Observer, Agitator, Target –
Media and Media Assistance
in Fragile Contexts

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On a global level, armed conflict has intensified and grown more deadly in recent years. In fact, yearly war fatalities have tripled since 2008 – mainly due to the still high death tolls in Afghanistan, Iraq and the extremely violent crisis in Syria. About 80% out of all conflicts world-wide are intrastate confrontations between non-state actors and the government and, increasingly, between non-state-actors. The spread of terrorist warfare and the growing popularity of extremist groups such as ISIS are challenging the international community and its previous policies.

Local media as well as international satellite broadcasters can play an important role in shaping conflict. Media have the capacity to escalate or mitigate conflict, to act as cata-lysts or agitators, to engage in reconciliation or mobilization. At the same time journalists and media outlets are targeted themselves as parties to the conflict. Consequently, freedom of speech has been significantly cut back in today's crisis regions and protection has become a crucial issue for all stakeholders.

Against the backdrop of these observations the Forum Media and Development (FoME) dedicated the FoME-Sympo-sium 2016 to challenges of media assistance and media development in countries affected by armed conflict and instability. One aim was to evaluate existing concepts and to develop new approaches for media assistance in crisis-riven and fragile countries. Furthermore, the event fostered exchange between academic research and the practice of media development with the aim of exploiting research results for the conceptual approaches in media assistance and vice versa, informing research design with experiences and knowledge needs from the field. A total of 160 people deriving from journalism, academic research and media assistance participated in the two-days Symposium.

Katrin Voltmer, Professor of Communication and Democracy at the University of Leeds, opened the conference with a keynote speech on the complex relationship between media and conflict in emerging democracies. Building up on this introduction a broad range of topics was raised in a total of 7 sessions in two days. Among them the pressing question of measuring impact, the role of media in recon-ciliation and transitional justice, the impact of armed conflict on journalistic ethics as well as the need for safety and protection for media personnel on the ground. Apart from presentations two open sessions provided academics as well as practitioners the opportunity to gather in small groups, share experiences and discuss current challenges in their work.

The symposium of the Forum for Media and Develop-ment is dedicated to a new theme each year and is hosted by a different member of the FoME-network. In 2016 Media in Cooperation and Transition (MICT) took responsibility for the concept and organization of the FoME-Symposium (mict-international.org). Further members of the planning group were CAMECO, GIZ, IDEM, Reporters Without Borders, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the Deutsche Welle Academy and the Institute of Applied Media Studies (IAM) of the Zurich University for Applied Sciences (ZHAW). The division on international and intercultural communication of the German Association of Communication Sciences (DGPuK) was involved in the planning process as academic partner.

6

The 2016 FoME Symposium was
held at the Robert Bosch Stiftung
in Berlin on 3/4 November.

Program /
Overview

Welcome address by Henry
Alt-Haaker, Senior Project Manager,
Robert Bosch Stiftung

Thursday, 3.11.2016	9.00 - 09.30	**Welcome address** by Henry Alt-Haaker, Senior Project Manager, Robert Bosch Stiftung
		Opening remarks by Anja Wollenberg, Head of Research and Development, MiCT
	9.30 - 10.15	**Keynote** by Katrin Voltmer, Professor of Communication and Democracy at University of Leeds and Principal Investigator MeCoDEM Facilitator: Anja Wollenberg, Head of Research and Development, MiCT
	10.45 - 12.30	**The problem of media polarization in the context of (armed) conflict and fragile statehood** Facilitator: Anja Wollenberg, Head of Research and Development, MiCT
	14.00 - 15.30	**The role of media in transitional justice and reconciliation** Facilitator: Britta Scholtys, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ
	16.00 - 18.00	**Information verification and Open Source Intelligence** Facilitator: Friederike von Franqué, Chair, IDEM
Friday, 4.11.2016	09.00 - 10.30	**Measuring impact in media projects in conflict/fragile contexts** Facilitator: Christoph Spurk, Institute of Applied Media Studies, Zurich University of Applied Sciences ZHAW
	10.30 - 12.30	**Open exchange: Practitioner Roundtable and Media Development Coaching Session** Facilitators: Christoph Dietz und Sofie Jannusch, CAMECO
	13.30 - 15.00	**Facing ethical dilemmas: Journalists and media development actors in conflict societies** Facilitator: Jan Lublinski, Head of Research and Evaluation, DW Akademie
	15.30 - 17.00	**Safety and protection of journalists** Facilitator: Christian Mihr, Director, Reporters Without Borders Germany

8

Media and conflict in transitional democracies: Polarization, power and the struggle for recognition

Katrin Voltmer presenting her keynote speech.

Keynote by Katrin Voltmer, Professor of Communication and Democracy at University of Leeds and Scientific Coordinator of the EU-funded project Media, Conflict and DEMocratization' (MeCoDEM)

This year's Peace Nobel Prize went to the Columbian President Juan Manuel Santos for his willingness to 'talk to terrorists' in order to bring peace to his country after half a century of civil war. Shortly after the announcement of the Nobel Committee, the people of Columbia rejected the negotiated peace agreement in a referendum. This is only one of many examples that demonstrate the complexities and ambiguities of processes of conflict resolution. There are no simple answers, and there are no solutions without costs.

Shortly after the Nobel Peace Prize was announced, the Global Peace Index 2016 was published, an annual measure of armed conflicts around the world. Overall, there is a historic decline in world peace over the last decade. But this trend does not affect all regions of the world in the same way, thus resulting in a growing inequality in peace. Figure 1 shows the development of conflicts since 2008.

The Global Peace Index uses a range of specific measurements that help to understand the changing nature of conflicts: While there is a clear decline in external (inter-state) conflicts, supported by intensified international peace keeping involvements, we see a significant increase in internal conflicts. Terrorism and large numbers of refugees are the main causes for the proliferation of internal conflicts.

GPI PERCENTAGE CHANGE FROM 2008 TO 2016 BY INDICATOR

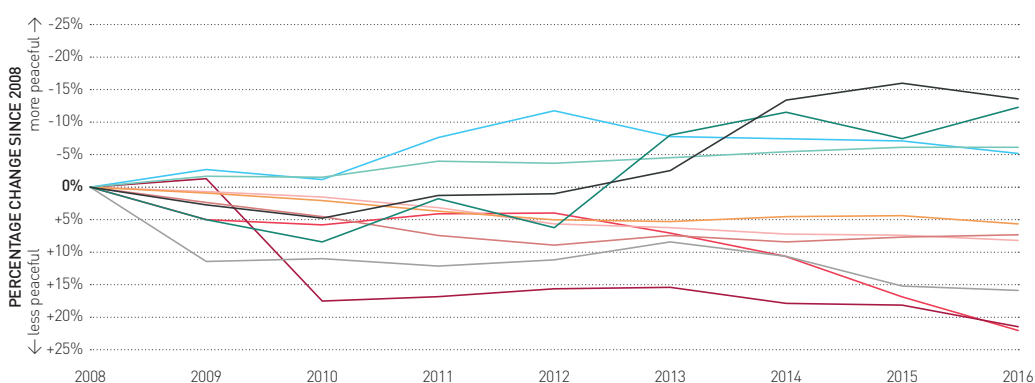Six indicators deteriorated by more than five %, with four improving by more than five %.

