



Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

SDC's Media Assistance: Report of Capitalisation Exercise

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Cover photo: Radio Kwanza Jamii – a community radio in Iringa, supported by the SDC-funded Tanzania Media Fund [Credit: iMedia Associates]

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

AEPO	Afghanistan Educational Production Organization
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
C4D	Communication for Development
CapEx	Capitalisation Exercise
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHF	Swiss Franc
CIMA	Center for International Media Assistance
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DDLGN	Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance Network
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EMB	Electoral Monitoring Body
EMT	Empowering Media in Tanzania
EU	European Union
FERCAB	Fédération des Radios Communautaires et Associatives du Bénin
FH	Fondation Hirondelle
FM	Frequency Modulation
GovNet	Governance Network of the OECD/DAC
HQ	Headquarters
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMS	International Media Support
IPGL	Institut Panos Grands Lacs
IREX	International Research and Exchanges Board
LGov	Local Government
m	million
MDI	Media Development Indicator
MIL	Media and Information Literacy
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	National Programme Officer
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
OSF	Open Society Foundation
RTB	Radiodiffusion Télévision du Burkina
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SENAP	Southern, Eastern and North Africa and Palestinian Territories Division
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TA	Technical Assistance
TMF	Tanzania Media Fund/Foundation
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United National Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USD	United States Dollar
VFM	Value for Money

1 | Executive Summary

This is a review of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation's (SDC) media assistance by consultants from iMedia. The aim is to capitalise on SDC's experience of media over the last 10 years. The objective is to examine the organisation's current media assistance programmes and bring out lessons learned. NB: this is *not* an evaluation report but it does end with some conclusions and recommendations offered from iMedia's independent perspective.

Methodology

Research was done by a three-person team from iMedia (a UK-based media-development consultancy), covering twenty-three (23) of SDC's media projects. A document review, a series of telephone interviews and an online questionnaire were done with SDC staff and partners in 16 countries and 2 regions, between November 2016 and May 2017. 21 SDC respondents/interviewees and 27 respondents from partner organisations were interviewed in total, using a two-stage interview process (scoping and in-depth). Sampling the projects involved identifying all SDC country offices which are currently supporting media assistance programmes (as guided by the SDC DDLG Policy Adviser). The focus was on media as a pillar and as an important actor/vector of democratisation, decentralisation and/or local governance. Programmes were selected where the focus is either exclusively media assistance, or where media is an element of a governance programme.

SDC's approach to media over the last 10 years

Over the last 10 years, SDC's overall approach to media assistance has remained fairly consistently to support independent pluralistic media as part of promoting good governance and human rights. A key document was the publication by SDC's Governance Division of its [Media Orientation Guide](#) (2007) in which SDC laid out its vision and guiding principles for media assistance. However, SDC has historically been, and still remains, a decentralised organisation, and media-assistance has *not* formally been a key strategic priority. Media-support has been championed by certain key departments, regions and individuals, notably by the DDLG network and by the SENAP region, where the largest media project is currently found (i.e. Tanzania). West Africa has also seen some significant media-support efforts, notably a project supporting community radios in Benin which began 21 years ago.

Over the last 10 years SDC has responded to governance challenges by using opportune political moments and available entry points to support media and freedom of expression, where necessary and where possible.

The size of SDC's portfolio of media projects has been commensurate with that of a medium-sized donor. In 2016, SDC's expenditure on media programmes totalled 12 million CHF (approx.) with the average SDC country office spending about 540,000 CHF on media assistance in 2016 (n=18 SDC country/regional offices). In comparison with other donors, probably SDC's most important asset is its tradition of political neutrality and its lack of colonial past. SDC is also marked out by the relatively long grant periods. It appears to be regarded by partners very positively: as a flexible, hands-on and 'listening' donor, with a high degree of 'staying power'.

SDC's current approach to media

SDC continues to regard the media as an essential component, actor, and/or mechanism to help achieve democratic governance, even though media is not currently recognised by SDC HQ as a strategic priority and there is no dedicated desk or department which includes media explicitly. In terms of SDC's higher goals and outcomes, 'accountability', 'professionalisation' and 'democratisation' emerge as the ambitions that dominate in the 18 countries/regions analysed. However, each country office articulates their reasons / logic for supporting the media in slightly different terms, with peace-building, support to elections and anti-corruption also being important rationales for media support.

When looking at the balance between supporting media as a vector for DDLG and media as an end in itself, it emerges that media as an end in itself predominates. However, of the 18 countries/regions analysed, over half of country offices support media as BOTH a vector for messages/education and as an end in themselves.

The types of activities that SDC's media programmes currently support, in order of frequency, are 1. capacity-building for media professionals as the most common activity; 2. support for the production of good-quality media content (e.g. TV debates during elections); 3. other types of capacity-building such as organisational development for media-support institutions. Attention to rights, legal issues and regulation (including self-regulation by media houses) and grants for equipment, technology and infrastructure are relatively less frequent activities. None of the country offices said their media projects promoted media literacy as a core activity. Finally, over half of the county offices play an active role in multi-donor initiatives concerning media.

Finance and Grant-making

SDC's dominant funding modality is with international NGOs – both those specialised in media (8 of the 32 contracts analysed) and those not specialised in media (6 contracts). Local media NGOs or federations also receive around one-fifth (6) of the contracts. It is noticeable that SDC does not have any direct contracts with local media outlets, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. Burundi). Of the approx. 12 million CHF spent on media projects in 2016, SDC's biggest grants were to the Tanzania Empowering Media project (approx. 3.2 m CHF) and an institutional partnership with the international media NGO, Fondation Hironnelle (approx. 2.75 m CHF). East Africa was the region with by far the highest funding in 2016, spending over 5 million CHF across all countries. However, country offices' spending can fluctuate substantially from year to year.

Programmatic / Operational Issues

Assessing context: Before media projects are planned, the context is normally assessed and the majority of media programmes are thought to be highly context-sensitive by both SDC officers and partners. **Designing, monitoring and evaluating:** Media projects seem to be designed using a 'mixed bag' of methods, with no particular design tool used consistently. It was noticeable that SDC's own 'guiding principles' on media seem unknown to the majority of SDC staff. For M&E, only six percent felt they had a good system and measuring impacts is regarded as a huge challenge. However, some constructive ideas and experience for M&E emerged. **Internal guidance:** Most SDC personnel working on media feel well supported by colleagues and supervisors, but most of them feel poorly resourced in terms of documentation. **Relevance and effectiveness of media projects:** both SDC staff and partners generally feel that SDC's support to media is highly relevant; similarly, there is relatively little divergence about effectiveness. However, less than half the SDC staff surveyed thought that their media programmes were highly effective. Generally, SDC finds it difficult to identify media success stories: impact is often hidden or difficult to assess.

Efficiency of management: In a number of cases SDC has reservations about partners' organisational capacity especially in the areas of financial management/reporting, institutional governance and monitoring and evaluation/reporting results. Increasingly it appears that SDC has recognised the need to build organisational capacity strengthening activities for its implementing partners into media programmes. On the partners' side, there is concern among a minority of them over SDC's lack of specialised understanding of media and onerous financial reporting requirements. **Sustainability:** Achieving sustainable media interventions continues to be a major challenge. Poor economic environments and difficult political contexts are both huge factors limiting sustainable media. **Non-discrimination, inclusion and gender:** Gender and inclusion issues did not emerge strongly among SDC or partners as successes or indeed challenges, which is perhaps an indication that within SDC there is not a great deal of systematically inbuilt thinking around these issues.

Successes

There is some evidence that SDC has contributed to more professional, diverse, inclusive/gender aware, independent (and/or public service) media houses in several countries. It has also enabled important messages, information, education and quality content to be communicated via media and has enabled sensitive but necessary

information and news to be broadcast in restricted/oppressive/fragile contexts. Work in Tanzania, Afghanistan, Benin and Mali stands out.

There has been progress on legal aspects of the media landscape and in some countries there has been progress on all fronts (legal, financial, capacity etc.) which means a positive and tangible contribution to the whole media landscape. In several countries, the best local media houses have achieved (or are moving towards achieving) sustainability and long-term impact. SDC has helped leverage the support of other large donors and contributed to more joined-up approaches to media assistance. Good donor-partner relations have been achieved and sustained in most places. Tanzania again stands out, as does Bhutan, Tunisia and others.

Challenges

Many challenges still remain, but SDC is not alone in facing them – they are common to media-support efforts the world over. They include conflicts resulting in partisan media, crack-downs on freedom of expression, pervasive poverty and corruption, etc. The sustainability problem is critical. Donors, including SDC could go further in accepting that they have a key role in making up for lack of commercial possibilities and providing grant funding for public service media houses/media content on a relatively long-term basis. Meanwhile, more advocacy-work with governments could be done to encourage local/national governments to fund community and public service media.

The specific challenges that are within SDC's control include: - Lack of diplomatic leadership and/or human resources and time within SDC/Swiss diplomatic service to do necessary political/ diplomatic work in support of freedom of expression; - Lack of staff specialisation and budget cuts at SDC restrict human resources and investment in media programmes and expertise; - Loss of media knowledge due to staff turnover within SDC; - In some countries, lack of clear strategy and/or budgetary priority given to media.

Risks

The following main risks emerged from the interviews with SDC and partners, alongside some suggested measures to mitigate them: - Supported partners are endangered /put under pressure / threatened/ imprisoned by government/ armed groups or other actors; - Political /diplomatic/ reputational risk to SDC if 'wrongly' aligned partners are supported and SDC becomes seen in the same light as the media it is supporting – i.e. as 'the opposition'; - Failure to sustain the media project after SDC's support ends, so, in the long-term, efforts are wasted; - Government backlash/further repression means good work is undone, media freedoms are reversed and media engage in self-censorship; - Weak / biased / inflammatory media organisations are supported; -Media houses receiving grants divert funds to other activities e.g. paying salaries.

Conclusions and Recommendations

General

Generally, SDC programme staff approach media in a sophisticated way and see it as an integral part of their efforts to promote good, democratic governance, whilst at the same time acknowledging that media-assistance is a delicate and complex area and must be approached with caution. SDC is rather special among donors for having initiated this deep reflection about media: most other donors have not spent as much time and energy on internal reflection on media as SDC has.

Political risk and conflict issues

Overall conclusion:

There are clear political risks to supporting media but this should not stop SDC from acting.

Recommendation 1:

Political economy analysis / context analysis should always be done, along with risk analysis and scenario planning, prior to launching a media project/programme.

Recommendation 2:

Emergency and ad hoc grants for journalist safety/protection should be ready and deployed in

urgent/crisis situations – for example to enable them to live safely in exile on a temporary basis, if need be.

Recommendation 3:

SDC should be more politically / diplomatically active in support of freedom of expression, journalist protection, and in support of media's exposure of corruption, i.e. doing more by ambassadors in-country to uphold rights and protect individual journalists and media outlets.

Recommendation 4:

SDC should coordinate systematically and frequently on media issues with other donors and members of the international community at country level, and share the burden and risk of diplomatic lobbying with other like-minded embassies/donors, at country level.

Recommendation 5:

SDC should generally avoid funding a single local media outlet directly – as this risks taking the 'wrong' side in a conflict and/or can bring SDC into disrepute for being associated with biased media. Instead, SDC should work through experienced, specialised local or international media-support agencies who know the context well and who can select the most appropriate media outlet(s), or set up new ones.

Recommendation 6:

SDC should NOT use the local media to enhance its own visibility, as instrumentalising the media in this way should not be the aim of media assistance. Furthermore, since the most popular local media outlets, which reach the biggest audiences, are often politically connected, there is a danger that by using them, SDC's motives and political allegiances could be questioned.

Comprehensive/holistic approaches vs standalone activities

Overall conclusion:

Context is paramount and there is no 'one-size fits all' approach, however, where possible, a holistic approach to media support is desirable because it encourages more long-term sustainability and a healthy media sector over all. A holistic approach includes capacity development, legal aspects, infrastructure, content and financial aspects all together in the same programme.

Recommendation 7:

SDC should invest in extra training and staff-time for NPOs responsible for larger-scale holistic media projects. Constant dialogue with partners is required, context monitoring, liaising with other donors, etc.

Recommendation 8:

SDC should develop/recruit some permanent in-house media expertise at HQ level.

Recommendation 9:

SDC cannot be expected to do everything, so HQ at SDC should set up (or continue with) permanent arrangements with one or several organisations specialising in media support, to provide technical and capacity-development for SDC personnel.

Programme design issues

Overall conclusion:

Media are not yet considered at all stages of the cycle of governance programming.

Recommendation 10:

SDC should consider media at all stages of the cycle of governance programming and redouble existing efforts to build flexibility and sustainability into programme design.

Recommendation 11:

SDC should improve the distribution and awareness of [SDC's Media Orientation Guide](#) 'Menu of Options' (2007:14) among SDC personnel and promote it internally.

Inclusion and Gender Equality

Overall conclusion:

There are still some gaps when it comes to integrating inclusion and gender equality more systematically into media projects.

Recommendation 12:

SDC should redouble its efforts to integrate inclusion and gender equality more systematically into media projects.

Analysis, M&E, providing evidence, analysing value for money

Overall conclusion:

SDC still has a challenge when it comes to evaluating media development projects.

Recommendation 13:

Devote more time and effort to M&E and generating evidence of what has worked. Establish monitoring systems that disaggregate gender data and establish gender and minority inclusion targets within media projects.

Recommendation 14:

Recognise that media results can rarely be quantified and that M&E frameworks for other types of development projects (e.g. Results Based Monitoring) may not apply to media projects.

Recommendation 15:

Establish better M&E indicators that are SMARTer and ensure baseline assessments are done at the design stage to understand audience's prior knowledge, attitudes and practices. Consider innovative methods/tools to measure progress and impact, such as content analysis.

Recommendation 16:

Pay more attention to measuring or encouraging partners to measure value for money (VFM).

Approach to new media technologies

Overall conclusion:

New, digital, social and mobile media are a key component of the media scene in a growing number of countries, but they could be better understood.

Recommendation 17:

SDC should explicitly include new media technology as part of its definition of media in all relevant publications and public-facing communications. SDC should also update the 2007 *Media Orientation Guide* to include digital/social/mobile media but should not worry about having separate guidelines on them.

Approach to capacity-building

Overall conclusion:

Capacity-building is generally of good quality but...

Recommendation 18:

...the style of training that SDC promotes in the media projects it supports should always be immersive, mentor-led, hands-on, and, where possible, in-situ (i.e. within trainees' own media houses/newsrooms/work environments).

Administrative procedures

Overall conclusion:

SDC's administrative/financial requirements can be overly burdensome in some cases.

Recommendation 19:

SDC should act on complaints about inflexible and over-long administrative procedures raised by some media partners and consider either easing HQ's requirements for financial reporting in the case of some media projects and/or offering extra help or accompaniment to media projects struggling to fulfil financial reporting requirements.

Policy guidance by DDLGN

Overall conclusion:

DDLGN has a key role to play within SDC to lobby for a more prominent place for media within SDC's overall governance strategy. At present, media-support is approached in a rather ad-hoc and/or opportunistic manner.

Recommendation 20:

DDLGN should redouble its efforts to promote media-support within SDC and consider making media-development a strategic priority within SDC; integrate media into wider governance policy guidelines and internal procedures and consider a media checklist as a feature of all governance credit proposals.

Recommendation 21:

SDC country offices should be made more aware of the HQ institutional partnership arrangement with Fondation Hirondelle and how to take advantage of its services

Guidance, knowledge resources and learning

Overall conclusion:

SDC guidance and internal learning on media-support could be improved.

Recommendation 22:

SDC should consider appointing a task-force within the DDLG network to draw up some benchmarks of high quality media assistance and, once drafted, encourage SDC country offices to sign up to them and report on them on a regular basis.

Recommendation 23:

DDLGN should document and share knowledge more widely: media CapEx meetings are a good start – but short research and practice briefings with key findings from media programmes and from evaluations could also be considered.

Recommendation 24:

Update the SDC's 2007 *Media Orientation Guide* to include digital/social/mobile media and media literacy, better English, clearer sections and more real-life examples and lessons learned from SDC's experience.

2 | Introduction and Acknowledgements

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) asserts that the media play a key role in informing the public and offering a platform for the articulation of different voices, in acting as a watch dog over public transactions and political processes and as such, contribute to the legitimacy of politics and trustful relations between the State and society¹.

SDC has a long history of media assistance in different geographical regions, while following a twofold approach: support to media as a vector within sector programmes and strengthening media as a sector in its own right. Several SDC guidance documents serve as a reference for media programmes and the SENAP Division (formerly ESAD²) conducted a learning event on supporting the media sector in Eastern and Southern Africa Region, in Kigali in May 2016. However, until now, SDC has never conducted a comprehensive review of its media assistance at a global level.

Therefore in late 2016 the Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance Network (DDLGN), a thematic unit within SDC, commissioned iMedia (a UK-based consultancy specialising in media and communication for development) to carry out this Capitalisation Exercise (CapEx) of SDC's engagement in media assistance. The primary objective is to examine SDC's current programmes and bring out lessons learned. This is the main CapEx report. We (iMedia) have also produced an *Inception Report* (November 2016) and a companion *Review of the Recent Literature and Other Donors' Approaches* which covers the current literature and what other donors are doing in the media assistance field³.

The period of this consultancy lasted roughly eight months starting in late 2016 and culminated in a presentation by two members of the iMedia team of the main findings of this report at a half-day workshop at SDC headquarters in Bern with ten key members of the DDLGN on 22nd May 2017. The present report incorporates the feedback gathered at that workshop and subsequent comments from SDC. Findings were also presented at a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, June 27-29th 2017 entitled Innovative Approaches in Supporting Media – SENAP Regional Workshop.

Our thanks go to all the SDC personnel and SDC's project partners who generously gave their time for interviews and to answer our questionnaire. Thanks also to Corinne Huser for commissioning this study and for her friendly guidance throughout.

The iMedia Team:

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¹ See TORs for this CapEx in Annex 5

² Southern, Eastern and North Africa and Palestinian Territories Division (SENAP), formerly East and Southern Africa Division (ESAD)

³ Our companion report is iMedia (2017) Capitalisation Exercise of SDC's engagement in Media Assistance: Review of the Recent Literature and Other Donors' Approaches, consultancy report iMedia: London

3 | Methodology and description of the projects in our sample

3.1 Method

The findings of this CapEx of SDC's media assistance were gathered through a methodology devised in collaboration with SDC officers. This current review marks the second of two studies. The first involved a review of recent literature on media assistance and other donors' approaches to it, using five major Western donors as case studies – DFID, Sida, Knight Foundation, UNESCO, and UNDP. We looked at the history and recent trends in media assistance, as well as the main debates in this field. Our findings informed the lines of enquiry pursued as we turn here to focus on SDC's own media assistance.

