

MEDIA AND ELECTIONS IN SUDAN
MONITORING THE COVERAGE OF SUDAN 2010 ELECTIONS
INTERIM REPORT No. 5

Period 11 - 23 April 2010

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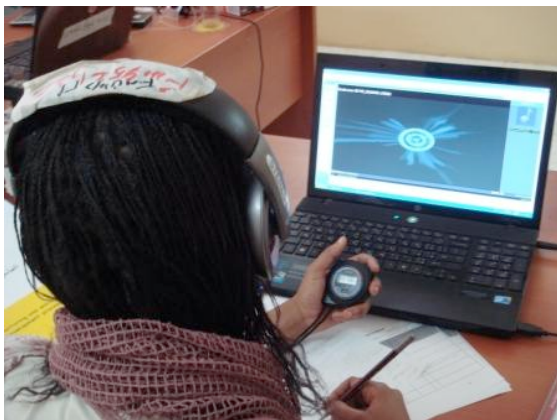


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I. Foreword and Executive Summary

This report provides the findings of the media monitoring activities during the election days in Sudan spanning from 11-15 April and the post-election days during which the country was awaiting the results of the vote count between 16-23 April. This is the fifth media monitoring report published by the Sudan Media and Elections Consortium (SMEC).

The election and post-election monitoring during this period is slightly different from the monitoring carried out in the campaigning period prior to the elections. Political campaigning is no longer prevalent in media advertisements or in news pieces or programmes. The media's focus during and in the days after the elections has been on the actual elections and the counting of votes. Therefore, during the election days the monitors did not measure the time and space allocated to the various political parties. Instead, monitors concentrated on counting the number of cases in which media covered political actors and parties and the formats used by the media for their coverage. For the post-election period up to 23 April, the monitors again measured the airtime and space devoted to political parties and the tone used in the coverage. The Annex of this report shows the findings on the tone of coverage and the allocation of time and space per medium observed.

The monitors have put extra attention on qualitative monitoring: what are the formats used by the media to inform the public on post-election news; what are the topics covered in post-election news, and are the media using professional standards and are they balanced in their reporting?

All media, newspapers, radio and television channels allocated extensive space and time to cover the voting process during the elections and in the post election days. They tried and succeeded in following the elections as detailed as possible on a national level, but certainly also at a local level. This meant that not only official sources were heard, but also the voices of voters were aired and published.

Mentors who were part of the SMEC Media Training component and placed in various media houses throughout the country, reported that the journalists they were working with visited polling stations to follow what was happening on the ground. For many media this was a new experience where some radio journalists managed to do live-reporting on location using their mobile phones to do a phone-in, as was the case at South Sudan Radio.

Now that paid advertisements were no longer one of the main formats by which the elections were covered, it was the news format that was used to bring the majority of election -related news to the public.

A remarkable and positive finding was the limited number of hate speech cases in the media during the elections. Only 30 cases of hate speech were found, where politicians and political parties were responsible for 28 of these cases of hate speech. This shows that media were inclined to stick to balanced reporting, taking into account the possible security risks. Despite this, there were cases of biased reporting and this also took place in the last phase of the campaigning period. Again there were again reports of journalists incorporating their private opinions in news articles and favouring one or the other party. In some cases editors-in-chief seemed to lack full control of content as their media published articles based on unreliable sources.

The monitoring of Sudanese media commenced on 13 February 2010 at the opening of the electoral campaign and will continue until the end of May in order to assess the post-election coverage. The SMEC carries out media monitoring of four TV stations, seventeen radio channels and thirteen newspapers on a daily basis. The media selected for monitoring have been chosen based on a number of criteria, including territorial outreach, estimated audience, and circulation.

The Media and Elections Project, funded by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is implemented by the Sudan Media and Elections Consortium (SMEC), a group of national and international organisations with expertise in media support. These are: Sudanese Development Initiative (SUDIA), International Media Support (IMS), Norwegian Peoples Aid (NPA), Osservatorio di Pavia, Arab Working Group for media monitoring and Fojo Media Institute.

For more information, contact Ms. Brigitte Sins, Project Manager, Tel. + 249 907 206 812 or + 45 8832 7005, email: bs@i-m-s.dk or britsins@hotmail.com. Khartoum: Mr. Abbas Tigani, Tel. + 249 912 127 279, email: abbastigani@sudia.org Juba: Mr. James Boboya Edimond, Tel. +249 955 004 798, email: boboya@npaid.org

II. Qualitative analysis of the media coverage during the election days (11 – 15 April)

These findings apply to all 34 broadcast and print media monitored during the days of the elections. In print media the most common format used to cover the elections was the news format, while opinion and analysis pieces along with other kinds of journalistic formats were also used on a smaller scale. Like in previous monitoring periods during the election campaign, NCP and SPLM received the most space in print media.

In broadcast media, radio and television, the formats used varied between news shows and debates, but the news format was also in this case the most common format used. Television stations concentrated on President Al-Bashir and the NCP in the North and on Salva Kiir and SPLM in the South.

Even though news was the standard format for all media, journalistic principles like balanced and accurate reporting were sometimes lacking. During the days of voting, some journalists wrote stories based on unreliable sources which newspapers admitted to and publically apologised for after the correct stories were verified. Some journalists were biased to certain political parties, criticising the opposition parties. This did not only occur in opinion articles and columns, but also in features and news articles, where journalists included their personal opinions in their news pieces and concentrated on the mistakes of others and accusing them of various wrong-doings. For Northern newspapers and the broadcast media in general the most news on SPLM was negative. Media outlets aimed at a Southern audience held negative coverage on the NCP.

As for television stations mainly controlled by the governments (National or GoSS), the coverage was mostly balanced, but sometimes lacked accuracy by hiding parts of facts. There were attempts to manipulate information to serve a certain political party.

Some polls were published in the newspapers in the North during the election days to give the public a voice, but also in some instances to set a certain agenda. The first poll was on the process of voting at the polling centres and a second poll was about 'who had the best chances of winning the elections'. A third poll was about whether and why to participate in and vote in the elections. A fourth poll was looking for an answer to the question 'who is going to vote for President Al-Bashir'. The result of this poll showed a 95 per cent support for the President.

As for radio and television, polls focused on: citizens and representatives of political parties, heads of polling committees at the polling stations, and the problems which voters are facing.

Judging from the media output in the days of the election, civil society representatives and the NEC still saw it as their task to continue to educate the public on voting. There were fewer articles and stories on voter education in the printed media, but the space which was allocated to voter education was covering NEC activities. Paid advertisements, news and statements to voters were the formats used for voter education during the election days. The main message of voter education was to explain to the citizens step by step how to vote and how many ballot papers had to be filled in and how. The highest concentration of voter education coverage was found on the radio, both in the North and the South. Television stations allocated reasonable time to the same subject. The messages were channelled in different ways: using music, drama and songs and some shows and interviews encouraging voting and explaining how to vote.

Electoral administrative bodies were covered extensively in the news of the media. The concentration of news pieces was on the mistakes, especially those committed by the National Election Commission (NEC) and the accusations of fraud and collusion with NCP. Parties' complaints against the NEC were also well covered, in newspapers as well as on the radio and television stations. It is notable that within this monitoring period, news coverage of NEC increased mainly when media covered NEC's press conferences or other activities.

