

African Media
Development
Initiative



Cameroon

Research findings and conclusions

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Cameroon

About this report

In March 2005, the UK Government's Commission for Africa delivered a report entitled "*Our Common Interest*", which represented a significant attempt to understand and recommend an action programme for Africa's social and economic development. A key component of the report focused on the importance of a strong media sector to support governance and development in Africa, and called for greater attention to, and resources for, media sector development as a result. The BBC World Service Trust and a number of international and African partners have subsequently set out to help develop ideas for future Africa media development initiatives.

In order to inform these efforts, the BBC World Service Trust – in collaboration with Rhodes University (South Africa) and Ahmadu Bello University (Nigeria) – has undertaken an extensive, pan-African research effort in 17 African countries, of which Cameroon is one. Data presented in this report is based on both secondary research gathered by local researchers in Cameroon and on extensive interviews conducted locally among key media practitioners and leaders. It is presented here in three parts:

- Media Sector Developments: an examination of developments in the media sector in Cameroon over the past five years;
- Challenges for Future Media Development Activities: an analysis of the perspectives of a range of key informants on media development challenges in Cameroon;
- Case Study: a case study from Cameroon illustrating good practice in media development.

The research was funded by a generous grant from the UK Government's Department for International Development. The research was conducted by Charles Esambe Alobwede in association with the BBC World Service Trust Research and Learning Group.

The BBC World Service Trust is the independent international charity set up by the BBC, which uses media to advance development. The Trust works to: raise awareness of development issues among mass audiences and opinion formers; influence attitudes, awareness and behaviour among poorer communities through a wide range of educational programming on poverty-related topics; and, build capacity in the media sector in developing and transitional countries.

Acronyms

ANACLAC Association Nationale des Comités de Langue Camerounaises
(National Association of Cameroonian Language Committees)

APA African Press Agencies

APAC Association des Professionnelles Africaines de la Communication
(Association of Professional African Women in Communication)

ART Agence de Régulation de Télécommunication (Telecommunications Regulatory Board)

ASMAC Advanced School of Mass Communication

BBC British Broadcasting Corporation

CACOF Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists

CAMTEL Cameroon Telecommunications

CMC Cameroon Media Council

CRETES Centre de Recherche et d'Études en Économie et Sondage
(Research Centre on Economic and Survey Studies)

CRTV Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation

ESSTIC Ecole Supérieure des Sciences de la Technologie, de l'Information et de la
Communication (Advanced School of Mass Communication)

FES Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Foundation)

ICT Information and Communication Technology

IFORD Institut de Formation et Recherche Démographiques (Demographic Training
and Research Institute)

INS Institut Nationale de la Statistique (National Institute of Statistics)

ISP Internet Service Providers

MINEFI Ministry of Economy and Finance

MINCOM Ministry of Communication

NCC National Communications Council

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

OAU Organisation of African Unity

RFI Radio France Internationale

RWB Reporters Without Borders

SIL Société Internationale des Langues (International Association of Languages)

SDF Social Democratic Front

SOPECAM Société de Presse et d'Éducation du Cameroun (Cameroon Press and Publishing Company)

STV Spectrum Television

UJC l'Union des Journalistes du Cameroun (Cameroon Union of Journalists)

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

UNPE United Nations Programme for the Environment

URTNA Union of National Radio and Television Associations



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Cameroon

Country Report

Context



1. Introduction

In gathering data for this research, the researchers encountered a number of difficulties. Some difficulties stemmed from dealing with government bureaucracy, while other blockages were caused by the absence of data for the first year of the research focus period, the year 2000. The state institutions holding relevant information required application letters to be written to unit heads and, at times, such applications took several weeks to be processed. In terms of the data shortfall, there is no data for the year 2000 on media and ICT access. The absence of statistics for the year 2000 is not surprising given that while the communications landscape was liberalised in 1990, it was only in 2000 that a decision was taken to allow the set-up of private broadcasters¹. And it was only in 2005 that a private company, the *Centre de Recherche et d'Etudes en Economie et Sondage* (CRETES), carried out the first audience and newspaper readership survey. Unfortunately, CRETES data do not cover the entire country; the study only covered the country's six major cities and towns (Yaoundé, Douala, Bafoussam, Bamenda, Limbe and Garoua)².

Meanwhile, the state-run *Agence de Régulation de Télécommunication* (ART) has carried out a recent survey on telecommunications in the country, but board officials did not respond in time to the researchers' requests for information.

In spite of the obstacles, it was eventually possible to retrieve a reasonable amount of accurate data for 2005 from various organisations, and to establish an overview of Cameroon's media environment³.

¹ Decree No. 2000/158 of 3 April 2000 outlined the conditions and modalities for the establishment of private broadcasters.

² Although the CRETES results are said to reflect the reality in the country as a whole, the researchers for this report believe that a study including not just urban areas but also rural ones would produce slightly different findings.

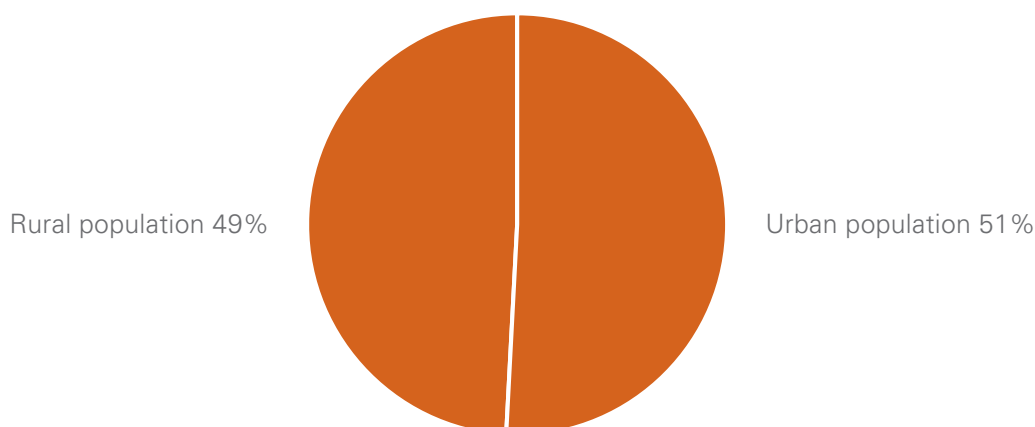
³ As well as CRETES, key information sources were UNESCO, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *Société Internationale des Langues* (SIL), *Association Nationale des Comités de Langue Camerounaises* (ANACLAC), the British Council, the Ministry of Communication (MINCOM), the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, *Institut de Formation et Recherche Démographiques* (IFORD) and the *Institut National de la Statistique* (INS).



2. Country Overview

In the year 2005, the population of Cameroon was estimated at 16 million (World Bank, 2006), with 41% of the population aged 14 years and under (UNSTATS, 2006). The general population increased by 9% between 2000 and 2005. The rural population stood at about 8.2 million in 2003, in comparison to a 7.8 million urban population. This gives a percentage of 51% for the rural population and 49% for the urban population (UNDP, 2006).

Figure 1: Urban vs Rural Population

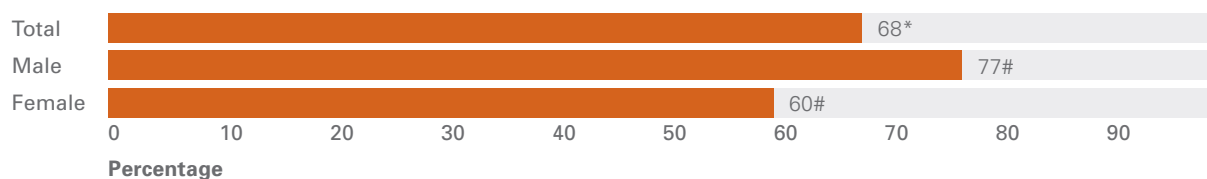


Source: 2003 statistics from UNDP, 2006

A 2004 report found that 83% of males and 81% of females attended school in Yaoundé and Douala, while 70% of males and 57% of females attended school in other towns. Around 70% of the school-age population in urban areas was attending school in 2004; in rural areas the percentage was around 20% (Republic of Cameroon, 2004). Adult literacy rates (see Figure 2) are estimated to be 68% on average, with percentages of 77% for men and 60% for women (World Bank, 2006).

In 2005, it was estimated that 48% of the population lived below the poverty line, with a GDP per person per capita of US\$2,400 (CIA, 2006).

Figure 2: Literacy Levels Age 15+



*Source: 2004 figure from World Bank, 2006

#Source: 2003 figure from World Bank, 2006

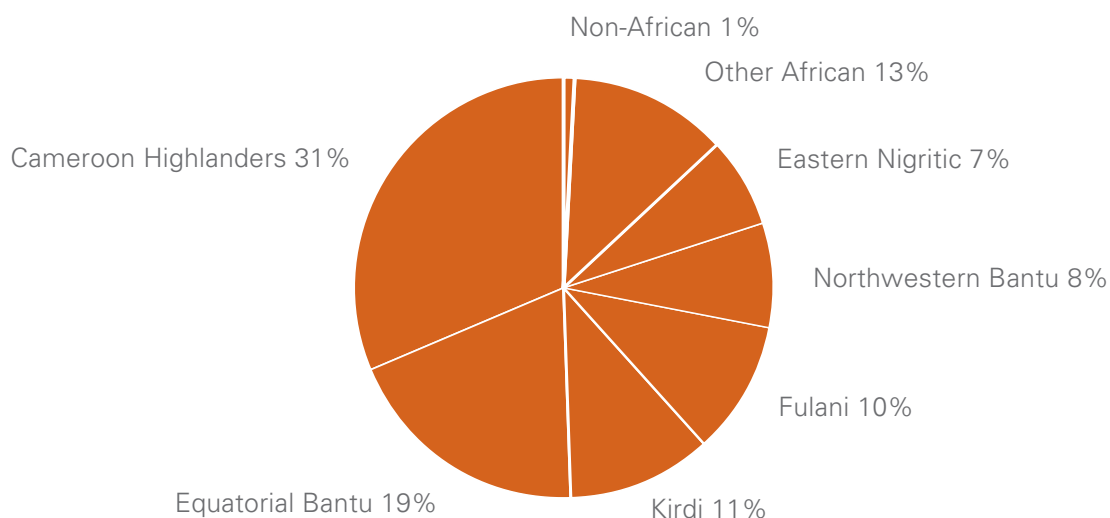
The official languages of the country are French (75%) and English (25%), and there are a further 286 indigenous languages and dialects. Of these, 279 are 'living' languages, three are second languages without mother-tongue speakers, and four have died out. No indigenous language dominates as a mother-tongue in Cameroon, and none is spoken as a mother-tongue by more than 4% of the population (Gordon, 2005). The country also has a *lingua franca* (Pidgin), which is used by many Cameroonians not as a mother-tongue but as a language of wider communication.

It was estimated in 2005 that 40% of the population is Christian, 20% Muslim and 40% hold exclusively traditional beliefs (CIA, 2006). Some Christians and Muslims also share some of these traditional beliefs.

In terms of ethnic groups, the categorisations drawn from the CIA (2006), and provided in Figure 3, are based on very large re-groupings. For example, the Highlanders category (31%) covers both the French-speaking Western Province and the English-speaking North-West Province. Both provinces are located around the highland areas of the country, and are home to many ethnic groups. Similarly, the Equatorial Bantu category (19%) consists of the South-West Province (English-speaking) and the Littoral Province (French-speaking), both of which are home to multiple ethnic groups. The *Ethnologue* website⁴, meanwhile, suggests that the ten most populous ethnic groups comprise less than one quarter (25%) of Cameroon's population. The other 75% of the population is made up of 265 different ethnic groups. *Ethnologue* lists the ten most populous ethnic groups in Cameroon as follows: Beti 12.26% (made up of Fang, Ewondo, Bulu, Mengisa); Fulfulde 4.10%; Medumba 1.28%; Tupuri 0.77%; Bassa 1.41%; Akoose 0.61%; Bamun 1.31%; Fe'fe' 0.76%; Duala 0.54%; and, Ghomala 1.60%.

⁴ See Gordon, 2005.

Figure 3: Main Ethnic Groups



Source: 2005 statistics from CIA, 2006

Cameroon consists of ten provinces, eight of which are predominantly French-speaking and two of which are majority English-speaking.

Table 1: Population of Provinces

Regions/Provinces/States	Total Population
Adamawa Province	723,626
Far North Province	2,721,463
Centre Province	2,501,229
East Province	755,088
Littoral Province	2,202,340
North Province	1,227,018
North-West Province	1,840,527
South Province	534,854
South-West Province	1,242,749
West Province	1,982,106

Source: INS, 2004

The law introducing multi-party democracy was promulgated in 1990, and in that year the first opposition party was launched⁵. The current revised Constitution was promulgated in 1996.

⁵ The Social Democratic Front (SDF) was launched on 26 May 1990 in Bamenda.

Key findings

- Cameroon has a young population, with 77% of the population aged 35 years or younger and 41% aged 14 and under.
- The two official languages are French (about 75%) and English (about 25%).
- The country is divided into ten administrative provinces.
- There are 279 indigenous mother-tongue languages, with none being a dominant language.
- The political sphere was liberalised in 1990 and the first opposition party launched in that same year.



3. Media Health

3.1 Status of the laws regarding rights and access to information

Article 1 of the general provisions of Cameroon's 1990 Freedom of Social Communication law and the 1996 revised constitution, both guarantee freedom of the press. Article 2(1) of the 1990 law stipulates that freedom of communication applies to all forms of communication. However, at present there is no specific law mandating access to information (Republic of Cameroon, 1990b; 1996b).

3.2 Status of the laws regarding criminal defamation and insult

There are no criminal libel or insult laws in Cameroon. The Freedom of Social Communication law outlines civil remedies for cases of defamation by the press, stating in Section 1, Article 52, that "the Publisher of a Press Organ is obliged to publish, in the next issue of his journal, every rectification addressed to him by a depositary of public authority in relation to his duties which were wrongly reported" (Republic of Cameroon, 1990b). Article 53 of the same law outlines newspapers' obligations to provide a right of reply. Article 57 outlines broadcaster obligations to provide a right of reply (Republic of Cameroon, 1990b).