Figure 1:
Global Peace Index 2016,
Source: Institute for Economics and Peace

EXTERNAL CONFLICTS FOUGHT
UN PEACEKEEPING FUNDING

ARMED SERVICES PERSONNEL
MILITARY EXPENDITURE

INTENSITY OF INTERNAL CONFLICT
VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS
PERCEPTIONS OF CRIMINALITY

CONFLICTS DEATHS (INTERNAL)

REFUGEES AND IDPS
TERRORISM IMPACT
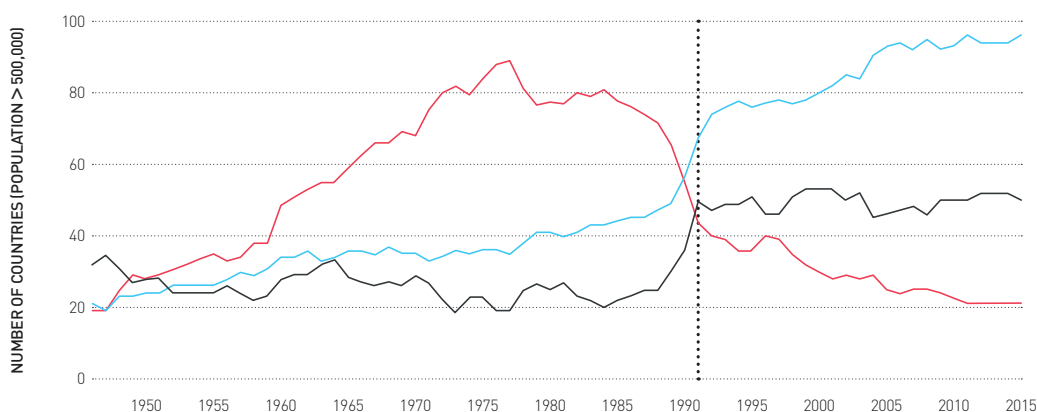
GLOBAL TRENDS IN GOVERNANCE, 1946 – 2015

Figure 2:
Global Trends in Governance 1946-2015, Source: Center for Systemic Peace / Polity IV

DEMOCRACIES

ANOCRACIES

AUTOCRACIES

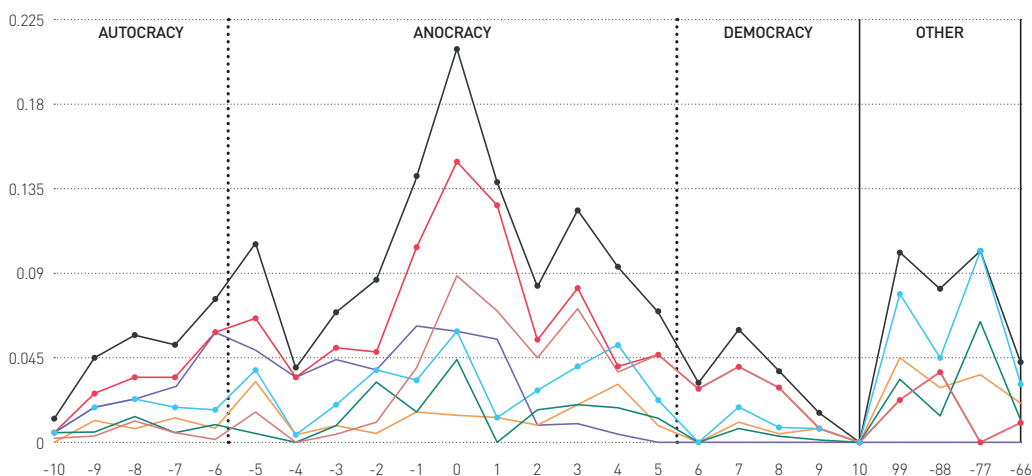## POLITY IV AND THE ONSET OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY, 1955 – 2015

Figure 3:
Regime type and Instability and Violent Conflict, Source: Center for Systemic Peace / Polity IV

POLITICAL INSTABILITY EVENT (All)
NEGATIVE REGIME CHANGE
POLITICAL VIOLENCE ONSET
ETHNIC WAR ONSET
REGIME INSTABILITY EVENT
POSITIVE REGIME CHANGE
REVOLUTIONARY WAR ONSET

This chart presents the individual plots for the onsets of the four categories of political instability events: positive regime change, negative regime change, ethnic war onset, and revolutionary war onset. The "major democratic transition" category is right-censored by definition (regimes with POLITY scores of 6 or higher can not experience shifts of five points or more). The "adverse regime change" category is strongly left-censored but not completely, as it includes cases involving a "collapse of central authority (-77)" which can occur in any regime. The two "regime change" categories are aggregated as "regime instability events" and the two "(civil) war onset" categories are aggregated as "political violence onsets." All four categories are then aggregated as "political instability events." What may be the most interesting aspect of this distribution of annual likelihoods of instability onsets across the Polity spectrum is that each of the three aggregated plots show similar "inverted U" shapes across the POLITY scale (-10 to +10). Annual likelihood figures for the four "other" categories of Polity conditions: independence (99), transition (-88), interregnum or collapse (-77), and foreign interruption (-66) are all relatively high (similar to the increased likelihood figures for "anocratic" or "incoherent authority" regimes, -5 to +5). It appears that the only (relatively) stable regimes are "fully institutionalized autocratic regimes" (-10; which have diminished in numbers from a peak of 89 in 1977 to just 21 in 2015) and "fully institutionlized democratic regimes" (+10;; which have increased steadily from only 9 in 1943 to 96 in 2015).

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The idea that democracy itself can be the problem is a rather unsettling thought. However, if we want democracy – and with it free speech and free media – to work, we have to confront ourselves with the 'dark side of democracy.'"

Katrin Voltmer

But the graph also shows a marked increase of violent demonstrations suggesting that conflicts have permeated deeply into societies rather than being driven by extremist fringe groups or external crises. In a growing number of countries citizens are revolting against their governments, demanding economic development, justice and freedom. The uprisings of the Arab Spring are but one outstanding example for the frustration and desperation of citizens and their willingness to take high risks in challenging political authority.

Another driver of internal conflicts is the mobilization of identities. Religious hatred, inter-ethnic divisions and xenophobic violence against foreigners have been on the rise and have become a threat to social cohesion and even territorial integrity.

It is interesting to plot the Global Peace Index against another indicator of global development: the distribution of types of governance produced by the Polity IV project, a longitudinal data series on government institutions and the quality of democracy. The Polity IV index distinguishes between democracy, autocracy and a third category sitting between these two: 'anocracy', which combines elements of democratic and autocratic governance. A more common term found in the literature is 'hybrid regimes' (Levitzky & Way 2010; Zakaria 1997) referring to types of governments that have introduced electoral politics, but typically lack liberties such as freedom of the press and a just application of the rule of law. Hybrid regimes oscillate between electoral authoritarianism on one end – i.e. autocratic regimes that conduct elections which, however, do not guarantee fair competition between political contenders – and flawed democracies on the other – i.e. countries where elections are fairly free, but governments are unable (or unwilling) to ensure full civil liberties and where fair process is hampered by problems such as weak state institutions, corruption, gross poverty or unmanageable societal divisions. Figure 2 shows the three types of governance since the end of World War II.

Not surprisingly, there is a steady rise of democracy over the last seventy years with a dramatic jump in the early 1990s after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. This is mirrored by a decline of authoritarianism, which started already in the 1970s when the Latin American military dictatorships were overcome. However, what is remarkable is the rise of anocracies, or hybrid regimes. Other indices that apply a stricter definition of democracy (e.g. the Democracy Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit, www.eiu.com/democracy2015) record an even higher proportion of hybrid regimes and flawed democracies of ca. 50%, with only 12% full democracies and 30% authoritarian regimes.

Most hybrid regimes can be found among those countries that have only a very short history of democratic governance and that are in the process of abandoning autocratic rule. Therefore, many scholars assumed that hybridity is a transient state of affairs that would sooner or later be replaced by a more mature form of democracy. However, this is not the case. Instead, it seems that many countries settle in the grey zones of authoritarianism with democratic accessories.

Is there a connection between regime type and conflict? Figure 3 plots the three regime types of Polity IV against different manifestations of conflict.

The resulting pattern is a striking demonstration of how dangerous hybrid regimes are. They are marred by political instability with different forces pushing for reverse or progressive regime change. These regimes also see a much higher degree of ethnic and political violence than their 'pure' counterparts on either the autocratic or democratic end of the spectrum.

