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The media's role in war and peacebuilding

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Introduction

The news media is a curious instrument. It can be a weapon of war, or can uphold prospects for peace. In the hands of totalitarian interests it can be a terrible device when it spreads messages of intolerance and disinformation which manipulate public sentiment. The use of government-controlled Radio-Television Libre de Mille Collines, to foment genocidal impulses in Rwanda in 1994, is one appalling contemporary example. The ethnic hatred propagated by the Serbian state on its broadcasting system in Bosnia is another recent case.

The news media is also capable of causing considerable damage when no-one is intentionally wielding it at all. Under ideal conditions the news media is supposed to have a mind of its own and operate according to professional codes of conduct. But its culture of professional and financial instincts can drive the media to practices which obsess with violence and influence opinion in socially destabilizing ways. Under less than ideal conditions, media bias, inaccuracy and sensationalism can generate xenophobia and violent conflict. The anti-Thai violence in Cambodia on January 29-30 2003 is one example.

There is, however, another side to this sword called the media. It can be an instrument of conflict resolution. When it responds well to its own professional strictures such as accuracy, impartiality and independence, the media can have an influence on peacebuilding. It can present alternatives to stereotypes and conflict. It can enable citizens to make well-informed decisions in their own best interests, which if freely exercised, is less likely to be a violent process.

This potential of the media has been less examined in research into democratization than other factors. While there is substantial academic and popular analysis of the media's role in conflict, there is surprisingly little concerning the media in peacebuilding.[1]

Nonetheless, the influence of the media has caught the eye of international agencies and NGOs closely involved in peacebuilding in the last decade.[2] In 10 years an estimated $1 billion US has been invested in interventions relating to the media in

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[1] *See:* Wolfsfeld, Gadi: The Varying Role of the News Media, Paper given at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, 2001.

[2] Howard, Ross: An Operational Framework for Media and Peacebuilding, IMPACS, January, 2002.

conflict-stressed societies. There is an emerging belief that the media may well be the most effective means of conflict resolution and preventing new wars.

However, the paucity of research into media intervention hampers democratization, as analysts Dusan Reljik[3] in the Berghof Handbook for Conflict for Conflict Transformation and Christopher Spurk[4] writing for SwissPeace, have commented recently. This has led to substantially flawed media initiatives.

These then are some points which may contribute to a much-needed overall framework on media and peacebuilding.   First, the undeniably deadly side to the news media, when it is used by totalitarian regimes as in instrument of repressions or conflict instigation, is the least accessible. It can hardly be called news media and should not be treated as such. .

Secondly, it is a contradiction but true that in the singularly most accessible democracies, where the media has complete freedom, the strongest impulses of the news media may still lead it to play a destructive role. Sensationalism and partisanship can deliver profit , but at the price of peacebuilding. This needs to be better recognized. There is an emerging debate within the journalistic profession now about the role of the independent media.

However, and thirdly, there is much that can be done, and is being done, at the in-between stage, in states emerging from totalitarian regimes towards democracy. Overthrowing tyranny, and turning around the worst of the media's capitalistic urges, may be greater challenges than working with media in democratizing environments. This should be of interest to anyone dedicated to the study and the pursuit of peacebuilding.

Definitions

The term "the media" needs some narrowing for the purposes of this discussion. The media here refers to the several mediums or channels used in an organized fashion to communicate information to groups of people, as a service to the public. Newspapers and magazines, radio and television and the Internet are the main channels. The gathering and dissemination process is called journalism. Journalism includes reporting, commentary, opinion and analysis. The process is distinguished by at least three central principles which are: accuracy, impartiality and responsibility in the public interest, sometimes collectively known as reliable journalism.

Most succinctly, the benefit of reliable journalism, under ideal conditions which include a diversity of independent media outlets, is that it enables well-informed citizen decision-making. Well-informed decision-making includes the right to free expression and debate -- reflecting Article 19 of the International Declaration of Human Rights – and it includes the right to vote freely, which substantially represents the practise of democracy.

