In case of the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), editors are theoretically free to decide editorial content, but their fear of the unknown—that is, the limits of tolerance of their political masters—keeps them from allowing an open editorial policy. The panelists noted that a lot of interference comes from ministers, the boards of directors of state media, and others in government through telephone calls and other direct communications. "State media policy is to promote government programs and as such there is no way it can entertain the opposition views," reported a panelist.

Although the laws are the same across the board for state and private media, when it comes to access to information, state media are in a better position to receive information from government officials.

As regards libel laws, panelists were thrilled that the new constitution eliminates criminal penalties for libel and placing such cases solely in the jurisdiction of civil courts. However, while the burden of proof has always in theory laid with the plaintiff, in practice it was and still is the journalist or media outlet that must prove truth.

The panelists also expressed optimism about the judicial branch and noted that there are now fewer examples of corruption within the court system. "We have had a better environment in the last three years because of the changes in the judiciary. The courts have changed; a lot cases reported by politicians don't go very far. The biggest enemies of

the media are the editors themselves, who don't bother [supporting] their reporters," a panelist noted.

The panel noted that although the access to information bill has not been enacted for years, there are other laws that guarantee access to public information by the media and public. However, all these laws are ignored by those in authority. Furthermore, laws such as the official secrets act remain in place, preventing civil servants from giving out information. The panel reported that the media have been able to get public information with the help of leaks made by some in the government. Journalist associations have come together alongside civil society organizations to push for the enactment of the access to information bill, which they believe will help solve this problem.

Access to international news sources is not restricted in any way by the government; likewise the media may reproduce or reprint information from the foreign media without restriction. However, the high cost prevents some media outlets from accessing and using international news sources. The good news is that the government has invested heavily in expanding Internet access, which has brought prices down and allowed more media and journalists to get online.

The panelists reported that entry into the media profession is free as long as one has a certificate or degree from any media training institute or university. There are some topical areas where accreditation is a requirement for journalists interested in covering them, which was seen by the panelists as a good for the profession because it will help to eliminate some of the "quacks" who have invaded the trade.

The panel reported that entry into the journalism schools is not controlled by government, but there are entry qualifications that are required by the administrators of these institutions. "Government only comes in to control the standard and license them; illegal institutions that have come up are being closed down," reported one of the panelists.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Kenya Objective Score: 2.00

While some journalists, especially those from big media houses, report objectively, many journalists do not crosscheck facts from their sources. "We have seen and read many stories that lack facts, are not balanced, and are without the necessary background. This may be because of laziness or poor facilitation for reporters to do their work properly," noted one panelist. Panelists said that television is the worst culprit, followed by radio, and then print media. The panel

noted that in cases where experts are consulted, it is the same people day in day out.

Panelists reported that the media apply a lot more bias to political stories than others issues.

A code of ethics exists and is policed by the Media Council of Kenya with the help of editors. However, it is constantly violated by the media in a variety of ways: asking for money from those who desire coverage, accepting gifts from sources, and extorting money from people and companies through blackmail. The panel noted that there have been cases where those who do not pay money to the media get poor or no coverage at all. One panelist added that even the president of Kenya knows that in order to get good media coverage one has to entice the journalists.

Panelists said that editors and senior journalists are among the major violators of the ethics code. Such corruption cuts across all media platforms, experience levels, and positions, however. Panelists reported that big media houses like Nation Media Group, were forced to set up integrity centers that campaign against the practice in society of giving gifts to reporters.

Self-censorship is a common practice among the Kenyan media and it affects all levels for different reasons ranging from financial considerations, friendship with sources, and fears of losing one's job. The panel noted that there are cases where journalists and editors censor stories due to fearing for their lives, but such instances are rare.

Most key events are covered by the Kenyan media. The panel agreed that there are limitations on covering issues related to security by the media. The government, through its security

agencies, restricts the media from accessing information on security matters. However, bloggers and other social media do a better job in this area, as well as other issues that are not covered in the mainstream media.

