

# MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

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## 2016

**The Development  
of Sustainable  
Independent Media  
in Mozambique**



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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## MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX 2016

The Development of Sustainable Independent Media in Africa

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MM  
MOZAMBIQUE

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*Panelists said that the media are less concerned about the quality of content and more focused on supporting powerful individuals or interest groups and they criticized the media for not reporting accurately on current events.*



# MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique's 40th year of independence from Portugal started with the inauguration of the new president and the swearing into office of a new government, which followed the elections of November 2014. The ruling FRELIMO party and its presidential candidate, Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, both won. However, continuing a trend from the 2013 municipal elections, the vote continued to change the political landscape in favor of the two largest opposition parties: the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) and the Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM). In his inaugural speech, President Nyusi declared his commitment to the people and peace, and against corruption. The president promised to govern the country above party politics and act as an "employee of the people."

The political and military tension caused by deteriorating relations between FRELIMO and RENAMO remained throughout the year. The panelists view the intensification of armed clashes between RENAMO forces and the Defense Forces of Mozambique as a threat to the exercise of the journalistic profession, particularly in the provinces of Sofala, Zambezia, and Tete.

While crime once seemed to be confined mostly to urban centers, it has spread to almost the entire country. News media report every day on murder, abuse of women and children, kidnappings, and forced removal of organs; victims are often people who are albino.

Economically, Mozambique anticipates rapid growth due to the discovery of large quantities of natural gas, oil, gems, and other natural resources. Yet in 2015, the country faced an intricate mix of financial difficulties manifested by the sharp devaluation of the Mozambique metical against the U.S. dollar, reduced foreign exchange reserves, reduced foreign investment and external support, and increased debt.

Panelists said that the media are less concerned about the quality of content and more focused on supporting powerful individuals or interest groups and they criticized the media for not reporting accurately on current events. For example, instead of providing independent and in-depth analysis of the country's prevailing political-military crisis, the media simply repeat government-generated pro-peace messages without adding context or content. The media have become a sounding board of opinions and statements made by politicians and other authorities. On the other hand, public broadcasters Radio Mozambique (RM) and Mozambique Television (TVM) have been criticized for using pro-government commentators whose speeches appear to favor military solutions rather than peace.

The panelists highlighted two noteworthy changes that occurred in 2015. First, RM and TVM improved coverage of nongovernment opinions; second, the state of print media worsened. The panelists attributed this decline and dwindling readership to the number of newspapers without a clear division between editorial, news, and commercial content; furthermore, some news reports are designed to promote a company or product rather than disseminate information.

# MOZAMBIQUE at a glance

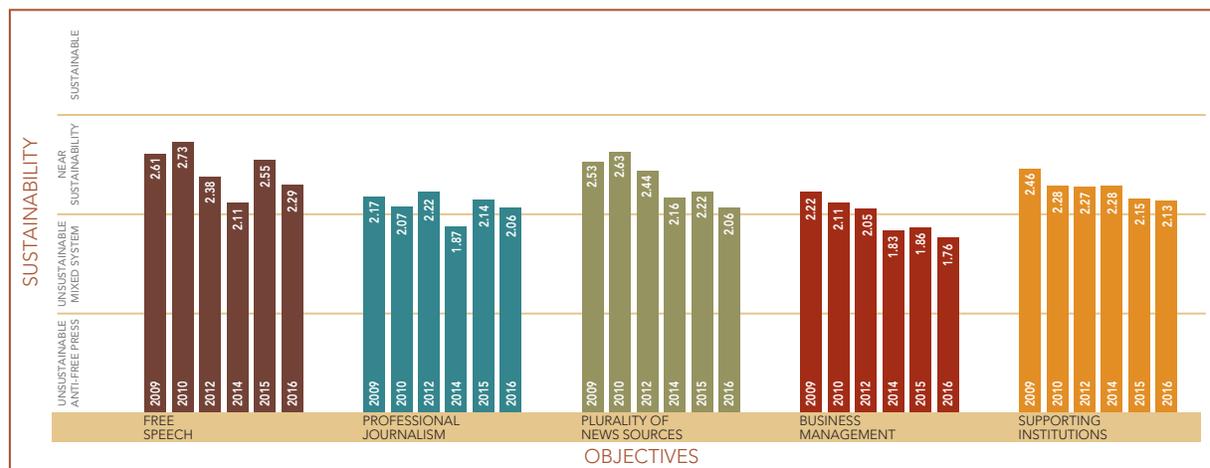
## GENERAL

- > **Population:** 25,303,113 (July 2015 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** Maputo
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** African 99.66% (Makhuwa, Tsonga, Lomwe, Sena, and others), Europeans 0.06%, Euro-Africans 0.2%, Indians 0.08% (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Roman Catholic 28.4%, Muslim 17.9%, Zionist Christian 15.5%, Protestant 12.2% (includes Pentecostal 10.9% and Anglican 1.3%), other 6.7%, none 18.7%, unspecified 0.7% (2007 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages:** Emakhuwa 25.3%, Portuguese (official) 10.7%, Xichangana 10.3%, Cisená 7.5%, Elomwe 7%, Echuwabo 5.1%, other Mozambican languages 30.1%, other 4% (1997 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2014-Atlas):** \$16.42 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2016)
- > **GNI per capita (2014-PPP):** \$1,120 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2016)
- > **Literacy rate:** 58.8%; male 73.3%, female 45.4% (2015 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** President Filipe Nyusi (since January 15, 2015)

## MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active media outlets:** Print: 4 major daily newspapers (2015, Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa); Radio: 13 AM, 17 FM, and 11 shortwave stations (2011 est., *CIA World Factbook*); Television Stations: 4 (2008 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** *Notícias* (16,000, state-owned); *Savana* (15,000, private); *Domingo* (10,000, private). Note: circulation is mainly confined to Maputo (2011 UNESCO's Media Development Indicators)
- > **Broadcast ratings:** N/A
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** N/A
- > **News agencies:** Mozambique News Agency, ABYZ News Link
- > **Internet usage:** 1.4 million; 5.5% of population (2014 est., *CIA World Factbook*)

## MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: MOZAMBIQUE



**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.

Scores for all years may be found online at <https://www.irex.org/msi>

## OBJECTIVE 1: FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Mozambique Objective Score: 2.29

The panelists concluded that from both a theoretical and legal point of view, free speech and access to public information are protected; however, in practice, there is room for improvement. Civil society organizations and professional associations have played an important role in the protection of free speech.

Simão Anguilaze, a journalist, vice president of the National Commission for Digital Migration, and former chairman of the Securities Administration Board, emphasized that the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique and other applicable laws guarantee freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Mozambique legislation regarding the press is considered one of the most comprehensive in Africa, but it lacks supporting regulations. Armando Nenane, a journalist, lawyer, and executive director of the Mozambican Association for Judiciary Journalism, decried the lack of accountability mechanisms, civil or criminal, against those who most actively deny access to information, either by action or omission. "With regard to the judiciary, in particular, journalists are still unable to access simple matters being addressed in court. There is too much secrecy. In the judicial system, access to information should be understood as the rule, and secrecy the exception, but in the end this is not the reality," he said.

### 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.

Nhanale links the lack of editorial independence in public media to the absence of a Broadcasting Law in Mozambique. He reminded the panel that although the constitution and the Press Law state that these media should be independent and promote pluralism, media continue to depend fully on government funding.

Nenane also highlighted that public administrators can invoke state secrecy laws and hide illicit activities related to financial management. According to Ernesto Nhanale, lecturer at the School of Journalism and researcher at the Center for Studies in Communication (CEC), there has been a recent shift in the trends and developments of state secrets. In the past, Nhanale could not recall a case related to a breach of state secrecy involving the media, but recently he was alarmed by the prosecution of Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco, economist, university professor, and researcher at the Institute of Social and Economic Studies, as well as fellow MSI panelist Fernando Mbanze, journalist and editor of the electronic newspaper MediaFax.

According to Anguilaze, the Press Law 18/91 of August 10, 1991, does not limit the exercise of journalistic activity, either in the private sector or in the public and state sectors. However, the ruling party has tried to exercise greater political control over the media by restricting access to politicians, removing dissenting voices from the media, and eliminating contradictory responses in public debate.

The panelists also deliberated the prosecution and trials of Castel-Branco and Mbanze. In 2013, Castel-Branco wrote an open and controversial letter to the former President Armando Guebuza, which was reproduced in MediaFax and Canal de Moçambique. As a result, charges were filed against the media outlets' editors, Mbanze and Fernando Veloso, respectively. The editors were accused of abusing freedom of the press, a punishable crime as defined in the Press Law. Veloso was not prosecuted due to illness, and Mbanze said that no facts were presented at the trial. Nenane concluded that the case was motivated by politics, revealing a system in which prosecution and a conviction can silence an opponent.

Nenane commented on prosecutors' lack of legal knowledge in their pursuit of cases involving media. For the most part, these cases end with the reopening of the media outlet. When the police issue an order to confiscate equipment or

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close a media organization, the media managers comply with the order, but the authorities do not always follow up. The law is lacking in this regard, as well as about the justifications and the financial damage that such decisions can cause.

According to Anguilaze, there are no political barriers to acquiring a broadcast license, the issuing of which results solely from a review of requirements, source of financing, and other standardized criteria. License registration does, however, depend on the availability of frequencies. In Maputo, for example, new radio and television licenses are no longer being issued because of the lack of available frequencies.

The transition from analog to digital broadcasting will create a greater spectrum of available frequencies, opening space for more television and radio channels to operate. In previous years, MSI panelists criticized the speed of the licensing process. This year they have somewhat accepted the delays, realizing that there is no mandatory deadline for the Council of Ministers to respond to applications for radio and television permits. However, the preliminary draft of the Broadcasting Act proposes a period of 90 days to respond to applications. Florentino Chassafar, computer engineer, director of Radio Terra Verde, and member of the Higher Media Council, believes that there is already a certain liberalization of licensing because there are no set deadlines. This gives each applicant the possibility to operate on a so-called experimental basis three months after submitting an application request.

Similar to acquiring licenses, there are no barriers to entering the media market, with the exception of foreign capital participation, which is capped at 20 percent. However, Nhanale believes that taxes and exemptions complicate business matters and make sustainability difficult. Media must pay the same taxes as other business sectors. Media companies have appealed for reduced equipment import fees, as well as a lower cost of newspaper distribution in more rural areas but no progress has been made yet in this regard.

