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SOUTH AFRICA

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South Africa's overall country score dropped somewhat from 3.01 in 2010 to 2.81 in 2012—mostly due to battles over freedom of speech and the proposed Protection of State Information Bill, dubbed the “Secrecy Bill.”

A painting titled “The Spear,” by artist Brett Murray, was published in the weekend newspaper *City Press* on May 12, 2012. The artwork depicts President Jacob Zuma, in Leninesque pose, exposing his genitals. Some South Africans were ready to march and torch the newspaper for its temerity, while others argued steadfastly in support for freedom of expression and media freedom. *City Press* initially refused to remove the image from its website, and the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party responded by calling upon its members and sympathizers to boycott the newspaper by withholding advertising. After about two weeks, the newspaper removed the painting, but the episode fired up debate about free speech in South Africa's media world.

The proposed “Secrecy Bill” would replace an outdated 1982 law and aims to regulate the classification, protection, and dissemination of state information, weighing state interests against transparency and freedom of expression. As it stands, it gives ministers the power to classify documents as state secrets. Media practitioners and civil-society bodies criticized the bill heavily, with the Right2Know campaign its most avid critic. Right2Know claims the bill undermines the rights of journalists, whistleblowers, and activists, stressing the maximum penalty of a 25-year prison sentence when one is prosecuted for espionage, receiving state information unlawfully, hostile activity, or sharing information classified by the State Security Agency.

The National Assembly passed the bill on November 22, 2011. At the time the MSI convened, the National Council of Provinces was debating the bill, and it conceded to hold public hearings across the country. The ANC proposed a number of amendments, but in September 2012 it withdrew some of its key concessions regarding whistleblower protection.

All five objectives scored below 3.0—the threshold for sustainability. Objective 5, Supporting Institutions, scored the highest (2.89), but still a good deal lower than the 3.26 it received in the initial South Africa study in 2006/2007. Objective 2, Professional Journalism, scored the lowest (2.75), but not much lower than the 2.89 it achieved in 2006/2007.

SOUTH AFRICA AT A GLANCE

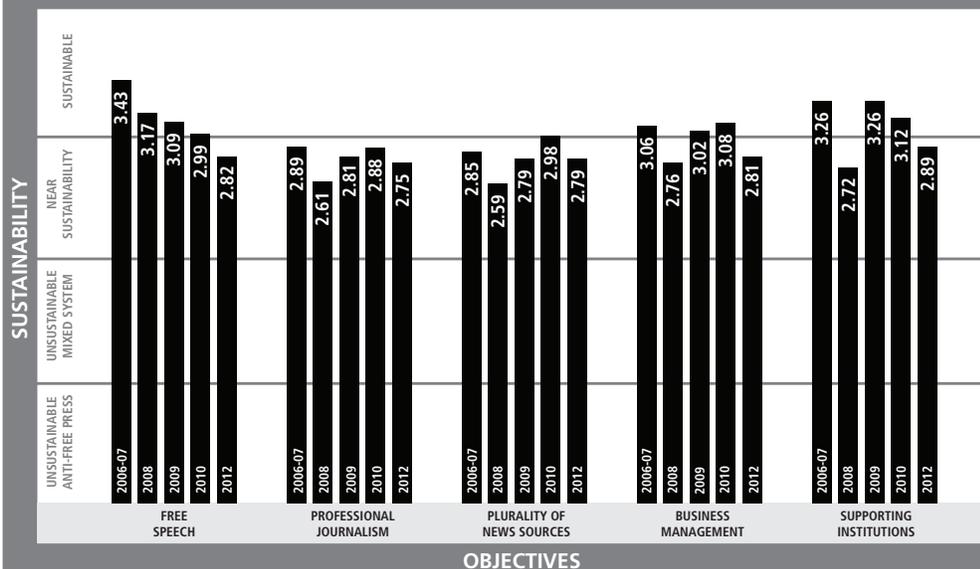
GENERAL

- > **Population:** 50.59 million (Statistics South Africa, mid-year estimates 2011)
- > **Capital cities:** Pretoria (administrative capital), Cape Town (legislative capital), Bloemfontein (judicial capital)
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** black African 79.5%, white 9.2%, colored 8.9%, Indian/Asian 2.5% (2001 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Protestant 36.6% (Zionist Christian 11.1%, Pentecostal/Charismatic 8.2%, Methodist 6.8%, Dutch Reformed 6.7%, Anglican 3.8%), Catholic 7.1%, Muslim 1.5%, other Christian 36%, other 2.3%, unspecified 1.4%, none 15.1% (2001 census)
- > **Languages (% of population):** IsiZulu (official) 23.82%, IsiXhosa (official) 17.64%, Afrikaans (official) 13.35%, Sepedi (official) 9.39%, English (official) 8.2%, Setswana (official) 8.2%, Sesotho (official) 7.93%, Xitsonga (official) 4.44%, siSwati (official) 2.66%, Tshivenda (official) 2.28%, isiNdebele (official) 1.59%, other 0.5% (2001 census)
- > **GNI (2011-Atlas):** \$352 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2012)
- > **GNI per capita (2011-PPP):** \$10,790 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2012)
- > **Literacy rate:** 86.4% (male: 87%, female: 85.7%) (2003 est., OMD Media Facts 2009)
- > **President or top authority:** President Jacob Zuma (since May 9, 2009)

MEDIA SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active print outlets, radio stations, television stations:** Print: 1000+; Radio Stations: 100+; Television Stations: 50+
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** top newspapers: *Daily Sun* (5,220,000), *Sowetan* (1,618,000); *Son* (1,132,000) *Isolezwe* (756,000); *Daily voice* (591,000) *The Star* (574,000), *Beeld* (511,000) and top three weekend newspapers: *Sunday Times* (3,659,000); *Soccer Laduma* (3,009,000); *Sunday Sun* (2,416,000) (Audit Bureau of Circulations, June 2010-2011)
- > **Broadcast ratings:** top three radio stations: Ukhozi FM (6.38 million per week), Umhlobo Wenene (4.76 million per week) and Lesedi FM (3.78 million per week). The state owned SABC 1 is the most watched television station (Media Club South Africa, 2012)
- > **News Agencies:** SAPA, I-Net Bridge, and African Eye News Service
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** Total: ZAR 20.1 billion (\$2.2 billion), Radio: 13.5%, Print: 39.8%, Television: 37.7%
- > **Internet usage:** 8.5 million users, with 7.9 million users accessing the Internet on their cell phone (World Wide Worx, 2011)

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX SOUTH AFRICA



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

South Africa Objective Score: 2.82

For Objective 1, indicator 9 (free entry into the journalism profession), scored the highest, just edging out indicator 8 (unfettered use of domestic and international news sources); both scored more than half a point higher than the objective score. Indicator 5, (legal guarantees of independence for public media), scored the lowest and was the only indicator that trailed the objective score by more than half a point. The rest of the indicators scored within half a point of the objective score. Indicators 4 (attacks on journalists) and 6 (libel laws) accounted for much of the decline in score, as each fell more than a third of a point.