All media outlets, newspapers, radio and television allocated extensive space and time to cover the voting days. The main topics that featured repeatedly during these five days of news reporting were: the 'who/what/where' of voting, confusing voting procedures, reactions of voters, technical mistakes at polling stations, violations tied to the voting process and the extension of the number of voting days. Media also devoted space and time to the complaints of some political party candidates and reporters at the polling stations. Part of the space and time allocated to the complaints concerned the delay of the announcement of the election results, hence lowering the standards of the elections in Sudan compared to other countries.

On the second day of voting, some officials of the NCP announced that they had won some constituencies and many newspapers published these news. Radio and television stations did not make the mistake of declaring the 'results' on the second voting day, but they did discuss this by informing the audience of the number of registered voters and the number of those who actually voted.

Another topic that was touched upon by the mass media was the issue that some polling stations were not open on the two extra voting days because the fact that the extension of

the voting period was not properly conveyed. Other important topics covered by the media during this period were President Jimmy Carter's visit to the country along with the security situation in the South and an incident where a cattle raid killed nine people and as a result a candidate in the region lost voters.

The news coverage of female candidates increased during the election days, as female voters were said to have turned up for voting in greater numbers than men all over the country. This caused all media outlets to shed more light on female candidates and women voting and participating in the electoral process. Many polling stations reported that more women than men were casting their votes. A play carried out by the General Union of Sudanese Women invited women to participate and vote. Apart from this, women's issues and rights did not get much attention in media.

III. Qualitative analysis of the media coverage during the post-election days (16 - 23 April)

Reflections on the voting days continued during the period of counting votes. Media outlets (newspapers, TV and radio) covered almost all the states and electoral centres in Sudan, followed up on the difficulties, the race for winning the elections and announced the preliminary results which surfaced on 16th of April at the local level.

News pieces and programmes have been the de facto standard format of all media outlets in covering the elections since the very beginning of the electoral campaigns in February 2010 until the end of this reporting period, including the post-election days. Opinions and analysis pieces are important and clear in newspapers as many writers reflected their points of view on the situation. Newspapers were neutral and balanced although some violations of professional standards were observed. As for the well-known writers, their articles were published in more than one newspaper.

As the situation on the ground intensified while the country awaited the election results, some newspapers exaggerated facts and at other times used misleading or populist headlines, like: 'Ladu Gore, an independent candidate for the position of Governorship in Central Equatorial accuses SPLM of massive rig'.

Most media tried as much as possible to be neutral and accurate in their reporting. SPLM and NCP got the largest percentage of newspaper coverage, which also applied to audio-visual media. The news that NEC would organise a press conference to announce the

results was also a topic of the media's election news coverage by the end of this reporting period.

Media covered election-related news in various ways using different angles such as the existence or outbreak of election-related violence. Newspapers covered some clashes which took place in the Southern states and in the Blue Nile state between the supporters of SPLM and NCP. Those incidents were covered mainly in a neutral tone, but some media outlets took advantage of the news of violence to attack one party or another, verging on the spread of hate speech.

The complaints tied to the vote counting process and the mistakes made during the electoral process continued to take up a large amount of space and time in the media where this topic dominated the headlines regularly. Many complaints repeated in the mass media were about the technical and the administrative errors of NEC. The complaints were put forward by various parties and independent candidates. But there were also complaints directed at the leading parties. In the South, political parties accused SPLM of rigging the election results, while in the North, the opposition accused NCP of rigging and sparking violence. One complaint in Yambio Western Equatoria was about the arrest of an NEC member who was caught committing electoral fraud together with a representative of the independent candidates.

The statements of the opposition parties, as well as their movements and travels, were well-covered, as were accusations made against the ruling parties (NCP and SPLM). Also well-covered were all the statements tied to the rejection of the election results, the calls for re-election, threats to call massive demonstrations, etc. Most media outlets in both North and Southern Sudan reported on the accusations made against SPLM that they imprisoned and intimidated members of the opposition during the voting period.

IV. Quantitative analysis of media coverage during the election days (11-15 April)

During the election days (11– 15 April) the space and airtime allocated by media to political parties was not measured. Instead, monitors counted the number of cases in which the media covered political actors (parties) and the formats used by the media in their coverage.

The print media was the main channel through which political actors communicated their messages, totalling 93% of the cases monitored, while the parties channelled their messages through radio and the television respectively in 6% and 1% of the cases.

Allocation of space/time among political actors – aggregation by type of media

Media	Total
Press	93%
Radio	6%
TV	1%
Total	100%

Basis: 2795 cases

The news format has been the main format used by media to cover the elections during the election period totalling 76% of the cases monitored in print media, 79% of election coverage cases on the radio and 56% of the cases on TV.

Looking at what election news the media were covering, monitors observed that all the media monitored during the election period reported on the campaigning of political actors (16% of the cases), devoted space to institutional activities (14% of the cases) and allocated space to the party activities (4% of the cases).

The media were reporting on facts and news about campaigning activities in 77% of the cases, although 19% of the cases were actual promotion of political actors which played an important role in the battlefield of the elections.

Allocation of time/space among political actors – aggregation by format

Format	Press	Radio	TV	Total
News	76%	79%	59%	76%
Editorial, analysis and opinions	18%	0%	0%	17%
Other	4%	17%	31%	5%
Poll	2%	0%	0%	2%
Interview	0%	1%	7%	0%
Mails from readers	0%	0%	0%	0%
Interview programme	0%	0%	0%	0%
Talk or panel shows	0%	2%	0%	0%
Current affairs	0%	2%	0%	0%
Talk show	0%	0%	3%	0%
Announcement	0%	0%	0%	0%
Paid election advertisement	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Basis: 2788 cases

During the election days the editorial¹ coverage of all media (print and audiovisual) was concentrated on the two main parties, the NCP and SPLM who featured in respectively 30% and 26% of the overall cases recorded. As shown in the table below; TV devoted respectively 10% and 90% of the monitored cases to the NCP and SPLM; the radio devoted 14% of the cases to the NCP and 62% to the SPLM; while the print media devoted 32% and 22% respectively to the NCP and SPLM in all the cases monitored during the election days.

