



Media News

Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa

MediaNews 21- May 2006/ Quarterly newsletter of NiZA 's Media Programme

South African tabloids: supporting democracy?

Well over a decade into democracy, the rise of tabloids in South Africa forces us to take a closer look at their role in South Africa's media landscape and its on-going democratisation process.

A mere four years ago, publisher Deon Du Plessis launched his tabloid, the Daily Sun, into the South African newspaper market. Averaging half a million copies a day, the Daily Sun took the market by storm and soon became South Africa's best selling daily newspaper. Instead of taking readers away from the broadsheets, the tabloid created new ones, luring millions of readers who had never bought a newspaper before.

Other titles soon followed: the Daily Voice, the Afrikaans-based Die Son and the Zulu-based Isolezwe. Even the Sowetan went tabloid to boost its declining readership. Today, the tabloids continually show the healthiest increases in circulation. It cannot be denied that commercial tabloids are a force to be reckoned with. Can the same be said about their contribution to the democratisation process?

Stereotypes and prejudices

Jacob Ntshangase, executive director of the Institute for the Advancement of

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Journalism (IAJ), does not believe we can look at tabloids as a positive force in the democratisation process. "The content is too sensationalistic and thrives too much on stereotyping to make a valuable contribution to the process."

Emphasising that he was speaking in his personal capacity, Joe Tholoe, chairperson

NiZA's Media Programme supports civil society organisations in Southern Africa that contribute to the creation of more democratic and open societies where governments are held accountable to citizens' needs and interests. To this end the Media Programme supports the strengthening of our partner organisations so that they can: 1. Influence the media and freedom of expression policies and legal environment in the SADC region to reach a conducive freedom of expression environment, 2. Increase access to information for citizens, 3. Train media professionals to deliver more balanced and accurate information on key political, social and economic issues, 4. Improve the financial sustainability of media outlets.

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of the South African National Editors' Forum, recently described tabloids as, "rags that show nothing but contempt to their readers and feed into racial and class stereotypes and prejudices."

Tabloids are often accused of ignoring basic journalistic principles such as factual accuracy and right of reply. Critics also argue that coverage centres on sex, scandal, sport and crime at the expense of 'real' news. Furthermore, some critics fear that the way tabloids cover witchcraft stories could have far-reaching consequences, such as misunderstandings concerning HIV/AIDS, or justifying communities who lynch suspects of witchcraft.



Watchdogs

Offering a more positive perspective, Justin Arenstein, journalist and president of the national Association of Independent Publishers (AIP), feels the tabloids have been receiving a "raw deal". Arenstein contends that tabloids tackle "grassroots issues" affecting people's everyday lives more than the broadsheets do. "People who weren't previously represented in the mainstream press finally have media that give them a voice. Tabloids do far more than the broadsheets to fight for social justice for the small guys, and to hold those in power accountable," explains Arenstein. "And, despite what the critics say, they do serve as watchdogs. They have also demonstrated their power in helping fight the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS almost

as often as they've fallen into the trap of reporting stereotypes."

Commenting on the tabloids' coverage of "serious" news, Arenstein points to recent research done by Wits University student Sumayya Ismail. She writes: "Stories like the tsunami, the death of the Pope and the election of his successor and other stories did make it into the paper – although they generally did not get as much prominence as in other papers. Interestingly, there is often a focus on educating readers. A report on the election of a new Pope will explain the process, for instance." Arenstein concurs: "Up to thirty percent of some tabloids' content is educational. They offer everything from life skills, to advice on personal finance and banking, and even insight into topical news issues."

Scientific explanations

Arenstein agrees, however, that tabloids "go overboard on the supernatural". "Belief in the supernatural and witchcraft is a daily reality for millions of South Africans. We can't ignore it just because urban or educated folks are embarrassed by it. But there should be a method to how the tabloids cover it. The best tabloids report the hype, but then also provide scientific explanations for perceived supernatural events...and they should always stress the legal implications," says Arenstein. "People need to understand there is a rule of law, and that they will be prosecuted for taking the law into their own hands."

When talking about the future of tabloids in South Africa, Ntshangase says a lot will depend on what drives the tabloids' publishers: making money or making a good paper. Arenstein thinks consumers will decide on the tabloids' direction. "As the tabloid market matures, and there is more competition, publishers will be forced to offer better quality. The strong competition on the weekends has already forced the Sunday tabloids to do exactly that, offering more sophisticated mixes of the usual entertainment stuff mixed with breaking news and analytical content."

