



## Domestic Accountability and Support to Media: From the Why to the How in Effective Cooperation

*Paper prepared for OECD DAC GovNet Meeting January 28, 2014*

### 1. Introduction

The role of media as an effective way for citizens to hold authority to account is widely acknowledged. The Network on Governance (GovNet) dedicated a day to examining this role in June 2010, following similar examinations of the role of parliaments and political parties, and reviewed a summary of evidence supporting the role of media as a source of domestic accountability. It also agreed on a set of principles that could underpin development support in this area.

The purpose of this paper, and of a one day session of the GovNet on January 28, 2014, is to illuminate and guide thinking a set of outstanding challenges in media support. It is focused less on why media is important as a source of domestic accountability and more on when it is appropriate to support media, how can support be most effective and what achievements can be expected through such support.

The meeting also take place within the context of the recommendation by the UN High Level Panel on the Post 2015 Development Agenda that a specific governance goal be established. This goal should be designed (among three other elements) to "ensure people enjoy freedom of speech, association, peaceful protest and access to independent media and information" and to "guarantee the public's right to information and access to government data".

The term "media" in this paper encompasses all the ways in which people in developing countries access information and use communication, including mobile telephony and the internet. The paper acknowledges that issues of open government, open data and civil society efforts to increase access to information, and increase transparency and accountability are closely linked to issues of the role of the media. However, it does not focus predominantly on these issues which are intensively covered elsewhere.

This note draws on the results of a very brief questionnaire sent out to GovNet members in December 2013.

### 2. Background

In June 2010, as part of the build up to the 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum on Development Effectiveness, GovNet organised – together with BBC Media Action, Internews and the World Bank – a seminar, *Trends in Support of Accountability: Media Assistance Today* (the executive summary of the report of that seminar can be found in Annex 1). In conjunction with other GovNet discussions, the meeting led to the inclusion of a set of principles which were summarised in the Synthesis Report from the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness for the Busan 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum and published in full by the OECD DAC (see Box 1). The statement of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation agreed in Busan placed an increased emphasis on the importance of mutual and domestic accountability and democratic ownership of development agendas.

#### **Box 1: Working Party on Aid Effectiveness – What it said about media**

GOVNET has committed to support the media, alongside with parliaments and political parties, as part of its broader promotion of domestic accountability, which has so far focused on budget monitoring, access to information and aid transparency. In doing so, they should be aware that:

- An effective media calls for editorial independence, financial sustainability, professional capacity and a lively civil society.
- Donor interventions can consist of legal support (in favour of a legislation that safeguards the freedom of the media) or material assistance (through the provision of laptops and transmitters to small radio stations, for example).
- Donor support is most effective when it is inclusive, holistic, and oriented towards the long-term goals of financial sustainability, i.e. when the media is integrated in a larger system of domestic accountability.

*Extract from “Strengthening Ownership and Accountability: A Synthesis of Key Findings and Messages produced for the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness – Cluster A, Ownership and Accountability – the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness” 2011*

Drawing on the work of the GovNet, in 2013 the DAC () published a set of strategic principles and guidelines for media support incorporated into its overall guidelines on Accountability and Democratic Governance (see Annex 1).

Since the 2010 GovNet meeting, significant new research and analysis on media and governance has emerged from various sources, including from the National Endowment for Democracy Center for International Media Assistance, BBC Media Action (then called BBC World Service Trust), the Global Forum for Media Development and its members and from a collaboration between the Brookings Institution, Internews and the World Bank (*The Media Map Project*). A summary of the findings and recommendations to donors of the Media Map project can be found in Annex 3.

The arguments of the relevance of support to media also appear to have intensified since Busan. Communication and media transformations have continued to accelerate, as have their political, economic and developmental effects. Within the development field, when working across sectors - such as health, environment, agriculture or food security or economic development - there is a renewed recognition that technical solutions are limited and an understanding of the political context matters. Media, and the enabling environment for its development, is recognised as a critical part of any system of accountability whether it relates to service delivery in a sector or resource mobilisation such as budgeting, natural resource management or taxation.