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[3] Reljik, Dusan: News Media and Transformation of Ethno-Political Conflicts, Berghoff Handbook, 2000.
[4] Spurk, Christopher: Media and Peacebuilding, Concepts, Actors and Challenges, KOFF, SwissPeace, Nov. 2002.

Media influences on conflict

Conventional media influences on the way war is conducted are well-known. To cite only one, as a witness the media can be an instrument of restraint. The sudden arrival of cameras and journalists on a local scene which averted, or at least forestalled, indiscriminate slaughter of persons in the Balkan conflicts, has been reported innumerable times. The presence of the international media was what was most effective, reflecting the fact that while local norms of humane conduct had broken down there were international standards to be reckoned with, and potential consequences to be avoided.

At the macro level there is or was briefly a period of the so-called CNN effect, referring to the media's role in defining state or international policy. It was argued that the end of the Cold War had created a vacuum in policy formulation which was filled by media-specified crisis management. Round-the-clock images of an American soldier's body dragged through the streets of Mogidishu in 1993 were credited with prompting an U.S. withdrawl from peacekeeping in Somalia. However, such significance may be exaggerated and operate only on occasions where leadership is weak and policy unclear.[5] Also, governments around the world have become more adept at using the media to stay their own course. [6]

On the other hand, the traditional influence of the media in igniting and fueling conflict is far less debatable. It ranges from exhibiting patriotic ethno-cultural bias to disseminating propaganda to serving the most extreme examples, which <u>directly</u> advocate violence, as occurred in Rwanda and more recently in former Yugoslavia.

This latter condition known as hate media bears little relationship to journalism. There is nothing accurate, impartial or responsible about it   And responses to it have been beyond the subject of journalism, as in NATO destruction of Serbian RTS transmitters in Bosnia-Hercegovina in 1995, and bombing of Serb radio and television facilities in the 1999 Kosovo conflict. Less controversial, largely because it is less violet, is electronic jamming of the transmissions. Either kind of intervention raises concern about whether it represents an abuse of the right of free speech no matter how odious. But the extent of concern may be circumscribed now by the successful prosecution of so-called journalists for their involvement in the hate radio in Rwanda. The International Criminal Tribunal has adjudged the broadcasters' message to be beyond the limits of anything which could be considered journalism or free speech. The Tribunal has identified it as public incitement of hatred and genocide, which makes it a crime against humanity. And the tribunal has held some individuals guilty for their personal participation.

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[5] Strobel, William: Late-breaking Foreign Policy" the News Media's Influence on Peace Operations.

[6] Chisholm, Stewart: Evaluating the Role of the Media in Conflict Resolution, Research Paper, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada, 2000.

Current conditions

As Terzis[7] and many others have pointed out, the current post Cold-War landscape is a different and volatile environment for the kind of conflict in which the media can be most influential. Interethnic clash has become the central characteristic of the violent conflicts that are being waged today around the globe, as groups turn to ethnicity as the answer to their dilemmas of identity and security. The media in these conflict-ridden societies often create and facilitate arguments for conflict, such as oppositional metaphors of "us versus them" linked to internal or external issues. The media often become the mouthpiece for ethnic power circles. A deliberate distortion of news reporting for particular interests exacerbates the tension between opposed factions and becomes the main trigger for violent conflict. For example, the 20-year conflict in Sri Lanka, and the fragility of the current peace process there, are partially due to sensationalist, partisanized and ethnically-divided media.

A second factor in the significance of the media for modern conflict is the virtual ubiquity of the media which has been achieved in the last two decades. Thanks to technology the media, and most particularly the electronic sector, is able to reach even the most remote corners of any state. Inexpensive radio broadcasting and the inconsequential cost of radio receivers has eliminated the barrier of illiteracy to spreading news, information or propaganda. Television, to a lesser extent but with greater influence, has enjoyed a similar rise in accessibility. Even printed material has achieved a wider circulation based on modern production and distribution technologies and increased literacy rates. Again, Sri Lanka comes to mind. With an exceptionally high literacy rate, citizens' attitudes are significantly influenced by the plethora of newspapers appealing to them on the basis of their separate ethnic identity.

