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MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Media development in regions of conflict, transitional countries, and closed societies

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"A free press is not a luxury that can wait
for better times; rather, it is part of the very process
through which better times are achieved."

Koïchiro Matsuura,
UNESCO Director General's Message on World Press Freedom Day 2004

Media development in regions of conflict, transitional countries, and closed societies

This paper explores the role professional independent media and journalists can play in circumstances where people's very survival may rely upon trustworthy information about conflicting factions, violence, or rescue efforts. It also looks at the approaches that have been tried and tested in light of the major challenges faced by the international media development community at local and regional levels. These efforts in fostering quality journalism as a public good in itself can support the realization of other human rights. A professional and pluralistic media environment does not only provide the necessary information to survive from one day to the next, it can also maximize the chances for dialogue and help reconciliation and political transformation processes. It can be argued that media development cooperation in areas of conflict and in countries with authoritarian regimes is needed the most. However, it also faces the highest obstacles in being able to reach the right stakeholders, being effective, and keeping all those involved secure.

While the first media development initiatives focused on supporting the transition to democratization and market capitalism in Latin America in the late 1980s and the former Soviet Union in the early 1990s, the pressing need for media development in conflict and post-conflict areas became evident after the catalytic role played by a number of local radio stations in the Rwandan genocide in 1994 and Serbian state TV during the war in the Balkans, all of which actively contributed to the murder of hundreds of thousands of people. This, unfortunately, was nothing new as mass media had been used time after time to incite violence and for propaganda purposes. Nevertheless, in the then very young field of media development it was a reminder that the media is not automatically a force for good. Consequently, it widened the focus to ensure that those working in the media were aware of their responsibilities and should play a neutral or even a positive role by providing balanced information and contextualizing developments so that affected populations could take informed decisions (Howard 2009; Puddephatt 2006).

Since then, the nature of conflict as well as the nature of our media environments have been changing dramatically. Technological advances – most importantly the Internet and the growth of mobile phone use – have changed the international media landscape, enabling news to spread more widely and empowering a much greater number of people to influence the global news agenda. The Overseas Development Institute (2012) predicts near-universal phone use by 2025. New actors such as citizen journalists and media activists have been providing some of the key images and information from war-torn areas or authoritarian states that professional journalists have not been able to reach. At the same time, the number of new online and offline media outlets has mushroomed as production and publishing costs have been decreasing, taking away the monopoly of news dissemination from the traditional broadcasters and print media. Since 1989, private and donor-funded national and community media have prospered in many developing countries, although authoritarian regimes such as in Zimbabwe, Cuba, or Ethiopia have kept tight control of the number and nature of media outlets (Deane 2013, 7).

As most of the wars covered by the media in the 20th century were between two or more nation states, the majority of violent uprisings since the fall of the Berlin Wall have been internal conflicts along ethnic or religious lines, or due to violence by insurgent groups or organized crime (Howard 2009, 3). As different as the reasons and dynamics of the ongoing conflicts in countries like Afghanistan, Mexico, or Somalia might be – they have all truly weakened the rule of law, created a climate of impunity and spread beyond national borders.

This has had a direct effect on the safety of journalists, classifying journalism a high-risk occupation, equal to being a soldier or working in high-altitude construction in many parts of the world. Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) report that attacks on journalists have been on the rise, especially in recent years. According to CPJ research, more than 1125 reporters have been killed as a direct result of their work between 1992 and May 2015. Contrary to the belief that many of these were war reporters, 87 percent were actually local journalists living and working in countries that are officially not at war, such as the Philippines, Mexico or Russia. Corrupt government officials, criminal organizations and influential businessmen or businesswomen were believed to be the intellectual authors of their murders (CPJ 2015; Simon 2015a, 126).

Joel Simon (2015a), CPJ's Director, sees a direct link between increased access to information technologies by a greater part of the world's population and the rise in attacks on the press. While reporters used to be seen as a tool by dictators, warlords, and other violent factions to convey their side of the story to the outside world via mass media, journalists no longer have this privileged role in a digital world, where anyone can upload a picture or post a comment to potentially millions of people within seconds. Alternatively, these heads of state or leaders of violent groups communicate via social media or create their own digital media channel, use state-sponsored media outlets or buy a local newspaper, giving them total control over the information that is distributed about them and their actions. More affluent states, such as China or Russia, set up their own international news channels to spread state-sponsored views,

thereby politicizing the news and journalism as a whole. Moreover, they are undermining the legitimacy of journalists acting as watchdogs for society. Most non-state actors, whether it be the so-called "Islamic State" or Mexican drug cartels have a rather sophisticated media strategy nowadays. Independent journalists, therefore, are no longer useful assets but are seen as obstacles that need to be silenced.

In addition, journalists as well as media development NGOs are increasingly being targeted by online hacking attacks and surveillance. Since 2014, CPJ has named cyberspace as one of the ten most dangerous places to be a journalist, next to the likes of Syria and Egypt. Of the 221 journalists on CPJ's annual census of imprisoned journalists in 2014, 50 percent had worked online (CPJ 2014).

Digital tools have not only been used to find out about journalists' sources or investigations but also to discredit reporters among their peers and the society they serve. This method is particularly popular by authoritarian regimes. In addition, they threaten and try to isolate investigative journalists by imprisoning them on trumped-up charges that are usually unrelated to their reporting, including tax evasion or drug smuggling.

Azerbaijan: false imprisonment and a smear campaign
One of the more recent examples is that of prominent journalist Khadija Ismayilova from Azerbaijan, a country that has become increasingly restrictive and has imprisoned its most influential independent journalists and opposition voices since 2014. Ismayilova, who was known for her investigations into corrupt business dealings of the Azeri political elite, was detained in December 2014, being accused of tax fraud, embezzlement, and other criminal offenses. For years, the government had been trying to discredit her, which culminated in the online posting of a video of a private nature (RSF 2014). This had been filmed with cameras that were secretly installed in her apartment. Apart from facing imprisonment, it is needless to say that her reputation not just as a reporter but also as a woman has been seriously damaged in a traditional society such as Azerbaijan. In countries without independent judicial institutions, reporters like Ismayilova are at the mercy of those in power, who arbitrarily use the laws of their country to silence their critics. Due to intense international pressure and legal efforts by human rights and press freedom groups, Ismayilova was freed in May 2016. Many others remain behind bars.