Sampling for this SDC-focused review involved identifying all SDC country offices which are currently supporting media assistance programmes (as guided by the SDC DDLG Policy Adviser). The focus was on media as a pillar and as an important actor/vector of democratisation, decentralisation and/or local governance. Hence programmes were selected where the focus is either exclusively media assistance, or where media is an element of a governance programme (DDLG). Those that were excluded were those where media only serve as an instrument for achieving other sector goals. Latin America was not included because most of those projects did not fulfil the selection criteria (they tend to have a strong focus on communication for development) or were very new projects (e.g. Honduras). Albania and Serbia were also excluded as places where SDC's media assistance programmes are too new to learn substantial lessons from. This process yielded 16 country offices for review: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, DRC, Kosovo, Macedonia, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, and Tunisia. Two regional programmes were also included – Great Lakes and Mali & Burkina Faso; and one global institutional partnership with Fondation Hironnelle. Descriptions of each of the programmes reviewed are given in Annex 1.

Initial scoping interviews were conducted via phone with one (or occasionally two) programme officers from each of these country offices, in either English or French – totalling 18 officers in all. Two SDC Regional Advisers – for West Africa and the Great Lakes – were also interviewed. For each media assistance programme, these interviews sought to discover (i) the relevant partners to act as informants; (ii) relevant literature to review; and (iii) the current status of implementation. A rapid review of the relevant documents was conducted for each country. 'Live' online spreadsheets were shared between the three iMedia consultants and maintained with information about projects' key data and scheduling of the informants.

Online questionnaires were then distributed to the SDC country offices, mainly to National Programme Officers (NPOs) but some regional advisers and regional representatives as well (21 respondents, 100 per cent response rate) and their partner representatives (27 respondents). For SDC personnel, the 30-question survey asked for both descriptive and evaluative responses regarding their country's media assistance programmes. The survey sent to partner representatives was a briefer version of this questionnaire, in order to allow direct comparison of SDC and partner staff's opinions around key issues of programme quality and learning. Twenty-three (23) media projects were identified across 18 selected countries and regions and a more in-depth document review was then done on each project.

Once a partner representative had completed her/his survey, a follow-up phone interview allowed us to further explore her/his responses. After this, the corresponding SDC officer was interviewed once more, with an eye to drawing out any points of contention between SDC and partner staffs' responses. Full, detailed notes were taken during all interviews, which were also audio recorded (on permission of the interviewee) to ensure that all information was captured. Phone interviews averaged an hour-long and were conducted in either English or French, as appropriate.

Findings from the literature reviews, questionnaire responses and interviews were categorised, coded and gathered in a 128-page matrix of raw findings. This allowed for cross-comparison and observation of global and regional patterns during the subsequent analysis.

3.2 Methodological Challenges

Three methodological challenges should be mentioned. First, the difficulty of estimating each country's annual spending on media assistance. As country offices do not have specific budget lines for media assistance, calculating this figure involved trying to identify a single year's funding for media activities only – often extracted from programmes working in a number of fields, and not media alone. This often involved approximations on behalf of SDC or partner staff. A second difficulty was the lateness of a number of informants' responses to the questionnaire or requests for interviews. This challenged the sequencing of data gathering. The third challenge for the iMedia team was the very wide-ranging scope of this CapEx review, and particularly of questions to SDC officers which meant a lot had to be fitted into phone interviews, whilst, at the same time, trying not to tire the interviewees.

3.3 Projects reviewed

The SDC projects reviewed for this study fell into 2 types: they were either exclusively media projects or they were programmes where media are supported as a component of a wider governance project. Their occurrence is shown below (Fig. 1):

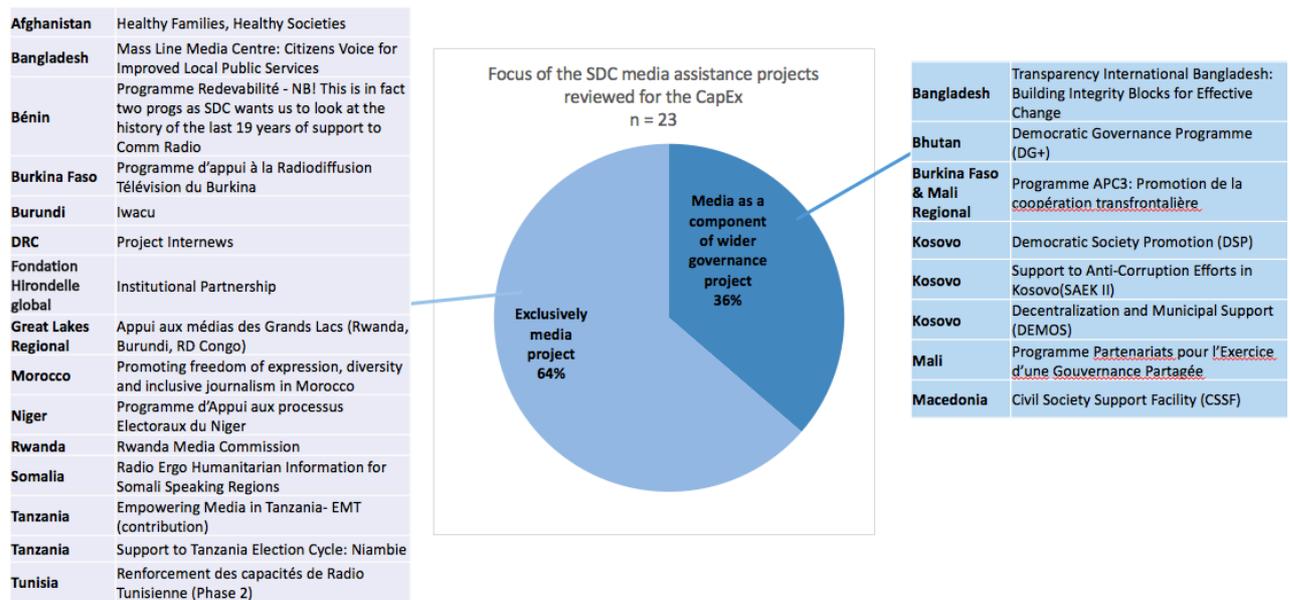


Figure 1: Pie chart showing the types of SDC media assistance projects reviewed

As this pie chart shows, almost two-thirds of the projects (15 of 23) SDC asked us to look at were exclusively supporting media. These 'exclusively media' projects occur across all regions except Eastern Europe. The other third (8 out of the total of 23 projects reviewed) were projects supporting media as a sub-component of wider governance programmes.

(NB. This information should not be confused with the way we categorise the projects in Fig. 3, where we divide projects between those where media are a vector for information/education and those where media are an end in themselves. In this chart (Fig. 1 above), a project can involve media as a component of a wider governance programme but that media-work can still be supported as an end in itself, or vice versa.)

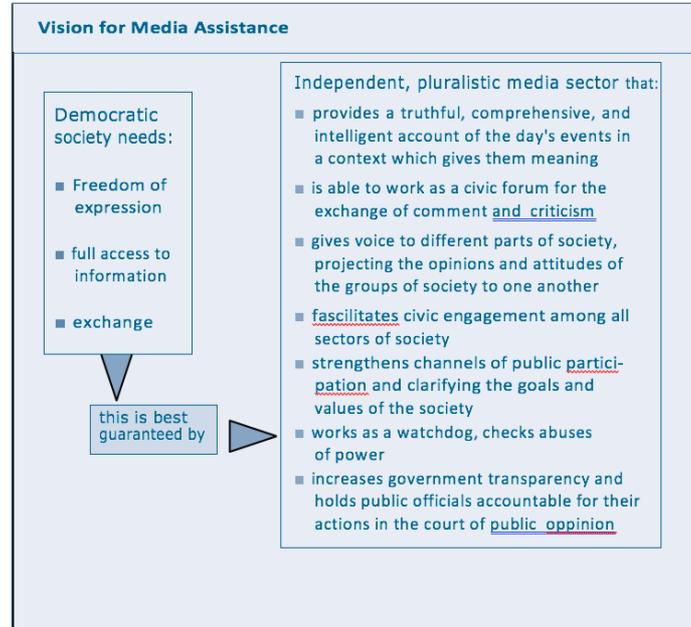
4 | Policy objectives and strategic choices

4.1 How has SDC's approach to media assistance evolved over the last 10 years?

Looking back over the last ten years, SDC's overall approach to media assistance has remained fairly consistent, with the guiding thread being support to independent pluralistic media as part of promoting good governance and human rights. Benin appears to be the country with the longest-running media project: SDC started supporting community radio there in 1996. A number of other countries have major media-focused programmes that are now in their fourth or fifth phases: these include Afghanistan (media support programme since 2003), Great Lakes region (since 2004) and Tanzania (since 2008).

In 2004 SDC published its *Media and Governance Guide*⁴, which effectively mainstreamed media within SDC⁵. This document asserted the need to uphold freedom of expression as a right, stating: *'Where the rule of law does not exist, or exists only partially, the media, no matter how imperfect they may be, should nevertheless be encouraged. It is often they who pave the way for freedom and democracy'*⁶.

In 2007 SDC's *Media Orientation Guide*⁷ was published which expressed SDC's commitment to media as *'a key mechanism for social accountability'* more clearly.



⁴ SDC, (2004) *Media and Governance: A Guide*, Governance Division, SDC: Bern

⁵ Interview with Deputy Head of Southern Cooperation Department, SDC, 2nd June 2017.

⁶ SDC, (2004) *Media and Governance: A Guide*, Governance Division, SDC: Berne, p.5

⁷ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), (2007) [Media assistance in the Swiss Development Cooperation: Media - a key player for realizing social accountability](#). Orientation guide, Governance Division; Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

In it, there is a theory of change (see above, entitled 'Vision for Media Assistance') which appears to be the only place in which SDC sets out how it understands the change process, in a public-facing document. Today, ten years later, in SDC's policy documents entitled *Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance* (2016), there is the following statement:

*'The media play an important intermediary role in the development of a democratic society. They are a vector of information and an agent in their own right. The SDC supports the media in fulfilling the following core functions: disseminating information on relevant topics that enables people to form opinions, giving a voice to different parts of society, providing a forum for exchange of diverse views, fulfilling a watchdog function by observing political processes, and providing channels to political actors to communicate and interact with the people.'*⁸

This indicates that, at policy level, SDC continues to regard the media as an essential component, actor, and/or mechanism to help achieve democratic governance.

However, it is important to note that SDC has historically been, and still remains, a decentralised organisation, which means that one geographical region has been able quite legitimately to assert that media assistance is a core part of its strategy without speaking for the whole of SDC. For instance, it is clear from our interviews that the East and Southern Africa regional division (SENAP)⁹ took media as a strategic priority some years ago, whereas other SDC regions did not necessarily do so - or at least not to the same extent.

Across the 18 countries and regions chosen for this CapEx, over the last ten years there has been a moderate increase in the number of programmes financed by SDC involving media, as well as a slight increase in total funds spent on media projects. Reasons for this moderate increase do not appear to relate to a clear strategic decision but more to the fact that opportunities have arisen. For instance new programmes in Tunisia and Morocco came on stream relatively recently, after the 2011/12 'Arab Spring', whereas there were no programmes there before. In Tanzania, the Empowering Media in Tanzania programme (formerly the Tanzanian Media Fund), which is currently SDC's biggest media programme in terms of budget (expenditure was approx. 3 million CHF in 2016), made a significant difference to SDC's overall spend on media, when it started in 2009, as it so large.

Other reasons for slightly increased recent emphasis on media include the fact that over the last 10 years political change in both positive and negative directions have either opened up possibilities of working with the media (e.g. Tunisia) or made it even more important to defend independent media because of political repression (e.g. Bangladesh).

Thus we see SDC responding in a style of what one senior SDC staff member called "*management by opportunity*" by using opportune political moments and available entry points to support media and freedom of expression, where necessary and where possible.

This is borne out in our survey where we found that in the few places where there has been a marked change in a country office's approach to media work, it has been in response to crises, violence or profound political changes. We asked our sample of 21 SDC personnel whether they felt

⁸ SDC, 2016 [SDC Policy: Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance](#), SDC P. 20

⁹ The division of South, East, North Africa and Palestine. The current CapEx (this report) was commissioned after, and builds on, a workshop on media held in Kigali in 2016 by the SENAP Division and is evidence of that division's commitment to the media issue.

that SDC's approach to media assistance had evolved and changed or stayed broadly the same in their country. The ones who said that it had changed a lot were those from Burkina Faso, Mali, Burundi and the Great Lakes region – all conflict-hit and fragile areas. For instance, in 2015, the Burundi country office had to review the whole set of its previous media partners in Burundi following the violence surrounding the attempted coup, in which some of the media either became party to the conflict or were victims of violence themselves, fled into exile and/or were identified as 'the opposition' by the government¹⁰. The Burundi office is currently in a temporary position where it is formulating a new strategy based on the new political reality in the country, and is carefully considering how it can support independent media in future.

In terms of the style of media support SDC has given, if there is a pattern to be discerned over the last 10 years, it is probably slightly away from using media as a means to an end (a vector) and slightly more towards institution-building and strengthening the capacity of media-support organisations. This is clearer in some countries than others. The shift is clear in the case of Mali, for instance, where SDC has changed from supporting media just as a channel for delivering messages to *also* supporting media houses with training to become more professional and to be stronger institutionally. As the Mali NPO said, "*SDC has chosen to exit from an approach relating to media as providers/ contractors, to an approach where media are actors for change*". Another case in point is the decision taken by SDC's HQ in 2013 to start an institutional partnership with Fondation Hirondelle, a Swiss organisation which creates or supports independent, civic-minded news media in conflict, post-conflict and crisis zones¹¹. This decision indicates SDC's conviction that independent and balanced news and journalism is worth supporting as an end itself.

4.2 What are SDC's current ambitions? What change is being aimed for?

If we take 'ambition' to mean what SDC wants to achieve by means of its media support in terms of wider and higher goals and outcomes, we see 'accountability', 'professionalisation' and 'democratisation' emerging as the ambitions that dominate in the 18 countries/regions we analysed. The following 'word cloud' illustrates this in graphic form and is the result of counting the number of times key words were mentioned by SDC respondents to our questionnaire¹².

¹⁰ See Box 2 on Media and Peace-building

¹¹ From Fondation Hirondelle's website: <http://www.hirondelle.org/index.php/en/who-we-are>

¹² The question was phrased as follows: "In your personal opinion, what is the main aim / ambition of SDC's current (actual) support to the media in your country/context? e.g. 'better security for journalists', 'public awareness about ...', 'greater public accountability and transparency by local government', 'more professional media sector', 'soft influence' etc.". Note that although suggestions were given, this was not a multiple choice question: respondents were left free to articulate aims and ambitions as they wished.



Figure 2: Word-cloud showing what SDC personnel see as the main aim of media assistance

Although we found an explicit theory of change in the 2007 *Orientation Guide*, at country level we found that SDC's theories of change on media are *implicit* and that each country articulates their reasons / logic for supporting the media in slightly different terms, with variations on the following common themes:

- Better informed public > *leads to* > higher demand for reduced corruption
- Stronger media/journalists acting as watchdogs > *leads to* > greater accountability
- Forum for deliberation, discursive (debate/discussion) > *leads to* > strengthened democracy
- Safer, more independent and freer journalists > *leads to* > fundamental rights upheld

Some examples of the way SDC country programmes articulate their ambitions for media include¹³:

- Benin: *'Communicating about the way governance works (les pratiques de gouvernance) in order to bring about a change in the behaviour of public officials'*
- Bhutan: *'An independent, relevant and diverse media for democratic governance and citizen engagement'*
- Bangladesh: *The 'promotion of investigative journalism to strengthen the movement against corruption and claim accountability from public institutions'*
- Kosovo: *'[to achieve] greater public accountability and transparency; [to encourage] more active citizenry in the fight against corruption'*
- Morocco: *'to promote democratisation by strengthening media practices and advocating for media policies that ensure diversity and freedom of expression'.*

¹³ We have gathered these 'ambitions' from a mix of interviews with SDC staff and project documents – they are not always or necessarily direct quotations.

We noted that 'peace' or 'peace-building' was not articulated very strongly as the ultimate ambition of the media projects in the countries sampled (see above word cloud), despite the fact that almost half (45%) of SDC respondents answered 'to a great extent' when asked, in a separate question, to what extent conflict prevention/ peace-building/fragility reduction was/is the main motivation for their current media support. This is somewhat paradoxical. The reason behind it, we assume, is that respondents are aware that media – even when balanced, plural and independent - are very rarely, if ever, guarantors of peace and that it is difficult to argue for a direct cause and effect relationship between a free media and peace, as free media may be a contributing factor but rarely a cause. At the same time, we note that it was mainly the SDC respondents working in conflict-affected countries (i.e. Burkina Faso, Burundi, D R Congo, Mali etc.) who said that peace-building was, to a great extent, the main motivation for their media work, which perhaps indicates that peace-building and/or conflict prevention is the overriding and defining motive behind *all of SDC's* work in these particular countries; so our guess is that they would have answered the same about all other types of work, not just media-work.

4.3 What is the balance between media as a vector for DDLG, and media as an end in itself?

Where media are 'vectors' media (such as radio or newspapers) are supported in order to convey messages, advice, information or education – for example radio messages about cross-border trading rules. Where media are supported as an end in themselves, this is about strengthening the media sector (mainly the news media), and/or individual media houses, for their own sake, and for the sake of upholding a free and plural media sector. As already noted, when looking at the past, there has been a slight shift by SDC towards media as an end in itself. Looking at the portfolio of current projects funded, media as an end in itself predominates. However, there are many projects that still involve supporting media vectors *as well* as ends in themselves, so the majority of media projects support media as BOTH a vector and as an end in themselves.