3.3 Status of the laws that exist to enable media regulatory bodies to function independently

A number of provisions exist in Cameroon in relation to media regulation, but there is no provision for an independent media regulator. The main regulatory bodies are the Cameroon Media Council (CMC) and the National Communications Council (NCC). While the former is answerable to the Minister of Communication, the latter answers to the Prime Minister.

3.4 Current provisions that aim to secure the independence of publicly-owned media

There are no current provisions that aim to secure the independence of state-owned media⁵. The general tendency is that the state media is pro-government.

3.5 Current provisions to support community or alternative media

The 2000 Decree on Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises (private media) authorised the creation of both community and alternative media (Republic of Cameroon, 2000a). A 2002 Ministerial Order further supported development of a community sector by providing for public assistance to private communication (Republic of Cameroon, 2002b). These two legal texts are a sign that the government encourages and acknowledges the existence of both community and alternative media in Cameroon. It should be noted that the assistance given by the Ministry of Communication to private media houses has not been accompanied by attempts to exert government control.

3.6 Regulatory obligations for public or state broadcasters to fulfil a public-service broadcasting remit

State broadcasting outlets in Cameroon are not subject to public-service broadcasting (PSB) obligations. The editorial line for state radio and TV broadcasters is set by the state-owned Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation (CRTV). While there is some difference of opinion among media observers, the general feeling is that the state radio and TV outlets side with the political grouping in power⁶.

3.7 Regulatory obligations for private broadcasters to fulfil a public-service broadcasting remit

One public-service obligation imposed on private broadcasters is the requirement, in terms of the 2000 Decree (Republic of Cameroon, 2000a), that 51% of daily radio air-time should be reserved for local production, while for television the quota is 30%. There has been no study to find out if these quotas are respected by the private media.

3.8 Journalism

According to the Cameroon Union of Journalists (UJC), there are 874 practising journalists in the country: 183 women and 691 men (UJC, 2005). This means that 21% of the country's journalists are female, and 79% male. Practising journalists are expected to register with the government, and a 2002 Decree established a press card system for registered journalists (Republic of Cameroon, 2002c). Only journalists who own a press card are allowed access to cover public events related to the state. For a journalist to obtain a press card, he or she must prove that he or she belongs to a legal media house or a media organisation. There is, however, no legislative provision for the licensing of journalists. Neither are there any provisions for journalists to belong to a professional association. For this reason, there is no data on the number of journalists who are registered with trade unions. A number of professional journalists' associations exist, but there is no single forum that brings together all associations.

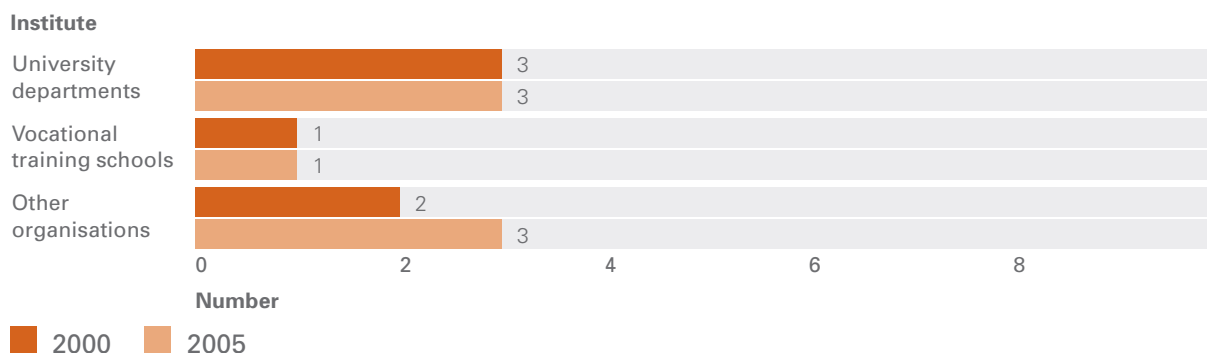
State media employees are categorised as 'A2 state workers', getting an average monthly salary of F.CFA 165,500 (US\$300) (Republic of Cameroon, 2000b)⁷. An average monthly salary for a teacher is also US\$300. It is difficult to estimate the wages of independent journalists in Cameroon. Private media employers generally pay low salaries. Thus, there is a tendency for non-state journalists to expect payments from individuals or organisations covered in their reporting.

⁶ Based on anecdotal sampling of public opinion.

⁷ The exchange rate used is F.CFA 550 = US\$1.

There is one vocational journalism school, the Advanced School of Mass Communication, based in Yaoundé. There are also three university departments offering journalism programmes, two of which are private institutions (Siantou Superieure and Institut Ndi Samba), and the third a public institution (Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Buea). There are also NGOs that provide journalism training, such as UNESCO, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), and the British Council in collaboration with the Thompson Foundation.

Figure 4: Number of Journalism Training Institutes



Source: Author estimate, 2006

Key findings

- Freedom of the press is protected by a 1990 law and the 1996 revised constitution, but there is no specific access to information law.
- There are no criminal libel or insult laws.
- Media regulation is not independent from the state.
- There is provision for community and alternative media.
- State-owned media outlets are perceived to lack independence and to support the government.
- Journalists are required to register in order to get a press card to cover state events, but do not have to be part of a professional body, or be licensed.
- Pay for non-state journalists is low, prompting private journalists to seek payments from the people and organisations on which they report.



4. State of the Media – Literature Review

4.1 African Press Agencies (2005)

This report charts the evolution of the media in Cameroon, and finds that the period 2000-5 was marked by two major phenomena: advancements in media freedom and media sector growth on the one hand, and new causes for concern on the other.

The year 2005 saw the replacement of the Managing Director of Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation (CRTV), who had been at the helm for over 16 years. During this 16-year period, the channel had witnessed a drop in both its credibility and its audience, in spite of the fact that the state delayed opening up the broadcasting sector to private players for ten years, from 1990 to 2000⁸. The new CRTV head is a seasoned journalist, potentially opening up a new era for public broadcasting in Cameroon. The new team put in place aims to make the state channel a real public-service media outlet, able to compete successfully with the new private broadcasters. This is seen as a positive development.

Another positive development is that private TV channels are breaking ground. A group of entrepreneurs has launched two channels through Spectrum Television (STV1, STV2), which are carried via satellite. This has given Spectrum national and international coverage. The Managing Director of the Spectrum group, Mactar Silla, says that satellite distribution has enabled the Spectrum channels to be watched in South Africa, Holland and the Middle East.

However, the private sector is still young and suffers from a lack of experience, and 'amateurism'. In addition, an uncertain legal environment has slowed growth of the sector. For example, Puis Njawe's Freedom FM radio has never been given authorisation to operate. A petition calling on the authorities to licence Freedom FM has ten million signatures from all over the world. The Freedom FM affair was brought in front of the African Commission on Human Rights. Lifting the barrier against Freedom FM would be a gesture of goodwill from the new Minister of Communication in relation to the media. Also, a revision of the criteria for providing public assistance to private communication enterprises, and an increase in the amounts provided, are needed to contribute in a favourable manner to the development of the media in Cameroon.

⁸ The Freedom of Social Communication law was passed in 1990, but the Decree allowing for private broadcasting (Decree on Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises) only came about in 2000 with the promulgation of Law N° 2000/158 of the 3rd April 2000.

4.2 Ministry of Communication (MINCOM) (2005c)

This report, entitled *A Decade of Social Communication in Cameroon*, charts the boom in the private radio sector and the breaking of the state TV and monopoly media. Some sources now estimate a 50% audience share for much of the programming on the private channel Canal 2 International, which broadcasts in and around the major cities of Yaoundé and Douala.

In relation to the growing loss of radio and TV audience share by the state-run CRTV, the state daily *Cameroon Tribune* has written: "We cannot say that the state broadcaster did not see the real competition coming from the private sector" (*Cameroon Tribune*, 2004, as cited in MINCOM, 2005c).

But, the paper adds, no one, at the beginning, took Canal 2, Radio Television Siantou or Radio Equinoxe seriously, and "although the public re-adjusted its preference in relation to its interests, the state organ remained perched on its pedestal, not looking forward to adapt to the new realities" (*Cameroon Tribune*, 2004, as cited in MINCOM, 2005c).

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African Press Agencies (2005) Summary report on the state of the media in Africa: the case of Cameroon. In *The state of the press in Africa*. Paris: African Press Agencies

Ministry of Communication (MINCOM) (2005c) *A decade of social communication in Cameroon*. Legal Affairs Unit. Yaoundé: Ministry of Communication

Key findings

- The period 2000-5 was marked by growth in private broadcasting, but there are ongoing concerns about the quality of private broadcast output and the lack of full government support for the development of private media.
- The state-run CRTV radio and TV services are losing market share to the new private entrants.



5. Radio

5.1 Key changes and developments in the radio marketplace in the past five years

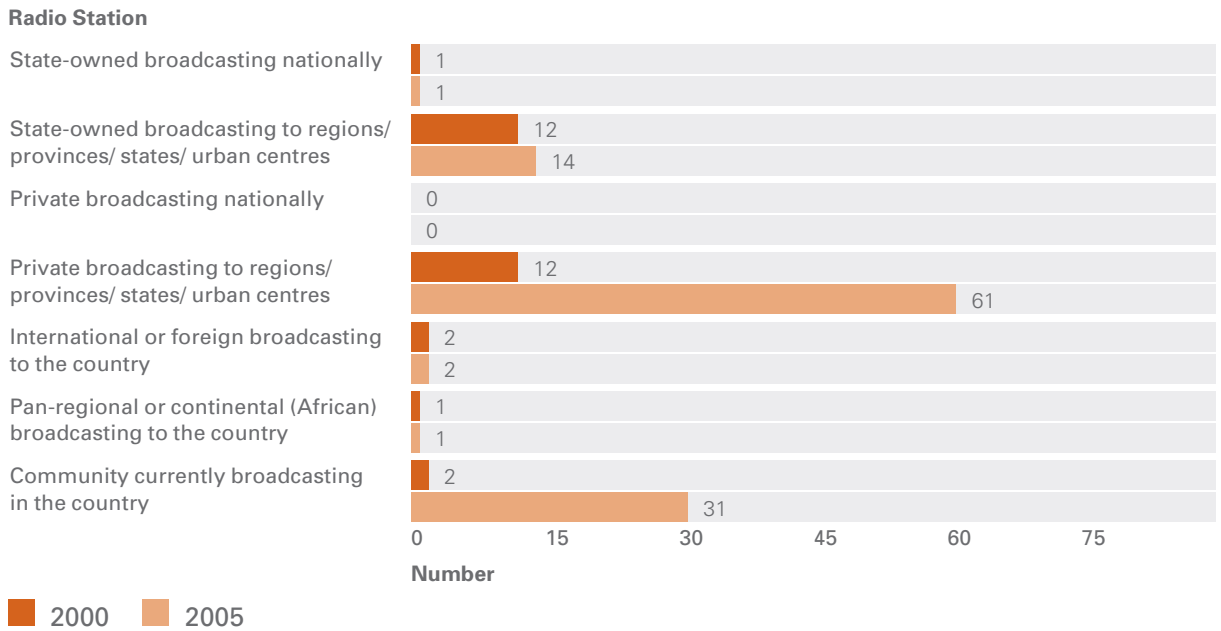
The radio sector in Cameroon grew by about 80 stations between 2000 and 2005 (MINCOM, 2004; 2005a) (see Figure 5).

In spite of this impressive growth in the radio sector, no private radio service has been established at national level, leaving the state-run CRTV as the only Cameroonian station with a national footprint. The only other services with national coverage, as was the case in 2000, are two international services (BBC and RFI) and the one African service (Africa No. 1).

Many of the new private stations created between 2000 and 2005 are regional in footprint, and a few are now drawing larger audiences than the state radio service in their regions. In the Centre Province, the most-listened-to station is the state-owned station FM 94, with 22% of the audience. In Littoral, private station Radio Equinoxe leads with 27%. In West and North-West Provinces, the state-owned CRTV station leads, with an audience share of 23% in West, and 29% in North-West (CRETES, 2005).

Twenty-nine of the new stations set up between 2000 and 2005 are non-profit community stations, bringing the number of community stations up to 31. Most of these stations (15) are set up with support from UNESCO. The creation of new radios, especially community radios, has assisted the rural population in getting educational and informational programming on development issues (S. Beyala, personal communication, 2 May, 2006).

Figure 5: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Radio Stations



Source: MINCOM 2004; 2005a

The rise in the number of non-state radio stations was initially made possible by the signing in 1990 of the Freedom of Social Communication law (Republic of Cameroon, 1990b), and was further enabled by the Decree on Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises in 2000 (Republic of Cameroon, 2000a). The possibility for individuals and communities to set up radio stations has given the population an opportunity to diversify its choice of programmes. The trend in Cameroon today is for communities to create radios that can project the issues of their communities and help gain exposure for their difficulties⁹. Community radios are those set up by communities, typically with the assistance of either an international non-government organisation (NGO) or a state organ. Such radios are non-profit making.

5.2 Investment and growth in the radio sector in the past five years

In relation to investment and growth, the radio sector in Cameroon, like many other sectors, faces many difficulties. Some of these difficulties are: the lack of infrastructure; the lack of funds; the lack of trained personnel; and, the lack of adequate equipment. Also, for community stations, the communities they serve are not large, making the advertising markets for such stations small.

⁹ Researcher's personal observation.