Challenging the credibility of independent reporters has become a common strategy not only in authoritarian regimes but also in regions controlled by organized crime. Dividing the community of independent media and press freedom NGOs has in many countries been so successful that there is little trust among journalists or press freedom advocates, making it nearly impossible to build local structures to improve freedom of expression. Co-opted media and unprofessional journalists with little training or interest in their role and responsibilities, contribute to this strategy of "divide and conquer." It also

makes it more difficult for international media development NGOs to find suitable local partners.

Moreover, by trying to damage reporters' credibility, authoritarian regimes create a general mistrust among society towards professional independent journalists and media, making them more susceptible to regime propaganda or other authoritarian groups controlling the flow of information. In some of the former countries of the Soviet Union, most prominently Russia, this strategy has been very successful. Journalistic investigations and alternative views on political developments have been marginalized or shut down completely, polarizing society and prohibiting any space for discussions between opposing views. Even if the constitution of the country protects freedom of speech, these laws can be loosely interpreted by a politicized or corrupt judiciary when those in power feel attacked or threatened in their political or economic undertakings (Simon 2015a, 54-62).

So it is to no surprise that trying to include freedom of expression in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) led to much discussion and negotiation among some of the UN member states, mainly Russia and China. The final target 16.10 to "ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements" as part of SDG 16 is a good start although it is still rather vague in its formulation and open to varying interpretations.

In fragile regions, where the state has lost its influence and information is controlled by warlords, insurgents, or drug cartels, even a seemingly harmless event such as a traffic accident or a wedding can have serious implications for a media worker wanting to report on it if a person belonging to the ruling group is involved. This leads to endemic fear amongst journalists, who turn to self-censorship as a protective measure for themselves and their families.

Consequently, the resulting black holes of information in many parts of the world lead to locals being unable to receive the necessary facts to make informed decisions about their daily lives. Moreover, local initiatives as well as the international community have no written proof of developments in these areas and have little grounds to act upon.

The arguments for and against supporting free media in conflict zones, fragile states, and closed societies

Conflict zones – weighing up security against the need for accurate information
A well-known proverb states that truth is the first casualty of war. This is perpetuated by the fact that information is tightly controlled by the warring factions. Independent media is often shut down – by violent force or through political or economic pressure – and replaced by manipulated media, which serves the various groups involved in the conflict. Independent local and international reporters are prevented from doing their work. Those who manage to film or report often do so at a very

high personal cost. Even if they leave the conflict zone physically unharmed, they often battle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) when they return to their everyday lives. Until recently, international legal frameworks did not give journalists any special protection in times of war. The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols merely classified journalists as civilians, who should therefore be granted the same protections as other civilians, such as "not being deliberately targeted, detained, or otherwise mistreated" (UNESCO 2004). On May 27, 2015, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2222, which for the first time "calls upon Member States to create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment for journalists, media professionals and associated personnel to perform their work independently and without undue interference in situations of armed conflict." It is also the first time that the Security Council highlights the important role of free and impartial journalism, which can contribute to the protection of civilians.

UN Resolution 2222 came against the backdrop of the increasing numbers of reporters attacked and killed in conflict areas in recent years. "Data compiled over two decades make clear that journalists working in conflict zones are much more likely to be murdered than step on a landmine" (Simon 2015a, 177). Since many war zones have become too dangerous for Western journalists to work in, international media outlets now increasingly rely on local reporters.

There are arguments that in the absence of regulatory institutions such as an independent judiciary or an ombudsman to detect and prosecute hate speech, and possibly a lack of a recent tradition of free expression, promoting free independent media will only exacerbate existing tensions and mistrust, leading to more violence as seen in Rwanda and the Balkans in the mid-1990s (Putzel and van der Zwan 2006; Puddephatt 2006). Hence, some actors tend to be cautious about introducing media development initiatives into conflict zones, also because production and broadcast equipment could fall into the hands of violent groups and all those involved may face great risks. This argument is also frequently used by those in power during a conflict to justify controlling the media or shutting it down completely.

However, Canadian journalist and scholar Ross Howard (2003b, 8) describes how research has shown that communication is vital when trying to solve a conflict, whether it is a conflict between two or more people, political factions, or states. This communication has to be free and transparent, and a professional, socially responsible media can support this process by providing a space for dialogue among opposing groups. If conflicts are to be resolved in the long term, society as a whole has to participate in the reconciliation process. For this, they need reliable, accurate, and impartial information, which is scarce in times when conflicts are also fought out through the media. A free and pluralistic media will "facilitate the non-violent expression of conflict – which is part of the ebb and flow of any democratic society" (Puddephatt 2010, 15).

The UNESCO Belgrade Declaration, summarizing the results of the 2004 World Press Freedom Day event, states that, "achieving democracy and enduring peace will depend upon respect for international human rights and, in particular, the right to freedom of expression as set out in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Freedom of expression requires there to be independent and pluralistic media, able to report independently of governmental, political and economic control." It calls on all authorities mandated by the international community to administer conflict and post-conflict zones to "promote and defend media freedom and other human rights – not restrict them," and warns "not to confuse independent news and propaganda that calls for violence."

The declaration also describes a set of principles that should be followed when defining media development strategies in conflict and post-conflict zones, including prioritizing the safety of journalists, ending the culture of impunity, encouraging the active participation of vulnerable groups, supporting a pluralistic media, and promoting media and information literacy. It also warns that journalists "should not be cast in the role of peacemakers."

When media development projects are introduced in conflict zones, as they have been in recent years in countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, or South Sudan, the role of the media has to be considered carefully. Should journalists be trained and media outlets set up mainly to inform the population about relief efforts, health risks, or security issues? Should media actively seek to help find solutions to the conflict as envisaged by peace journalism? Or should media simply try to report from all sides on the developments of the conflict and how these affect various parts of society?

Peace journalism, which was promoted by a number of Western scholars and journalists returning from having witnessed the atrocities of the war in the Balkans, asks reporters and editors to actively advocate for peace by choosing to report on stories that promote conflict resolution. It is based on the premise that "journalism inherently or intentionally emphasizes and encourages violent conflict by its treatment of the issues" (Howard 2009, 9). This, however, has made a number of journalists and scholars uneasy about their role, seeing it as taking sides and hence, undermining journalism's role and legitimacy of serving the public and acting as a watchdog for society (Howard 2009).

