UNESCO: freedom of expression, information and the media

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1 Introduction

Freedom of expression is central to dialogue, democracy and development worldwide. Without it, an informed, engaged and responsible citizenry is impossible; corruption and crime cannot be exposed; and societies cannot hope to implement the social and economic programmes that will enable their future prosperity. When freedom of expression is upheld and championed, however, a whole host of objectives become possible, ranging from democratic governance and poverty reduction to gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is, therefore, not just an individual right, but a collective one that constitutes a prerequisite for the exercise of a number of other fundamental human rights and the attainment of the internationally endorsed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to which world leaders and development institutions have committed since the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration in September 2000.[1]

Since its foundation, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has placed freedom of expression and press freedom at the core of its mission. Indeed, its Constitution, adopted in November 1945, calls on UNESCO Member States to 'collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of all peoples, through all means of mass communication'. UNESCO is the

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[1] The eight MDGs, set time-bound targets, to be achieved by 2015, in regard to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and women's empowerment; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and fostering a global partnership for development. UN GA, Resolution 55/2: United Nations Millennium Declaration, 18 September 2000, UN Doc. A/RES/55/2. For more information, see www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd (last accessed 27 January 2014).

only specialized agency within the United Nations (UN) with a mandate to 'promote the free flow of ideas by word and image'.[2]

UNESCO is governed by two bodies: the General Conference and the Executive Board. The General Conference consists of the Organization's Member States and meets every two years. It determines the policies and the main lines of work of the Organization. The Executive Board, which meets every six months and consists of fifty-eight members elected by the General Conference, assures the overall management of UNESCO.

In carrying out its mandate, the Organization's priorities are determined by a (six-year) Medium Term Strategy, broken down into (two-year) 'biennium' cycles.[3] They are also designed to reflect, incorporate and contribute to the UN's human rights-based approach to programming, gender and disability sensitivity, and wider development commitments. The resulting activities in the area of freedom of expression and media development, undertaken in partnership with civil society organizations, may be divided according to five key approaches:

- advocacy and awareness-raising and monitoring;
- safety of media professionals;
- media law and regulatory framework;
- ethical and professional standard-setting; and
- promoting media diversity.

In what follows, each of these activity areas will be addressed in turn, with a view to providing a concrete and comprehensive overview of UNESCO's role in the promotion of freedom of expression, as well as forward-looking reflections about emerging trends and challenges.

2   Advocacy and awareness-raising and monitoring

UNESCO's advocacy, awareness-raising and monitoring activities are designed to sensitize Member States, public institutions and civil society to the importance of freedom of expression and press freedom.

In 1993, the UN General Assembly proclaimed World Press Freedom Day, in order to remind governments worldwide of their duty to respect Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since then,

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[2] Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, London, 16 November 1945, Art. 1.
[3] Beginning in 2014, UNESCO has moved to an eight-year Medium Term Strategy (2014–21) and a four-year biennium cycle (2014–17).

World Press Freedom Day has been celebrated every year on 3 May, the anniversary of the historic Declaration of Windhoek, a statement of free press principles prepared by a number of African journalists on the occasion of a UNESCO seminar entitled 'Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press', held in Windhoek, Namibia in 1991.[4]

UNESCO celebrates World Press Freedom Day by bringing together media professionals, press freedom organizations and UN agencies to assess the state of press freedom worldwide and discuss ways of addressing new and enduring challenges. Each conference focuses on a theme related to press freedom, from media in violent conflict and countries in transition (2000, 2002 and 2004) to freedom of information and empowerment of people (2008, 2010).[5]

On the 20th anniversary of the proclamation of World Press Freedom Day in 2013, the spotlight was on the theme of 'Safe to Speak: Securing Freedom of Expression in All Media'. In particular, the main commemoration and others held around the world focused on issues related to the safety of journalists, combating impunity for crimes against freedom of expression, and securing a free and open Internet as the precondition for safety online.[6]

Since 1997, as a result of an initiative by UNESCO's Executive Board, UNESCO has also marked World Press Freedom Day by awarding the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize, named after assassinated Colombian journalist Guillermo Cano Isaza. The prize, which comes in the form of $25,000, is intended to honour the work of an individual or an organization defending or promoting freedom of expression anywhere in the world, especially when this has been achieved in the face of danger.

Regional and international organizations, as well as professional and non-governmental organizations working in the field of journalism and freedom of expression, and UNESCO Member States, are invited to nominate candidates for the prize. The prize is then awarded on the

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[4] See www.un.org/en/events/pressfreedomday/windhoek.shtml (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[5] For a review of the focus themes of World Press Freedom Day celebrations over the years, see W. Horsley, *Pressing for Freedom: 20 Years of World Press Freedom Day* (Paris: UNESCO, 2013), 20–4; See http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002205/220525E.pdf (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[6] See www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/prizes-and-celebrations/celebrations/international-days/world-press-freedom-day/previous-celebrations/2013/2013-themes (last accessed 27 January 2014).

basis of the recommendation of a twelve-person international jury of distinguished media professionals.

In 2013, the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize was given to imprisoned Ethiopian journalist Reeyot Alemu. Ms Alemu could not attend the ceremony in person since she is currently serving a five-year sentence in Kality prison. Her message, read by Alana Barton of the International Women's Media Foundation that proposed her candidature, stated: 'The award is not only for me, but also for all individuals and institutions that struggle for press freedom around the world . . . I am very worried for those who are labeled as terrorists and imprisoned only because they struggle for their rights in a peaceful way . . . Since the journalists are in prison, exile or trouble, who will expose the hidden truths?'[7]

UNESCO's Director-General (DG) publicly highlights the plight of persecuted journalists frequently. Resolution 29 entitled 'Condemnation of Violence against Journalists' and adopted at the 29th Session of UNESCO's General Conference in November 1997, called upon the Director General 'to condemn assassination and any physical violence against journalists as a crime against society, since this curtails freedom of expression and, as a consequence, the other rights and freedoms set forth in international human rights instruments'. In addition, it recommended that the DG 'urge that the competent authorities discharge their duty of preventing, investigating and punishing such crimes and remedying their consequences'. In accordance with these stipulations, the DG now publicly condemns the murders of journalists and media professionals, and mobilizes against the impunity of such crimes, by urging the relevant authorities to prevent, investigate and punish them.