Given such vulnerable societies and such capacity for pervasive presence, the news media is now a pivotal influence in peacebuilding, or conflict   Ideally, with its professional objectives of accuracy, impartiality and public responsibility, the media should be a contributor foremost to peacebuilding. But for much of the last two decades, the media has been doubted.   Because even under the most ideal conditions, it appears the media most often gravitates towards a destructive role. As argued by Gadi Wolfsfeld[8] and many others, the media sensationalizes conflict with simplistic reporting which reinforces stereotypes. The media also tends to reflect and reinforce elite consensus, and to reflect its own environment of shared or isolated context. And it is driven by commercial imperatives which accelerate that gravitation towards a destructive role.

Wolfsfeld's ideal situation is a democratic state with opposition parties and a civil society, and a financially healthy, independent news media. His point is that even in this

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[7] Terzis, George and Melone, Sandra: Using the Media for Conflict Transformation, in Berghof Handbook, 2002.

[8] Wolfsfeld, op cit.

best possible environment, the media seems to exacerbate tensions. It fuels rather than cools conflict. As Robert Manoff of the Centre for War, Peace and the News Media, put it , journalism is the handmaiden of conflict.[9]

Why the free media is conflict-obsessed

First, there is an inherent contradiction between news media values and peacebuilding. News is about conflict. The professional journalist seeks immediacy, drama, and simple images which favour stereotypes. Immediacy does not favour peacebuilding as a news story because it is almost always a time consuming process rather than an instant event.

The demand for drama drives the media, especially television, to seek the most eye-catching and arresting action, even if it is inconsequential to the process. It leads journalists to seek out those who can provide the most dramatic – or extremist – message. This creates impressions upon the audience that they live in a fearful world of extremists and violent events happening constantly. At the same time it encourages potential players in the struggle to express themselves the same way, in order to be heard.

The media demand for simplicity robs the news of its context. Short simple stories which feature vivid personalities with opinions about immediate incidents are preferred to individuals or institutions with considered ideological motives to explain. Audiences are offered superficial and often distracting explanations to feed their curiosity but to starve their understanding.

And as Wolfsfeld points out, all news media presents a degree of bias reflecting their indigenous language, values, beliefs and prejudices. Most mainstream media offer audiences images and impressions centred on themselves. Stereotypes about themselves and others are reinforced as part of the simplification process.

In addition to the inherent contradiction between news and the nature of peacebuilding, Wolfsfeld and others have noted the significance of the political environment on media behaviour, even within mature democracies. For its own professional convenience in accessing recognizable voices, and for cultural comfort, the news media generally reflects elites' consensus around an issue. Lance Bennett, in his analysis of U.S. foreign policy in the Gulf War,[10] noted that the American media reversed its questioning attitude once war was declared and it adopted a patriotic fervor, because the US Senate did the same thing and thus eliminated dissenting officialdom. Concerning the current threat in the Gulf and surprisingly little reporting of substantial grass-roots American dissent, Bennett in January 2003 noted "it's the way media works in these matters." [11]   The Republican president has used the issue for his popularity and the Democratic Party opposition is extremely weak. Lacking official validators in Washington, the U.S. media has not

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[9] Manoff, Robert: *In* Journalists Covering Conflict, Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, at www.ccpdc.org/events/journalist/report.htm.

[10] Bennett, W.L & Paletz, D. (Eds):Taken by Storm: The Media, public opinion and U.S. foreign policy in the Gulf War.

[11] Bennett, W.L: Newsweek Web Jan. 16 2003.

sought other voices challenging the war policy. In one survey in the second week of January there were 100 news stories about anti-war protest and 800 stories about U.S. troop deployments.