Regarding indicator 1, Section 16 of the South African Constitution expressly affords the right to freedom of expression to the press, and Section 32 enshrines the right to access information. The panelists warned, however, that the ruling party's posturing in the past year threatens to undermine these hard-won protections.

However, community station Cape Town TV (CTV) producer Michael Aldridge said he took refuge in the Constitutional Court. "It has proved itself to be capable of upholding the spirit of the constitution in defending civil liberties. In this context, freedom of speech is well protected." Columnist and political analyst Abbey Makoe agreed, commenting, "Any hint of hindrance to free expression of this right is dealt with by the courts."

Yet Jude Mathurine, head of the New Media Lab at Rhodes University's School of Journalism and Media Studies, believes that the courts are still used to silence the press.

A case in November 2011 illustrates that concern. Presidential spokesperson Mac Maharaj charged that two investigative reporters and the editor of the *Mail & Guardian*, a weekly newspaper known for its investigative journalism, had committed a criminal act. Maharaj contended that the transcript of a 2003 testimony cannot lawfully be in the possession of the paper—despite the fact that it is in the public domain. The three were formally warned in July 2012, in a step toward possible prosecution, and face a potential jail terms of 15 years.¹

The publication of "The Spear" in *City Press* also sparked debate among panelists over the issue of freedom of expression versus dignity and the role of the press. Shalen Gajadhar, director of Journalism and Multimedia at CityVarsity

¹ *Mail & Guardian*, July 26, 2012. "M&G journalists warned of criminal charges." <http://mg.co.za/article/2012-07-26-mg-journalists-suspects-in-criminal-investigation>

School of Media and Creative Arts, said, "The Zuma painting should have been a defamation case between a public figure and the artist, but due to the media's reporting on the matter, it became highly politicized." Gajadhar called for a review of the media's handling of the situation. Sikhonzile Ndlovu, Gender Links media program manager, added, "There should be laws that ensure that media do not abuse this freedom. With freedom comes responsibility."

The ANC claimed in a press statement that the paper's "refusal to remove this portrait from their website and their controlled social media is a clear indication that this newspaper does not belong to our shared democratic dispensation and values."²

Ferial Haffajee, *City Press* editor-in-chief, responded to the threats to compel advertisers to boycott the paper, which she deemed deeply disturbing.³ The South African National Editors' Forum (SANEF) backed her up, saying, "While we recognize the right of the ANC to advise members on how to exercise their consumer decisions, the call for a boycott of a newspaper is tantamount to intimidation and abuse of power."⁴

² African National Congress press statement, May 24, 2012. "ANC calls on all South Africans to boycott buying *City Press* newspaper and to join the protest march to the Goodman Gallery." <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=9629>

³ News24, May 24, 2012. "Boycott 'immoral' *City Press*, ANC urges." <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Politics/Boycott-City-Press-the-paragon-of-immorality-ANC-20120524-2>

⁴ South African National Editors' Forum, May 24, 2012. "SANEF alarmed at call by the ANC to boycott *City Press* newspaper." http://sanef.org.za/news/entry/sanef_alarmed_at_the_call_by_the_anc_to_boycott_city_press_newspaper/

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.

Mathurine commented, “‘The Spear’ incident demonstrated the willingness of political parties to agitate a boycott against the media on the flimsiest of excuses.” He said, “It demonstrated a fault line with regards to the public’s understanding of media freedom and culturally constructed (and manipulated) views of nudity and art.”

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The Film and Publication Board (FPB) of South Africa gave Murray’s artwork a 16N (“N” for “nudity”) rating so that under-16s do not have access to the artwork.⁵ Fazila Farouk, executive director of the South African Civil Society Information Service, a nonprofit news agency promoting social justice, noted that the FPB has the ability to censor websites: “Considering this is a platform that most civil-society organizations use to publish content, it will have the effect of muzzling civil society.”

Eventually the newspaper removed the image from its website about two weeks after it was published—“to restore calm.”⁶ But the legal and free-speech debates stirred up by the incident are far from resolved.

As for the “Secrecy Bill,” some panelists said it threatens free expression, as well as democracy and media freedom, and will suppress investigative journalism, academic research, and public access to official information. Media consultant and communications specialist Adli Jacobs added that the bill, if passed in its present form (as of August 2012), would have a negative impact on the public’s right to know.

Some panelists also said the Superior Courts Bill will limit the right to equality and the right of access to courts. Freelance editor and SANEF member Gavin Stewart said: “The Judicial Service Commission is the Achilles’ heel of the constitution, because it is loaded 14/7 in favor of the ruling party. Over

⁵ Film and Publication Board press statement, June 1, 2012. “FPB Classification of ‘The Spear’ Artwork.” <http://cdn.24.co.za/files/Cms/General/d/1940/83d2e76c62e442cab9ec9cfdbaef697d.pdf>

⁶ *City Press*, May 28, 2012. “City Press removes ‘The Spear’ to restore calm.” <http://www.citypress.co.za/news/city-press-removes-the-spear-to-restore-calm-20120528/>

time, it can appoint all the judges it wishes from the Chief Justice downward.”

Another potential threat to the media that looms in the background is the government’s proposed Media Appeals Tribunal. The government floated the idea in a 2010 party discussion paper, stating that freedom of the press is not an absolute right and that the available means to pursue cases against the media (like writing to the press ombudsman) are inadequate.⁷ While this resolution has not been tabled in parliament, and the ANC states it will not pursue the matter, it “is adamant that the Press Council must reform its rules to include the imposition of fines, in addition to the publication of apologies, for newspapers’ mistakes.”⁸

The Press Freedom Commission (PFC), an independent body of nine commissioners from different sectors of society, initiated by Print Media South Africa (PMSA) and SANEF, was formed to investigate the best possible regulatory system suitable for the South African print media. The PFC report calls for a system of co-regulation, as opposed to self-regulation, the establishment of a new system under the Press Council of South Africa (PCSA), and a media charter to promote transformation in the media industry.⁹

Mathurine said the proposal for the creation of a Media Appeals Tribunal pressured PMSA to engage in significant public consultation and reform the South African Press Council through the PFC. “While this renewal and move toward ‘co-regulation’ (as opposed to statutory regulation under the Media Appeals Tribunal) was an important first step—for example, to include specific aspects related to coverage of children and vulnerable persons—it does not go far enough. In the case of new media, the Press Council has indicated that it will not extend jurisdiction over online content, for example.”