Howard, who has been at the forefront of developing conflict sensitive journalism, believes that professional journalists cannot and should not set out to solve conflicts when covering wars, but can only help people to understand "the conflict beneath the violence" (Howard 2003b, 5). Accurate reports sensitive to the underlying reasons and dynamics of the conflict help those directly affected to take informed decisions about their everyday lives and their future. They are also essential for humanitarian relief efforts, both for the local population and for international assistance organizations. But while the media can have positive effects on the reconciliation process,

it "must maintain its essential standards of accuracy, fairness and balance, and responsible conduct" (Howard 2009, 12).

As more and more research is showing that impartial, professional media is essential for reconciliation and lasting peace, media development initiatives have proliferated and range from conflict sensitive journalism training to media initiatives serving internally displaced persons (IDPs), and dealing responsibly with PTSD.

Pakistan: dealing with PTSD

In Pakistan, DW Akademie is working with local universities in the conflict-ridden regions of FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluchistan to include conflict sensitive journalism, digital safety, and dealing with PTSD in their curricula for journalism studies. In these regions, the local population only has limited access to reliable information due to unbalanced reporting by state broadcasters and propaganda by extremists groups, but also because journalists have not been adequately prepared to report on conflict and deal with the consequences on their personal lives. Together with the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma and the University of Peshawar, DW Akademie has set up the country's first ever trauma center, which offers professional psychological support to affected reporters as well as preventative counseling to local media and journalists.

Fragile states – how much free information can a fractured society take?

Since 9/11, almost all Western governments, including the UK, the US, and the EU (Deane 2013, 4) have prioritized donor support for state-building measures in fragile states as it is expected that more than half of the world's extremely poor will be living in these areas by 2018 (OECD 2013, 1). Those countries tend to have been destabilized by violent conflict in their recent history, either through an internal conflict along sectarian, ethnic, or other factional lines or they have been at war with another country. The risk of violence erupting remains high.

Fragile states have the most difficulties in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With a broken state structure, endemic corruption, and ethnic or sectarian divides, these states have also become a security issue for the international community as they serve as hiding places and training grounds for terrorist networks and organized crime. An increasing number of civilians are leaving these states every year, seeking refuge in more stable neighboring countries, in Europe, or the US.

The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, convened by the OECD in 2011, formalizes international donor support and provides guiding principles on how to legitimize politics, establish and strengthen people's security, and build up local economies. Media development initiatives, however, have not been at the forefront of this agenda.

Some scholars have argued that an unregulated, independent media would do more harm than good in fragile states, further dividing an already fractured society and standing in the way of state-building measures. Against the backdrop of neo-liberal policies dominating development aid in the 1980s and 1990s and the privatization of many state-owned media along with it, James Putzel and Joost van der Zwan (2006, 2) believe that, "the development of an open and free media environment, like other liberal projects, requires the presence of a strong state which includes, among other features, a well-functioning legal and judicial environment that is able to apply checks and balances." Donors should therefore prioritize assistance to "supporting the formation of a functioning state." Media should be supported with the aim of contributing to the creation of non-existing or weak state institutions.

The global increase in the use of mobile technology and access to information and social media via the Internet, especially amongst the younger generations, combined with a quickly expanding broadcast and print media sector and increasingly fractured media landscapes, have brought a dimension to the arguments in support of strengthening professional free media in fragile states. In his policy paper for BBC Media Action, James Deane (2013, 3) argues that, "such transformations are unleashing an unprecedented democratic energy, with profound political and social consequences … Support to the media in fragile states designed to minimize the risk of division and maximize the opportunities for dialogue should feature more prominently in assistance to such states."

Support for the establishment of a professional and pluralistic media landscape is therefore essential in providing a space for discussion for a polarized and fractured society and strengthen a shared identity, which is seen by many experts as the basis for any reconciliation. In countries where governmental structures have been weakened or are non-existent, the media's role in applying checks and balances is particularly crucial, although experiences from media development initiatives in Angola, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone have shown that independent media is mainly seen by local populations as a space for discussion; holding those in power accountable was not considered a priority due to lack of understanding "on how government functioned and their own role in the political process," writes Rebecca Stringer (2014, 19) in a policy briefing evaluating the work of BBC Media Action in these countries. Projects supporting responsible use of the media can also enable people to actively help rebuild their country and encourage political participation as political parties need to be able to communicate freely with the electorate. Media should not be controlled by the state or even shut down as "it could lead to further anger building within the pressure cooker of political fragmentation" (Deane 2013, 25). Nowadays, people are no longer reliant on traditional media or the state to receive and pass on information. Young people especially are using mobile technology to connect with peers and organize themselves – particularly in fragile states, where people 15 years or younger account on average for almost 40 percent of the population (OECD 2013). Extremist and other violent groups have also been taking advantage of this, targeting young people through social media and manipulating the news. It is therefore important to counter this propaganda with balanced reporting (Deane 2013).

Uganda: new forms of radio participation
In Uganda, 78 percent of the population is below the age of 30. Yet, they are not always given the opportunity to play an active role in the political decision-making processes. DW Akademie and its local partners have therefore developed new software to be used with basic mobile phones, enabling young people, especially women, to contribute to the discussions held on the country's established radio programs as well as DW partner radios. Furthermore, Ugandan media, journalists, and bloggers are being trained in ethical and responsible reporting in addition to their role as the watchdogs of a democratic society.

Of course, the risk of enforcing existing divisions along sectarian or other factional lines through a large number of media outlets serving only "their" communities remains, as has been seen in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein (Simon 2015a). The extent to which they are vulnerable to acting simply as mouthpieces for ethnic, political, or religious leaders depends on each country's history, culture, financial situation, and not least the availability of dedicated and courageous reporters (Deane 2013). Or, as Simon (2015a, 25-26) puts it: "The media is generally no more biased, underdeveloped, or polarized than the rest of the society and that expecting the media to rise above all other institutions is unrealistic and unfair."

Initial research by BBC Media Action (Deane 2013) has shown, however, that the media has been as much a force for reconciliation and dialogue as it has inflamed existing tensions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia, although more research into the role of the media in fragile states has to be carried out. Media rights activists and press freedom advocates therefore encourage a clear development strategy to understand, establish, and foster professional free and pluralistic media in fragile states in order to support state building and hold those in charge accountable.