Beyond the influence of media culture and political environment on the reporting of conflict, there is the growing impact of commercialism on the media. Media owners, especially conglomerates insensitive to the socializing role of the media, are pursuing maximized audiences, advertisers and revenues. This is most easily achieved by producing ever more entertaining, which is to say sensational, news. The news media "cannot afford" to be a responsible forum for serious debate. Conflict sells better, and is financially satisfying. Increasingly, news is seen as entertainment, by media owners and by consumers.

Of course, this spiraling state of affairs among the media of Westernized democracies has great importance beyond the boundaries of their homelands. The coverage of conflict in newly emerged or recently liberalized states by the Western media does influence Western governments bilateral and multilateral response to these new states' situations. The CNN effect on policy may be diminished but there is certainly a CNN-viewers' perception of the world, and it is heavy on intractible conflict. In an analysis which applies broadly, Micheal Ignatieff observes[12] that television news is more adept at pointing to corpses than explaining why violence may, in certain places, pay so well. The overwhelming danger is that the tv image of apparently pointless corpses encourages a retreat among audiences from the attempt to understand.

To recall: Even within an ideal environment, one which includes democracy and a self-sustaining economy, such as Western Europe and much of the Americas, researchers find this gravitation of the media towards a role which exacerbates conflict. In many other states the political environment and the media are much worse. Where government or powerful interests exercise complete control over the media, the news is simply another form of propaganda and compelled to aggravate societal prejudices through biased and manipulative reporting.

Objectivity versus intention

This spiral towards a violence-enhancing media culture within democracy has inspired new debate among journalists and some academic circles about the media and conflict, and about the media's professional practices. The debate became particularly vigorous among Western correspondents over their coverage of the last decade's conflict in the Balkans, which BBC correspondent Martin Bell and some others seriously questioned. Bell was distressed by the early stages of the ethnic cleansing in 1994-95. In his view[13] the West stood idly by because the media reported the slaughter with all the objectivity of reporting on a football match. The enormity of the tragedy never reached western

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[12] Ignatieff, Michael, "Is Nothing Sacred," in The Warrior's Honour: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience, Metropolitan Books, New York, 1997.

[13] Bell, Martin: Journalism of Attachment, interview by Ben Ayers (Contemporary Media Practice) at http://cci.wmin.ac.uk/aha-feb/mbell.html.

Europeans because of journalism's professional disinterest in outcomes. Bell argued for a more engaged journalism which would cause Western audiences to more seriously consider acting to resolve the conflict.

Bell's argument struck a chord with some researchers, and particularly with advocates of conflict prevention. Encouraged by the previous decade's success in integrating the media into strategies for immediate relief and long-term development strategies, they suggest the media can play a critical role in defusing tensions.[14] Many journalists[15] and some researchers[16] reject Bell's modest call for a shift in tone and for an empathy for humanity as an affront to classic journalistic objective neutrality. Others, however, have taken it considerably further. Jake Lynch[17] may be the most articulate proponent, presenting a new "ethics of responsibility" for reporting which utilizes concepts of conflict resolution to seek alternative news and outcomes. Jannie Botes describes media outlets in South Africa which   onsciously seek to mediate. [18] Melone and George Terzis put it bluntly, arguing   the media should ensure balanced reporting but "cannot be neutral towards peace."[19]

This debate over journalistic objectivity versus intention and responsibility in an ideal setting is healthy. (As an aside, much of the strongest objection to the debate comes from American journalists and media owners. It is argued there is no place for novelties like peace journalism in the coverage of American foreign policy, for example. And yet, for more than a decade American journalists and editors have been exploring a domestic version, called civic journalism, which argues there is more to journalism than being a professional spectator. Civic journalism, which engages the media directly in the search for solutions for troubled communities, is now widespread in the US.)