This is where the research interest of the project 'Media, Conflict and Democratization' (MeCoDEM) is located (for details please visit the project website www.mecodem.eu).[1] For our empirical research we have selected a set of conflict cases in four countries, each representing specific contexts of transitional politics: Egypt, Kenya, Serbia and South Africa. Our research crystallizes around what we call 'democratization conflicts', i.e. conflicts that accompany, or are triggered by, political and social transformations from authoritarian rule to a more democratic dispensation. In our project we distinguish between four main categories of democratization conflicts:

1. Conflicts over the distribution and control of power, including issues of accountability, responsiveness, systems of checks and balances.

2. Conflicts over citizenship and identity, including demands for extended participation, but also issues of inclusion and exclusion and related conflicts between groups and actions against 'foreigners'.

3. Conflicts over transitional justice, involving issues as to how to address the injustices and human rights abuses

The emerging diversification of media doesn't take place in a power vacuum and only few – if any – of the new media outlets manage to maintain distance to the post-transitional power struggle that is unleashed by the power vacuum that opens up after the collapse of an old regime."

Katrin Voltmer

committed by the old regime, how to penalize perpetrators and how to achieve a settlement for the future. Transitional justice issues force societies to make hard choices: between peace and justice, revenge and reconciliation, and between the past and the future – as the Columbian example mentioned at the beginning highlights.

4. Elections as distinct events that intensify existing conflicts by providing an arena where divisions are articulated and exaggerated – often with deadly consequences.

While in the post-1989 spirit of optimism the spread of democracy was regarded as a route to both domestic and international peace, the reality of the past decades speaks a different language. Transitions to democracy have proven to be a factor of instability and intense conflict. Why is this the case? One common explanation draws on the legacies of the old regime. According to the saying 'old habits die hard,' both citizens and elites are believed to be stuck in an authoritarian mindset, implying that with the passing of time the old generation will be replaced by a new, more democratically-minded one. Another explanation is that any political change produces winners and losers, suggesting the need for a negotiated transition that pacifies, even co-opts those who have lost power and access to other resources, like wealth and cultural capital.

A third explanation assumes that democratic politics itself contains forces that have the potential to trigger

unmanageable conflicts, especially in countries where societies are deeply divided and/or state institutions are weak (Collier2009; Snyder 2000). Paradoxically, the core democratic institution – elections – appears as the most dangerous innovation of the transition process. Faced with large-scale participation and unprecedented competition with uncertain outcome, politicians approach electoral contests as zero-sum games in which destroying the 'enemy'/opponent is the only way of survival. Mobilizing ethnic or religious divisions has turned out to be one of the most effective ways of winning elections where other loyalties are weak and less salient. With very few exceptions, the media have attached themselves to one of the competing camps, thus amplifying the destructive forces of electoral politics. The 'politics of belonging' (Nyamnjoh 2009) not only maximizes votes, it is also an effective selling point for media organizations struggling in over-crowded markets.

The idea that democracy itself can be the problem is a rather unsettling thought. However, if we want democracy – and with it free speech and free media – to work, we have to confront ourselves with the 'dark side of democracy' (Mann 2004) and search for solutions that sometimes might lie outside established certainties.

In the following I want to focus on two principles that are essential for democracy – and for a democratic public sphere – to enquire how good things can become bad things if consumed in undiluted form. I will use examples from our MeCoDEM conflict case studies to illustrate my argument, but for the purpose of this lecture won't present data-based research findings.

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> The polarization and fragmentation of transitional societies and their media systems and the resulting high risk of unmanageable conflict put the search for a common communication space high up on the agenda of media development."
>
> Katrin Voltmer

The principles I'm going to reflect on are **Pluralism vs. common space** and **Voice vs. listening**

My main argument is that these and other values and principles which guide the policies and interventions of media assistance organizations, but also democracy support initiatives, are highly ambivalent and can even result in negative outcomes if they are not balanced by values and practices that compensate for their deficiencies.

Pluralism vs. common space

Pluralism is at the heart of liberal democratic theory. It is the antidote to the hegemonic claims of authoritarianism, and it can reasonably be argued that there can't be democracy without pluralism. The principle is based on the assumption that competition between different groups – from business to trade unions, from environmentalists to churches, etc. – ultimately results in equilibrium between different interests. In this model the state functions as an arbitrator and state power is controlled and kept at bay by the multitude of groups (see Dahl 1971).

Pluralism is also a key value of journalism and media policy. The foundation text that still guides our thinking today is John Stuart Mill's 'On Liberty' (1859/1972). Written in the middle of the 19th century, Mill introduces the metaphor of the 'marketplace of ideas' to defend the virtues and benefits of freedom of speech. Like in political pluralism, the driving force is competition – in this case between different ideas. Mill argues that the confrontation of different ideas and opinions helps to identify 'the truth', by which he meant the best use of knowledge in a society's endeavour to improve the 'happiness' of its people.

Immediately after the collapse of authoritarian regimes there is usually a proliferation of new media outlets, a honeymoon of free speech – often before the first election has taken place or any substantial institutional change. The promotion of a pluralist media landscape is also one of the primary objectives of media assistance programmes in the process of democratic transition.

However, the emerging diversification of media doesn't take place in a power vacuum and only few – if any – of the new media outlets manage to maintain distance to the post-transitional power struggle that is unleashed by the power vacuum that opens up after the collapse of the old regime. As a consequence, many media are quickly hijacked by the competing political forces, in particular sectarian groups that seek to imprint their influence on the emerging political order. The media's willingness to serve as a platform for particularistic interests is not only driven by economic constraints, but also by a conception of journalism that sees itself as activism with other means where journalists are participants rather than observers. The resulting structure of the media landscape might be a fair representation of all groups and opinions, but it is characterized by fierce antagonisms and a spiral of mudslinging and mutual accusations.

These experiences demonstrate that media pluralism not only opens up spaces for public debate; it also contains strong centrifugal forces that can lead to polarization and fragmentation, and in the worst case, the outbreak of open conflict. This is particularly the case in divided societies that

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14

lack effective mechanisms of moderation and interest accommodation. Iraq after the downfall of Saddam Hussein is one, but by no means the only, example of the 'dark side' of media pluralism (see Price, Al-Marashi & Stremlau 2009). However, recent developments in many western countries, most notably the U.S., show that established democracies are not immune against the destructive potential of 'media abundance' and that a highly commercialized multi-media market together with the rise of populist politics can polarize a nation to a point where dialogue becomes impossible.

The conclusion from these observations is that for pluralism to release its potential of a 'truth finding' mechanism, the polarizing energies need to be counterbalanced by centripetal forces. Virtually all transitional societies are in desperate need of a space where minds and voices can meet and where a shared vision of the country and its future can be negotiated. A space where the nation can be forged as an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) that has the capacity to serve as an umbrella for a diversity of identities and world views.

In a media ecology where the Internet has added to the centrifugal forces of public debate, the call for a common space of communication is becoming a matter of urgency and should be at the centre of media development policies. How can this be brought about?

The 2013 Kenyan election is an example from the MeCo-DEM project for a society who was determined to protect itself from the destructive energies of polarization and ethnic divisions. This election took place in the shadows of the 2007 election that descended into inter-ethnic violence and left about a thousand people dead. During these events the media had played a crucial – and in places, disastrous – role. Reporting about a campaign in which both main candidates mobilized heavily on ethnic identities, newsrooms became themselves ethnically divided and torn between competing loyalties. As the tone of the campaign heated up, no effective mechanisms were in place to moderate hate speech. In particular vernacular radio stations were frequently hijacked by serial callers who spread misinformation and hatred. In the aftermath of massive post-election violence, there was a lot of soul-searching among journalists who realized their own share in the outbreak of the 2007 violence. In addition, during the run-up to the 2013 election, civil society groups and political leaders ran high-profile campaigns for peace, demanding ethnic harmony to prevail over political disputes and divisions. This gave rise to what has been called 'peace-ocracy' – the idea that peace and stability must be promoted above all else. In media coverage, episodes of division were played down and references to ethnic identities systematically avoided (Stremlau & Gagliardone 2015). While the determination to maintain peace during the 2013 election united the nation, the trade-off between stability and democracy had put hard, if not impossible, choices on journalists, and many Kenyan commentators now think that the profession has gone too far.