Alongside the DG's efforts, UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the only multilateral forum in the UN system designed to mobilize the international community to discuss and promote media development in developing countries, also plays a crucial role in raising awareness on journalist safety.[8]

On 27 March 2008, at its 26th session, the intergovernmental council of the IPDC adopted a 'Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity' which requested the DG 'to provide, after consultation with

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[7] 'Who will expose the hidden truths?', message to be found at: www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/resources/who-will-reveal-the-hidden-truths (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[8] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/intergovernmental-programmes/ipdc/special-initiatives/safety-of-journalists (last accessed 27 January 2014).

the UN Secretary-General, the Intergovernmental Council of IPDC . . . with an analytical report on the basis of responses received from Member States concerned, including updated information on the Director-General's condemnations, and [to] make this report widely available'.[9] This happens every two years. Moreover, in 2010, the IPDC Council unanimously adopted a second 'Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity', which reiterated the request for governments to report to the UNESCO DG on their investigations into the killings of journalists. This Decision also requests that the General Conference of UNESCO encourages newsrooms around the world to observe one minute's silence every year on World Press Freedom Day to denounce the murders of journalists.[10]

The report presented to the IPDC Council at its 28th session in March 2012 concerned the 2010–11 biennium. During this period, UNESCO condemned the murder of 127 journalists, a tally comparable to 2008–9 when the organization had reported and condemned 123 murders. A noteworthy evolution during 2008–9 was that the percentage of killings not linked to conflict situations had dramatically increased, and the great majority of casualties were not international war correspondents, but local journalists mostly working in peacetime, covering local stories and being attacked for doing so. This trend was confirmed during the 2010–11 period, in which the number of journalists targeted for murder represented at least 75 per cent of the killings condemned by the Director-General. As for the action taken by Member States with regard to these killings, out of the thirty-eight countries and territories concerned by the killings of journalists condemned in 2006–7 and 2008–2009, only eighteen responded to the Director-General. Of the twenty-seven countries included in the list of killings in 2008–9, nine provided information on judicial follow-up.[11]

 9 UNESCO, Intergovernmental Council of IPDC, *Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity*, 27 March 2008; see www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTI-MEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/ipdc2008_decision_safety_of_journalists.pdf (last accessed 27 January 2014).
10 UNESCO, Intergovernmental Council of IPDC, *Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity*, 24–26 March 2010; see: www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTI-MEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/ipdc2010_safety_decision_final.pdf (last accessed 27 January 2014).
11 UNESCO IPDC, *Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity presented by the UNESCO Director-General to the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC*, UN Doc. CI-08/CONF.202/7, 3 March 2008 at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/ipdc2008_safety_of_journalists_report.pdf (last accessed 27 January

Besides its special initiative focusing on the safety of journalists, the IPDC also plays a more general role in monitoring freedom of expression, having initiated the development of a set of Media Development Indicators (MDIs) for evaluating national media landscapes, which have gained widespread recognition among UN agencies, development partners, intergovernmental bodies, media professionals and civil society groups (see further below).

Following a two-year consultation process involving a variety of experts and organizations from all over the world, the MDIs were finalized and unanimously endorsed by the IPDC Intergovernmental Council at its 26th session in 2008. The 1991 Windhoek Declaration and subsequent regional declarations on 'Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media' adopted in Almaty, Santiago, Sana'a and Sofia, served as the theoretical framework for the MDIs. In this context, they were structured around five media development categories:

- *Category 1: a system of regulation conducive to freedom of expression, pluralism and diversity of the media:* existence of a legal, policy and regulatory framework which protects and promotes freedom of expression and information, based on international best practice standards and developed in participation with civil society.
- *Category 2: plurality and diversity of media, a level economic playing field and transparency of ownership:* the State actively promotes the development of the media sector in a manner which prevents undue concentration and ensures plurality and transparency of ownership and content across public, private and community media.
- *Category 3: media as a platform for democratic discourse:* the media, within a prevailing climate of self-regulation and respect for the journalistic profession, reflects and represents the diversity of views and interests in society, including those of marginalized groups. There is a high level of information and media literacy.

2014); UNESCO IPDC, *Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity presented by the UNESCO Director-General to the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC*, UN Doc. CI-10/CONF.202/4/BIS REV, 30 March 2010 at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001874/187491e.pdf (last accessed 27 January 2014); UNESCO IPDC, *Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity presented by the UNESCO Director-General to the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC*, UN Doc. CI-12/CONF.202/4 REV, 27 March 2012 at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/IPDC/ipdc28_dg_safety_report_final_rev.pdf (last accessed 27 January 2014).

- *Category 4: professional capacity building and supporting institutions that underpin freedom of expression, pluralism and diversity:* media workers have access to professional training and development, both vocational and academic, at all stages of their career, and the media sector as a whole is both monitored and supported by professional associations and civil society organizations.
- *Category 5: infrastructural capacity is sufficient to support independent and pluralistic media:* the media sector is characterized by high or rising levels of public access, including among marginalized groups, and efficient use of technology to gather and distribute news and information, appropriate to the local context.

These categories are intended to be taken together to create a holistic picture of the media environment, and enable a comprehensive map of the media ecology to be constructed.

Since their endorsement, the MDIs, which were originally published in English, have been made available in eight different languages, with the number of countries concerned by their application steadily increasing. At the present time, studies having been launched or completed by UNESCO in Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Ecuador, Egypt, Gabon, Iraq, Jordan, the Maldives, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nepal, Palestine, South Sudan, Timor Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda and Uruguay, as well as a regional project in South-East Europe. The United Nations is also using the MDIs as a basis for the elaboration of a common approach in the fields of communication development and good governance and collaboration is ongoing with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) to apply a new set of internationally standardized media statistics that will help address gaps in available country-specific data.