Asking about NiZA's point of view on the tabloids Astrid Schipper, programme officer of NiZA's Media Programme, says NiZA supports the availability of relevant information in general so that's why NiZA backs organisations as IAJ and AIP. "Ideally, we hope mainly quality news outlets profit from our support, but it is possible that a sensationalistic tabloid journalist participates in for example a training programme of IAJ. At NiZA we haven't formulated a viewpoint on this issue as yet."



One of the reasons for this is that it's hard to say whether the tabloids are contributing to the on-going democratisation process. They simply haven't been around long enough. However, as Schipper puts it: "Tabloids have found a way to reach a new audience that didn't regularly read a newspaper before. For that fact alone, they deserve our attention."

By Thessa Bos

Thessa Bos (thessa.bos@gmail.com) is a freelance journalist based in Cape Town. She is a former participant in NiZA's programme for young journalists. In this programme young Dutch journalism graduates are attached to a media outlet in South Africa or Namibia for a three to six month period to gain work experience. Also read in this issue "Juggling in Namibia." Young journalist Arjen de Boer

reflects on his time at The Big Issue Namibia.

Links

Website IAJ: <http://www.iaj.org.za/>
 Website AIP: <http://www.independentpublisher.org/index.asp>

DRC: Storm destroys transmitter

Newsflash

Last February, a storm in Bukavu in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, destroyed the transmitter of NiZA Media Programme partner and private radio station Radio Maendeleo. The station continued broadcasting, but is now using a smaller transmitter with a smaller reach. NiZA donated 5000 euro to help Radio Maendeleo to replace or repair the old transmitter. Hopefully the station soon will be up and running again in full force.



Links

Radio Maendeleo's website: <http://www.radiomaendeleo.org/>

Kim Brice is leaving NiZA

'It's time to shake things up'

Kim Brice, manager of NiZA's Media and Freedom of Expression Programme leaves the organisation at the end of May to explore new pastures. In the 2,5 years she worked at NiZA, US-born Brice created more clarity in the direction of the Media Programme.

"It was September 2003, when I started my job at NiZA," tells Brice. "I remember it very well because I had just done an emergency course of Dutch of almost 24-hours for seven days. During my first two work days, I had a workshop in Dutch. I just sat there with my dictionary, trying to make sense of it. NiZA was my integration process in the Netherlands."



And integrating into Dutch society and NiZA went quite quickly, mainly because she had to supervise an evaluation of the last four years of the programme (which she hadn't been part of) and write a proposal for the next four years when she arrived at the organisation.

According to Brice, an important question in this process was trying to define the

overall goal of the programme. "Is it about democracy? Or do we bring it down to the level of just media development? What is the link between the two? NiZA isn't a media development organisation so that's not the end goal. So how do you develop an independent media but really link it to democracy?"

Brice says one of her main achievements as a manager is that she helped to "create more clarity about the overall direction of the Media Programme". "While talking with the staff I noticed that although there was a line, people also got lost and didn't really know which direction to follow. I created a framework in which we could work as a team."

Under her guidance, other changes were made. The programme stopped working in Zambia and Malawi and became active in Swaziland and Mozambique. And some partner organisations were dropped. "We realised we were spreading ourselves too thin. We really want to understand our partners and their organisational needs. That cost us to cut down from 49 to 36 long-term-partners. We also felt we needed to become more flexible. The context is changing from year to year. So apart from building partnerships for four years, we are now also working with organisations for a shorter term."

Impressed

During those years, Brice has seen the ups and downs of all these partner organisations. Asked which organisation she is most proud of, she instantly says Journaliste en Danger (JED) from the Democratic Republic of Congo. "I met them early in their life when it was a very small organisation. They have been able to grow in a meaningful way. For example, this year they did a very in-depth investigation on the assassination of a journalist. It takes a lot of courage and professionalism to do so."

"Another organisation that I am impressed with, in terms of how they are trying to work, is the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI) in South Africa," continues

Brice. “They are one of the very few advocacy organisations that I know of in the region, that are deliberately working with community groups and supporting these groups to understand the importance of freedom of expression. That takes a lot of time and patience and it is small steps. It would have been an easier choice to work with bigger organisations on big policy issues.”