Donors working to support governance change, such as transparency and accountability or inclusion and participation, are increasingly focused on how to program more politically and act as facilitators of change with full recognition that the role of donors, while important, may be limited. Facilitating media development constitutes an important way of doing this. Working with the media can help provide a window into how accountability in particular plays out within societies. Understanding the interplay around media and service delivery and budgeting, for instance, can help to see where assistance may be most appropriate.

### **3. Why is further discussion by GovNet considered useful?**

A clear rationale and set of strategic principles have been considered and agreed by the GovNet in the past in relation to support to media.

However, a series of issues specific to the area of media assistance prevent these principles from being operationalized, and significant obstacles remain in assuring development effectiveness in this area. Principally these are:

Very limited institutional expertise and capacity: Very few multilateral or bilateral development actors have significant staff or capacity dedicated to supporting media, or gleaning learnings from and developing good practice for that support. Support to this area is considered particularly political which makes donor perception of

investment in it a high risk. Very rapid changes in technology and media development make this a particularly challenging area to develop clear and timely strategies.

Lack of Governmental Demand: Demand for media support is very rarely prioritised by developing country governments. While substantial citizen demand around issues of freedom of expression may exist outside of government, media support is rarely identified as a priority through conventional channels in the current aid architecture. There are few political rewards for governments to welcome investment or support in this area, and the political costs to powerful governments of a more muscular and effective media can be substantial – not least because media can be so effective as a force for domestic accountability. Governments see media as prone to capture by oppositional and factional interests.

Results: While the evidence base supporting the role of media as a check on power and source of accountability is considered compelling, and is rooted in centuries of practice, there is little clarity on what the constitutes effective results in terms of development support. Substantial investment in research by leading media assistance organisations is beginning to build a stronger evidence base, and work by UNESCO and others on media development indicators has contributed to a clearer framework for the achievement of results. However, only a few recipients of the GovNet survey were able to point to clear examples of strong practice in this area and the evidence base supporting the role of development assistance in this area is traditionally considered weak.

Poor integration of media issues into governance diagnostics and development plans: While few development agencies have significant specialised staff capacity focused on this issue, media relevant issues seem poorly integrated into systems that can ensure they become more mainstreamed. Issues of media support have tended not to be considered significantly in political economy, drivers of change or power analyses (with media frequently being referred to as important drivers but not often considered as areas for development intervention), nor in many governance assessments, nor in more specific diagnostic and planning tools like the electoral cycle approach.

Where politics and development most collide? Support to the media is generally considered political, messy and difficult. However important it may be considered as a policy priority, it is an area that is more likely to create difficulties with partner governments. Consensus among an increasingly broad development community, with many new donor entrants, on the legitimacy and appropriateness of support to independent media is unlikely (and was arguably a key reason why no mention of the issue was made in declaration emanating from the Busan 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum). The result of such concerns appears to be a level of fuzzy incoherence about media in governance (perhaps an “it’s too difficult to focus on” perception) rather than a clear analysis of what should or could be supported in this field. There has been a welcome and very substantial development effort on opening up government data and access to government information, but the arguably more political and complex area of media and other demand side areas have received less attention.

*“I believe that aid to the media would be low on the list of something governments would actively demand. Rather than seeing this as an aid effectiveness problem, I think that we need to recognize that while country ownership is important, looking at the full context of the country and identifying gaps may lead to a determination that support to the media is paramount in order to tackle other governance issues.”*

Meghan Watkinson, Acting Director,  
Governance and Economic Growth  
Division, CIDA

#### **4. Four problems to be solved around effective development support to media**

Support to media is a complex area with many actors, objectives, funding models and theories of change. This paper will focus specifically on the issues raised by GovNet members in relation to media support.

It focuses on three key problems which the GovNet might discuss how to solve them.

### a) Clarifying objectives: what do we expect to achieve when supporting media?

There is a view that support for governance programming in general is under pressure and the focus for that programming to achieve clear and preferably quantifiable results has become more intense.