In this example, a nation came together to reach a consensus in a critical moment in its history. However, 'common space' does not necessarily mean consensus. In most political debates it will be impossible to agree on a particular view or solution. What is therefore more impor-

More than 150 participants from academic and media development organizations attended the 2016 FoME Symposium.

> **"**
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>
> Katrin Voltmer

tant is a space for public debate that enables citizens to consider all sides of the issues. In many established western democracies, the institution of public service broadcasting has been set up to fulfil this role. However, the attempt to transform former state broadcasters into public service institutions in emerging democracies has been largely unsuccessful, even in circumstances where a combination of international support and political pressure (like post-communist eastern Europe) provided rather favourable conditions (see Voltmer 2013, pp. 153-160).

However, the polarization and fragmentation of transition-al societies and their media systems and the resulting high risk of unmanageable conflict put the search for a common communication space high up on the agenda of media development. Exporting western-style public service institu-tions might not be a workable approach. Therefore, fresh thinking and innovative solutions, possibly involving new digital technologies, could be a way of counter-balancing the centrifugal forces of extensive pluralism in an age of media abundance.

Voice vs. listening

Another principle of democratic public communication, though in some respect related to pluralism, is 'voice'. While pluralism denotes the representation of a broad range of mostly organized or collective interests in the public realm, the notion of voice focuses on individual citizens: the experi-ences, grievances and demands of ordinary people.

Nick Couldry (2010) describes the principle of voice as the 'effective opportunity for people to speak on what affects their lives'.

While autocracy is based in silence and silencing voices, democracy embodies the promise to have a voice. Having a voice gives agency to people, it is the manifestation of recognition of their status as citizens. In a way, 'voice' complements, even contradicts, the principle of represen-tation which delegates the direct voice of citizens to repre-sentatives who are speaking and acting on their behalf. These representatives can be elected officials, but also journalists and the media in their role of reflecting and shaping public opinion.

Recent pro-democracy movements have been powerful displays of voice: the Arab Spring, the Hong Kong umbrella movement, the Maidan movement in the Ukraine, and many more. In fact, the powerful bottom-up mobilization is one of the main features that distinguishes recent democratizations from earlier ones, in particular of the 1970s, which were mainly elite-driven.

Most development policies aim at maximizing voices as a way to empower people and to strengthen democratic development. Moreover, digital technologies and social media platforms, like Facebook or Twitter, have provided citizens with a powerful tool to speak up and speak back. However, the proliferation of voice has its drawbacks: it often escalates into sheer noise. In the online world, attention is a rare resource, thus driving expressions to extremes. Many online discussions are shrill and offensive to an extent that doesn't exist in the offline world.

Katrin Voltmer during the Q&A session.

Thus, the important question is: Does this huge chorus of voice matter? There is expressive value in having a voice. But without being heard – being listened to – voice remains an exclamation mark without consequences.

Recent debates at the intersection of deliberative democratic theory and deliberative practice are exploring how effective practices of listening can be introduced in political communication and indeed journalism (see for example 'The Listening Project' at the University of Technology Sydney, summarized in a special issue of the journal Continuum 2009). Listening is more than extracting public opinion data. It involves a dialogical process that doesn't shy away from differences, but recognizes the experiences and views of the other side. As part of a dialogue, listening involves more than refraining from speaking in order to provide space for the voice of the other; it also requires a kind of response that reflects active engagement with the views of the other side.

Given the abundance of voice in the age of media abundance, Andrew Dobson (2012, 2014) identifies listening as the new democratic deficit and proposes processes as to how listening can be implemented in current institutional politics.

The importance of listening became dramatically evident in our research on South Africa. One of our conflict case studies in the country focuses on what have become known as 'service delivery protests'. These are longstanding community protests where citizens demand basic provisions such as water, electricity and sanitation. These protests are now going on for a decade or so with an estimated number of occurrences of several thousand a year. However, the protests go deeper than their obvious demands for policy delivery; they are the expression of deep frustrations about the broken promises of post-Apartheid politics, of grievances of people who have been left behind and their desire for recognition and dignity.

Interestingly, service delivery protests have attracted much less media attention, both nationally and internationally, than the current student protests against tuition fees, highlighting the fact that the poor don't have a voice. They might be shouting, but their voice is not effective, it isn't heard by those who are shouted at. It is often overlooked that, especially in less developed societies, social media is the platform of those with ample communication resources: the well-educated, urban part of the population. Thus, while providing new and powerful channels of speaking up and speaking back, digital media also contribute to perpetuating existing power structures by widening the gap between those who can make their voice heard and those who can't.

Our research reveals an alarming inability and/or unwillingness of political authorities to listen, and this applies to both the national and the municipal level. Again and again, political activists report that continuing petitions and requests, often over months and even years, have failed to elicit any response from the side of the authorities, let alone change. The result is a rising tide of cynicism and frustration that plays into the hands of radical populists. When interviewing political authorities, we asked about their strategies of communicating with citizens. All of them emphasized the importance of consulting and listening to citizens, but this rarely exceeded mere lip service, as none was able to describe concrete measures in place that would enable effective, i.e. dialogical, listening.

In these circumstances, many journalists are rethinking their own role in a country that is marred by growing inequality and social unrest. A recurrent theme that came up in most of our interviews with South African journalists is their wish to 'give voice to the voiceless'. But they are also acutely aware of the limitations set by the routines of the industry. Being parachuted into conflict zones to deliver dramatic images and one-off stories leaves little opportunities to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the protests. Only very few of the journalists we interviewed took it upon themselves to live with the communities so they were able to tell their stories in a more authentic way. Recent debates on a journalism of listening (O'Donnell 2009; Wasserman 2013) could be a way forward to develop journalistic practices where a 'good story' reflects the experience and voice of people rather than a maximum of news values.

Conclusion

In conclusion I would like to emphasize three points that seem to me important for the understanding of the relationship between media and conflict in transitional societies:

1. Idealism vs. realism

Interventions of democracy support and media development have to be aware of the ambiguity of the values and principles that guide policies. Creating a communicative commons and a culture of listening is as important as promoting pluralism and enhancing voice.

2. Media-centric vs. communication approach

Media and journalism should be understood as part of a wider 'communication ecology' that includes a wide range of stakeholders and practices. Popular communication cultures and the communication capacity of political authorities are as important as the quality of journalism to foster a democratic public sphere.

3. Transfer vs. mutual learning

Last but not least, so-called established and so-called emerging democracies increasingly share similar problems: polarization, fragmentation, cynicism, irresponsiveness of elites. It is therefore time to revisit our own long-held assumptions and to look out for the communication resources of more traditional societies.

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Panel 1:
Challenges of media
polarization in the context
of (armed) conflict and fragile
statehood

18

The panellists Jad Melki, James
Deane, Carola Richter and Hanan
Badr, and moderator Anja Wollenberg
(from left to right).

Speakers: Jad Melki (Associate Professor of Journalism
and Media Studies, Lebanese American University), Carola
Richter (Associate Professor for International Communica-
tion, Freie Universität Berlin), Hanan Badr (Post-Doc
Researcher, Freie Universität Berlin), and James Deane
(Director of Policy and Learning, BBC Media Action)
Facilitator: Anja Wollenberg (Head of Research and Develop-
ment, Media in Cooperation and Transition)

In a pluralistic media environment the emergence and
escalation of intrastate conflict often entails media
polarization along conflict lines. This pattern is reinforced
by fragile statehood and can, by deepening existing gaps
in the society, jeopardize the state building process. Under
such circumstances, media assistance is challenged by the
apparent contradiction of equally important aims such as
pluralism and stability. This session discussed indicators and
criteria for the analysis of pluralism, while looking at the role
of education and media literacy and investigating causes and
consequences of media polarization.

