Journalism training in Sudan:

A move towards enhanced cooperation

Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations

AIM	Agency for Independent Media
AMDISS	Association for Media Development in South Sudan
AMWISS	Association of Media Women in South Sudan
BBCWST	British Broadcasting Corporation World Service Trust
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
EC	European Commission
DFID	[UK] Department for International Development
IMS	International Media Support
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NPC	National Press Council
RNTC	Radio Netherland Training Center
SCRN	Sudan Catholic Radio Network
SJU	Sudanese Journalists' Union
UJOSS	Union of Journalists in Southern Sudan
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WBI	World Bank Institute

1 Introduction

Freedom of expression and an independent and professionally oriented media are critical to ensuring a sustainable peace and building democratic institutions in Sudan. Clearly, raising awareness and educating the population in the lead up to the 2010 elections is imperative and the media play an important, if not crucial, role and so there must be emphasis placed on media training over the next year.

The media are key players in the political process in Sudan, and it is crucial that a free, professional and pluralist media in Sudan is bolstered thereby more effectively playing their role building sustainable peace and democracy. This is particularly important given the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections set for April 2010 and for a referendum in Southern Sudan – cornerstones for the democratic development of Sudan.

The 2010 elections will be the first to take place after the 21 year-long civil war that ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005. It is essential the media understand the process so they can effectively inform their constituents. This is no easy task. The electoral process is very complex, where Sudanese at national level will be voting at 6 different levels, and in Southern Sudan at 8 different levels.

In 2007, International Media Support (IMS) led a comprehensive assessment of the media landscape in Sudan at that time, which was published (in English and Arabic) under the title "Media in Sudan at a Crossroads: Assessment and outline of a strategy for media Support".[1] The current paper comes largely in response to a recommendation from that assessment which called for more cooperation and coordination amongst media development actors in Sudan in order to strengthen the impact of activities and best use of resources for media development.

One of the major obstacles to the development of a professional media is the lack of qualified education and training and media training remains a neglected area in Sudan. Education and training in journalism and related areas provided by universities are not responding sufficiently to the needs of building journalistic skills. Meanwhile, a number of media training initiatives carried out by Sudanese and international media training institutions have largely been conducted ad hoc but do not address the needs with a long-term and integrated vision, and without overall coordination and strategy framework.

In order to address this need, International Media Support developed a project with the objective to map out lessons learned and the challenges and priorities for media training in Sudan, and with a particular focus on the challenges related to the upcoming elections. The project consists of two main parts:

– The gathering of information on needs, experiences, challenges and lessons learned from training of journalists and media workers in Sudan
– The presentation and discussion of these findings in two round tables (in Khartoum and Juba) with major stakeholders

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1 *Please see http://www.i-m-s.dk/*

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2 Methodology and scope of the study

The methodology for collecting the information involved interviews with journalists, training providers, international organizations delivering training and international donors investing in media training. In addition, focus group sessions were held with media practitioners.

Two surveys were designed – one for organizations involved in conducting media training and the other for journalists. In total, 17 donors or media training institutions provided information (response rate of 63%) as did approximately 30 journalists. Additional journalists were interviewed individually or participated in the focus group sessions.

The surveys and focus groups took place in late 2008 and early 2009. The surveys were supplemented with information and interviews carried out during a mission to Southern Sudan in May-June 2009.

The key research questions for the media training organizations dealt with organizational and funding information, types of training conducted (including content, format and participants), lessons learned and future training plans.

The key questions for the journalists included basic demographic information, as well as questions pertaining to training the journalist had participated in (content, format) and what they felt were the training needs that would be important in the future.

Additionally, there was scope in the questions that allowed respondents to present their thoughts on such aspects of training such as coordination amongst donors and training providers and how trainees were chosen.

The two round tables were carried out on 22 and 24 June 2009 in Khartoum and Juba. More than 30 participants took part in both meetings representing a broad range of stakeholders related to training of journalists and media workers.

The information provided in this report is by no means exhaustive. Indeed, several of the major donors did not provide input for this report nor did some training providers. Despite this, the report provides a useful snapshot of media training in Sudan and the lessons and challenges ahead within this field of work.

3 Actors engaged in media training

The media training scene is fairly active in Sudan and ahead of the upcoming 2010 elections there is a lot of concern as to the preparedness and capacity within the media sector for playing an active role in covering the elections.