In 2015, crimes against journalists and other media personalities occurred, including the murder of journalist Paulo Machava in October, which, according to Chassafar, has not yet been solved due to a lack of political will. It is not widely accepted that Machava was, in fact, murdered for his work as a journalist. Nhanale suggested that many violations of press freedom by members of the government and military have never led to a concrete case being brought against the accusers. However, Anguilaze disagreed, stating that there have not been many crimes recorded

against journalists in recent years, with the exception of some extreme cases, such as those involving academics Gilles Cistac and Castel-Branco among others. Cistac, a Franco-Mozambican constitutionalist with dual citizenship, was killed in March 2015 after receiving anonymous messages on social media describing him as hypocritical, ungrateful, and “testing the patience of the Mozambican people.” This was in response to Cistac’s analysis of constitutional law and support of RENAMO’s plan to create autonomous provinces in Mozambique, which, in principle, could be ruled by either political party.

At a conference on peace and media in Maputo in November 2015, journalist Rogerio Siteo said that Mozambican media are threatened not only by political forces, but also by economic and commercial interests and organized crime. Carlos Coelho, journalist, lawyer, and director of the management board of the CoopNorte media cooperative in Nampula, added that there is inadequate support from associations and institutions, naming the Rapid Response Commission as an example. This commission was designed to assist journalists whenever their rights were violated, but it stopped working in early 2015 and is currently undergoing the process to register as a nonprofit association.

Legally, the Superior Council for the Media (CSCS) guarantees the media’s editorial independence. However, according to Chassafar, state or public media agencies do not enjoy editorial independence. The boards of directors of those agencies are appointed by politicians, and most journalists end up conforming to the government’s political agenda.

Mbanze explained that there is a group of 40 pro-FRELIMO reporters and commentators in Mozambique, known as the G40, which continues to receive airtime to publish insults against the opposition. Chassafar added that the G40 has been the target of much criticism for its actions, which violate the existing legal framework, but nothing has been done to change the situation. As described in the Mozambique 2013 MSI, “As the list of 40 personalities who have the party’s confidence and are authorized to comment on public issues is called, G40 is used as a force to eliminate those who speak out against the powers that be.” Having reached a high point in the manipulation of public opinion in 2012 and 2013, in 2014 and 2015 the G40 group appeared to have lost structure, seemingly adrift without guidance from its political mentors.

Highlighting the presence of G40 as a limitation to editorial independence, Mbanze mentioned the case of an RM journalist who covered his trial, but this journalist’s report was not broadcast on the radio, reinforcing Mbanze’s

suspicious of RM's growing politicization. Furthermore, on the day of the court ruling, TVM covered the trial, and the reporter made a piece in two parts: one was with voice-over spoken by actors, underlining or hinting at the criminal nature of the case. The second one was more direct, with the voices of the defendants, lawyers, and judge being heard. Nevertheless, the report was not broadcast because it would have drawn further attention to Castel-Branco's and Mbanze's case.

Nhanale links the lack of editorial independence in public media to the absence of a Broadcasting Law in Mozambique. He reminded the panel that although the constitution and the Press Law state that these media should be independent and promote pluralism, media continue to depend fully on government funding. "Public media outlets receive direct funding from the state budget, but this is not the main reason for potential political interference. That interference has historical roots and is linked to the fact that the ruling party used to be the only party and defined as one of its core missions to inform the state and society," said Mbanze.

Nhanale described clear manifestations of this problem during the electoral processes, when the news media—particularly the public media—were found to practice censorship or report in favor of FRELIMO and its candidates. AfriMAP reports and other election monitoring reports support his research findings.

Further evidence of the lack of editorial independence was demonstrated by Sister Maria Idalina Patia, a Catholic nun, journalist, and coordinator of Nova Radio Paz in Quelimane, Zambezia. She said that media, especially in local communities in Zambezia, are not allowed to disseminate news about the deaths of military or government officials that result from clashes with RENAMO. Elaborating on this observation, Anguilaze stated that this is due to Mozambique's current legal framework. "And it's not just radio. If I am the president of the public television board, for example, it just takes one angry party leader to send me away," he said. Anguilaze added that in recent years he and others felt greater political control by the ruling party, which has prevented dissenting voices in the media from accessing politicians and has eliminated contradictory responses in public debate. For example, some programs are created, started, and then ended as a result of decisions taken by the Central Committee of FRELIMO. This was the case with the program *The Week*, which was ultimately canceled.

In October 2015, the academic Castel-Branco was accused of criminal libel against former President Guebuza for publishing his opinion on Facebook. Mbanze, journalist and editor of MediaFax, was charged in the same trial for abuse

of press freedom for republishing the comment. The trial and subsequent sentencing showed no overt interference by political forces or any other interests, and the law ultimately prevailed.

In Mozambique, libel or defamation committed through the press is treated as a criminal, rather than civil, offense, and journalists may be sentenced to imprisonment if they are found guilty. Anguilaze shared that there have not been many cases of criminal defamation in Mozambique and that the right of reply, or right to defend oneself, has been used as a way to restore the good name of the offended party, thus avoiding prosecution and legal proceedings. The panelists agreed on the need to tighten up or improve journalism, as some reports blatantly violate ethical and professional journalism standards, which may lead to unnecessary or avoidable litigation.

On the right to access to information and its enforcement, Anguilaze stressed that a culture of secrecy exists in public institutions, despite the Right to Information Act that went into effect in December 2014. President Nyusi has insisted that members of his government should regard access to information as a citizenship right enshrined in the constitution and the law. This is a step in the right direction, but there must be a change of mentality within public institutions and organizations in order for the new law to be effective. Nhanale stated that public information is not available and that the culture of secrecy prevails.