   Jad Melki introduced the rich discipline of media literacy
and its contribution in conflict driven political contexts to help
to "prevent the clashing of identities". Media literacy, which
as a discipline originated in Western countries, has gained
more popularity all over the world with the spread of social
media but rarely has it dealt with other contexts, including
fragile states. It deals with patterns of media usage during
war and conflict, building digital competencies of inhabitants
living in conflict zones, and addressing critical thinking skills
and media awareness abilities with priority given to issues
critical to such environments. It addresses how to analyze
stereotypes based on racism, sectarianism or gender and
hereby builds upon what Melki calls "the pedagogy of the
oppressed." The Media and Digital Literacy Academy of Beirut
(MDLAB) was one of the first institutions to introduce media
literacy studies in the Arab world, and since then, the disci-

"

We have been dealing with violence and
extremism for decades. Now the Euro-
pean societies found a common interest:
We need to engage with this together."

Jad Melki

Jad Melki: "When people use different
media outlets, that doesn't mean that
they are from different 'camps.' Media
literacy is not only about detecting
the 'wrongs' and bias of the others
but, most importantly, about their own
media."

> "In any case, we can detect an instrumentalist understanding of journalism as being the tool for a specific political interest. Journalism in such circumstances is more emotional than rational, more opinionated than analytical."

Carola Richter

pline is taught in over 30 universities in the region. Melki highlighted the importance of advancing media literacy in countries with polarized-pluralistic media environments in order to enable the people to make sense of what media is offering them.

Carola Richter and Hanan Badr investigated the question of polarization in Egypt from a theoretical and empirical perspective. The media start-up boom in Egypt that began in 2011 could be seen as an expression of the country's lively political culture, but from our ex-post perspective now it can also be interpreted as a structural legacy of the old regime, which ultimately fostered polarization. This resulted in a fragmentation of the journalistic community along ideological and generational divides, which in the end shapes the self-perceptions of their roles, priorities and grievances. In order to deepen understanding of the self-images of Egyptian journalists, Richter and Badr conducted a content analysis of Egyptian newspapers investigating the coverage of the detainment of two Egyptian journalists in the premises of the Journalists Syndicate in Cairo (link to: https://cpj.org/tags/egyptian-journalists-syndicate). The coverage of the case raises questions about the professional roles of journalists and the balance between solidarity among journalists on one side and their (enforced or deliberate) loyalty to the government on the other side. The sample consists of three print media: the state newspaper Al-Ahram, the private medium Al-Masry Al-Youm and the alternative medium Al-Badil. The four types they found in their study are the "loyal pro-stability" journalists, the "change agent", the "functional institutionalist" and the "analytical interpreter". They concluded that the "external pluralism" logic is indeed an unhealthy pluralism, which dictates the media tone.

Instead, internal pluralism should be strengthened by, among others, supporting investigative journalism, investing in training and strengthening the professional sector in the journalistic community and strengthening the informed and analytical reflective positions.

James Deane's presentation focused on the role of media in fragile states. Fragile states are defined as "states where it takes little for it to fall apart". Very often these states are characterized by deep (ethno-sectarian) divides in society, prevalence of non-state armed groups and identity politics. The media's role in fragile states can be regarded through at least three lenses: First, with regards to state-citizen relations, second, democracy and empowerment and, third, national identity and belonging. Different impacts of media on fragility have been discerned: 1) political polarization and group identity formation, 2) "coalitions for/against suspicion of 'the other' and violent extremism", 3) erosion of drivers capable of enabling shared identity or a sense of belonging. The work of BBC Media Action tries to tackle these issues by resetting the focus from shared interests of separate groups to a shared national identity. The latter should be fostered by media assistance in fragile contexts. Deane highlighted the necessity to build media capacity to enable a dialogue on national identity that can best be pursued by a Public Service Broadcaster. Although evaluation of media assistance projects from BBC Media Action and other organizations demonstrate that public service broadcasting in fragile states is hard to accomplish he still holds the opinion that PSB is the most promising concept in this regard. Deane called for more assertiveness in making these arguments within the development community.

PANEL 1
AT A GLANCE...

1. Media consumers need to be trained in media literacy to detect the political agenda behind stereotyped representation.

2. The focus of analysis and media assistance should be on shared identities rather than shared interests within a society to prevent conflict.

3. The media have a credibility issue stemming from media ecology: Media ownership and production are intertwined. This reveals the political agenda behind representations.

4. Polarization is reflected in the structures of media pluralism, in media content as well as in self perceptions of the journalism; it penetrates different levels of the system

Panel 2:
The role of media in transitional justice and reconciliation

20

The panellists Roger Niyigena, Pierre Hazan, Maria Teresa Ronderos and moderator Britta Scholtys (from left to right).

Speakers: Pierre Hazan (Editorial Advisor JusticeInfo.net, Associate Professor Neuchâtel University), Roger Niyigena (Project Director Ejo Youth Echo in Rwanda) and Maria Teresa Ronderos (Director of the Program on Independent Journalism, Open Society Foundation)
Facilitator: Britta Scholtys (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ)

In the aftermath of brutal civil wars, justice and reconciliation processes play a crucial role in helping societies deal with the legacy of mass human rights violations. Media is an important actor in this process, as well as a subject that requires reform itself. This session discussed competing values such as freedom of expression and promotion of reconciliation and addressed major achievements and challenges of media development work in reconciliation and transitional justice processes.

Pierre Hazan engaged with the different roles media can play in transitional justice contexts. First, he shed light on the oxymoron of transitional justice often happening in times of war (examples: Sarajevo, Burundi). A crucial issue is to discern first what kind of information is available to the people. Reports are often written from different perspectives and it is hard to find non-biased information on incidents and war crimes. In the process of finding justice, different perspectives and a "struggle for narratives" by different (political) camps appear: In this context transparency is crucial, where the people can "see how justice is been done". He distinguished three different roles media can play in the process of transitional justice and truth finding: 1) agitator, by spreading propaganda, 2) victim, by being shut down like local radio stations in Burundi, 3) help to implement mechanisms of justice, by documenting human rights violations. Here, journalists can help and bring proof. The focus should be on "old school" skills for journalists: Fact checking, investigation, providing coverage and proof. Hazan presented the platform, justiceinfo.net, which takes up the role of providing background news and analysis to understand what happens and happened. Furthermore, it collaborates with academics from the University of Oxford.

Roger Niyigena presented the goals, contents, activities and challenges of the project Ejo that was created in Rwanda to help to assist transitional justice. The name of the radio is significant as it can be translated as both "yesterday and

> "
> The right of justice is very much linked to the right of information. Justice needs not only to be done, but needs to be seen to be done."

Pierre Hazan

Roger Niyigena: "One of the challenges we face in our debates is rooted in psychology: Finding a language to speak. There are no words to discuss genocide."

Maria Teresa Ronderos: "The most important thing for the media is to show what is happening and why."

tomorrow". He made the point that media played into the destruction and genocide in Rwanda and a lack of media literacy, translated into an audience lacking critical thinking and awareness of the consequences that occurred. The aim of his project is to show how media can bring people together, rather than dividing them. They work with youth and bring together people from the survivors' side and perpetrators to discuss paths of reconciliation. Ejo works as well with the older generation and deputies to bring together different perspectives in round tables. In their training, they take on a transnational approach and work with people in Ghana as well. As for challenges, he pointed out the lack of trust in the media, after the role they played in the genocide. Another issue involves finding a language to speak about atrocities and trauma.