Closed societies – creative approaches to authoritarian rule
In closed societies, initiatives promoting independent journalism and a pluralistic media require very creative approaches. As authoritarian regimes fear that a free media could result in actions undermining their political and economic powers, they control any information inside their countries and heavily persecute those trying to challenge this with smear campaigns, economic restrictions, imprisonment, or physical attacks. Controlling the free flow of information has become increasingly difficult with easier and wider access to the Internet, but countries like Uzbekistan, Iran, or Belarus still manage to censor unwanted information and social media. China and Russia have also been rather successful in filling the Internet with state-approved news without the average citizen noticing it (Simon 2015b).

This presents great challenges, not least because of the potential risks to the personal safety of human rights activists, NGO workers, and local journalists. Andrew Stroehlein, European

Media Director at Human Rights Watch, believes that funders and NGOs should not be deterred by these restrictive measures but rather focus on initiatives that are still possible to implement under existing circumstances. These lifeboat strategies should maintain journalistic skills and integrity until a country opens up to more democratic forms of government. "As with other sectors of the economy, media cannot be left to wither and die and then be expected to somehow resurrect themselves when the regime is gone to create professional institutions instantly from scratch." (Stroehlein 2006, 145)

Marie Struthers, who was responsible for media development in closed societies at the Independent Journalism Program of the Open Society Foundations (OSF) for many years, adds in an interview that with rapid technological changes and its effects on journalistic practice, there is a need to, "ensure that professional standards are kept up with the outside world and that closed society colleagues are in regular contact with professionals working in free and 'transitional' societies." This also helps to break isolation and makes the international journalistic community aware of the challenges these reporters face. In order to ensure that there is a core group of experts who are prepared to move back into the country once it opens up, journalist unions in exile and experts on media legislation receive regular support from OSF. Journalism training for young people, too, is promoted to ensure that there continues to be a group of professionals in the medium and long term.

In some authoritarian countries, particularly those in the former Soviet Union, measures to improve media infrastructure and journalistic training had been carried out during the early years of international media development. As a result, a group of trained journalists continues to work from exile, setting up newspapers, radio, TV, or online news services after having been persecuted in their home countries. As the underlying dynamics of political and social developments are often found across state borders and as journalists find themselves more and more threatened by government officials for their reporting, this is now increasingly done at a regional level. Sharing investigations with colleagues from neighboring countries and publishing it simultaneously can decrease the personal risks to journalists and enhance the depth of the research. It also fosters professional exchange and helps to break the isolation many are facing.

A few NGOs, such as Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT), attempt to actively involve authoritarian regimes or their state-sponsored media in their work, but it is a much contested strategy. In the past years, MiCT has trained North Korean journalists in sports reporting, Iranian journalists working for state media in international journalistic standards, and promoted a media dialogue between journalists from Iran and Germany, all in agreement with the respective governments. Critics argue that this legitimizes the systematic constraints on freedom of expression and persecution of independent journalists of these regimes. In their 2014/2015 review, MiCT (2015, 5) describes that "we continue to be of the

opinion, however, that dialogue stands a greater chance of mobilizing movement and development than exclusion can; however, this remains up for debate!"

In countries where a limited possibility of working with local journalists exists, there have been initiatives to train reporters on (seemingly) non-political issues, particularly in business reporting. With economic news thriving at a global level, business papers and news services like Caixin ("Money News") in China or The Source in Zimbabwe enjoy more freedom in their investigative reporting than their colleagues at other media outlets. These media houses regularly uncover corruption through investigative reporting but are still seen as less threatening by the regime (Podesta 2014). One reason for this is the increasing need for foreign investment to stabilize the local economy. As investors require transparency about how the local market is working and "such societies … are frequently beset by corruption and secrecy (and the two are closely interrelated)," media can contribute to the necessary check and balances, notes Andrew Puddephatt in a policy paper for the Swedish International Development Agency (2010, 13). "Freedom of expression and access to information (and independent media as a means of supporting and facilitating these) can be promoted as an antidote to corruption by scrutiny of officials who otherwise are often unable to disguise their corruption from the central government/party machine," suggests Puddephatt (2010, 13-14). "However," he warns, "references to the promotion of human rights should be avoided as this strategy has not proven to be effective" (2010, 15).

Natural disasters – mixing the old and the new

When a natural disaster strikes, it not only kills and destroys the livelihood of thousands of people, it often also causes an information blackout with production equipment and receivers such as radios or TV sets being damaged, journalists injured or killed, and existing media unable to meet the communication demands of affected communities, relief agencies, and security organizations. This is particularly the case in countries with already fragile media landscapes, such as Haiti or Nepal, or in areas where previously there had been no independent media at all, like in Kashmir and the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) in Pakistan prior to the earthquake that hit the region in 2005. Referring to the immediate aftermath of the Pakistan earthquake, Adnan Rehmat (2006, 150-151) describes how this "presented the classic paradox: news about the calamity and its impact was going out to the world at large, but those affected … had no means of finding out what was going, what to do, or how to get help," leaving them dependent on word of mouth, which soon turned into rumor and in turn to misinformation. Nevertheless, a media strategy in response to a natural disaster only recently made it on the agenda of relief operations, even in developed countries (Wall 2012).

The earthquake that hit Haiti on January 12, 2010 and the cholera epidemic that followed 10 months later was the first time humanitarian relief organizations formally coordinated efforts with media development NGOs through the newly formed Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) network, made up of media development and humanitarian aid organizations. Lessons learned from the 2004 Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina in 2005 had shown that many deaths could have been avoided if the media had been used in a more constructive way to send out warnings and inform about relief efforts. Furthermore, a 2008 BBC World Service Trust (now BBC Media Action) policy briefing describes how in general aid agencies were focusing on relief efforts but neglected communicating information to affected communities, which could have saved lives just as much as water, food, shelter, and medical aid (Wall 2012).

In Haiti, it was also the first time that a combination of new and traditional communication technologies were applied on a large scale – a method already being applied by journalists in many developing countries, for example, broadcasting radio programs online (Wall 2012). This facilitated a two-way communication between aid agencies and the affected communities, helping to find missing persons, direct people to emergency shelter and food services, and mobilize people for reconstruction efforts.

Communications via social media and other online services also enabled the Haitian diaspora to be kept informed about missing and killed relatives and friends. Moreover, it mobilized huge financial and practical support, particularly from the United States, which ranged from translations to mapping services and emotional support, a "crucial function that was largely ignored by global responders" (Wall 2012, 5).