The debate is widening journalists' understanding of their profession, and this in turn prompted new interest in the role of media in conflict-stressed societies moving towards democratization. And this brings the most positive developments concerning journalism and conflict to the fore.

Journalism as mediator

As Manoff[20] and others have pointed out, professional journalism in its normal pursuits has innate potential for contributing to conflict resolution. The similarities of function,

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[14] *See*: Botes, Johannes: Journalism and Conflict Resolution *in* Frameworks for Interpreting Conflict: A Handbook for Journalists, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, 1994; *Also see:* Media and Conflict: Special Edition, Track Two, Centre for Conflict Resolution, December 1998;
Also see: Van de Veen, Hans: Better media, less conflict, European Platform for Conflict Prevention, at www.oneworld.org.
[15] *See:* Journalists Covering Conflict: Norms of Conduct, a conference supported by the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. 1999, at www.ccpdc.org/events/journalist/report.htm.
[16] Spurk, op cit.
[17] Lynch, Jake & McGoldrick, Annabel: Reporting the World, Conflict and Peace Forums, London 2001.
[18] :Botes, Jannie, *in* Regional Media in Conflict, The Institute for War and Peace Reporting, London 2000
[19] Terszis & Melone, op cit.
[20] Manoff, Robert: Role Plays, in Track II, Vol 7, December 1998.

position and even attitudes among reporters and mediators who assist disputants to resolve their differences are considerable, although largely unrecognized by journalists.[21] With no intention beyond doing its job according to accepted standards, the news media can deliver an essential requisite of conflict resolution, which is communication. The media educates, corrects misperceptions, identifies underlying interests, and humanizes the parties to the dispute. It also provides an emotional outlet, enables consensus-building, can offer solutions and build confidence, and so on. As Bauman and Siebert put it, "journalists mediate conflict whether they intend to or not."[22]

As a profession, journalists are in constant search of conflict, as news, and they have rudimentary to highly sophisticated skills in reporting it in conventional terms. But world-wide, journalism training and development contains almost no reference to the discipline of conflict analysis. Little of the wisdom of nearly five decades of academic and professional study of conflict is included in journalism training, and certainly not at the basic level. This is unfortunate, because such knowledge can better inform journalists in their work, especially in their analysis of conflict, its sources and its alternative responses, and in their reporting of efforts to defuse conflict. As American journalist Jay Rosen argued to his colleagues at the Carnegie Commission's inquiry into conflict news-reporting, "we make an error if we assume that the price of an interest in conflict resolution is giving up commitment to truth and professional objectivity. It is in fact quite the opposite: conflict sensitivity is a journalist's pass into a deeper understanding of what it means to seek the truth in journalism."[23]

Journalism and peacebuilding

Recognition of these inherent benefits of reliable journalism is much of the impetus for a greatly accelerated program of professional journalism development in emerging democracies. [24] These are the areas of opportunity. The free-wheeling and intensely competitive media of many Westernized democracies has not resolved, or has resigned itself to, its obsession with commercialized conflict. And on the other hand in many autocratic states the media has virtually no freedom and there is no debate for it to represent. However, in between, there are several dozen countries at various stages of democratization where the role of the media can be critical. And international donor and intervenor attention has turned to them. Whereas the extent of an independent and reliable media industry was once seen as an indicator of democracy, it is now viewed as an actor in its own right in the process of democratization.

In the last decade, media and peacebuilding has become integrated into the foreign aid and intervention policies of a number of major donors including members of the European Community, the US, UNESCO, the World Bank, and many international

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[21] Botes, op cit.

[22] Bauman, Melissa & Siebert, Hannes, in Peacebuilding, A Field Guide, Lynne Rienner Publishers, London, 2001.

[23] Rosen, Jay, in: Journalists Covering Conflict, op cit.