3.1 Sudanese institutions

Amongst the national or local training providers the most visible and well-known institutions include Nasqh Centre for Journalism, Atheer, Teeba Press, Sudan Press Watch. However, other non-governmental organizations are also playing an indirect role in furthering capacity within the media sector through provision of non-technical knowledge and material, access to support and so forth. There are also civil society organizations (such as universities and colleges as well as a few of non-governmental voluntary organizations) and private sector companies.

There are a handful of public and private universities and colleges which provide diplomas or academic degrees to students in media. These include, Khartoum University, Omdurman Islamic University, Garden City College, Sudan Academy for Communication and Sudan University. However, most of these institutions (especially the public schools) are ill-equipped and lack the necessary inputs which would ensure students receive training on some of the practical aspects of media. There is, however, room for collaboration between the private schools and public schools where the private schools are able and willing to provide their facilities and equipment for students from outside their campus. This can be a short term solution to the equipment and hardware deficiencies of some of the larger and more accessible and affordable universities.

The Sudanese Journalists' Union has no training budget of their own and relies on training opportunities provided through other institutions of which they are members. These include the Federation of Arab Journalists, Union of African Journalists and the Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA). These however do not represent trainings that are customized to suit particular needs but rather are regional events which bring together journalists from the region. The SJU has provided training for almost 300 journalists.

3.2 International training providers

There are numerous international media development agencies working in Sudan, in both north and south. These include: BBC World Service Trust (BBCWST), Deutsche Welle (DW), Internews, Radio Netherlands Training Center (RNTC), FreeVoice and UN agencies to name a few.

BBCWST is the major player in media training, and has been active in Sudan for almost three years now. With funding from DFID, the BBCWST is currently implementing a capacity building project covering both Northern and Southern Sudan but focusing primarily on radio. They are also working with Khartoum University to provide training to freshman students in the media department.

Recently a few of the International NGOs, such as Care in South Kordofan, have also taken to developing media projects and training activities around their development interventions and programs. However, these INGOs tend to be less qualified to develop and deliver media training programs.

Quite a number of Sudanese have been trained in journalism through their inclusion in new media outlets. The UN radio in Sudan, Miraya, is one example, where mainly young Sudanese have been trained in radio production.

3.3 Donors

A considerable amount of support and assistance is being allocated by international donors towards capacity development of the media sector. In recent years, donors in the sector have included: the Swiss, NPA, NCA, DFID, EC, Germany, Canada, Sweden, Netherlands and UN agencies. Expenditures on training 2007-2008 have ranged from a low of USD 7000 to a reported high of BBCWST that is USD 700,000. It is likely that UN agencies have higher budgets, however, they did not respond to survey questions regarding budgets (the question was listed as optional).

Most organizations believe that these figures will increase over the next two years. In late 2008, UNDP put out a Request for Proposals from training providers to provide training services for journalists as well as to develop capacity amongst media institutions and practitioners on monitoring democratic processes in the country. UNDP is in the process of finalizing its selection of the training provider that it will be working with.

However, this support has faced some difficulties. The recent expulsion of international organizations working in the northern part of the country, as well as the restrictions and scrutiny being placed on the internationals, has prompted donors to reconsider their options and look for alternative ways through which to channel their assistance and support programs. Amongst the international agencies that have had to review their presence in Sudan is the BBCWST which has now relocated its international staff to Southern Sudan and scaled down its presence in the northern part of the country.

The World Bank Institute (WBI) had signed an agreement with the Ministry of Finance and National Economy through which the Ministry would allocate USD 5,000,000 for capacity building interventions for government institutions covering different sectors including the media sector. Some interventions were delivered, however, for various reasons the media sector capacity building interventions did not materialize. The agreement continues to be valid but needs to be pursued from the Bank's side since the finance is being put up by the Ministry, and the WBI was to be responsible for the training provision.

Despite this, the World Bank's Juba office was able to organize a media training course for Southern Sudanese journalists with emphasis on economic and development reporting in early 2009.

There is some coordination amongst the donors with regards to assistance to the media sector and more specifically for capacity development with an emphasis on the short term. The Donor Electoral Group, in which most of the principal donors are represented, has a media working group which coordinates efforts and elaborates priorities with regard to the media sector. The larger part of funds allocated for media development has been pooled and channeled through the UNDP, which now also chairs the media working

group. Nonetheless, individual donors such as DFID and USAID also provide support independently and outside the pool of donor funds.