5.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Licensing is directly controlled by government, with Article 8 of the 2000 Decree on private broadcasting stipulating that, “Audio-visual communication activities are subjected to the obtaining of a licence issued by the Minister in charge of Communication”. Article 9 specifies that a licence shall only be for five years before needing renewal (Republic of Cameroon, 2000a). The Communication Minister is also responsible, in terms of Article 15, for collecting radio licence fees from operators, and, in terms of 22(1), for designating sites for transmitters (Republic of Cameroon, 2000a). In spite of the ministerial control, the state has not, to date, had a tendency to meddle in the operations of private commercial or community stations.

5.4 Diversity

Radio programming output in Cameroon is relatively diversified. State radio, for instance, has a variety of programmes that focus on women and development, different ethnic groups, and the different religious groups. Private radio stations, meanwhile, are compelled by the 2000 private broadcasting decree, Article 26 (1), to ensure that radio programming is made up of at least 51 % local content.

The national state CRTV radio channel based in Yaoundé, uses only French and English for its broadcasting, but the provincial/local affiliate stations of CRTV broadcast in the major dialects of the provinces in which they are based. Private commercial radios broadcast in French and English, the main languages of commerce in the country. Like CRTV provincial radios, community radios broadcast in French, English and local dialects (depending on whether they are based in a French- or English-speaking part of the country). Some stations – state, private and community – also broadcast in Pidgin, which is a *lingua franca* in the English-speaking part of the country.

5.5 Quality of radio output and programming

During the past five years, the huge growth in the number of radio stations has brought about growth in radio production, with a slight improvement in production quality but, unfortunately, a decline in the quality of journalism¹⁰. This decline is because most of the new radio stations cannot afford to pay trained journalists regularly. A good number of private media organisations use mostly unemployed university graduates who do not have any other job. Such journalists do not have a good understanding of the ethics and norms that guide the profession. Journalists working for state radio are better trained, and produce reports of a much more acceptable quality.

In terms of objectivity, there are some journalists (both state and private) who tilt their analysis in favour of their paymasters¹¹.

¹⁰ Researcher’s personal observation.

¹¹ Researcher’s personal observation of a common practice going on in the country.

5.6 Specific challenges

Today, the major challenge faced by the radio sector, especially by non-state radios is the lack of funding, equipment and infrastructure.

Key findings

- The number of radio stations saw strong growth from 2000 to 2005.
- The vast majority of the new stations are non-state-owned, with some operating on a private for-profit basis and others running on a community-based, non-profit basis.
- Some of the larger regional private stations are getting larger audiences than the state CRTV channels.
- Several of the non-profit community-based radio stations have experienced growth thanks to UNESCO support.
- The Minister of Communication directly controls radio licensing.
- Journalism standards are low among non-state stations because of a lack of trained journalists.
- Many stations lack adequate equipment.



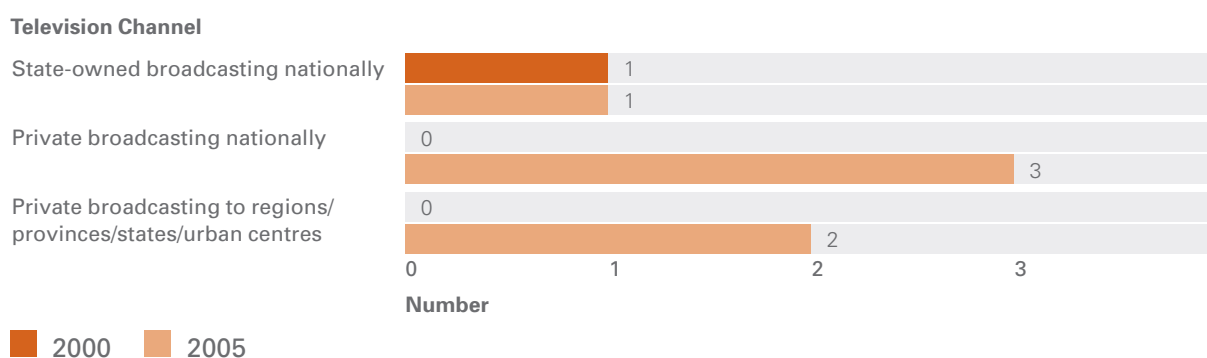
6. Television

The television sector in Cameroon was opened up by the 2000 Decree on Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises (Republic of Cameroon, 2000a), and in the period 2000-5, a number of significant changes occurred within the television landscape.

6.1 Key changes and developments in the television marketplace in the past five years

In 2000, there was only one TV service, the state-owned Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation (CRTV) channel. Now, five years later, a total of six stations exist: the CRTV service and five privately-owned services. These are: Canal 2 International, STV 2, STV 1, TV MAX and Ariane TV. At the moment, four of the channels (CRTV, Canal 2, STV 1 and STV 2) are available on satellite. Because of the high cost levied by providers of subscriber television, these services are also pirated by cable distributors (MINCOM, 2005b)¹². It is estimated that 22.9% of households have a working television set, with 35.03% subscribing to pay-TV channels (Republic of Cameroon, 2004a).

Figure 6: Broadcasting and Ownership Status of Television Stations



Source: MINCOM, 2005a

¹² A number of complaints have been received by the Ministry of Communication from providers complaining about the pirating of their images by cable distributors. The existing satellite services are free-to-air even without a dish. From the commission that sat in August-September 2005, there are 51 demands from operating cable distributors, but because the results of the commission have not yet been made public, certain statistics cannot be provided at this level.

At national level, the only national free-to-air TV broadcaster is the state-owned CRTV. Canal 2, STV 1 and STV 2 are also available nationally, on a subscription basis via satellite. Satellite television has a one-off set up cost of about US\$170, with the monthly subscription costing about US\$10¹³. There are two regional stations, Ariane TV and TV Max, both privately-owned.

As mentioned above, all five of the private TV services have been established in the past five years, making the sector much more competitive than it was before 2000.

6.2 Investment and growth in the television sector in the past five years

Investment in the TV sector is made difficult by the high licence fees private broadcasters have to pay in terms of the 2000 Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises Decree. The advertising market for televisions is, however, gradually growing¹⁴. This is partially because of the multiplication of advertising agencies, currently more than 60 in all, which are specialised in providing advertisements for TV stations (UJC, 2005).

6.3 Plurality, ownership and control

Apart from state-owned CRTV, the other five television stations are owned and run by private entities with little or no support from the state. As in radio, the Minister of Communication has power over licensing, licence renewal and transmission parameters (Republic of Cameroon, 2000a). To date, the Minister has not been found to intervene in or influence the conduct of private TV broadcasters, even when it comes to coverage of government/political affairs.

6.4 Diversity

The state-owned CRTV has a wide range of programmes on different aspects of life, including the views and experiences of women, children, different ethnic groups, religions and different political opinions. Private television stations' programmes are not as diversified. Some are sports-orientated (TV Max), while others (Canal 2 International, STV 1, STV 2) focus more on national and international news. All stations carry foreign music programmes. There is no research on the most popular television programmes in Cameroon, but from the researcher's observations, most people seem to be interested in Latin American and Asian series, which are broadcast on both state and private TV.

6.5 Quality of television output and programming

In terms of quality, CRTV, STV and Canal 2 seem to have the best programmes, most of which are foreign. These three stations also do a lot of news and current affairs reporting.

¹³ Researcher's personal observation.

¹⁴ The National Advertising Council, sitting on 12 April 2006, had 20 additional demands from advertising firms for accreditation, in addition to the more than 60 firms already in existence.

6.6 Specific challenges

The greatest challenge the newly-created private commercial television channels face today is to be able to match up with the state CRTV in terms of coverage area, professionalism, equipment and infrastructure.

Key findings

- The monopoly of the state-owned CRTV has been broken since 2000, with five new private TV services now in existence.
- Of the six services now in existence, one is national free-to-air (CRTV), three are available nationally on satellite (Canal 2 International, STV 1, STV 2), and two are regional (TV MAX and Ariane TV).
- As with radio, TV licensing is controlled directly by the Minister of Communication.

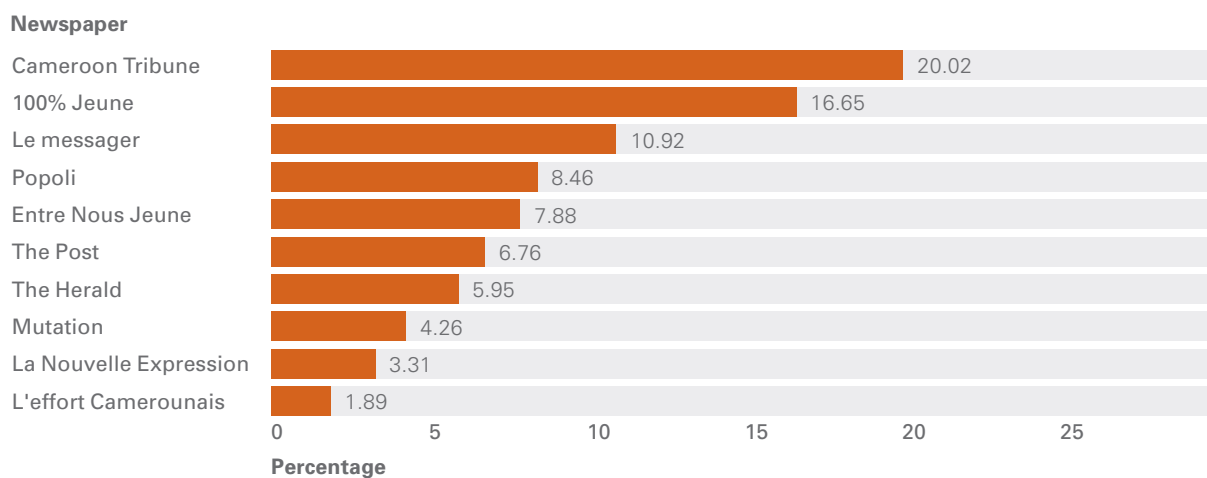


7. Newspapers

7.1 Key changes and developments in the newspaper marketplace in the past five years

Between 2000 and 2005, the marketplace for the press in Cameroon saw a massive growth in the number of newspapers and magazines, from around 50 in 2000 to around 500 in 2005 (UJC, 2005).

Figure 7: Percentage Readership Amongst the Ten Largest Publications (Newspapers and Magazines)



Source: CRETES, 2005

A CRETES readership survey of national publications (see Figure 7) found the state-owned *Cameroon Tribune* to have the highest percentage of readers (20.02%), followed by *100% Jeune* and *Le Messenger* (CRETES, 2005). Apart from *100% Jeune* and *Entre Nous Jeune*, both of which are magazines, all the top ten publications listed above are in tabloid newspaper format¹⁵. The *Cameroon Tribune* is the only state-owned title in the top ten, with all the others privately-owned. As in the radio and television sectors, the state print outlet is gradually losing market share in most parts of the country to emerging, privately-owned operations. Three of the top ten publications in terms of readership (*100% Jeune*, *Le Popoli* and *La Nouvelle Expression*) were launched between 2000 and 2005.

Many of the new publications of recent years are regionally- or locally-based titles covering regional development, education and local current affairs. Few of them discuss foreign issues. Most of these publications publish in tabloid format.

There are two news agencies in Cameroon, CAMNEWS (Cameroon News) which is state-run, and Reuters, which is foreign.

7.2 Investment and growth in newspapers in the past five years

Of all the media sectors, the newspaper sector has had the fastest growth, as it is the area where people have invested most¹⁶. A likely reason for this is the lower cost of investment as compared to radio and television. In carrying out this research, however, it was found that the advertising market is not very healthy, especially for the local and regional papers not based in the major cities of Yaoundé and Douala.

7.3 Plurality, ownership and control

With 500-odd new publications (magazines and newspapers) launched between 2000 and 2005 (MINCOM, 2005b), a much greater range of independently-owned private print organisations now exists in Cameroon. In general, it can be said that there is transparency in ownership and a trend for these publications to operate free from government control¹⁷. Press freedom is guaranteed by the Freedom of Social Communication law (Republic of Cameroon, 1990b) and the Constitution of 1996. One of the few legislated restrictions on journalist activity is the provision, in terms of a 2002 Decree, that every journalist needs to have a press card (Republic of Cameroon, 2002c). It should be noted that the issuing or refusal of a press card has not been used to date by the government as a form of control, intervention or intimidation. The commission in charge of issuing press cards is composed mostly of independent personalities from the communication profession.

¹⁵ Based on CRETES 2005, researcher's personal observations and inquiries to newspaper dealers.

¹⁶ Researcher's personal observation.

¹⁷ Researcher's personal observation.

7.4 Diversity

Before the liberalisation of the media in Cameroon, most of the newspaper organisations dealt primarily with political issues. Today, a good number of publications, particularly those with local or regional orientation, focus on topics other than politics, looking at community development, health, education, sports, business and youth affairs. Most of the publications are in tabloid newsprint format, while a few are newsletters and magazines, such as the ones focusing on children's issues and women's interests.

7.5 Quality of newspaper reporting

The quality of reporting has improved enormously in Cameroon over the past five years. Many of the journalists and media practitioners who graduate from the Advanced School of Mass Communication (ASMAC) and the University of Buea Department of Journalism and Mass Communication are employed in the private sector¹⁸. The integration of trained journalists into this sector has helped raise the quality of journalism. News reporting and editorial stances have thus improved. There is now a certain degree of respect for journalistic norms and ethics. Unfortunately, this improvement in quality is not reflected in the salaries of these journalists.

¹⁸ Researcher's personal observation and inquiry from some newspaper houses.

7.6 Specific challenges

Today, the specific challenges for the newly-created newspaper operations are those of infrastructure, office space, training and funding. Most of the publications do not have appropriate workplaces, with some having no editorial offices whatsoever. The journalists on such publications simply go out collecting information and then meet at a bar, for instance, to discuss their findings. Fortunately, some journalists are benefiting from training courses and seminars offered by organisations such as the British Council, the Thomson Foundation, the US Embassy, the Canadian High Commission and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Unfortunately, the problems of infrastructure and funding still have to be looked into if there is to be significant improvement in the print sector in Cameroon.