Even after the approval of the Right to Information Act, journalists and citizens continue to face serious barriers accessing government information that is in the public interest; this applies particularly to issues that concern transparency and good governance. Even parliamentary deputies, who by law have the right to request information, have been denied access to information. In support of this, Nhanale gave the example of the Democratic Movement of Mozambique's Parliamentary Caucus, which was denied its request for information about the publicly owned company EMATUM.

In Mozambique, the law does not restrict or prevent the access or use of international news and news sources in media. Any limitation to foreign media is due to other factors, such as financial capacity and access to equipment.

The panelists agreed that the government does not interfere in the journalism profession. However, the professionals themselves, most of whom are members of the National Union of Journalists (SNJ), want to establish professional requirements for entry into the profession, in order to improve the quality of journalistic output.

## OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

### Mozambique Objective Score: 2.06

The panelists believe that more objective, rational, and well-founded reports are beginning to emerge, but there are still reports that violate the most elementary journalism principles. Nevertheless, the panelists recognized media representatives who practice fair, objective journalism and research social issues, upholding good journalism practices.

In general, the press discusses mostly political issues, while investigative journalism is still very weak. Opinion articles and television debates on the controversial political themes are becoming increasingly common. However, Chassafar added that many journalists and news media are pressured to take direction from the authorities and that public media practice self-censorship, especially on security-related issues. Furthermore, there is a visible fear in the private media of offending the authorities.

According to Anguilaze, the SNJ journalist union has ethical standards that journalists should follow, although some media outlets have their own codes of ethics. However, there have been systematic violations of these standards, such as disrespecting the presumption-of-innocence principle and violating privacy. Cases have been cited of journalists interviewing sexually abused children without protecting their identity and of reporters filming police capturing and identifying suspects before due process had

#### 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).

taken place. Most of these suspects were declared innocent after appearing before the judiciary, but there is no process to clear the name of an exposed and potentially criminalized person.

In cases of abused minors or potential suspects being interviewed by journalists, Nenane said that this is a violation of the presumption of innocence, both by the state and the journalist. Nhanale said that the violation of ethical norms contributed to lower-quality reporting. For example, some journalists make unfounded accusations in the name of investigative journalism about the personal and professional lives of different personalities, inevitably damaging the name and image of these individuals. Addressing the ethical issues of journalism, Fernão Paulo, program officer of the Association of Women in the Media, lamented that journalists do not even respect the profession's good name.

Anguilaze believes that hidden payments, gifts, and covert advertising are also a reality in Mozambican journalism. Chassafar agreed with this opinion, suggesting that each person needs a code of conduct and ethics to pursue his or her profession. In his view, most journalists are not independent, but rather work to please certain powers or benefactors. Similarly, Mbanze recognized the existence of good professionals who do acceptable or quality work but said that there often are ethical violations. For example, some newspapers contain news that has resulted from horse-trading or other forms of barter. Referring specifically to a media outlet based in Zambezia province, Patia said she knew that articles had been written in exchange for substantial pay. According to Patia, ethical and professional issues are also caused the increasing competition among outlets, which sometimes undermine the application of ethical standards.

"There is self-censorship in Mozambique, particularly when reporting on sensitive situations linked to organized crime and corruption cases involving powerful figures, because journalists do not have sufficient protection mechanisms in case of a threat," said Anguilaze. Chassafar added that self-censorship occurs in almost all media, depending on the editorial guidelines that each follow. For example, the private media group SOICO's chairman of the board of directors, Daniel David, is increasingly intervening in the activities and programming of the STV television channel, according to Nenane.

However, censorship is more pronounced in public media outlets, where fear of losing one's stable income drives journalists to produce reports that meet the needs of

the employer. Nenane explained that in the case of TVM, complaints or denouncements of public policy are not allowed and, therefore, TVM has not made a single such complaint or denouncement throughout 2015. The panel also observed a lack of peer solidarity among journalists, especially when it comes to protecting whistleblowers. Ouri Pota, journalist at Radio Moçambique, added that the solidarity issue is also a matter of not biting the hand that feeds you, since an alliance with or support of a stigmatized offender can make the supporter vulnerable and cause him or her to lose established benefits and perks.

Regarding journalists' coverage of key events and issues, Nhanale mentioned the case of photographs of deceased soldiers being shared on Facebook, which was not covered by the mainstream media. Chassafar agreed, stating that journalists at some private outlets avoid covering certain events organized by the state or government for fear of publishing something wrong or partial. This also applies to sensitive material, such as the deceased soldiers. However, Anguilaze suggested that virtually all events get covered in one way or another, including situations of extreme violence and armed conflict. The prevalence of smart phones and computers has improved news reporting in recent years, even when there are limited financial resources available for more traditional media, such as print.

Compared with the legal standard of average national salaries in Mozambique, a journalist's salary can be perceived as fair, according to Nhanale. However, considering the high cost of living, it can be concluded that journalism is not a financially attractive sector. The low salaries force journalists to take on other activities to generate income, such as working in press offices in the public or private sector. The sector is also vulnerable to the mobility and departures of professionals, who leave journalism altogether in search of better-paying work. Anguilaze noted that public media outlets generally pay higher wages than private media.