An evaluation carried out by Internews and BBC Media Action on media development initiatives in Haiti (Nelson and Sigal 2010) has shown that while new technologies such as SMS texting and interactive online mapping had improved the information needed to map the scale of destruction and adequately respond to the needs of affected populations, it was radio that was most effective in the medium and long term in providing information on relief and reconstruction efforts, public health advisories, and emergency food supplies. Radio is still the media that most people have access to, with both community and commercial radios thriving in many parts of the world; broadcasts can reach large numbers or people in remote areas; and radio sets are affordable or can easily be shared by a community. As a result, media development organizations have since focused on reconstructing radio services, producing programs with local journalists and handing out radio sets to affected communities. This is supported by audience surveys on information needs, the setting up of media centers for local and international journalists, and mapping the state of the media for future reconstruction efforts (Nelson and Sigal 2010).

A number of media development NGOs, including Internews, BBC Media Action, and International Media Support (IMS) have now developed humanitarian response capacity and are included in the roster of relief organizations that can

be called upon when a natural disaster strikes. Other agencies, such as the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) or the UN's Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) have recognized the importance of reliable communication as part of immediate relief efforts (Wall 2012, 2).

Follow-up reports and investigations by independent media can also ensure that reconstruction efforts are coordinated and actually relieve the suffering of local communities long after aid agencies have left the country. This benefits the local community as well as international donors, ensuring that funds reach their planned destination and do not end up in the accounts of corrupt officials.

They can also provide discussion forums for affected people. In northern Pakistan, the radio stations that were set up to provide information to the local communities in the aftermath of the earthquake were the first independent media outlets in the region, providing a diversity of views and a platform for debate far beyond the relief efforts. Donors, however, have not always shown long-term commitment, not extending funds beyond the relief efforts to also cover reconstruction, thereby missing opportunities to build on the equipment and training provided, and the trust obtained from the local communities.

In areas where an independent and pluralistic media landscape was fragile or non-existent in the first place, this creates fresh information vacuums in the public sphere, which can be filled by extremist views. For post-earthquake Pakistan, Rehmat (2006, 153) remembers that, "our most vivid lesson (…) is that the abrupt phase-out of emergency [radio] stations in the absence of a parallel emergence of a commercial broadcast sector is limiting the proliferation of moderate messages. (…) The platforms that were balancing out the voices of religious intolerance are no longer functioning."

Relief efforts in communities affected by a natural disaster have created new forms of collaboration between a variety of commercial and humanitarian actors at local and international levels, including media development NGOs, humanitarian aid organizations, social media providers, telecommunications and the (new) technology sector. Strong coordination and ongoing exchange can ensure that newly created synergies improve future disaster response as a whole. It remains to be seen in how far they can also be applied to other challenging environments, such as conflict zones, fragile states, or closed societies.

How these challenges are dealt with

Practical approaches at the international level

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights describes the right to "seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers." Especially the latter part of this sentence has become more applicable than ever when trying to preserve freedom of expression since the age of the Internet and mobile technology has clearly eliminated any 'frontiers.'

Global campaign against impunity

One of the most serious underlying issues of attacks on journalists and the right to freedom of expression is a culture of impunity. "A culture of impunity exists when those who deny others their right to freedom of expression do so knowing it is unlikely they will be held accountable for their actions" (IFEX 2015). In nine out of ten cases when a journalist gets killed, no perpetrator is convicted (IFEX 2015).

Of course, impunity is not solely an issue for journalists but a general problem of any society as it legitimizes murder, the most violent form of censorship, and encourages others to use this 'method' to solve their disputes, leading to a cycle of violence and a climate of fear and intimidation. For journalists, self-censorship or exile are often the only ways to stay safe, leaving violent actors to take full control of the information that is reported to local communities and to the outside world.

As journalists are at the forefront of freedom of expression, international, regional, and local members of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) launched a global campaign against impunity in 2011. Building on a regional anti-impunity campaign for Latin America, run by the Inter-American Press Association (IAPA) since 1995, the main objectives are to create public awareness of the seriousness of the issue and lobby state governments and the UN to ensure those who attack journalists and others expressing their ideas will face justice. For this, all attacks on journalists are documented and in the case of murder, local and international NGOs monitor the progress on criminal investigations, if there are any.

Since its inception, the campaign, through its participating members, has made considerable progress by putting the issue on the global agenda. "After years of indifference, the international community has begun to tackle the issue of impunity," writes Simon (2015a, 179), whose organization CPJ together with others like Reporters Sans Frontièrs, the International Press Institute, and IAPA has been at the forefront of lobbying the UN and national governments in this matter.

As a result, the UN declared November 2 the International Day to End Impunity in 2013 and all resolutions dealing with the safety of journalists have included the issue of impunity. Security Council Resolution 2222 requests the UN Secretary-General to include information on the safety of journalists and attacks on the press in his reports on armed conflict. Furthermore, it emphasizes "the responsibility of States to comply with the relevant obligations under international law to end impunity and to prosecute those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law."

In 2012, the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity was endorsed by the UN Chief Executive Board. Developed in close collaboration with press freedom NGOs, it aims to work towards "the creation of a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers in both conflict and non-conflict situations, with a view to strengthening peace, democracy and development worldwide" (UNESCO 2012, 2). The implementation plan, which is

overseen by UNESCO, outlines a list of measures to coordinate inter-agency mechanisms at the UN level to deal with threats against journalists, "assisting countries to develop legislation and mechanisms favorable to freedom of expression and information, and supporting their efforts to implement existing international rules and principles" (UNESCO 2012, 2), focusing on Iraq, Nepal, Pakistan, and South Sudan.

In practice, these UN actions will not automatically lead to an end to attacks on journalists or impunity overnight. Simon (2015a, 179) notes that, "ultimately, the crimes will have to be prosecuted by national governments that have demonstrated neither the political will nor the capacity to reduce the violence." Actions at UN level do, however, create public awareness and give local and international actors a base for their advocacy efforts. Simon believes that by focusing on a few countries where the situation is most serious, political will can be achieved with support of international agencies such as the UN. Also, those who do want to investigate the murders of journalists need to be given practical and moral support. "The goal is to create a dynamic in which failure to solve the crime results in direct political cost for the government in power, at least in terms of its international reputation," he says (2015a, 127).