Too comfortable

Brice says she will have fond memories of her time at NiZA. “Both on the personal and professional level it brought me a lot.” So why is she leaving? “I want to do different things. I have worked in the development sector for many years and I would like to experience other realities. I would like to work for the private sector and explore the education sector. There are other worlds out there that I have never been part of that I would like to experience. I am considering working as a consultant, teacher or journalist.”

One of the tasks of the new manager, who hasn't been appointed yet, will be to explore two new terrains the Media Programme wants to get more involved in, says Brice. “We want to pay more attention to investigative journalism. This area of publishing in-depth information on issues that are of national and regional importance is underdone. Another new area is what we call media-civil society links. How can civil society and media co-operate to get important issues out to the greater public?”

Besides this challenge, Brice says her successor needs to “shake things up again”. “My strongest point can also be my fall point. I am very focused on objectives. The programme is clear on what the parameters are and about where we are going. Now we need a dose of creativity and even a bit of chaos. We mustn't get too comfortable. Again we need to take a critical look at the choices we made.”

By Elles van Gelder

Elles van Gelder (elles@ellesvangelder.nl) is a freelance journalist. She is the editor of MediaNews. She is also a former participant in NiZA's programme for young journalists. Also read in this issue 'Juggling in Namibia' about the experiences of another participant of this programme.

Links

NiZA's Media Programme:
www.niza.nl/media

New Regional Director for MISA

Newsflash

On 4 March 2006, Kaitira Kandjii was appointed as the new Regional Director of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA). He takes over from Luckson Chipare, who worked for MISA for the past 10 years. Before his appointment, Kaitira was the head of the Freedom of Expression Programme at the organisation's Regional Secretariat.



He will work on improving MISA's advocacy thrust as well as actively engage with various stake holders, civil society, media and government to enhance and advocate for the promotion and protection of media freedom and freedom of expression in Southern Africa. He began his new post on 1 April 2006.

*Kaitira Kandjii can be reached at
kkandjii@misa.org*

*Also read MediaNews 20 for an interview
with Luckson Chipare about his time as the
Regional Director of MISA*

Links

Website MISA: www.misa.org

DRC: addressing pillaging of natural resources

Although rich in diamonds, gold and copper, the majority of the population of the Democratic Republic of Congo lives in misery. How to change this paradox? On the 18th and 19th of April 2006 NiZA organised a meeting between representatives from the media and other civil society organisations in the DRC met in Lubumbashi to discuss possibilities for co-operation in research and information dissemination to expose and address this contradiction.

The meeting was a follow-up of the conference ‘Natural resources in the DRC: source of conflict, or key to development?’ in Brussels in November 2005, organised by Fatal Transactions, a collaboration between six European NGO’s that aims to stop the conflicts and human rights abuses that arise out of the exploitation of natural



resources in Africa. One of the recommendations of this conference was

that media and other civil society organisations should work together. During the meeting, representatives from the DRC’s Natural Resource Network presented recent developments and publications, such as the Fatal Transactions report, ‘The State versus the people’. The documents detailed the role of members of the transitional government and the World Bank in the pillaging of the natural resources of Katanga.

Joseph Bobia, co-ordinator of the network and member of the NGO CENADEP, an environmental federation, explained the need for co-operation. “The local community has to profit from the natural resources. In order to reach this, it is necessary to inform them about the realities around mining and forestry in the DRC, and who profits from these activities.”

The participants concluded that it is therefore necessary for the Congolese media to participate more actively in monitoring resource extraction. They called for the media to be a watchdog instead of simply covering press conferences where reports are issued. On the other hand, the workshop also called for civil society to assist the media more actively by delivering concise information and not to expect community radio journalists to read through long technical reports.

Elections

The discussion was turned towards the upcoming elections in the DRC by Tshvis Tshivuadi of NiZA Media Programme partner Journaliste en Danger (JED). “The situation around the exploitation of natural resources concerns everyone. It plays an important role in politics and in the economic development of the country.” This is evident in the Fatal Transactions report, as well as in the report of the independent parliamentary ‘Lutundula’ commission. Named after its chair, the commission examined mining contracts signed during the war in the late ’90’s. Despite being named in these reports,

many of the people and networks are running for positions in the national or provincial government in the upcoming elections. In the final declaration of the meeting, the participants urged the Congolese voters to abstain from voting for anyone involved in pillaging the DRC's natural resources.