Key findings

- ❑ The number of newspaper and magazine titles grew from around 50 to more than 500 in the period 2000-5.
- ❑ Almost all the newspapers are tabloid in format.
- ❑ The ten most-read publications are the state-owned *Cameroon Tribune* and nine privately-owned titles.
- ❑ The advertising market is weak, particularly for local and regional publications.
- ❑ The main challenges for new newspaper operations are infrastructure, office space, funding and training.



8. Media Support

Since the passing of the 2000 Decree on Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises, the new media sector has begun to develop, the use of computers has been popularised and three mobile telephone companies (MTN, Orange and CTM) have been set up. People have also started taking an interest in statistical analyses of the use and ownership of new media.

The government has since created the ART, which is in charge of providing data on radio, television, telephone and Internet access. The Board carried out annual surveys between 2000 and 2004 on the percentage of Cameroonians with mobile phones. In 2000 only 0.66% of Cameroonians had a cell phone, whereas, by 2004, the percentage had increased to 10.20% (ART, 2004). A private enterprise, known as the Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes en Economie et Sondages (CRETES), was also established. CRETES carries out studies on newspaper readership and radio and television audiences.

There are now a number of Internet service providers (ISPs), focused particularly in the major cities of Yaoundé and Douala, including ICC Net, Globtournet and Global Net. In 2005, the incumbent state-controlled fixed-line phone operator, Cameroon Telecommunications (CAMTEL), also began offering Internet access to individual consumers.

8.1 Key changes and developments in new media technologies in the past five years

Certain statistics, such as the percentage of the population with access to a personal computer, or the percentage with access to the Internet, are not available. Statistics were, however, found for phone penetration, with access to a fixed-line phone estimated at 1.8% in 2005, and mobile phone use at 23.8% (Republic of Cameroon, 2004). These two percentages provide proof of the popularity of the mobile phone over fixed-lines. The number of mobile telephone operators stayed at two between 2000 and 2005, with a third one announced in 2006 (allAfrica.com, 2006).

8.2 Key changes in media support in the past five years

In the area of media support, there are now ten locally-owned independent production companies (UJC, 2005). Three of these are for radio production, four are for radio/TV production, one for TV, one for video, one for film. There are also more than 60 locally-based advertising agencies not connected to multi-national franchises (UJC, 2005). There is only one locally-owned market research company, CRETES. There are no international or foreign-owned private television or film production companies in the country, and no international or foreign-owned advertising agencies.

8.3 Audience and readership research data

The first research into newspaper readership and radio/TV audiences was conducted by the private-sector firm, CRETES, in 2005. Unfortunately, the survey was only carried out in six towns, without focusing on rural areas. Although the results can be said to reflect some of the general readership/audience trends in the country, the researchers for this report are of the belief that some different results would have been obtained if rural consumers had been part of the survey. It is hoped that future surveys by CRETES will take the entire nation into consideration.

8.4 Media support, ISPs and ownership

The film companies and advertising agencies operating in Cameroon are privately-owned companies, while the two mobile telephone companies (MTN and Orange) have their headquarters in South Africa and Europe respectively.

Key findings

- Mobile phone use, at 23.8%, has far outstripped fixed-line use, which sits at 1.8%.
- There are two mobile phone providers, MTN and Orange, with a third operator awarded a licence in 2006.
- As with the radio and TV sectors, the growth in new media outlets was enabled by the 2000 Decree on Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises.
- ISPs are, growing in number, particularly those serving the main cities of Douala and Yaoundé.



9. NGO Activity

9.1 Key changes and developments in NGO activity in the past five years

The general impression this research has come away with concerning NGO activities in relation to media development, is that local NGOs are generally not concerned with media work. Most, if not all, of the NGOs dealing with media development are international. Among local NGOs, there is, generally speaking, more emphasis on activities such as education, health, rural development, women's empowerment and community development.

The trend in NGO involvement in the media sector has not changed much in recent years. The bulk of the work continues to be driven by foreign NGOs, agencies and embassies such as those of the USA, Canada, Germany and Israel.

9.2 Key NGOs involved in media development activities

As said above, there are no local NGOs significantly involved in media development activities. There are 28 local professional media organisations, but they do not carry out media development activities and are not registered as NGOs with the government.

The key media support NGOs/agencies in the country are international: the Thompson Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, UNESCO, the British Council, foreign embassies and, to a lesser extent, Transparency International. The *Association des Professionnelles Africaines de la Communication* (APAC), one of the few local bodies engaged in media development, is managed by civil servants. It is an NGO created by female media professionals already working with the government.

9.3 Climate of opportunity for media development activities

Given that there has been a huge growth in the number of media outlets since 2000, there would seem to be ample scope for media development work in Cameroon. Unfortunately, local NGOs and local professional media associations have so far contributed very little to media development. Professional associations lack the financial means necessary to be active. Those responsible for the daily running of most of the associations are civil servants, who first of all have an obligation to fulfil their public-service duties. This gives them little or no time to cater for the activities of their associations. Such associations need to be sustained financially if their contributions are to be felt in the media development sector.

Key findings

- No local NGOs are focused on media development, with most support coming from foreign players such as the Thompson Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, UNESCO, the British Council, Transparency International and foreign embassies.
- There are many professional associations, but these associations do not at present participate in media development activities.



10. Conclusions

10.1 Sector growth

It seems clear that in the period covered by this research, 2000-5, there have been many signs pointing to improved conditions for the media in Cameroon. The 2000 Decree on Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises (Republic of Cameroon, 2000a) has led to rapid growth in the number of non-state media. These new private outlets, particularly in radio and print, are adding diversity to the media landscape. Of particular note is the growth in community-based, non-profit radio.

10.2 Legal and regulatory environment

Many of the legal parameters needed for a healthy media environment are in place, including the Constitution's guarantee of freedom of the press, as affirmed in the 1990 Freedom of Social Communication law. However, an independent media regulator is absent.

10.3 Journalist remuneration and ethics

Private journalists are generally poorly remunerated by their employers. There is a tendency for these journalists to expect payments from individuals or organisations that they cover – a breach of journalistic ethics.

10.4 Professional media associations

The professional media associations that exist in the country have so far contributed very little to media development. These associations do not have the financial means necessary to keep them active. Such associations need to be sustained financially if their contributions are to be felt in media development.

10.5 Support for media development

Almost all of the support for media development is coming from foreign NGOs, agencies and embassies. Local NGOs need to begin to take an interest in media development.

10.6 Research data

There is an absence of data on media and new media/ICTs in the country. It was only in 2005 that a private company, CRETES, carried out the first survey on media audiences, and even this study was only conducted in the six major cities and towns, neglecting rural consumers.

Key findings

- There has been significant growth and increased diversity in radio, print and television since 2000, largely due to a 2000 decree allowing private ownership of media outlets.
- There are some useful legal frameworks, including a constitutional guarantee of a free newspaper, but there are still shortcomings, including the lack of an independent media regulator.
- Private journalists are remunerated poorly, leading to breaches in ethical conduct.
- Professional media associations are poorly financed, undermining their ability to engage in media development.
- Local NGOs are not focused on media support, with media support activities primarily being driven by foreign organisations.
- Research data on media audiences only started being gathered in 2005.



11. Appendices

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Appendix 2: Individuals/organisations consulted during the research

Individuals

- Sophie Beyala, UNESCO Coordinator, Community Multimedia Programme
- Charly Ndichia, *The Post* newspaper

Organisations

- Centre de Recherche et d'Etudes en Economie et Sondages (CRETES)
- Institut National de la Statistique (INS)
- UNESCO Cameroon
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Société Internationale des Langues (SIL)
- Association Nationale des Comités de Langue Camerounaises (ANACLAC)
- British Council
- Ministry of Communication (MINCOM)
- Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation
- Institut de Formation et Recherche Démographiques (IFORD)



Cameroon

Country Report

Way Forward



12. Introduction

Fifteen interviewees were selected on the basis of their experience and knowledge of the Cameroonian media landscape and based on the different categories required by the research brief. Where first choice interviewees were not available, people with similar responsibilities within the same organisation were substituted.

On the one hand, interviews with government officials, who were sceptical about the outcome of the interviews, were difficult to obtain. On the other, interviews with media practitioners and NGOs, with the exception of the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO), were obtained with relative ease. The other interviews fell somewhere in the middle.

Twelve were willing to sign a consent form, allowing their comments and their names to be quoted in this report. Three interviewees, two government officials and an academic appointed by the government, did not want their views attributed to them in any identifiable way.

Only one interviewee, an NGO representative, could not be interviewed directly because she was away on leave. The interview protocol was sent to her via Internet. She responded to all the sections of the interview guide and returned it to the in-country researcher via the Internet. The only disadvantage of this was that it did not allow for prompts or follow-up questions.

From the conduct of the interviews, the researcher concluded that all those with whom he had a face-to-face interview were sincere in their opinions and all, with the exception of the above-mentioned interviewee questioned via Internet, were willing to have their views audio-recorded – although, as mentioned earlier, not all accepted that their views should be directly attributed to them.



13. Media Development: an organisational perspective

13.1 Key organisations

The selection of the 15 interviewees for this project was carefully carried out. In their different capacities, all those selected are either directly or indirectly involved with the media sector. Interviewees were drawn from a range of entities, including the British Council, UNESCO, Transparency International, Association des Professionnelles Africaines de la Communication (APAC), the Ministry of Communication, the Cameroon Media Council (CMC), the Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation (CRTV), the Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists (CACOJ), the Advanced School of Mass Communication (ASMAC), the *Post* newspaper, Spectrum Television, the Catholic Church and the Human Rights Commission.

13.2 Impact of media development initiatives

With regards to the most significant change in the media sector, 11 of the interviewees cited Law N° 092/158, signed on 19 December 1990, which liberalised the broadcasting sector, allowing for private media enterprises. It is certain that the media landscape in Cameroon took a different turn from this point on, and these interviewees believe this has been the most significant change, bringing about a proliferation of private radio and television stations.

One interviewee cited the creation of community radios as the most significant change in the past five years, while another thought that the most significant change is the fact that news organs have flooded the media scene, particularly private news organs. One interviewee said the most important change over the past five years is the liberty of expression granted by the state.

Today, there is much more media freedom, which has given the population a wider range of choice in terms of the content of the radio, television and print media they consume. The liberation has moved the society from a monopolistic one to one which is more competitive, where different media houses have to “fight” for survival.

“ *The most important change has been liberty of expression. Formerly, newspapers were censored before they were printed, but today many newspapers have liberty – not liberty to insult, but liberty to say what they think, and say it in a gentle way. When I look at what newspapers today say about the President, if it was during the period of Ahmadou Ahidjo, many journalists would be in prison... there are many private radio stations, but what I don't like is the state's hesitance to allow a free [media]... The law on social communication was voted in 1990, but the authorisation for private radios and televisions to operate came only ten years later. The delay was too long. One has the impression that the administrative authorities are afraid of the living [and] direct voice of the [media]. But looking at the situation today, I think there's more freedom of expression. ”*

(**Cardinal Christian Tumi**, Media Support: Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Cameroon)

One interviewee, an analyst, said the growth in media outlets has not necessarily been accompanied by responsible journalism.

“ *People came up with the spirit of freedom and got away with a lot of things that may be considered libellous. I'd like to believe that if there is a review on this as it is being done now by media professionals, this might change the landscape and put a few more stop-guards on some of the things that have been happening. The media atmosphere in the country has been very encouraging... we sometimes accuse government of trying to clamp down on some private press, and even the official the press, because if you do things that are not within the norms or are ethical to the profession, you are stamped on. So, I think the line is to better the conditions of the media personnel in the country so that they... take their own responsibility as they should and confirm their status as the fourth estate. ”*

(**Peter Essoka**, Analyst and Member of the Human Rights Commission; Commentator: Human Rights Commission, Cameroon)

13.2.1 Strategic changes within the interviewee's own area of work

Media development in Cameroon has affected the interviewees in different ways. Interviewees' responses depended on their area of activity. The two government officials were agreed that there has been a change in government's approach to dealing with media houses, especially private media ones. There has been the creation of the CMC, the creation of the commission for the issuing of licences and that for the issuing of press cards.

For the private media practitioner interviewed, the change was seen to be at the levels of acquisition of content and increases in salaries. For the state/public media practitioner interviewed, the change has been the coming of a new General Manager at the helm of the state broadcast corporation after 16 years. This has revolutionised the approach in the treatment of news and has brought about an evolution in the editorial policy of the corporation.

“ When we got a new General Manager, Amadou Vamoulke, over a year ago, the editorial line evolved in the sense that he asked [for] the floor to be given more to the public. At first we had the tendency to analyse and comment on the news, and give the facts mostly by ourselves. Today, more and more we give the floor to experts to educate and inform. We are... improving on the standards of our journalists. They are going for training. The General Manager gives directives as to how things should be done, down to the grammar used. Now we have more of a ‘big brother’ kind of overseeing policy. He is improving on our quality and quantity. ”

(**Jessie Atogo Ekukole**, Senior Practitioner; Media Practitioner, State/Public Sector: CRTV, Cameroon)

One of the two educators interviewed sees the transformation of the *Ecole Supérieure des Sciences de la Technologie de l’Information* (ESSTI) to the *Ecole Supérieure des Sciences de la Technologie de l’Information et de la Communication* (ESSTIC), as a major change within the sector. This has introduced the aspect of communication into the curriculum.

Most interviewees felt there had been some impact on the media sector from the changes brought about by the signing of new laws in 1990 and afterwards, although their opinions differed as to whether the impact in their own area of work had been significant.

One interviewee from civil society said that such changes have changed mentalities, especially on the part of government officials, who have come to realise that media freedom is essential for any modern democracy.

The two interviewees engaged in training said the creation of new private training institutions, such as Ndi Samba and Siantou, has been a boost for the media sector in general. Dr Sillar Mactar, a media entrepreneur, also lauded the creation of such institutions as they give opportunities to younger people to join the media sector.