Anguilaze shared that, at least on television, entertainment and sports overshadow the news, despite the audience increasingly demanding news on events occurring throughout the country. Nhanale believes that the commercial portion of media tends to prioritize specific issues. For example, *Savana* publishes a weekly events insert for the newspaper, where readers can announce their events for free, and other media outlets are replicating this approach.

Regarding the efficiency and modernism of the facilities and equipment used for news, Nhanale suggested that

**“There is self-censorship in Mozambique, particularly when reporting on sensitive situations linked to organized crime and corruption cases involving powerful figures, because journalists do not have sufficient protection mechanisms in case of a threat,” said Anguilaze.**

the available base of media equipment does not allow for gathering, producing, and distributing news efficiently. Accordingly, outlets are behind in the technical development process, and financial difficulties prevent newsrooms from making technical improvements. Coelho added that the general trend is to invest in administrative structures rather than improve operations or efficiency. Elaborating on this point, Anguilaze said that equipment budgets are generally tight, and, in some cases, the current equipment is obsolete. Journalists, particularly in television and radio, struggle with a lack of production equipment and means of transporting equipment safely and efficiently, in order to gather and produce the news. In part, this may explain the continued focus on bureaucratic news content (i.e., coverage of press conferences, seminars, and meetings).

“Investigative journalism is still in its infancy, with some honorable exceptions such as the print media especially. Investigative journalism is considered expensive, but there is also a lack of preparation of journalists and limited availability of information sources,” said Anguilaze. The panelists concluded that investigative journalism must improve many deficiencies, including weak research, blurring of facts and opinions, weak knowledge of the language, and vengeance reporting.

According to Nhanale, despite a lack expertise media outlets are developing better niche reporting, especially in the area of economic journalism. For example, the Association of Economic Journalists of Mozambique (AJECOM) was established to promote analysis and discussion of the country's socio-economic state. AJECOM also promotes study, debate, and dissemination of economic analysis materials. The panelists noted that there is a tangible will to pursue growing specialization among journalists, particularly in the larger media outlets. However, Patia pointed out that the cost of training is an obstacle to many newsrooms.

### OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS

#### Mozambique Objective Score: 2.06

The panelists concluded that there are multiple news sources and unhampered Internet access. There are various news agencies; however, the information sources used to report the news are often the same, which means that the same news is repeated by various media outlets. Taking into account the size of the country and the challenges it faces, Anguilaze noted, "There is still a bottleneck in the flow of information." For example, TVM rarely covers activities initiated by citizens, so even though there is a plurality of news sources, the prevailing trend of this public media outlet is to act in the service of the government instead of its citizens. Furthermore, when the president travels internationally, he is accompanied by more correspondents from public-sector media outlets than from private ones.

Nhanale criticized the media, stating that 80 percent of what is reported in newspapers concerns prominent people or political figures. He feels it is necessary to produce more relevant stories. Anguilaze argued that there is conformity among journalists because they often consult only the sources within their own newsroom. Journalists must more actively seek out other sources in order to achieve diversity of information. Patia mentioned that in the provinces, particularly Zambezia, event coverage consists of only the official opening speech and never any background or analysis. According to her, the credibility of media outlets varies from region to region. In Ilé district, for example, people used to watch only TVM, but their opinions began

to change when STV became available and offered an opposing perspective.

According to Patia, community media also struggle with restrictions on access to information that may put local governments in a bad light, and they are virtually prohibited from using information from persons who speak out against the authorities on any issue. Patia believes that the perceived bias of public media outlets, particularly TVM, cannot be overcome by media working individually; rather, it must happen as the result of a concerted effort by media associations.

Nenane suggested that social networks provide a space for journalists to communicate directly with the public; what they cannot publish in their news outlet, they can publish through these networks. The October 2015 assault on the residence of RENAMO leader Afonso Dhlakama in Beira was reported first through social networks. The newspaper *Canal de Moçambique* then reported on the assault, and the Portuguese station RDP later used this material as a source. "Social networks are mostly an urban and youth phenomenon, and most news that comes through social media is signed by pseudonyms. Radio is the medium with the greatest reach, especially when we talk about the role of community radio stations," said Anguilaze. Some community radios, such as Radio Pax, use social networks as a source.

According to the panelists, limitations on access to news media result primarily from low income, low education levels, inadequate power grids in many regions of the country, and TVM's inability to broadcast in all local languages. However, there are no legal restrictions on access to domestic and foreign media. Anguilaze stated that lack of access is not a political issue but results somewhat from the conditions under which TVM operates. He mentioned that television access is limited to 23 percent of the population but may increase to 70 percent after the transition to digital broadcasting.

It is very difficult to buy a newspaper outside the capital or watch television in rural areas, said Anguilaze. Mozambican media have expanded and diversified to be quite inclusive since the democratic transition, but they are still marked by inequalities of coverage and access. Some panelists suggested that the high levels of illiteracy and poverty affect the scope and potential of the written press. In Mozambique, most people do not read newspapers and have never purchased one. Only radio reaches a considerable audience, and most Mozambicans have access to few media outlets apart from public ones.

Patia said that in Zambezia, the presence of the mobile phone company Movitel has enabled thousands of citizens, even in the most remote regions, to access the Internet.

#### 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.

Several television channel aggregators in Zambezia, such as Zap, DSTV, Startime, GoTV, and others, provide a framework that gives citizens greater freedom of access to information and a choice of channels and programs. To illustrate citizens' level of awareness, Patia said that people have started to call reporters when urgent news is breaking.