Initially, the media sub-group was focused on advocacy and capacity building but lately the advocacy focus has been considerably reduced and efforts are currently only focused on capacity building. For the immediate future the capacity building focus is on the Electoral Democratic Process with emphasis being put on coverage of the upcoming elections and the media needs relevant to this issue.

The NEC is developing its own media strategy with the support of the international community. At the time of writing, UNDP was waiting on the NEC and its needs so as to tailor a responsive program to the needs for the coming period.

Another initiative related to coordination between media training actors is coming from DFID. They hired an independent consultant to undertake some informal research, interviews and focus group sessions and to put together some preliminary ideas and recommendations for media programming in Sudan. One idea that was developed was setting up a taskforce in which different leading media actors would come together and act as a "think tank" highlighting the interests and concerns of the media industry in Sudan and targeting media practitioners, donors, and policy makers, as well as acting as a consultative and evaluating body. The idea, however, has not yet been carried forward.

4 Training content, format and participants

Most training that has been conducted in Sudan has been short-term, i.e. ranging from 3-5 days. Some organizations (such as SCRN and the UN Radio Miraya) conduct in-house training that tends to be much longer term and can continue for several months. BBCWST has also moved to in-house training that tends to last for several weeks or months at a time.

Content of the training has been varied. The tendency has been to focus on basic reporting skills such as news gathering, writing, interviewing, and ethics; on the radio side there has been additional training in programming, field and studio recording and editing. Two organizations also cited English as a subject taught and several organizations included computer skills such as internet and IT skills in their training while one also addressed safety concerns. Two organizations cited economic and business reporting training while one included human rights.

The respondents noted there were some areas of repetition for those who had participated in more than one training. These areas included discussions of gender, freedom of expression and conflict reporting.

Most training has been carried out in traditional group lectures with some practical elements and anywhere from 10-20 participants. Participants in most cases came from across Sudan and were from all levels from junior reporters to senior editors and managers. In several cases trainings were focused strictly on the south while others focused on the north. Some organizations in Southern Sudan, including Gurtong, SCRN, Radio Miraya, carry out their own in-house training. In most other cases, heads of news organizations were asked to select one of their journalists; sometimes this was done in consultation with the organization providing the training.

All organizations said they intend to continue with training efforts in 2009-2010 and that they would also have a greater budget for this training. Most training providers indicated they will, for the most part, continue to provide similar content in the same format as they have been. However, most also indicated that more of the focus would be on election training. It is not clear, however, whether election reporting would be supplemental or take the place of other journalistic training.

5 Training needs, challenges and lessons learned

Sudan, Africa's largest country, is vast. According to the 2008 census, there are more than 39 million inhabitants living in 25 states. The illiteracy rate is almost 60 per cent. As such, election coverage will be a logistical challenge. In addition, according to the press council there are some 3,000 journalists in Sudan though it is not known how many are computer literate, able to conduct basic internet research or even have regular access to the internet. Indeed, infrastructure throughout the country is weak.

It is clear that despite the years of training and the resources that have been allotted to journalism training in Sudan, the needs continue to be enormous. This is particularly true given the significance of the elections in 2010 and the referendum in 2011. Serious challenges exist ahead of any media development initiative with regard to the elections including the relatively low understanding of governance issues amongst the general population, the lack of a clear electoral process despite the elections being only a few months away, and most significantly poor journalistic ethics.

On the ground capacity of journalists remains limited and there are considerable needs. Elections coverage alone represents a fairly advanced need but a number of media institutions and media practitioners lack even more basic journalistic and computer skills. Knowledge of governance and civic issues amongst media practitioners is also lacking.

Clearly, the fact that journalists across the country have been and continue to receive training is positive. However, there are a number of needs and challenges related to the training that need to be addressed, in order to ensure that training builds the desired capacity. These needs and challenges are presented below, while also highlighting some of the particular lessons learned from the training that has taken place.

Additionally, a list of needs and challenges outside the training area, which has significantly impact on the quality of journalism, has also been identified in this research and are described below.