Media and Information Literacy

In order for a society to demand justice for those who attack journalists, they need to value independent reporting and investigative journalists in the first place. Unfortunately, due to increasing numbers of sensationalist and co-opted media in some countries, traditions of reporters accepting bribes, as well as violent groups and repressive regimes trying – and succeeding – in discrediting responsible journalists through smear campaigns and trumped up criminal charges, it has become more and more difficult for professional, independent media workers to stand their ground and defend their legitimacy in a participative society.

Media and information literacy (MIL) could be seen as one approach to counter-balance this. Even though it has been promoted by UNESCO since the Grunwald declaration in 1982, it has recently enjoyed renewed attention. In 2013, over 300 organizations from 80 different countries formed the Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL) under the auspices of UNESCO and in collaboration with media development actors such as IREX or OSF in order to further deepen regional and international MIL strategies. Whereas MIL traditionally only encompassed the understanding of news media by the end user, in the digital age it now also includes ways to "create quality content and distribute it," so that it enables people to "become part of society's larger dialogue" (Burgess 2013, 3).

A human rights-approach to MIL, as elaborated by DW Akademie's Reineck and Lublinski (2015), encompasses three stakeholders: firstly, the government, which must provide an enabling environment for citizens to exercise their right to information and freedom of expression as well as for journalists

to work in safety and security; secondly, citizens themselves, whether they are consumers of news or producers, from professional reporters to citizen journalists or ordinary people uploading information or commenting in forums who should be enabled to know what information they need for their daily lives as well as where and how to access and distribute it; and thirdly, the media, which act as intermediaries between these two groups as well as between citizens, having privileged access to sources of information and encouraging discussions.

According to UNESCO, "empowerment of people through Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is an important prerequisite for fostering equitable access to information and knowledge and promoting free, independent and pluralistic media and information systems." Reineck and Lublinski (2015, 5) add that it increases people's "individual autonomy and collective solidarity in society … thus acting as a catalyst for improvements in journalistic reporting, editorial organizations and the media system as a whole."

Looking at NGO programs and donor spending, it appears that media literacy programs are increasingly being considered as an important aspect of media development (Burgess 2013). UNESCO is supporting this with a model curriculum for school teachers around the world and guidelines for broadcasters to encourage audiences to produce better quality user-generated content, among other things. It also includes workshops for government officials and military personnel in closed societies, transitional countries, or conflict zones, who have often seen journalists as the enemy, on the role and responsibilities of a free media, as well as public campaigns. Efforts by other NGOs have included workshops to enhance technological skills, creating media clubs at schools, or student radios or magazines.

In order for this comprehensive approach to bear fruit in the long term, collaborations with other organizations, from the educational sector, for example, are key. Even in closed societies, where the options for media development work are particularly limited, MIL offers a possible entry point as an increasing number of authoritarian regimes have realized the need for their citizens to obtain the technological skills to access online information (Reineck and Lublinski, 2015).

Local and regional approaches

At the local and regional level, the following approaches have been adopted to increase journalist's resilience towards the dangers they might be facing in closed societies, conflict zones, and fragile states. A cross-cutting theme has been gender and the support of female journalists, both as recipients of development measures as well as looking at how women are depicted and gender issues covered in the media.

It should be clear that none of these approaches are stand-alone projects that will increase freedom of expression and strengthen professional independent media by themselves. Projects that include a combination of different support and

advocacy activities at different levels are needed and increasingly applied to contribute to the establishment of a responsible pluralistic media landscape.

Capacity building

Training reporters, cameramen and camerawomen, and photographers in journalistic skills has been at the core of much media development work since the onset as qualified journalists are the base for quality media. Notably in areas where access to journalistic training is very expensive, schools are too far away, those in power exclude certain parts of society from education, or where training is simply unavailable due to conflict or repressive regimes, courses on journalistic standards and responsibilities have made essential contributions to the existence of independent media.

More recently, this traditional training has been extended to cover digital content, and more specific training modules have been offered, such as data journalism, social media tools, multimedia journalism, or conflict sensitive journalism as described above. Moreover, scholarships and placements with international broadcasters including Deutsche Welle and print outlets have been added (Myers 2012). As more citizen journalists contribute to the global news agenda, there have also been tailored training sessions to enable these actors to provide quality content, especially in the Arab world.

Training by Western NGOs has long been criticized for being too oriented on Western principles and not incorporating political, cultural, and practical realities of the trainees coming from authoritarian countries or crisis zones. While inviting selected journalists to Europe or the US for training sessions, often to protect them and allow them to have access to some of the most experienced trainers, this "can result in great frustration and less than positive consequences" (Myers 2012, 15) as trainees cannot put any of the principles of accurate and responsible journalism into practice in their home countries where they have to deal with low wages, no actual legal frameworks to protect them, nor the media outlets that adhere to these principles. Funds to start their own media are increasingly provided by training providers but often these have to be applied for through complicated and bureaucratic fundraising efforts that most journalists are not trained in. Even with production costs being much lower than a few years back, salaries and office/production space still have to be paid and in some countries security personnel has to be hired.

Training sessions for individual journalists are increasingly held in-country and in local languages, or where this is too dangerous for participants, in neighboring countries. This is not only more cost-effective but also allows the training to be held in a more country-specific or regional context. Coming from conflict zones or closed societies, it also provides a possibility for journalists, especially the growing number of freelancers who work on their own, to exchange experiences and create new networks and joint investigations. To multiply the effect of the training, train the trainer sessions have

been offered to former workshop participants. However, critics have long warned that these relatively short-term and ad-hoc training courses do not give journalists the opportunity to progress over time. Mary Myers (2012, 27) concludes from BBC Media Action's case studies in Uganda, Bangladesh, Syria, South Sudan, and Cambodia that, "this kind of training though often popular with funders, rarely has any long-term impact and tends to create a class of trainees who invariably leave their newspaper or broadcast outlet soon after they have been trained, often tempted by more highly paid jobs with PR companies and aid agencies."

Journalistic training has also increasingly been offered online, giving a greater number of journalists from around the world access to some of the most experienced trainers. The Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas has pioneered MOOCs in journalism capacity building – massive open online courses that are organized to be completed over a specific time. They are usually free and open to thousands of interested people, covering topics ranging from data journalism to investigative journalism in the digital age and entrepreneurial journalism.

Furthermore, increasing the capacity of media houses as a whole has become very important, providing training to editors and managers as well as technical support. Referring to interviews with journalists in her case studies, Myers (2012, 22) describes how, "respondents in the profession felt that stronger media outlets are more likely to stand firm in the face of threats than weaker ones."