“ There are a lot of schools in Cameroon – the Douala University, ESSTIC, Yaoundé, Institut Siantou, the CRTV Training Centre – training young people. These young people are absorbed into the private sector given that the public sector cannot absorb all of them. The fact that there are many players creates opportunities and opens doors for these young people, and thus creates competition. ”

(**Sillar Mactar**, Executive Chief; Media Entrepreneur: Spectrum Television, Cameroon)

Dr Mactar also says that development in the media sector has given Cameroonians the opportunity to receive a variety of media programmes from different sources, and the competition has been beneficial.

“ In terms of content, there is great diversification in what people are offering in relation to the approach to news. When I came to Cameroon, CRTV did not broadcast much on African or international news, its news was... mostly government-related issues. Now, almost all television stations are showing news concerning Africa and international news. They are also showing national news differently. Even in terms of coverage, the approach has changed... There is more professionalism and lots of choices have been created for each and every Cameroonian... Everyone has to fight to be watched. This is what helps to focus society to move towards real development, [the airing of] various options and ways of tackling problems. ”

(**Sillar Mactar**, Executive Chief; Media Entrepreneur: Spectrum Television, Cameroon)

Although the general impression is that there has been much development in the media sector, two interviewees from the private sector think that such development depends on who undertook it, and that government has not done much.

“ The only thing government has done is that it has been tolerant, but even [then] it’s like giving with the right hand and taking with the left... they tell you to write anything you can, but even if [what you write] is true, the powers that be can still use... the courts to nail you. That aside, other initiatives, such as training initiated by bodies like the Cameroon Association of English-speaking Journalists, the Cameroon Union of Journalists, of which I’m a member, the embassies and especially the American Embassy, the British Council and the Canadian[s]... have helped individual reporters and media houses to improve on their skills in reporting and their ethical conduct. ”

(**Charlie Ndichia**, Editor-in-Chief; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post Newspaper*, Cameroon)

“ We’ve not really had a lot of funding for training, except for those who go out and look for their own private training opportunities. The British Council sponsors journalists. This is also done by the Israelis, embassies and international organisations, but not very much. Internally, there are really no development initiatives. We’ve had some partners like the Japanese who want to help with technology, to refurbish equipment. That is the only sponsorship I can think of. ”

(**Asong Ndifor**, National President; Media Support: Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists, Cameroon)

An NGO interviewee said that media development has enlightened the people, who are now, for instance, asking for more community radios. The liberalisation has enabled people to understand the need for a communication tool that will help them in their development.



14. Media Development Initiatives

A number of media development initiatives have been undertaken in Cameroon by several organisations, including state organisations. Interviewees who have been involved in such initiatives have learned a number of lessons they think are of importance in the development of the media sector in Cameroon. It is worth noting that of the 15 interviewees, seven are directly involved with media development activities in terms of funding or designing of media projects. The British Council, for instance, is involved with training journalists, organising workshops and seminars to help journalists improve their skills and journalistic awareness.

14.1 Review

Within the past five years a number of media projects/initiatives/activities have been undertaken to develop the media. These include seminars, workshops, training programmes and the creation of community radios. The Director of the British Council said her organisation manages training workshops for journalists in collaboration with the BBC World Service and the Thomson Foundation.

“ In January 2006, the Council organised training for 28 broadcast journalists. The training was delivered by the Thomson Foundation and funded by the Commonwealth Media Development Fund. The training covered practical areas including interviewing skills, running order, reporting the facts, and, ethics in journalism. We have also run training enabling journalists/broadcasters to use the Internet for research. ”

(**Jenny Scott, Director**; NGO: British Council, Cameroon)

Two interviewees from the private sector talked of seminars organised by their organisations with the aims of enhancing corporate strategies, and training journalists to report on areas that have an impact on the social lives of the people.

The NGO, APAC, has also been supporting journalistic skills for reporting on social issues.

“ We’ve been involved in organising seminars. That has been our main activity. These seminars were intended to train journalists in areas that have an impact on the social lives of the people, but then you realise the media is not giving enough attention to those areas. ”

(**Anne Geudheu Youmbi**, President; NGO: APAC, Cameroon)

Interviewees representing the government said they have been involved in seminars and workshops intended for media practitioners. They have also been involved with the funding of media houses.

The interviewees' organisations have a variety of overarching objectives and goals for their development work in the media sector. At least one is focusing on broadcast journalism skills.

“ The key objectives have been to strengthen and reinforce participants' skills in broadcast journalism and reporting. The training has generally been delivered by practising, experienced journalists and broadcasters from the UK, and has encouraged the participants to analyse their own skills, share best practice amongst themselves, as well as providing 'hands on', practical exercises. ”

(**Jenny Scott**, Director; NGO: British Council, Cameroon)

Some organisations are focused on public education goals. Other interviewees' organisations are focused on improving general journalistic quality. A government official spoke of seminars organised in collaboration with foreign agencies to foster the skills and capacities of Cameroonian journalists who have to master journalistic norms.

Media development in Cameroon is funded mostly by foreign organisations, with the exception of the provision of subsidies to media houses by the Cameroon Ministry of Communication.

One of main foreign organisations funding media houses is UNESCO, under its Community Radios and Multimedia Programme. Unfortunately, UNESCO could not, at the time of the research, provide records on the amount of funding it has devoted to media development through this programme, although it did say that the amounts are likely to increase in the years ahead.

“ [Funding] is increasing because we've discovered that the populations are interested in what we are doing. At the beginning we planned to put in place 15 community radios. But the value of the dollar dropped. When we started the project, the dollar was at F.CFA 750. At the time of implementation, it had dropped to F.CFA 550. [But] we had promised 15 community radios in Cameroon, and we put up 15. This is what we used to convince other sponsors to continue supporting us. For 2006 we have, as a short-term project, US\$3 million to create 30 community radios. Today sponsors come to us to express their interest in community radios. Last week the UNPE came to us to express their wish to put up community radios in areas that are facing environmental problems, such as Kousseri and the Dja. Many bodies are coming to us with the intention of creating community radios. ”

(**Ms Sophie Beyala**, Coordinator; NGO: UNESCO Community Radios and Multimedia Programme, Cameroon)

In the Ministry of Communication, the amount for the subsidies given to private media houses has remained constant for the past two years since the subsidy scheme was introduced.

“ Our assistance to the private media has been constant, although we intend to increase this whenever our means permit us. ”

(**Government Official**, Cameroon)

Spectrum Television also provides funding for media development, although this funding is usually internal, as its Chief Executive makes clear:

“ It depends. If it is our own internal project, yes [the funding is internal]. We [also] buy programmes from private producers, [and] we have some people doing co-production. ”

(**Sillar Mactar**, Executive Chief; Media Entrepreneur: Spectrum Television, Cameroon).

Two interviewees said that their funding for media development initiatives is increasing. As mentioned above, the UNESCO representative said that the funds mobilised to put community radios in place is increasing. Community radio funding is now around three times the amount UNESCO has for all other projects in Cameroon.

14.2 Success and impact

14.2.1 Evaluating the success of media development projects

In terms of project evaluation, four interviewees said that they do evaluate, to some extent, projects related to media. When asked if this evaluation was done in a formal way, for example, measuring impact or outcomes against project objectives, one interviewee stated:

“ We evaluate our projects. If we organise a seminar or a training course, we give out an evaluation questionnaire for participants to fill in. We keep newspaper cuttings and observe to see to what extent those who attended the seminar have improved. Because of some of our training seminars, some journalists have now realised that they cannot just pick up their pens to write anything. ”

(**Asong Ndifor**, National President; Media Support: Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists, Cameroon)

In relation to community radio projects, the UNESCO interviewee said that an order has been placed for an audit of community radio performance in terms of human rights and democracy-building. Another audit has been ordered to evaluate the impact of community radio programming on HIV/AIDS. The UNESCO interviewee thinks that in the next year and a half, UNESCO will be able to answer questions related to project evaluation in both a quantitative and qualitative manner.

In relation to methods used for project evaluation, one interviewee said that for strategic reasons his organisation does not make public the results or the methods of its evaluations, which are done internally. The only interviewee who was able to provide records of his organisation's evaluations said:

“ We keep questionnaires, which are for trainers and students. For the impact on local media, we do the evaluation and keep them ourselves to know how often, for instance, health issues are being reported by the press and what the quality of the reporting is. ”

(**Asong Ndifor**, National President; Media Support: Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists, Cameroon)

14.2.2 Factors contributing to the success of media development projects

A number of specific factors are thought to contribute to the success of media development projects. One interviewee said that any success for a media development initiative will depend on whether there is a clear vision in the selection of the project, whether the correct participants are found, and whether the correct course contents are designed (if the initiative involves training). A second interviewee said that success will depend largely on the quality of the resource persons used in the initiative. A third interviewee, from the UNESCO Community Radios Programme, strongly believes that success depends on acceptance by communities and their 'elites' of the knowledge of those initiating a project.

“ Before we came to Cameroon we had tried the experience in other countries. So, we knew what had worked and what had not. We also had the experience of the community radios that had been created before we came. We saw where they had failed and why. We started with training the people from the local communities and we made them understand that community radios were not political and that... politics should be excluded from their debates. We also excluded sensitive subjects like religion, because there are areas where people are very sensitive to religious matters. We think there are many subjects on development that could be debated in a democratic manner. There is HIV/AIDS, there is malaria... The people could debate on how to market their local products. In a town like Mbalmayo, there are people who produce lots of cassava but do not know what to do with it, whereas in the same town there are firms that need starch. With the help of the radio, these firms are able to buy the local cassava, and only go out of town when there is a shortage. The government gave us much assistance. The Ministry of Communication, which is our partner, facilitates obtaining frequencies. Today these radios are a priority because people have understood that they are for the development of the country. ”

(**Sophie Beyala**, Coordinator; NGO: UNESCO Community Radios and Multimedia Programme, Cameroon)

14.2.3 Factors undermining the success of media development projects

In terms of the factors that inhibit a media project's success, or make it less successful, one interviewee said that too much theoretical emphasis during training is one factor. Meanwhile, Peter Essoka of the Human Rights Commission and Dr Mactar of Spectrum Television said that the absence of adequate and continuous training was a major factor in the lack of successful building of professionalism in the media. For instance, one unprofessional practice that Mr Essoka wants to see stamped out is "clientism" (papers writing in favour of individuals). Poverty, lack of professional management and an over-emphasis on commercial imperatives were also cited as factors inhibiting media development efforts in Cameroon.

“ I think it's poverty and the fact that most media in Cameroon are not run by professionals. Another fact is that the business aspect of the project overshadows the professionalism. I'll give an example. A publisher is only interested in how much he makes from adverts and not in the quality of what he produces, not in how much he pays his staff. You know that if a staff member is well-paid, it is in itself a motivating factor to get the reporter to work harder and improve on his/her skills and devotion. ”

(**Charlie Ndichia**, Editor-in-Chief; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post Newspaper*, Cameroon)

Other inhibiting factors identified by interviewees were the lack of government support and the absence of access to information for private media houses and journalists. To overcome the problem of government support, Sophie Beyala of UNESCO thinks that any foreign- or internationally-initiated media project carried out in Cameroon needs the approval of the Ministry of Communication.

“ Specifically in Cameroon... I think anyone who wants to carry out a project must be sure that he/she is in agreement with the government. When we draw up a project, there is always a paragraph entitled “Risk”... We are an organisation which works in line with the government, that is, whatever project we draw up must be in line with government action. If you come up with a project which does not satisfy government needs, you might not even take off. ”

(**Sophie Beyala**, Coordinator; NGO: UNESCO Community Radios and Multimedia Programme, Cameroon)

Coming from quite a different angle on the question of inhibiting factors, one interviewee said that, paradoxically, the country's more democratic environment can sometimes work against the success of media development initiatives – if the media becomes too “libertine”.

“ There is a certain amount of ‘libertinism’ in the media landscape. Today, because of democracy, some people think they can do whatever they like. ”

(**Anne Guedheu Youmbi**, President; NGO: APAC, Cameroon)

14.3 Lessons learned

Interviewees who responded to this question said a key lesson is that sustainability is a major factor for any successful media initiative. Sustainability, among other things, provides independence for a media house wanting to stay clear of government control. Another lesson, according to the UNESCO interviewee and as mentioned above, is that government backing is unavoidable in initiatives undertaken by foreign or international organisations such as UNESCO. Staff involvement and feedback were found to be important to development at *The Post* newspaper, which undertook a project called ‘*Charting the way forward for The Post*’, aimed at enhancing corporate growth, during which the staff had the opportunity to evaluate what had been done and what had to be aimed at.

Another lesson cited was that public education can be a powerful goal and outcome for media development initiatives. The Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists (CACOJ), after evaluating its project on the effects of malaria on the population, found that more programmes are needed that aim at educating the population about their surroundings. This is also a lesson learned by UNESCO in its Community Radios and Multimedia Programme in rural areas.

14.3.1 The importance of the cultural context in planning and designing initiatives

The majority of interviewees felt that it was vital for the cultural perspectives in Cameroon to be taken into account in the planning and designing of any media initiatives. It was felt that the current media in the country had too much European content and that the news was being reported from a foreign rather than African perspective. It was felt that local production should be encouraged to address the specific Cameroonian and African contexts and that it would be helpful to have regional initiatives looking at how local and African content production can be fostered.

“ If you look at our media today, the content is influenced by European content. We should have more African content in our media, and one of the ways to do this is through regional or sub-regional projects for newsgathering and dissemination. Africans should report on Africa from the African perspective, rather than relying on foreign international news agencies that report from foreign perspectives, which is not the reality on the ground. ”

(**Asong Ndifor**, National President; Media Support: Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists, Cameroon)



15. Developing the Environment for Success

Media development has to take place within a favourable socio-economic and political environment. There has to be the political will for the media to develop and inform people better. This means that the political environment is a major factor that can either inhibit or foster successful media development.

15.1 Key factors

Interviewees cited a number of factors that are thought to favour media development initiatives in Cameroon. Among these is the fact that there is relative peace and calm in the country at present, something that was seen by most interviewees as essential for the success of media development projects.