The representatives from human rights NGOs, environmental groups, trade unions, community radios and other media also discussed several ways to increase collaboration. They decided to launch an 'observatory' of media and other civil society groups that will together monitor the behaviour of the mining and forestry industry on a local level.

An online database on natural resources is to be established, containing information on national and international companies and individuals implicated in the extraction of, and trade of minerals and timber. Civil society organisations are to receive media training and a network of investigative journalists covering these issues are to be established, which also includes the training of these journalists.

The workshop ended with a well-attended press conference where the final declaration was presented. Considering the sensitivity of the issue - criticising the mining industry in Katanga - the event went surprisingly peaceful.

Discussions were open and free and many detailed questions were asked referring to the journalists' own experience with the disastrous consequences of mining in their communities.

With the elections taking place in a few months, and huge interests at stake, now is the time to act. Hopefully, this very fruitful meeting has launched a series of joint activities by media and other civil society groups in the DRC, which will see the equal distribution of the country's wealth.

By Kirsten Hund & Christian Kuijstermans

Kirsten Hund (kirsten.hund@niza.nl) is NiZA's senior Programme Officer of the Economic Justice Programme.

Christian Kuijstermans

(christian.kuijstermans@niza.nl) is a Programme Officer at NiZA's Media and Freedom of Expression Programme

Links

For the report 'The State versus the people', the report of the Brussels Conference in November 2005, and the 'Final Declaration' of the meeting in Lubumbashi in April 2006, go to the website of Fatal Transactions at <http://www.fataltransactions.org/cgi-bin/dbp.cgi?db=cmsp&ID=50> and scroll down.

Research: HIV/AIDS under reported

A study by the Media Monitoring Project (of South Africa) and NiZA Media Programme partner Gender Links shows that some countries in southern Africa hardly report on HIV and AIDS. Also, the voices of people living with HIV and AIDS aren't enough heard.

"People are dying because of a lack of information". Rose Thamae spoke these words at the recent launch of a study into how well the Southern African media covers HIV and AIDS, and the gender issues closely related to it. Rose is one of about 30 caregivers who provide the often only help received by destitute people living during the terminal stages of AIDS in the Orange Farm settlement on the

outskirts of Johannesburg. She does this work voluntarily despite receiving little financial support for working in the frontline of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa.

A shocking fact is that Rose, who is quite famous in South Africa, is dirt poor herself. NGO workers speak of her in a tone of hushed reverence and some say she should be nominated for a Nobel Prize. In principle there is no difference between her and Mother Teresa.

One can't help but wonder where the resources for HIV/AIDS are going to and why those who care for the terminally ill in the poorest communities – where the majority of people living with AIDS are to be found - get almost none of it.

But Rose says her community also vitally needs information, and information presented very differently than that currently being made available through the normal media. For one thing, her community needs information in their own indigenous languages and presented in a way that makes the information accessible to them. The information must also be useful. Clearly community media could make a big difference to Rose and those she helps, particularly community media with a major focus on HIV and AIDS.

Study

Rose spoke at a function on World Press Freedom Day (May 3) to launch the HIV/AIDS and Gender Baseline Study in Johannesburg. The study was conducted by the Media Monitoring Project (of South Africa) and Gender Links – one of a series of activities taking place in terms of the Media Action Plan (MAP) on HIV/AIDS and Gender. The broader Media Action Plan is a programme of the Southern African Editors Forum (SAEF) involving a broad range of organisations in southern Africa united in a forum known as GEMSA – a network of gender and media organisations in the sub continent.

The study shows that HIV and AIDS are shockingly under reported in 11 countries of southern Africa. Only 3% of the 37 001

news items monitored over a period of one month in late 2005 in 118 media houses focused on or mentioned the pandemic. Lesotho recorded the highest coverage with 19% and Swaziland came in second with 10%. South Africa, who has the highest number of people living with HIV and AIDS in the world, recorded only 2% coverage.

Other findings include that the voices of people living with HIV and AIDS – those most affected – are least heard and constitute a mere 4% of sources. The majority of sources used by the media (42%) are government officials and officials representing international organisations. Women, who constitute the highest proportion of those living with HIV as well as provide most of the care, constitute only 39% of the sources. But the study also showed some improvements in HIV/AIDS reporting. There are fewer blatant stereotypes and increased sensitivity to language. A higher number of stories are also original stories (as opposed to agency copy). There are also more women journalists reporting on HIV (45%) than in most other beats and in most instances women journalists were most likely to access female sources.