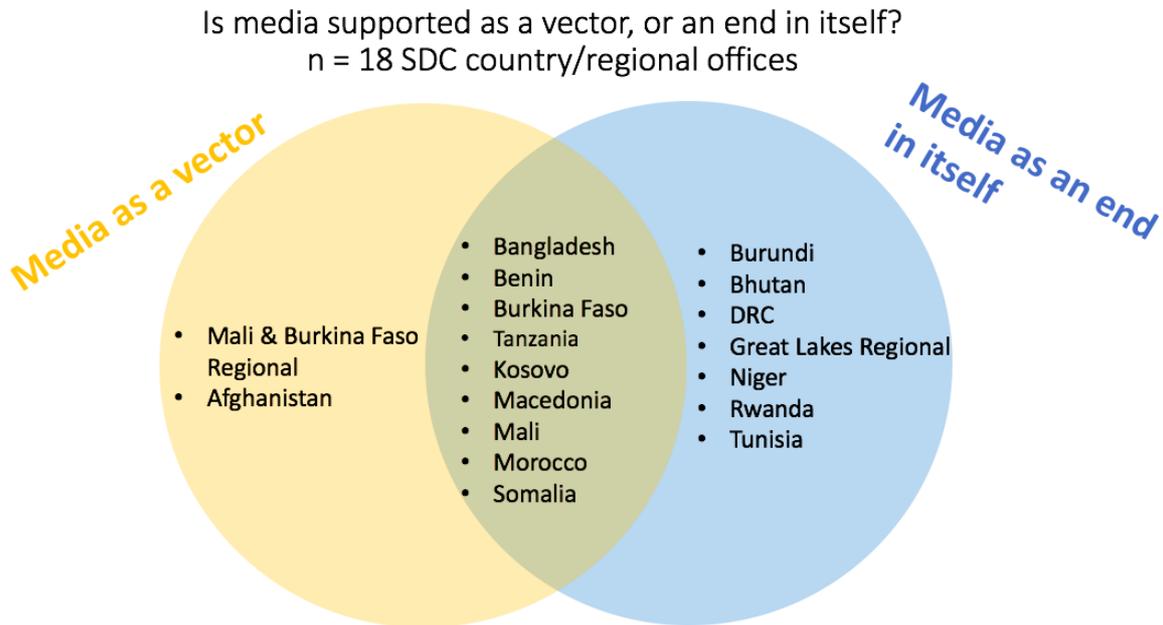


Figure 3: Media Supported as a Vector or an End in Itself?

Taking an example from the left side (media as a vector) we have, for instance, the Mali/Burkina Regional programme called *Programme APC3: Promotion de la coopération transfrontalière* which uses local radio and TV stations to explain to the public about their rights and duties regarding cross-border movement and trade in the border areas in the sub-region.

In the middle, Somalia is an example (being both vector and end in itself) where we have the humanitarian station, Radio Ergo, which exists primarily to give information to people affected by humanitarian emergencies but which also requires core support to exist and expand its own capacities as a viable and sustainable radio station with trained staff, a proper management structure and durable equipment and premises.

On the right side of the above diagram, Rwanda is an example where SDC is supporting a free media as an end in itself by working with the Rwanda Media Commission to be a strong and independent body helping to regulate and raise standards in the Rwandan media.

4.4 What are SDC's current strategic choices and activities?

Analysing the breadth of SDC's current media support strategies we have divided them into eight categories. For this we started with a typology¹⁴ used by the Center for International Media

¹⁴ We recognise that SDC set out its own typology in its 2007 Orientation Guide 'Media – A Key Player for Realizing Social Accountability'. This defines six 'different spheres of the media sector' as both 'bases for analysis' and 'entry points', as follows: 1. Individual journalists 2. Media outlet organisations 3. Media institutions (training, research, press councils) 4. Economic factors and media economics 5. Legal environment and legal reality and 6. Societal beliefs and cultural values. We could have followed these six spheres in our typology but we wanted to a. compare SDC's activities with what other donors were doing, so for this, a typology derived from an analysis of the activities of other OECD donors seemed appropriate; b. we felt that the six spheres were less dynamic than our typology which categorises media

Assistance (CIMA)¹⁵ because it is fairly comprehensive and covers all the types of media support that OECD countries engage in. Then we added two more sub-categories to the capacity-building heading to accommodate the sorts of strategies that we found the SDC programmes were implementing, and to sub-divide the category which would otherwise have been too large and varied to have much meaning. Our final typology is:

1 | CAPACITY BUILDING:

A. TRAINING/MENTORING OF JOURNALISTS/BROADCASTERS/WRITERS ETC.

B. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/RESTRUCTURING OF MEDIA OUTLET

C. OTHER TYPE OF CAPACITY BUILDING e.g. improving CSOs' or NGOs' capacity to communicate with their constituents, the media, and the government; improving governments' and other state actors' ability to usefully provide information to media and citizens; establishing/supporting networks of (media-related) organisations.

2 | PRODUCTION & DISSEMINATION OF GOOD-QUALITY MEDIA CONTENT

3 | ATTENTION TO RIGHTS, LEGAL & REGULATORY CONTEXT, SELF-REGULATION AND JOURNALIST SAFETY

4 | INFRASTRUCTURE/TECHNOLOGY/EQUIPMENT

5 | SUPPORT TO RESEARCH SUCH AS MEDIA MAPPING, SURVEYS / M&E PRINCIPLES OR PROCESSES

6 | PROMOTING MEDIA LITERACY.

Note: A lot of the activities in this typology are done by media associations, umbrella organisations and other supportive media institutions, such as specialist media NGOs or CSOs, be they international (like Internews) or local (like the Afghanistan Educational Production Organisation (AEPO)). Sometimes a project will involve capacity building for these media-focused CSOs/NGOs themselves, which we have categorised under *C. OTHER TYPES OF CAPACITY BUILDING.

We found a high proportion of SDC's programmes fall into the category of capacity-building, and second to that, projects tend to also emphasise production and dissemination of good quality media content. Interestingly, we did not find any projects or programmes with a discernible element of promoting media literacy¹⁶, although this may be happening but is just hidden in the detail.

assistance into the activities themselves rather than the people or organisations being acted upon; and c. there is no obvious place within the SDC typology for support to the production and dissemination of content.

¹⁵ See Cauhapé-Cazaux, Eduardo González & Shanthi Kalathil, (2015), [Official Development Assistance for Media: Figures and Findings A Report by CIMA and the OECD](#), CIMA/NED: Washington D.C.

¹⁶ UNESCO is the leading agency on promoting media and information literacy (MIL). On its Media and Information Literacy web- page media literacy is defined as follows: '...to help develop a discerning and critical approach to news coverage by media consumers and to promote media awareness and development of Internet literacy to combat misperceptions, prejudices and hate speech.'
<https://milunesco.unaoc.org/>

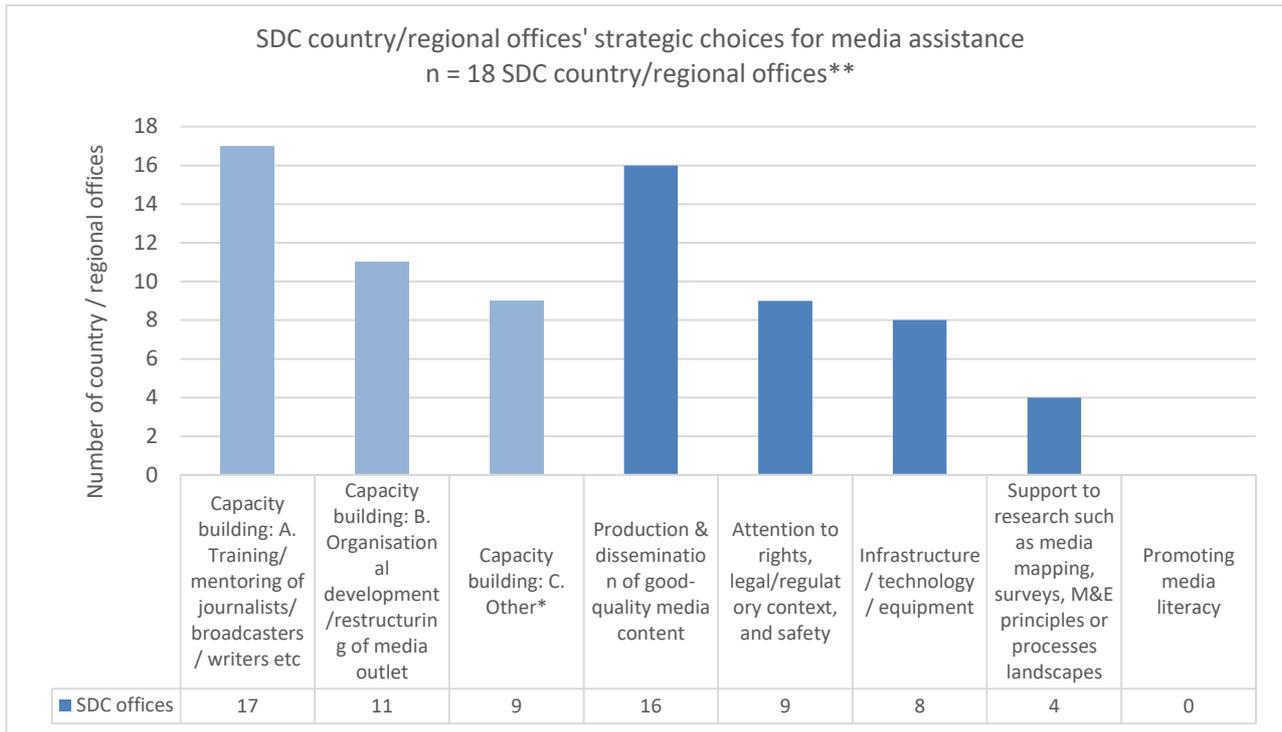


Figure 4: SDC's Strategic Choices for Supporting Media

** In each country SDC may be supporting more than one media project and within each of these projects there may be more than one type of strategy pursued. For instance, one project might be supporting *both* capacity-building *and* infrastructure.

Picking a typical project intervention from each category, we find the following examples of strategies and activities:

1. SDC Benin's support to the umbrella group FERCAB (*Fédération des Radios Communautaires du Bénin*) is an example of **CAPACITY BUILDING: A** in which the Federation is being supported by SDC to do TRAINING/MENTORING OF JOURNALISTS/BROADCASTERS/WRITERS. FERCAB is currently training 37 radio stations that are members of FERCAB to produce programmes about accountability. We counted 17 projects which had a major element of this type of intervention, in total.
2. SDC Tunisia's support to the reform of Radio Tunisienne, the state broadcaster, is an example of **CAPACITY BUILDING: B. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/RESTRUCTURING OF MEDIA OUTLET**. This has involved management and financial training of key staff and coaching of the CEO/Station Manager in order to change working practices and transform what was formerly a government mouthpiece into a more balanced public service broadcaster. We counted 11 projects which had a major element of this type of intervention, in total.
3. SDC D R Congo's programme of media support through Internews is an example of **CAPACITY BUILDING: C. OTHER TYPE**. Part of this project is concerned with bringing magistrates and journalists together in training workshops to promote knowledge of the

law and mutual understanding, so as to protect journalists from harsh extra-judicial treatment by security services, to teach magistrates about journalists' rights, and to ensure that due process of law is respected. We counted 9 projects with a major element of this type of intervention, in total.

4. SDC Afghanistan's support to the AEPO programme is an example of **PRODUCTION & DISSEMINATION OF GOOD-QUALITY MEDIA CONTENT**. Radio programming includes several drama strands and feature/magazine programs produced and broadcast through over 75 local and international channels. All the programs are published online and comic strips/cartoons contain key messages from the radio drama. We counted 16 projects with a major element of this type of intervention, in total.
5. SDC Tanzania's Empowering Media in Tanzania (EMT) programme is an example of **ATTENTION TO RIGHTS, LEGAL & REGULATORY CONTEXT**. Part of the programme involves advocacy for enactment of Right to Information and Media Services Acts; monitoring of press violations; increased representation of community media in national dialogue (implemented by partners Media Council of Tanzania and UNESCO) We counted 9 projects with a major element of this type of intervention, in total.
6. SDC Burkina Faso's programme to support the state TV broadcaster (RTB) is an example of **INFRASTRUCTURE/TECHNOLOGY/EQUIPMENT** support. This project has helped provide replacement studio, cameras and recording equipment, following the ransacking of RTB during the riots in 2014, when demonstrators accused RTB of having supported Compaoré's regime. We counted 8 projects which had a major infrastructure element.
7. SDC Tanzania's Empowering Media in Tanzania (EMT) programme is an example of **SUPPORT TO RESEARCH SUCH AS MEDIA MAPPING, SURVEYS / M&E PRINCIPLES OR PROCESSES**. Part of the programme supports research indirectly through internal M&E requirements, promoting use of proprietary audience research for marketing to support financial sustainability of media outlets and commissioning of feasibility studies to support interventions. We counted 4 projects with a major element of this type of intervention, in total.
8. We counted zero projects which had a major element of **PROMOTING MEDIA LITERACY**. However, we have included this as a category partly because we find it an important area of media assistance and it is in the CIMA typology we decided to use. Furthermore, there may be elements of teaching or promoting media literacy within some of SDC's media support activities but they just do not show up prominently.

It is interesting to note that most of SDC's media projects pursue more than one strategy and combine different entry points at once. Therefore most projects involve both capacity-building and production of content, and often involve work on both legal and organisational issues at the same time. As such, SDC's guiding principle to '*embed media assistance in a broader approach*'¹⁷ is being

¹⁷ See Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), (2007) [Media assistance in the Swiss development cooperation: media - a key player for realizing social accountability. Orientation guide](#), p. 10 for the Guiding Principles.

adhered to. In terms of regional patterns, Fig 5 below (which takes the previous graph and breaks down each strategic choice by geographical region) shows that almost all types of activities are fairly evenly spread across the five SDC geographic regions we looked at. However:

- Only East Africa and South Asia support research/M&E
- North Africa, S Asia and E Europe are evenly spread across strategies
- W Africa is relatively more engaged in training, content-production and infrastructure
- E Africa is relatively more engaged in training, content-production and rights/legal context.

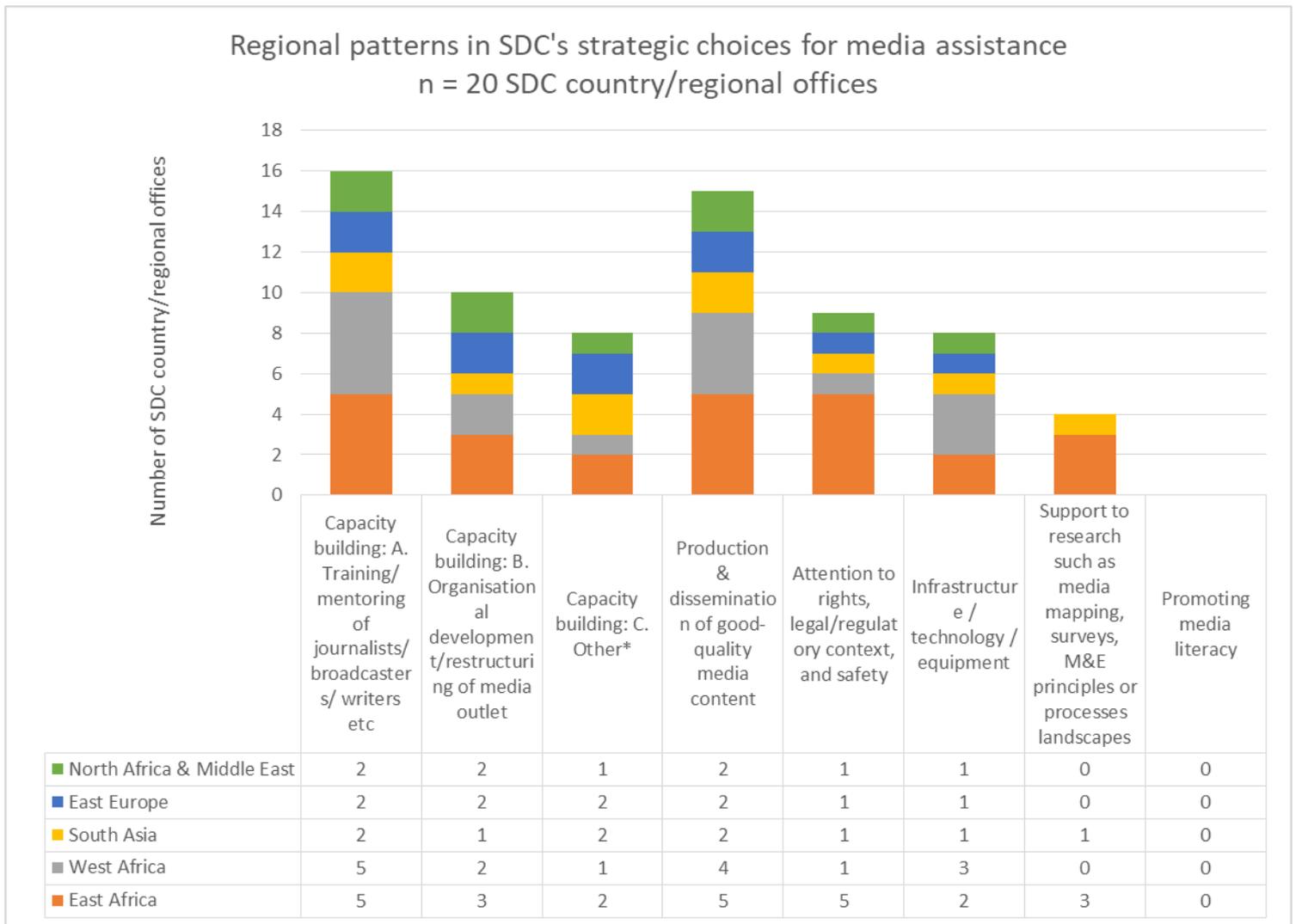


Figure 5: Regional Patterns in SD's Strategic Choices for Media Assistance

Finally, one of the things encouraged in SDC's *Guiding Principles* (SDC, 2007) is to 'place emphasis on donor coordination' in order to 'share best practices, form coalitions, address common regional or thematic media development issues'¹⁸. We asked all of the countries and regional offices surveyed whether SDC was playing a part in any multi-donor initiatives to support, reform or influence the media in their country and we found that just over half said "yes" (see Fig. 6 below).¹⁹

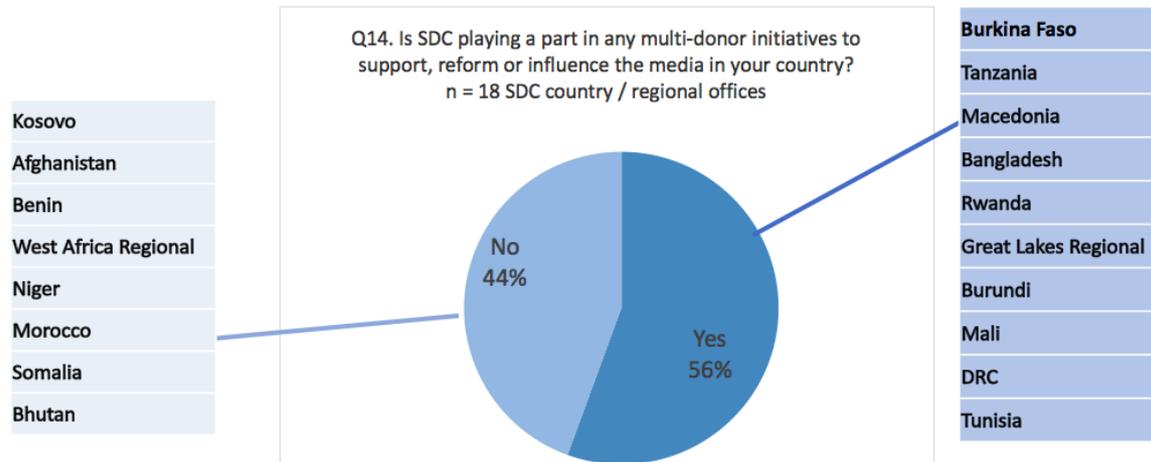


Figure 6: Multi-donor initiatives at country/regional level

These forums can range from multi-donor basket funds, as in Tanzania, to the GIBM (*Groupe Inter-bailleurs Médias*) in D.R. Congo, which is a regular meeting between donors to monitor developments in the media scene and to organise concerted pressure on the government, should the need arise. In some cases, SDC or the Swiss embassy is the chair or main convenor of these kinds of forums.