Allocation of time/space among political actors – aggregation by party

PARTY	Press	Radio	TV	Total
NCP	32%	14%	10%	30%
SPLM	22%	62%	90%	26%
Others	1%	0%	0%	7%
DUPO	7%	0%	0%	7%
PCP	7%	1%	0%	7%
Independent	6%	6%	0%	6%
UNP	6%	0%	0%	6%
JNA	3%	0%	0%	3%
SPLM-DC	2%	2%	0%	2%
URRP	2%	0%	0%	2%
SCP	1%	0%	0%	1%
SAP	1%	0%	0%	1%
DUP	1%	0%	0%	1%
UDF	0%	5%	0%	1%
SSDP	1%	0%	0%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Basis: 2788 cases

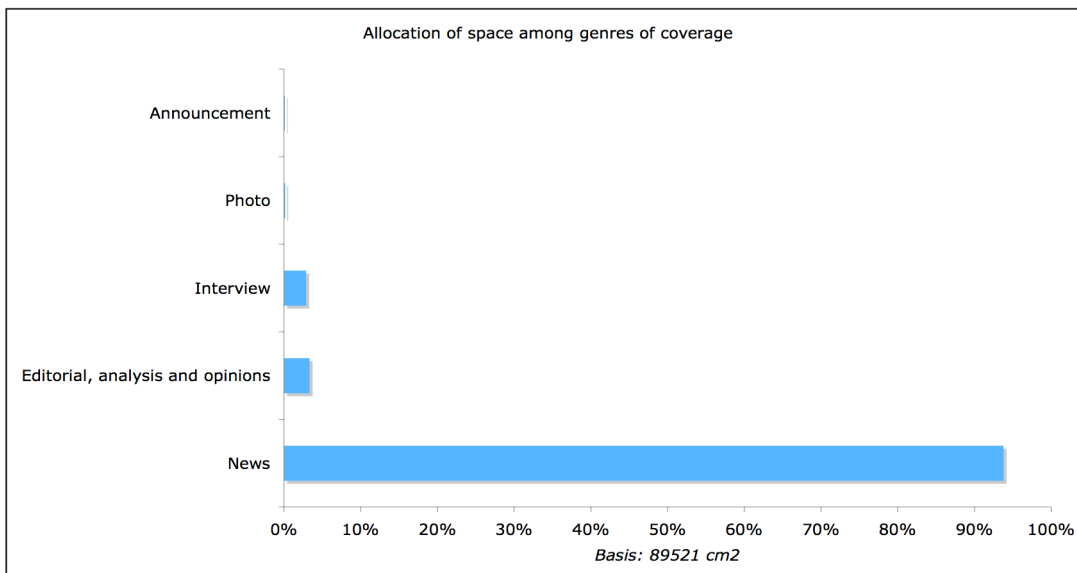
¹ This category includes any kind of coverage under the direct editorial responsibility of the media outlet: news articles, editorial, analysis and opinion pieces, interviews, photos, cartoons, as well as polls. It does not include: paid political and election advertisement, free airtime established by the NEC mechanism or mails from readers.

V. Quantitative analysis of media coverage during the post-election days (16-23 April)

Print media

During the post elections days the main format used by newspapers to convey information about the elections was the news format, accounting for 94% of the total space used for election coverage in the newspapers.

Formats such as editorials, analyses and interviews have also been used to convey information about the electoral campaign. Moreover, in this post-election period monitored, print media did not use formats that were not under their direct editorial² responsibility as shown in the table below.



The print media mainly concentrated on the two main parties, the NCP and SPLM who respectively received 38% and 20% of the overall space. The distribution of space confirms a polarisation of the coverage based on the geographical reach of each media outlet. The newspapers targeting Northern readers focus in their reports largely on the NCP (as shown in Annex1). For example Al Ayam and Al Ray Al Am devoted respectively 50% and 64% of overall space to the NCP whilst a newspaper targeting

² The formats: paid political and election advertisement, free airtime and mails from readers are not under the direct editorial responsibility of the media as established by the NEC mechanism.

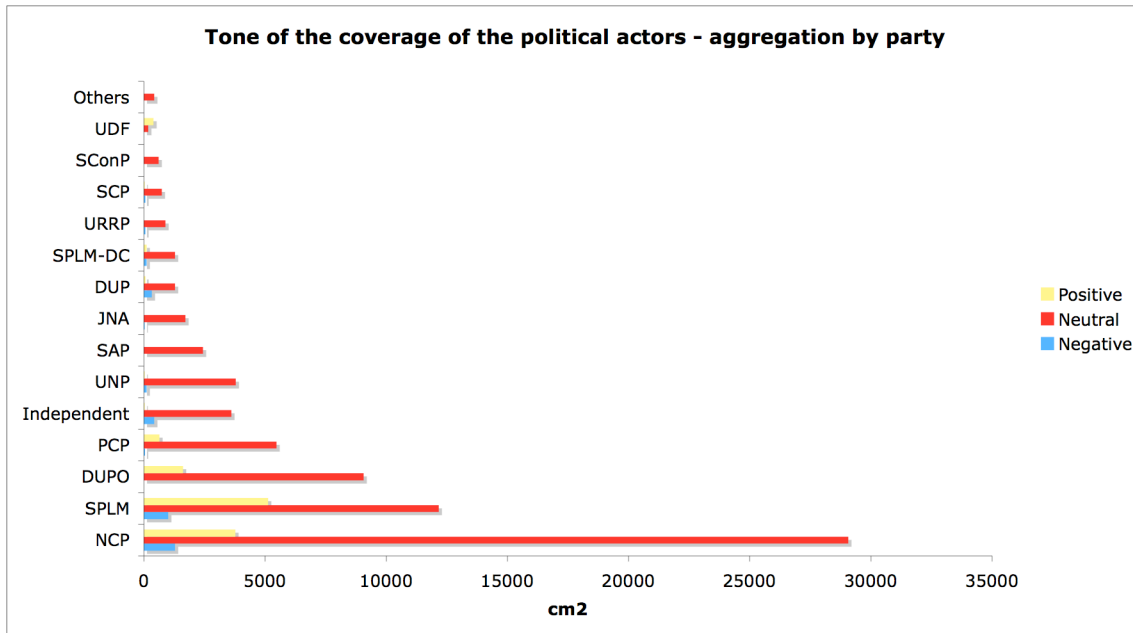
Southerners like Southern Eye devoted 100% of the overall space to the SPLM and political actors.

Allocation of space among political actors – aggregation by party

PARTY	Total
NCP	38%
SPLM	20%
DUPO	12%
PCP	7%
Others	5%
Independent	4%
UNP	4%
SAP	3%
JNA	2%
DUP	2%
SPLM-DC	2%
URRP	1%
Total	100%

Basis: 89521 cm2

In general, a neutral or positive tone dominates all coverage of political opponents, particularly in relation to the NCP and the SPLM among other political parties.



Television and Radio

The data shows that news has been the only format used throughout the campaigning period by radio and TV to convey information about the elections and politics in general in respectively 99% and 100% of the cases monitored in audio-visual media.