Stewart said the PFC made sweeping statements without attempting to word them into practical language: “The right to reply excludes the defenses of possible destruction of evidence or stopping publication by way of a court order. The current Press Code says that you have to first present a claim (or critique) to the individual and give them a chance to comment, unless you have reason to believe that they will destroy evidence or that they will attempt to stop publication by going to the courts. The latest recommendation is to

⁷ *ANC Today*, August 13-19, 2010. “Let the real media debate begin.” <http://www.anc.org.za/docs/ancoday/2010/at30.htm#art1>

⁸ *Mail & Guardian*, January 14, 2011. “ANC backtracks on media tribunal.” <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-01-14-anc-backtracks-on-media-tribunal/>

⁹ Press Freedom Commission, April 2012. “Report on Press Regulation in South Africa.” http://www.mpasa.net/uploads/File/news/press_release/PF%203%20fri%5B3%5D.pdf

remove even that allowance. If you put an allegation to the president, he is immediately going to court to stop you from publishing that allegation, but you would still have to address your claim to him according to their recommendation.”

Stewart continued: “I am worried about the right to reply because what do you do with sports commentary or theater criticism? Do we now have to submit our theater reviews and our sports commentaries to a cricketer for his comment on our criticism of his performance? Further, the report calls for transformation of media content but offers no indication of what ought to happen. Is the content of your newspaper supposed to be divided 80 percent, 7 percent, 3 percent, or 9 percent among the population groups? If so, how do you actually measure this?”

As far as the structure of the PCSA is concerned, the report suggests that it should consist of seven members of the public and five members of the press. Amina Frense, managing editor of television news and current affairs at South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) and a SANEF member, objected, commenting, “Press should be in the majority.” Ndlovu, for her part, noted that the recommendations failed to address gender and media issues.

Regarding indicator 2, the panelists said that licensing of radio and television is largely fair but that the boards that make decisions can be open to abuse. However, according to Themba Sepotokele, media liaison at the Department of Local Government and Housing in Gauteng province, “Procedures are free and fair, and there are appeals procedures if an application is denied.”

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) regulates the telecommunications, broadcasting, and postal services sectors. It licenses and monitors compliance for broadcasters and signal distributors, manages the frequency spectrum, develops regulations for the three sectors, and protects consumers of these services.¹⁰

Despite these serious obligations, the panelists said ICASA barely functions as an institution and that it lacks operational and monitoring capacity. Aldridge said the community television sector is concerned about the entry of the private sector into the nonprofit, developmental space and said, “ICASA must still regulate this aspect of the sector.” Frense added that community broadcasting continues to struggle against overpriced transmission costs.

While legislation ensures that ICASA regulates in the public’s interest, Mathurine said it is failing in its role of policy development and regulation to the detriment of consumers (in

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the telecommunications sphere) and the public (in the political sphere)—persistent weaknesses in capacity and regulation.

“At the end of 2011, for example, a legal challenge by the Freedom of Expression Institute found that ICASA had effectively failed in its mandate to take the SABC to task, to prevent the widespread manipulation of editorial process and censorship under the previous SABC Head of News, Snuki Zikalala—with particular attention to the 2005-2006 allegations of blacklisting of commentators. This finding is an indictment of both the independent regulator and public broadcaster,” he added.

Regarding indicator 3, the panelists said the requirements for starting a small-town newspaper are simple and straightforward. Companies need only complete a registration process, under the terms of the Companies Act. According to Stewart, “The tax structure is not unfair; it is the same as any other business. If you make money, you will be taxed.” Sepotokele added that the Media Development Diversity Agency (MDDA), set up by the government, has also ensured that apart from commercial media, community media are catered for and given space. Many emerging radio stations and community newspapers demonstrate that this is true, he said.

Gajadhar suggested, though, that tax breaks should be allowed, with stipulations that the savings be re-invested to build a diverse and inclusive media. “It should be used for staff development, to subsidize access, and to translate news into other official languages, with less media saturation, as this should be imperative to ensuring access to information,” he said.

Responding to indicator 4, the panelists reported that threats against journalists had increased. Stewart noted, “Quite a lot of photographers have been beaten up by policemen, and nobody has taken any interest.” In July 2012, PEN SA (an independent organization that opposes the oppression of writers and defends freedom of expression) expressed its growing alarm on its website that in the previous 18 months,

¹⁰ ICASA website: <https://www.icasa.org.za>

12 journalists and photographers were detained and arrested while reporting at crime or incident scenes.¹¹

Gajadhar added, "Often, journalists are harassed at political conferences, kicked out of negotiations, and denied access to certain meetings or individuals within organizations."

Sunil Gopal, a media practitioner, also mentioned the circulating claims that state security tapped the phones of investigative journalists, including *Sunday Times* investigative reporter Mzilikazi wa Afrika. Gopal said, "Bugging of phones is a worrying example of escalating threats against journalists, and civil society needs to keep up the pressure on government."

With indicator 5, the panelists shared their belief that the public broadcaster, SABC, faces a credibility challenge. Censorship at the SABC is quite prevalent, according to Makoe. He said journalists in the newsroom know there are boundaries. Aldridge added that ANC wields some political influence over both the SABC and the Minister of Communications (SABC, ICASA, and related parastatal institutions report to the South African government via the Department of Communications). In reference to editorial independence at the SABC, Frense pointed to senior management appointees as evidence of interference.