[24] Howard, Ross: Media Assistance in Democratic Transitions in Post-Conflict Societies, Conflict Research Unit, Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael," 2003 (forthcoming.)

foundations. A survey of these and other significant donors in mid-2002 identified well over 115 million Euros budgeted in that year for specific projects related to media and peacebuilding, and it was by no means a complete survey.[25]

The purpose of most of the interventions remains the support of conventional, reliable journalism. Reliable means journalism practices which meet international standards of accuracy, impartiality and social responsibility. There also is support for creating diversity within the media industry to reflecting competing opinions, and to ensure the industry enjoys independence.

There is also a new trend to foster media activities which go well beyond conventional journalism. The definition of media is extended to include unconventional channels of communication such as street theatre, posters, radio dramas and comedy, and other entertainment. The purpose is to produce information specifically designed to influence attitudes toward conflict resolution. The media becomes a facilitator of positive social change rather than a professional disinterested observor. This kind of initiative, called intended outcome programming, is not journalism as we know it, although it adheres to values such as accuracy, fairness and responsibility. It is attracting audiences, and donor support.

Opportunities for media

The opportunities for intervention are extensive, in societies that are emerging out from under regimes which practised violence, ignored human rights, suppressed civil society and neglected infrastructure. Under such regimes, the media was largely limited to serving as a propaganda agency, and professional journalism training was largely non-existent. There was also no system of independent regulators, and often no privately-owned media outlets at all.

The climate for media-related peacebuilding in such post-totalitarian environments is challenging. State censorship often continues in a less predictable manner, sometimes favouring media outlets which support the state or powerful interests. In the absence of an independent regulator or impartial courts to appeal to, the media intentionally or unconsciously adopts self-censorship to avoid transgressions. Accuracy and impartiality are sacrificed for safety's sake. News reporting lacks diversity of opinions and is uncritical of the state or powerful interests. Particularly lacking is a diversity of news media outlets as the state controls licencing in its own interest or at the behest of powerful interests operating competing media. Much of the permitted reporting is superficial but highly sensationalized and the influence on public opinion can be highly destabilizing.

 The most prevalent media and peacebuilding initiatives have focused on basic training of professional reporting and editing skills, the provision of technical resources, and direct financial support. Training increasingly includes specific skills such as financial reporting, health reporting or investigative reporting. Responding to common flash-

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[25] Spurk, op cit.

points in emerging democracies, journalism training increasingly includes human rights reporting, diversity reporting and techniques of conflict analysis. Particularly to accelerate the development of independent and diverse media outlets, training has also focused on business practices including advertising and financial management.

The importance of journalism training for political stability in some of these environments can be seen in this assessment of Bosnia-Herzogovina in 2001, by the London-based Institute for War and Peace Reporting, a reputable intervenor:

 "Bosnia has no comprehensive journalism training or education in place. The existing journalism faculties are politically tainted, obsolete and often incompetent. Many of the most talented journalists have emigrated and will never return.
"The younger generation of journalists lack mentors to teach them the craft. …Some young reporters who have attended [training] courses … have subsequently been fired by their editors, who view Western-style journalism education with suspicion.

"The ethnic slurs and excesses so common during the war have been replaced by slightly less-explicit language. However, the message of the sectarian media – that ethnic equality and integration is impossible – has not changed.

"Government agencies operate in a political culture of secrecy, withholding almost all information of vital interest to the public."

  This analysis, it should be noted, was produced after five years of unprecedented media-related interventions in Bosnia by numerous donors, following the Dayton Accords. Tens of millions of dollars were assigned to training, journalist protection, equipment and direct subsidies to newly-emerged media outlets. The intention was to create diversity and independence within the Bosnia media to counter state broadcasters who continued to foment ethnic hatred. What was produced was a saturated and artificial media market almost wholly dependent upon donor aid, with minimal responsiveness to the Bosnian public, and practicing highly unreliable and partisanized journalism. In addition to severe over-enthusiastic funding, there had been a serious mistaking of self-declared opposition media outlets for independent, professional journalism. The widely documented failures[26] of the Bosnian interventions, including lack of donor coordination and unfounded expectations, illustrate a major shortcoming of the field of media and peacebuilding, as mentioned earlier, and that is its lack of well-researched methodology.