Donors support media to help or facilitate country-level efforts to achieve a range of different objectives. Four distinct sets of objectives are:

- To build an independent media sector (and a free and open internet) as an intrinsic good in and of itself, essential to the functioning of a democratic society and a key platform for freedom of expression [Democratic and Human Rights Objectives].
- To enhance accountability of government to citizens, often in order to improve service delivery and state responsiveness, improve state-citizen relations and to support more informed democratic/electoral decision-making [Governance Objectives];
- To improve debate, dialogue and tolerance especially in fragile or conflicted societies; increase the availability of balanced, reliable and trustworthy information; and reduce the likelihood of hate speech or inflammatory media likely to exacerbate conflict or build the legitimacy of weak governments in fragile contexts [Conflict and Stability objectives].
- To create demand for services (such as health or agricultural services) and use the media as an instrument to achieve development objectives by working to shift behaviours (e.g. improving uptake of immunisation) or changing the social norms that prevent such uptake (e.g. distrust of vaccinations) [Communication for development]. This role is considered separate from a governance conversation, although improving demand

*“Where to draw a line between promoting Freedom of Expression (a human rights perspective) and promoting independent journalism for the sake of checks and balances in society (governance perspective)? Should donors support media as an instrument for achieving other objectives? As message carriers that facilitate programs in the field of basic service delivery (health, sanitation awareness), economic livelihoods (access to market info)? Or should donors support media as a goal in itself, part of Human Rights or governance policies?”*

Corina van der Laan, Head of Stabilisation and Rule of Law Division, Netherlands Foreign Ministry

*“I am not sure if there is a flaw [in the aid architecture]. We first need to see how much our programs rely on media outlets, it is often more than we realize, because we use media outlets and social media for all the time in support of development programs. Ideally media is a cross cutting issue but that means it does not get the attention it deserves. I think media is best treated as a key part of the governance agenda, but the problem is that the whole governance agenda is under pressure.”*

Corina van der Laan, Head of Stabilisation and Rule of Law Division, Netherlands Foreign Ministry

for and accountability of health services has some cross over to core governance concerns.

**Question for discussion: Does it matter if different donors have different objectives in supporting media and value different results? What results are most valued? How can strategies to support media be improved, how can learnings be better shared, and what does a more concerted focus on support to media potentially look like?**

**b) How to improve effectiveness of support to a cross cutting issue?**

Media is a cross cutting issue with distinct objectives even within the governance field (e.g. between advancement of human rights/freedom of expression and fostering stability in fragile states). It is seen as increasingly important in shaping governance outcomes. There is currently weak capacity within agencies to determine the best ways of supporting it and no obvious strategic focus on mainstreaming the issue. This may explain why the issue tends not to be prioritised.

***Questions for discussion: Given the lack of capacity within the system, and that it is seen to be an issue that needs to be mainstreamed, how could support be better designed and where should responsibility sit within agencies and across the system?***

*“The question on aid architecture is very interesting. It applies in many regards also to civil society support more generally thinking. Many times in countries where this kind of support would be most necessary in order to promote good governance, it is least demanded by the government itself. One suggestion could be that when we talk about the countries (both partner and donor countries) in aid architecture, we shouldn’t limit our thinking only in governments, but consider the countries as societies consisting of different sectors and actors. So when we think about promoting democratic and good governance and inclusive and pluralist societies, we should consider the different demands coming from different actors, and ideally direct our support inclusively to all these sectors and actors as well.”*

Jaakko Jakkila, Advisor for Democracy and Good Governance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

**c) Where does – or should – demand for media support come from?**

A key reason why media support is relatively poorly prioritised in governance support is because there are few obvious mechanisms through which demand for it is expressed. There are some similarities to civil society support in that governments rarely prioritise support in this area. The difference is that media organisations in developing countries do not in general advocate for support. Even in transitional environments (a good example is Afghanistan), issues of how societies are to debate their own future and gain accurate information on the issues that affect them are rarely integrated into transitional planning.