Gajadhar agreed, characterizing the SABC executive board as dysfunctional and highly politicized. Funding is provided to help float a company that has major irregularities and does not conform to policies, strategies, and protocols set in place to ensure the smooth running of the business, he said. Makoe cited the saga surrounding the appointment of SABC's news head, Phil Molefe, in 2010 and his subsequent suspension in 2012 as a case in point. He was appointed by the SABC board chair, Ben Ngubane, without consulting internal processes and protocols. His appointment was implemented by SABC CEO Solly Mokoetle, even though the board stated that his appointment was illegal. Molefe was suspended on paid leave after the SABC board complained that Molefe's selection of the news favored former ANC Youth League President Julius Malema (who was expelled from the ANC for criticizing the president).¹²

Gajadhar explained, "He [Molefe] was allowing coverage on Malema, over objections from the board." Makoe explained that the board required Molefe to submit the day's editorial news to the CEO. The CEO's official title is also editor-in-chief,

leading him to think he could get involved editorially. Molefe maintained they were misreading the title, and it does not mean that the CEO must get involved in day-to-day editorial decisions. Molefe was then suspended."

Regarding indicator 6, the panelists said that Zuma and the ANC increasingly resort to libel charges. They referred to the debacle over the "The Spear" painting and the raft of defamation suits the president has initiated (nearly 14) since 2006 against several media outlets that covered his rape trial. He has brought a series of charges against political cartoonist Zapiro.

Stewart noted that in the past 18 years there has not been a single judgment against a public official who was a defendant on a defamation action.

Sepotokele added, though, that many newspapers have gone to court to fight for a public-interest clause (the public's right to know). Sepotokele also said, "No law favors government or the media. The supreme court of law of this country is the constitution, and even when the media are threatened or taken to court, the constitution prevails in promoting and protecting freedom of the press and speech."

Indicator 7 prompted the panelists to consider and debate the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) of 2000. Makoe cited the legislation as one of South Africa's most praiseworthy, commenting, "Beyond any doubt, this law alone is a key that unlocks any closed door to free expression by citizens and institutions as well as access to public information. We do have enormous amounts of access to public information in this country." Gajadhar agreed but added, "Government still feels inaccessible at many levels, and this perception can be eroded by government if they realize that working with journalists can work to their advantage."

Gopal was more pessimistic, adding, "There is no culture of sharing the information." Stewart went further, saying the PAIA is inadequate: "You apply for information and you can be stalled forever and you never get the information." Mathurine said, "The PAIA may work, but usually only in relation to stories with longer deadlines." Farouk added that online news agencies and bloggers face additional challenges in accessing public information. Without the valid press cards held by their counterparts in the traditional media, it is difficult for non-traditional and independent media outlets to gain the same recognition and respect.

Regarding indicator 8, the panelists said there are no major restrictions on accessing international news sources. This is equally enforced for all media and journalists.

As for indicator 9, the panelists confirmed that South Africa does not require licenses for journalists. They said entry into the journalism profession is free and that the government

¹¹ PEN SA, July 2012. "PEN SA Alarmed at the Number of Journalists Arrested by the Police While Carrying Out Their Reporting Duties." <http://www.sapen.co.za/sa-news/37-pen-south-africa-alarmed-at-the-number-of-journalists-arrested-by-the-police-while-carrying-out-their-reporting-duties>

¹² *Mail & Guardian*, May 31, 2012. "Clash of the SABC titans heats up." <http://mg.co.za/article/2012-05-31-clash-of-the-sabc-titans-hots-up/>

does not impose any restrictions in this respect. Journalists are also free to form unions or professional organizations to protect their rights.

On that point, Sepotokele commented, “Unfortunately, journalists themselves are not taking advantage of such organizations. They are not united but come together only when they feel the media are under threat. As soon as a situation returns to normal, they retreat back into their cocoons.”

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

South Africa Objective Score: 2.75

All indicators in Objective 2 scored within half a point of the objective score. Further, few of the indicators showed much change; the drop in score can be attributed mostly to declines of more than a third of a point for indicator 1 (fair, objective, and well-sourced reporting) and indicator 8 (niche and investigative reporting).

Concerning indicator 1, the panelists said reporting in South Africa is generally fair but that there is room for improvement. Sepotokele said, “While solid journalism exists, there are also examples of poor-quality journalism—with stories that are single-sourced, unverified, or biased.” Farouk believes an ideological bias colors much reporting in South Africa, noting that there is a tendency to endorse neo-liberal economics. “To its credit, the *Cape Times* is the only newspaper in South Africa which embarked on a series of articles in the aftermath of the financial crisis, in an effort to investigate the crisis in depth and explore alternatives,” she said. This series of articles,

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).

Gajadhar believes advertorials should not be allowed into major newspapers as a method of advertising “until audiences fully understand what an advertorial is. Advertorials should also come with larger warning blocks flagging content as advertorial.”

titled “The Next Economy,” is now part of a policy platform dialogue hosted by the Ministry of Economic Development and the South African New Economics Network.

Discussing indicator 2, the panelists said the South African Press Code¹³ is in line with international codes. Established by the print media industry, it promotes the principles of fair, balanced, and accurate reportage. The National Community Radio Forum (NCRF) does not provide a code or guideline for radio community journalists, but it does have a charter that serves as a guide to journalists.¹⁴

Gopal said discussions around the Media Appeals Tribunal revealed that journalists do not always follow high ethical standards and are not held accountable for “shoddy” reporting. In addition, he said, “Revelations of brown-envelope journalism [payment to cover, or not cover, certain stories] were a cause for concern.” Frense agreed, adding that plagiarism is another area of concern.

For her part, Vale believes journalists generally do not abide by the Press Code. Reporting is subjective, lacking multiple perspectives, and at times fails to allow people the right to respond, she said.

Makoe cited another incident that highlights ethical lapses in journalism: the firing of *Sunday World* columnist Kuli Roberts in 2011. Her column was found to include derogatory racial generalizations that violated the Press Code and Avusa Media’s internal codes.¹⁵ On the other hand, one could argue that her firing at least indicates that violations can be met with consequences.

The panelists spoke at length about the growing use of advertorials and the practice of giving gifts in exchange for news, and their impact on editorial integrity. Gajadhar believes advertorials should not be allowed into major

¹³ Text of the South African Press Code: <http://www.presscouncil.org.za/pages/press-code.php>

¹⁴ NCRF Charter: <http://www.communitymedia.org.za/alt-media-resources/110>

¹⁵ <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article941516.ece/Kuli-Roberts-apologises-over-coloured-remarks> and <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article940353.ece/HRC-investigates-Kuli-Roberts-column>

Septokele added, "Journalists like covering what is widely known as 'service delivery protests.' They follow the billowing smoke without conducting proper analysis and research."

newspapers as a method of advertising "until audiences fully understand what an advertorial is. Advertorials should also come with larger warning blocks flagging content as advertorial." Stewart commented that lifestyle publications lack any sense of ethics. "Consumer magazines sell all their space," he said. "If we included magazines scores in the MSI, it would drag the standard right down. *SA HOMEOWNER* magazine [showcasing South African dream homes] has about 250 pages [and] boasted that it sold every word...every single article was paid for."