3   Safety of media professionals

In the words of Barry James: 'Every journalist killed or neutralized by terror is an observer less of the human condition. Every attack distorts reality by creating a climate of fear and self-censorship.'[12] UNESCO works at the local, regional and international level in order to promote

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[12] B. James, *Press Freedom: Safety of Journalists and Impunity* (Paris: UNESCO, 2007), 7; see   www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/press-freedom-safety-of-journalists-and-impunity (last accessed 27 January 2014).

the safety of media professionals. It does so following a gender-sensitive approach, for example taking into account the specific challenges faced by female journalists.

At the local level, the organization, often in collaboration with civil society, supports safety and risk awareness training for journalists and media workers on the ground. Indeed, as the IPDC Council's 2010 and 2012 Reports (referenced above) highlight, the vast majority of journalists killed undertaking their professional duties are local. While international journalists are well equipped and heavily protected, local ones are often untrained and underprepared for the violence they have to cover and confront. As a result, a significant percentage of IPDC-funded projects aims to provide journalists in conflict-sensitive regions with the necessary instruction.

UNESCO also works at the international and regional levels, with public authorities, private enterprises and journalists' organizations, to systematically seek ways to reduce risks involved. For example, in 2002, UNESCO supported the consultation process for the Reporters Without Borders Charter for the Safety of Journalists Working in War Zones or Dangerous Areas.[13] This theme was later to be addressed by the UN Security Council in 2006 with the adoption of Resolution 1738 on the safety of journalists in conflict situations.[14] This includes a commitment by the media, public authorities and journalists to systematically seek ways to reduce the risks involved.

On a more practical level, UNESCO has collaborated with Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) to publish a regularly updated practical handbook for journalists working in conflict zones, available in ten languages. This *Handbook for Journalists*, first published in 1998, recalls key documents, charters and declarations, which spell out the principles of press freedom. These come from all over the world, from the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights to the Munich Charter on the rights and duties of journalists, which was adopted by representatives of the Journalists Unions of Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany in 1971. The handbook contains useful advice on precautions to be taken in dangerous situations, from how to save a

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[13] Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Reporters Without Borders Charter for the Safety of Journalists Working in War Zones or Dangerous Areas, March 2002.

[14] UN SC, Resolution 1738 on the Safety of Journalists in Conflict Situations, UN Doc. S/RES/1738, 23 December 2006.

wounded or injured person to how to go about investigating press freedom violations.

In addition, UNESCO works to encourage the inclusion of journalist safety in the curricula of journalism and mass communication schools. With this in mind, a team of four UNESCO experts, on the basis of consultations with a wide variety of journalism educators, published the *Model Curricula for Journalism Education* for distribution in journalism schools worldwide. This is an Open Educational Resource (OER), in that it can be copied, shared and altered at will. The book is available via UNESCO's OER online platform, the world's largest online OER community, and is available in all six UN languages and Portuguese.[15]

UNESCO collaborates with other UN agencies to advance freedom of expression, for instance contributing to information relevant to this fundamental right in the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (a process led by the UN Human Rights Council to survey the state of human rights around the world). Moreover, UNESCO plays a central role in promoting the importance of the safety of journalists across the rest of the UN system, by promoting the incorporation of the issue into the strategies of all relevant UN agencies, funds and programmes, as well as at Member State level. Indeed, in September 2011 UNESCO hosted the first-ever UN Inter-Agency Conference on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity,[16] convened by the Director General of UNESCO at the request of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication.[17] This inter-agency meeting sought to formulate a comprehensive, coherent and action-oriented approach to the issue. A Plan of Action was drafted on the conference's second day by representatives from UNESCO; the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC);

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[15] M. Cobden, G. S. Adam, H. H. Holm and M. Abu-Fadil, *Model Curricula for Journalism Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2007), at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/model-curricula-for-journalism-education; for OERs, see www.oerplatform.org (both last accessed 27 January 2014).

[16] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/events/calendar-of-events/events-websites/inter-agency-meeting-on-the-safety-of-journalists-and-the-issue-of-impunity (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[17] UNESCO IPDC, *Decision on the Safety of Journalists*.

the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR); the World Bank Institute (WBI); and the World Food Programme (WFP). It included recommendations for the UN, Member States and civil society.[18]

The UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity was endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board on 12 April 2012. Following this key development, UNESCO convened a 2nd UN Inter-Agency Meeting on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, which took place at the United Nations Office in Vienna on 22–23 November 2012.[19] The meeting was co-hosted by UNESCO, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It brought together representatives from fifteen UN bodies and more than forty non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, independent experts, media groups and professional associations. The purpose of this gathering was to formulate a concrete implementation strategy at global and national levels by outlining more than one hundred areas of work by UN bodies and civil society groups to secure the safety of journalists.

At the time of writing, an implementation strategy to operationalize the UN Plan at the global, regional and local level in 2013–14 had been developed, and it was being adapted to a selection of countries for a first roll-out phase (including Iraq, Nepal, Pakistan and South Sudan, as well as Latin America). The strategy makes clear that when referring to journalists, it 'includes media workers and social media producers who produce significant amounts of public-interest journalism'. Its appendix focuses on the UN's track record on safety and impunity issues and recognizes General Comment No. 34 by the Human Rights Committee on Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as constituting 'an authoritative clarification of the scope of States' obligations, calling on them to adopt adequate laws and practices together with national enforcement mechanisms to protect the right to

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[18] UNESCO IPDC, *UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity*, UN Doc. CI-12/CONF.202/6, 12 April 2012, at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/ HQ/CI/CI/pdf/official_documents/UN_plan_on_Safety_Journalists_EN.pdf (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[19] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/ safety-of-journalists/2nd-un-inter-agency-meeting-on-the-safety-of-journalists-and-the-issue-of-impunity (last accessed 27 January 2014).

freedom of expression and opinion', also citing it among the basic texts on the subject matter.[20]

4   Media laws and regulatory frameworks

Media laws and regulatory frameworks are also necessary instruments in ensuring enabling environments for freedom of expression and press freedom. This is a matter of both form and substance. A country may have good laws relating to freedom of expression and the right to information, but they may not be implemented. Their function may be hampered by a culture of secrecy or corruption, institutional resistance, or a lack of technical or institutional capacity. In addition, constitutional guarantees may be eroded by exceptions and derogations from international treaty obligations or by contradictory laws covering, for example, State secrecy or defamation. The 'war on terror', for example, has seen the introduction of laws and regulations relating to national security that infringe the right to freedom of expression and erode the assumption of information access.