By Jeanette Minnie

Jeanette Minnie (jcmmin@iafrica.com) is an advisor to NiZA on the issue of freedom of expression.

Links

Gender Links www.genderlinks.org.za
Media Monitoring Project
www.mediamonitoring.org.za
GEMSA www.gemsa.org.za

The Big Issue Namibia opens Swakopmund depot

Street magazine The Big Issue Namibia expands its work field. On the 29th of April a new distribution depot was opened in the coastal town of Swakopmund.

Approximately 20 new vendors were introduced to the programme. According to The Big Issue director Jo Rogge, it is important to have a sales point and full-time staff in different places throughout the country. “Homeless people in Swakopmund and surroundings must have access to the same services as our Windhoek-based vendors. We want to give opportunities to attend courses and training and other social services to all our vendors.”



The Big Issue's social development programme, known as The Big Step, provides vendors with support through counselling services, support groups, substance abuse support and rehabilitation programmes, as well as other education and skills training.

The Big Issue Namibia, a member of the International Network of Streetpapers, was launched in Windhoek in June 2002 to tackle the challenge of homelessness and unemployment. The magazine is sold by about 50 homeless and socially excluded individuals in the capital, as well as smaller towns across the country.

By Danielle Batist

Danielle Batist (dianellebatist@gmail.com) currently works for The Big Issue Magazine Namibia through NiZA's programme for young journalists. Read the experiences of her

predecessor Arjen de Boer in 'Juggling in Namibia'.

Links

TBI Namibia: www.bigissuenamibia.org/

Juggling in Namibia

Arjen de Boer (29), a Dutchman who participated in NiZA's programme for young professional journalists, worked at The Big Issue Namibia in Windhoek for six months. Twice a year, NiZA's Media Programme selects journalism graduates to work at a media outlet or a media NGO in South Africa or Namibia. By offering a new generation of journalists this opportunity, NiZA aims to combat the predominantly negative manner in which Africa is covered in Dutch media. Read Arjen's reflections on this challenging period.

“My nostrils were wide open to inhale the fumes of kerosene while my eardrums were filled with the roar of jet engines. Although I wasn't certain that I would be picked to go to southern Africa, I could feel in my guts that the time had come to leave the Netherlands. This feeling dawned on me directly after my interview as a candidate for one of NiZA's six-month work experience placements for young journalists. On my way back home from Amsterdam, I got out of the train at Schiphol airport and headed straight for the viewers platform of the airport to experience that special feeling that something is about to happen. A couple of months later, I touched down at Hosea Kutako International Airport in Namibia. I would be entering a new chapter of my life as a journalist. Working for the street magazine The Big Issue Namibia, I was a reporter with a pen and a notebook, I was the photographer climbing chairs and kneeling down to get the right angle, I was the magazine's editorial assistant; and I was the managing editor of

a brand new publication on Namibia's media scene.

As I'd been there several years ago to finish my graduation assignments for my journalism studies, Windhoek was a familiar city to me. But this time my goal was different. For six months, from September 2005 until March 2006, I would be working at The Big Issue Namibia. I had to divide my time between the magazine and the new publication called Big Talk. The latter being a tabloid format supplement on lifestyle for Namibia's business paper, The Namibia Economist.

Juggling these two balls became quite hectic. Add to that the fact that I had never ran a publication before and stress ensues. Writing stories for the magazine proved not to be a real problem. Rather, the main challenge was in guiding journalism students from the Polytechnic of Namibia to write stories to suit the Big Talk's style. The whole process of continuous meetings, reading and commenting on stories, watching over the lay-out, finding ways to attract advertisers, speaking to the printers about possible solutions to perfect the full colour printing took a few weeks to adjust to.

However, the adjustment doesn't necessarily mean a well-run process in the end. I've discovered that running a publication has its own momentum. Besides being a full-time reporter for the magazine, I also became a full-time manager. And the responsibility increased after four editions of Big Talk. Due to a financial problem, the journalism students could no longer provide stories, which left me destitute, story wise that is. From then on I would be writing all the articles for Big Talk myself; with occasional help from Big Issue staff members."

