

The Case for Strengthening Media in Africa: Framework and Proposals

“Only a healthy media sector can fulfill its obligations. If media publishers and broadcasters in both the public and private sectors lack financial resources and security, if they do not uphold professional standards, and if they use reporters and editors who are inadequately trained or experienced, they will fail to live up to the standards that underpin public confidence”. Consensus Statement, the Fourth African Development Forum¹.

I. Introduction

Recent years have seen unprecedented attention focused on Africa’s development challenges and the priority actions that should be undertaken by Africans and the international community in order to effectively meet them. Following the recommendations of the 2005 United Nations World Summit Outcome document, a consensus has emerged around the immediate need for a *big push*, a major comprehensive scaling up of effort and resources (both financial and intellectual) in support of Africa’s development efforts, if any headway is to be made in turning the situation around.

At the heart of this new impetus is the need to address the capacity constraints faced by numerous institutions and sectors essential to the development and maintenance of vibrant open societies as well as accountable, well-governed and effective states in Africa. This is seen as critical as there is “a clear consensus that good governance and sustainable development are two sides of the same coin”. In that context, it is acknowledged that effective media are a vital ingredient in the establishment and maintenance of effective, transparent, and accountable states which promote development, protect human rights, respect the rule of law, and ensure that people are free to participate in, and be heard on, decisions that affect their lives.

This argument forms a key part of the Consensus Statement of the African Development Forum IV (October 2004), which echoed the call made in the first African Governance Report² for a new large scale and comprehensive African capacity building initiative to address capacity deficits in key areas, including the media. The Commission for Africa, established by British Premier Tony Blair, also subsequently made a similar recommendation within its “coherent package for Africa”.

¹ More than a thousand delegates from all over Africa participated in the Fourth African Development Forum (ADF IV) on the theme of “**Governance for a Progressing Africa**,” at ECA’s headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 11–15 October, 2004. The African Development Forum is an initiative intended to advance an Africa-driven development agenda. It aims to initiate dialogue, build consensus and mobilise partnerships around African stakeholders’ goals. <http://www.uneca.org/adfiv>.

² The first African Governance Report (AGR I) was based on a study conducted in 27 countries which sampled the opinions of over 50,000 households and 2,000 experts. <http://www.uneca.org/agr2005/>

In light of the above, the main thrust of this document is to articulate a framework for an African-owned and led media development agenda to address the existing deficits faced in, and by, the media sector in the region. It is set against the urgent need for effective partnerships towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that world governments have set themselves to achieve by the year 2015. These targets include reducing poverty, promoting gender equality, halving major infections, such as HIV/AIDs, malaria, and tuberculosis and building a sustainable environment.

A strong media and communication environment are critical to a developed and prosperous Africa. This framework document is therefore predicated on the recognition that the MDGs cannot be achieved without sustained political will and investment, which would among others, require a free and democratic environment in which the media can play an effective role in promoting sustainable development, fighting corruption and promoting good governance.

The framework is the outcome of a wide-ranging consultation process, '*Strengthening Africa's Media*'³, undertaken in 2006, which drew on the expertise and views of key stakeholders in the African media sector. The consultation process provided a platform for African media actors, in collaboration with their support partners, to articulate concerns and perspectives, identify priority issues and areas requiring support, and propose concrete initiatives and programmes towards a strengthened media sector. This document, the main outcome of the consultations, highlights the main challenges cited by stakeholders as well as concrete actions proposed to address them.

Stakeholders were unanimous that the track record of international donor support in strengthening media and communication in African countries has been mixed, while African governments have by and large failed to put in place the enabling environment to ensure a robust media and communication sector. As a result, the impact of what little investment in media has come Africa's way has been fragmented.

With a view to moving the agenda the forward, this framework aims to achieve the following:

- a) To accentuate the consensus among African media development actors on the key priorities to be addressed;
- b) To rally international media support actors around the African agenda articulated herein; and
- c) To ensure that future support to the sector in Africa is coherent, coordinated and fully responsive to the challenges at hand.