Citizens' awareness and empowerment is also vital: there may be inhibitions against seeking information or a reluctance to assert the right to freedom of expression, either in the public at large, or among marginalized or minority groups. Laws need to be backed up by systematic measures to make citizens aware of their right, and to make officials aware of their obligations.

In order to facilitate these goals, UNESCO provides expert advice to Member States, from Brazil to Timor Leste, on how best to ensure that media legislation complies with international standards and to raise awareness on the importance of such legislation in the media industry and among the wider public.

UNESCO's Communication and Information work in Brazil is an excellent example. Brazil's regulatory framework regarding freedom of expression and press freedom is severely outmoded, dating from 1962. Two challenges exist, in particular: the lack of media pluralism which characterizes Brazil's highly concentrated, privately owned media landscape and the absence of an independent regulator. In this context,

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[20] UNESCO, OHCHR, UNDP, *Implementation Strategy 2013–2014 on the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity*, 2, 24 and 26, at www.unesco.org/new/ fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/official_documents/Implementation_Strategy_ 2013–2014_REV8march.pdf.

UNESCO's office in Brasilia, in partnership with the Ford Foundation, has been highly active in contributing to the ongoing debate in Brazilian society about the role of the communication industry in strengthening democracy. In March 2011, it released three studies on the Brazilian media system.

The first study, *The Regulatory Environment for Broadcasting: An International Best Practice Survey for Brazilian Stakeholders*,[21] written by international experts Toby Mendel and Eve Salomon, is an investigation of the regulatory situation of the Brazilian media system in comparison with current practices in ten other democracies (Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Jamaica, Malaysia, South Africa, Thailand, the UK and the USA) and with recommendations based on international law. The second paper, *Freedom of Expression and Broadcasting Regulation*,[22] also by Mendel and Salomon, provides content for reflection on the centrality of regulation for the protection, promotion and guarantee of the right to receive, seek and impart information, ideas and opinions. The third publication, written by Andrew Puddephatt, focuses on different angles of self-regulation applied to the media sector. *The Importance of Self-Regulation of the Media in Upholding Freedom of Expression*[23] summarizes the intersections of the theme with the practice of journalism, the editorial principles and strategies for corporate social responsibility.

Although the texts focus more on traditional media, the core principles reaffirmed by the authors can be applied to new (or innovative) media, including the Internet. For the Representative of the Ford Foundation in

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[21] T. Mendel and E. Salomon, *The Regulatory Environment for Broadcasting: An International Best Practice Survey for Brazilian Stakeholders*, Series CI debates: Communication and Information, vol. 7 (Brasilia: UNESCO Office Brasilia, 2011); at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/the-regulatory-environment-for-broadcasting-an-international-best-practice-survey-for-brazilian-stakeholders (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[22] T. Mendel and E. Salomon, *Freedom of Expression and Broadcasting Regulation*, Series CI debates: Communication and Information, vol. 8 (Brasilia: UNESCO Office Brasilia, 2011); at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/freedom-of-expression-and-broadcasting-regulation (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[23] A. Puddephatt, *The Importance of Self-Regulation of the Media in Upholding Freedom of Expression*, vol. 9 (Brasilia: UNESCO Office Brasilia, 2011); at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/the-importance-of-self-regulation-of-the-media-in-upholding-freedom-of-expression (last accessed 27 January 2014).

Brazil, Ana Toni, 'the goal of these important studies is to contribute to the public debate that gained weight last year in Brazil regarding media regulation and freedom of expression'.[24] The three publications bring regulatory and self-regulatory best practices from other countries that seek to strengthen freedom of expression and to guarantee the development of a pluralistic and democratic media, in accordance with UNESCO's mandate.

UNESCO also supported the adoption of the Freedom of Information Law in Brazil, and is assisting the government in its implementation and in meeting a number of Brazil's commitments under the Open Government Partnership.[25] UNESCO has further supported civil society organizations, via an IPDC project, to prepare, monitor and use the new law.

Activities in Liberia also encapsulate the main thrust of UNESCO's activities in support of a regulatory environment in accordance with international standards. In 2011, UNESCO supported two Freedom of Information Stakeholders Forums, coordinated by the Centre for Media Studies and Peace Building (CEMESP) and intended to increase the visibility and understanding of Liberia's freedom of information legislation. The first forum, which took place on 5 September 2011, was held in Monrovia and aimed at law-makers, media executives and CSOs. The second, held in the rural town of Gbarnga on 12 September, targeted local county authorities and community radio journalists from the surrounding areas of Lofa, Bong, Nimba and Margibi. In a series of interactive workshops and discussions, participants highlighted the enduring need to fully implement existing freedom of information legislation. The two sessions peaked with the drafting, signing and reading of a communiqué that captured stakeholders' commitment to provide the impetus for effective implementation of Liberia's Freedom of Information Law. These actions were implemented in the lead-up to the second post-conflict legislative and presidential elections in Liberia, which were held in October 2011 (with the run-off presidential election held in November). The project, financed by the Danish International Development Agency, also included a component of training journalists on conflict-sensitive reporting; monitoring media output in regards to electoral

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[24] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-foc us-articles/all-news/news/unesco_releases_three_publications_analyzing_media_regulation _and_freedom_of_expression_in_brazil-1 (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[25] See www.opengovpartnership.org/country/brazil (last accessed 27 January 2014).

coverage and freedom of information; and capacity-building efforts contributing to financially sustainable media.