¹⁸ SDC, (2007), *Media – A Key Player for Realizing Social Accountability: Orientation Guide*, SDC: Bern p. 11.

¹⁹ The data is indicative only, as some of the country offices we surveyed may have said 'yes' simply if SDC is co-funding a media project with another donor; conversely, another respondent may have interpreted the question differently and may have said 'no' because they did not count a co-funding partnership as a 'multi-donor initiative.' Equally, SDC and or Swiss diplomatic personnel may be involved in diplomatic groupings or occasional meetings regarding media and other governance issues without them being captured in the figure above. We simply present the data here to highlight the importance of coordination and to show that there are significant efforts made on the part of SDC to cooperate with other donors over media issues.

Box 1 | Media and Elections

*'Perhaps more than ever before, the media have the potential to significantly impact perceptions and behaviour during elections'*²⁰, suggests a recent policy paper by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA). A number of SDC's programmes within the governance domain are testament to media's potential impact on elections: in Tanzania, Niger and Kosovo, for example, media have been used at a number of stages in the electoral cycle.

Tanzania's election programme has shown some of SDC's most impressive media assistance results globally. Media have been central to SDC's response to the slump in young voter turnout in the 2010 elections. With BBC Media Action as an implementing partner, SDC launched the two-part *Niambie* programme in 2013: one part, an interactive national youth radio show accompanied by social media platforms; the other, provision of capacity-building support for three Tanzanian media stations. This support continued throughout the key 2015 election and beyond it. By 2016, 24% of Tanzania's 15-35 year old population – a massive 3.8 million individuals – reported that they had listened to *Niambie*²¹. To this audience, the energetic young presenters Meena and Noel posed questions such as *"What is the importance of voting?"* and *"How important is the constitution to you?"* As a result of these lively on-air and online discussions – in which women's voices were aired at least as often as men's – listeners to *Niambie* were nearly 3 times more likely to discuss political and current affairs with others than non-listeners. They were found to be more than twice as likely to engage in political action.²²

In **Kosovo**, a series of 35 pre-election mayoral debates were aired with SDC support in 2013, on Kosovo's public TV broadcaster with roughly 400,000 viewers every week. Mayoral candidates and women running for Assembly took to the screen to pitch their political platforms to citizens, and citizens raised their concerns in return. Young Kosovans were a particular target audience for the programme, in a country where the youthful population means that first-time voters are an influential group. One young woman in the audience explained: *'People often talk about the problems in our municipality, but no one has ever been publicly called upon to answer allegations. I am glad that we are now starting to talk about what bothers us in an open discussion.'*²³ After these broadcasts, SDC's implementing partner BIRN (Balkans Investigative Research Network) continued working into the post-election phase by following up on the promises made by the winning candidates. Kosovo's local election cycle has now started again, along with a second round of SDC-supported mayoral debates, which began in early 2017.

SDC Niger's focus on training and education in the pre-election period. In light of Niger's state of emergency, SDC's media intervention in the run-up to the 2016 elections was based on awareness-raising to build stability, and facilitating dialogue for social cohesion. The SDC-funded Studio Kalangou seeks to create the space for dialogue. Through a partnership with Fondation Hironnelle and the Niger Community Radio Network, a physical studio was installed, and journalists and radio technicians were trained. This team were supported to produce radio programmes in 5 languages, involving debates to illuminate candidates' platforms, and informing audiences across Niger on how to vote. Fresh from last year's elections, the French Ambassador hailed Studio Kalangou as doing *"wonderful work"* (*"un travail formidable"*), and the fact that both Radio France Internationale and Voice of America now use Studio Kalangou as a point of reference²⁴, is further testament to its credibility.

²⁰ International IDEA, 'Media Assistance and Elections: Toward an Integrated Approach', (2015), <http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/media-assistance-and-elections-toward-integrated-approach?lang=en>, p.3

²¹ BBC Media Action, (2017), '*Niambie*: End-line Research Report', p.3

²² *Ibid.* p.4

²³ Quoted from Mustafa Skenderi, (2008), 'OSCE Mission takes municipal debates to Kosovo-wide TV audience', Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

²⁴ As reported by senior staff from Fondation Hironnelle in interview with iMedia.

Box 2 | Media & Peace-building

Promoting peace is a major reason behind SDC's support to the media. Our survey found that 45 percent of SDC respondents said that conflict prevention/ peace-building and/or fragility reduction was the motivation for media support in their country 'to a great extent' and 35 percent said 'to a medium extent'. The following examples from Burundi, Mali and Afghanistan illustrate some media activities SDC is supporting.

In Burundi, promoting inter-communal dialogue has long been a cornerstone of SDC's support to independent media. But following the 2015 Burundi crisis, the media sector is in disarray, with most of the independent journalists in exile or 'disappeared', and many radio stations burned-down or closed by the government. Donors are wary of supporting 'independent' journalists and media houses for fear of appearing to support the political opposition. Nonetheless, one online and print newspaper, *Journal Iwacu* (meaning 'our home'), is still receiving support from SDC and other donors, despite its director being in exile. So far, *Iwacu* has not been closed by the Burundi government because it has not demonized either Hutus or Tutsis (unlike other media) and has systematically produced balanced and properly verified reports, whilst still tackling sensitive issues. *Iwacu* is the most visited website in Burundi, receiving up to 80,000 visits per day²⁵. The web has very recently become the space for alternative media to expand and SDC is also supporting *Humura* and *Inzamba*: two other online radios produced by independent journalists in exile. As SDC's Regional Director of International Cooperation told us: *"In a crisis situation there are always ways of supporting diversity of information to citizens – this is a guiding principle."*

In Afghanistan, the radio drama that SDC supports, called *Healthy Families, Healthy Societies*, uses humour and entertainment to reach Afghans of all ages and across borders. Peace-building is a strong thread throughout its work, although it is ostensibly designed to raise awareness about civic engagement and sustainable livelihoods. Subtle messages are woven into the drama about how to resolve conflict and defuse disagreements before they become violent. For instance, one recent programme showed how tribes in one fictional village worked through a land dispute with another tribe in a neighbouring village. Through their characters, dramas can show the benefits of adopting certain behaviours and can demonstrate that change is possible.

In Mali, SDC sees media as a vector to enhance local governance in a conflict context. The biggest piece of media support by SDC in Mali, currently, is support to local radio and TV stations within the PEGA programme (Programme Partenariats pour l'Exercice d'une Gouvernance Partagée) which aims to contribute to national reconstruction after the 2012-13 crisis and coup d'état. Bad journalism which accuses leaders of corruption without proof, or blames a whole ethnic group for the work of one or two individual terrorists, can inflame an already tense situation. But through PEGA, radio journalists are being trained to take a conflict sensitive approach, to understand laws and to report constructively on regional meetings between local government and civil society on the decentralisation process, reconciliation, reconstruction, women's empowerment and equitable sharing of national wealth. This is especially important in the conflict-affected areas around Timbuctou, where tensions are still running high over land issues, mining resources and jihadism.

²⁵ Marie-Soleil Frère, (2017), *'I wish I could be the journalist I was, but I currently cannot': Experiencing the impossibility of journalism in Burundi*, *Media, War and Conflict* 1-22 Sage

Box 3 | Media and Anti-Corruption

The media have long seen it as their role to 'speak truth to power' and to expose corruption in high places. The following are two examples of media and anti-corruption work supported by SDC in Kosovo and Mali:

The fight against corruption is one of SDC's primary ambitions for media assistance in Kosovo, their Programme Officer reports. Through the Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts in Kosovo (SAEK), a programme implemented by UNDP, SDC have supported the research and development of a web platform through which citizens themselves can report corruption cases to be reviewed by a dedicated team. Over 6,000 corruption cases were logged through www.kallxo.com in Phase I (up to 2016). Ten per cent of these cases were investigated by the kallxo.com team, 64 cases were forwarded to the judiciary, resulting in 24 disciplinary processes and investigations by the prosecution.

In Mali, SDC is currently funding Oxfam Novib to support journalists in local radio and TV stations within the PEGA programme (*Programme Partenariats pour l'Exercice d'une Gouvernance Partagée*). Part of the project involves training for journalists in 10 radio stations on understanding and publicising the annual budgets of regional government (*Conseils Régionaux*) in a simple way so as to raise awareness among listeners/viewers of what services and amenities local government should be paying for and how the public can tell if local politicians are dealing honestly with them – or whether they are embezzling public funds. The President of Sikasso Region said recently that he could sense a palpable feeling among elected officials that the media were holding them to account in a constructive way, according to SDC's NPO in Mali.

5 | Financing mechanisms

5.1 Support Modalities

SDC's support for media assistance can be categorized within nine modalities, which indicate how funding is distributed to the respective implementing partner(s). These modalities have been identified by iMedia as follows:

- a. Contract with local media NGO or local media umbrella-group/federation/union
- b. Contract with local media outlet(s)
- c. Contract with local NGO **not** specialised in media
- d. Contract with international NGO specialised in media
- e. Contract with international NGO **not** specialised in media
- f. Contract with government body
- g. Multiple contracts with local media outlets managed by SDC
- h. Special institutional partnership
- i. Contract with consulting organisation (local or international)

The present distribution of SDC's media assistance contracts across these modalities is shown below (Fig. 7), which also indicates whether this work is **mandated** by SDC, for a specific action which SDC has defined; or whether SDC is making a **contribution** to the ongoing good work of an organisation, which the *organisation* predominantly defines.

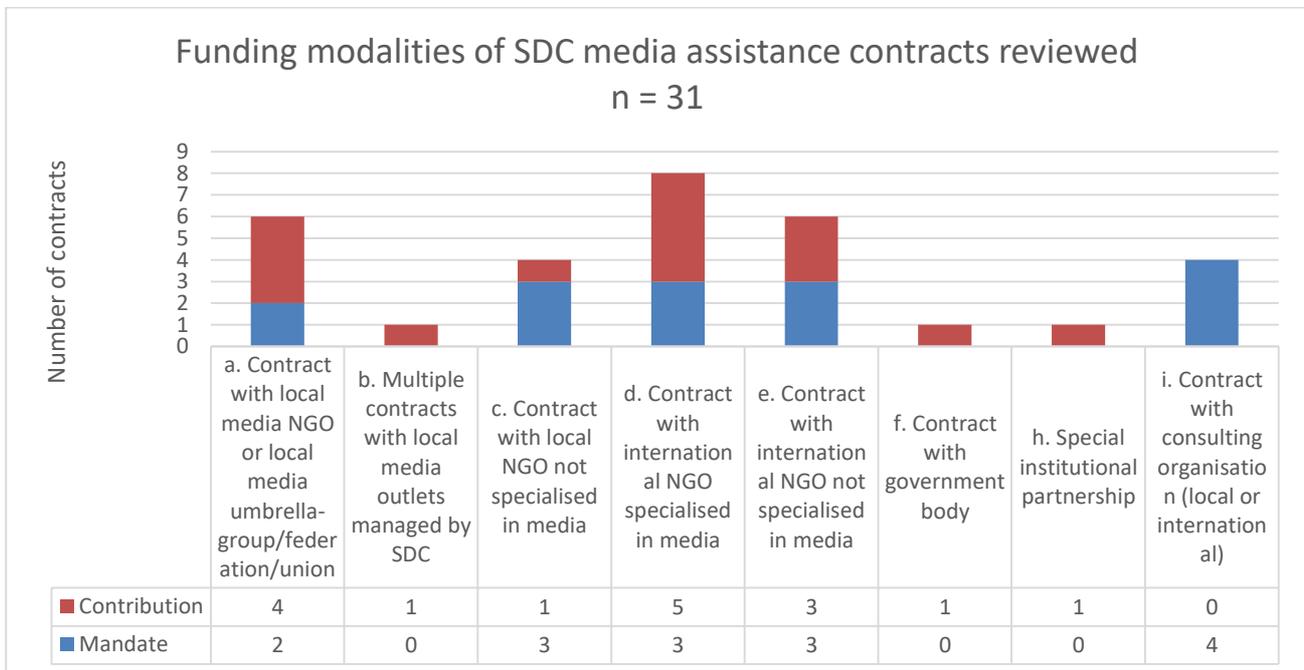


Figure 7: Graph Showing the Types of Contracts SDC Uses

The above graph shows that SDC's dominant funding modality is with international NGOs – both those specialised in media (8 of the 31 contracts) and those not specialised in media (6 contracts).

Local media NGOs or federations also receive around one-fifth (6) of the contracts. It is noticeable that SDC does not have any direct contracts with local media outlets except in Burundi where the SDC office manages a small portfolio of grants given directly to a number of local media outlets as a temporary measure.

Guidance given in SDC's 2007 *Media Orientation Guide* perhaps contributed to the near lack of funding directly to media outlets: *'It needs to be stressed that media assistance is a very delicate task'*²⁶. The guide goes on to highlight five key risks which media outlets face, such as: being *'forced...to take sides'* in times of violent conflict; being implicated with *'powerful elites'*; and that *'too much funding for media by donors might... create artificial institutions that will hardly survive or be in the public interest.'*²⁷ An SDC Programme Officer from Kosovo suggested another reason for not supporting individual media outlets in favour of media NGOs and federations: *"There are so many media organisations which are in need of funding... it would have been difficult to pick one or two and leave the others out. So instead, we have supported the umbrella organisations creating an enabling media environment – like the Journalist Association and the Press Council – to be fairer and to ensure that we are doing enough for the whole sector."*²⁸

Much less frequent were contracts with government bodies, and multiple contracts with local media outlets, which were all one-off cases in contexts where this was the most conducive way to work with media. In Bhutan, for example, media assistance is a component of a democratic governance programme implemented through the Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC). SDC's one contract for a special institutional partnership is with Fondation Hironnelle, administered on a global level.

Across all contracts, SDC gives an even mix of contributions (16 contracts in all) and mandates (16 contracts). Contributions are dominant for local or international NGOs specialised in media (9 contributions for 5 mandates). For local or international NGOs *not* specialised in media, on the other hand, mandates are dominant (7 mandates, for 4 contributions). This pattern suggests that SDC more often uses mandates to stipulate specific media assistance actions for organisations which do *not* specialise in this field, be they local or international. Organisations specialising in media are more often supported to continue with their own activities or strategies.

Finally, SDC's funding modalities for media assistance are clearly not static, but can change year on year – as is clearly demonstrated by the Tanzania Media Fund/Foundation (TMF). TMF is one of the largest-scale media development programmes anywhere, both in terms of funding and duration. When launched in 2009, TMF was initially funded by the governments of Switzerland, Denmark, Ireland and UK, with support via the Dutch NGO, HIVOS. Owing to growing capacities, however, the fund has now transitioned to local ownership, to become a very successful foundation which was itself managing 242 sub-grants by 2014.

²⁶ SDC, (2007), 'Media – A Key Player for Realizing Social Accountability: Orientation Guide', p.21

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ SDC Kosovo Programme Officer, (2017), Phone Interview in May 2017

5.2 Approximate global spending

Among programmes within SDC's governance domain, **SDC's global annual spend on media assistance is estimated to have been approximately 11,966,000 CHF in 2016.** This is not a total figure for all media funding: it should be noted that some SDC offices give smaller (additional) amounts of funding for media work through so-called 'small actions'. Such funding is often for content production.