Attached to this document is a matrix of proposals that spell out the targets for delivery.

³ <http://www.uneca.org/africanmedia/>

II. Context

In the late 1970s, one of the main concerns of post-colonial Africa was the unbalanced information flow between the continent and the industrialized North and the negative image of Africa and Africans portrayed in the major news agencies of the world. Arising out of this concern, the Organization for African Union created the Pan African News Agency (PANA) in 1979 to “rectify the distorted image of Africa created by international news agencies and to let the voice of Africa be heard on the international news scene.”

As concerns grew globally, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided the forum for a vigorous debate on media development, culminating in calls for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO). Pushed by countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, NWICO highlighted problems of commercialisation, unequal access to information and communication, and media concentration, and advocated for the strengthening of national media to obviate overdependence on external sources.

At the same time, within the continent, there was considerable concern about press freedom, freedom of expression and media repression as the 1970s and 1980s were marked by military dictatorships and one-party state systems across Africa. In many countries there were very few media entities in operation apart from state controlled outlets, which served as mouthpieces of the government of the day.

Over the past 15 to 20 years, there has been notable progress and a significant shift towards democratization and media diversity in Africa. Mainstream, alternative and new forms of media, such as community and privately owned commercial media have steadily emerged and grown in numbers and diversity of opinion. The growth is in large part due to the space created by the shift from dictatorial regimes to multiparty democracies and elections as well as the end of the cold war and internal calls for democratic reform. In many African countries, as new media entities have emerged, state-owned media, equally important for the public interest, has stagnated in the face of competition and diversity.

The growth of independent and pluralistic media in the 1990s was characterized by an urgent need to move from top-down, state-driven propaganda to message-driven and participatory forms of dialogue and expression. Organic community media networks and associations across Africa emerged to give voice to marginalized and isolated communities in the wave of the democratic reform that was sweeping the Continent.

For instance, in the post-Agenda 21 round of UN negotiations on Desertification and Biodiversity issues, a pilot community media initiative in East Africa created a much-needed space for the Maasai community in Tanzania’s Simaanjiro

District to organize and articulate their views on the role of communities in natural resources management. At the local level, land rights violations were addressed, based on the global imperatives and agreements emerging from these negotiations. In Southern Africa, community radio stations, once outlawed in the oppressive apartheid era, mobilized communities around the issues that defined the new South Africa. These stations served as models to similar initiatives emerging in the rest of Africa.

The 1990s also witnessed a surge in the take-up of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in Africa. While mainstream mass media outlets harnessed ICTs to achieve significant efficiencies and economies of scale, the period saw the emergence of pioneering grassroots media initiatives leveraging ICTs. Integrating ICTs in traditional media offered a diversified media and medium. At the regional level, the African Information Society Initiative (AISII) was established in 1994 to enable African leaders, and planners to position Africa in the world's rapidly expanding global economic system and accelerate the pursuit of Africa's development goals. A decade later AISII, which emphasizes the symbiosis between media and ICTs, remains a key African framework for integrating ICT policies in national development frameworks and MDGs.

For close to a decade, the Highway Africa initiative, an annual collaboration between Rhodes University in South Africa, the private sector and development partners to showcase and promote new media, has helped engender a new breed of networked, multimedia-savvy African of journalists.

In recent years, the digital era, and with it the convergence of new technologies with traditional/conventional media have raised critical policy questions on conventional regulatory telecommunications frameworks that lag behind new and emerging technologies. With access to new technologies and with improved bandwidth and Internet infrastructure, ordinary citizens can bypass the hurdles of access to frequencies and licenses by appropriating digital or video cameras and audio players to publish, podcast, vodcast or stream stories on independent Internet blogs.