The bigger picture

"Simultaneously, I was writing long feature articles for the magazine. I interviewed people living in Windhoek's

informal settlements, spoke to the former Prime Minister, Hage Geingob, about fighting poverty in Namibia, flew to the Kunene region to witness the successes and challenges of communal conservation programmes and drove to a San community in the Northeast with the Red Cross to distribute seeds. The list is endless.

In retrospect, I can say without hesitation, that these six months made me a better journalist. Working for The Big Issue gave me the opportunity to hone my story telling skills using multiple sources for one article. Furthermore, I've gained a deeper insight in what it means to compile a magazine and be more persistent and creative in finding the information needed. My understanding of topics relevant to southern Africa such as HIV/AIDS, poverty alleviation and economic growth have also grown - contributing to a deeper understanding of how these issues influence the development of African societies.



And of course there's the whole process of running a new publication. I've learned how important it is to work as a team, to coach the people you're working with and to have a thorough idea of the direction in which you want to take a publication. The insight gained in Namibia will help me to see the bigger picture of the do's and don'ts in media land. A reporter is not just someone who writes stories, they need to think about the publication they are working for and contribute to the development of that medium. To put it into

perspective, think of journalistic skills as a toolbox; after six months I not only have a hammer and a screwdriver to do my work, but also a saw, a folding ruler and a drill. All these new experiences and tools have enormously broadened my horizon. At the moment it is difficult to pinpoint exactly how they will affect my future. For now, I've started to nuance the negative view my friends and family have of southern Africa. Sure there are dozens of problems. But issues such as HIV/AIDS, corruption and poverty are not the whole story. And I, as a journalist, also have the responsibility to show the other, more positive side of the coin. It's a story that needs to be told."

By Arjen de Boer

Arjen de Boer (arjendeboer_nl@yahoo.com) currently works as a freelance journalist. He is based in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. For a report written by another former participant in NiZA's programme for young journalists read in this issue 'South African tabloids: supporting democracy?'

Links

TBI Namibia: www.bigissuenamibia.org/

The Zimbabwean calls for feedback

Newsflash

The independent weekly The Zimbabwean has launched an international market research exercise as part of a project to further develop the publication. The Zimbabwean is the first physical newspaper for Zimbabweans in exile. Its vision is to produce and distribute a newspaper dedicated to freedom of expression and access to information for all the peoples of Zimbabwe.

If you would like to participate in the survey you can fill in the questionnaire at: <http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/questionaire.cfm>

Links

Website The Zimbabwean:
<http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/>

The needs of media managers

The Sol Plaatje Media Leadership Institute (SPI) recently completed the study 'Media management training needs assessment within the SADC region'. Herewith, a summary of this interesting research, which was funded by NiZA, and its main findings.



By exploring the views of editorial and business leaders in the media industry, the SPI, based in Grahamstown, South Africa, aims to reach a comprehensive understanding of management

training issues regarded by leaders in the SADC region as priorities. The institute also aims to create a space for media organisations to share their experiences of management capacity building and explore avenues for future collaboration.

Representatives from the SPI, the Southern Africa Institute for Media Entrepreneurship Development (SAIMED), the Southern Africa Media Development Fund (SAMDEF) and the Southern African Media Training Trust (NSJ) met to advise the SPI on the kind of information the industry would find beneficial.

Focusing on these needs, the SPI conducted approximately 75 interviews with people holding diverse positions in a broad range of print and broadcast media institutions across Botswana, Malawi and Swaziland. These interviews were followed up by a workshop for training providers and media professionals from across the SADC region with the purpose

of triangulating and testing the research findings.

The main findings of the study can be summarised in terms of four major challenges faced by media organisations: Lack of journalism and technical specialisation training, lack of management training, introduction of new technology, and the competitive media environment. A brief discussion of each follows.

- **Lack of journalism and technical specialisation training**

Few of the countries visited as part of this study have schools teaching formal journalism programmes and none of these address management issues. Furthermore, the schools that do exist are relatively new. This means that people in management roles have not had the opportunity to undergo formal training and have had to learn in the workplace. In most cases, managers are responsible for the training of their sub-ordinates, who have also often not had the opportunity to receive training.

This results in a need for basic training in journalism and technical specialisations.