The activities in Liberia, implemented between June 2011 and December 2012, represented a pilot phase of a broader project that is in the process of being implemented in other countries of the Manor River Union: Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. Indeed, in the context of media laws and regulatory frameworks, freedom of information legislation is a high priority. Freedom of Information is recognized by both Resolution 59 of the UN General Assembly adopted in 1946, and Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states that the fundamental right of freedom of expression encompasses the freedom 'to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'. In the words of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights' 2002 Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, 'public bodies hold information, not for themselves but custodians of the public good and everyone has a right to access this information, subject only to clearly defined rules established in law'.[26]

However, in the face of calls for freedom of information, many political leaders and civil servants spring immediately to a defensive posture of stressing the need to limit the circulation of 'sensitive' information. But there are also many others, especially when newly elected, who see the value in democratizing access as a way to reform the State by exposing those officials appointed under a previous regime to the light of a new day. When executive behaviour occurs in the sunlight, its excesses are more easily exposed, valuable public input can be heard and integrated in policy design and implementation.

Like most human rights, that to freedom of information can be qualified – but such limitations should be secondary, rather than primary, considerations when it comes to legislation provision for access to information. There is substantial jurisprudence, and valuable standards proposed by NGOs such as ARTICLE 19, around this issue. Key among these is the principle of maximum disclosure, which dictates that individuals should be granted access to all information held by public bodies, except for very limited and clearly specified categories, subject to harm and public interest tests. In practice, however, it is not unusual for

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[26] ACHPR, Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, Banjul, the Gambia, 17–23 October 2002, Principle IV(1).

exceptions, along with the reference to official secret acts, to unduly justify arbitrary denials of information access.[27]

In terms of encouraging the empowerment of citizens, freedom of information is at the heart of a participatory democracy. Consider the consequences of an uninformed electorate going to the polls; consider the consequences when information flows are curbed or manipulated in times of political crisis or ethnic strife. Freedom of information promotes a true sense of empowerment within society and therefore gives meaning to the concept of citizenship.

In the context of the profound transformations that have taken place in the Arab region in the past few years, UNESCO has also placed special attention to facilitating support towards strengthening the legal and regulatory frameworks conducive to freedom of expression, press freedom and freedom of information in countries such as Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan, among others. It is critical to support freedom of expression in fostering democratic governance, development and sustained peace, in a region where the enhanced exercise of this right has enabled social and political change, promising to transform societies in ways perhaps unimaginable only a few years ago.

Looking to the future, another priority for the next biennium is likely to be the decriminalization of defamation laws. Criminal defamation is an affront to free speech. It has enormous personal impact on the accused journalist, and may deprive him/her of his career, income and liberty. It puts a burden on journalists' families and, by definition, brands them criminals. Furthermore, it has what has been called a 'chilling effect' on other journalists and media professionals working in the jurisdiction, encouraging a climate of fear and self-censorship.

There is a trend towards decriminalization. Countries such as Ghana, Liberia and Niger have decriminalized speech, for example. Sri Lanka did the same in 2002. In Latin America, decriminalization of speech related to critical expressions against public functionaries or institutions have been almost completely eliminated through a process that started in the 1990s. However, in several countries in the region, the remaining figures

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[27] For a review of international standards and case studies focused on freedom of information, see T. Mendel, *Freedom of Information: A Comparative Legal Survey*, 2nd edn (Paris: UNESCO, 2008); http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=26159&URL_-DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (last accessed 27 January 2014). See Chapters 3 and 9 in this book.

established to protect the honour of individuals are still being unduly used to restrict debate on matters of public interest (that is, public officials, acting in their personal capacity, file penal charges related to expressions critical of the exercise of their public functions).

Progress around the world in regards to this matter is linked to strong efforts of press freedom advocates. In Africa, important milestones have been the 2007 Declaration of Table Mountain,[28] and a resolution by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in 2010,[29] which called for repealing laws that criminalize speech. The African Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information is leading advocacy efforts focused on this matter in the region, in partnership with different key stakeholders. Moreover, the Pan African Parliament adopted a resolution launching a campaign to protect press freedoms in 2012.[30] In Latin America, the work of the organs of the Inter-American system of human rights and several CSOs has been critical. However, criminal defamation laws persist, and there is still much work to be done, often in some of the most progressive nations.

Finally, in a digital age characterized by prospering user-generated content, UNESCO recognizes that the principle of freedom of expression must apply not only to traditional media, but to the Internet too. Providing an unprecedented volume of resources for information and knowledge, the Internet opens up new opportunities for expression and participation and holds enormous potential for development. This is undoubtedly a blessing for creativity, exchange and dialogue. Yet the digital age also creates the need for updated legal and regulatory measures which balance a variety of potentially conflicting values and interests.

With this in mind, and within the framework of the follow-up process to the 2003 and 2005 World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) conferences in Geneva and Tunis,[31] UNESCO has

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[28] WAN-IFRA, Declaration of Table Mountain: Abolishing 'Insult Laws' and Criminal Defamation in Africa and Setting a Free Press Higher on the Agenda, 3–6 June 2007; at www.wan-ifra.org/articles/2011/02/16/the-declaration-of-table-mountain (last accessed on 27 January 2014).