To enable journalists to disseminate information in areas of conflict where broadcasting equipment has been destroyed, is controlled by ruling powers, or can endanger journalists trying to transmit radio programs, innovative technical support is key. One example is the portable radio transmitter Pocket FM, developed by MiCT and design company IXDS, which is reasonably priced, works without external power supplies, telephone, or internet infrastructure, thereby giving journalists in crisis zones and remote regions the possibility to continue broadcasting. Looking more like a radio receiver than a transmitter, it can be installed in private homes without immediately being detected and needs a personal code to start working, which decreases the chance of it being used by others for propaganda purposes.

In Libya, where the media sector has practically collapsed since the fall of the Gaddafi regime due to increasing instability, DW Akademie and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) have set up a virtual Cloud News Agency to ensure the safe distribution of quality content from journalists based in all regions of Libya and from various ethnic backgrounds. For this, over 60 journalists have been trained on issues such as conflict sensitive reporting and personal security; editorial teams are being put together and trained in checking facts and sources. These journalists will then be able to upload their content to the Cloud News Agency, which will be available to national and international audiences (DW Akademie 2015).

Exiled media

Another approach to support media in countries where it is too dangerous for independent journalists to work – whether this is in a closed society, a fragile state or a war zone – has been the support of exiled media to continue providing citizens inside the country as well as the diaspora with as much news on political and social developments as possible. Worldwide there are around 50 exile media outlets, mostly publishing online as this is cost-effective, but there are also a handful of exile newspapers, such as The Zimbabwean based in London, radio stations like the European Radio for Belarus broadcasting out of Poland or Syrian Radio Rozana based in Paris, as well as exile TV stations such as the Azerbaijani Meydan TV with production studios in Berlin. They are all run by professional journalists and have become influential voices within the diaspora as well as inside their respective countries (Ristow 2011).

These media outlets face several major challenges, including being far away from the country they report on and having only limited access to information; their own personal safety and that of their journalists working undercover; as well as digital security – as the regimes of the countries they are covering are trying to silence them. Most of them are faced with regular smear campaigns to discredit them personally and as trustworthy journalists. The more influential and successful an exile media becomes, the greater is the threat of it being attacked and having to close down, as was the case with Uznews.net, which had to close after almost 10 years when the Uzbek regime hacked the editor's email account and published confidential information, including the names of undercover reporters.

Isolation is another issue that many exiled journalists face, not having access to training or opportunities to exchange their unique experiences with colleagues. Exiled media forums and regular training sessions are organized by OSF and the Fojo Media Institute to help these journalists out of this isolation. Integrating exile media with established media houses, such as the Tehran Bureau at The Guardian is another way to increase security and bring the news to a wider audience.

When a country does open up and makes a transition towards democracy, such as in the most recent case of Myanmar, these trained journalists and exile media outlets can return to their country and contribute to setting up a pluralistic media landscape that adheres to international standards of quality journalism, including balance, a plurality of voices and sources, fact-checking, accuracy and fairness. Ending its five decades of authoritarian rule in March 2011, the government of Myanmar introduced legal frameworks to allow privately owned media and ensure journalists can work freely, at least theoretically. Practically, journalists still feel the government's repercussions for critical reporting and need to familiarize themselves with these new freedoms, building on their previous experiences of carrying out balanced reporting, conflict sensitive journalism and including the voices of minorities, among many other things. Those in power, too, have to learn how to work with an independent press (IMS 2014; Deutsche Welle 2015). This process has of course not happened without setbacks and the few journalists that had been trained in exile before 2011 cannot fully fill the vacuum that still exists in Myanmar's booming media landscape. Previous media development with journalists and other media experts in exile have, however, contributed to a smoother transition as qualified journalists were able to stay within the profession, learn about international journalism standards and assist the Ministry of Information with the drafting of policies that are in line with international media freedom standards. How successful the exiled journalist community will integrate themselves into the local media community in the long term remains to be seen.

Journalists' safety

As described above, journalists' safety and security is still being compromised in many countries around the world. The International News Safety Institute (INSI), a membership association comprising international media corporations, journalism unions and media development NGOs, have advocated for the safety of journalists and offered hostile environment training and general advice for journalists working in conflict zones since 2004.

There have been further efforts by The Rory Peck Trust and the Reporters Instructed to Safe Colleagues (RISC) initiative to make this often very costly training accessible to freelancers, who increasingly cover the most dangerous places as decreasing budgets do not allow established media to maintain foreign correspondents in all crisis zones. Freelancers by definition rarely work in a team and do not always receive the support of the media outlets they have been commissioned by. As a result, NGOs like INSI, CPJ, RSF and The Rory Peck Trust have published advice on personal and digital security on their websites and some are holding livestream panel discussions on the topic.

In February 2015, over 20 news organizations and NGOs signed up to a 'Global Call for Safety Principles and Standards,' which describes the responsibilities journalists have before and during an assignment in a dangerous area and the responsibilities of newsrooms towards their correspondents. It also calls on news outlets to offer the same provisions to their staff and the freelancers they work with.

While hostile environment training has become a prerequisite for most reporters working in crisis zones for international media outlets, there are still large numbers of journalists who do not have access to it. Moreover, while very suitable for war zones, the standard hostile environment training, which covers hostage situations, recognizing weapons, and first aid, does not include the issues that reporters from fragile states face in their countries. Only a handful of courses, including a week-long training offered by Article 19 Mexico and Central America, take a holistic approach to security, covering physical and digital safety, psychological effects of covering a

crisis, legal aspects, including the right of journalists, as well as the link between ethical journalism and safety. There have been calls to integrate all of these aspects in standard journalistic education where possible, especially in fragile countries.

Enabling legal environments for journalists to work in safety and security

In order for independent media to strive and develop, a legal environment that protects freedom of expression and journalists' rights needs to be intact. Apart from the Global Campaign to End Impunity, there have been local and regional advocacy efforts by international and domestic press freedom groups with state governments as well as regional bodies such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), or the European Union (EU). The OAS, ACHPR, and the OECD have appointed Special Rapporteurs for Freedom of Expression, who monitor legislation in their respective member states and regularly report to the organization's council on the state of freedom of expression.

Furthermore, there have been efforts by local and international NGOs to consult national governments and judiciary instances on media law reform and protection mechanisms for journalists at risk, such as in countries like Myanmar, Tunisia, and Mexico. Any success in the actual practice of these reforms and mechanisms obviously depends on the political will of those in power, which has not always been as forthcoming in practice as in official statements.