Nonetheless, the near 12 million CHF of funding for substantial media assistance programmes in 2016 was split between SDC country and regional offices as follows:

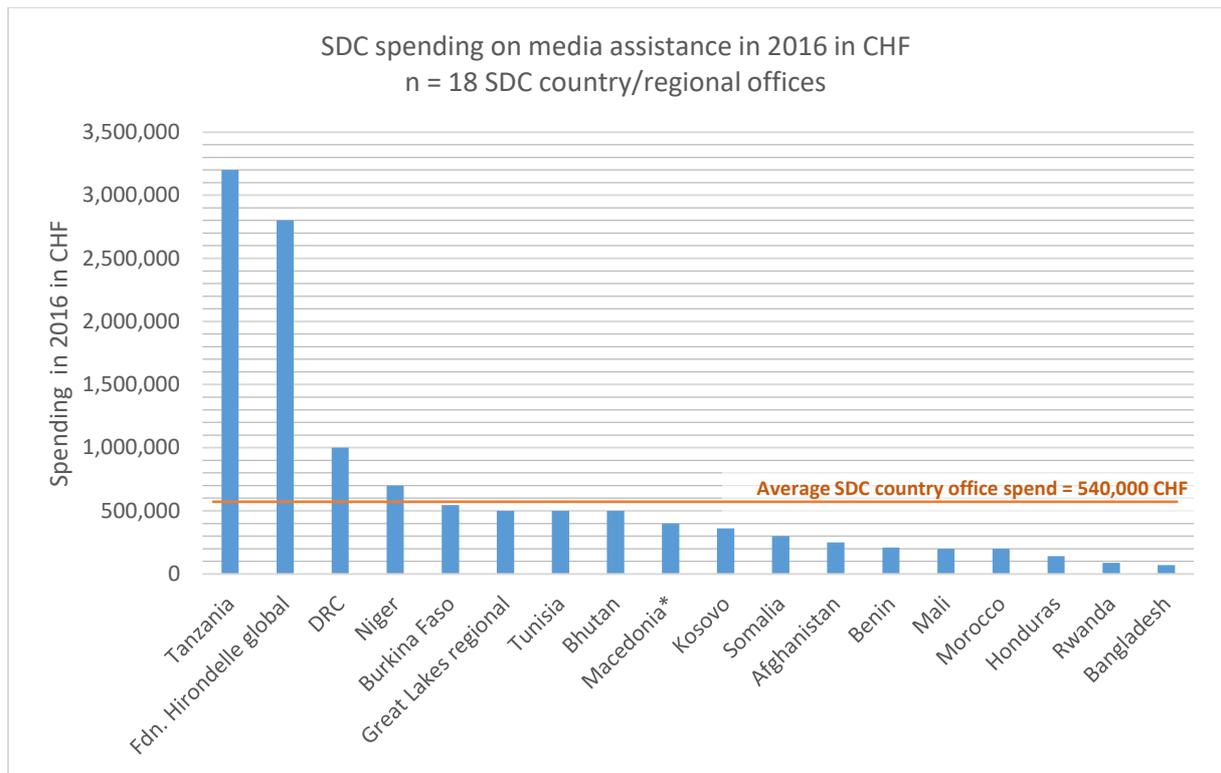


Figure 8: Graph showing SDC offices' spending on media assistance in 2016

* Macedonia's spending figure is a rough estimate by SDC Programme Officer

The graph above shows how Tanzania and Fondation Hironnelle accounted for over half of SDC spending on media assistance in 2016 (6 million CHF together). SDC's institutional partnership with Fondation Hironnelle is sufficiently large to operate on a global scale, and SDC's largest national media assistance programme – Empowering Media in Tanzania (EMT) – accounts for a considerable 3.2m CHF.

All other country offices, however, range from spending 70,000 to 700,000 CHF on media assistance per year. The average country-office spend (excluding the Fondation Hironnelle institutional partnership) was 540,000 CHF in 2016. East Africa was the region with by far the highest funding in 2016, spending over 5 million CHF across all countries. Asia has almost 10 times less funding, at 570,000 CHF between Bangladesh and Bhutan.

The Rwanda and Bangladesh country offices had the lowest funding for media assistance in 2016. Yet they demonstrate how country offices' spending can fluctuate substantially from year to year, depending on when media assistance programmes start and finish. SDC Bangladesh, for example, is at present the lowest-funding country office. But this hides the fact that a four-year, 1.52-million CHF media assistance programme recently finished, and that SDC Bangladesh is currently in the process of deciding whether to launch another media assistance programme, as of summer 2017.

6 | Programmatic / Operational issues: guidance, value for money, design, M&E

6.1 How is the context assessed?

Starting with whether and how the context is assessed, we asked SDC staff (mainly NPOs) in our survey whether the political or media context was assessed or studied at the outset. While the majority said 'yes' (76%), almost a quarter (24%) said 'no'. However, the reasons behind the 'no's' may include other assessments having already been made by other donors or implementing partners; also the respondents may not have been aware of efforts by partners to assess the context independently or prior to SDC's financial support. Our sense is that in most cases, the political/media context *is* usually subject to assessment. There is no consistent methodology for such context-assessment exercises, as the list of diverse studies and mapping exercises shows.

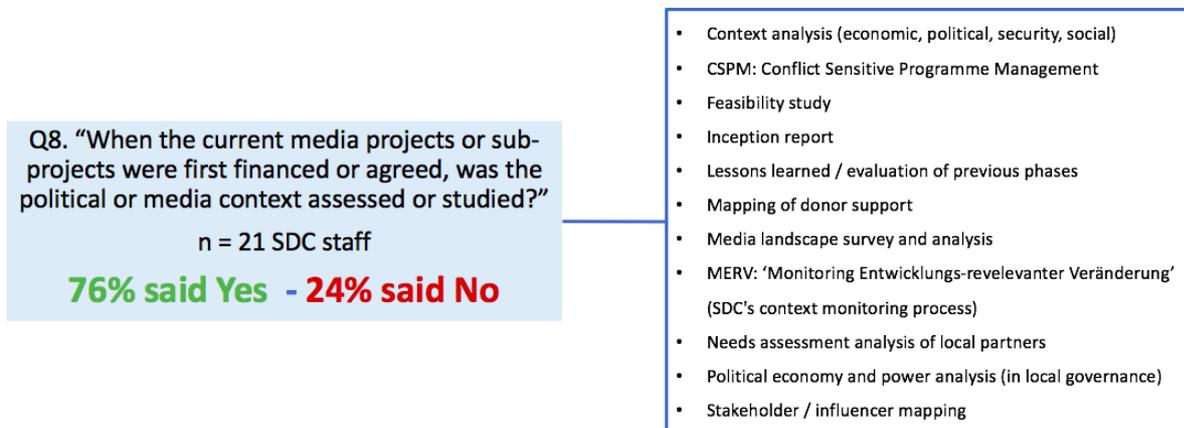


Figure 9: Context assessments by SDC for media assistance projects

6.2 What project design, monitoring and evaluation tools are most effective?

We asked SDC staff in our survey whether any project design tools were used, at the initial stage of design, for media-related projects and, if so, which ones²⁹. As Fig. 10 (below) shows, just over half of respondents have used some sort of tool. The list is somewhat a 'mixed bag' of methods, and again, there is no particular tool used consistently and it is difficult to discern which, if any, are most effective. The first item on the list ('SDC Guidelines for Credit Proposal') had the most mentions, with four countries saying they used these; the following item had three mentions and the rest had two or one mention each.

²⁹ When asking this question in the questionnaire, we gave some suggestions as follows: "i.e. gender equality checklists, risk analyses, TOC's, logframes etc."

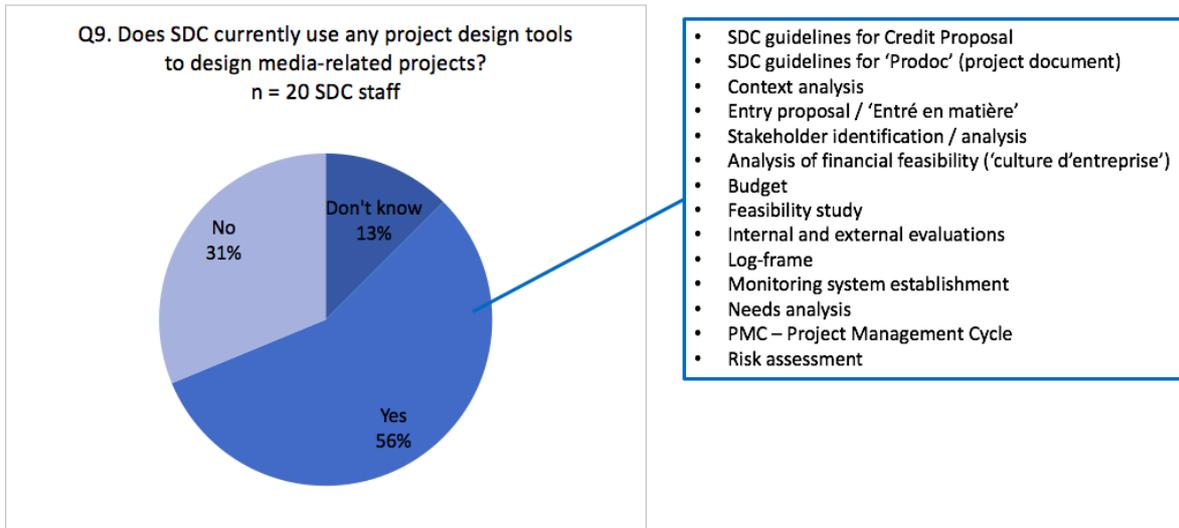


Figure 10: Project Design Tools Used by SDC

It is noteworthy that no one explicitly mentioned the 'Menu of Options' laid out in SDC's *Media Orientation Guide* (2007:14)³⁰ which lists 'possible interventions' at the different levels of the media sector, from support to 'individual journalists' (level 1) up to interventions at the level of 'societal beliefs' (level 6). We assume that this is because this guide has not been well distributed within SDC, since only one respondent actually referred to it by name when asked about SDC documentation. As a basic menu we believe it is a good framework to start from, so it is not an issue of quality or 'usability', but probably more due to a lack of awareness about its existence.

For monitoring and evaluating (M&E) media projects, we asked SDC staff their opinion of their current system. We found that half of respondents thought they had a weak system of M&E when it came to media projects, and only six percent felt they had a good system (see Fig. 11). This is quite a striking finding and probably reflects a challenge that is common amongst many donor agencies, not just SDC, that media impacts are very hard to measure and attribution is very difficult to prove. It may possibly reflect a more generalised dissatisfaction with SDC's internal M&E systems for all projects, not just media projects, but we did not do an in-depth analysis of SDC's M&E systems in any field other than media, so we cannot make a judgement.

³⁰ **Media Assistance - Menu of options (from SDC's *Media Orientation Guide*, 2007)**

Sphere and Possible interventions (examples):

1 Individual journalists Support in training professional skills and/or knowledge on specific issues

2 Organizational level Support to independent, pluralistic media outlets,

of media outlets and improving the working conditions; on-site training for editors on ethics, journalism concepts; management courses

3 Media institutions Establishing missing institutions in support of a pluralistic media sector (research, education, associations, press councils)

4 Economic factors Enhancing sustainability of media (circulation, printing, broadcasting capabilities, anti-mono-polistic activities, media management training)

5 Legal environment Establish and enforce media laws and regulations enabling freedom of expression and access to information; protection of journalists

6 Societal beliefs Support activities strengthening the values of freedom and exchange, the rights and duties in democratic societies, and forms of dispute settling

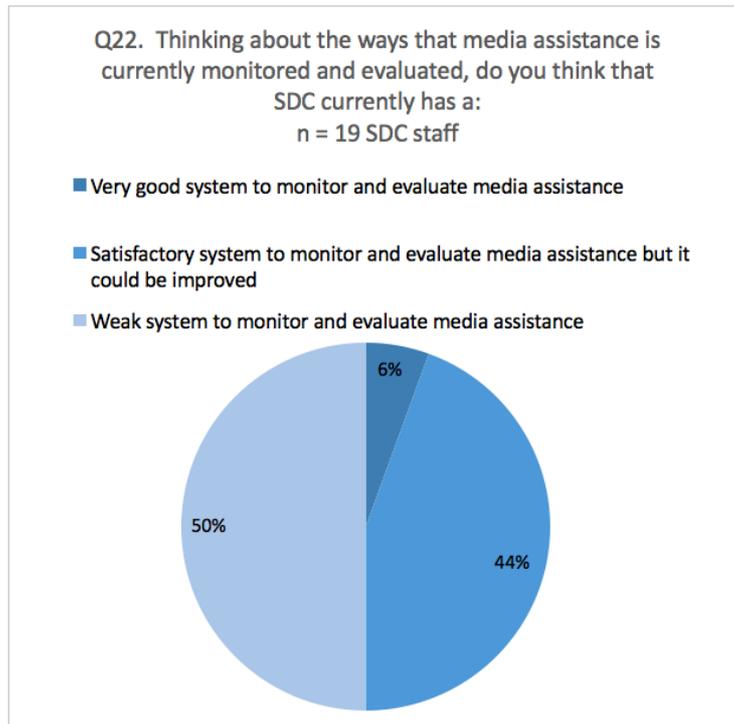


Figure 11: Quality of M&E systems

Despite the dissatisfaction, there were some suggestions gathered from SDC about this M&E challenge including:

“For better monitoring we should always require 6-monthly reporting, financial audits conducted on partners every year and programme evaluations at least every two years” – (SDC Bangladesh)

“SDC doesn’t have specific media-related M&E tools but an Aggregated Results Indicators framework has recently been developed and there are a couple of good indicators for media in there.” – (SDC Great Lakes Regional)

We also asked SDC staff and partners for any specifically media-related M&E tools they were using. Not many examples were forthcoming but the following examples were gathered:

- Public perception surveys (Tanzania)
- Content analysis (Tanzania, Mali, Tunisia)
- Audience focus groups (Tanzania, Tunisia)
- Reach, outcome and impact surveys to measure audiences, guided by indicators in the project log-frame (Tanzania, Benin, Tunisia)
- Regular analysis of the context and the [political] positions taken by the partners supported (Benin)
- Use of UNESCO’s Media Development Indicators (Bhutan)

Of particular interest is the content analysis method currently being pioneered in both Tanzania (for the EMT programme) and in Mali for the evaluation of Studio Tamani, implemented by Fondation Hironnelle and partly funded by SDC (see Box 4 below).

Box 4 | Content Analysis and Other Promising Evaluation Tools

Content analysis^{31 32} can be used to assess improvements in quality of public interest and investigative journalism, following training. Analysts examine in detail the content produced by trainees. This can either be done comparing the content produced by trainees and that produced by non-trainees, or pre and post analysis of the same intervention group. Both have their methodological flaws, mainly because analysts will always be subjective and there may be characteristics and factors not controlled which are crucial to improvements in quality of content. Training of coders is very labour-intensive. However, content analysis is a promising method not only for analysing the success of capacity-building but also for understanding media influences:

For example it has recently been used in Mali to assess the impact of Studio Tamani (a radio project implemented by Fondation Hironnelle) on the peace process. Content analysis is done on two levels:

- Comparative analysis of daily news bulletins of Studio Tamani compared to other competitor or rival stations such as ORTM (state owned media) and Radio Kledu (private commercial radio)
- Analysis of 60 *Grands Dialogues* (Studio Tamani's daily debate program) focused on the peace process since 2013: how the guests speak and listen to each other; how the discussions with the same guests (negotiators from the government, the Touareg rebels, and the pro-Bamako militias) have evolved over the two years; which arguments they use more often as the root causes of the conflict and the solutions each side wants to implement. Qualitative conclusions are drawn from this detailed content analysis.

Other useful tools for (mainly) qualitative evaluation of media interventions are Delphi panels, focus groups, network analysis and survey research. For more information on these tools, see Taylor, Maureen, (2010), [Methods of Evaluating Media Interventions in Conflict Countries](#) paper prepared for the workshop 'Evaluating Media's Impact in conflict Countries', Caux, Switzerland, December 2010.

Calculating how many people are reached by a particular media intervention (e.g. a TV programme) and what it costs per person reached – even what it costs to change specific behaviours - has recently been attempted by BBC Media Action and Development Media International (DMI), in order to demonstrate value for money (VFM). For example, BBC Media Action reported this year that under a large global grant from the UK government it reached 283.5 million people around the world at a cost of 32 pence (£0.32p) per person³³. DMI's cost-effectiveness analysis suggests that their TV and radio programmes in Burkina Faso which give advice about childhood diseases, '*added a year of healthy life (disability-adjusted life year, DALY) for \$25, equivalent to \$750 per life saved - one of the cheapest health interventions currently available*'³⁴.

³¹ Consultants from the University of Zurich, Christoph Spurk and colleagues, have recently used these methods in Mali and Tanzania. For more detail, see, for example Jan Lublinski and Christoph Spurk, (2014) *Content Analysis: Measuring the Success of Journalism Capacity Building*, DW Akademie: 10/ 2014. Internews is also using content analysis in its media/peace-building work in Kenya.

³² Thanks to Nicolas Boissez at Fondation Hironnelle for the details about the Studio Tamani evaluation.

³³ Global Grant to BBC Media Action: Management Report 2016, Internal report to DFID, BBC Media Action: London

³⁴ <http://www.developmentmedia.net/>

6.3 How accurate /well-used are SDC's existing guidance documents on media assistance?

We asked SDC staff two questions about the guidance they were receiving about media assistance, one about support from colleagues and supervisors, and one about documentation.

Firstly, we found that most of them were satisfied with the support they were receiving from colleagues and supervisors on dealing with media issues and projects (28 per cent said they feel very well supported, 67 per cent feel adequately supported and only 5 per cent feel poorly supported).

Secondly we asked if they felt they had sufficient and good-quality guidance, documents, resources and training on media issues. Here, out of 20 SDC staff who responded, a strikingly small percentage said they feel very well resourced (only 5 per cent), 55 per cent feel adequately resourced, and a large minority said they feel poorly resourced (see Fig.12 below):

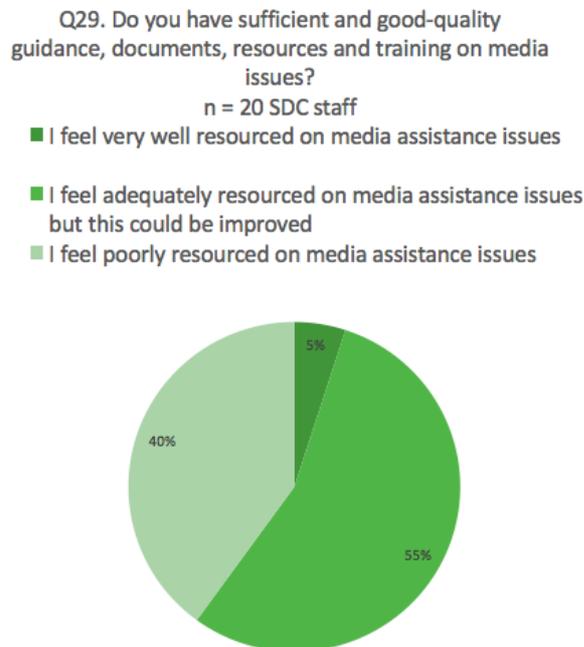


Figure 12: Staff resourcing on media issues

Our analysis is that SDC personnel do not feel well-resourced partly because SDC's main *Media Orientation Guide, 2007*³⁵, does not appear to have been well disseminated inside SDC, or beyond. We found that only one respondent referred to it by name as a resource he used, and one other respondent may have meant this document when he referred to 'SDC documents on communication and media' but did not name it. The general quality of the document is not at fault: we find that it is a clear and useable guide with some particularly good points on designing media interventions. Its 'menu of options' about the different 'spheres' in which media operate (from the 'individual journalist' up to 'societal beliefs') is excellent. However, we found no mention in it of social, digital

³⁵ SDC Governance Division (2007), *Media-A Key Player for Realizing Social Accountability: Orientation Guide*, SDC: Berne

or mobile media; neither did we find any actual examples of SDC's media-support experience or lessons learned. Furthermore there are sections where the style is very imprecise and where the standard of English is poor.