*“Support to media basically faces the same challenges as the one of good governance, accountability, and transparency in general. A step towards more coherent, effective or impactful support would be following up on how the DAC strategic principles have impacted donor strategy and programme design and learning from what has thus been achieved so far.”*

Dr. Alexander Görsdorf, Division for Media and Freedom of the press. BMZ. Germany.

***Questions for discussion: How can the need for support to media be better gauged, and how can demand be better expressed in the aid architecture to address that need? Would better integration of media issues into diagnostics (e.g. governance assessments) be sufficient or are other measures possible? What would they be?***

**d) What is the role of the donor? What does a country level coordination system look like?**

Media operate in an existing market with the vast majority of funding coming from sources such as advertising, state or public subsidy, political or other factional sponsorship or support from the community the media is working to serve. Support from development assistance is always likely to be ancillary to these other sources.

As a result, there are seen to be particular challenges for donors in determining their role. That role has traditionally been to create an enabling environment for free and plural media (including through regulatory reform but also by applying pressure when governments abuse journalistic and media rights); building the professional capacity and capability of the media (training and capacity building); supporting functioning media markets capable of supporting independent journalism (media loan and investment funds); support to public interest media and content when markets fail (enabling people living in poverty to access information on issues that shape their lives and providing opportunities for public questioning and debate). More recently the role for some donors has focused explicitly on supporting digital and internet freedom.

There are many different media support actors, often with different theories of change and approaches and systems of coordination or ensuring coherence are rarely well developed.

***Discussion questions: What is the most valuable role donors can perform? What is their role in supporting the economic viability and political independence of media? How do they know what market failures exist (e.g. availability of media and public debate for marginalized groups) and how their support can best be deployed? How can media support be better coordinated and more strategic? Could the OECD do more to incentivize behavior that does recognize governments who support independent media capable of holding government to account (e.g. by building issues of media independence into OECD rankings)?***

## **5. Are there examples of good support?**

In our request for input into this paper, we asked for examples where media support had achieved valued impact. The examples provided tended to be generic (examples of where donors have been supporting media) rather than specific (the results of that support).

- The Netherlands is an active donor to the media funding large programs with Foundation Hironnelle, Press Now (Free Press), BBC Media Action and have Radio Zamaneh- Iran, Radio Okapi-DRC, Radio Darfur (Dabanga) and Radio Miraya, Sudan among others. It spends approximately EUR 35 million (about 1 % of ODA budget) on this area.
- Finland integrates its support for freedom of expression, transparency, right and access to information and support to media into its Development Policy Programme published in 2012. Support is considered modest at just over EUR 1 million in 2012, mostly channeled through small scale projects implemented by NGOs. It consists of “quite traditional training projects” with some quite good results, especially from support to investigative journalism in Nepal, Nigeria and Tanzania.
- Ausaid commissioned a systematic review of [Communication for Development in Fragile States](#). That concluded, among many other findings, that support is most effective when intervention comes early, when there is long term commitment to the interventions, is context specific and uses a range of methodological approaches. It argued that both media development and communication for development (including behavior change communication) should be considered to achieve impact.

*“We think it is important to enhance the environment to respect the principles of accuracy, impartiality and fairness of the media. So, we use it as one of the indicators of how much media policy, acts, regulations and guidelines which are revised by government with JICA’s assistance are recognized and taken by media organizations.”*

Ryuichi Tomizawa, Deputy Director General and Group Director for Governance Industrial Development and Public Policy Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

- JICA supports the media in Nepal and South Sudan significantly. One of the major purposes is to enhance the principle of accuracy, impartiality and fairness of the media. Main counterparts are National Broadcasting Stations which are considered as covering the widest population and the most influential among the broadcasting media in the two countries. Ministries of Information and Communication in those countries are also counterparts because the stations are regulated by law and governmental policy. The focus is on transformation of state broadcasters into public service broadcasters.