[29] ACHPR, Resolution 169 on Repealing Criminal Defamation Laws in Africa, 24 November 2010. See: www.achpr.org/sessions/48th/resolutions/169 (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[30] Pan African Parliament, Resolution to Protect Media Freedoms, 18 October 2012, Doc. No. PAP/P(3)/RES/08(I); at www.wan-ifra.org/articles/2012/12/19/pan-african-parliament-resolution-to-protect-media-freedoms (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[31] These Summits brought together representatives of States, as well as representatives from international organizations, the private sector and civil society. At the first meeting in

recently launched a series on Internet freedom. The first publication, *Freedom of Connection, Freedom Of Expression: The Changing Legal and Regulatory Ecology Shaping the Internet*,[32] examines the changing legal and regulatory ecology that has shaped the internet over the years, with a view to providing a reference tool that can inform and stimulate the current debate on the global trends that have shaped freedom of expression on the internet. The second publication, *Global Survey on Internet Privacy and Freedom of Expression*,[33] seeks to identify the relationship between freedom of expression and Internet privacy, assessing where they support or compete with each other in different circumstances. The book maps out the issues in the current regulatory landscape of Internet privacy from the viewpoint of freedom of expression and provides an overview of legal protection, self-regulatory guidelines, normative challenges and case studies relating to the topic.

Freedom of expression and media development emerged as key issues in the First WSIS+10 Review Event, held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 25 to 27 February 2013 ten years after the first WSIS in Geneva. The programme included a dozen sessions devoted to media,[34] and the Final Statement, adopted in the closing session of the conference, recommends that all stakeholders 'further promote universal access to information and knowledge with due respect for free flow of

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Geneva in 2003 the Geneva Declaration of Principles and the Geneva Plan of Action were adopted, confirming political will to take steps to establish the foundations for an Information Society for all (Geneva Declaration of Principles and Geneva Plan of Action, WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/0004 and, WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/0005 (10–12 December 2003)). At the second meeting in Tunis in 2005, the Tunis Commitment and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society were adopted to put Geneva's Plan of Action into action (Tunis Commitment and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, WSIS-05/TUNIS/DOC/6 (rev. 1) and WSIS-05/TUNIS/DOC/7 (16–18 November 2005)).

[32] W. Dutton *et al.*, *Freedom of Connection, Freedom of Expression: The Changing Legal and Regulatory Ecology Shaping the Internet* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011), 103; at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/freedom-of-connection-freedom-of-expression-the-changing-legal-and-regulatory-ecology-shaping-the-internet (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[33] T. Mendel *et al.*, *Global Survey on Internet Privacy and Freedom of Expression* (Paris: UNESCO, 2012), 144; at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/global-survey-on-internet-privacy-and-freedom-of-expression (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[34] For summaries of sessions related to media, see www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/news/media_session_reports.pdf (last accessed 27 January 2014).

information'.[35] During WSIS+10, UNESCO called for feedback on a new concept of 'Internet Universality', meaning an open, accessible, free and rights-based Internet, developed in a multi-stakeholder environment. Additionally, the safety of online journalists, bloggers and human rights activists as a precondition for freedom of expression was recognized in the Final Statement and in a UNESCO session on the Digital Safety of Journalists.

UNESCO also plays an active role in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), designed to support the United Nations Secretary-General in carrying out the mandate from the WSIS and provide an interactive, collaborative space where all stakeholders can share their views and exchange ideas. The 7th Annual IGF Meeting was held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 6 to 9 September 2012, with its main theme 'Internet Governance for Sustainable Human, Economic and Social Development'. In this context, UNESCO organized a workshop on privacy and freedom of expression,[36] and co-hosted an open forum on the safety of online media actors.[37]

As part of its work in the area of Internet freedom, UNESCO has commissioned a study on cases around the world linked to guaranteeing the safety of journalists using digital media. The research will analyse the role of governments, intergovernmental organizations, civil society and the media in the protection of online media actors. It will also provide guidelines, good practices and policy recommendations related to respect for the right to freedom of expression in the digital environment. At the same time, UNESCO is also conducting a study on the role of Internet intermediaries, such as Internet service providers (ISPs), hosting

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[35] WSIS, Final Statement, Information and Knowledge for All: An Expanded Vision and Renewed Commitment, created for the project Towards Knowledge Societies for Peace and Sustainable Development on the first WSIS+10 review event, 25–27 February 2013; at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/wsis/WSIS_10_Event/wsis10_final_statement_en.pdf (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[36] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/unesco_launches_global_survey_on_internet_privacy_and_freedom_of_expression_at_the_internet_governance_forum/ and http://wsms1.intgov-forum.org/content/no59-internet-privacy-and-freedom-expression-unesco-launches-global-survey-legal-frameworks (both last accessed 27 January 2014).

[37] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/affirming_the_safety_of_online_media_actors_at_the_internet_governance_forum/ and http://wsms1.intgovforum.org/2012/Meetings/joint-open-forum-ebu-coe-osce-safety-online-media-actors (both last accessed 27 January 2014).

providers, search engines, social media platforms and other entities, in the protection of freedom of expression. Internet intermediaries function as the new and global gatekeepers of information flow in cyberspace and increasingly play a fundamental role in enabling Internet users to enjoy their right to freedom of expression and access to information on the Internet. This project aims to identify those good practices and processes related to Internet intermediaries that can encourage or protect freedom of expression by ensuring that any of its limitations are consistent with international standards.

5   Ethical and professional standard-setting

In addition to formal legal frameworks, any system of regulation must also include self-regulatory mechanisms that promote freedom of expression, including codes of conduct, press councils and standard-setting bodies operated by the press communities themselves.[38] Indeed, too much State intervention negates the independence of the media as a watchdog that speaks truth to power and acts as a channel through which democratic deliberation and debate can take place.

Self-regulation, on the other hand, preserves independence of the media and protects it from partisan governmental interference. It can also be more efficient than State regulation as the media often understand their own environment better than government and more effective given that it requires organizations to think about and even develop their own standards of behaviour. It also fulfils a norm-setting function where peer pressure fosters compliance. Finally, as the media environment becomes global (through the development of the internet and digital platforms) and questions of jurisdiction become more complex, self-regulation has the potential to fill the gaps that State regulation cannot cover.