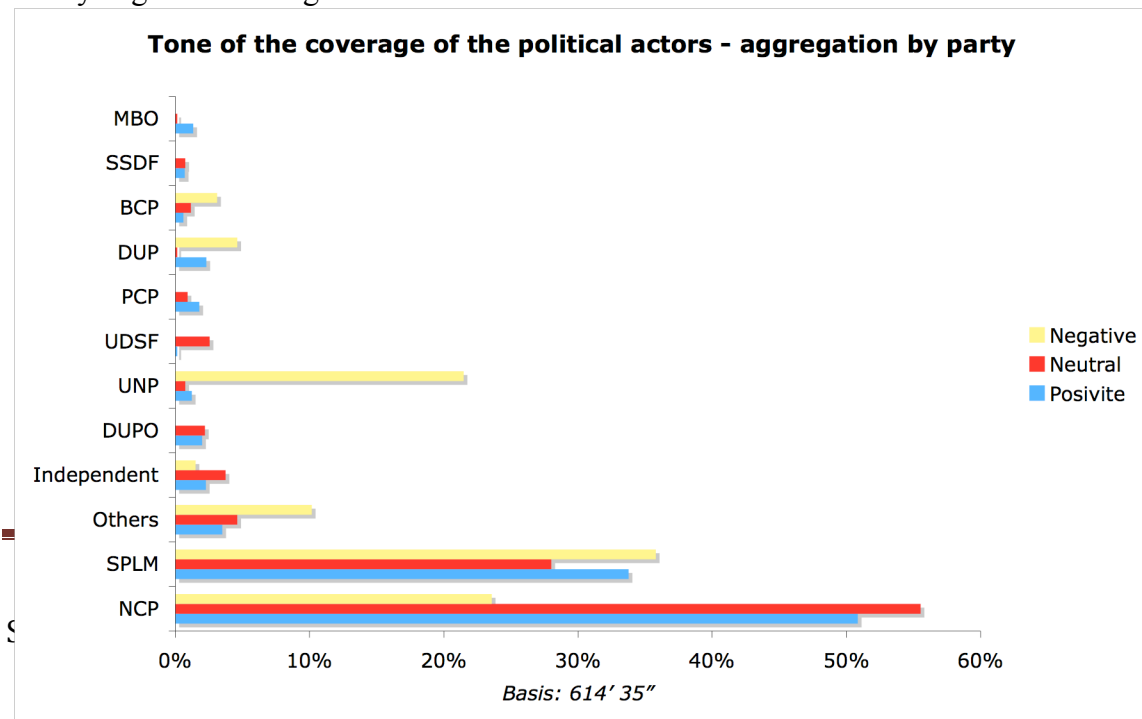
During the post-election monitoring period (16 - 23 April), SPLM received less than half of the coverage of NCP on the radio (respectively 27% and 58% of the overall airtime monitored) whilst SPLM received more airtime on TV than NCP (42% and 38% of the overall airtime).

Allocation of time among political parties – aggregation by party

PARTY	Radio	TV	Total
NCP	58%	38%	53%
SPLM	27%	42%	31%
Independent	3%	3%	3%
DUPO	2%	3%	2%
UNP	0%	4%	1%
UDSF	2%	0%	1%
PCP	1%	2%	1%
DUP	2%	0%	1%
BCP	1%	0%	1%
SSDF	1%	1%	1%
MBO	0%	2%	1%
Others	0%	1%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Basis: 614' 35''

The NCP mostly enjoy positive visibility whilst SPLM, UNP, DUP and BCP receive mostly negative coverage in the audiovisual media.



Hate Speech

The data analysis revealed a modest number of 30 cases of hate speech in media throughout the latest reporting period (11-23 April). Fourteen cases of hate speech were recorded under the geographical category ‘Southern’. This means that most of the hate speech cases deal with the Southern part of the country and only 16 cases refer to national issues, whilst there were no cases of hate speech recorded under the category ‘Northern’.

The analysis shows that 26 of the 30 cases of hate speech recorded belong within the category of ‘Politicians and political parties’.

Politicians and political parties are also the main sources of hate speech with the highest number of hate speech episodes linked to them during the monitoring period. In fact, politicians and political parties are the source of hate speech in 28 out of the 30 cases observed.

Coverage of Female Candidates and Women’s Issues

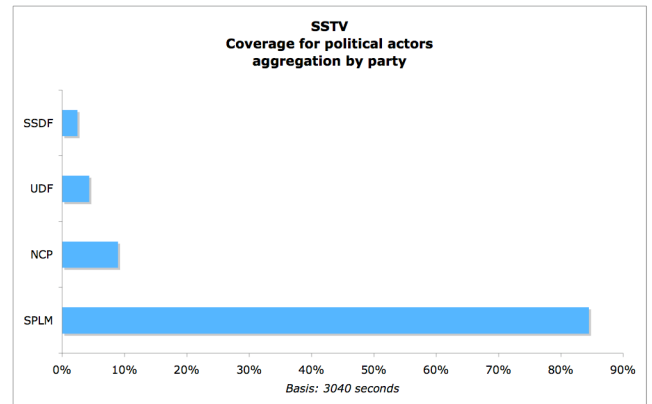
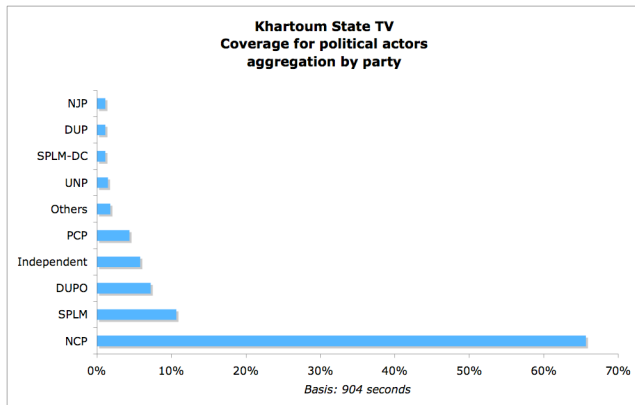
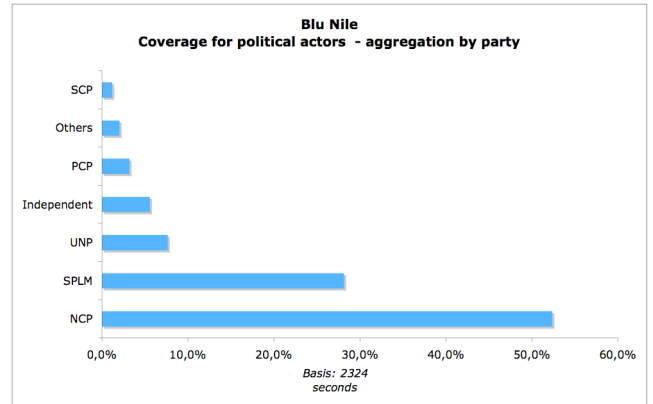
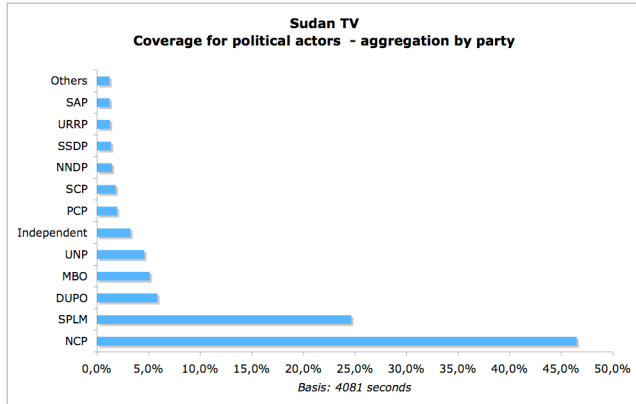
The editorial coverage in audiovisual media of female candidates and women’s issues shows that women continue to receive extremely limited exposure in media with an average of 2% for both TV and radio. The women represented are party leaders, governors or other local government representatives, as well as members of the National Government.

In print media, editorial coverage shows that women (female candidates or candidates on women’s issues) receive limited exposure as well with an average of 6%. Also in this case, the women who are represented in media are candidates, party leaders, governors or other local government representatives, as well as members of the National Government.