The digital age and the ubiquitous nature of the Internet have also challenged the traditional definition of journalism, forcing the mainstream or mass media to adapt or face extinction. "Citizen journalism", including the generation of news content and analysis by individuals and independent groups of citizens world wide, is an important dimension of this emerging phenomenon. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process fostered discussion on how to address the range of emerging issues accompanying the juxtaposition of new with old media.

With more Africans able to access other forms of communications, such as mobile telephony, the emphasis rightly remains on converging these newer

technologies with radio, which has the widest reach and is most accessible to marginalized communities.

International and regional processes have also been instrumental in advancing media pluralism. The UNESCO-organized meeting in Namibia in May 1991 resulted in the landmark *Windhoek Declaration on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press*. It has been acknowledged that the Windhoek Declaration falls in line with the principle of the Universal Declaration of Human rights which acknowledges information as a “fundamental right, public property at the service of humanity” and encourages African States to “provide the constitutional guarantees necessary for press freedom” and for the emergence of a pluralistic press in the continent. In particular, the Declaration recommends the elimination of all economic and legal obstacles to the establishment of new media outlets.

In support of the Windhoek Declaration, the UN General Assembly proclaimed May 3 as World Press Freedom Day, creating the space for national as well as international debate on media freedom. More than a decade after Windhoek, studies have reported progress as well as gaps between the Declaration, its interpretation in national legal frameworks, laws and constitutions and its enforcement at the national level.

At the policy level, regional advocacy led to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, in Article 9, which echoes Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights has elaborated the issue of media pluralism and freedom of expression in its *Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa*. It promotes the development of private broadcasting and echoes the African Charter on Broadcasting, adopted in 2001 on the tenth anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration. The African Charter on Broadcasting encourages the development of private broadcasting, the need to transform state or government broadcasters into genuine public broadcasters, and the need for independent broadcasting regulatory bodies.

Internationally, various commitments recognize the importance of free, pluralistic, and independent media. Development agencies, donors and international organisations are also increasingly paying attention to these commitments: The Tunis phase of WSIS came up with an action plan that includes an action line that states, “media in their various forms and with a diversity of ownership - as an actor, have an essential role in the development of the Information Society and are recognized as an important contributor to freedom of expression and plurality of information”. It encourages the development of domestic legislation that guarantees the independence and plurality of the media and urges for appropriate measure, consistent with freedom of expression, to combat illegal and harmful content in media content.

The 2005 Commission for Africa report recommended to the G8 Summit that substantially increasing spending on media support strategies and ICTs was essential for ensuring accountability and transparency in government.

Overall, the media landscape has benefited from media support institutions established, partly in response to the wave of democratic reform and the proliferation of media. The Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA) is emblematic of the capacity that now increasingly resides in African media support organizations. MISA was set up to maintain and foster an independent, pluralistic and free press, seen as "vital to the maintenance of democracy in a nation, and for economic development." MISA's programs include freedom of expression, broadcasting diversity, media monitoring, gender, media support and legal support. Other African organizations that have helped strengthen the media environment include the Media Foundation for West Africa, Panos Institute for West Africa, while institutions such as Genderlinks and FEMNET have sought to amplify women's voices by building the capacity of journalists to seek out gender angles in their reporting, and advocating for gender equality in the larger policy context. A host of international actors and initiatives has also helped assert the importance of an African media development agenda.

III. Outstanding Challenges

Despite the recent political changes, institutional reform and a changed media policy and operating environment in many countries, the effectiveness of Africa's media continues to be hampered by a number of critical challenges. At the same time there appears to be a widening gulf separating the interests of big (commercial, and public) from small (community, alternative and independent) media players. The nature of Africa's evolving diverse media calls for recognition that both are equally important and must be nurtured in tandem. Big media players are essential if large numbers of citizens are to be included in the information loop, and for impacts on governance and accountability to be most effectively registered at scale. Small media players have a strategic role in providing alternative points of view and can effectively cater for dissenting, and minority voices and the needs of rural and marginalized community groups. In terms of the value-chain, the smaller players have a critical role to play as guardians of local spheres, creating resonance between the various players in public spaces, across borders and common languages.