There is, however, no single model suitable for all contexts. The apparatus of self-regulation is ineffective without a prevailing culture of public and peer scrutiny. Conversely, self-regulation can sometimes be effectively achieved without formal national structures or bodies, through local and international vigilance, responsiveness and transparency on questions of news ethics and accuracy. Self-regulation is most successful where it properly engages all stakeholders within the media (including publishers, owners, editors and journalists) as well as the broader public.

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[38]   See Chapter 11 in this book for further discussion of these and related topics.

UNESCO contributes to ethical and professional standard-setting through trainings, workshops and technological capacity-building, as well as through public knowledge resource sharing. At the global level, for instance, the conference 'The Media World after WikiLeaks and *News of the World*', held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, gathered leading media representatives, media professionals, citizen journalists and media law experts to discuss good practices in traditional professional journalism and citizen journalism in the digital era.[39]

Regionally, between August 2008 and February 2011, UNESCO implemented the EC-funded project 'Alignment to International Standards in the Media Sector of South-East European Countries' in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Kosovo (as understood under UN Security Council Resolution 1244). The initiative was implemented in collaboration with the South-East European Network for Professionalization of Media, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Alliance of Independent Press Councils of Europe. It aimed to support the development of self-regulation mechanisms and the adoption of media accountability best practices.

Press council members, new ombudsmen, editors and journalists, academics, representatives from media institutes, civil society and international organizations were brought together through two series of local roundtables, two region-wide meetings and a closing conference organized in Paris in January 2011,[40] to debate the issues the media currently faces, most notably how media accountability can be supported in the digital age. Information was also shared through a publication entitled *Professional Journalism and Self-Regulation: New Media, Old Dilemmas in South East Europe and Turkey*[41] and a database[42] on the UNESCO

[39] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/events/calendar-of-events/events-websites/the-media-world-after-wikileaks-and-news-of-the-world (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[40] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/events/calendar-of-events/events-websites/journalism-ethics-and-self-regulation-in-europe-new-media-old-dilemmas (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[41] Z. Ognian, *Professional Journalism and Self-Regulation: New Media, Old Dilemmas in South East Europe and Turkey* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011); at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/professional-journalism-and-self-regulation-new-media-old-dilemmas-in-south-east-europe-and-turkey (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[42] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/professional-journalistic-standards-and-code-of-ethics/, database can be found at www.

website. This virtual resource concerns media accountability and its various mechanisms in Europe, Africa, the Americas and South-East Asia. In 2012, UNESCO launched a three-year follow-up project, also funded by the European Commission, which will continue to build awareness and capacities to strengthen media accountability and transparency in South East Europe and Turkey.

At the country level, UNESCO launched an initiative to build capacities for strengthened media accountability in Egypt, including through the establishment of a media self-regulatory body. Moreover, in partnership with USAID, International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), the Africa Elections Project and the International Media Centre (IMC), the Organization has supported the Liberian Media Centre in implementing an elections support programme, 'Strengthened Media for Transparent Elections', for local journalists covering the 2011 Liberian elections.[43]

This programme established a multipurpose Elections Reporting Centre (ERC) for local journalists and provided training and logistical support for media coverage of elections and conflict-sensitive reporting. It also provided daily online services for local reporters through the use of ICTs and social media applications and delivered monitoring services for media coverage and incidence of violence through a Call Centre jointly run with the Africa Elections Project. The Election Reporting Centre was furnished with a state-of-the-art E-News Lab for training and online reporting purposes. It was also equipped with a television, radio and newspaper monitoring platform, as well as 50 audio recorders; 10 video cameras; and 10 motorcycles for 300 reporters covering the elections across the country for four months.

Free resource and training handbooks on topics such as conflict-sensitive reporting[44] and investigative journalism,[45] published by

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unesco.org/shs/ethics/geo/user/?action=search&db=GEO5 (last accessed 27 January 2014).

43 These actions were implemented in the framework of the project supporting media in the Manor River States, mentioned previously in this chapter.

44 See R. Howard, *Conflict-Sensitive Reporting: State of the Art; A Course for Journalists and Journalism Educators* (Paris: UNESCO, 2009); at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/conflict-sensitive-reporting-state-of-the-art-a-course-for-journalists-and-journalism-educators (last accessed 27 January 2014).

45 See M. L. Hunter, *Story Based Inquiry: A Manual for Investigative Journalists* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011); see www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/story-based-inquiry-a

UNESCO, also constitute vital instruments for fostering ethical journalism and professionalism.

6   Promoting media diversity

The final approach that underpins UNESCO's strategy on freedom of expression is the goal of promoting diversity in media content, production and consumption. The media should reflect the diversity of society, in all its facets (including gender, age, race, ethnicity, caste, language, belief, sexual orientation, social class, etc.), in order to avoid the marginalization of minority groups. This means that media pluralism, in both form and content, is of paramount importance. Community media and public service broadcasting (PSB) are particularly relevant in this regard.

PSB is broadcasting made, financed and controlled by the public, for the public. The defining characteristic of PSBs is that they are protected from interference, of a commercial or political nature, in respect of their financing, governance and editorial independence. Their public service remit usually includes obligations to ensure that the public receives politically balanced information, especially at election times. In addition, they typically strive to ensure that their transmission system covers the whole territory of a country and that they serve all regions, cultures and linguistic groups.

Through PSB, citizens are informed, educated and also entertained. When guaranteed with pluralism, programming diversity, editorial independence, appropriate funding, accountability and transparency, public service broadcasting can serve as a cornerstone of democracy. Community media typically concerns media at the local level. In this context, radio broadcasting plays a key role as the most economical and universal means of communication meeting community needs in the context of globalization and high illiteracy rates (indeed, the importance of radio broadcasting was highlighted at the 2011 Executive Board when it was decided that World Radio Day was to be celebrated annually on 13 February). Community media increase the opportunities of rural communities to produce, acquire, contextualize

-manual-for-investigative-journalists and M. L. Hunter, *The Global Investigative Journalism Casebook* (Paris: UNESCO, 2012); at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/the-global-investigative-journalism-casebook (both last accessed 27 January 2014).

and share locally relevant content. This, in turn, offers the basic tools for introducing and managing community-centred, sustainable development.