- **Lack of management training**

Many of the media managers interviewed started as journalists and worked their way up in their organisations. The only exposure they have had as to how media organisations should be run is through the example of their predecessors. Media managers find themselves mimicking the often outdated management styles of these predecessors and are concerned that as a result, they may not be doing their jobs as effectively as possible.

Accordingly, managers request various forms of management training ranging from general human resource management, to management styles and newsroom management, to staff support.

- **Introduction of new technology**

With the continuous entry of new technology into the media industry, media managers feel that they need their knowledge of technology to be updated. Media managers battle to make decisions regarding technology: in their opinion they do not have enough information about available technology and the implications that new technology may have on their organisations. Furthermore, they experience the move from analogue to digital broadcasting systems as challenging. These difficulties are compounded by a lack of available resources to invest in new technology and to train staff in how to use it.

Interviewees request training that will assist them to understand new technology and its impact on the media industry, how to incorporate it into their already existing systems, and how to use and maintain it.

- **The competitive media environment**

The media industry is highly competitive, with print and broadcasting competing for audiences and advertising. Following the withdrawal of government funding from many public media organisations, advertising sales have become an increasingly important way of generating revenue.

In response, media managers request training in various financial management skills, including basic financial management, preparing funding proposals, and marketing strategies.

The overall impression portrayed by the study is a sense of the real struggle media managers across the SADC region encounter as they attempt to overcome the constraints of having received little training other than that acquired in the workplace. This report is the beginning of what the SPI hopes will be an ongoing collaboration with media industry managers in the SADC region: a co-

operate effort aimed at shaping solutions to the considerable range of training and management capacity building needs revealed in this study.

It is anticipated that the SPI will continue the current research in the Lusophone and Francophone countries of Angola, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The SPI's intention is that the report should be a living document that provides an accurate reflection of the training needs and preferred training strategies of media managers currently working in the industry. This report should therefore be seen as part of an ongoing process aimed at determining the needs of media leaders across the region.

Currently, the report is viewed by the SPI as predominantly an internal document. The SPI plans to adapt this report to be more generally applicable and then to make it publicly available through their website (<http://journ.ru.ac.za/spi>). When, isn't clear yet. For those who would like to receive a digital version beforehand, please contact claire.milne@ru.ac.za

By Claire Milne, Peter Du Toit and Asta Rau

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Links

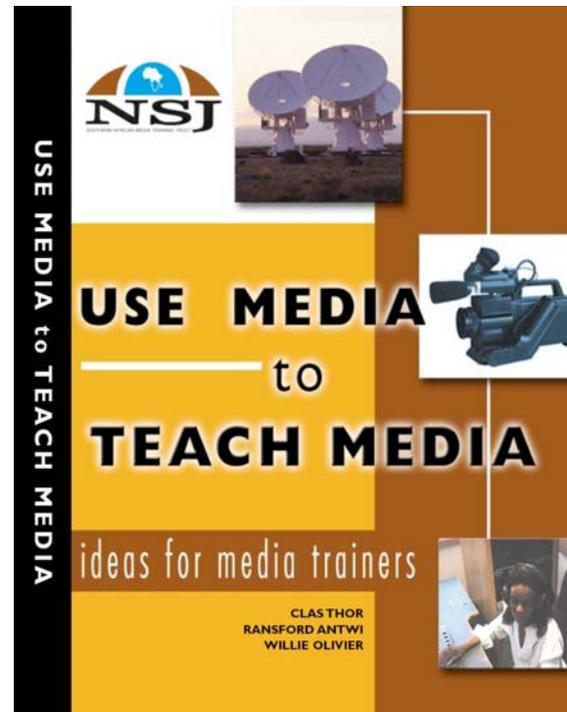
The SPI-website: <http://journ.ru.ac.za/spi>

Handbook launched

Newsflash

The Southern African Media Training Trust (NSJ), in partnership with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) and NiZA, on March 17 launched a book entitled 'Use media to teach media, ideas for media

trainers'. The book, authored by Clas Thor, Ransford Antwi, and Willie Olivier, will provide resource material for media trainers in the Southern African region and beyond. The book designed for training of trainers, provides a practical approach for



journalism educators.

The handbook will soon be available on the NSJ website. For hard copies contact Ransford Antwi at rantwi@nsjtraining.org

Links

Website NSJ: <http://www.nsjtraining.org/>

Website KAS: <http://www.kas.de>

Website NiZA: <http://www.niza.nl>