In this context, the following constitute five most critical challenges facing the media sector in Africa today:

1. Media Freedom

As a result of efforts by media advocates and democratization in the last decade, most countries in Africa have constitutions that guarantee freedom of expression and information. At the same time these rights are embedded in the regional instruments, such as the Windhoek Declaration, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, whose Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa enshrines freedom of expression, including the development of broadcasting services in Africa.

Most African countries now subscribe to regional and international human rights instruments which guarantee these rights. However, while media regulation and policies have improved since independence, many African countries still carry the legacy of the colonial period. Many Anglophone countries in East African countries, for example, are yet to repeal their Secrecy Acts and Penal code sections that criminalize libel. Attacks on and destruction of property in media houses by governments have brought to the fore the gaps between international and regional instruments and their application/interpretation at the national level.

Particularly in repressive and authoritarian regimes, the media is either compromised or in adversarial relationships with governments. In addition, it is unable to play an effective role as the guardian of the public sphere and cannot effectively deal with Africa's poverty challenges, which are for the most part due to lack of the kind of societal transformation that is only possible through the use of the media for civic education. As a result, citizens remain unaware of

alternative viewpoints and are denied the opportunity to dialogue and question leadership and expose deceit and corruption.

2. Policy

The need for a critical review and overhaul of the legal and policy environment in which the media operates across Africa cannot be overstated. Of particular concern are policies relating to issues such as defamation and the legal protection of investigative journalists attempting to inform on corruption, governance and accountability issues.

Furthermore, most current regulatory frameworks are not relevant to demands and situation of the technological environment in which the media now operates, where traditional forms of broadcasting and dissemination of media output/products are changing rapidly, with the introduction of all manner of multimedia, such as streaming, podcasting, webcasting and vodcasting.

The fast moving global technological advances of the 21st century now demand that African regulatory frameworks move from frequency allocation to a much more informed and broader media regulation which seeks to empower the media to provide the best possible service for citizens within in the context of technological convergence, assessments of the benefits and disadvantages of cross-ownership, media concentration and the introduction of quotas for balancing local and foreign content.

3. Capacity and standards

The media cannot effectively play its role in promoting good governance without journalists, editors and media owners adhering to professional codes of conduct. While numerous media support organizations have worked with media houses over the past 20 years to improve professional standards, it is acknowledged by many stakeholders that the long-term impact of these efforts has been minimal. The daily application of professional ethical standards by many journalists and editors remains low. Long-term comprehensive professional capacity development of media practitioners and institutions, which seeks to builds on projects already undertaken, is therefore needed.

The mushrooming of media and communication training institutions in various countries has also raised concerns about the lack of professional standards. Many media practitioners are trained by institutions whose standards do not correspond to industry needs and retraining is needed in a number of areas, including in the use of ICTs and in research and analytical skills.

Unfortunately, the lack of access to computers and high costs of connectivity make it difficult for many media organizations to access information and deliver high quality stories at low cost. In addition, inadequate media and management

policies and poor wages hamper the day-to-day welfare of journalists, in particular women and reporters. Where they exist, media unions and associations are generally weak and incapable of playing a supportive role.

4. Sustainability

The survival and sustainability of the media is a critical issue that is intrinsically linked to content, format and business models. A lack of access to capital, poor financial practices and unstable business environments all impinge on sustainability. With important but isolated exceptions, where effective infrastructure does exist it is under-supported, under-invested, and personnel are inadequately prepared for the practical business of managing media sustainably.

Smaller entities such as community and private media are largely dependent on donor support and suffer from financial sustainability and lack of skills in financial/strategic planning, monitoring and accountability. Unlike bigger media, very little earnings if any are accrued from advertising revenue.