Maria Teresa Ronderos engaged with two distinct processes of transitional justice in Colombia: First, with regards to the paramilitary, and second with regards to the negotiations with the FARC. First of all she gave background information on 52 years of violence and highlighted the issue of misrepresentation of the conflict in Colombia within the international community that made it look like the violence was about drugs, not politics. Official media in Colombia very often depend on official sources and fall into the trap of legal framework. She gave examples of different online media outlets that help to assist the transitional justice in Colombia to cover justice practices, 1) by assisting and reporting on all sessions, 2) by publishing investigative reports, for example, on information who the paramilitaries are, 3) by providing new technologies where personal stories and eye witness accounts can be shared, 4) by cultural and artistic expressions engaging with the conflict.

RECOMMEN- DATIONS...

1. Documentation of war crimes

2. New technologies to open debate to many, and to bring in personal stories

3. Investigation of particular narratives of violence and creation of spaces where people can talk freely

PANEL 2 AT A GLANCE...

1. In transitional justice processes the "battle of narratives" prevails: It's the role of journalists to provide valid proof and information and not to fall into this battle.

2. The role of media is to cover actual events their contexts and reasons; unlike activists, journalists have to distance themselves against their own judgements and prejudices

3. Memory construction is a dynamic process and reconciliation can take a long time.

22

The panellists Michael Wegener,
Chris Böhme, Oleg Khomenok and
moderator Friederike von Franqué
(from left to right).

Speakers: Michael Wegener (Head of Content Center, ARD New), Oleg Khomenok (Senior Media Advisor of Internews Network and Co-founder of YanukovychLeaks.org) and Chris Böhme (Chief Architect Maltego, Paterva)
Facilitator: Friederike von Franqué (Institut für Demokratie, Medien und Kulturaustausch e.V.)

The need for accurate and timely information is more pressing in times of conflict, when the deliberate placement of information is part of a combat strategy. Focusing on the Internet as a source, this session explored the parameters for journalistic work in information verification, open source intelligence and real-time data mining with examples from Germany and Ukraine. Given the drastic increase of possibilities for surveillance, strategies for protection of endangered journalists and the media development community itself were also debated.

Michael Wegener briefly talked about the history of User Generated Content (UGC) and its relation to the mainstream media ("we tried to ignore it at first") and how he is now trying to establish a best practice network, where European state broadcasters pool expertise and tips as they work in open source verification, and try to establish standards. Open source verification is something every journalist should be able to do in the 21st century. Newsrooms need to develop a workflow, whereby reporters checking UGC go through a series of steps, to ascertain whether a piece of UGC is real and can be incorporated into the broadcast. Michael Wegener shared the various tools that his editors use in that process. There are about eight of them working in this area for ARD.

FROM THE Q&A SESSION...

Q: "If a piece of UGC is particularly compelling, do the fact checkers or verifiers feel under more pressure to publish it?"
Michael Wegener: "Open Source Verification takes time and people need to be aware that it takes time."

Q: "How do newsrooms deal with this time pressure?"
MW: "For example, in the first round of Tagesschau the presenter may say that this video clip was 'apparently' filmed in a particular location. By the next news bulletin, the information had been verified and the presenter was able to say this video clip 'was definitely' shot in the location."

Q: "Open Source Verification is often not 100 percent: What happens if a mistake is made?"
MW: "We acknowledge it publicly and we apologize."

> "
> We live in a 'post-privacy' era. Everything we do on the Internet is there in perpetuity and may be used to track us, or against us, at some stage in the future. Software like this exists and we need to learn how to deal with it."
>
> Chris Böhme

Oleg Khomenok spoke about the different tools that journalists can use to verify text or visual information. He gave detailed information, including weblinks (link to: http://www.slideshare.net/Khomenok/verification-of-inforamtion-tools-for-journalists), and introduced how a fact-checking desk works. Oleg Khomenok also talked about how certain social media monitoring platforms (platforms like Banjo and Yomapic) have allowed journalists to reach witnesses / potential interviewees during a breaking news event in Ukraine.

Chris Böhme talked about how easily internet users can be identified and located in the real world, even if they try to hide. He talked about potential threats for journalists reporting on conflict with his software, called Maltego. He felt that those enacting privacy legislation did not understand the implications of big data and how it can be used to find many personal details that Internet users thought were anonymous. During his presentation the software was demonstrated. Maltego analyses links between different bits of data that can be found freely online and finds commonalities. It would be most useful for investigative reporting, law enforcement and government agencies according to Böhme. Some examples can be found on their blog (link to: http://maltego.blogspot.de/). For example, it is possible to search through all off the data uploaded in the Panama Papers to find links. Another example of the use of Maltego's free community version by verification experts, Bellingcat, can be found here (link to: https://globalvoices.org/2015/07/13/open-source-information-reveals-pro-kremlin-web-campaign/).

Lively discussions followed each panel.

FROM THE Q&A SESSION...

Q: "What about the privacy implications of your software? How is it sold?"
Chris Böhme: "There was, rightly, a fair bit of suspicion about how this could be used to, for example, not just track 'the bad guys' but also journalists and activists. We only sell our software to countries with a robust constitution where the use of it could be policed."

Q: "How close is this software to that used by the NSA?"
CB: "The quality of the NSA's data is much better."

Q: "How can we protect ourselves against this kind of thing?"
CB: "There's not much you can do. Encrypt your hard drive, consider the balance between importance of what you want to say and your own security."

24

Panel 4:
Measuring impact in media projects in conflict/fragile contexts

Moderator Christoph Spurk and the panellists Jeffrey Conroy-Krutz, Nicolas Boissez and Chris Snow (from left to right).

Speakers: Chris Snow (Governance Research Manager, BBC Media Action), Andrea Scavo (Quantitative Research Manager, BBC Media Action), Nicolas Boissez (Programme Manager, Foundation Hirondelle) and Jeffrey Conroy-Krutz (Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Michigan State University)
Facilitator: Christoph Spurk (Institute of Applied Media Studies, Zurich University of Applied Sciences ZHAW)

The impact of media support is always a crucial question. Measuring impacts in conflict contexts is perceived as especially challenging. This session aimed at exchanging views on latest developments on how to measure the impact of media projects on peace processes or generally in conflict environments: What are good examples? What lessons can be learnt for future impact evaluation? How important is the justification of projects by measuring impact in donor practice?

   Chris Snow asked about the media's impact on political participation. His presentation cantered on the following questions: How can we analyze a large amount of data in relation to the effects of selected radio programs? Does radio make people participate more in politics? Quantitative and qualitative data sets were collected from seven countries, about views and attitudes, behaviour, media consumptions and knowledge about governance (combined, aggregated data sets from all countries, in total 23,000 respondents). The goal was to evaluate the impact and to try to figure out

PANEL 4 AT A GLANCE...

1. Impact measurement in media support projects is characterized by the tension between the need for scientific rigor on the one hand, and budget and logistical problems on the other. Rarely can the perfect research design be implemented.

2. Donors and media support organizations need to work together in developing realistic expectations around impact measurement, and donors need to be willing to fund research into impacts.

3. Between the full implementation of scientifically rigorous field experiments, and not using a scientific method at all, there is a lot of room to develop innovative research designs that are capable of reliably measuring impact while keeping costs and logistical inputs manageable.

26

if exposure to the radio programs makes a difference. Major results: 1) Exposure is strongly associated with higher levels of participation and increase in participation, even controlling for contributing factors such as gender, age and education, 2) Compensation effect: For younger audiences, even non-interested and less educated people participate more, 3) Reinforcement effect: Gender gap in participation grows bigger after exposure, 4) Implications: Remarkably consistent findings across the seven countries. There are larger effects on groups that traditionally don't participate as much. This has implications for social inclusion.