At a micro-level, the Media Legal Defense Initiative (MLDI) has been defending journalists, bloggers, and independent media outlets who are prosecuted in their countries. MLDI has also trained lawyers around the world on how to continue this work.

Supporting local and regional media environment structures

International donors have also supported local journalist unions, media development NGOs, and journalism schools to enable local and regional structures that can work within local contexts and adapt as these contexts evolve. These institutions are also vital partners for international media development actors to successfully carry out in-country projects, which are eventually planned to be devolved to local initiatives where possible.

Domestic or regional journalist unions, press councils and media development NGOs can give journalists the backup they need to carry out quality journalism and inform their international partners about any worrying trends that curtail freedom of expression or about attacks on journalists. Local Journalism Institutes can uphold international journalism standards and apply them at the local level, also giving young as well as more senior journalists the opportunity to progress over longer periods of time and have continuing access to further education. Regular exchange with international and regional partners is very important for sharing experiences and keeping up to date with the latest research and developments.

It can of course be very dangerous in some countries to be affiliated with a Western organization, as is the case of many countries in the Middle East, North Africa, the former Soviet Union, or Central Asia. In most Latin American or Asian countries, however, it can be perceived as a further protection mechanism as violent groups trying to silence those supporting freedom of expression tend to be more cautious with their actions if an attack will expose them at the international level.

Individual support for attacked journalists and reporters at risk

A total of 22 international NGOs currently provide grants and vital moral support to reporters, cameramen and camerawomen, and photographers whose lives are at risk due to their work in newsgathering. Funds are provided to help with immediate and medium-term expenses to cover medical or legal costs, support the families of journalists who have been imprisoned or killed with finding alternative ways to generate an income, and travel expenses when having to flee the country. Some NGOs also provide non-financial help, referring journalists at risk to human rights NGOs, institutes, or recommending them for Awards or scholarships.

This financial support does not only alleviate the journalist's or their family's immediate financial worries, it also gives a sign to them and their wider communities that their work of providing critical information is important. So, too, do Journalism Awards such as the UNESCO Guillermo Cano Prize World Press Freedom Prize, the CPJ Courage in Journalism Award or the Rory Peck Award for Freelance Cameraman and Camerawomen.

In some countries, safe houses are provided for prosecuted journalists to seek refuge and a number of universities, mainly in the US and the UK as well as NGOs such as the Hamburg Foundation for Politically Persecuted People or PEN offer scholarships for these journalists to spend time in a safe country.

Conclusion

Each country is dealing with different sets of opportunities and challenges, so there is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to finding the best way to support journalists and a free and professional media landscape in conflict zones, fragile states, or closed societies, or when a natural disaster has destroyed a country. Nevertheless, some general conclusions can be drawn:

– Local information eco systems, existing media development initiatives, journalists' needs and legal frameworks have to be clearly assessed and comprehensive, long-term strategies applied in order for media development initiatives to have a sustainable impact. MIL could be one of these comprehensive approaches.

– In conflict and post-conflict regions, media development initiatives to strengthen professional journalists, promote conflict sensitive journalism and provide includive platforms for discussion can contribute to a de-escalation of the conflict and to reconciliation between warring factions if reporters are aware of their duties and responsibilities.

– In closed societies, media development is somewhat limited in its approaches, but possible. Projects could include training in business or sports reporting, or in technical skills. Alternatively, exile media can be supported and future journalists trained, especially in new technologies for journalism, so that a professional media community continues to exist and possibly help build a local free media landscape once the country opens up.

– Evaluations of recent relief efforts have shown the importance of media development after a natural disaster has struck. Media development NGOs are now a firm part of humanitarian relief efforts (CDAC), relying on 'old' media such as radio and new technologies to exchange life-saving information with affected communities.

– Local, regional, and international initiatives need to be coordinated in order to offer comprehensive replies to complex realities at the local level that often spread beyond state borders. Alternatively, regional approaches should be tried, which can also promote an exchange between journalists from different countries who face similar problems.

As conflicts are becoming increasingly fractured and as more regimes who were previously considered democratic are returning to authoritarian rule, a variety of new approaches for media development have to be tried, evaluated, and shared among all local and international stakeholders. The continuous evolvement of our information eco systems through rapid technological advances as well as the synergies of new collaborations between various actors, especially the technology sector, will provide new tools to the media development community, as initiatives after recent natural disasters have shown. These now have to be applied creatively.

We are heading towards a time where nearly all citizens of the world will be able to access the Internet from their mobile phones and produce and share content with millions of people. Therefore, the challenge will be to empower journalists and ordinary citizens to do this responsibly and safely, teach the general public how to deal with these masses of information, and prepare those in power to put into practice the necessary frameworks in time. Only then can media development initiatives have a positive impact in war-torn countries, fragile states, and authoritarian regimes, and possibly prevent future conflict.

Some definitions for this report

Fragile State

According to the OECD (2013), "a fragile region or state has weak capacity to carry out basic governance functions, and lacks the ability to develop mutually constructive relations with society. Fragile states are also more vulnerable to internal or external shocks such as economic crises or natural disasters." Furthermore, fragile states are characterized by a culture of impunity and high levels of corruption. Societies in fragile states are often fractured along sectarian, ethnic or political lines.

Closed Society

A closed society is ruled by authoritarian and repressive regimes, which might have been elected in democratic elections but since coming to power have curtailed and oppressed human rights and individual freedoms, including freedom of expression. There is a systematic legal, infrastructural, and physical repression and harassment of those trying to exercise these rights, leading to self-censorship and a general climate of fear and danger.

Citizen Journalist

Although the term 'citizen journalist' has been criticized and there is great debate to its usefulness, it is used in this chapter to describe all citizens contributing to the news agenda by uploading content and images on the internet.

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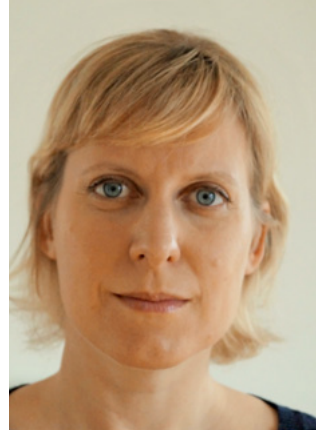
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