There is a need to learn from successful support initiatives and scale up what works. One such success story is the Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF), based in South Africa and one of the few entities that provide revolving loans and grants as well as tailored on-site business training to media clients who meet laid-down criteria.

5. Lack of quality and diversity of content

The capacity to generate and package high quality local content that is relevant to local conditions and that offers ideological diversity is lacking, as is the financing to train practitioners.

Economics and the requirements of sponsors and the advertising industry drive programming and format. In terms of diversity of content, there is little or no content analysis that monitors the proportion of content genres and reach. Balancing entertainment (movies, music), religious programming or propaganda with civic education or dialogue on issues that concern the public and that point to a truly democratized free flow of information is lacking. In East Africa, for example, the preponderance of religious programming is a controversial issue that might require a healthy debate on the need for quotas to allow for other non-religious content that meets the notion of public service delivery.

Further, the lack of capacity for research in areas such as content analysis, demographic and audience surveys, sharing of statistical data as well as research into the role of the media in forming opinion, combines to hamper quality and diversity of content.

III. Proposed Actions to Help Develop a Sustainable and Pluralistic Media in Africa

The proposals described below and tabulated in the accompanying matrix build on innovative initiatives, aim to significantly reduce duplication, and are intended to address gaps, share good practices and replicate creative approaches in media capacity-building efforts. On the basis of these and other emerging proposals, efforts should now be geared towards finding innovative solutions to the challenges highlighted above, and to ensuring sustained and accurate measurement of progress in implementing the Framework on an ongoing basis.

Cluster 1: Freedom of Expression and Information:

- Actively promote the adoption and domestication by all African governments of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, as well as Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, on freedom of expression.
- Advocate for the adoption, ratification, domestication and implementation of all international and continental freedom of information principles, norms and standards.
- Formulate and adopt specific laws related to access to information, whistle blowing, protection of sources, etc.
- Develop an awareness-raising strategy to promote better understanding within the media itself of national media laws, to educate the media on its responsibility to provide accurate information, and to educate the public at large on its rights to information.
- Sensitize lawyers and the judiciary on international and continental standards related to freedom of expression and information.

Cluster 2: Policy and Regulation:

- Undertake an audit of existing national laws and policies to identify poor regulation (such as incoherence between media laws and national constitutions) and promote the design and implementation of policies and legal frameworks that enable, rather than stifle, the growth of a strong, pluralistic and sustainable media in Africa.
- Promote legislation to mitigate the negative impacts of media concentration, promote fair competition and ensure diversity.
- Promote good corporate governance among African media enterprises.
- Advocate for the licensing of community media in all African countries.
- Advocate for the transformation of state-owned media into public service media that operates independently from the influence of the state and political parties in line with internationally recognized norms and practices (African charter on broadcasting).
- Promote the establishment of legislation to ensure that the important potential of convergence as an opportunity for media development is realized.

Cluster 3: Capacity Building:

- Undertake a comprehensive audit of existing media training in Africa, identify gaps and problems, and develop proposals to strengthen training.
- Develop minimum standards for training of all kinds by advocating for and developing models for competency testing and academic recognition.
- Promote the establishment of in-house training policies for media houses that promote sequential and on-going learning.
- Advocate for and promote more on-site training as an important strategy for continuous skills building and knowledge acquisition.
- Develop and sustain stronger links between the media industry and media training industry.
- Actively promote and develop media exchange programmes within Africa as a value-added strategy for strengthening capacity.
- Promote the establishment of networks and associations of media owners to strengthen the capacity to develop and sustain media enterprises.
- Strengthen or where appropriate establish regional centres of excellence as a means of overcoming national media capacity building shortfalls.
- Establish and strengthen networks of specialized training centres and trainers to rationalize and consolidate thematic training offerings – for example on reporting HIV/AIDS, multimedia and ICTs – and promote the sharing of curricula.
- Promote the pooling of training expertise, mentoring and resources as a means of widening access across media to cutting edge and affordable training.
- Develop accreditation mechanisms for training centres.