Septokele observed, "The issue of unethical conduct of journalism is a thorny issue. Only a few media houses have developed gift policies, and few are enforcing it. This came to the fore during the SANEF discussion I attended recently and applies mostly to sport journalists and those covering entertainment and motoring."

Makoe spoke about paid-for slots in the broadcast sector. "I know that the National African Union of Farmers has a slot on television, AGRI TV, and they pay SABC-2 for that slot." Stewart commented that *Engineering News* and *Mining News* magazines pay for their spot on SAfm.

Regarding indicator 3, Septokele said, "Sometimes editors and journalists are compelled to censor certain stories due to pressure from a political party, or when media owners do not want to lose advertising. We do not get to hear or read such stories, but my interactions with journalists reveal that all is not well, as it seems."

Again this year, indicator 4 prompted participants to state that journalists tend to cover events rather than issues. Journalists often fail to unpack complex issues, and coverage lacks depth and analysis. Furthermore, coverage is often urban-centric and events-driven, and participants feel that large parts of the country are poorly covered and stories of ordinary lives under-reported. Farouk underscored the scant coverage of development issues. Overall, Frense questioned the quality of journalism and agreed with Farouk: "There is insufficient coverage of development issues, and coverage of international events is neglected."

Septokele added, "Journalists like covering what is widely known as 'service delivery protests.' They follow the billowing

smoke without conducting proper analysis and research. They ignore the unintended consequences of the protests, such as vandalism, road blockages, and the impact of the protests to the economy, education, and health systems. People are being relocated from one area to another, and journalists covered their protests without even giving context or stating that people had to be relocated because the area is unsafe. Further, coverage of government providing services is ignored."

As for indicator 5, the panelists agreed that pay levels for journalists vary. Stewart said, "The 'juniorization' in the newsrooms occurs because media institutions cut costs to become more profitable. Experienced journalists simply cost more money." He added: "At the entry level, large numbers are attracted into journalism, but the retention numbers flatten dramatically by their fifth year. Journalists migrate out to other jobs, particularly to the state media liaison. People do not stay in journalism, unless they manage to secure a spectacular promotion."

According to Gajadhar, "Pay levels for journalists in this country are still too low, while profit margins for large conglomerates remain where they are. The situation flourishes also due to a number of unemployed students who will work for low salaries just to secure any employment."

In this climate, corruption persists, the panelists agreed. Mathurine said, "*Mpumalanga Mirror* reporter Mbekezeli Mbuli admitted to having been induced to write negative stories about a political challenger to the ANC premier David Mabuza in Mpumalanga." Mbuli was allegedly promised a municipal job and a BMW.¹⁶ In another alleged case of corruption, *Sunday Times* editor Ray Hartley denied allegations that *Sunday Times* journalists were paid to divert attention from officers suspected of corruption, according to news reports in May.¹⁷

Regarding indicator 6, Aldridge said the broadcast sector provides a wide range of programming, with multiple viewpoints expressed in news bulletins across the channels. He added that dedicated news channels are available only by paid subscription and within the overall programming mix of community television channels.

Gajadhar mentioned that accessing news on mobile phones is fast becoming the most popular way to stay on top of current events. Push services, which deliver e-mails and updates to your phone or computer, are becoming more popular as well.

¹⁶ *Mail & Guardian*, March 16, 2012. "Reporter blames smear campaign on ANCYL leaders." <http://mg.co.za/article/2012-03-16-reporter-blames-smear-campaign-on-ancyl-leaders>

¹⁷ *Mail & Guardian*, May 17, 2012. "Brown-Envelope Journalism Rears Its Head Again" <http://mg.co.za/article/2012-05-17-brown-envelope-journalism-rears-its-head-again>

In a *Mail & Guardian* article, Richard Lord, media director at the MediaShop, commented that the chief executive of the SABC group, Lulama Mokhobo, is correct in saying that pay television affects SABC's viewership.¹⁸ Lord, according to the report, said the growth of DStv's compact bouquet, which is cheaper than its premium bouquet, means people are watching fewer SABC programs as they flip between terrestrial television and DStv. SABC has three terrestrial television channels: SABC 1, SABC 2, and SABC 3. SABC 1 boasted 27.6 million weekly viewers, SABC 2 had 24.6 million weekly viewers, and SABC 3 enjoyed 20 million weekly viewers. A privately owned free-to-air commercial station, e.tv, had 23.5 million weekly viewers. Pay television subscriptions are on the rise, with subscriptions showing excellent growth in 2011. Pay television reached 27 percent of households—up from 24 percent in 2010. DStv rose to 9.1 million weekly viewers. TopTV, a new entrant to pay television, was up to 551,000 weekly viewers, according to the report.

Regarding indicator 7, the panelists agreed that facilities and equipment are on par with the best in the world. Digital distribution ensures a wide footprint for most broadcast media, but Jacobs noted that community radio lacks the necessary capital investment to upgrade studios.

On independent and community publications, Vale said, "We have to build AIP [the Association of Independent Publishers], and we have got to find ways of creating an enabling environment for the growth of these independent papers. But, the economic recession poses a problem, and while the Department of Trade and Industry purportedly offers loans for small independent publishers, these loans are seemingly inaccessible. Nobody knows how to get them. Advertisers, government, and the retail sector need to invest in independent publishers. Further, the independent newspapers themselves have got to get their acts into gear and actually produce quality content. There are those who print only when they get an advertisement." Vale said he understands they need the revenue, but he feels they are dishonest about their operations and orders.

Regarding indicator 8, the panelists feel that there is a plethora of niche media and some excellent investigative reporting. Aldridge, Gajadhar, and Mathurine agreed that most investigative reporting is in the print media, however, and remains costly and time-consuming. Furthermore, their reporting may be subject to legal challenge.

According to Makoe, "The *Mail & Guardian's* investigative unit, *amaBhungane*, is a thorn in the flesh of the authorities. *City*

¹⁸ *Mail & Guardian*, July 27-August 2, 2012. "People loyal to content, not channels."