The panelists agreed that, in practice, there is biased coverage by public media in favor of the ruling FRELIMO party and an exclusion of other voices that might be contrary to the party. According to Anguilaze, public media outlets still do not reflect all the views of the political spectrum in a balanced manner. In recent years, the exercise of highlighting contradictions in debates has been lost. Public media produce programs clearly designed to cultivate a positive image of the government, leaving no space for negative stories or contradictions. Furthermore, election monitoring coverage demonstrates bias toward and positive treatment of the ruling FRELIMO party and its candidates.

Nhanale agrees that there are no independent information agencies. The country has only a state information agency, which distributes news equally to all subscribers, charging a fee for this service. The agency provides news service with photographs. The Portuguese Lusa Agency is present in Mozambique as well and provides news to other major international news agencies, such as the Associated Press, Agence France-Presse, and Reuters.

Regarding Indicator 5, Anguilaze has no doubt that private media produce their own programming. In the case of television, a competition exists between private and public outlets; the scheduling matrix is generally the same with the same amount of time for each type of program and the same slots in the broadcast schedule, differing only in approach. Anguilaze argued that private outlets tend to be more independent but also more sensational, while public outlets tend to be more formal and official. Community media produce their own programming, although most of the available airtime is dedicated to national public radio and television broadcasts. Patia added that independent community radio stations produce 90 percent of their own news, but the same cannot be said of community radio stations of the Mass Communications Institute (ICS), which belong to the state and often depend on local administrators' agendas. ICS community radio stations rebroadcast RM materials, as well as broadcasts from the national television news service.

As an example of both transparency and control of the media, Nhanale mentioned again the case of SOICO, whose board chairman Daniel David increasingly interferes in the activities and programming of the STV television channel.

**It is very difficult to buy a newspaper outside the capital or watch television in rural areas, said Anguilaze. Mozambican media have expanded and diversified to be quite inclusive since the democratic transition, but they are still marked by inequalities of coverage and access.**

According to the panel participants, David is just pursuing short-term political interests; several other national personalities have media companies, but their names are not publicly disclosed. In Mozambique, there are organizations that control the media, and transparency of ownership is observed only in the public sector. In the private sector, this transparency is sometimes lost when certain media outlets are sold in whole or in part. It is not always possible to know the buyer's name, which often leads to speculations about the ownership.

Foreign ownership of media is limited to 20 percent; however, most outlets could benefit from the additional capital.

Regarding the spectrum of social interests represented in the media, Anguilaze stated that while most media outlets devote much space to politics, there is concern about the lack of reporting on peripheral or minority issues, such as human trafficking of albinos, child trafficking, violence against women, and LGBT rights. Gender issues are reported only from the angle of domestic violence. Many of the panelists agree that there is a lack of news coverage of issues that pertain to minorities and that this represents a significant challenge, especially with regard to reporting on social issues.

In Nhanale's opinion, community radio stations in Mozambique, and the associations responsible for their management, generally do not operate professionally, and this is reflected in the quality of the local coverage. Coelho, on the other hand, added that local interest in community radio stations comes from their focus on local content. Community radio stations broadcast local programs in their respective languages, in which they address specific issues of local community interest.

News tends to center on the capital city, Maputo, where the economic and political players are concentrated. Local news is generated and disseminated by provincial stations, delegations, or correspondents.

## OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Mozambique Objective Score: 1.76

The panelists concluded that the media sector is increasingly benefiting from good management, but limited financial capacity makes editorial independence vulnerable. A recurring example of this is the insertion of advertising in articles and news reports, which occurs as a result of media outlets' relationships with advertisers or customers. The editorial lines in the private sector are determined by the advertising market, which is controlled mostly by economic groups linked to the ruling party. It is for this reason that some newspapers and broadcast media are forced to take editorial lines that are less critical to powerful political figures and parties; if they do not maintain their advertising income, they risk going out of business.

Within most private media outlets, there is little separation between owner and editor. Public media outlets are typically stronger financially, in part because of dominant market positions and the support they receive from the state budget; however, these outlets also have a lot of staff and heavy administrative structures, which leads to inefficient management.

Most managers have no formal management training, and it is difficult for a small company with 10 employees to hire a financial director. Newspapers' finances are often so fragile that journalists are forced to do everything from producing journalistic materials to managing the company's accounts. SOICO is the only independent media company that combines television, radio, newspaper, and its own print shop and fills the role of a private media conglomerate.

### 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.

Community media remain unsustainable, but these outlets have good prospects for improvement because their managers and volunteer staff have usually been trained to secure the self-sufficiency of such community outlets.

Advertising remains the biggest source of revenue in the media sector, along with the production and distribution of sponsored supplements. Newspapers are becoming more honest with regard to advertising, but often outlets are willing to compromise their ethics to attract further advertising. National television has endured great pressure to offer prime-time advertising, particularly during news programs and soap operas. Printed press, other than the newspaper *Noticias*, does not generally attract enough advertising, which is a common cause of newspapers going out of business. The reality is that the media outlets all pursue the same advertisers, such as banks and mobile phone companies. Currently, a new phenomenon on the rise are public and private newspaper inserts, which tend to blur the line between information, advertorial content, and news reports. According to Anguilaze, in a situation where advertising and sponsorships are the main sources of media revenue and where the advertising market is so limited, there is always a risk that advertisers will influence editorial policy or content.