“ First of all, peace. If you don't have peace you can't work, especially in the domain of the media because we're the very first ones to feel it [conflict]. ”

(Jenny Scott, Director; NGO: British Council, Cameroon)

Another factor that interviewees saw as vital to the success of projects included a supportive government, and laws that favoured the media. Between 1990 and 2005, seven important legal texts were signed in favour of the media in Cameroon: the Social Communication Law; the Public Assistance to Private Communication Decree; the Press Cards Decree; the Decree on Private Audio-Visual Communication Enterprises; the Decree on the creation of the National Communications Council; the Code of Ethics; and, the Charter of the Cameroon Media Council.

Ten of the 15 interviewees – two academics, two government interviewees, three NGO interviewees, the representative of CMC, the vice president of Transparency International, and the president of the Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists – agreed that the government in Cameroon has provided an atmosphere of freedom in which media houses can carry out their profession without much disturbance from, state machinery, and that this is an important part of the environment for successful media development.

“ We have the regulatory and legal frameworks. It is clear that when one wants to create a community radio or a press organ, for example, there is a text to consult which guides you. This is a positive aspect. The fact that there’s regulatory framework enables us to evolve. ”

(Anne Geudheu Youmbi, President; NGO: APAC, Cameroon)

The liberalisation of the broadcast sector was also seen as paramount to the freedom that exists in this sector today.

“ Government has made much effort to liberalise the broadcast sector in order for private media houses to operate in a free and independent manner. Even those that insult the government are not harassed in any way. Some even go to the extent of insulting the head of state. So, I think there is an atmosphere that favours successful media development in our country. ”

(Government Official, Cameroon)

Private investment in the sector is subsequently regarded as having contributed enormously to media development activities in Cameroon.

In addition to the above-mentioned factors mention was also made of the establishment of new state and private educational institutions providing communications and journalism skills development. Most private media houses now get their workers from among the young people coming out of these institutions.

“ The fact that the state has put in place schools and university departments that provide studies in communication plays in favour of media development. Young people have the opportunity to learn communication techniques in these institutions before they venture into the profession. The existence of a school of journalism in Yaoundé is a major factor, which enables us to have trained professionals in the media sector. There’s a Department of Communication in the University of Buea and also some private institutions like Siantou and Ndi Samba that offer courses in mass communication. In terms of training, I believe we have more than the minimum. ”

(Anne Geudheu Youmbi, President; NGO: APAC, Cameroon)

The Ministry of Communication was also cited as helping to create an environment for successful media development.

“ At the level of state institutions, I realise there is a framework that enables us to do a number of things. There is the Ministry of Communication, which is in charge of the communication sector in Cameroon. I think the Ministry helps in the progress of the media. I consider the Ministry of Communication as a structure or an institution that permits us to go in the right direction. ”

(Anne Geudheu Youmbi, President; NGO: APAC, Cameroon)

15.2 Political and economic influences

All interviewees agreed that the political and economic environments play a major role in the development of the media in Cameroon.

It was generally acknowledged by interviewees that it is very difficult for any major development to take place within a poor political and economic environment. If a country is poor and unstable, then investors will not want to put in their money. Thus, it is imperative that both the economic and political aspects be taken into consideration in any media development initiative. A civil society interviewee gave an example of arbitrary government intervention of the kind that will hinder growth.

“ We wanted to hold a press conference in Yaoundé in May 2006 on the report of the Episcopal Commission for the elections that took place in October 2004. The press conference was stopped. We wanted to know who gave the orders. The President was contacted and he said he wasn't aware of any such orders. So, the abusive use of authority can be an obstacle. I think that those in power should learn to see the good [of having a free] press, but we must be responsible. Journalists should be responsible. I think there are two things that are very important; the State should not be an obstacle, [and] those involved with the media should know what they are doing. ”

(**Cardinal Christian Tumi**, Media Support: Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Cameroon)

The question of whether or not there is state support for media development in Cameroon was controversial. Six interviewees pointed to the fact that the state gives subsidies and other minimal forms of support to private media houses – but there was a feeling that the support is not large scale.

“ Yes, there is state support. There is assistance for private communication. There is a Commission of which I'm a member. Unfortunately, the amount is quite small, although to a certain extent it helps. Some organs that receive the assistance are now able to register their staff with the Social Insurance Fund, something they could not previously do. Also duties [are waived] for certain imports, but unfortunately the media does not benefit because they don't import. Importers sell to media organs without taking into consideration the exonerations [the duty-free status]. ”

(**Asong Ndifor**, National President; Media Support: Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists, Cameroon)

One of the senior government officials interviewed confirmed that the assistance from government takes place, via the Ministry of Communication, in terms of the Decree on Public Assistance to Private Communication. But the official pointed out that many of the applications for funding do not meet the necessary conditions and are thus rejected.

“ For the past two years we've been giving subsidies to a number of private media houses that are in conformity with the texts. For a media house to be granted such subsidy, there are a number of requirements to put in place. Most of those who come to us for assistance do not fulfil these requirements and so cannot be given the assistance. ”

(**Government Official**, Cameroon)

One interviewee said that what the state gives is not support *per se* but rather an incentive scheme aimed at getting some marginal private media houses to support government action. This interviewee felt the assistance was thus arbitrary, dependent on the whim of the state.

“ *There is so-called support, but it is very arbitrary... The government gives this support to some very obscure media houses. You don't find [their newspapers at] the kiosk, you don't find them broadcasting but when media handouts have to be given by the government, [they get it] while authentic media houses don't.* ”

(**Charlie Ndichia**, Editor-in-Chief; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post Newspaper*, Cameroon)

Mr Essoka of the Human Rights Commission said that although the state assistance mechanism exists, it is very little compared to what the media houses need.

“ *... it's almost like nothing... if the state really wants to help, it should do a little more than what it is doing. Why should the Herald newspaper, for instance, go to collect F.CFA 150,000 or F.CFA 200,000. What use is this amount? To put out a tabloid costs a lot of money. The state... [could waive] custom's duty on imported media equipment. But this should not be abused by the media themselves, because it is known that in some places, not Cameroon, people use such tax-free authority to import guns. The tax-free [benefit] should [come] with a kind of control.* ”

(**Peter Essoka**, Analyst and Member of the Human Rights Commission; Commentator: Human Rights Commission, Cameroon)

Many of the interviewees said they were not aware that state support for private media existed.

15.3 Donor communities' role

Twelve of the 15 interviewees were aware of participation by donors in Cameroon's media development.

Dr Kilo of the Cameroon Media Council (CMC) pointed to the support of the Canadian High Commission, which she said recognised the importance of media self-regulation and therefore was supportive of the CMC, helping with practical aspects, such as finding a central office and training staff.

“ *The Canadians have seen the importance of this self-regulation to the growth and the responsibility of journalists in Canada, so they were quick to help in our training, to support us in getting an office for the CMC, where people can come and talk to us. The office is directly opposite the train station. They know and see the usefulness of an organ like ours, and so they're encouraging us, hoping that once we take off we should be able to find funding from other sources and sustain this good job of self-monitoring.* ”

(**Asheri Kilo**, Treasurer; Government: Cameroon Media Council, Cameroon)

The donor community is seen by many as being useful in providing training programmes and scholarships for journalists. Some donors also provide material assistance, particularly to those programmes the objectives of which they support, as Cardinal Tumi confirms:

“ ... I am well-placed to appreciate what the foreign NGOs are doing for us. I would not have had the media house without the Italian Episcopal Conference and the Diocese at Belgamo in Italy and Munich. If one church hasn't the means, it can ask from another church in a developed country. Without these churches we would have had nothing. We don't deal with external NGOs but with dioceses and Episcopal Conferences in other countries. It is thanks to them that we have the only car for the radio, bought by the Italian Episcopal Conference. This is because they also believe in the media. If the churches in other countries help us, it is because they know that we are doing the work of evangelisation... Ours is a typical example where, without foreign [support] we would not have been able to realise our objectives. ”

(**Cardinal Christian Tumi**, Media Support: Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Cameroon)

Four interviewees said that the donor community needs to look for new types of media development initiatives to support, in addition to what is being done presently. One of these four said that donors should have a more co-ordinated approach and that before providing assistance for a project, they should find out what other donors are funding. Another said that, given the poor environment in which most journalists operate, training should be based more on practical aspects, which do not require much technological investment. Another interviewee said donors should focus more on initiatives that build long-term sustainability, such as building skills in equipment maintenance.

“ Although I'm not a technician, I would be interested in putting up a regional maintenance centre, which will take care of Gabon, Cameroon, Senegal, etc. We'll know that we can easily get spare parts for our machines. There are lots of initiatives like that which would have positive effects on the economy. I think we should apply the Chinese saying that, 'You should teach a child how to fish instead of teaching him how to eat fish'. ”

(**Sillar Mactar**, Executive Chief; Media Entrepreneur: Spectrum Television, Cameroon)

But most interviewees were satisfied with the way the donor community is doing things at present. And there was general agreement that the main focus of assistance should be on training. Some emphasise the need for training in ethics while others called for focus on computers and other new information and communication technologies (ICTs). As Jessie Atogo Ekukole of CRTV said:

“ I'd like to emphasise the need for ICT, because that is what the media is all about today. There's a lot that we can cover in Cameroon, but we don't have the means to do that. With ICT and probably a news agency, we would be able to cover a lot. ”

(**Jessie Atogo Ekukole**, Senior Practitioner; Media Practitioner, State/Public Sector: CRTV, Cameroon)

15.4 Other issues

Although the liberalisation of the broadcast sector is a positive step by the government, Essoka of the Human Rights Commission and Charlie Ndichia of *The Post* both think the liberalised environment has also opened up the way for unprofessional practices.

“ [Now] anyone who can scribble one or two lines or who can pick up a microphone... calls himself/herself a journalist. The definition of journalist should be revised. The 1990 laws that made this profession an ‘all-comers’ enterprise should be changed to trim down issues to professional acceptability. ”

(**Charlie Ndichia**, Editor-in-Chief; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post* Newspaper, Cameroon)

Sillar Mactar of Spectrum Television talked about ethnic favouritism, which he considers a stumbling block to development in any sector in an economy.

“ I think Cameroonians should do things in an elitist manner, getting rid of tribalistic considerations. During the selection of our staff, I didn’t know who was who. We simply studied the demands that were submitted, and from there we recruited those we found qualified. Our company has people from almost all tribes in Cameroon. The entire staff shares the same vision and values. ”

(**Sillar Mactar**, Executive Chief; Media Entrepreneur: Spectrum Television, Cameroon)



16. Future Strategies

16.1 Strategic priorities

Views on strategic priorities for any new donor-backed media development initiatives ranged from calls for investment in technology/infrastructure/equipment training, to calls for supporting the general political environment and good governance.

A majority of the interviewees (nine) stressed the importance of training.

“ That’s [an] area where donors can be very useful. Some journalists have worked for the past 15 or 20 years and have never gone for a refresher course, so they use the same ideas every day. They don’t see anything new. This applies even to our universities. Some of our professors use the same notes they have used for 30 years to teach their students. Do they think things don’t change? Every day, technology changes... People should constantly be going out for short training courses or seminars and from that they’ll learn and bring back the experiences. ”

(**Peter Essoka**, Analyst and Member of the Human Rights Commission;
Commentator: Human Rights Commission, Cameroon)

Four interviewees emphasised the need to support a conducive political/governance environment in which journalists feel free to exercise their duty to inform. Such an environment means good governance and less interference. Peter Essoka again:

“ I’m a member of the National Programme on Governance and I think basically the donor community [should] insist on good governance. If our media houses are well directed and we... are able to write good projects to help improve our status, and the projects are studied by the donor community, there is a lot of help that can be given to us... The issue of governance should play a lot on this. There should be less interference. Allow the professional to be the professional. Why is it that you cannot stop a medical doctor from operating on a patient, but you’ll stop a journalist from analysing a certain issue or run after him? The journalist should be allowed his free will. Don’t always instruct him. If a journalist can analyse in a lot of depth, I think the donor community will be pleased and will want to know what they can do. ”

(**Peter Essoka**, Analyst and Member of the Human Rights Commission;
Commentator: Human Rights Commission, Cameroon)

One interviewee, from the state CRTV, prioritised the need for a strong independent news agency. The interviewee argued for a news agency that would be able to collect news from every part of the country, given that presently most Cameroonians, especially those in the hinterlands, do not identify with the news on the media, especially the state media (CRTV).

“ A news agency, to me, will be a key priority because it will be able to provide the key information that we need... If we have a good agency with good reporters spread around the country, then we can depend on them to cover the rest of the country and be able to reach the people. ”

(**Jessie Atogo Ekukole**, Senior Practitioner; Media Practitioner, State/Public Sector: CRTV, Cameroon)

16.2 Focus of support

16.2.1 Media frameworks

As covered earlier in this report, many interviewees are of the view that the legal and regulatory frameworks necessary for media development are largely in place. The two exceptions would be the absence of stronger mechanisms to fund private media development and the absence of an access to information law.

16.2.2 Developing local content

Five of the interviewees said that developing local content was important for the Cameroonian media. They said they think this is a key factor because it will enable the younger generation to learn something of their cultural realities. According to Cardinal Tumi:

“ In developing content, it is important to take account of the local setting. Today many of the young people who are going to the towns have no idea of their cultures. Two cultures are evolving in Africa – the urban and the village cultures, as I’ll call them. A child who grows up in the town goes to the village and he is lost. His comrades in the village look at him as someone who fell from the stars. Neither of them understands each other. He can’t go to the toilet in the village because it is a hole. There must be a certain transition. We, the elders, must realise that there is another culture... I’ve been listening to a number of radio stations that prepare children for exams, where you are told how to answer a question, how to write a composition, what to look for when you read a question, what the major ideas are, what are the central notions... That is cultural education. I think the [media] can do much, especially on the radio... I have day and night watches in my compound who listen to the radio the whole day. Whether they are there or not the radio is on. ”

(**Cardinal Christian Tumi**, Media Support: Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Cameroon)

16.2.3 Supporting growth of private media

The general view from all interviewees is that the private media need much support to grow, although interviewees had different ideas about the types of support they think should be given. Cardinal Tumi thinks financial support of private media is required, but that support should also focus on personnel development, including exchange visits between countries.