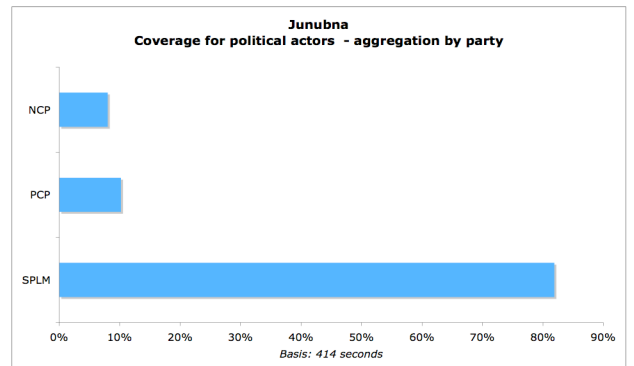
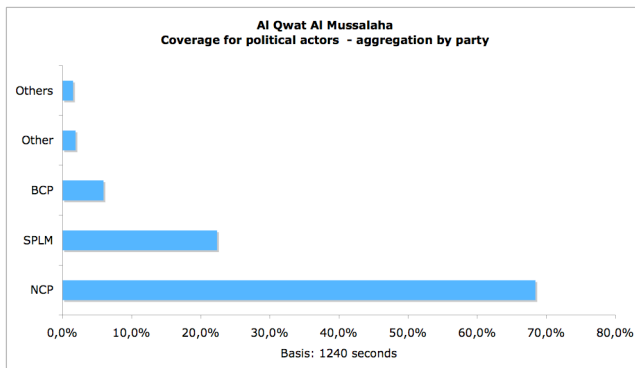
The media devoting the most time to women are: Akhbar Alyoum, Akhir Lahza, Al Sahfa, Al Intibaha, SSTV, Radio Bakhita and Omdurman Radio.

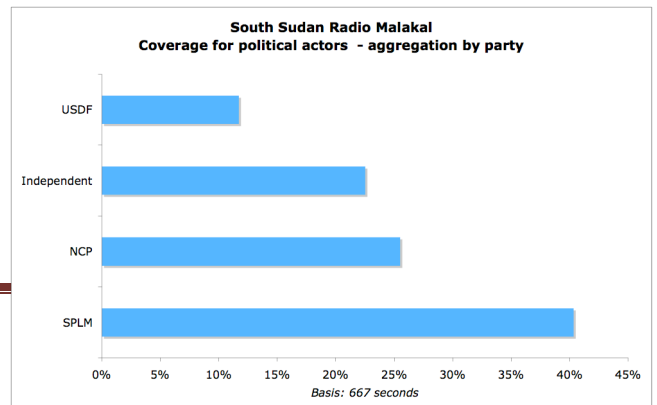
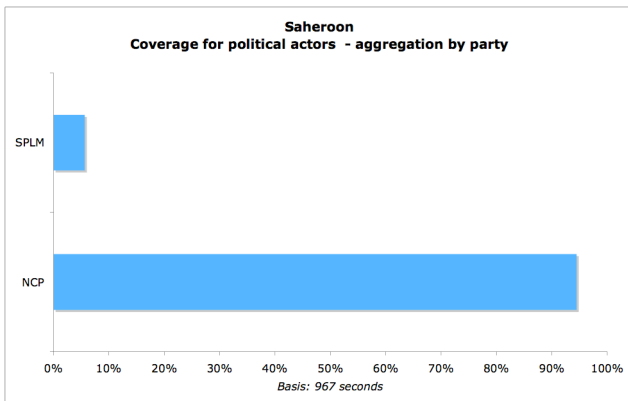
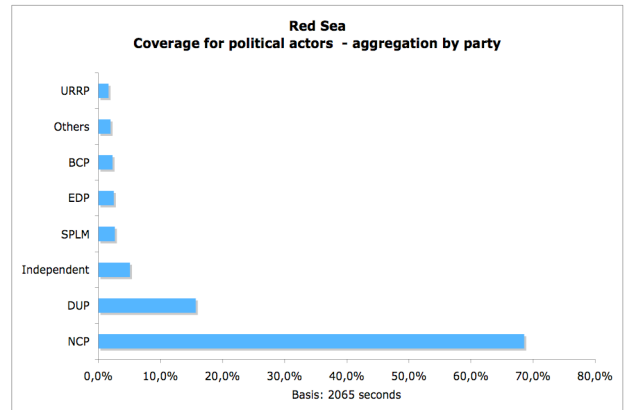
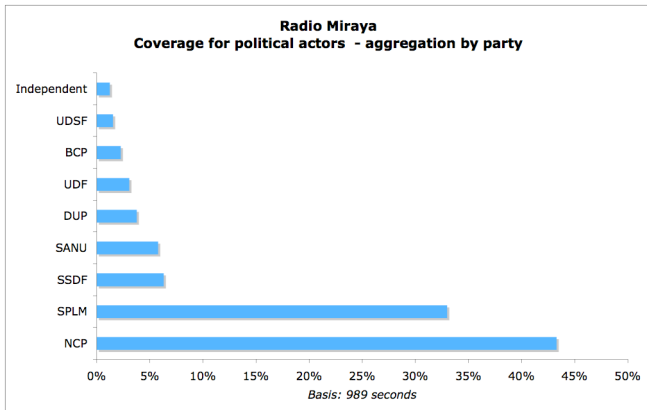
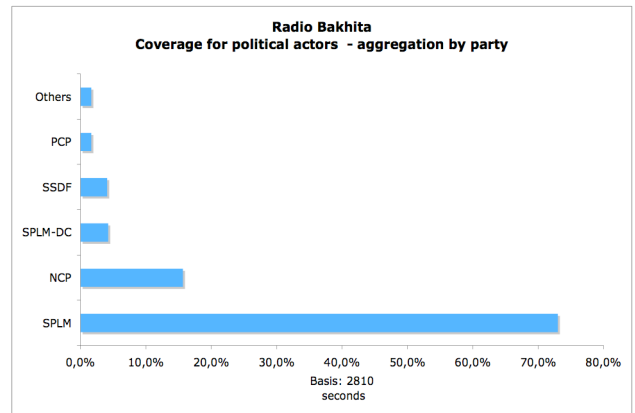
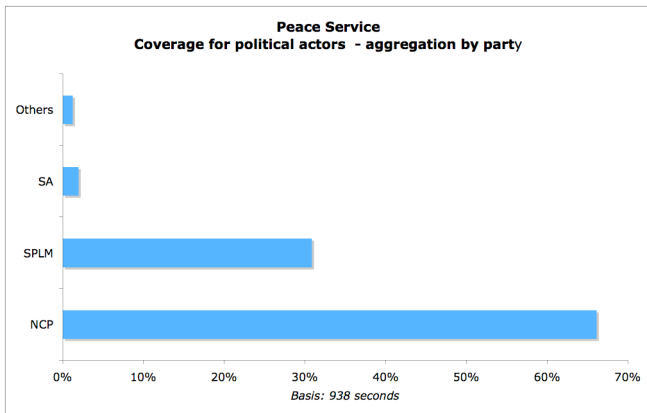
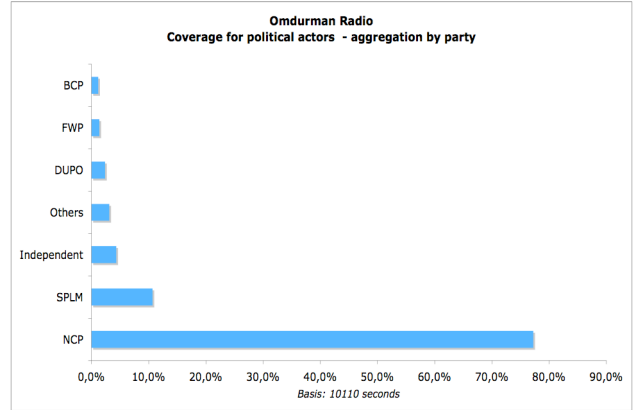
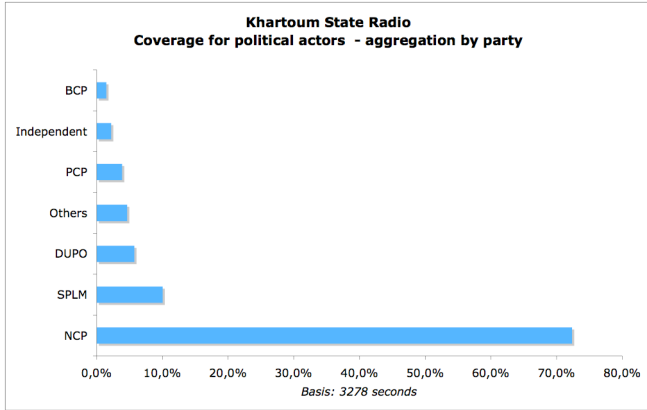
ANNEX - Charts and tables by media name Post election period: 16 – 23 April 2010