There was a document produced prior to these guidelines, entitled *Media and Governance: A Guide*, in 2004³⁶, which is no longer available online. Unlike the 2007 'Orientation Guide' this document is much more discursive and was meant 'as a document for discussion and orientation on the place of media in international development cooperation'. However, despite a rather outdated feel, it did include a section on 'the new media (internet, e-mail, mobile phones)', unlike the 2007 document. We did not receive any direct references to this document from staff surveyed.

We asked SDC personnel to name any resources that they found particularly useful, and gathered only the following responses:

- External resource persons / institutions [3 respondents]:
 - *"The implementing partner (Fondation Hirondelle) is a highly knowledgeable and experienced resource on media supports"* [BURKINA FASO]
 - External resource persons contracted by SDC [TANZANIA]
 - Various publications by Reporters sans Frontières etc. [BENIN]
- SDC Policy DDLG [KOSOVO]
- SDC Thematic Network DDLGN [KOSOVO]
- *How to: Stakeholder Analysis* note is useful across different topics [TANZANIA]
- *Media – Orientation Guide* [TANZANIA]
- SDC documents on communication / media [BENIN]

6.4 How relevant, effective, efficiently managed and sustainable is SDC's support for partners at country level?

Relevance The graph below (Fig. 13) shows that both SDC staff and partners generally feel that SDC's support to media/media-related projects is highly relevant (over 80% and 90% respectively): this is to be expected given that media programmes are normally designed to fit into a wider domain of support around Democracy, Decentralisation and Local Governance (e.g. in Tanzania, Morocco), and initial context assessments are conducted either by SDC or the partner to ensure relevance. Where there are divergent opinions the reasons are relatively clear: for example the Nairobi-administered programme of support to Radio Ergo for humanitarian broadcasts into Somalia apparently no longer fits with SDC's Horn of Africa strategy which does not include governance *per se*, but the focus themes include displacement, health, food security and related governance processes. It still remains highly relevant for its partner, IMS, who told us: *"The Radio Ergo project is a key element of IMS Somalia programme in which IMS works to support the development of a free and independent media in Somalia and to promote content that better serves the Somali public"*.

³⁶ SDC Governance Division (2004), *Media and Governance: A Guide*, SDC: Berne

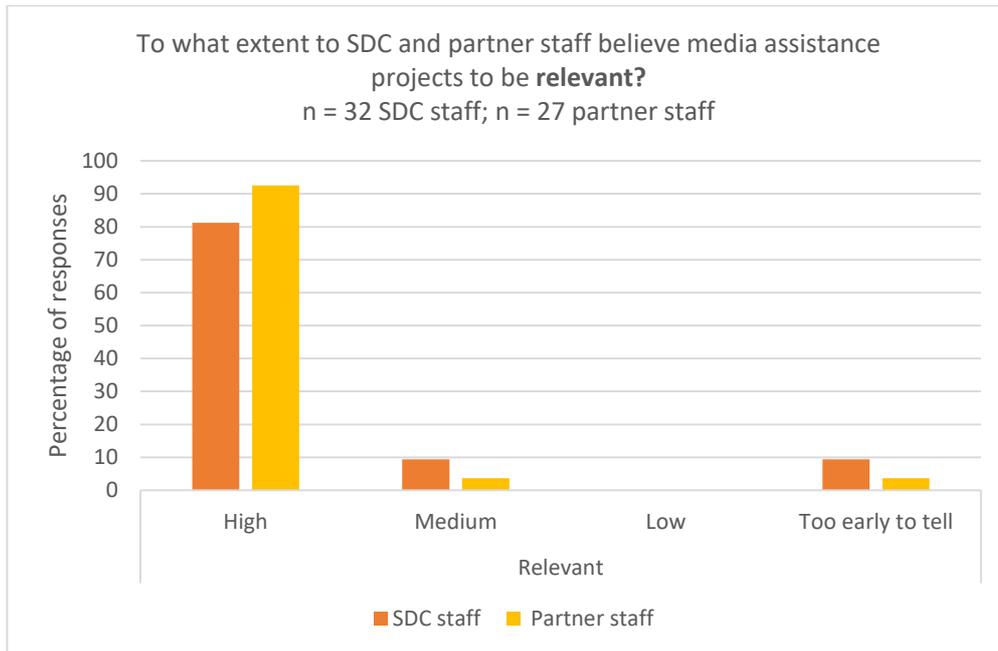


Figure 13: Opinions of the Relevance of Media Assistance Projects

In Afghanistan where there is no media assistance programme *per se*, but funding is provided to the Afghan Education Project Organization (AEPO) to make radio programmes about elections, sustainable income opportunities, water management and nutrition, AEPO reports this is of high relevance to its aims and focus areas.³⁷ However the SDC officer reports it is of medium relevance and sees a clear role for more innovative use of media, in line with the changing media landscape and audiences' tastes, to engage with stakeholders and employ dialogic formats in support of, for example, social cohesion, peace and reconciliation, anti-corruption, transparency and accountability objectives.

In Bhutan, the high relevance of the original programme Media Pluralism Component as part of SDC's wider Democratic Governance Projects was not in doubt, but the SDC's Head of Cooperation in Bhutan emphasised how media are changing in Bhutan, and how there is an expansion of social media, a collapse of the private (conventional) media and a fall in the levels of trust which calls into question the currency of SDC's view of the media as a watchdog and as a force for democratic accountability.

Effectiveness The graph below (Fig 14) shows that, again, there is relatively little divergence between SDC staff and partner organisations about effectiveness, with the latter somewhat more positive than the former, overall. However less than half the SDC staff surveyed thought that their media assistance or media-related programmes were highly effective and some appeared to be very cautious by saying 'too early to tell' even where partners reported evidence of achievement and the programme had been running for several years (e.g. Bhutan, Macedonia). However in both those cases media was only one part of a wider programme expected to contribute to country level

³⁷ SDC Afghanistan plans a more ambitious programme of support to civil society with a media component, in the future.

results. The variation in responses may also relate to differing definitions of 'effectiveness' – SDC seems to have been looking for higher level or more downstream impacts than their partners, and did not generally expect to see much change in the short term. In Morocco for instance, the SDC National Programme Officer said: *“Long term engagement is important to change the mind-set of journalists/media outlets. Including the voiceless in public debate takes a long time. We should be aware that a three year project won't change things. Six-seven years are needed rather than three to five.”*

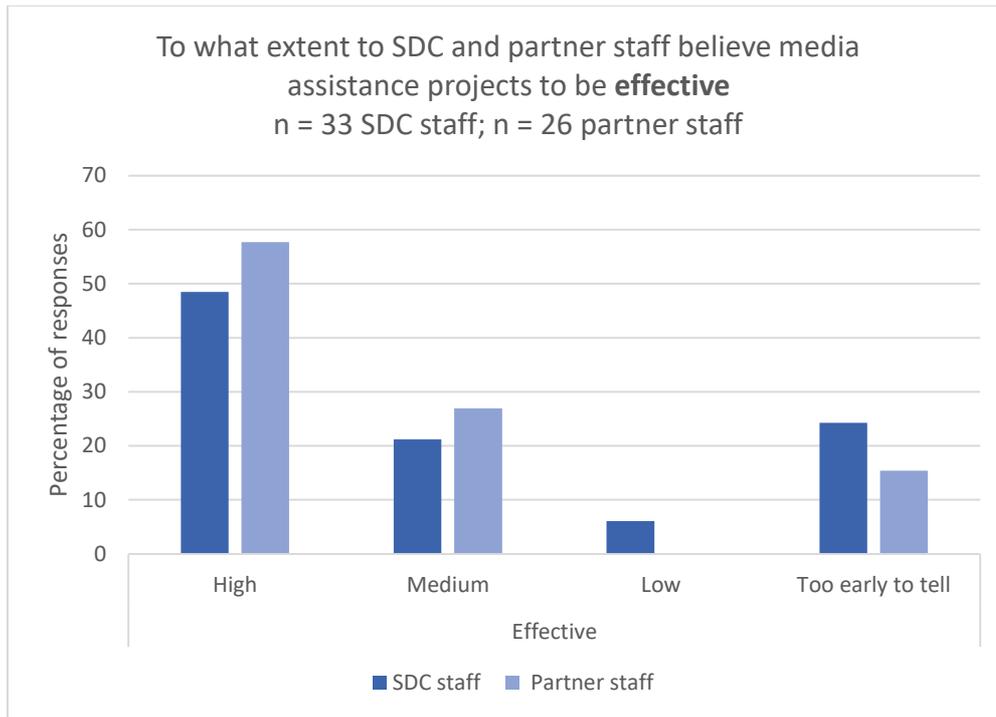


Figure 14: Opinions of the Effectiveness of Media Assistance Projects comparing SDC with partners

Efficiency of management Fig. 15 below shows that there is clear divergence overall between all survey respondents' assessment of how well SDC manages media assistance and media-related programmes, compared to partners' management efficiency. SDC clearly comes out better although in both cases partners are generally more positive about their own and SDC's management, than SDC officers. In a number of cases SDC had reservations about partners' organisational capacity especially in the areas of financial management/reporting, institutional governance and monitoring and evaluation/reporting results (e.g. TMF and MCT in Tanzania, IPGL in the Great Lakes Region, AEPO in Afghanistan, Radio Ergo in Somalia, MMC in Bangladesh). Increasingly it appears that SDC has recognised the need to build organisational capacity strengthening activities for its implementing partners into media programmes (e.g. the Healthy Families, Healthy Society project in Afghanistan has as its second outcome *'AEPO will increase its capacity to better design, manage and sustain educational media projects'*, and has often supported this with directly funded technical backstopping. For example in Tanzania, for TMF, KPMG has provided strategic and risk management consultancy in the process of localisation while Christoph Spurk (University of Zurich) has advised on M&E; in Burundi the online newspaper *Iwacu* has benefited from management training from SDC.

Detractors of SDC's management style point to the lack of specialised understanding of media amongst programme officers (e.g. in Kosovo, DRC, Great Lakes), onerous financial reporting requirements and a tendency to focus on financial and administrative aspects rather than the wider ambitions of the programme (e.g. Bhutan).

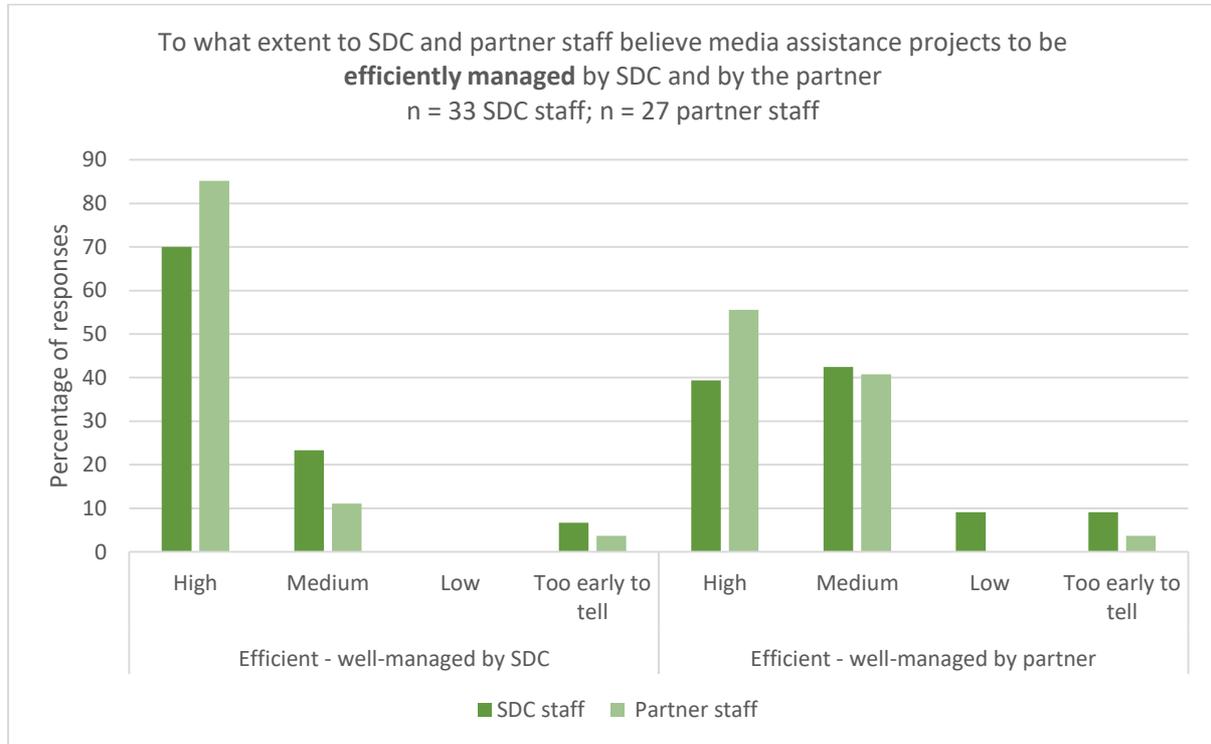


Figure 15: Opinions about Efficiency of Management of Media Assistance Projects

Sustainability Fig. 16 below indicates that more SDC staff thought it was too early to tell if their programmes were sustainable (30%) than those who thought they were highly sustainable (25%) and there was wide divergence between their responses and those of partners (59% - high and 11% - too early to tell). The variation in responses is at least partly accounted for by differences in definition and measurement of sustainability and assumptions made about continued funding. Some respondents focused on the sustainability of the institutions involved, particularly the potential for reduced reliance on external funding, whereas others considered the sustainability of outcomes and wider impacts on audiences and the media sector. For example in Tunisia, Fondation Hirondelle reported the project with Radio Tunisienne was highly sustainable *if* new working practices were genuinely maintained, but at the same time admitted that this required not only the implementation of skills and use of equipment but also political commitment to the notion of public service broadcasting by the government. SDC suggested it was too early to tell. This was also the case in Somalia where SDC thinks Radio Ergo is sustainable only to a low extent while its partners, IMS and Radio Ergo itself, rated it medium and high respectively. For the SDC officer sustainability implies local ownership and local funding and currently Radio Ergo does not have either, and is reliant on external funding and external production/broadcasting [from Nairobi]. IMS on the other hand said: *“Radio Ergo will continue to be dependent on external funding due to its nature. However the capacity built among journalists and stringers and the knowledge and awareness raised among Somali audiences will sustain.”*

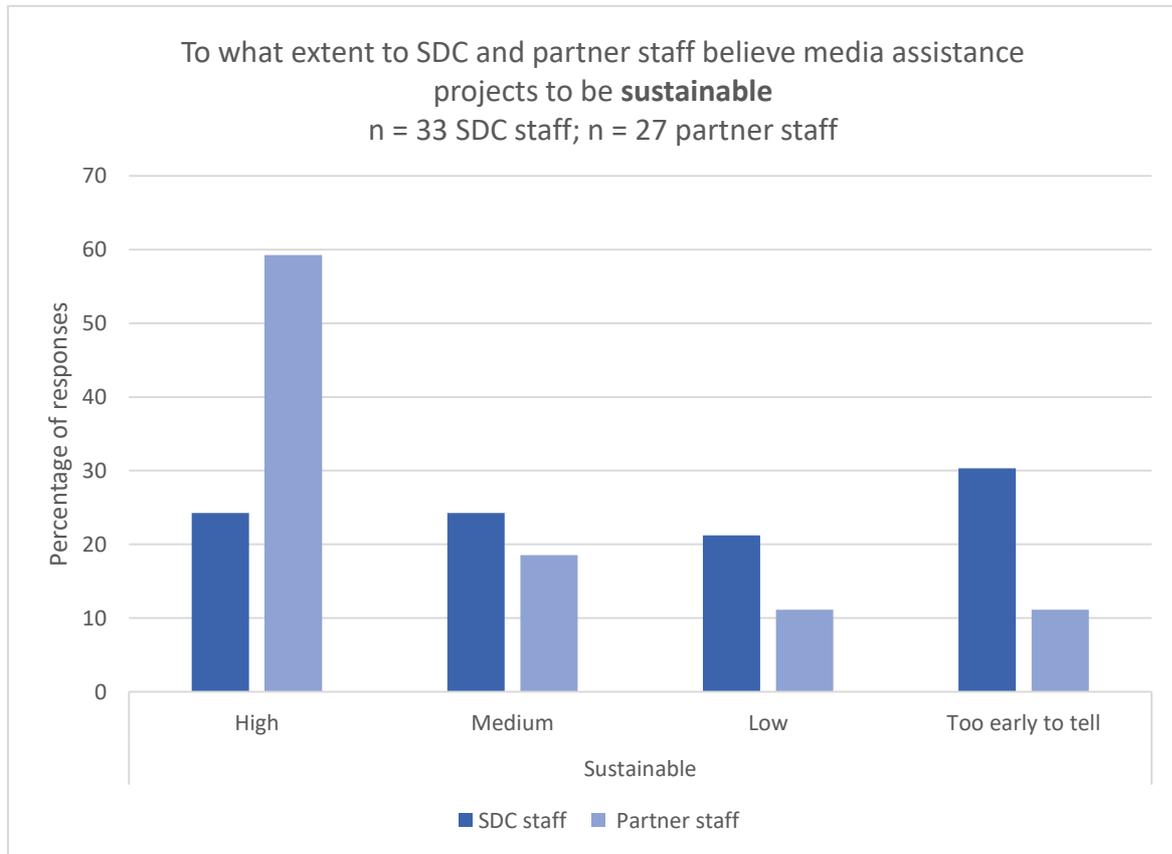


Figure 16: Opinions of the Sustainability of Media Assistance Projects

It seems that increasingly SDC recognises that sustainability should be designed into the project, addressing business development, marketing and financial capacities of media houses as well as editorial and technical skills; and also supporting reform of legal, tax and regulatory aspects that make it difficult for media houses to sustain themselves. Bhutan and Tanzania are good examples of projects which conduct multiple activities and address multiple spheres of interest – individual practitioners, media organisations, systems etc. to support the viability of the media sector as a whole. *“The approach has evolved a little, from focusing on content to strengthening structures which support good journalism e.g. better working conditions, mentoring in the media houses, better business plan for outlets, stronger internal governance. We have also placed greater emphasis on rural reporting,”* said SDC’s NPO in Tanzania.