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[26] *See*: Stalnaker, Jesisca: International Media Assistance and Bosnian Civil Society, Localization as the Missing Link; American University School of International Service, 2001;
Also see: Price, Monroe: Restructuring the Media in Post-Conflict Societies, Background Paper for UNESCO World Press Day, 2000;
Also see: Taylor, Maureen: Evaluation of USAID/OTI Media Transition Grants in Bosnia, USAID, 1999;
Also see: Curtis, Devon: Broadcasting Peace, an Analysis of Local Media Post-Conflict…Rwanda and Bosnia, Canadian Journal of Development Studies, No. 1, 2000.

A holistic approach

The final paragraph cited from the Bosnian appraisal illustrates another essential point about enthusiasm for media and peacebuilding. It is increasingly clear that journalism development in the absence of a media-supportive infrastructure cannot function very well or likely very long. Media development initiatives must take account of a larger approach to a state's democratization.[27] A media-supportive infrastructure includes a system of legislation, courts and tribunals that complement, defend and discipline a reliable news media. Without this, there is no access- to-information legislation to enable well-informed journalism, no courts to protect journalists from intimidation and to address media malfeasance such as libel and slander, and no independent regulators to fairly allocate publishing and broadcasting rights. It requires a multi-sectoral approach to enable the media to contribute to a society's resolution of its conflict. It may be called something else, such as legal and administrative reforms, or civil service modernization, and may be funded separately, but these sectors are essential for media security and professionalism.

The holistic approach to media interventions for peacebuilding must also reflect upon economic conditions. Professional journalism and the presence of a media-enabling infrastructure will have little effect if a local economy is too impoverished to support companies buying advertising in the media.   Media managers unable to finance their operations in the open market will remain vulnerable to subsidization by political interests who seek to dictate news judgment. In addition, journalists regardless of advanced training remain liable to corruption, bribery and intimidation on the job if they obtain very low pay and low status in reflection of the national economy. While democratization initiatives often encourage the formation of private outlets to foster media diversity and independence, those new players may not be economically self-supporting. A donor-dependent media may be a starting point but media outlets must sustainability or fail. State-owned broadcasters in numerous Western democracies should not be overlooked as an acceptable model in emerging democracies, where other essential elements such as independent regulators are in place.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is at this time a cacophony of media-related initiatives in support of democratization and development, around the world. Most of the initiatives focus on basic and increasingly sophisticated journalism; others are exploring redefinitions of conventional journalism to include a conscious ethic of conflict resolution; while a third momentum is expanding the concept of intended outcome programming for conflict resolution.

The number of intervenors is growing, and even within bilateral donors or international agencies such as UNESCO there can be complimentary or competing programs which unwittingly operate in isolation. There are initiatives being taken upon which a reliable

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[27] Krug, Peter & Price, Monroe: The Legal Environment for News Media, *in* The Right To Tell, Ch 10, The World Bank, Washington, Dec. 2002.

media greatly depends, such as legislative and legal and regulatory reforms, although these initiatives are supported under the name of good governance or human rights or civil society support. There is a need for much greater coordination of the work being done.

In addition, acknowledged wisdom about what works and does not, is only beginning to be identified and shared. While the processes and the immediate outcomes have in many cases been recorded, particularly for funders' purposes, the effect of media interventions is not well documented. It is not a question of how many journalists were trained or how many laws were changed, but how the standard of reliable journalist was raised or much the fairness of regulatory decisions was enhanced. It is a slow and expensive process but evaluation and scholarship needs to be built into media interventions from the point of inception. The extensively-documented success of media-based human development initiatives, such as educational programs relating to HIV-AIDS development, offers some insight. But for media and peacebuilding new yardsticks and indicators and frameworks will be needed.

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