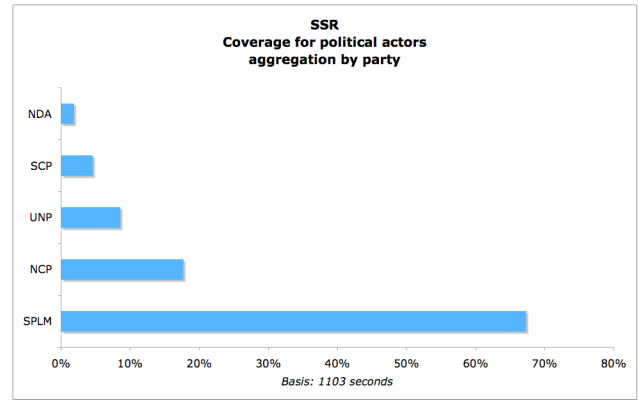
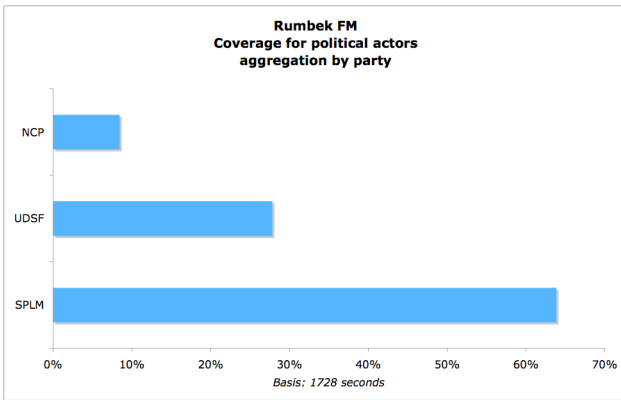
TV: Allocation of time of political actors - aggregation by party



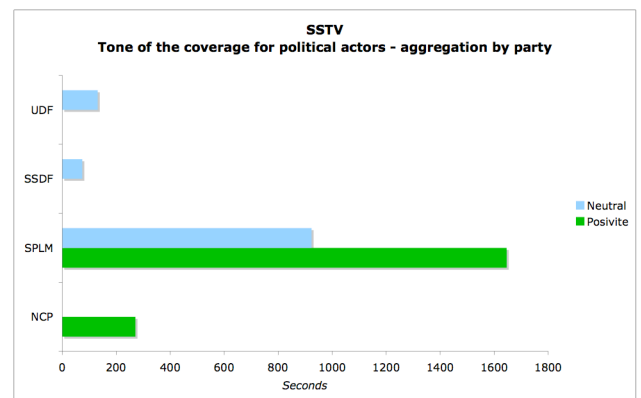
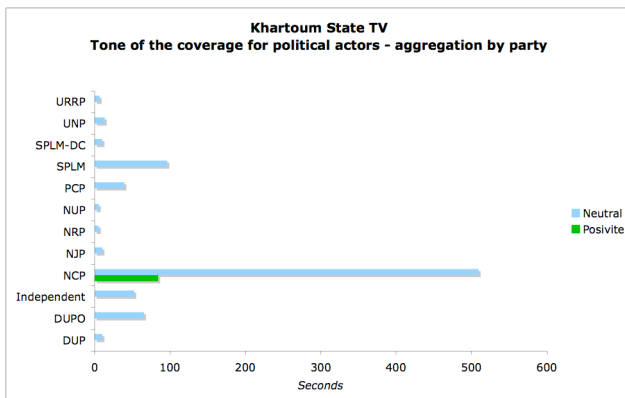
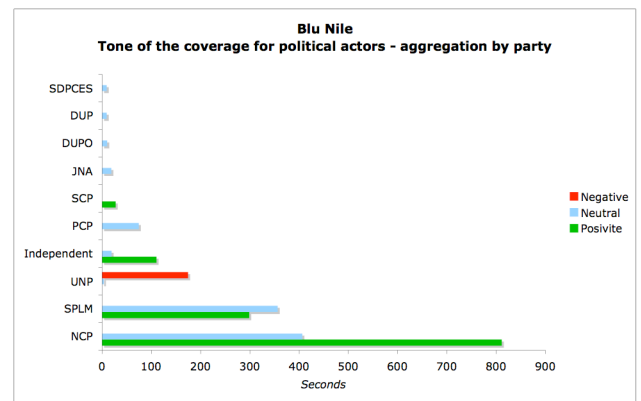
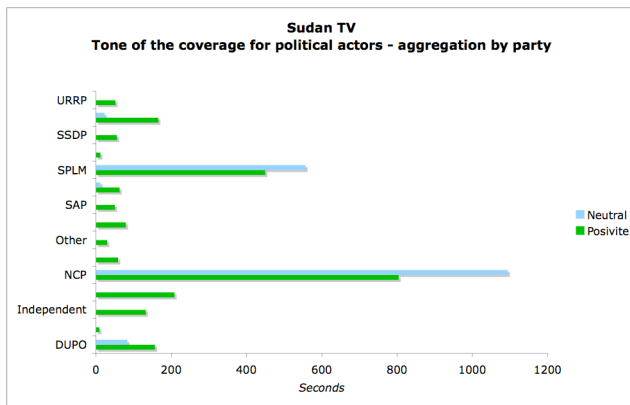
Radio: Allocation of time of political actors - aggregation by party