But in poor economic environments with minimal advertising, and where traditional media are increasingly in competition with online/digital media (accessed via mobile phones), the potential for media houses to generate revenue on a commercial basis is limited (e.g. Journal *Iwacu*, Burundi). And in political contexts where the space for media and civil society is closing, there may even be setbacks, undermining or undoing gains made: Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) agreed with SDC that the extent of sustainability of the Empowering Media in Tanzania project was medium: *“...important to acknowledge that an executive that is hostile to media freedoms can put in place legislation and regulations that might reverse some achievements gained”*.

6.5 How context sensitive are current programmes?

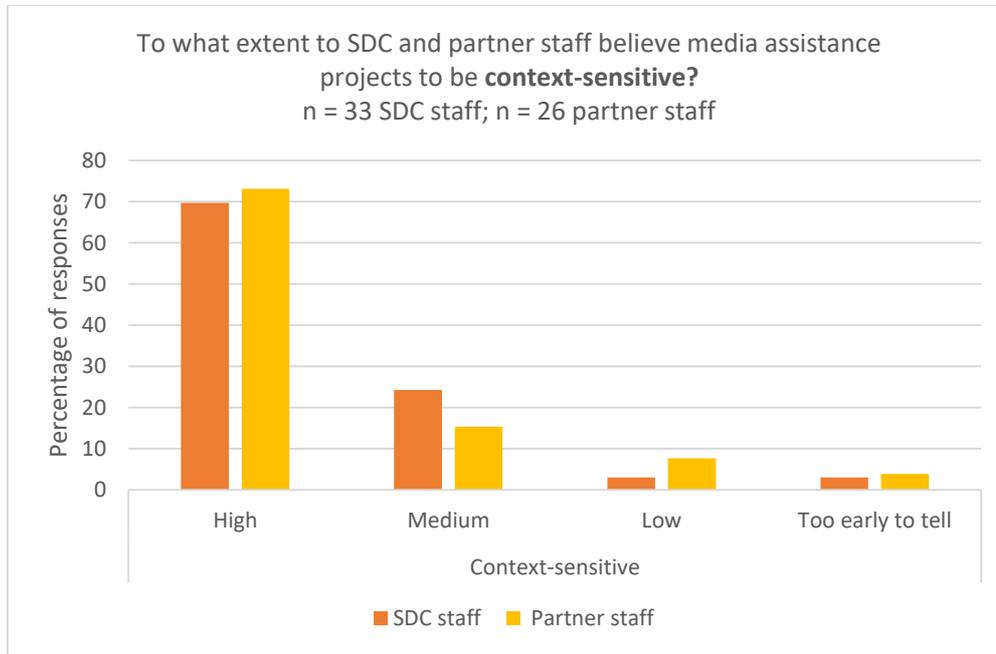


Figure 17: Opinions of the Context-sensitivity of Media Assistance Projects

As shown in the above graph (Fig. 17.), the majority of media programmes are thought to be highly context-sensitive by both SDC officers and partners: this is what we would expect given that many of the recipient countries are fragile and conflict affected states and the media is a key stakeholder in democratic governance processes. In fact, it is more surprising that SDC actually funds a number of media programmes, including in fragile states, which its staff only consider to be context-sensitive to a medium or even low extent. These include Niger, Rwanda, DRC, Tunisia and Somalia. It should be pointed out that in some of these cases partners felt they were highly context sensitive. This variation in responses may be explained by differences in how respondents believe context sensitivity is demonstrated by the programmes – through *responding* to the context or *changing* the context, or indeed by being *politically sensitive* in nature. An example of the first definition can be found in Niger where the partner, Fondation Hirondelle, said it was *'sensitive to different languages and conflict and reflecting different points of view in a fragile context'* but this may not have met SDC's desire for a more robust engagement with the context. Context- or political- sensitivity sometimes looks like risk averseness or 'playing it safe': for example in Afghanistan AEPO says "[we are] *not touching issues that make people angry – all our programmes appeal to all sections of society...even the Taliban are listening to it and not objecting*". However an independent external evaluation suggested that AEPO could tackle harder issues more effectively, and SDC also feels that AEPO is doing what it has been doing for 20 years and needs to step up to new challenges.

Some respondents suggested that SDC's own level of sensitivity to context affects the design and operation of programmes, both negatively and positively, depending on the country: for example in Kosovo a Helvetas partner pointed out that "1) SDC plays a limited role in the North of Kosovo (high political risks), 2) [SDC] does not speak out in the public discourse in Kosovo and 3) [SDC] does not address yet the main problem (clientelistic government system developed and maintained by political

/ mafia elite)". Partners in Burundi and Tunisia also expressed disappointment that SDC was not willing to engage more on the diplomatic level and take a stronger stance on press freedom with their governments. By contrast, in Bangladesh SDC personnel feel SDC plays an appropriate role responding to context by engaging with government through a coordinating mechanism for donors on local governance: "We [the working group] try to have a policy dialogue with the government, to make sure important provisions are respected". Here and in a number of other countries, such as Tanzania and Macedonia, both SDC and partners had praise for how the Swiss Ambassador often engages publicly on human rights and freedom of expression issues in response to closing space.

6.6 How far do media programmes address non-discrimination, inclusion & gender?

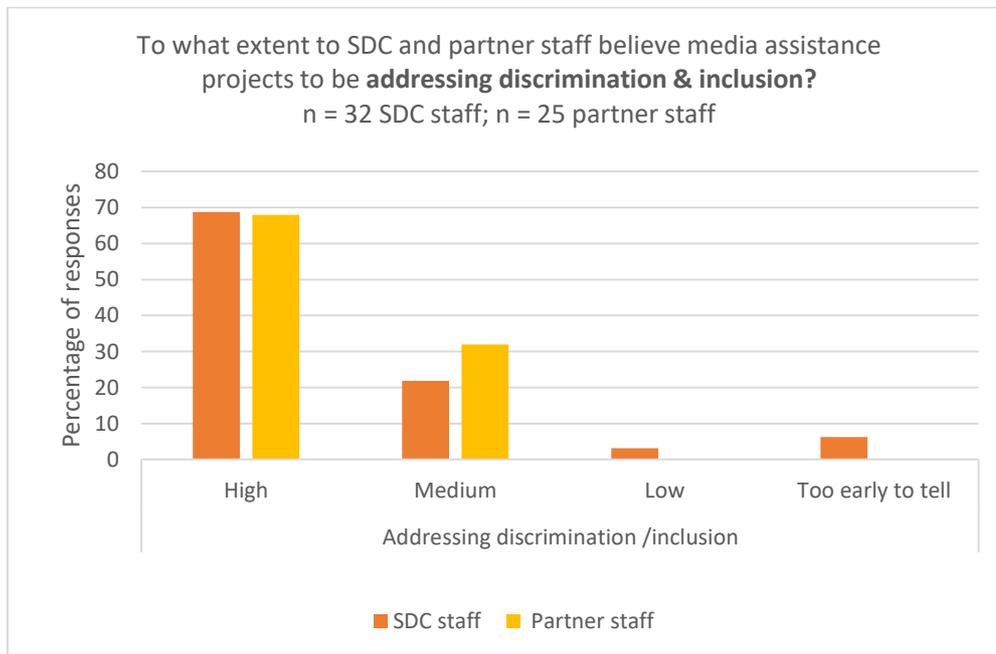


Figure 18: Opinions about Addressing Inclusion in Media Assistance Projects

The graph above (Fig. 18) shows that responses around the extent of inclusivity of programmes have a similar pattern to that for context sensitivity: relatively high (approaching 70% for both SDC staff and partners) but at the same time it is perhaps surprising that after over a decade of gender mainstreaming in development and increasing policy attention to issues of social exclusion, vulnerability and discrimination, that there are still programmes which address these issues to only a medium extent. Whilst a gender checklist is a feature of all credit proposals, to assess how gender sensitive a programme is likely to be, this is not necessarily translated into a deliberate strategy to integrate gender and inclusivity systematically into design, operations, internal policies and monitoring and evaluation systems, or to explicitly address and change gender norms and to recognise the fact that women are not a homogenous group. Issues of differing access to and control of media, portrayal and representation by the media, employment and participation in the media sector, and impacts on different sections of society are not always a focus of activity or measurement. Some SDC officers and partners believe a more robust approach to social inclusion

should be used, for example like that of the World Bank. BBC Media Action in Tanzania is a good example of a partner that explicitly set out to reach and have impact on women and youth audiences, and to disaggregate results, in its *Niambie* programme. Another appears to be Oxfam Novib in Mali where they say ‘*Social cohesion and social inclusion are among the objectives of the project. Spaces are offered to women and young people to talk about their preoccupations and to criticize, if necessary, the practices of the public authorities in case of non satisfaction*’. (See also Box 5 on Inclusion and Gender). Overall we detect a greater capacity amongst international NGOs compared to local organisations to understand and integrate inclusivity issues into programmes in a strategic and holistic way.

6.7 How do SDC and partners judge cost-effectiveness?

Responses to this question show a wide divergence between partners and SDC, with over 70% of partners rating their programmes as delivering high value for money and only 25% of SDC officers saying the same. The measurement of cost-effectiveness and value for money is notoriously difficult in media-related programmes, where there are no obvious tools and metrics for estimating the value of benefits. Some SDC officers pointed out that it is difficult to measure value for money in democracy and governance processes: “*Cost effectiveness in democratisation! Not an easy subject.*” Generally partner respondents focused on economy – how cheaply inputs are procured - and efficiency – how well resources are converted into outputs – rather than effectiveness – the conversion of outputs into outcomes – and equity – the fair distribution of benefits. In some cases where media was a vector for delivering content, partners measure the cost per person reached or point to the large coverage achieved by (e.g. Radio Ergo, AEPO, BBC Media Action, Fondation Hirondelle), but for the most part answers were simply based on a ‘sense’ of whether value for money had been achieved.

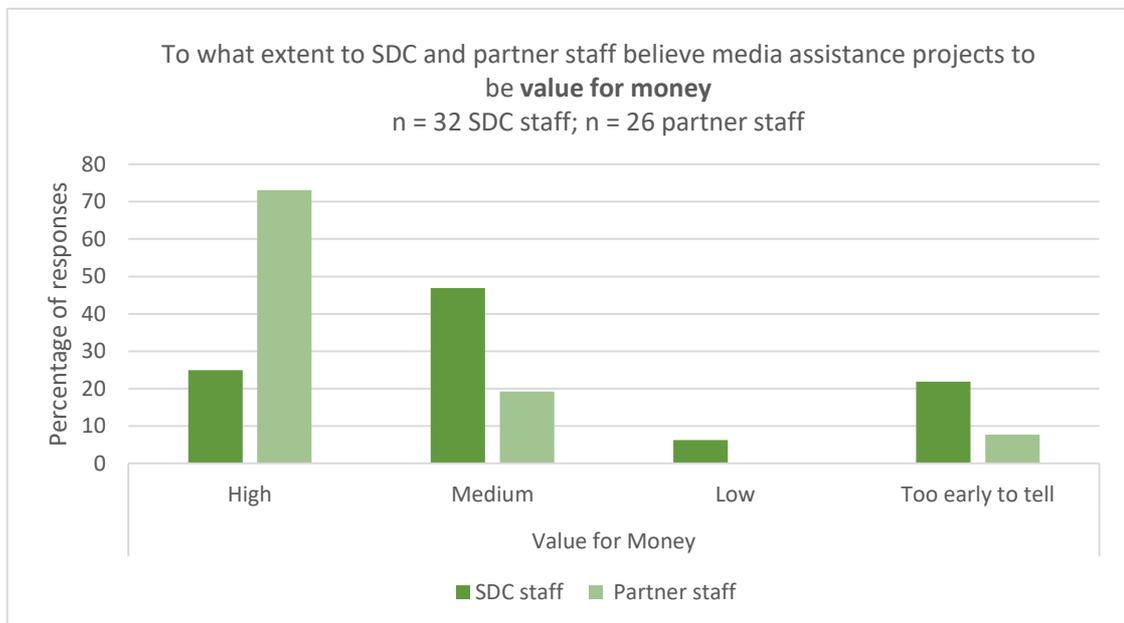


Figure 19: Opinions about Value-For-Money in Media Assistance Projects

Box 5 | Inclusion and Gender in SDC's media projects

'States that exclude voices in politics or the media are more likely to fail' – says one of SDC's partners in Morocco, Media Diversity Institute (MDI). Largely for this reason, SDC supports media projects that foster the inclusion of women, youth, different ethnic groups and other minorities. In our survey, 70 per cent of SDC staff and partners said 'high' when asked about the extent of inclusion in their projects. The following are examples from Morocco, Bangladesh and Burkina Faso.

In **Morocco** SDC's project called Promoting Freedom of Expression, Diversity and Inclusion in Morocco aims for the Moroccan media to become a change actor through airing voices of vulnerable groups such as refugees and migrants, raising public awareness and reducing xenophobia and racism. Part of MDI's activities includes promoting the adoption by media houses and the Press Council of a *Diversity Charter*. This charter contains guidelines on how important it is to include minorities and marginalized groups, such as women, youth and disabled people, not only in media content but also in newsrooms. By 2016 the project had ensured that nine key media groups had signed it and were genuinely committed and implementing it. The project has an interesting promotional [film](#) about promoting diversity in the Moroccan media. SDC's National Programme Officer in Morocco said: *"we can consider it an outcome to have for example a woman participating in an event, and raising awareness about inclusion, [this] is a significant change."*

In **Bangladesh** the Mass-line Media Centre (MMC) programme that SDC supported 2011-15 called Citizen Voice for Improved Public Services (CVIPS) has, among other things, been training women newspaper journalists to *'bridge the gap between the poor and disadvantaged and local government institutions'*. Women journalists are stigmatised in Bangladesh because their job obliges them to travel, stay out overnight and work alongside men. Too often they are given the desk-work rather than grass-roots reporting. But MMC reported that it had successfully brought new faces in areas where journalism has not been encouraged for women, especially in Sylhet and Rajshahi, which are traditional and conservative areas. A total of 91 women journalists received training and orientation on journalism and local government, gender and extreme poverty and local government policy, over four years. However, challenges remain, as one SDC programme officer told us *"We have a challenge promoting women journalists sufficiently, because of the economic and social context."* For instance, women were only 12 percent of the MMC journalist trainees and Transparency International (SDC's partner on another governance project in Bangladesh) reported that of over 50 investigative journalism awards given, only 6 were given to women.

In **Burkina Faso** Fondation Hirondelle was mandated by SDC to raise the standards at the state broadcaster, Radio Television du Burkina (RTB) between 2015 and 2016. Fondation Hirondelle say inclusion is their *raison d'être*, and 'a space for all' is integral to their editorial approach. For example, they have recently helped RTB broadcast some *grands reportages* on television about: migration of teenagers on the route through Libya to Italy; female genital mutilation; child marriage and polygamy. All of these involved interviews with people who would not normally feature prominently on TV in Burkina Faso and tackled sensitive gender and youth issues, yet the programmes were very popular because they reflected the challenges of ordinary people.

7 | SDC compared with other donors

Switzerland is one of about 25 industrialized countries which have programmes of media assistance around the world. While media assistance is thought to be a small fraction of overseas development assistance (ODA), it is nevertheless estimated to be in the region of US \$625 million per year, worldwide³⁸. While numbers fluctuate over time, independent media funding has recently constituted approximately two percent of total support for governance by OECD member countries—or less than half a percent of official development assistance overall³⁹.

7.1 SDC's spending compared with other donors

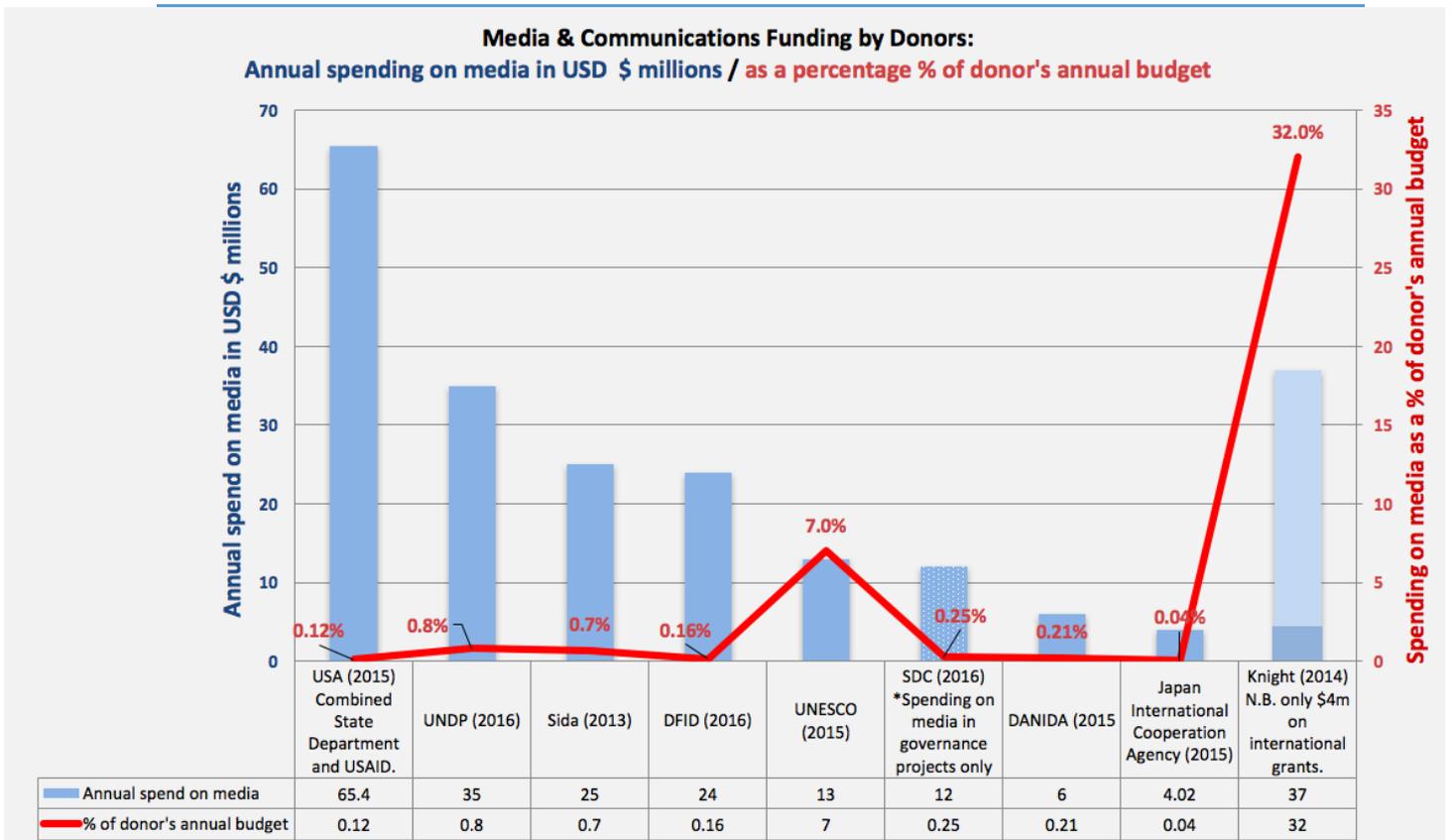


Figure 20: Media and Communications Funding by Donors

The graph above shows media and communications spending by a selection of major donors in recent years, showing both the comparative size of their media-assistance budgets and their media-spend as a percentage of their overall annual budgets.