Cluster 4: Sustainability:

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of existing media funds and facilities available to African media, whether private, public or community. Where such funds exist, develop proposals to strengthen and extend their remit as needed towards ensuring sustainable media, bearing in mind the appropriate financing instruments (loans or grants) depending on the type of media concerned. Where there are clear gaps, develop proposals as to how these can be addressed by the establishment of new mechanisms as appropriate.
- Advocate for public funding to ensure the development and sustainability of community, local, small and emerging media as well as media producing public interest content.
- Conduct analysis of different models of media funding and co-ownership to inform strategies for economic sustainability of African media.
- Undertake comprehensive research into the community media sector in Africa, as a means of identifying its reach and scope and strengths and weaknesses. On the basis of the research findings, develop a strategy to ensure sustainable and effective community media in Africa.

- Undertake a study of the conditions in African countries with regard to taxes imposed on the importation of media equipment and inputs, including newsprint. On the basis of the results of the study, advocate for the lowering or waiving of taxes on the import of media equipment and other inputs.
- Advocate for the removal of unfair competition from state media funded by public resources – e.g. for an end to preferential access of state media to public advertising.
- Advocate for the recognition of the Media as a sector in its own right and avail investor funds to build the financial sustainability of the media.
- Promote the use of independent circulation auditing to gather more robust data and thereby strengthen media markets
- Produce periodic reports (ideally annually) on the state of the media in Africa

Cluster 5: Professionalism and Ethics:

- Develop tools and mechanisms to monitor the status of implementation of norms, standards and best practice related to ownership, editorial independence and public interest journalism.
- Ensure that regional norms and standards on professionalism and ethics in the African media are widely disseminated and respected across the board.
- Establish and encourage the development of professional networks (such as the African Economics Editors Network) and regional forums (such as the Festival des Ondes de Bamako and Highway Africa) to strengthen the practice of media in Africa.
- Establish an African Media Award to showcase and reward outstanding media practice, entrepreneurship, innovation and public interest journalism.
- Develop mechanisms to strengthen the organization of media practitioners to combat poor wages and working conditions. Where they exist (e.g. in francophone Africa), explore ways of bolstering and ensuring the respect for national and sub-regional legal codes that guarantee minimum working conditions for media practitioners.
- Where they exist (e.g. in francophone Africa), explore ways of bolstering and ensuring the respect for national and sub-regional legal codes that guarantee minimum working conditions for media practitioners.
- Promote fair and equitable working conditions for women in the African media, and advocate for an end to sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based discrimination.

Cluster 6: Content:

- Ensure the respect for and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity as well as gender balance in Africa's media, and in particular support the use of local languages.
- Facilitate the conducting of audience surveys to determine relevant content/formats.

- Strengthen awareness of the media's responsibility and critical role in addressing the burning development challenges facing Africa – including in health, governance, conflict and peace building, and globalization.
- Advocate for 'public interest' funds within countries and in the context of regional mechanisms and initiatives such as NEPAD and the African Union, to be allocated to media across sectors producing content in the public interest. Such funds could be modelled on universal access funds created to promote the use of ICTs in rural areas.
- Ensure the production and dissemination of content that reflects the diversity of interests, the opinions and the voices of different social actors, including the marginalized.
- Promote the use by media of ICTs to digitize and share content across Africa.