> **Lesson learned:** *All respondents said the training they had received was useful. In particular, they appreciated training that was combined with other activities (practical and hands on experience) or that involved an exchange to another country.*

5.1 Training issues

Strengthen coordination

While there have been some initiatives for coordination at both the local and international levels including coordination on technical, financial and organizational aspects of training, this should be strengthened. However, one organization cautioned that coordination clearly depends on the goal and may not be suited to each case. All respondents said there should be coordination amongst training providers and that they have tried to coordinate and would continue to do so. It was agreed that coordination and cooperation

were important for several reasons including: to avoid duplication of work; to share ideas and experiences; to identify potential joint projects; to maximize resources; to compliment strengths of each organization; to monitor training impact; to measure the success or failure of training; and, to make future planning easier. There were some suggestions that any ongoing coordination efforts would be difficult.

> **Lesson learned:** *In most cases there should be coordination. Some organizations have expertise in the south while others in the north and some in Darfur. But in addition to geographic areas of expertise, there are also content areas of expertise and these can often be coordinated. Or are you assisting with the set-up of radio stations? If so, perhaps this could be coordinated with another organization that provides tailor-made training for that particular situation. This may then mean that efforts of providing training would be coordinated with efforts at providing resources.*

Focus training and reach all levels

Media training to date in Sudan has almost always focused on the journalist with little attention given to the media institution or entity as a whole. Media institutions also have capacity development needs which must be addressed. These have largely been overlooked and there are clearly needs for enhanced management so that editorial skills can be effectively implemented but also overseen.

There is also too little attention given decision-making levels in the institutions which can make it difficult for journalists to capitalize or implement what they have learned due to decisions made higher up the food chain, i.e. editors, managers and even owners. This also leads to frustration where the journalists find resistance in applying what has been learned and almost always they will revert to the "old way" of doing things. In addition, service providers often design their training content to cater to a wide group that may be at different levels in terms of their knowledge and skills. It is believed that in this way each participant is likely to find something of value in the training. But that approach is neither sustainable nor very effective. As one respondent said: "it's like casting a net to catch a specific kind of fish whereas the only real type of fish that might be preferred in the market is Tilapia; the rest is useless."

> **Lesson learned:** *Training needs to be well-focused and designed according to real needs; this will oftentimes mean that it needs to be customized for a specific group of people and/or specific institutions.*

Recruitment of trainees

Media outlets also don't always choose the person most suited to a particular training but rather choose the person most convenient. Training providers therefore should be more actively involved in this process as well so not only the training activities are appropriate to the intended audience but also that the right audience is actually in attendance.

Media outlets must give training priority

There seems to be a paradox with regards to how training is viewed by journalists and media trainers. On one hand, many of the media practitioners interviewed said they believe there is a clear need for training. However, one media training provider said there seems to be a problem with the perception towards training. This provider went on to say that journalists often see training as unnecessary and that in some cases an attitude of 'we know it all' prevails.

Perhaps one of the issues is that local media outlets and journalists don't feel that the training being offered meets their needs. In any case, there needs to be some communication on this matter to ensure training is both awarded priority and meets the needs on all sides.

In addition, trainees are also often skeptical when the trainers are nationals as opposed to internationals. Often within institutions training is not considered a priority and journalists are most often left to find resources and opportunities for training from themselves. The institution rarely covers any training costs for its staff and even when a journalist is able to find a training opportunity the institution is reluctant to give the journalist the time off to attend the training. In some cases, editors are reluctant to send their best people for training and the best people are reluctant to give up valuable time to train. Often they can't recognize that they need to train.

Longer-term training

Short-term training or interventions do not, for the most part, lead to sustainability. Clearly, despite past training, there is still a large need for basic journalism skills training, English language training as well as computer, internet and email skills. These needs cannot be addressed by short-term trainings; rather long-term media training programmes and perhaps even new training institutions need to be established. Where the need for long-term capacity building exists in Sudan on a whole, the need is definitely greater in Southern Sudan.

> **Lesson learned:** *In some cases the goal has been to build capacity specifically with regards to the elections and its coverage. However, once training begins it is found that the sector is in need of more basic training and capacity building. Similarly, at the level of the general public, there needs to be a lot more basic information on rights and civic education before they can benefit from election-specific media messages.*

Appropriate training formats

Respondents felt that external trainings require time and most newspaper owners and managers are reluctant to let their staff go for a few days. At the same time, however the journalists themselves prefer this type of training because it gives them an opportunity to leave their work environment and enter a learning environment. Respondents felt that if this is problematic and ends up keeping journalists from benefiting and making use of training opportunities then in-house training or on-the-job training is a second option.