There is significant additional data on donor support to media which can be added beyond that submitted through the questionnaire process. In particular:

- The US is by some distance the largest single supporter of media development worldwide with a series of very strong institutions, long and strong practice, and a substantial academic and research community. The National Endowment for Democracy Center for International Media Assistance has published various reports on support to media including [one](#) on support from the US government to media around the world and [another](#) on funding for media development by donors outside of the US.
- The European Union also provides significant support to media development. It carried out a major review of its spending on media development in 2012 publishing three reports as a result including [Mapping EU Media Support 2000-2010](#). Some of its main conclusions were:
  - Total support between 2000-2010 on media development and fostering freedom of expression amounted to less than Euro 150m, more than half of which was spent on EU neighbourhood countries. A little under half was spent supporting media development in Africa. The amount was considered relatively small compared to support from countries such as Sweden (EUR 26 million in 2012) and the UK (see below).
  - The main focus has been on training of journalists and editors in journalism skills and professional standards, as well as support to regulatory reform and direct support to endangered writers and journalists. Projects supported were considered similar to those supported by national bilateral agencies with the EU dimension more focused on “EU visibility rather than EU inclusion”.
  - The top ten contract holders implemented 36% of the project value. The EC was perceived as bureaucratic and especially difficult for small organisations to navigate and meet funding requirements.
- The UK is a significant supporter of media to achieve governance outcomes (as well as health and resilience outcomes), principally in the form of a major grant (GBP90 million over 5 years) to BBC Media Action. The governance component of the grant reaches 109 million people worldwide with an impact target of 40% of people reached saying they feel the intervention has played a key role in holding government to account. The grant also supports substantial research to contribute to the evidence base around the role of media in achieving governance outcomes.

## 6. Conclusion

The responses to the brief questionnaire raised important answers and suggested that there remains significant need for guidance and sharing of best practice in the area of media support, and a sense that substantial opportunities exist to achieve governance outcomes which are not currently being explored. Substantial research and analysis now exists (including papers referred to here) on current findings, principles and recommendations for more effective support to media, but these have not obviously been consolidated or crystallised into a clear framework of seriously moving support to this area. The questions included under each section in this brief paper are suggested to help guide the discussion at the GovNet.

James Deane, January 2014.

## Annex 1: OECD DAC Strategic Principles for Media Assistance

Following earlier work by the GovNet, specifically around the 2010 meeting on media, a series of principles were developed for media support. These were published in the *DAC Guidelines and Reference Series*:

- 1. Incorporate media assistance into a larger framework of development aid.** Access to information is crucial for domestic accountability. Media institutions in particular provide tools and channels for accountability that can complement and enhance other accountability mechanisms, but also add new instruments that may be at least as powerful and efficient as the more commonly supported accountability measures. A weak and/or highly constrained media can undermine domestic accountability. The risk of not considering and supporting the media as part of broader accountability programmes is significant.
- 2. Incorporate media indicators and audits into governance diagnostics and needs analysis.** The state of the media is inseparable from the state of governance in general. For instance, the UNESCO standard media development indicators (UNESCO, 2008) could usefully be incorporated into governance needs assessments to more effectively guide interventions for improving media as an accountability mechanism.
- 3. Co-operate with media development CSOs and determine media objectives and outcomes, not methodologies.** Given a lack of specific expertise on media development within the majority of donor organisations and local media beneficiaries, there is a strong argument for developing media support strategies and specific interventions in partnership with media development CSOs. Some donors are already taking this approach. Media development organisations, along with local partners, are often best positioned to assess context and needs and to develop effective interventions to address these. While there is a clear need to ensure that media strategies complement overarching accountability objectives, there is a strong argument for providing CSO implementers with substantial scope – and the ability to propose creative solutions – as opposed to highly prescriptive requirements.
- 4. Focus on building public demand for inclusive policy dialogue.** The *Accra Agenda for Action* calls for “broadening country-level policy dialogue on development” (OECD, 2005/2008). One concern is a paucity of “evidence from which to systematically assess progress in implementing these commitments”. There is clear potential for media support that enables and fosters policy dialogue to contribute to this goal; research incorporated into such support can assist in building a body of evidence and understanding of effective strategies for stimulating policy dialogue.
- 5. Support independent, sustainable, and capable local media in developing countries.** Local media in developing countries often enjoy significant reach and audience interest, but lack the resources, skills and support to better understand the needs of populations and effectively hold government to account. In supporting these organisations to improve their watchdog role, donors can effectively enhance non-media accountability interventions, build people’s demand for domestic accountability, and strengthen local media as an accountability institution.
- 6. Foster ownership as a central component of support.** The nature of productive relationships between the media and audiences is one that engenders a sense of ownership. Where people see the media acting on their behalf and critically – enabling them to engage directly with issues and politicians – there exists a clear sense of trust and ownership of media programmes.
- 7. Promote citizen access to the media and mobile technologies as well as citizens’ media literacy.** The media can only be an effective accountability mechanism only if citizens are able to use them. This includes access to media products and infrastructure as well as the ability to make sense of information.
- 8. Encourage links between media institutions and the rest of civil society.** Media and civil society organisations together can form a formidable coalition for accountability and good governance. Donors should consider joining support for several accountability mechanisms, including media support, in appropriate situations.
- 9. Support systematic research on the effects of media and information access on domestic accountability.** As outlined in this discussion paper, there is empirical evidence of the media’s impact on domestic accountability, but it is not integrated into a larger theoretical framework. Research, including monitoring and evaluation, should be part of any media support project, but should also be supported in its own right to advance our understanding of the role of the media in domestic accountability in different political, economic, and social contexts.
- 10. Learn about and harness new technologies.** Internet and mobile-focused support is not appropriate in all contexts. Needs analyses must properly assess media and communications environments to determine the most appropriate media platforms for supporting accountability. Where interventions do focus on new technologies, research should be incorporated to build a body of policy-relevant evidence to guide subsequent support.

*Accountability and Democratic Governance: Orientations and Principles for Development, OECD DAC Guidelines and References Series, OECD 2013*

**Annex II: Seminar: Trends in Support of Accountability: Media Assistance Today**  
**OECD-DAC-GOVNET, BBC World Service Trust, Internews, the World Bank Institute**  
**7-8 June 2011**

**Executive Summary of Report of Meeting**

On 7-8 June 2011, **OECD-DAC-GOVNET** organized a joint seminar with the **BBC World Service Trust, the World Bank Institute** and **Internews** on, “**Trends in Support of Accountability: Media Assistance Today**” gathering around the table high-level external advisors/academics in the field of governance, OECD-DAC-GOVNET donor staff working on governance, and a broad range of media assistance providers, civil society organizations and international organizations.

The objectives of the seminar were to: i) share practice and approaches in the area of media assistance among key actors while acknowledging sensitivities and challenges; and ii) to explore opportunities for more holistic approaches in support to accountability and better governance, building the bridge with media assistance and its role in this field. This seminar was designed to build a consensus as to why and how to support the media in the context of broader strategies to improve domestic accountability, governance and development.

The discussions showed a broad recognition of media assistance as a fundamental component of support to domestic accountability: vibrant media communities inform and stimulate public debate so that people can hold their governments to account. Key recommendations and next steps emerging from the discussion were as follows:

Key conclusions and recommendations:

1. **Media should be viewed as an integrated part of the system of accountability/democratic governance institutions, from project-based assistance to holistic approaches.** At the country-level, media should be integrated into governance diagnosis/analysis (indicators, surveys) shared among donors.
2. **Support to a free and plural media in its own right** is important as an intrinsic component of democratic governance. Support can also be focussed more specifically at media efforts designed to meeting the information and communication needs of particular populations, particularly in enhancing access to information on issues that shape their lives.
3. **A common language needs to be defined on media assistance and its evaluation frameworks**, to push toward greater **aid effectiveness** and avoid obstacles such as multiple results frameworks. Media assistance should be **defined within a local-specific development context** and set within political economy analysis of the development context. Support to media and news/social media platforms must take into account specific country needs (new media/social media in hand with traditional media).
4. **Ownership challenges** need to be addressed. Programmes should be locally driven where possible. Connecting local strategies to national policies through accountability/governance approaches, placing a priority on strong formative research, as well as using participatory processes for strategy and program design can help. Media’s capacity to reach large numbers is a key part of its attraction, particularly in delivering value for money.
5. Efforts **to create a division of labour to support accountability systems/mechanisms like media** need to be pursued. Development agencies need to have **institutional capacity** on media (media advisors, experts) to better inform diagnosis, strategy and planning.
6. **Enhanced coordination** among donors and multilateral development banks, towards the creation of coalitions for change is key.
7. Donors should **model the behaviour** they seek to support (social media and otherwise).
8. Support to the **independent media sector** and the media management sector should be increased.
9. **Basket funding approaches** should be pursued where they enhance coordination and do not inhibit plurality and innovation.
10. In fragile contexts, concerns emerged of **over-emphasis on state/central support**: stakeholders should think creatively about what can help (support to investigative journalists, CSOs, etc.)

## **Annex III: Key Conclusions of *Healthy Media, Vibrant Societies*, Research Study by Internews, Brookings Institution and World Bank, 2012**

### **Part 1 – Media and Development**

- In the coming decade, most of the fastest growing economies will be African, but the region's progress in improving governance, poverty reduction, and human development lags far behind its economic growth. Governments and donors have largely overlooked the potential of a healthy media sector to boost Africa's development.
- There is already a robust body of research on media and development that uses macro data and finds strong and significant positive correlations between freedom of the press and development; Africa is relatively under-examined in this vein of research.
- Broad-based economic growth and political stability in Africa seem to be strongly connected to the presence of a free press. Free press countries are less dependent on foreign aid, provide a better environment for businesses within the country, are more integrated into world financial markets, are more likely to be democratic than countries without a free press, and have much stronger democracies overall.
- A free press is associated with higher literacy in Africa, and we found literacy to be a vital factor in maintaining democracy over time, globally. Thus, literacy, a free press, and democracy can create a virtuous cycle that lays the ground for improvements in governance, and in development overall.
- The combination of a free press and greater access to information is associated with greater political stability. Results suggest that a healthy media sector has a causal effect on political stability.

### **Part 2 – The Development of the Media Sector**

There are a number of critical areas for improving the health of the media sector across Sub-Saharan Africa including improving press freedom; business management (at the level of individual firms and of markets) and business models (both traditional and new models should be explored), professionalization of journalism; access to media, including radio, but especially television, Internet, and fixed and mobile broadband; literacy in general, information literacy, and ICT skills; quality of content (both improving quality and the means to measure it); Africans' high interest in the news, as well as the growth of mobile, present potential opportunities to improve development in the region.

### **Part 3 – Donor Support to Media Development**

Based on evidence from case studies of DRC, Kenya, and Mali, donors could better support the media if they:

- Give up preconceived models and implementation plans; instead, decide where aid goes based on need and country-defined priorities;
- Improve diagnostics to help implement priorities identified by beneficiaries;
- Foster the commitment of host governments to accept and support a media sector that may criticize them, respect the rule of law, and tackle corruption.
- Be sensitive to the power dynamics between donors and beneficiaries, and model the same behaviour that donors demand of local organizations.
- Coordinate better amongst themselves.
- Strengthen institutional memory of their collective support to the media sector

### **Conclusion: Summary of Key Recommendations for Media and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa**

- Donors need to work directly with governments on improving the health of the media sector.
- Media support is most effective when development priorities are country-driven and processes of implementation are country-specific.
- Donors should support the health of the media sector in and of itself, rather than merely supporting the media as a tool for other development ends.
- Media development would benefit from tighter donor coordination.
- Improving business practices and professionalization of the media sector in Sub-Saharan Africa is key to strengthening media overall.