Matrix of Proposed Actions to Help Develop a Sustainable and Pluralistic Media in Africa

Cluster 1: Freedom of Expression and Information	Actions Required	Timeframe	Actors
	Actively promote the adoption and domestication by all African governments of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, as well as Article 9 of African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, on freedom of expression.	Activities throughout 2007 and 2008 Adopted by end of 2008	Media Rights and FoE focused orgs to lead with support of other key stakeholder
	Advocate for the adoption, ratification, domestication and implementation of all international and continental freedom of information principles, norms and standards.	Activities throughout 2007 and 2008 Adopted by end of 2008	Media Rights and FoE focused orgs to lead with support of other key stakeholder
	Linked to the above, formulate and adopt specific laws related to access to information, whistle blowing, protection of sources, etc	Activities throughout 2007 and 2008 Adopted by end of 2008	Media Rights and FoE focused orgs to lead with support of other key stakeholders
	Strengthen existing national, sub-regional and continental mechanisms, including media defense funds to ensure the protection of journalists and other media practitioners.	Activities throughout 2007 and 2008	African media support organizations in partnership with international media support organizations.
	Develop an awareness-raising strategy to promote better understanding within the media itself of national media laws, to educate the media on its responsibility to provide accurate information, and to educate the public at large on its rights to information.	Activities throughout 2007 and 2008	African media support organizations in partnership with international media support organizations.
	Sensitize lawyers and the judiciary on international and continental standards related to freedom of expression and information.	Activities throughout 2007 and 2008	African media support organizations in partnership with international media support organizations.

Cluster 2: Policy and Regulation	Actions Required	Time frame/Targets	Actors
	Undertake an audit of existing national laws and policies to identify poor regulation (such as incoherence between media laws and national constitutions) and promote the design and implementation of policies and legal frameworks that enable, rather than stifle, the growth of a strong, pluralistic and sustainable media in Africa.	Activities throughout 2007. Audit report and proposed new policies and frameworks drafted and circulated by end of first quarter of 2008	Sub-regional African media support organizations
	Promote legislation to mitigate the negative impacts of media concentration, promote fair competition and ensure diversity.	Activities throughout 2007	Sub-regional African media support organizations
	Promote good corporate governance among African media enterprises	Activities throughout 2007	Sub-regional African media support organizations
	Advocate for the licensing of community media in all African countries.	Activities throughout 2007	Sub-regional African media support organizations
	Advocate for the transformation of state-owned media into public service media that operates independently from the influence of the state and political parties in line with internationally recognized norms and practices (African charter on broadcasting).	Activities throughout 2007	Sub-regional African media support organizations
	Promote the establishment of legislation to ensure that the important potential of convergence as an opportunity for media development is realized.	Activities throughout 2007	Sub-regional African media support organizations

Cluster 3: Capacity Building	Actions Required	Time Frame	Actors
	Undertake a comprehensive audit of existing media training in Africa, identify gaps and problems, and develop proposals to strengthen training.	Activities throughout 2007. Audit reports drafted and circulated by end of first quarter of 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Develop minimum standards for training of all kinds by advocating for and developing models for competency testing and academic recognition.	Draft standards ready by end of 2007	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Promote the establishment of in-house training policies for media houses that promote sequential and on-going learning.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Advocate for and promote more on-site training as an important strategy for continuous skills building and knowledge acquisition.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Develop and sustain stronger links between the media industry and media training industry.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Actively promote and develop media exchange programmes within Africa as a value-added strategy for strengthening capacity.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Promote the establishment of networks and associations of media owners to strengthen the capacity to develop and sustain media enterprises.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Strengthen or where appropriate establish regional centres of excellence as a means of overcoming national media capacity building shortfalls.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Establish and strengthen networks of specialized training centres and trainers to rationalize and consolidate thematic training offerings – for example on reporting HIV/AIDS, multimedia and ICTs – and promote the sharing of curricula.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Promote the pooling of training expertise, mentoring and resources as a means of widening access across media to cutting edge and affordable training.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions
	Develop accreditation mechanisms for training centres.	Proposal by end of 2007	Leading African training organizations in 5 sub-regions