Meanwhile, one main training provider believes in-house training tends to be more effective than bringing together trainees from different stations and delivering a workshop for a fixed number of days. There has, however, been a down side to this as well since this type of training is less conventional

and was consequently frowned upon by the trainees who believed that the agency was trying to save money this way.

Online or long-distance training is not an option and most journalists are not skilled enough to interact with a computer and the internet.

> **Lesson learned:** *In addition to appropriate formats, it is important that training locations also be taken into consideration. One respondent suggested that training take place away from their city of residence or work place to ensure that participants are fully free.*

Strengthen election reporting

The complexity of the upcoming elections cannot be underestimated. Voter education is crucial given the high illiteracy rate, the fragile transitional state which the country is in and where it is highly likely that those under the age of 40 have not voted before. There will need to be extensive training regarding election coverage, conflict coverage, journalistic ethics and federalism.

Monitoring, evaluation and follow-up

There must be some form of comprehensive monitoring and evaluation built into any training programs. While such activities often prove challenging, only with ongoing monitoring will training providers know what the needs are as they change and evolve. Follow-up after training is also very weak and seldom exercised by training providers. Once the service is delivered it seems that training providers are neither keen nor interested in following up on the results and/or impact of their training inputs. This is also the case on the part of the institutions which seem to be indifferent to the newly acquired skills and knowledge of its journalists and thus unable to see how these may be applied.

5.2 Additional factors influencing the quality of journalism

Training is not the *only* need for enhancing quality in journalism

According to one DFID consultant:[2] there exists the "myth of [a] good telecommunications network" in Sudan and this must be addressed or at the very least taken into account when considering media development interventions. Indeed, it must be acknowledged that while journalists and editors may receive training, if they do not have the equipment and resources to do their job, much of the training will be for naught. As such, this must be taken into account when considering media development and training interventions. Training is not a magic bullet which can solve all problems related to poor quality in journalism; rather a comprehensive approach needs to be taken.

Clearly, there is, at least in the South, a primary need for resources in order for effective training to be carried out, for if, as mentioned above, there are no resources then there can be no coverage, election or otherwise. Thus, while most donors seem to be intent on technical assistance, there must also be some effort made to provide resources so that journalists throughout Sudan can produce effective coverage of their communities.

2   *Executive Sudanese Media Focus Group: Meeting the responsibility and the challenge of covering the elections: Outcomes and Recommendations by Taghrid al-Sanhouri.*

In addition, mobility in this vast country is a challenge and will prove even more challenging when national elections need to be covered. One journalist from the South said there is a need for media houses to come together so that they can more effectively cover the entire country (or the South).

Safety and security of journalists

Journalists' movements are restricted by security regulations and thus it is difficult to gather information. Furthermore, it can be expected that restrictions and even harassment against journalists and media workers will increase towards the elections. Adequate attention to prevent this development to hamper journalistic work is crucial.

Legislative environment

The laws and regulations governing the media sector and journalism in Sudan present another challenge. Journalists are sometimes taken to court and imprisoned for their writings. While the laws themselves can sometimes be confusing, misunderstood, misinterpreted or misused, it is still essential that media practitioners receive training on the laws (both national and international) applicable to them and to ensure that they are well acquainted with the different sensitive and problematic areas in the laws. During the electoral period this will, of course, introduce a whole new set of legislation that journalists must know and understand with the added responsibility of having to present this information to their audiences.

Working conditions

Wages and salaries for the larger majority of journalists is relatively poor. These being the case journalists have difficulty meeting the cost of training from their own pockets and even when training is being provided at no cost – the transportation costs to/from the training venue represents a significant cost to the journalists' budget. These structural issues have to be considered by stakeholders who are keen on developing capacity within the challenging environment of the media sector in Sudan.

Networking

There should be some effort placed to improve networking and sharing of information amongst Sudanese journalists and between Sudanese and international journalists. Such national and international networking would provide a secondary service in the sense of mentoring and skill sharing.

Election monitoring

It is not yet clear how the election coverage will be monitored. The Southern Sudan Ministry of Information has created a governmental election monitoring unit, however, this unit should be coordinated with the electoral commission and journalist organizations so that there can be not only effective monitoring but also information sharing regarding media laws and electoral laws that affect media. The UNDP is planning to fund monitoring of the media's coverage of the elections. A similar initiative is planned for by International Media Support (IMS).