“ It should not be only financial. If technicians could come and help in the modernisation of our local structures...We had that in the beginning. We had people from Italy... and some came from France to work with me for two or three years to set up our structures. A specialist in radio worked with us for six months. We paid his travel expenses...his know-how was very important for us. There should be contribution exchange programmes. At times I send journalists to Paris to work with a Catholic newspaper like La Croix. They go there to get experience. I sent the present Director of our radio. He went first to Vatican Radio and then Notre Dame Radio before coming back. This experience can sometimes be more important than money. ”

(**Cardinal Christian Tumi**, Media Support: Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Cameroon)

Two interviewees believe that the private media support should be in terms of acquisition of equipment and transfer of technology and technological know-how. The interviewee from the state/public media said support for private media should be in terms of training. Such training would enable the media to gain its independence and have less dependence on foreign news agencies, which today provide about 80% of all news broadcast in Cameroon, including news on Cameroon itself.

Atogo Ekukole of CRTV, Peter Essoka of the Human Rights Commission and Dr Ngwang of the Advanced School of Mass Communication believe that strong, private, independent media outlets are essential.

“ [a] problem in Cameroon is that we have individuals paying newspapers to write stories against other people. I think if the media are independent, they will be more objective, more daring and more pertinent in the issues they cover. It will help the democratic institutions, because an independent media would be able to play its role of watchdog in the country, and as the fourth estate, we will be more powerful. ”

(**Jessie Atogo Ekukole**, Senior Practitioner; Media Practitioner, State/Public Sector: CRTV, Cameroon)

16.2.4 Raising standards of journalism

The general view from 12 interviewees was that raising standards will require appropriate equipment, a conducive environment and the organisation of workshops, seminars and training programmes. The British Council conducted focus groups with journalists and broadcast workers in October 2005, and identified the following training priorities that would help raise the standard of journalism. British Council Director Jenny Scott said some of the training areas identified were:

- ethics;
- background research including knowledge of information technology use and increasing personal knowledge on subject matter;

- radio production techniques for dramas, documentaries, features;
- investigative reporting;
- responding to public opinion, researchers and experts; and,
- dealing with issues of culture.

16.2.5 Any other areas

Nine interviewees called for support of media trade bodies, including building management and advocacy skills.

16.3 Media sector focus

Opinions were divided as to which media sector or sectors should be supported most.

Eight interviewees felt that support should be given equally to the different types of media (state/public, private and community), since each has its own function.

“ All of them deserve some kind of support, although this has to be well defined. I think the state media has to be supported by the state. Support should be given to the private media without it losing its independence. France and Germany give subsidies to the private media [in those countries] but these [media] do things the way they think they should do them, without any pressure. The community media also deserves a lot [of] support because they are close to the population. ”

(**Sillar Mactar**, Executive Chief; Media Entrepreneur: Spectrum Television, Cameroon)

Atogo Ekukole of the state broadcaster CRTV called for support for all three sectors, but with more support to state media:

“ All of them are important. They all have their different roles to play. Now, it is important for all these sectors to be assisted because not one of them covers the entire spectrum of communication in Cameroon. All of them need improvement and all of them have different objectives. The community radios are important because they use local languages, which is not the case with the state or private media. We need the private media because they are more daring and play more of the watchdog role than we play. But if I had to choose one, I will say the public media, because communication between the government and the people is very important, so the role we play to get information from the government to the public and vice versa is very important, because if there is a break in this link, then the state cannot function. I think if priority was to be given, it should be given to the state media. ”

(**Jessie Atogo Ekukole**, Senior Practitioner; Media Practitioner, State/Public Sector: CRTV, Cameroon)

Three other interviewees also called for the majority of support to go to state media.

“ Assistance should be focused more on state media, given that the state media focuses on state matters that concern every Cameroonian as well as the entire nation. This does not mean that the other media are not important, but I think the state media needs more support. ”

(**Government Official**, Cameroon)

Two interviewees thought strongest support should be given to community media.

“ To start with, it should be community, because the public media is already well funded by government. CRTV radio and television are well funded so we should not worry about those. I think community radio and the folk media should be encouraged. I know that UNICEF trains radio journalists from 21 community radios... on the use of theatre for instance, for dissemination of information, for education and for entertainment. Community media centres should also be encouraged. Such centres should have telephones, Internet, computers and small libraries. ”

(Asheri Kilo, Treasurer; Government: Cameroon Media Council, Cameroon)

Two interviewees said that private commercial media should be given priority as they bring about change in the way of doing things.

“ It should be the private media. The reason is simple. Public media benefits from state subsidy, which is not the case with all private media. The private media is a private enterprise, which generally is poor. Those working in the private media are people who really don't have anything. So, I think the private media should be given more support. ”

(Anne Geudheu Youmbi, President; NGO: APAC, Cameroon)

16.4 Type of support most needed/useful

Interviewees felt that the type of support project most needed is one that:

- is centred around a good and well-structured organisation;
- is staffed by personnel who are willing to work in depth; and,
- has a good sense of analysis and initiatives emanating from communication professionals.

Five interviewees see business interests as having a strong role to play in media development – because business interests can address needs expressed by private media houses and organisations.

“ From my experience in the media outside our country, many of the private stations are run by businesses. When you look at CNN, it is run by Ted Turner. Unfortunately in our developing world, particularly in Cameroon, people don't even have a sense of business, we don't even know that the media is important in the development of the country. We toy around with the media. Even in Nigeria, private businessmen are handling most of what is happening. Look at the number of airlines, how many of them are in Nigeria? And here we cannot even afford just the one Cameroon Airlines we have. The airline is dead. This is what is happening in the media in Cameroon. You don't expect somebody outside to come and run things for you... If business organisations can really work with some of these groups of people, lots of things are going to change. But can we? That is the question. ”

(Peter Essoka, Analyst and Member of the Human Rights Commission;
Commentator: Human Rights Commission, Cameroon)

16.5 Appropriate organisational framework

In terms of an appropriate organisational framework for new media initiatives, views were mixed. One view was that the central organisational entity should be a training programme for journalists. Another interviewee emphasised the need for the organisational framework to allow for the opinions of practitioners to be sought on changes needed in the media sector. Another interviewee said the appropriate framework would be an organisation of media professionals who would be able to tell donors exactly what is needed for any media development initiative.

“ As an organisation of media professionals, we should be able to tell donors exactly who and what we are. We should give a true image of ourselves. We should make them understand that although we don't have the money, we have other things, like our competence and expertise, to offer. The donor community should be able to help professional media organisations. We are not asking them for millions, we are simply asking them to give us a helping hand. For example, because our organisations don't have a permanent staff, we are obliged to do the work of the organisation only when we have free time from our daily duties. Consequently, one can only conceive a project out of working hours, whereas if we had a permanent staff, much will be done in a better manner. Such a staff would be remunerated for the job done and would do his/her job the right way. ”

(**Anne Geudheu Youmbi**, President; NGO: APAC, Cameroon)

One interviewee said that a good organisational framework would be an NGO specifically conceived for media development initiatives.

“ Its [the media development NGO's] priority would be to strengthen the means of the media, to assist in developing the technical and human resources, to promote the transfer of technology, financing a wide range of projects in information and communication, training, so that we can have media independence, development of human resources and modernising the national news agency... It should be national as opposed to regional... A national agency would have a specific spectrum. If there is one institution in Cameroon, for instance, then it will be more effective, all resources will be targeted towards the media in Cameroon. ”

(**Jessie Atogo Ekukole**, Senior Practitioner; Media Practitioner, State/Public Sector: CRTV, Cameroon)

16.6 Pan-regional versus country-specific initiatives

Eight of the 15 interviewees supported pan-regional initiatives – because they reinforce regional cooperation and the exchange of programmes, which enrich the media.

“ The idea had come in when the OAU [Organisation of African Unity] was operating. And now even with the African Union, people are talking about those possibilities. The pan-African organ that is operating in Senegal is supposed to put all of this together. Then, there was URTNA [Union of National Radio and Television Organisations] at the time that it was supposed to organise media exchange. It was good. Sometimes we broadcast things from Nigeria, Senegal, Gambia, etc. But the idea collapsed. I worked for URTNA sometimes. In fact, I went to the 1998 World Cup in France under the banner of URTNA; I didn't go with CRTV. I was selected in Central Africa to broadcast in English. I think it will be wonderful if we can still develop the trans-regional, trans-African initiatives. There was a time we were in collaboration with Nigeria. We sent a number of delegations to the Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation to try to find out how we could have exchanges on programmes. But this never lasted. Why? I don't know. I'm very much in favour of that kind of pan-regional initiative. ”

(Peter Essoka, Analyst and Member of the Human Rights Commission;
Commentator: Human Rights Commission, Cameroon)

Mr Essoka went on to talk about how he envisaged such an initiative working.

“ If there is that kind of association developed amongst African media, it will be possible for us to know what is happening in Nigeria, in Gabon, in South Africa, etc, and vice-versa. We should try to develop pan-regional types of associations in order for us to develop. The new General Manager of CRTV sends reporters to places when there are important events, although I don't know for how long he will do this. It's an expensive thing to do. But then if we had money to make the station independent, we would be able to send out reporters, as in developed countries that have correspondents everywhere in the world. If we could have even a certain number of correspondents in certain places, it will help in pan-regional initiatives. ”

(Peter Essoka, Analyst and Member of the Human Rights Commission;
Commentator: Human Rights Commission, Cameroon)

UNESCO's Sophie Beyala was also one of the supporters of pan-regional approaches.

“ Programme exchanges are very important. It's because people know what happened in Rwanda, in Chad, or in other places, and because they know how other people have managed through community radios to safeguard peace that they think it's a good idea. When we organise programmes on the culture of peace, there are people from other communities such as Burkina Faso who come here to tell their experiences. I think such exchanges are important. This is why we think the idea of community multimedia centres is good because it enables such exchanges without any movement. ”

(Sophie Beyala, Coordinator; NGO: UNESCO Community Radios and Multimedia Programme, Cameroon)

One interviewee was more in favour of country-specific rather than pan-regional initiatives.

“ *Pan-regional initiatives are universal in thought. Universals as such are not so useful without the individual. It is the individuals that realise the universality, so therefore if the basics are not here, the root cannot stand. So, the local should be developed first. In the Catholic Church, for instance, we talk of basic Christian communities, small communities where everybody knows everybody, and then you go to the parish, then to the diocese, then to the universal. The universal church as such is not seen by anybody, what you see is the Christians and the churches. I know it is important to share ideas. I've always gained from meetings at international levels, but I think the local is more important, because if the local works well, the pan works well necessarily. The two are important but I give priority to the local.* ”

(**Cardinal Christian Tumi**, Media Support: Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Cameroon)

16.7 Initiatives relating to developmental content

Most interviewees (13) agreed that initiatives relating to developmental content are needed and should be enhanced. As part of improving developmental reporting, one interviewee called for measures to support better access to information for private sector journalists, who do not have the same access to information that journalists in the state sector have.

“ *The media has a whistle-blower mission, which is even contained in the African Union Convention for combating corruption. There is a part of the Convention that talks about the media and society. The document we are talking about is a huge one, which calls for those who manage the sector to put in place a good system of access to information, regulated and transparent access to information. It is vital to have a responsible and vital press.* ”

(**Barrister Akere Muna**, Vice President; NGO: Transparency International, Cameroon)

Another call was for development of content that is specific to African problems and African culture. Although the law in Cameroon states that 51% of radio and 30% of television programming should be local content, the interviewee from the state-run CRTV thinks that it is only the CRTV that respects this quota and that the private media houses broadcast high percentages of foreign content.

16.8 Initiatives to develop independent media

In spite of the 1990 law on the liberalisation of the broadcast sector for private sector participation, nine interviewees were of the opinion that the private media in Cameroon still need more independence. Again, as mentioned above, it is felt that the best way to increase the independence of the private media will be through a strong access to information law. As Barrister Akere Muna said above, the media has a whistle-blower mission.

Five interviewees (two government officials, one NGO representative, the state/public media practitioner and one educator) said they think there is sufficient media freedom in the country for the private media to be able to function effectively. The two government officials said, in effect, that there can be no liberty without some control. They said this is why some journalists are being brought to court to answer charges against them.

16.9 The role of media development in the country's democratisation process

All 15 interviewees agreed that the media have a major role to play in a country's democratisation process. Every actor in a democracy has to get to the masses and the only way to do this is through the media.

“ The media is the avenue for democratisation. Press men are educators, they are those who give us information, they analyse information. If that is not democracy, then what is it? Democracy is freedom of expression, freedom of speech. This is why we say press men must be resourceful, they should be research-inclined and have to present facts as they are. ”

(Asheri Kilo, Treasurer; Government: Cameroon Media Council, Cameroon)



17. Summary & Conclusions

The following findings have emerged from this research:

17.1 Media development: an organisational perspective

The media sector has changed in recent years, mostly for the better, through the following media development processes:

- the 1990 Decree on the liberalisation of the broadcast sector to allow private entrants;
- significant increase in private radio and television, although licensing is still problematic;
- seminars and training workshops for Cameroonian journalists supported by the donor community;
- introduction of a state subsidy system for private media houses, though the number and amount of such subsidies is still small; and,
- management change at the state television CRTV, with a new General Manager replacing one who had been in the position for 16 years.

17.2 Lessons learned

Lessons identified by interviewees include:

- the need for approaches that build sustainability;
- the power that media development initiatives can gain when they have a measurable public education component; and,
- the need for cultural considerations to be prominent in project identification and execution.