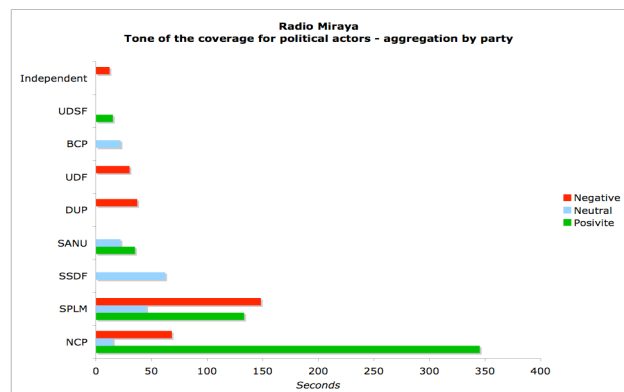
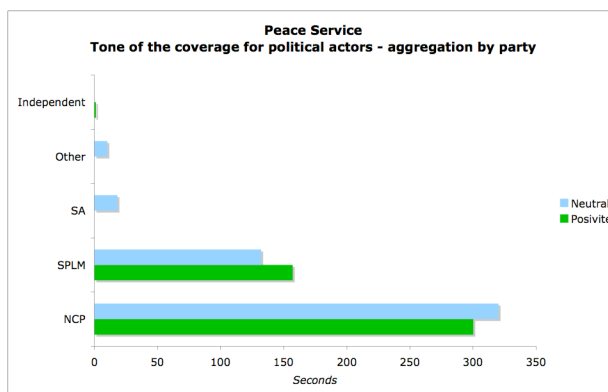
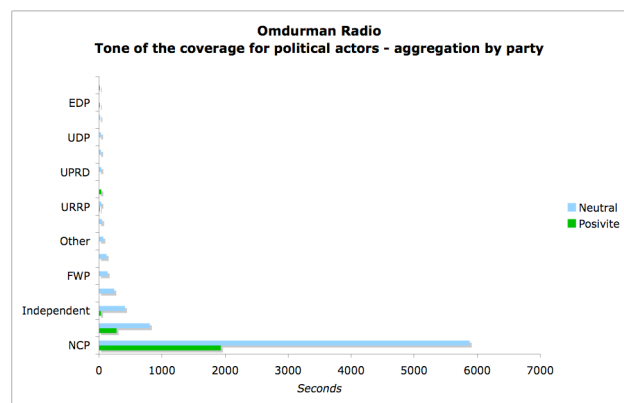
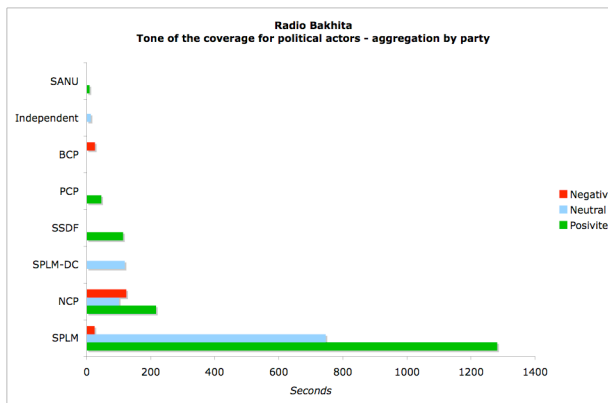
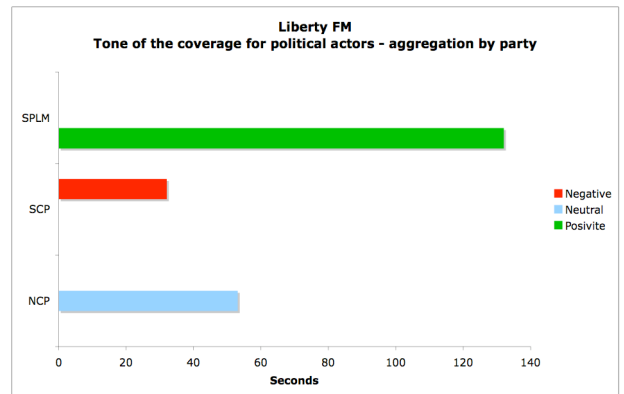
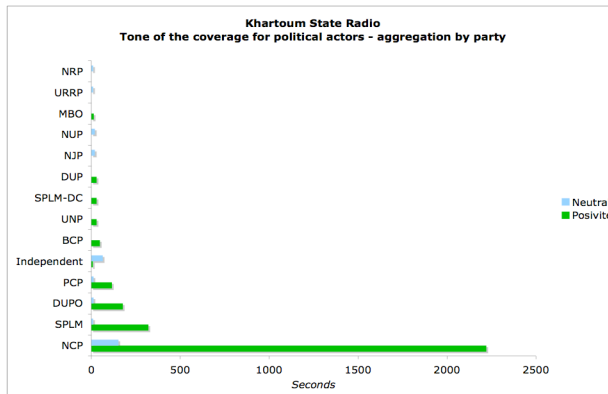
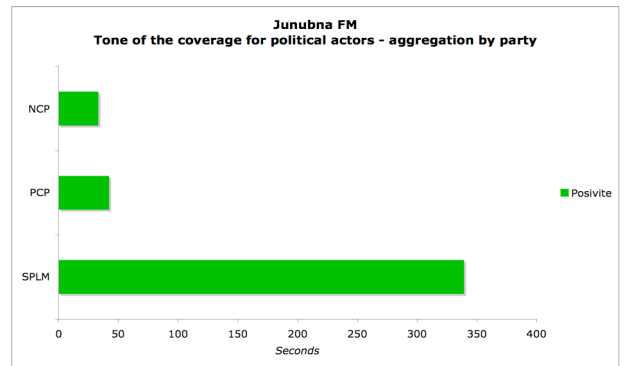
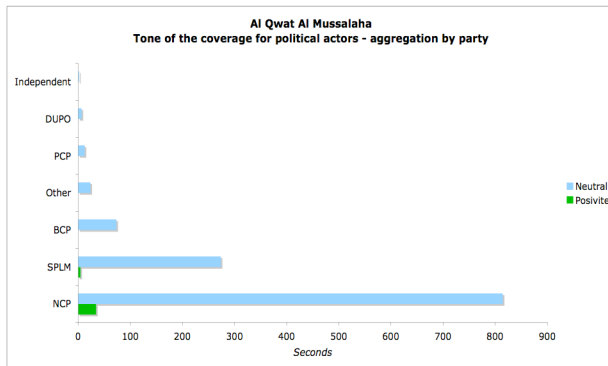