Needs on the ground

There appears to be some short-sightedness regarding priorities and commitment to support for the media sector. Assistance is largely being used to address the pressing and urgent needs of the sector in light of the upcoming elections. Donor support towards capacity development remains inattentive both to the long term as well as to the institutional needs of the sector.

Training is not identified according to need but rather according to what is being offered. One example of this is from Southern Sudan, where a govern-

ment official felt that what was offered from international training providers was not always meeting the needs of the media. He stated as an example, that much training has been offered in news coverage, but very little in other genres (information, drama, etc.) which are also an integrated part of media content. Neither institutions nor journalists seem to have a way of identifying their training needs and accordingly identify which training opportunities are suitable for them. Little, if any, capacity assessment or capacity development plans exist. Service providers often design their training content to cater to a wide group that may be at different levels in terms of their knowledge and skills, that way everyone is likely to find something in the training. But that approach is not a good approach.

Needs in Southern Sudan

There is also a substantially lower level in Southern Sudan than there is in the North which to some extent has been addressed by some training providers including BBCWST, Internews and SCRN. In addition to basic, advanced and specialized skills it seems that there is also a demand and need for English language training and computer skills. While these areas may be beyond the scope of media development providers (and donors), they must be taken into consideration in the planning phase of media development interventions.

> **Lesson learned:** *There is the need for a media training centre for Southern Sudan. Only with such a centre will Southern Sudan have structured media training content for the short, medium and long-term and be able to build their own capacity.*

6 Recommendations

Clearly, there is much work that can be done with regards to media training and overall media development in Sudan. The question, however, remains as to how best to meet these needs and to ensure coordination and collaboration amongst media development practitioners on the ground. This section intends to outline only some of the possibilities for training and other media development interventions. It is important to point out that all the needs discussed above have been addressed below and these recommendations are intended only as a point of departure and as a basis of discussion for the June 2009 roundtables in Khartoum and Juba.

When considering these recommendations it may also be useful to consider who or which organization/s might be best placed to act as lead or to take on any particular recommendation.

Strengthen coordination and cooperation
The donors working group on media, which is set up as part of the donors Electoral Group, is clearly one way to work towards continued cooperation and coordination and should continue, perhaps on a more active basis, while widening the scope outside the electoral process. One recommendation coming out of the DFID research that could be pursued is the idea of a media producers' taskforce (in addition to the donors working group on media), where ideas and conclusions are developed and steps to their implementation agreed upon. The taskforce could also act as an interface between the international community, donor community and Sudanese media. Proper measures need to address the differences in Sudan, and the particular needs in Southern Sudan.

A strengthened coordination and cooperation among Sudanese media outlets and training institutions should be paired with a similar process among the international organizations providing media training.

Joint strategy for long-term media training and capacity building
There is a need to move away from short-term ad hoc training and towards a long-term approach for building capacity among journalist and other media workers. Sudanese and international stakeholders should pursue development of a joint strategy for long-term capacity building within the media sector. Part of such a strategy would include the strengthening of existing media training institutions as well as the establishment new media training institutions, especially in Southern Sudan. Local ownership and buy-in from the Sudanese media community are key factors in such a process.

Strengthen election reporting
This can be done in numerous ways, first and foremost of course is training in political reporting and the electoral process. But there must also be access to information. One way this can be done is to develop an elections packet that could be distributed to all media outlets. This packet could include a guide to the election law or an abridged election law document. Other material could include a list of political parties and their platforms and candidates; historical background; etc. Finally, Journalists and editors should be encouraged to devise a list of best practices. This could be done in cooperation or consultation with journalist organizations in other countries that have come up with such a thing, such as the case of Togo. Nevertheless, there should be no il-

lusions that short-term training in electoral coverage of journalists in Sudan will guarantee high-quality coverage. The need for capacity building goes well beyond what can be addressed within the short term. However, some improvement can be expected through these measures.

Encourage networking and cooperation between media outlets
Resources are clearly a challenge in Sudan as is the complexity of the elections themselves. This can be addressed in several ways. First, it may well be useful for media outlets to set up a specific team to focus on the elections. Second, pool reporting, where journalists from different media organizations work together to more effectively cover the region or country, can be encouraged through training as well.

Pool reporting was done successfully in Burundi, and could be done in Sudan. In Burundi, it was done with radio, however in Sudan it could be done in different ways – partnerships between newspapers or community radios or even across media.