17.3 Developing the environment for success

The following factors were identified as barriers to media development success:

- training that is more theoretical than practical;
- poverty;
- the non-professional nature of many media owners and journalists;
- the need for government approval to carry out a media project;
- the lack of access to information, particularly for private media;
- inequitable treatment of journalists by the government;
- inadequate training, including the absence of refresher courses for practising journalists;
- the absence of well-structured professional organisations to fight for the interests of the media; and,
- the lack of professional ethics exercised by some journalists;

The following factors were identified as working in favour of successful media development:

- the presence of a peaceful environment;
- the generally positive evolution of the general regulatory environment, including the existence of media freedom guarantees and opening up of the sector to private and community players; and,
- the existence of a growing number of communication schools.

17.4 Strategic priorities

- The majority (nine) identified training as the key strategic priority.
- Four interviewees called for strategic focus on the political/governance environment in the country.
- Strongest backing from interviewees was for:
 - raising standards of journalism;
 - supporting private media development;
 - support for trade associations; and,
- Local content support was raised as a key focus by fewer interviewees (five).

Media legal and regulatory frameworks were largely seen to be in place, with the exception of the need for a stronger mechanism for supporting private media development, and the need for an access to information law.

The majority view (eight interviewees) was that there should be equal support for all three sectors (state/public, private, community). The other interviewees were almost equally divided in calling for the emphasis to be one of the three sectors.

No clear majority view emerged here but there was some strong support (five interviewees) for private investors and private interests to play a key role in media development.

The following options received some support:

- an organisation focused on training;
- an organisation of media professionals that guides donor decision-making; and,
- a new national NGO with a specific media development mandate through which donor and national state funds would be channelled.

A majority (eight) called for an emphasis on pan-regional initiatives, particularly around content-sharing and non-state news agency development. There was also strong support (13 interviewees) for enhancing developmental content, with a call for an access to information law to free up information for the private media.



18. Appendices

Appendix 1: Interviewees

1. Jenny Scott, Director; NGO: British Council, Cameroon
2. Sophie Beyala, Coordinator; NGO: UNESCO Community Radios and Multimedia Programme, Cameroon
3. Barrister Akere Muna, Vice President; NGO: Transparency International, Cameroon
4. Anne Geudheu Youmbi, President; NGO: *Association des Professionnelles Africaines de la Communication (APAC)*, Cameroon
5. Dr Asheri Kilo, Treasurer; Government: Cameroon Media Council (CMC), Cameroon
6. Charlie Ndichia, Editor-in-Chief; Media Practitioner, Private Sector: *The Post Newspaper*, Cameroon
7. Jessie Atogo Ekukole, Senior Practitioner; Media Practitioner, State/Public Sector: Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation (CRTV), Cameroon
8. Dr Sillar Mactar, Executive Chief; Media Entrepreneur: Spectrum Television, Cameroon
9. Peter Essoka, Analyst and Member of the Human Rights Commission; Commentator: Human Rights Commission, Cameroon
10. Dr Ngwang Michael, Lecturer; Academic: Advanced School of Mass Communication (ASMAC), Cameroon
11. Asong Ndifor, National President; Media Support: Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists (CACOJ), Cameroon
12. Cardinal Christian Tumi, Media Support: Head of the Roman Catholic Church, Cameroon
13. Government Official, Cameroon
14. Government Official, Cameroon
15. Academic, Cameroon

Appendix 2: Media development projects/activities described in Section 14

Interviewee name and organisation	Specific media development project: title	Key purpose/aim of project/initiative/activity	Project time span (dates or length in months/years of project) and status (ongoing, etc)	Outcome sought	Target audience	Evaluation method used (if any)	Result of evaluation	Is/was this project/activity considered by your organisation to be a success? On what basis?
Ms Jenny Scott British Council (NGO involved in training journalists)	Combined training for media practitioners	Working in collaboration with Thomson Foundation and BBC World Service Trust to facilitate the training of journalists in Cameroon	Periodic with no specific dates	Improved skills of Cameroonian journalists	Cameroonian journalists	Evaluation carried out but method not given by interviewee	Training considered successful with immediate impact on participants' work	Project considered successful from feedback from participants, trainers and funding organisations
Ms Sophie Beyala UNESCO (NGO involved in development)	Development of community radios and multimedia centres	To help educate the rural population on their rights and obligations	Fifteen community radios installed within five years and project still going on for the installation of other radios	Rural populations brought closer together and closer to governors and other realities	The rural population	Evaluation ongoing by experts in the field (no method given by interviewee)	Evaluation ongoing (although the rural population is already responding positively to the project)	Project considered successful from the reaction and enthusiasm of the population
Barrister Akere Muna Transparency International (NGO involved with organisational changes)	Budget tracking	To enable the local population to evaluate projects at the end of each budgetary year	Ongoing project	Awareness built in the local population on the running of their communities	The local population	No evaluation method given	No results mentioned	-
Mrs Anne Geudheu Youmbi APAC (NGO involved with advocacy)	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senior civil servant Government	Assisting the media	Public assistance to private communication	Each year since 2003	Subsidies granted to some private media houses	Registered media houses	No evaluation done	No results	Project considered successful because of the reaction of media houses that received subsidies

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Appendix 2: Media development projects/activities described in Section 14 – continued

Senior civil servant Government	Assistance to private communication	As above	As above	As above	As above	As above	As above	As above
Dr Asheri Kilo (Quasi-government regulatory body)	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mrs Jessie Atogo Ekukole (CRTV – Senior practitioner from state media)	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mr Charlie Ndichia <i>The Post</i> Newspaper (senior practitioner from private sector)	Charting the way forward for <i>The Post</i>	To develop a five-year corporate strategy plan for the newspaper	The project was carried out in 2005 and will continue for five years (2005 – 2010)	To enhance corporate growth profitability to promote team work within staff management and Board and to ensure corporate sustainability	The entire Cameroonian population	Evaluation to be done in 2010	Results still expected	Results still expected
Dr Silar Mactar STV (media entrepreneur)	STV projects	The launching of two television stations (STV 1 and 2) at the same time	Project launched in 2005	To show that there is quality in Africa in terms of contents, human resources and knowledge	We don't make public our evaluation methods for strategic reasons	Positive results	The project is considered successful because of the reaction of the population, the number of calls and letters received each day, the number of state ministers who come to grant interviews in studio, the number of companies that come for advertising	

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Appendix 2: Media development projects/activities described in Section 14 – continued

Mr Peter Essoka (Analyst)	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dr Ngwang Michael (Lecturer in the school of journalism - ASMAC)	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Head of Journalism School	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Me Asong Ndifor Cameroon Association of Commonwealth Journalists (Head of journalist union)	Seminars	Organising seminars	To give sufficient coverage on areas that have an impact on the lives of people	People educated on social ills such as malaria	The entire population				Successful, because six months after the project, there was bound to be an increase in media coverage
Cardinal Christian Tumi Catholic Faith (civil society)	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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Cameroon

Country Report

Case Study



19. Case Study

The installation of the Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation (CRTV) on AB3 Satellite

Globalisation and communications has had an impact on Cameroonian society. 'Communications' is high on the political agenda, following the legislative, executive and the judiciary in political importance.

For almost a decade since independence, the culture and practice of communication in Cameroon has seen positive changes and is now considered an indispensable tool for the realisation of improvements to social activities.

As a result of these changes, private businesses have brought about competition in the audio-visual landscape. The government of Cameroon could not be indifferent to such competition. In 2001, the Ministry of Communication embarked on the digitisation of the state broadcaster (CRTV) radio and television electromagnetic wave signals, with the intention of modernising the system of transmission of information. Today, CRTV wave signals are received in every part of the country, which was not the case before the digitisation process. This situation has enabled most parts of the country to be informed on national and international events.

The situation prior to digitisation and the CRTV solution

CRTV is a state broadcaster in Cameroon. It has a national coverage and owns both a television and a radio network.

The television network consists of a production centre based in Mballa II in Yaoundé, 33 broadcasting centres spread over the national territories, and reporting units in the ten provincial stations.

The radio network comprises a national radio station and provincial stations based in the provincial capitals. Each provincial station has a local broadcasting centre, while the national radio station has relay transmitters in all the provinces. Radio broadcasting is done exclusively on FM. Before digitisation, some parts of the country, especially the areas around the borders, did not receive CRTV's radio signal. This meant that part of the population was short of information broadcast by the national radio station.

The first television network was put in place in Cameroon between 1984 and 1985. This was the Country's TV main network, which covered only the largest urban centres. It was a two-way network, which enabled TV signals to be transmitted from the production centre in Mballa II and the television signals from the national television station to all broadcasting centres, and which enabled return provincial TV signals. Prior to digitisation, CRTV could not be received in some administrative regions of the country. This was the case in the Far North province, the East province, parts of the South West province, parts of the North province and parts of the North West province.

From 1995 to 2001, CRTV functioned on what was called P and T1 electromagnetic waves, which warranted the use of relay stations for transmission from the broadcasting station to the reception stations. The use of electromagnetic waves posed a major problem for the transmissions of CRTV signals. Not only were relay stations needed to be built to enable CRTV television signal to be received in remote regions that are far off from the broadcasting centre but the amounts to build the stations were very high. The government found it difficult to provide the number of relay stations to cover the entire national territory. For this reason only the major towns, where relay stations were built, received CRTV signals. Thus, this was a major handicap for effective information dissemination for most parts of the country. Moreover, the terrestrial electromagnetic waves became outdated and almost in-operational. Today, only part of this problem has been resolved.

In 2001, the Ministry of Communication embarked on a project called *La Montée de la CRTV sur Satellite*², with the aim of installing CRTV onto the satellite. On 1 February 2002, a digital system was put in place, and digital decoders in homes were to be changed from 3/4 FEC³ parameters to 7/8 parameters. The objective was to cover the entire national territory and to resolve the problem of 'shadow' areas within the country.

Since 2003, CRTV signals for both radio and television have been available on Single Carrier per Channel (SCPC) from the Atlantic Bird 3 (AB3) satellite. Today CRTV signals are received in virtually every part of the country.

The challenges of implementation

The implementation of the installation project faced a number of difficulties, including technical, social and financial. From a technical perspective, the first challenge was to provide the capability for point-to-point microwave links to cover the entire national territory.

In this sense, the installation of CRTV on AB3 satellite has also created a technical glitch: the return signal that existed with the old system has today disappeared. This means that provincial stations cannot send back TV signals to the production centre in Mballa II. The only means of exchange for TV and radio information between provincial stations and the base in Yaoundé are by way of telephone for the radio and public transport (vehicles, trains, planes) for TV elements on cassettes.

¹ Post and Telecommunication.

² Setting-up of CRTV on satellite.

³ Forward Error Correction.

These means of transportation have limitations;

- on the technical level, the radio-phonetic sound transmitted by public telephone is of poor quality giving it reduced transmission band;
- at times, programmes sent on cassettes get to the production station late; and,
- during equinox, the satellite can become dysfunctional for about five minutes.

The second challenge was of a social nature. Between 1985 (when CRTV was launched) and 2001 (when the satellite project started), CRTV signals were received only in urban centres. There was, therefore, a need to cover rural areas in order to give equal access to information to every Cameroonian, irrespective of where they reside.

The financial difficulties posed the most challenge. Although a new company, NewTech, was set up to handle the task, the process required strong financial backing. However, Cameroon was in economic recession; thus the Ministry of Communication was unable to finance the entire project.

This is a major reason why, five years after its launch, the project's goal remains unchanged; it is still attempting to enable every Cameroonian to receive satellite CRTV signals with an ordinary TV or radio set, without any additional equipment (eg a decoder).

The impact of digitisation

There is no doubt that the installation of CRTV onto AB3 satellite has considerably reduced some of the shortcomings of the analogue system. Not only has the reception of CRTV signals been improved in terms of quality but also the system is today identical all over the national territory. Similarly, the corporation registers fewer breakdowns in equipment as was the case before 2001, thereby cutting down on the huge finances that went into repairs and maintenance. Significantly, digitisation has enhanced CRTV transmissions and coverage, and made it more effective.

Today, the station provides a 24-hour broadcast enabled by two systems:

- one in SCPC on Telcom 2C satellite which descends on Bercenay in France; and,
- one in MCPC on NSS7 satellite.

The installation has created the possibility for everyone to receive CRTV signals, although it has not totally eliminated the problem of 'shadow' areas. This is especially the case in the northern part of the country (North and Far North provinces), which makes up about 24.19% of the total population. To receive the signals in these provinces, residents still need a decoder, which can sometimes be expensive.

Despite this shortcoming, the digitisation of the CRTV has impacted on the population in the hinterlands, who are now able to receive cable television, contrary to the situation prior to digitisation. Therefore, although the only TV signal available to these people is CRTV, the project has fulfilled the aim of making CRTV more accessible and equitable to a wider audience. In contrast, there has been little to no impact on people living in big cities, as they could receive a CRTV TV signal before the digitisation process.

Regarding the radio, the reception of CRTV has remained the same as it was prior to the digitisation process, namely, via FM.

However, the impact of digitisation is such that CRTV radio signals are received all over the national territory, contrary to the situation before digitisation. It does not require a digital radio or television in order to receive radio or television in Cameroon. An ordinary radio or television is sufficient to receive the signals. This means that analogue technology still works sufficiently. Decoders are needed only in 'shadow' areas.

In general terms, the satellite project has enabled CRTV signals to be received beyond the national territory. It is now possible to receive CRTV television signals on the entire African continent, in the East coast of North America, in the North coast of South America, on the entire European continent and in both the Middle and Far East regions.

Conclusion

The satellite project has contributed enormously in modernising the CRTV in terms of broadcasting and coverage. However, the limitations identified (especially the financial and technical), imply that CRTV cannot be as competitive as private channels in the broadcast sector. This is particularly true given the new drive towards the liberalisation of the communications sector. New private channels are deploying advanced technology and equipment in production and broadcasting. To be able to succeed in providing the public with instant information from every part of the world, the CRTV will have to invest more in terms of money and production capacity.

African Media Development Initiative Research

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