Press's reporting on Malema and his misdemeanors is another example, along with *The Sunday Times* exposure of [police chief] Bheki Cele's unauthorized leasing of buildings that led to his dismissal." In addition, *The Star* ran a series of exposés of Gauteng local government official Humphrey Mmemenzi's corruption and nepotism. He was forced to relinquish his position as a member of the local executive council. Alex Eliseev wrote an interesting column in *The Daily Maverick* (an independently owned news website) about the Mmemenzi case, which shows that quality reporting also exists online.¹⁹

Specialist financial and economic reporting is available in most papers. But Frense and Farouk added that there is still insufficient niche reporting about all topics, and that politics and economics are favored at the expense of health, education, gender, and poverty—a concern expressed in last year's MSI as well.

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS

South Africa Objective Score: 2.79

Indicator 6 (transparency and concentration of media ownership) was the only indicator not scoring within half a point of the objective score, falling behind by slightly more than that margin. However, this was one of three indicators that scored about half a point lower than last year: indicator 2 (citizen access to news) and indicator 4 (news

¹⁹ *The Daily Maverick*, June 13, 2012. "Humphrey Mmemenzi: Have you any shame, sir?" <http://dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2012-06-14-humphrey-mmemezi-have-you-any-decency-sir>

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 many national, regional, and community newspapers. National radio is broadcast widely, and community radio is growing. Ndlovu commented, "Community media are growing, and they bridge the gap. Where you cannot access the SABC, there are community media."

agencies) were the other two. Together these three indicators accounted for almost all the lost ground in this objective.

Indicator 1 led the panelists to state that media channels are diverse, but the plurality of news sources is limited. Women's voices are under-represented in the media, said Ndlovu, and news is told from a male perspective. Women constitute just 19 percent of news sources in South Africa, according to Gender Links research in 2010, Ndlovu said.²⁰

Gajadhar added that much of the information available is repetitive; media conglomerates share the same information across titles. While there might be a number of titles on shelves, the content is largely similar, even down to minor stories.

There are many national, regional, and community newspapers. National radio is broadcast widely, and community radio is growing. Ndlovu commented, "Community media are growing, and they bridge the gap. Where you cannot access the SABC, there are community media."

The community radio sector is stronger today than it was a year ago, reaching 24.3 percent of South Africans each week (compared with 23.0 percent in February 2011), according to the South African Audience Research Foundation (SAARF).²¹

National broadcast news channels still have a largely urban bias, focusing on news from the major metropolises, according to Mathurine. "Further, regional news channels also prefer news from these areas due to abundant availability of wire copy and the interest and relevance of matters from these centers to national political and economic life," said Mathurine.

Stewart agreed that geographical and economic limitations hamper access to news. He added, "The more urban you are,

²⁰ "Gender and Media Progress Study," October 2010, Gender Links, the Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (GEMSA) and the Media Institute of Southern Africa. Available at: <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/gender-and-media-progress-study> and Centers of Excellence for Gender in the Media: Gender Links <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/media-centres-of-excellence>

²¹ SouthAfrica.info website, June 1, 2012. "Community radio in South Africa." <http://www.southafrica.info/about/media/community-radio.htm#ixzz27hKXJvZb>

the more voices you hear. In rural areas, you are pretty much restricted to what is called vernacular radio. News channels providing multiple news sources favor urban areas." However, the urban poor could access pay television, according to Stewart, who can view decent-quality sports and 24-hour entertainment at a relatively low subscription rate.

The panelists generally agreed that citizens have access to domestic or international media, but at the same time access to international news via the Internet or via mobile is still quite costly. Mathurine noted, "While government does not block access to any international websites, the cost of broadband access limits Internet access for the public and journalists working in small commercial media operations and community news environments." However, several participants pointed to the government's planned ICT infrastructure roll-out as a key factor in reducing Internet costs and increasing citizens' access to media globally.

Aldridge added, "While there are many mobile-phone users, the economic implication of using bandwidth for Internet and MMS constrains use in the low-income sectors. CTV's audience research reveals this pattern of usage, showing that low-income sectors do not spend very much money on mobile communications. Cape Town TV audience research in 2011 on the Cape Flats revealed that a huge proportion of our audience has never had access to the Internet. Cape Town has about 3.5 million people, and Cape Flats, I'm estimating, sits in the region of 2.5 million people."

However, Gopal said the government is already moving ahead with its ICT expansion. "The government is laying under-the-sea cables, and this will increase bandwidth and will definitely decrease the price of the Internet," he said.

Regarding indicator 3, participants criticized the SABC for favoring the ruling party. "Criticisms have been raised about the SABC's mode of financing, its over-reliance on commercial funding, and its impartiality," commented Aldridge.

Aldridge continued, "The SABC has been accused of favoring government, or even certain factions within the ruling party. The organization strives to project an image of impartiality in line with its public-service mandate, and it has won praise from ANC leaders for its political coverage." And yet, Aldridge concluded, ANC functionaries on the SABC board and its ties to the Minister of Communications limit the corporation's ability to be independent of the ruling party.

Gopal added that the appointment of politically compliant people in senior posts stifles the growth and vibrancy of the SABC. Stewart said the political interference at the SABC is flat-out disgraceful.

Regarding indicator 4, all participants pointed to the major local news agency—the South African Press Association (SAPA). However, Stewart noted, “SAPA is excellent, but it is out there on its own.” There are a few other independent local news agencies; some of the bigger ones, besides SAPA, include I-Net Bridge and African Eye News Service. Aldridge stated that “not all media can afford the services of news agencies, particularly community media.” The South Africa Government News Agency (SAnews) provides free content.

Septokele added that international news agencies also play a pivotal role in media diversity in the country. “Most have also hired local journalists to cover stories for them, unlike in the past, when they relied heavily on foreign correspondents, who mostly gave a distorted picture of South Africa. And, Al Jazeera has added to the number of foreign news agencies, such as AFP, Reuters, and Bloomberg,” he said.

For indicator 5, panelists said that local and community radio and television stations produce their own news bulletins and reports, but television channels purchase items from international news agencies to complement their own local coverage. Gajadhar said, “Private media, including e.tv news and other private broadcasters, produce fairly decent content.”

According to Mathurine, international news forms part of most broadcast news programming but is not always provided in a way that offers the viewer or listener any relevance or context—and typically favors a largely Northern agenda. “This bias tends to be replicated by community media organizations that are often dependent on their well-resourced partners for coverage,” he added.