All in all the pay levels for both electronic and print media is inadequate; this has promoted corruption in the media. Because of the low salaries offered by media outlets, many professionals have found themselves forced to run away to other sectors, reported the panel. Further, journalism is used by some as a means to get an income without contributing much to news: "Too many trained journalists, who are jobless, going around accompanying others to functions. They have specialized in begging as a way of survival; they include government workers," commented a panelist.

Salaries at electronic media differ vastly depending on the person in question: celebrity personalities are paid much better than most professional journalists and this has caused problems and divisions, noted the panel. There have been cases where presenters demand a payment from people they host on their programs as a supplement to their income.

The panel reported that journalists working for private media get more money than those working with public media. But pay can be uneven and some successful bloggers get more money than some editors. Panelists reported that freelancers earn between KES 4,000 and KES 10,000 per month (between \$50 and \$120), while well-paid editors get about KES 1 million (\$12,000), a big disparity, said panelists.

The panel reported that there is more entertainment in the electronic media than news and information. The panelists estimated that about 80 percent of airtime is dedicated to entertainment compared with 20 percent for news. They said that audiences are more interested in entertainment than they are in news, especially the youth. Radio stations with little entertainment have been abandoned by listeners. The panel also said that owners of electronic media indicate that producing news is an expensive venture that small radio stations cannot afford. In print media, however, news content far outweighs entertainment-related content.

The media now enjoy good equipment and facilities for newsgathering and dissemination than in the past, although panelists felt that there is yet room for improvement. The panel noted that the equipment used in newsgathering in rural areas, in particular, lags behind that used in urban areas. Media there need equipment like digital recorders, digital still and video cameras, laptops, and equipment for better remote reporting.

Niche reporting is developing more each year, especially in the areas of sports, politics, and health. However there is a need for media owners and editors to invest more in this

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).

area. In particular, the panel felt that training is paramount for those engaged in niche reporting. Niche reporting is more developed in television than in print, according to the panelists.

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS

Kenya Objective Score: 2.42

There are many news sources that provide information to the people, both electronic and print. They include radio stations, television, newspapers, magazines, SMS media, and Internet sources including Twitter and YouTube. However the panel noted that broadcast media have grown more than print media and this has benefited common Kenyans who live in rural areas where radio is the only option for receiving news, as long as one owns a radio set.

However, despite the many individual outlets, the panel reported that mainstream media are controlled by politicians in government and dominated by single line political views.

There is no restriction on accessing either domestic or international media by citizens, however, economic factors may hinder access. There is also a problem of media outlet concentration in urban centers, leaving the rural dwellers at a disadvantage. Distribution also poses a problem: only radio can be accessed in every part of the country. But even radio can be problematic: "Electricity coverage is at 16 percent and mostly in urban areas, kicking out the people living in rural areas. The only alternatives they have are batteries, which are also expensive," noted a panelist. The panel reported that

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.

there are areas like Budalani and Sigulu Islands where 100 residents share one radio set.

The situation has changed regarding the way state or public media operate in Kenya, with a shift toward balanced coverage of both the government, which funds and controls it, and opposition views. This has resulted mainly because of the existing political compromise, which has forced state media like KBC to change, reported the panel. However one panelist referred to this situation as a state of confusion, with KBC trying to serve the public as mandated but at the same time please its masters in government.

The panel agreed that despite all this, state media devote more time to educational programs, which are beneficial to the public, than private media, thereby covering a gap left behind by commercial radio and television stations.

The Kenya News Agency (KNA) is owned by the state and not independent but is the dominant local news agency. KNA provides news stories to any media house that may need them for a very low fee. Other organizations have services that are similar. For example, the African Woman and Child Feature Service is editorially independent and provides feature stories to any media house at an affordable fee, if higher than KNA. However, this service does not follow breaking news, rather it produces stories related to development issues, particularly those affecting women and children as a way to promote better coverage of these issues in the media.

The panel agreed that big media houses also use the services of foreign news agencies like Reuters, AFP, AP, and others.

Most media houses have reporters and correspondents who send news stories on daily basis to their editors. Private media houses depend on this network in order to produce their own news programs, reported the panelists. They said that state media has a similar structure, however its news content differs from private news program as it concentrates more on government or official information.