Nicolas Boissez showed how radio programmes can contribute to understanding and dealing with violent conflict using the example of Studio Tamani in Mali. Fondation Hirondelle cooperates with URTEL (L'Union des radiodiffusions et télévisions libres du Mali) to produce a show broadcast by local radios that reaches an estimated audience of 1.6 million daily listeners. In collaboration with ETH Zurich, Fondation Hirondelle conducted an explorative study on the characteristics of Studio Tamani's news and dialogue formats and its potential contributions to change of knowledge, perceptions and further impacts. The study could also be a pilot showing how independent radio stations can demonstrate their impact in conflict settings. The results prove that Studio Tamani covers conflict, causes and solutions much more than the others. But people who listen to the radio have no better knowledge about the conflict. Different assessments of conflict are due to other factors, but not due to listening to the radio. However, listeners to Tamani discuss more

within the family and are also in favour of a dialogue between government and rebel groups.

Jeffrey Conroy-Krutz's presentation dealt with the measurement of radio impact in Africa through experiments and quasi-experiments. He was specifically interested in the question of whether radio programs have a polarizing or a moderating effect on people who listen to them. Using the example of radio programs in Ghana he conducted a field experiment on public mini-buses during elections in 2012. To guarantee randomization the researcher decided what radio stations were listened to during the bus ride. Four 'treatments' were administered: pro-government radio, pro-opposition, neutral radio, or no radio. The results showed that in like-minded settings (people who are partisan and listened to the partisan radio from their side) no statistical difference to the control group could be observed. However, when people listened to the partisan stations of the other side, they all became more moderate. Based on the survey results, there is a very strong potential for moderation in democracy through listening to radio.

Practitioner roundtable with Gustav Ebai, Community Radio Initiative of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon and Christian Schulte, Radio Liberdade in Timor Leste.

Practitioner roundtable with Masood Momin discussing the Afghan Journalists' Peace Journalism Project with other conference participants.

27

ROUNDTABLE WITH
KATJA GÜRTEN, KUTAWATO
MULTIMEDIA NETWORK
(KUMUNET), PHILIPPINES
AT A GLANCE...

1. Strategic planning and long-term institutionalization of practices and partnerships with existing institutions need to resist "wild activism" and "event orientation", but at the same time projects still need to adapt to conflict dynamics, i.e. increasing level of impunity.

2. We need to adapt to the context and look for new (digital) actors and change agents, i.e. "the youth" who are used to communicating with social media tools, and therefore more willing to network – use their capacity!

3. The "governance" of the networks of actors/institutions/NGOs is key to long-term success. Changing of context can jeopardize the media projects aims and an "inclusive society".

4. Promoting media literacy needs long-term approaches.

ROUNDTABLE WITH
GUSTAV EBAI, COMMUNITY
RADIO INITIATIVE OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN CAMEROON AND
CHRISTIAN SCHULTE,
RADIO LIBERDADE, TIMOR
LESTE AT A GLANCE...

1. Fragility has many faces, but can be broken down to three factors: Politics, economy, society. Despite the very different settings in Cameroon and East Timor, both countries share common problems.

2. Community radios aim at being a prevention tool.

3. In our settings the choice of the broadcasting language needs to be carefully weighted. Broadcasting in local dialects might make the station more relevant to the community, but might also trigger suspicion among people who do not speak a specific dialect. Broadcasting in a lingua franca such as English, French or Pidgin might widen the number

4. of listeners, but will inevitably exclude listeners who only speak their local dialect.

5. Community radios have to make sure that they are financed by more than one party (multi-dependence). One tool aimed at sustainability can be the training and involvement of members of the community (example: listening groups, journalistic training).

Practitioner roundtable with Klaas Glenewinkel, director of Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT) discussing the new radio station Start FM for refugees in Kurdistan Iraq.

Media Development Coaching Session

The Media Development Coaching Session was designed as an open space to provide academics and practitioners an opportunity to discuss their ongoing research or challenges in their practical work with other participating experts.

28

"The past that won't pass by: Journalists' habits in the context of fragile transformation processes during Burundi's 2015 electoral campaign"

Presentation by Bettina Haasen, PhD fellow at the School of International and Intercultural Communication (SIIC) in Dortmund

After sixteen years of peace-building, the controversial re-election of President Pierre Nkurunziza has taken Burundi once more to the brink of civil war. The previously outstanding example of freedom of the press in the Great Lakes Region came to an abrupt halt. Haasen's field research took place during the failed military coup in May 2015, in the course of which five media houses were destroyed and journalists fled the country. This tense political environment forms the setting in which the concept of habitus is applied. What Pierre Bourdieu describes as incorporated dispositions that are reflected in the actor's perception, thought and action was not related to journalists in fragile democratization processes, until now.

The analysis of habits in the current Burundian context offers a new perspective on normative expectations towards (peace) journalism in a particular conflict situation. Preliminary findings of Bettina Haasen's research in Burundi indicate that the polarization of politics and journalism by media development activists contributed to the destruction of the plural media landscape and the deterioration of democratic transformation processes.

The habitus analysis revealed five habitus types. It became obvious that, in particular, among younger journalists, freedom of speech is both a way of life and a duty towards society and the legacy of the past.

MAPPING OF LIFE COURSES
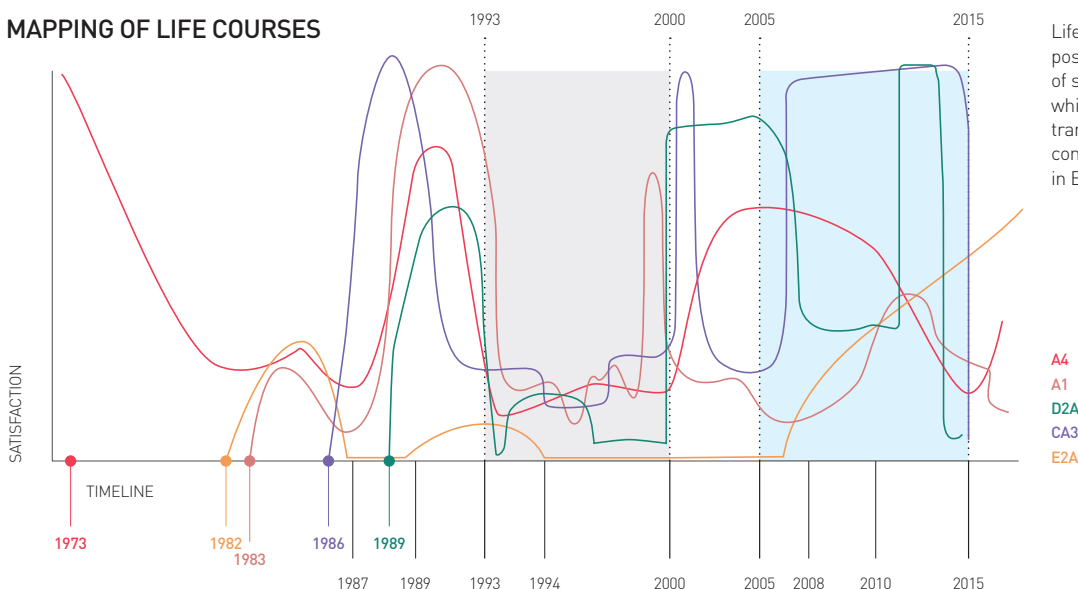
Life course analysis offers the possibility to access the results of societal and political developments, which in turn decisively influence transformation processes in post-conflict states, as demonstrated in Burundi.

"How to most effectively integrate technology in media development projects in the South Caucasus"

Presentation by Veronika Divišová, Head of Strategic Partnership at Sourcefabric

"Public service media standards for UN peacekeeping operations (UNPOs): Challenges of a multidisciplinary research project"

Presentation by Sacha Meuter, legal advisor and research coordinator at Fondation Hirondelle

Sourcefabric has worked in the South Caucasus assisting local media in their transition to digital platforms and supporting human rights activism and independent journalism through local online radios. These projects, which are centred around open source news technologies, assist the media to streamline their workflow, effectively reach their audiences, and establish digital economic strategies. Sourcefabric has repeatedly encountered weak and unsustainable technological solutions for beneficiaries of media development projects.