In reference to the lowest-scoring indicator, indicator 6, participants said print media ownership is not as transparent to citizens as broadcast. Frense believes citizens are fully aware of broadcast media owners.

The major players in print are the Naspers group (holding company of Media24), Independent News & Media, Avusa, and the Caxton and CTP Group. There are numerous independent media houses in South Africa.

Media24 owns around 40 percent of the country’s newspapers, 70 percent of its magazines, 80 percent of leaflet advertising distribution, and 90 percent of pay television. Its proposed merger with the 165-year-old Pietermaritzburg-based *The Witness*, a network of community newspapers, and substantial printing presses was allowed by the Competition Commission’s Tribunal in July 2011 with certain conditions designed to protect the small players in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, as the merger may be a threat to smaller publishers.²²

²² The Media Online, January 12, 2012. “The giant is growing...some more.” <http://themediainline.co.za/2012/01/the-giant-is-growing-some-more/>

Makoe pointed out, “The main media owners also jointly own SAPA, the main newswire service in the country, which used to be independent. Furthermore, there are scarcely other meaningful role-players in the industry that threaten the status quo.”

There are 260 independent publications, according to Vale, operating in a disabling environment. “Small newspapers were gobbled up by larger, established monopolies. Limpopo Independent Newspapers Media, comprising 15 small independent newspapers in Limpopo Province, are being sued for using the term ‘independent newspapers’ by independent newspapers,” she said.

The panelists believe greater effort is required to reflect the broad spectrum of social interests in the media, as called for in indicator 7. Participants said the SABC and a few commercial indigenous-language radio stations assume responsibility for broadcasting in indigenous languages. Frense said the SABC embraces diversity in its coverage but that national television coverage is insufficient. This will change, Frense noted, with digital terrestrial television, as it will allow for more channels, provide more content, and expand geographically, thus covering more communities. SABC’s 24-hour news service is expected to be rolled out in 2013.

All panelists agreed that the media provide local, national, and international news coverage.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

South Africa Objective Score: 2.81

For the business management objective, all indicators scored near the objective score. The drop in score is a result mostly of lower evaluations by the panelists of indicator 4 (balance between type of revenue sources), indicator 5 (government intervention in the media market), and indicator 7 (audience and circulation statistics). Each fell by about half a point or more.

The panelists largely agreed that indicator 1 deserved strong scores. Media conglomerates have the capacity and resources to keep competitors at bay while able to innovate and keep their business alive for the future, unlike smaller enterprises. In contrast, the smaller media businesses are unable to release their staff for training, be it managerial, editorial, or financial. Aldridge said commercial media are well established and seldom suffer from financial mismanagement.

And yet, many media companies are turning a profit. According to a *Mail & Guardian* article, Independent News & Media South Africa made an operating profit of more than ZAR 380 million (\$44,176,700) in 2011. However, its

Vale said, “*Masilonyana News, a bilingual monthly newspaper in Free State Province, exists because the municipality pays it ZAR 40,000 (\$4,650) a month. In exchange, the municipality gets four pages of editorial. This is when I think the MDDA funding gets a bit dangerous.*”

Dublin-based parent wants the local group to pay its ZAR 4.2 billion (\$488,269,000) debt. At the same time, the Sekunjalo consortium (a coalition of companies, investments, and funds) has placed a ZAR 2.4 billion (\$279,011,000) bid for Independent News & Media South Africa. The same *Mail & Guardian* article states that in the year ending March 2011, Avusa’s operating profit was ZAR 153 million (\$17,786,900), up from ZAR 127 million (\$14,764,300) in the previous year.²³

Audit Bureau of Circulation figures, meanwhile, show a “sorry picture of consistent decline for newspapers.”²⁴ While the circulation of Afrikaans-language newspapers and weekend newspapers declined, isiZulu newspapers and the *Mail & Guardian* continue to grow in sales.

²³ *Mail & Guardian*, August 10, 2012. “Newspaper still in the money in South Africa.” <http://mg.co.za/print/2012-08-10-00-newspapers-still-in-the-money-in-south-africa>

²⁴ BizCommunity, February 24, 2012. “Newspapers dire but not dead, say latest ABC circ figures.” <http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/90/71340.html>

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.

There is also a divide between rural and urban media companies in terms of business management. Louise Vale, executive director of AIP, underscored the challenges faced by journalists from rural areas who want to set up newspapers. “There are journalists who are passionate about their work, but they do not know how to run a business. And, in rural areas there is no economy to support independent publishers through advertising.”

Responding to indicator 2, the panelists said the SABC relies heavily on commercial revenue. According to Frense, it drew more than 80 percent of its funding from commercial sources, 13 percent from license fees, and the remaining 2 percent from direct government grants.

Independent small-scale media publishers received funding from the MDDA but were open to abuse. Vale said, “*Masilonyana News, a bilingual monthly newspaper in Free State Province, exists because the municipality pays it ZAR 40,000 (\$4,650) a month. In exchange, the municipality gets four pages of editorial. This is when I think the MDDA funding gets a bit dangerous.*”

On the positive side, MDDA funding fostered the growth of small-scale publishers, Vale said. The needs of these publishers are great, as Vale described: “A newspaper publisher from Polokwane, in Limpopo Province, produces his paper from a rented hut at the back of a building. All he has is a cell phone, a chair, and a desk boasting one computer.”

Regarding indicator 3, the panelists described the advertising industry as sophisticated, savvy, and in tune with market nuances. However, advertisers favor mainstream media over community media. Sepotokele commented, “Advertising companies ensure that they invest in companies that show higher returns, but community media are under pressure to attract advertising in order to survive.”

Aldridge noted, though, that the tension between the government and the commercial print media has swung government advertising spending toward community media.

For indicator 4, the panelists agreed that urban areas fare better in generating advertising revenue than rural areas, at least in print media.

On indicator 5, Aldridge said, “Government advertising spending is geared toward community media. This has been very beneficial for the community broadcast sector and can be seen as a positive development that enhances the capacity of community media to spread government-related information. However, the Western Cape Province and Cape Town city are run by the Democratic Alliance, which adopts a corporatist approach to media and does not support community media at all.”

As for indicator 6, the panelists said that television audience figures in South Africa come from the All Media and Producers Survey (Amps) and the Television Audience Measurement Survey (Tams), compiled by SAARF.