Legislative environment
New media legislation is to be introduced both in northern and southern Sudan and it is essential that journalists are familiar with these laws. It is also important that these laws not be restrictive and if they are there should be some work done with legislators to make the legislation less so. In addition, it is crucial that media operators know, understand and are able to impart legislation as it pertains to the elections.

Security and safety
The movement of journalists is largely restricted by security regulations and this will likely become an even larger issue during the electoral period. There is a clear need for training in safety and risk awareness among journalists and editors. In addition, it would be important to create some space for dialogue between authorities and media to address issues of safety and current restrictions on movement.

7 The Way Forward – recommendations from the Khartoum and Juba roundtables

Journalists and media training representatives met in both northern (Khartoum) and southern (Juba) Sudan, June 22 and 24, 2009 respectively, to try to explore ways to further cooperation and coordination of media training as Sudan prepares for elections next year. Some thirty participants took part in each of the roundtables.

The roundtable discussions were largely based on the above review focusing on the efforts and lessons learned regarding media training in Sudan. The roundtable developed a number of recommendations with a view to improving coordination amongst those actors involved in the media development of Sudan.

The first roundtable discussion was held in Khartoum in partnership with Sudanese Journalists' Union (SJU) while the second was in Juba where IMS partnered with the Association for Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS).

Both round tables brought together national and international stakeholders who worked together to map out lessons learned and outlined challenges and priorities for media training in Sudan in the context of the current political situation as well as the upcoming national elections and referendum. Participants included working journalists, representatives from government, local media organizations as well as local and international NGOs and donors.

Presented at the roundtables was this paper on media training in Sudan. The roundtable discussions served as a forum to coordinate existing initiatives in the field of media training and initiate new projects and programmes to further develop journalistic skills with regards to reporting on political topics and covering elections.

While the needs for the media community and the needs for enhanced cooperation among media development actors are quite similar in both northern and southern Sudan, it must be emphasized that the working environments are quite different.

Several recommendations came out of the discussions and were largely focused on training and coordination issues. They included the following:

Election-related Issues:
- The National Electoral Commission should be properly trained and have regular briefings with media.
- There must be coordination between the National Electoral Commission (NEC) and local and international NGOs.
- The election act, CPA and other relevant documents should be distributed to journalists so they can publish guides and handbooks.

Training Issues:
- Training must include the next generation of journalists.
- Training modules should be shared. (UNIFEM, UNESCO and IMS have offered up modules that could be inserted into journalism training programs).
- There is a need for management training which would help managers address human resource issues such as lack of motivation and poor morale.

- Develop capacity in languages. While this is be a long-term issue it is one that must begin to be addressed immediately by training institutions and organizations as well as media outlets.
- Develop universities and revise curricula. The universities are in need of training labs so that the practical elements of journalism today can be taught along with theory.
- Donors should find a way to meet the need for technical equipment. In many cases donors are not funding such equipment. It is therefore recommended that donors include equipment in their packages. Additionally, when applying for funds, organizations should build in to their budgets lines for equipment, travel and telephone costs.

Capacity Building:
- Media outlets should be provided training on how to access funding, where to look for it and how to put proposals together.
- Training institutions need to ensure they meet the needs on the ground. Additionally, donors need to respond to the needs on the ground rather than having local organizations and institutions meeting the demands of a donor driven agenda.
- Ensure that a comprehensive needs assessment from the perspective of journalists and editors is carried out. Such an assessment can help to identify gaps as well as identify players and resources. From there organizations can work out a long-term strategy to match the needs with the capacities of different organizations.

Coordination:
- There should be a round table discussion for local media organizations to work on coordination/harmonization.
- Many international organizations do not have permanent representation on the ground. It would therefore be advantageous for those who do have permanent representation to meet on a regular basis and report to those outside Sudan.
- Create one forum that would help coordinate all actors. This would help determine interventions, match needs with resources, competencies.

There were several recommendations that came up in Khartoum that were specific to northern Sudan. These include:

- Develop use of IT in media work including cameras, computers, mobile telephony.
- Encourage private journalism training institutions to coordinate curricula.
- Ensure practical elements of journalism are integrated into university curriculum.

As in Khartoum, there were a number of recommendations that came up at the Juba roundtable that were specific to the needs of coordinating media development in Southern Sudan. These included:

- Mapping of media development in Southern Sudan. IMS will take preliminary steps.
- Set up press council to field and adjudicate complaints. It would have to ensure that such a council would be independent and not used as a tool for the government.
- Set up a media center in Juba which would bring all different media associations together and be a central repository for training. This could be housed at the University of Juba and/or based upon the Media Academy (aka School of Journalism) housed at Juba Post. Such an initiative could be done in a phased approach and ultimately lead to a type of UNESCO center of (communication) excellence.