Veronika Divišová, in charge of projects in the South Caucasus, wishes to open a deeper and continuous debate about how technological components can be most effectively integrated in media development projects. How can we assess the technological needs of projects? How is technological know-how fostered in your own and partner organizations? How can the relevance and quality of available technological solutions for media be evaluated? Was the sustainability of technological solutions provided in the past reviewed? Can you share experiences from projects where effectiveness and sustainability of technological solutions were explored, for example with respect to proprietary versus open source, relevance of implemented vis-à-vis latest global developments in communication and media technologies, or developing a local community of technologists versus maintaining dependence on external technological providers?

The UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPOs) toolkit now routinely includes the creation of radio stations in their host countries. Over the last two decades, a dozen UN radio stations have helped UNPOs to reach out to millions of local listeners. Some UN radios have been praised as major sources of reliable information in particularly weak and polarized media environments. Some have been criticized, notably for disrupting the emergence of local media markets and capturing scarce local resources. There is a recurring call for UNPOs to better promote fulfilment of public service media (PSM) functions in these contexts, and to prepare for their legacy beyond the UNPOs mandates.

Sacha Meuter has been working with the Centre for the Freedom of the Media (CFOM), University of Sheffield, on the design of a multidisciplinary research project aimed at analysing the adaptability of PSM standards to UNPO contexts. The CFOM team includes experts in journalism studies, in UN peacekeeping law and in post-conflict and memory studies. The team is now looking for additional research capacities to address the UN institutional factors influencing its capacity to operate media, and the interaction between UN radios, their local media environments and the peace process at large. Seed money will be needed to connect the different researchers and to jointly design a stronger multidisciplinary research proposal.

Panel 5:
Facing ethical dilemmas: Journalists and media development actors in conflict societies

The panelists Ines Drefs, Altaf Khan and Gamal Soltan, and moderator Jan Lublinski (from left to right).

Speakers: Ines Drefs (Research Associate MeCoDEM, Hamburg University), Gamal Soltan (Associate Professor at the American University of Cairo and Research Associate MeCoDEM) and Altaf Khan (Head of Journalistic Department at University of Peshawar and Co-founder of the Competence and Trauma Center for Journalists)
Facilitator: Jan Lublinski (Head of Research and Evaluation, DW Akademie)

Ethics form a vital component of journalism as a profession. During conflict coverage the values and guiding principles that journalists apply are of key importance. Based on latest findings from the international research project "Media, Conflict and Democratisation" (MeCoDEM), this session evaluated ethical dilemmas that journalists face in conflict environments, addressed the issue of traumatization and discussed new approaches for media development work in this field.

Ines Drefs referring to the MeCoDEM policy brief on "Supporting Journalism in Conflict Societies"(link to: http://www.mecodem.eu/new-mecodem-policy-brief-supporting-journalism-in-conflict-societies/)

Sofie Jannusch (CAMECO) commenting on the findings during the Q&A session.

PANEL 5 AT A GLANCE...

1. **Gamal Soltan:** Interviews with 24 Egyptian journalists on ethical orientations and dilemmas, work practices, role perceptions and working conditions while reporting on democratization conflicts.

2. **Altaf Khan:** Psychological education and outreach with a focus on 1) partnership between psychology and journalism departments on sensitization, counselling, and competence building, 2) focus groups at press clubs for sensitization, especially with women 3) profile study and literature about dealing with pressure on a personal level, reporting and good journalism practice without traumatizing 4) readers' education and capacity building.

3. **Ines Drefs:** Research on media development actors addressing the question on how media can contribute to democratization. MeCoDEM study: Interviews with 19 implementers and donors from the media development sector. Most important recommendations: 1) think of all aspects of journalists' safety 2) take local conditions as the starting point, 3) intensify research and evaluation activities 4) apply qualitative approaches 5) involve multiple public communicators besides journalists.

Panel 6:
Safety and protection
of journalists

The panelists Ibrahim Al Sragey,
Esben Q. Harboe and Delphine
Halgand

Speakers: Ibrahim Al Sragey (Iraqi Journalists Rights
Defense Association), Esben Q. Harboe (International Media
Support) and Delphine Halgand (Reporters Without Borders)
Facilitator: Christian Spahr (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung,
Head of the Media Program South East Europe)

Journalists and media workers are increasingly
subject to deliberate violence and imprisonment.
This is indicative of the failure of the initiatives so far
taken to protect media personnel – such as various UN
resolutions on the safety of journalists. The session evaluat-
ed the UN action plan of safety of journalists and the role
of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary
General for the Safety of Journalists, analyzed the role of
media development organizations and media companies
for protecting journalists in fragile and failing states and
discusses political obstacles against strengthening interna-
tional safety mechanisms.

   Ibrahim Al Sragey talked about the situation of journalists
in Iraq, where safety is becoming increasingly important.
Kidnappings, killings and arrests of journalists happen
on a daily basis. He discussed the role of a UN action plan
for the protection of journalists. Just 50% of assassinations
of journalists are followed up and investigated. Old laws
are seen as the main challenge, in addition to a culture
of impunity. One newspaper mentioned as an example
had approximately 80 court cases per year brougt against
journalists reporting on corruption and human rights
violations. Mostly parliamentarians, banks and companies
complained about journalists and sought immense compen-
sation. For fear of such trials, journalists publish anony-
mously. While the court and judicial system is new, the
legislation is 60 years old and new national press codes
for the protection of journalists need to be developed. Al Sragey
highlighted the need for the Iraqi government to sign up
to the UN action plan.

   Esben Q. Harboe presented the work of International
Media Support (IMS) and the strategies they take to protect
journalists. He pointed to both good and bad developments
in the field. The research team of IMS works on models of
best practices for the protection of journalists and tries to
bring together a local and international approach. They have
started in the Balkan countries but have broadened their
scope of intervention since then. The collaboration with

32

NGOs is essential. The good news is that over the past ten years, many more mechanisms for the protection of journalists have been put in place. One issue is the limited resources to protect journalists, so NGOs and local media organizations need to work together to strengthen efforts. The aim is to include more local journalists. The strength and diversity of the local journalists network very much depends on local IMS staff.

Delphine Halgand engaged with the attacks against journalists in a new post-Cold War era and presented the different strategies Reporters Without Borders (RSF) uses in this context. The latest numbers are alarming: Over 800 journalists were killed in the last year. The situation is very bad in Iraq and Syria, but in India as well. She points to the development that more and more journalists are taken hostage: 90% of the hostages are local journalists. However, the focus in reporting is often on Western journalists, while the safety issues of local journalists remain underreported. Halgand clarified why journalists' protection is crucial: They represent the freedom of information, which is an important pillar of democracy. Legal frameworks can only constitute a first step in this context. Therefore, RSF calls for a special UN representative for the protection of journalists who can act quickly and coordinate the reaction of the UN. At the international level, a group of "friends" has been created, involving new states like Afghanistan that actively want to support the protection of journalists.

PANEL 6
AT A GLANCE...

1. Local journalists are endangered.

2. Journalists face different sources of violence: Militias, governments, Islamist terror organizations.

3. There is no fixed model on how international legislation can be translated on national contexts: They have to be tailor-made.

> **"**
> Even though the Iraqi constitution guarantees important rights, they are not applied. Our laws are over 60 years old and lack specific areas of journalist protection."
>
> Ibrahim Al Sragey

Anja Wollenberg (MiCT): "From a comparative perspective, it would be interesting to investigate possible relations between government engagement in protecting journalists and government involvement in violence against journalism."

RECOMMEN-DATIONS...

1. Encourage alliance building and exchange of best practices, as resources in the field are very limited.

2. Bring governments on board to guarantee protection of journalists, but this can only be a first step.

3. A follow up on the application of state-led mechanisms is necessary: Strategies should target local, national and international partners.