Amps provides broad numbers for the television channels and is based on interviews and surveys, whereas Tams gives specific information about programs and is based on the people-meter system. A people-meter is a box fitted to about 1,700 households in the country that monitors television usage.

Stewart described SAARF's major research products (Amps and Tams) as world-class. However, Aldridge said SAARF is unable to generate accurate figures for community media in rural areas because its sample size is small.

For indicator 7, the panelists agreed that the ratings and figures are reliable. They noted that data collection for Internet usage and access, including mobile Internet, was inconsistent and often based on flawed assumptions, such as SIM card sales and lack of clear aggregated data from cell phone companies like Vodacom, MTN, Cell C, and Virgin. This results in marketers and media managers relying on estimates instead. World Wide Worx, an independent technology-market research organization in Johannesburg, provides trend analysis and research into Internet usage and access for individual clients.²⁵

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

South Africa Objective Score: 2.89

Within Objective 5, all indicators fell at least a little compared with 2010. However, indicator 1 (trade associations) accounted for a good share of the fall with a drop of four-tenths of a point. All indicators scored within half a point of the objective score.

There are a number of trade associations that protect the interests of media and provide member services in South Africa. These include SANEF, NCRF, and AIP. Print Media South Africa (PMSA) serves as an umbrella body to its constituent members: the Newspaper Association of South Africa, the Magazine Publishers Association of South Africa, and AIP. Taken together, PMSA represents more than 700 newspaper and magazine titles. Digital media organizations include the Internet Service Providers Association, Wireless Application Service Providers Association, the Website Association of South Africa, and the Online Publishers Association.

Mathurine felt that trade associations could do a better job, explaining, "Trade associations remain weak and do not

²⁵ World Wide Worx—see <http://www.worldwideworx.com>

Ndlovu said, "There are very good and credible journalism institutions in the country. However, media houses do not support capacity-building. For example, Gender Links runs free training, but journalists are not given time to participate."

actively lobby or engage in debates on media education, media pluralism, or media diversity." He added, "Media activism tends to be conducted by SANEF, the National Press Club, and FXI. Politically, the focus is on issues of national concern, leaving small and rural media to fend for themselves."

Unions, such as the Communications Workers Union, do not represent journalists specifically. The Media Workers Association of South Africa and the Broadcast & Electronic Media Allied Workers Union do represent media workers, however.

There is also the Forum for Black Journalists and the Professional Journalist Association of South Africa (ProJournal), which was established in 2010 but has yet to show any meaningful impact, the panelists said. In addition, there are independent press clubs, such as the National Press Club and Cape Town Press Club, which have paying members and host networking events.

NGOs concerned with aspects of freedom of speech and journalistic standards include the Media Institute of Southern Africa-SA (MISA), Gender Links, the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI), and the Media Monitoring Project (MMP). Farouk said, "Most support structures backed mainstream

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.

media organizations in the for-profit sector. Some NGOs support free speech and an independent media but are poor at engaging in media advocacy on a wide range of issues. When civil-society organizations or groups try to mobilize the media for purely civil-society campaigns, the media are unresponsive.”

Regarding indicator 4, there are 23 public institutions and close to 150 private institutions with journalism education programs, according to Gajadhar. Of the 23 public institutions, at least 20 offered some sort of journalism certification, but sometimes the lines are blurred between journalism and communications study. Gajadhar added that junior or mid-level training is limited.

Responding to indicator 5, the panelists confirmed that programs like this exist in major media houses. Ndlovu said, “There are very good and credible journalism institutions in the country. However, media houses do not support capacity-building. For example, Gender Links runs free training, but journalists are not given time to participate.”

Organizations like Highway Africa (housed in the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University) provide a platform for journalists across the continent. In addition to its annual conference (the largest gathering of African journalists), it educates and trains media practitioners. Short-term training is offered by Gender Links, the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, and the Sol Plaatje Institute for Media Leadership (also at Rhodes University). There are also numerous private media training companies, run by media professionals.

For indicator 6, participants said monopolized distribution and printing has negative effects on competition and diversity. Also, this impacts small independents in respect to

printing costs and quality. Mathurine said, “In KwaZulu-Natal, Naspers bought up outstanding shares in *The Witness* and shares in printing press Africa Web.” The move, which the Competition Commission of South Africa approved, increases Naspers’ foothold in KwaZulu-Natal and gives Naspers and Paarl Media increasing control over printing presses there, the second-largest province in the country. “There remains a fear that Naspers, which owns several community newspapers, may use its control of African Web to strangle small local competitors,” said Mathurine.

For indicator 7, the panelists said control and pricing of broadband is still restrictive. Frense said, “With the digital broadcasting and analogue switch in 2015, the scenario may change. At the moment, the lack of broadband is restrictive.”

Regarding indicator 8, the panelists agreed the infrastructure does not meet the needs sufficiently. Mathurine said media are able to offer the products they believe consumers might want, such as digital broadcasting, Internet streaming of audio or video, podcasting, and content via mobile-phone networks, but they face barriers because of low ICT capacity (e.g., slow Internet connectivity, overloaded mobile-phone networks, etc.). However, as discussed earlier, costs affected accessibility.

Vale added that Internet connectivity was prone to constant disruptions in rural areas and areas away from the major metropolises. The government’s current rollout promised to widen the scope for citizen participation. Stewart said 7,500 kilometers of fiber-optic cable, owned by a consortium of cell phone and Internet service providers, will link the major cities and economic hubs, leading to hope that improvements might be on the way for South Africa’s citizens.

List of Panel Participants

Michael Aldridge, producer, community station Cape Town TV, Cape Town

Abbey Makoe, columnist and political analyst, Johannesburg

Gavin Stewart, freelance editor and member, South African National Editors' Forum, East London

Shalen Gajadhar, head of Journalism and Multimedia, CityVarsity, Johannesburg

Sikhonzile Ndlovu, media program manager, Gender Links, Johannesburg

Sunil Gopal, media practitioner, Durban

The following participants submitted a questionnaire but did not attend the panel discussion:

Jude Mathurine, head, New Media Lab, School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University, Grahamstown

Louise Vale, executive director, Association of Independent Producers, Johannesburg

Themba Sepotokele, media liaison, Local Government and Housing, Gauteng Province, Johannesburg

Amina Frense, managing editor, Television News and Current Affairs, South African Broadcasting Corporation, Johannesburg

Fazila Farouk, executive director, South African Civil Society Information Service, Johannesburg

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