Community media lack the network and facilities to produce their own news programs; many times they lift stories from bulletins produced by big media houses or state media.

As for bloggers, a panelist reported that serious bloggers produce their news programs, but a majority of them lift news stories from other media.

The ownership of big media houses such as Nation Media Group or Standard Group (owners of Kenya Television Network and other outlets) is relatively clear to the public. However, most of the owners of media houses in Kenya, particularly small outlets, are not known; a few who are

known are not the actual registered owners according to the registrar of companies, noted the panelists. It is not easy to locate the actual ownership because some owners fear they will be subjects of a political witch hunt, while others hide to avoid paying taxes, observed the panelists.

No major foreign investment in the media was made in 2012.

The panelists agreed that there is no resistance to the inclusion of most social issues in the media. Issues related to gay activities receive less coverage, as media who might do so are reluctant to support it openly, concluded the panel. Minority language media do not exist in Kenya as all Kenyans speak Swahili as their national language, with many speaking English, the official language.

The panel reported that media provide local, national, and international news to all the citizens. There are also local media and community radio stations in different parts of the country that give coverage to local issues. Emphasis with such media is on issues that happen within their localities.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Kenya Objective Score: 2.29

Panelists reported that big media houses are well managed and have all the required structures, including qualified staff, to run the outlet as a business. However there are some media houses that are poorly managed with no proper structures and no skilled employees. The well managed media houses have business plans that they follow to guide their work. Small media houses are run as family businesses, with

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.

relatives of media owners taking on all roles, and therefore often mismanaging them.

Media is, in most cases, not a lucrative business and even state-run media have been affected. "State funding of its media was reduced and for many years the state media have been surviving on the little funds they make through commercial advertisements," reported a panelist. However a blogger on the panel noted that many bloggers make good money from stories they file and advertising on their sites. The larger media groups are also established commercial companies.

Media, both private and state, depend on multiple sources of revenue, including advertising, sale of copies, commercial printing, and sponsored programs or space in print media. However the panel noted that many of the big advertisers end up influencing the editorial. Critical stories about big companies such as breweries, mobile telephone companies, and many others will never see the light of the day because editors and media owners fear losing business. Many good stories have been "killed" because of business interests; this cuts across all media types, noted the panelists. In fact, there is little editorial independence in Kenyan media, whether state or private media. Owners interfere with editorial staff by giving them instructions on what to publish or leave out.

As for community media, these depend mainly on donations and sponsorships, which are not reliable. Community media do sometimes receive revenue from selling advertisements, however.

Advertising is a well-developed business in Kenya, with the media working hand in hand with advertising firms. Advertising is mainly centered in Nairobi, but has started spreading out to other urban centers. However this business is controlled by a few companies: the three biggest media houses in Kenya are Nation Media Group, Citizen (Royal Media), and the Standard Group. These three control about 80 percent of the KES 14 billion (\$170 million) annual advertising spend. Brewing companies, mobile telephone companies, soft drink companies, and the banking sector are the biggest advertisers.

Advertising rates are set by media houses and many of the advertising agencies work on a commission basis. Panelists reported that some big media houses have set up advertising departments with well skilled staff, who go out to solicit business from companies and individuals.

Some advertisements are produced locally, but the best ones, according to panelists, are outsourced to South Africa.

On many occasions, print editors are pressed to devote more space to advertisements, hence dropping stories because

they do not want to lose money. "There has been always a battle between the editorial and marketing or advertising department and we have seen stories being removed at the last hour and replaced by an advert," observed one panelist.

The government does not provide subsidies to private media, but instead advertises in the media on a selective basis, namely in media houses that are not critical. The panelists reported that the government issued a circular directing all its agencies to stop advertising with any media seen to be critical. An example of these media houses are the *The Standard* newspaper and *Kenya Today*. Therefore, panelists could not rule out that the prospect of government advertising influences editorial decisions at certain media outlets.