Chassafar believes that the absence of specific regulations on advertising in public outlets leads to unfair competition, especially because Mozambique has a very limited advertising market. Public outlets do not have legal limitations on how much advertising they can secure, thus competing directly with private outlets. Mbanze suggested that TVM should not worry so much about advertising, which it dominates when it comes to sales; instead, it should focus on its role of informing the public. State newspapers such as *Noticias*, Nhanale explained, cannot survive on advertising and rely on state funding as well. In Nenane's opinion, advertising should ideally be allocated proportionally and in accordance with market or audience surveys; what occurs instead is unfair competition. The draft Broadcasting Law is expected to set some limits regarding the percentage of advertising that will be allowed during news programming.

Caetano said that most of the advertising at community radio stations is local, but they must negotiate for sufficient funds. He explained that in addition to advertising, community media provide open space to institutions that are interested in specific programs and have greater focus on informative and educational programs and announcements.

Broadcast media outlets have established advertising rates according to airtime used and time of day. Overall, announcements and advertising do not occupy much

airtime; however, news programming represents the strongest selling point for community media, which are authorized to use advertising to fund operations. Patia concluded that advertising is more developed in urban centers—especially in large cities, such as Maputo, Beira, and Nampula—than in the provinces and districts. Eighty percent of advertising takes place in the capital, which discourages or hinders media development in the provinces. Although few in number, the country has respectable marketing companies and highly skilled marketers that can make a positive impact in the future.

The panelists agreed that the government grants subsidies only to the public sector and state-owned media outlets. Nhanale clarified that there is no true government subsidy, but that the government funnels its own advertising to government-controlled media.

Chassafar mentioned that the largest mobile phone company, mCel (in turn controlled by state-owned Telecomunicações de Moçambique), refused to purchase advertising time in some private outlets, such as his Radio Terra Verde, despite acknowledging the station's reach and audience metrics. According to Chassafar, Radio Terra Verde is independent but perceived as an opposition radio station. Patia spoke of a mobile phone company's interest in advertising through her community radio station. However, the mobile phone company required a portion of the advertising money to be returned to it in what resembled a kick-back scheme. The radio station turned down the offer because the kick-back amount was not to be reflected in the company's total revenue or audit reports.

Pota emphasized the lack of media audience surveys. The absence of such surveys makes it challenging for outlets to draw conclusions about programming, management, and the financial health of their business. According to Nenane, there have not been any market research studies that support the creation of new private media outlets; instead newspapers frequently are established in the interest of politicians and political leaders. These outlets, which are not too concerned with their audience but rather with the positive or negative coverage of certain individuals and groups, usually disappear from the market in a short amount of time. Anguilaze stated that advertising agencies use market research to gauge the audience of a particular media outlet. Most market research focuses on television and is carried out by specialized companies. However, according to Nhanale, the migration to digital broadcasting will make it easier and more feasible to measure the audience and take audience samples from the programs that are running.

Lobão João, journalist and editor of *Diário de Moçambique*, does not believe that the appropriate tools and technology

are in place to properly measure audience data in Mozambique. Media outlets, especially the large ones, are concentrated in urban centers, and it is not easy to gauge what is happening in rural areas, where the majority of the population lives. Except for television, where audience surveys are carried out with some degree of professionalism, there is still a long way to go in this area. The panelists also discussed newspaper circulation statistics, which is a matter of concern because the numbers stated by the Government Office of Information (GABINFO) do not match those that are perceived to be accurate.

## OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Mozambique Objective Score: 2.13

The panelists agreed that institutions such as the National Union of Journalists (SNJ) work to protect journalists' rights and promote quality journalism, but the results of their work have yet to be realized. The same applies to state institutions that deal with freedom of the press and freedom of expression. Nhanale stated that there is no basis for measuring the quality of trade association representation, since these do not exist for all practical purposes. Existing professional associations are fragile and do not reflect the growth of the sector. It is remarkable that commercial television companies lack an association that would allow them to speak with one voice in defense of their interests regarding the transition from analog to digital broadcasting. According to the panelists, the government encourages the creation of such associations. Community radio stations are more advanced in this regard, as they are organized in, and sometimes represented by, networks and associations.

### 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.

The council has received widespread criticism for the manner in which it carries out its duties, ensuring that only prominent personalities have the right of reply, as opposed to exercising its real mission of observing and supervising the media sector and media freedoms.

Nenane indicated that professional associations' main source of income is mandatory membership dues, which are mostly symbolic and serve as a mechanism for members to invest in the work of the association and demand high performance. However, dues and contributions alone will not be sufficient to ensure the implementation of the activities of these organizations in the foreseeable future. To access funding from international NGOs that specialize in strengthening media associations, they must prove that they have good management, transparent governance, sound policies and procedures, equality, political neutrality, and independence, which is not always the case.

Chassafar pointed out that SNJ, the journalists' union, is not free of political interference, either. However, Mbanze noted that while SNJ is widely criticized, the journalists themselves do not approach the union to learn about what is being done and do not necessarily identify the areas they would like to see improved. Nenane stated that the union exists primarily as a historical relic and not as an association for journalists and that the union is absent when journalists need protection. However, Chassafar praised the SNJ for playing a positive role in the trial of Castel-Branco and Mbanze.