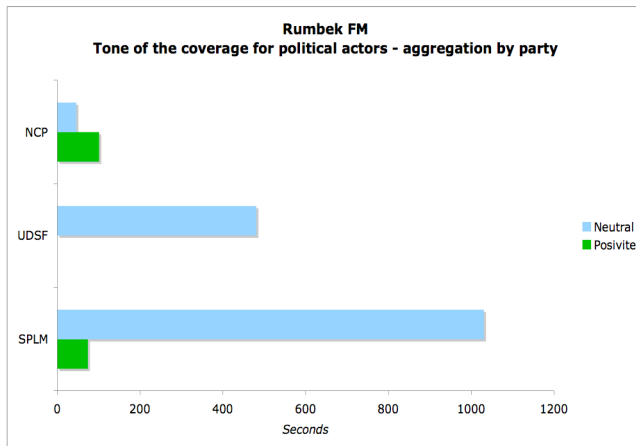
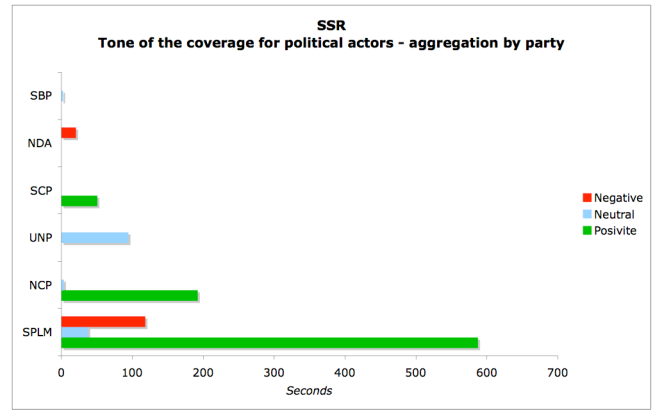
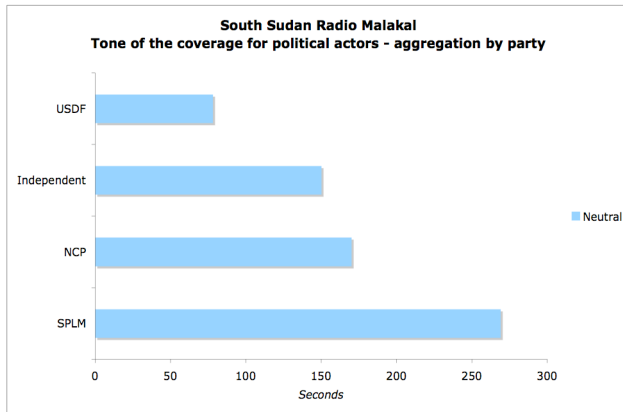
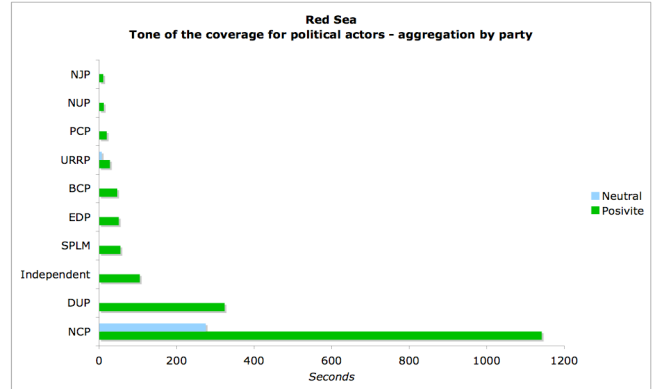
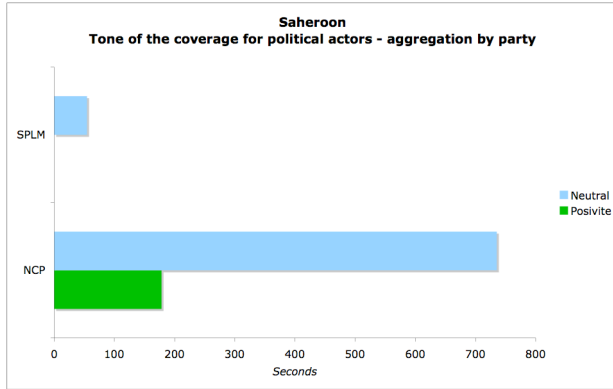


TV: Tone of the coverage of political actors - aggregation by party



Radio: Tone of the coverage of political actors - aggregation by party





Print Press: Allocation of space of political actors - aggregation by party

Akhbar Alyoum	
PARTY	Total
NCP	39%
DUPO	16%
SPLM	14%
UNP	6%
PCP	6%
Independent	5%
SAP	3%
SPLM-DC	2%
URRP	2%
SConP	1%
BCP	1%
JNA	1%
SCP	1%
Others	3%
Total	100%
Basis:17649 cm2	

Ajras Al huriah	
PARTY	Total
SPLM	32,8%
NCP	20,9%
DUPO	12,2%
Independent	11,8%
PCP	5,0%
Others	3,2%
JNA	2,9%
SAP	2,5%
URRP	2,3%
UNP	1,9%
SPLM-DC	1,8%
NJP	1,8%
EPJD	1,0%
Totale	100,0%
Basis: 6410 cm2	

Akhir Lahza	
PARTY	Total
NCP	38%
PCP	12%
SAP	9%
DUPO	9%
SPLM	8%
DUP	7%
Independent	6%
UNP	4%
SCP	3%
JNA	1%
URRP	1%
SPLM-DC	1%
Other	2%
Total	100%
Basis:12350 cm2	

Al Ayam	
PARTY	Total
NCP	50%
DUPO	21%
SPLM	11%
PCP	5%
JNA	4%
UNP	3%
Independent	2%
SCP	1%
SConP	1%
UDSF	1%
SPLM-DC	1%
Total	100%
Basis:3074 cm2	

Al Intibaha	
PARTY	Total
NCP	43,8%
SPLM	24,5%
DUPO	9,1%
UNP	4,6%
Independent	3,7%
JNA	3,3%
PCP	2,7%
SPLM-DC	2,1%
URRP	1,3%
Others	5,0%
Total	100,0%
Basis:9694 cm2	

Al Ray Al Aam	
PARTY	Total
NCP	64,2%
SPLM	14,5%
DUPO	4,2%
UNP	3,4%
PCP	3,0%
Independent	2,8%
JNA	2,0%
SPLM-DC	1,2%
Others	4,6%
Total	100,0%
Basis:6562 cm2	

Al Sahfa	
PARTY	Total
NCP	33,8%
DUPO	20,1%
UNP	11,1%
PCP	10,4%
SPLM	9,5%
JNA	3,6%
Independent	3,0%
SAP	2,2%
URRP	1,1%
Others	5,4%
Total	100,0%
Basis:12117 cm2	

Al Sudani	
PARTY	Total
NCP	38,9%
DUPO	21,4%
SPLM	15,0%
PCP	7,3%
Independent	3,8%
SAP	3,2%
DUP	3,2%
JNA	2,8%
SConP	2,1%
SPLM-DC	1,0%
Others	1,2%
Total	100,0%
Basis:7854 cm2	

Khartoum Monitor	
PARTY	Total
SPLM	53%
NCP	29%
PCP	6%
Independent	5%
SPLM-DC	4%
UNP	1%
DUP	1%
UFP	1%
Others	1%
Total	100%
Basis:5530 cm2	

The Citizen	
Party	Total
SPLM	41%
NCP	31%
DUP	7%
PCP	7%
SANU	7%
SCP	2%
Independent	2%
UNP	1%
Others	1%
Total	100%
Basis:4386 cm2	

Sudan Vision	
PARTY	Total
SPLM	48%
NCP	27%
SPLM-DC	17%
UDF	5%
DUP	2%
NASP	1%
Total	100%
Basis:1110 cm2	

Juba Post	
PARTY	Total
SPLM	52%
NCP	30%
UDF	15%
PCP	3%
Total	100,0%
Basis:2577 cm2	

Southern Eye	
PARTY	Total
SPLM	100%
Total	100%
Basis:208 cm2	

Print Press: Tone of the coverage of political actors - aggregation by party