- Hold round table for local media organizations to work on coordination and harmonization to address competition and lack of coordination and cooperation between local organizations (AMDISS, AIM, UJOSS, AMWISS) on the ground address what each organization does and how journalists and media society at large benefit from each.
- There must be outreach and training carried out in the states and not just in Juba.
- Organizers must ensure that there is follow up.
- To improve coordination on the ground work more closely with local organizations on the ground such as AMDISS, AIM, UJOSS, AMWISS
- Devise a strategy for a media monitoring/self-regulatory body. The four local organizations (AMDISS, AIM, UJOSS, AMWISS) could work together on this.
- Need an electoral code of conduct for journalists. Have local journalists meet with NEC to devise such a code.
- Need to address security and safety issues.
- Need to create a regular coordinating mechanism.

8 Roundtable participants

Khartoum Roundtable
1. Dr. Youssif Ismail, TAMAM
2. Abdulrahman Zaroug, Al-Majd newspaper
3. Marqani Yoniss, SJU
4. Elfatih Elsead, Anwar Press Center
5. Younis Shouaib, Sudan Radio
6. Mohammed Elfadin, Ramattan News
7. Huda Seif, EU
8. Kouider Zerrouk, UNMIS
9. Abeer Muhi Eldar, El Houraa newspaper
10. Enas Badri, PAT
11. Abdule Hamid Rhamatalla, DANIDA
12. Abdul Wahab Salih Muhammed, SUNA
13. Hassan al-bashir Bakri, SUNA
14. Sana Eldardiny, SJU
15. Murtada El-Ghali, Ajrass al-Hurriya
16. Altom Ahmed, Turath
17. Nasser Bigdash, Alwast Alegtisady
18. Neimat Bilal, Sudan Press
19. Mohammed Kashan, Al-Ahdath newspaper
20. Dr. Amel Ibrahim, Nasaq Journalism Center
21. Hussein El-Tigani, Sudan Press Watch
22. Ameir Abdel Majeid, Sudan Press Watch
23. Abbas Eltijani, BBCWST
24. Hezekiel Dlamini, UNESCO
25. Elsadig Kafy, Al-Shorooj
26. Abdallah Hassa, Al-Shorooj
27. Albaqir Alafif, Khatim Adlan Centre
28. Omneya Mansour, EC
29. Maha Salah, journalist
30. Ali Shumo, NPC
31. Muheldin Titawi, SJU
32. Finn Rasmussen, IMS
33. Michelle Betz, IMS
34. Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi, IMS

Juba Roundtable
1. Mamoun Mussa, BBCWST
2. Khalid Ahmed Dannaa, BBCWST
3. Liemia Abubakr, KCHRED
4. Gwado Ado, MIB
5. William Zaza, University of Juba
6. Jeff Phillips, BBCWST
7. Moyiga Nduru, NASS
8. John Gachie, Article 19
9. Apollonia Mathia, AMWISS
10. Tore Torstad, NCA
11. Carmel Whelton, Deloitte/Bearing Point
12. Fenu Bekele, Freevoice
13. Bile Bol, Centre for Documentation and Advocacy
14. Sr. Cecilia Sierra Solcido, Bahkita FM
15. Colin Lasu, EDC, Sudan Radio Service

16. Douglas Armour, UNICEF
17. SM Asaduzzaman, UNMIS
18. Hezekiel Dlamini, UNESCO
19. Eunice Smith, UNESCO
20. Apune Jacob Alfred, BBCWST
21. Andre Suren, DW
22. Isaac Billy, Juba Post
23. Mustafa Biong, GoSS, Min. of Information
24. Santino Okanyi, journalist
25. Maria Frauenrath, DW
26. David Dau, AIM
27. Lucie Luguga, UNIFEM
28. Joseph Contreras, UNMIS
29. Ashraf Eissa, UNMIS
30. Bullen Kenyi, Juba Post
31. Anne Dietrich, DED
32. Joanne cheah, UNDP
33. Jimmy Atilio, Budi Media
34. Abdel Rahman el-Mahdi, IMS
35. Michelle Betz, IMS