UNESCO actively promotes community media through a wide range of initiatives. Both through its publications and through various international and national events, it provides a forum for best-practice sharing. The UNESCO publication *Community Media: A Good Practice Handbook*[46] is organized according to three key themes:

- The enabling environment for community media, with ten country case studies of good practice in policies, laws, regulations, funding and support structures that enable community media to establish and to flourish.
- Sustainability, with ten case studies of community media practice that demonstrate such characteristics as longevity, consistency and adaptability.
- Social impact, with ten case studies of community media contributing to social change, improvement in lives and livelihoods, social cohesion in the face of conflict, humanitarian protection, strengthened governance and accountability, increased participation in democracy and development, reduced discrimination and other benefits.

In addition, UNESCO's International Initiative for Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs) promotes community empowerment and addresses the digital divide by combining community broadcasting with the Internet and related technologies.

The CMC programme offers a global strategy for addressing the digital divide in the poorest communities of the developing world and also among countries in transition. The CMC opens a gateway to active membership of the global knowledge society by making information and communication the basic tools of the poor in improving their own lives. It combines community radio by local people in local languages with community telecentre facilities (computers with Internet and e-mail, phone, fax and photocopying services). The radio – which is low cost and easy to operate – not only informs, educates and

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[46] S. Buckley, *Community Media: A Good Practice Handbook* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011); at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/community-media-a-good-practice-hand book (last accessed 27 January 2014).

entertains, but it also empowers the community by giving a strong public voice to the voiceless, and thus encouraging greater account-ability in public affairs.

In the field of PSB, UNESCO's endeavours centre around enhancing the utility of PSB as an educational and cultural vehicle, especially for disadvantaged communities; promoting best PSB practices and professional standards and contributing to relevant revisions of national legislation; strengthening PSB as a gateway to information and knowledge for all; fostering the indigenous content quality and technological upgrading of public service broadcasting; encouraging innovative and creative improvements in programming to captivate larger audiences; and upholding discussions between media professionals, decision-makers, and other stakeholders on major PSB-related issues.

In pursuit of these objectives, the organization has worked with a number of regional broadcasting unions such as the Asian Broadcasting Union (ABU), the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC), the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), as well as associations of broadcasters, including the South African Broadcasting Association (SABA), the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA), the International Council of French-speaking Radio and Television (CIRTEF), the International Association of Educational and Discovery Television Companies (AITED) and the International Radio and Television University (URTI), among others. Priorities for the future will include contributing to capacity-building and providing training in modern broadcasting, particularly in issues related to ICTs and stimulating an international debate on the significant PSB-related issues and its impact on education, culture and civil society.

Furthermore, especially in light of the designation of gender equality as one of two global priorities in the organization's Medium-Term Strategy for 2008–13, and reaffirmed for the 2014–21 Medium-Term Strategy, UNESCO is dedicated to ensuring that media development initiatives are gender sensitive. This means combining the promotion of gender-specific programming and the battle against female stereotypes in media content with drives to include women as members of the workforce at all levels of the media. In the words of Aidan White, former Secretary General of the International Federation of Journalists:

> [F]air gender portrayal is a professional and ethical aspiration, similar to respect for accuracy, fairness and honesty. It is the other side of the coin

that says women need to be more present at higher levels of news business, both at work and in the unions. In a world where hard news is still mainly reported by men, journalists need to stand up for gender equality. This equality is not just a women's issue; everyone benefits from eliminating discrimination.[47]

Through a consultative process launched in 2010, UNESCO produced the Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM), to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment in and through media of all forms, irrespective of the technology used.[48] On the basis of these indicators, UNESCO promotes a more balanced representation of women and men in the media and fostering gender equality in Morocco, under projects financed by the Swedish and Finnish governments. In partnership with the High Authority of the Audiovisual Communication (HACA), the Permanent Conference of the Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM) and the National Society of Radio and Television (SNRT), the project seeks to sensitize media professionals and reinforce their capacities for the production of audiovisual content that follows a gender-sensitive approach, as well as to support the development of internal policies towards the institutionalization of gender equality considerations within participating media outlets.

Globally, UNESCO and its partners continue to launch the Women Make the News initiative, aimed at calling attention to issues relating to gender equality in and through the media, driving debate and encouraging action-oriented solutions until global objectives are met.[49] Importantly, in November 2013, UNESCO and partner institutions convened a 'Global Forum on Media and Gender', which is expected to strengthen international cooperation, leading to the establishment of a Global Alliance on Media and Gender.

[47] A. White, *Getting the Balance Right: Gender Equality in Journalism* (Brussels: International Federation of Journalists, 2009), v; at www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-andcommunication-materials/publications/full-list/getting-the-balance-right-gender-equality-in-journalism (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[48] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/gender-sensitive-indicators-for-media-framework-of-indicators-to-gauge-gender-sensitivity-in-media-operations-and-content (last accessed 27 January 2014).

[49] See www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/crosscutting-priorities/gender-and-media/women-make-the-news/about (last accessed 27 January 2014).

7   Conclusion

This chapter has outlined five key approaches employed by UNESCO in the fight for freedom of expression and, hence, development, dialogue and democracy. The challenges to freedom of expression are multiple and ever-changing. George Orwell once wrote that 'if liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear'.[50] Freedom of expression means, indeed, the right to inform, whatever the context, however difficult the situation. Protecting this fundamental human right, and thus upholding the UDHR, is a process without an end. The case must be continually argued; violation of this right should never be accepted; and States and societies must be helped to move forward. This is a central tenet of UNESCO's mandate.

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[50] George Orwell, 'The freedom of the press', *Times Literary Supplement*, 15 September 1972.

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