Additionally, Nenane highlighted problems with the official entity covering activities and issues of freedom of expression and the press, the Higher Media Council (CSCS). The council has received widespread criticism for the manner in which it carries out its duties, ensuring that only prominent personalities have the right of reply, as opposed to exercising its real mission of observing and supervising the media sector and media freedoms. Nenane also drew attention to the composition of the CSCS, specifically to the selection by SNJ of three journalists to serve on the council and their subsequent swearing in before the president. Nenane said that this was not in accordance with the law, since both the Press Law and the CSCS establish that the three journalist representatives should be elected by their respective professional organizations and not by SNJ. SNJ's

appointment of Suzana Espada of TVM, Taibo Latico of RM, and Pedro Nacuo of *Noticias* does not at all guarantee the effective independence of the CSCS since the three outlets are all public.

The panelists acknowledged the work of NGOs that support media development and free speech. For example, in cases of violations affecting community radio stations and their volunteers, the forum of community radio stations, FORCOM, has stood up to support, protect, and defend their rights. At Mbanze's trial, NGOs were actively involved in providing advocacy and support, alongside the media and various sectors of society interested in protecting freedom of expression. Nenane is skeptical as to whether this indicator has reached a sustainable level to pursue a permanent agenda for free speech and independent media, because NGOs have not yet proven longstanding support. Mbanze recognized the support he had received during his trial from CSCS, SNJ, and others. Anguilaze also recognized that civil society organizations have played a major role in pressuring groups to defend both freedom of expression and the right of access to information.

Nhanale stated that there are no journalism degree programs that provide substantial practical experience, which is a critical component for a true investment in students. Students must have access to a camera and an editing room to learn the practicalities of the work and how to put materials together. At the Higher Journalism School, there is a studio for journalism students provided by TVM. This initiative is not only good for the students, but demonstrates a promising partnership between media institutions and public universities, which is typically lacking. Most training is very theoretical, and there is a lack of practical application at the universities that teach these courses. Some students get practical experience during internships and probationary periods, while others end up in journalism simply because it is an employment opportunity just like any other.

According to Pota, "There is a worrying lack of communication and collaboration between the journalism schools and institutions that can offer internships." Mbanze said that the press has a lot to complain about in this regard, because the type of training students receive is inadequate. By the second half of their training, they are supposed to know how to write, but they do not even understand their operating environment or the current state of their country.

Chassafar acknowledged that some companies have systems or departments for staff training, but they focus primarily on information technology. Lobão described the poor quality of primary and secondary education and the weak

presence of continued learning in professional newsrooms. This means that there is no continuity of training in the workplace and a lack of on-the-job training. In recent years, there have been several professional journalism courses, but this has not yet resulted in a corresponding improvement in the quality of journalism.

Journalists have access to short-term training courses designed to improve their knowledge in specific topics of coverage, such as taxation, parliamentary issues, health, and gender. In most cases, these courses are offered by organizations that advocate or promote such topics. However, some editors send journalists to courses reluctantly and typically without any post-training follow-up. The panelists noted that many journalists do not participate in courses that are offered because they believe they should receive an allowance or per diem for attending training activities. For example, the training in data journalism organized by CEC this year did not have the desired number of participants because no per diem was provided.

The panelists unanimously agreed that sources of newsprint and printing facilities are in private hands, apolitical, and without restriction or intervention by the state. The panelists also agreed that there should be a way to limit the cost of import tariffs, which both penalizes consumers and undermines their right to information.

Generally speaking, media outlets are owners of their own equipment and distribution and transmission mechanisms, without any government interference. There is no politicization in the distribution market, as it is an open business. In the case of television, the migration to digital broadcasting may alter this paradigm, since the production, transport, and signal distribution of contents will become separated. The panelists emphasized that specialized networks are being created for the aggregation and distribution of content that television channels will produce.

Nhanale stated that the ICT infrastructure does not adequately meet the needs of media outlets due to the lack of a stable power supply and an insufficient distribution network of newspapers in the provinces. According to Anguilaze, ICT is a reality in urban areas and attracts a younger crowd, but it is not being used by the majority of the population as a means to access information. However, there are government initiatives to create community multimedia centers and a universal access fund for the popularization of these technologies at the community level. However, the panelists noted that the impact of these initiatives is small, given the large geographical size of the country.

## List of Panel Participants

**Armando Nenane**, journalist and lawyer; executive director, Association of Judicial Journalism, Maputo

**Carlos Agostinho Rodrigues Coelho**, journalist and lawyer; director, Management Board, MediaCoopNorte, Nampula

**Ernesto Nhanale**, professor, Higher School of Journalism; researcher, Communication Studies Center, Maputo

**Fernando Mbanze**, editor, Mediafax, Maputo

**Fernão Paulo**, program officer, Association of Women in the Media, Maputo

**Florentino Chassafar**, IT engineer and director, Radio Terra Verde, Maputo

**Idalina Patia**, Catholic nun; journalist and coordinator, Nova Radio Paz, Quelimane

**Maria da Anunciação Mabui**, professor and director, Condhlhana Primary School; program editor, Community Radio Nkomati, Manhica

**Ouri Pota**, journalist, Radio Moçambique, Maputo

**Rosalina Caetano**, journalist and coordinator, Community Radio Mocuba, Mocuba

**Simão Anguilaze**, journalist, Maputo

*The following panelist submitted a questionnaire but was unable to attend the panel discussion:*

**João Lobão**, journalist, *Diário de Moçambique*, Maputo

## Moderator & Author

**Alfredo F. Thomas Lubombo**, journalist and human rights activist, Maputo

*The panel discussion was convened on November 13, 2015.*