Big media houses hire companies to carry out research. The findings are used to improve media programming and business decisions. There are also some media houses that carry out their own research through telephone calls, filling of questionnaires, and sampling. However the panel noted that many times the findings of companies that carry out research are not trusted; there are constant charges that the research companies are manipulated by the owners of media houses that engage them. "Money is involved, there is a lot interference in this kind of work, every media house wants to be on top and as such they manipulate the research companies hence coming up with fake figures," one panelists noted.

Synovet and ABC, based in South Africa but with branches in the region, are the two common companies hired by media houses to conduct research. Anybody who desires the results can easily get them but for a fee. Advertisers use the results to determine their spending decisions.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Kenya Objective Score: 2.18

Several trade associations exist but most of these associations are very weak, noted the panel. Membership in these associations is limited and is controlled by a few individuals who pursue mainly their own interests. These associations are independent of the government. Most of them are not very active until a major issue affects them, at which time they lobby the government. The government does not restrict the formation and registration of new ones.

There are several professional associations that represent the interests of individual journalists. These associations promote media freedom, media development, and also conduct training in different sectors of the profession. There

are also associations for specific sector of the media. These associations are independent of the government, which does not restrict their formation and registration, noted the panel. However, panelists added that many of these associations have been penetrated by media owners and these hardly fight for members' rights if the owners have a stake in the issue.

These organizations include the Kenya Union of Journalists, 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 many others. Membership to these associations is open to any journalist who applies and pays the membership dues.

However, the panel noted that many of these associations are financially crippled as members do not pay membership fees and leaders end up looking for funding elsewhere. Often, the result is that the organization ends up being compromised.

Panelists reported that there are a number of NGO's operating in Kenya, but most have an international affiliation. Some of these NGO have been instrumental in advocating for media rights. These NGOs have teamed up with civil society organizations and have offered legal assistance to the media in some cases, training, and help defending journalists' rights. The panel noted that there are some NGOs and civil society organizations that have even performed better than the media itself in this area.

Such organizations include the Kenya Human Rights Commission, Open Society Foundations, International Commission of Juries of Kenya, Kenya Media Institute, and Center for Law and Research International. Panelist

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.

agreed that registration of an NGO is simple and no undue restrictions are imposed by the government.

Several media training institutions at universities and colleges offer degrees; diplomas and certificate curricula also exist in Kenya but most of these emphasize theory rather than practice. Panelists reported that many of these institutions do not have required facilities such as studios and other equipment necessary for training, and also lack enough lecturers to do the teaching. Despite all these problems, modern techniques are taught in many of these institutions, including the use of the Internet and social media like YouTube and Twitter.

A good number of the graduates from these institutions receive employment in the existing media houses, while others get jobs in other sectors as spokespersons.

Panelists also noted that opportunities for training abroad are available, though limited. Many of those who go for such training return to Kenya to get available jobs in the media or elsewhere.

Short term courses are available in the country for all media and are organized by international organizations in conjunction with local ones or specific media houses. Big media houses also carry out in-house training sessions for both their staff and selected freelance reporters or photographers. Short term trainings are often paid for by international organizations. In most cases editors or media managers decide to attend. The panel noted that the most popular courses are human rights and ethics, however the most needed ones, in addition to ethics, are investigative journalism, sourcing a story, and interviewing techniques.

There is no restriction on importing or buying materials used in the production of newspapers or the practice of journalism. The panel reported that the country has good and efficient printing companies owned by the private sector, which support the media industry without discrimination.

Media distribution is entirely in private hands without any government interference. Broadcast media often have their own transmitters, but small ones rent from KBC.

There is equal access for all media to mobile networks and every user is free to choose the kind of software that suits his or her requirements. The panel noted that the government has been at the forefront of encouraging media to adapt to modern technology. Sizable amounts of money have been invested in this sector and the media and other sectors in Kenya have started enjoying the fruits of this investment. While the existing ICT infrastructure is still lacking, the government is making good efforts in partnership with the private sector to improve on it.

The panel reported that affordable mobile phones and many other devices are available to meet the citizens' news and information needs. These services are easily accessed in cities but not rural areas. As a result of this, urban dwellers are enjoying digital broadcasts, audio and video news content through the Internet, and SMS news alerts on their mobile phones.

List of Panel Participants

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