STREAM Secretariat Draft, 2006

Cluster 4: Sustainability	Actions Required	Time Frame	Actors
	Conduct a comprehensive analysis of existing media funds and facilities available to African media, whether private, public or community.	Analysis ready by 3 rd quarter 2007	African + international media support organizations.
	Advocate for public funding to ensure the development and sustainability of community, local, small and emerging media as well as media producing public interest content.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations.
	Conduct analysis of different models of media funding and co-ownership to inform strategies for economic sustainability of African media.	Analysis ready by 3 rd quarter 2007	African + international media support organizations.
	Undertake comprehensive research into the community media sector in Africa, as a means of identifying its reach and scope and strengths and weaknesses. On the basis of the research findings, develop a strategy to ensure sustainable and effective community media in Africa.	Research ready by 3 rd quarter 2007. Strategy by end 2007	African + international media support organizations.
	Undertake a study of the conditions in African countries with regard to taxes imposed on the importation of media equipment and inputs, including newsprint. On the basis of the results of the study, advocate for the lowering or waiving of taxes on the import of media equipment and other inputs.	Study ready by 3 rd quarter 2007. Advocacy throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations.
	Advocate for the removal of unfair competition from state media funded by public resources – e.g. for an end to preferential access of state media to public advertising.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations.
	Advocate for the recognition of the Media as a sector in its own right and avail investor funds to build the financial sustainability of the media.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations.
	Promote the use of independent circulation auditing to gather more robust data and thereby strengthen media markets	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations.
	Produce periodic reports (ideally annually) on the state of the media in Africa	Plan for 1 st edition by mid-2007	African + international media support organizations.

STREAM Secretariat Draft, 2006

Cluster 5: Professionalism and Ethics	Actions Required	Time Frame	Actors
	Develop tools and mechanisms to monitor the status of implementation of norms, standards and best practice related to ownership, editorial independence and public interest journalism.	Draft strategy by end 2007	African + international media support organizations.
	Ensure that regional norms and standards on professionalism and ethics in the African media are widely disseminated and respected across the board.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations.
	Establish and encourage the development of professional networks (such as the African Economics Editors Network) and regional forums (such as the Festival des Ondes de Bamako and Highway Africa) to strengthen the practice of media in Africa.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations.
	Establish an African Media Award to showcase and reward outstanding media practice, entrepreneurship, innovation and public interest journalism.	Inaugural award end 2007	African + international media support organizations + other partners.
	Develop mechanisms to strengthen the organization of media practitioners to combat poor wages and working conditions.	Draft strategy by end 2007	Unions + African + international media support organizations.
	Where they exist (e.g. in francophone Africa), explore ways of bolstering and ensuring the respect for national and sub-regional legal codes that guarantee minimum working conditions for media practitioners.	Draft strategy by end 2007	Unions + African + international media support organizations.
	Promote fair and equitable working conditions for women in the African media, and advocate for an end to sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based discrimination.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	Unions + African + international media support organizations.

STREAM Secretariat Draft, 2006

Cluster 6: Content	Actions Required	Time frame	Actors
	Ensure the respect for and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity as well as gender balance in Africa's media, and in particular support the use of local languages.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations + other partners.
	Facilitate the conducting of audience surveys to determine relevant content/formats etc to be formulated.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations + other partners.
	Strengthen awareness of the media's responsibility and critical role in addressing the burning development challenges facing Africa – including in health, governance, conflict and peace building, and globalization.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations + dev. agencies + other partners.
	Advocate for 'public interest' funds within countries and in the context of regional mechanisms and initiatives such as NEPAD and the African Union, to be allocated to media across sectors producing content in the public interest. Such funds could be modeled on universal access funds created to promote the use of ICTs in rural areas.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations + other partners.
	Ensure the production and dissemination of content that reflects the diversity of interests, the opinions and the voices of different social actors, including the marginalized.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	African + international media support organizations + other partners.
	Promote the use by media of ICT to digitize and share content across Africa.	Activities throughout 2007, 2008	