³⁸ Current estimate by Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA) <http://www.cima.ned.org/what-is-media-development/> accessed June 2017

³⁹ Shanthi Kalathil, (2017), *A Slowly Shifting Field: Understanding Donor Priorities in Media Development* A CIMA Digital Report: Washington D.C.

It shows that SDC (sixth from the left) is a medium-sized donor on media issues: smaller than Sweden (Sida) and the UK (DFID) but larger than Denmark (Danida) or Japan (JICA). We have counted only SDC's spending on media and governance here, whereas we are almost certain that the figures for the other donors are for *all* their media and communications for development, including media used for raising awareness on health, agriculture, education etc. as well as, in some instances, telecoms and ICT. So, if we had the figure for SDC's other communications work we believe SDC's total would probably be several millions of US dollars higher, although probably still slightly behind Sida and DFID. It is interesting to note that SDC, at 0.25%, spends a slightly higher proportion of its overall budget on media than the USA, DFID, Danida and JICA each do (and, again, this figure would be even higher were non-governance media projects added to the calculation).

7.2 SDC's approach compared with other donors

In a companion report to this one (see iMedia, 2017, *Media Donors/Literature Review*) we have highlighted the fact that media assistance has always been a relatively marginal part of the global development agenda. This is not helped by the present international climate which is characterised by conservative politics and aid budget cuts, making a risky area like media likely to remain marginal for the foreseeable future.

Where it has a 'home' in bilateral development agencies, media support is usually within governance divisions - or sometimes human rights. In this respect SDC is no different from most other aid agencies such as DFID or Sida, in that SDC's main media work is a sub-section of governance work and is accorded a similarly small proportion of the overall budget. Indeed, like most of its OECD counterparts, SDC is a donor that does not single out media with a separate funding line, but generally incorporates media assistance into larger governance programmes. Incidentally, this integration within other projects and a lack of common coding of media programmes by donors makes it extremely difficult to trace spending on media, both within and across donor agencies.

There does not appear to be a clear public position taken by SDC on how and why it supports media projects apart from a couple of statements buried in documents such as the 2007 *Orientation Guide*. On this point, as our donor review found, SDC is no different to most bilateral donors, few of which have a clear public position on this issue and, like SDC, do not give any particular status, desk or institutional home to media assistance⁴⁰. Again, like other donors, SDC is somewhat cautious in its support to media, being very aware that the field is fraught with political risks. It is only the specialised agencies like UNESCO and distinct foundations such as Open Society and the Knight Foundation that see media support as part of their core mission.

In terms of guiding principles for media support, a quick comparison between SDC, DFID and Danish DANIDA shows that SDC is broadly similar to other like-minded bilateral donors. (See Annex 4 for a table comparing the three donors' guiding principles side by side.)

It is noticeable that most of the bilateral donors' media guidelines date from up to a decade ago (SDC 2007, DFID 2008, Sida 2010, Danida 2011). Since then, most donors have sought to update

⁴⁰ An exception to this is Norway's NORAD which has a senior adviser with responsibility for 'civil society, freedom of expression and media development'. Swedish Sida is also slightly more explicit about its support to media than other donors: it has a clear thematic area entitled 'Democracy, Human rights and Freedom of Expression' - see <http://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/our-fields-of-work/democracy-human-rights-and-freedom-of-expression/democracy-and-human-rights/>

their own internal reflections in various ways such as participation in seminars/conferences, commissioning of research, generation of evidence and policy briefings: the most influential of which have probably been convened or produced by BBC Media Action, CIMA, FOME, IMS, IREX, Internews, OECD/DAC Governance Network, UNESCO, World Bank Institute, and various academic bodies – mostly funded by the OECD bilateral donors and the big foundations. (A selection of the most recent policy and strategy documents by donors, think tanks, international NGOs and other international bodies appears in the annotated bibliography of our *Donor/Literature Review*⁴¹.)

Media technologies are, of course, moving and changing very fast. Most donors include the internet, digital, social and mobile media in their definition (or implicit understanding) of 'media' but it is noteworthy that SDC does not explicitly do so in its 2007 guidelines⁴². Because of the convergence of platforms (e.g. radio content is now 'broadcast' over the internet as well as radio waves), media are now generally seen as encompassing all traditional, digital and mobile means of spreading and accessing news and information. Rather than producing their own guidelines on digital and social media, only for them to become quickly out of date, it is noticeable that donors have tended to leave specialist agencies and implementing partners to map the changing media landscapes and make country-level adjustments to activities as appropriate⁴³.

7.3 SDC's approach to M&E in media compared with other donors

SDC, as we have seen, has found the M&E of its media programmes difficult. But at least it is not alone: monitoring and evaluation in the media field is universally acknowledged to be problematic. We have covered the arguments and the attempts to generate evidence of what works in our *Donor/Literature Review*. SDC has not invested in research and the generation of evidence to a large degree, compared to DFID and some of the larger foundations, for example. In our *Donor/Literature Review* we show that implementers like BBC Media Action (funded largely by DFID) have recently devoted significant attention and resources to providing evidence of the impact and the value-for-money of media and governance projects. Much of this is quite compelling. But we also show that, generally, the evidence of a clear link between media interventions and good governance outcomes is patchy and suffers from methodological flaws, perhaps the most serious of which remains the fact that this 'evidence' is largely being generated by implementing organisations which have a vested interest in finding positive impacts of their own interventions.

7.4 SDC's partnership style compared with other donors

One of the questions we asked partners in our survey of SDC's media partners was about the general approach to partnership by SDC, and how partners compared SDC with other donors.

Generally, the picture is very positive, with most partners saying that SDC's partnership style is highly consultative. For example, Fondation Hirondelle and partners in Benin, Mali, Niger, Tunisia and Morocco all said that SDC is an approachable and a listening donor, partly because SDC is relatively small.

⁴¹ See iMedia (2017) *Capitalisation Exercise of SDC's engagement in Media Assistance: Review of the Recent Literature and Other Donors' Approaches*, consultancy report iMedia: London

⁴² There is not a single mention of the internet, social media or mobiles in the 2007 'Orientation Guide'. In it, 'media outlets' are defined as 'the single media enterprise, the TV channel, radio station or weekly printed magazine'.

⁴³ See for example Toustrup, Morten, & Poul Erik Nielsen, (2016), [Changing Media Landscapes in Transitional Countries - Handbook on Mapping Media Landscapes](#), IMS: Copenhagen

In Benin, one partner talked about a *“higher frequency of meetings than with other donors”*. A partner in Somalia said:

“SDC is loyal, flexible, engaged, interested, professional and friendly, supporting institutional development and leveraging of co-funding.”

A partner in Tunisia contrasted SDC with the EU, saying that SDC's approach to media support was *“courageous”* and *“intense”*. Another partner in Bhutan said:

“We see SDC as a very like-minded donor.... closest to Scandinavian donors and [they] differ from others in the way they operationalise their work and look specifically at media in the broader governance context.”

A partner in Macedonia said: *“SDC is in the ‘golden middle’ of donors, between the EU which is bureaucratic and focused only on financial issues, and USAID which is in almost daily contact to the point of interfering with [our] work.”*

However, there were a number of less positive comparisons made between SDC and other donors. There were several mentions of paper-work and onerous financial reporting procedures. For example, one partner in Kosovo said:

“SDC is one of the flexible donors, but they are also very demanding in terms of downward accountability. These two approaches – ‘we are flexible, we can change’, but also changing lots of things – requires lots of paper work, justification, reasoning, analysis, and checking how others do it.”

Another partner in Tanzania said: *“[SDC's] finance systems ...are some of the least flexible and most unconstructively detailed I have ever encountered. They seem to have requirements that merely take up our (and presumably their own) resources and add no obvious value at all as control mechanisms.”*

A couple of partners, in Bangladesh and the Great Lakes, who have had problems recently and have had their contracts terminated, were (predictably) aggrieved and pointed to what they regarded as overly stringent financial reporting requirements. They said they had not been given a chance to meet the financial and management standards that SDC required and had not been offered help. For instance, one former partner thought SDC more stringent than DANIDA or GIZ (German cooperation), saying: *“It's a bit tough to work with SDC... it's very difficult. We don't have the competency level demanded by a donor like SDC...particularly on maintaining the accounts, auditing issues. When SDC find something that doesn't meet their standards – they don't play the suggestive role.”*

However, these complaints about bureaucracy and lack of support do not seem to arise everywhere. For instance in Bangladesh a different partner said: *“SDC is a charming partner, supporting us wholeheartedly..[as a partner, they're] “absolutely easy”*. Partners in Somalia and the DRC did not see SDC as too prescriptive or bureaucratic and said, *“SDC do not have heavy or onerous administrative procedures”*. A partner in Kosovo was of like mind: *“SDC ... trusts the implementer a lot, they listen to advice they get from the implementer. They can be flexible about budget and log-frame, if you negotiate well.”* In Tanzania, the partner was happy that *“SDC will provide technical assistance to enable us to do organisational development. [They] don't interfere – [we are] really happy with this kind of association.”* Nevertheless it is worth pointing out that these testimonies are either from

large international NGOs or from long-established partners of many years. This suggests that new, small and local NGOs can find SDC's procedures very difficult to deal with, whereas larger, more experienced NGOs do not perceive a problem.

7.5 SDC's added value

We asked both SDC staff and partners in-country whether they could identify what made SDC different or special, i.e. what added value SDC brings as a donor to media.

The main element that emerged was Swiss neutrality: as one Regional Representative said: *"Switzerland is known for international law and neutrality... we have to launch in, even when it's raining!"* In the opinion of many, this neutrality is an asset because political and diplomatic advocacy work is more possible for SDC than for other donors who may be perceived as having a hidden agenda (this was mentioned by several partners and own SDC staff – for example in Macedonia, Burundi, Tunisia, Great Lakes Regional and DRC). In the words of SDC in Morocco: *"The strength of Switzerland is in providing peace, mediation, finding consensus, bridging gaps and bringing protagonists to the table."* As mentioned above (see Policy and Strategy section 4), SDC does indeed seem to be playing this convening role by playing an active part and sometimes leading multi-donor groups in a significant number of countries.

One opinion from Macedonia was particularly eloquent about Switzerland's good-governance advantage: *"Switzerland itself is a good example of decentralised governance, federal state and not seen to be too aligned within the political spectrum."*

As well as the neutrality and good governance characteristics, one partner in DRC picked out SDC's reputation for covering Francophone countries and crisis states; and another partner in Morocco talked about Switzerland being a *"model of diversity with many languages and groups"*, therefore being a very appropriate supporter of the media diversity programme in that country.

8 | Successes, Challenges, Risks and Strategies

First, a couple of caveats: this is a CapEx (capitalization of experience) not an evaluation report, therefore what we identify here are mainly successes and challenges, strengths, weaknesses etc. as identified by SDC and its partners, they are *not* independent judgements or assessments made by iMedia. However, we have permitted ourselves to select what we feel are the most salient points and to elaborate on the strategies SDC staff pointed to. So there is, inevitably, an element of iMedia's own advice/views in what follows.

8.1 Successes and strengths

Starting with successes, we gathered many stories ranging from the achievements/outputs of individual projects (e.g. *'400 journalists trained'* (Bangladesh)) to the more long-term positive impacts of SDC's support (e.g. *'we invested in community radios early, now 20 years later everyone's saying how vital they are!'* (Benin)). Some of the success stories we gathered are incorporated into the illustrative boxes on peace-building, anti-corruption, elections and inclusion elsewhere in this report; and in the section below is a further selection of successes that SDC staff and partners identified and/or we gathered from documents.

However, SDC NPOs did not provide as much evidence of successes as we were expecting. Several skipped the question in our questionnaire⁴⁴ or gave short, vague answers such as *'Better appreciation of the national radio and television by the citizens'*. We identify three reasons for this: firstly respondents may have felt constrained by time and space in answering our questionnaire and during the follow up phone interviews because giving stories of impact is often difficult to do in short-form, without explaining the context in relatively long detail. Secondly, there does not seem to be much concrete evidence of impact gathered by projects and few external evaluations commissioned, which means that SDC staff cannot easily identify impact stories or statistics. This points to some gaps in M&E procedures and knowledge management which we discuss elsewhere in this report. Thirdly, there is the more general difficulty of identifying the effects of media projects because they are often very intangible and difficult to prove; this is a universal challenge in the media assistance field, and where SDC is not alone⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ Of 19 respondents to this question, 8 skipped the 'success' sub-question which was "If your current media assistance project(s) have been operational for at least one year, what do you think are their main successes so far? Please name 1 - 3 successes"

⁴⁵ See our iMedia's Donor/Lit Review as part of the CapEx.

The following are a selection of success stories (and some remaining challenges⁴⁶) provided by SDC staff and partners:

Afghanistan – Afghan Education Production Organization (AEPO) radio drama: There is evidence that listeners can recall what they have learned from the programmes and have been able to put into practice awareness on HIV/AIDS and the role of women in society, and they share this with others. There are good prospects for the long-term sustainability of the AEPO itself, with new skills being used to develop a four-five year strategic plan: commercial possibilities have been researched and options presented and discussed with donors and relevant ministries.

Reasons for Success: SDC has offered consistent support over a long time-frame (the drama has been on-air for 20 years, SDC has funded it since 2003). There has been investment in audience research and other M&E so that a strong impact story can be told, which has attracted other funders and local support. Initially, a specialised international media-support agency (the BBC) was chosen with high level of expertise who, in turn, provided capacity-building and encouraged AEPO to try to become a sustainable local organisation.

Some remaining challenges: Despite some very positive qualitative results, SDC staff expressed difficulties and frustrations around setting appropriate indicators and demonstrating results for this project.

Bangladesh - Building Integrity Blocks for Effective Change (BIBEC): There have been a number of significant improvements in the legal framework and policy changes at national level such as the accession of Bangladesh to the UN Convention against Corruption and the adoption of the Right to Information Act (2010).

Reasons for Success: In this case, SDC has been able to offer a degree of political/diplomatic protection due to Swiss neutrality in sensitive political contexts, which has allowed the partner (Transparency International) to push a little harder on corruption issues than other advocacy groups/NGOs. Activities like media-awards for investigative journalism and media campaigns have been critical in garnering support for the anti-corruption movement and creating public pressure through public discourse at the local and national levels.

Some remaining challenges: The external legal and regulatory environment appears to be increasingly unfavourable to independent media.

⁴⁶ For some suggested solutions to these challenges, see Table 2 'Challenges and Strategies to Overcome Them'

Benin - ASCComm⁴⁷ (19 year community radio project). As one SDC staff member said: 'we invested in community radios early, now 20 years later everyone's saying how vital they are!' (Benin). An independent evaluation report⁴⁸ in 2016 highlighted community radios' contribution to: rural economy value chain; better agricultural productivity; better access for people to education and training; better access to public services and improvement in public services.

Reasons for Success: Apart from SDC offering consistent support to this project over a long time-frame (19 years), another reason for success is that community radio as a sector was supported by SDC in a holistic way by including capacity development, legal aspects, infrastructure, content and financial aspects all together in the same programme (see also Box 6 on Positive Lessons from Tanzania and Benin).

Some remaining challenges: The umbrella group, FERCAB (*Fédération des Radios Communautaires et Associatives du Bénin*) which brings together 37 radio stations to train them, is itself relatively new and fragile and requires institutional capacity-building.

Burundi - Journal *Iwacu* is still open and reporting despite crisis and against all odds; SDC is still finding ways to support free expression by journalists in exile – e.g. websites *Humura* and *Inzamba* produced in Rwanda bring independent radio into Burundi via the internet.

Reasons for Success: SDC has offered a degree of political/diplomatic protection due to Swiss neutrality in sensitive political contexts. SDC has done a careful and continuous monitoring of the political economy of the media sector, so it understands the context well and has a close relationship with the relevant partners.

Some remaining challenges: Threat of further violent conflict and an external legal and regulatory environment that is very unfavourable to independent media are still big challenges in Burundi.

D R Congo - Radio Okapi, the United Nations peace radio (supported by SDC since 2002 directly at first, then through Fondation Hirondelle) remains sustainable, trustworthy, internationally recognised, with approximately 14 million listeners per day – it also boasts the most popular website in the D R Congo.

Reasons for Success: Good choice of a specialised partner (Fondation Hirondelle) and commitment of support made by SDC at an early and opportune moment in the DRC peace process (i.e. 2002), when donors had maximum influence. SDC/Swiss embassy coordinated closely with

⁴⁷ *Appui suisse à la Communication Communautaire*

⁴⁸ SEREC, (2015) *L'Éveil des Sans Voix: Capitalisation des dix-neuf ans d'appui de la Coopération Suisse aux radios de proximité au Bénin*, SDC/DDC Bern

other donors at country level on a continuous basis, pooling knowledge/learning about media and co-funding Radio Okapi with other donors. SDC has also offered consistent support over a relatively long time-frame, and demonstrated staying-power.

Some remaining challenges: The long-term sustainability of public service media houses like Radio Okapi via commercial options/advertising is difficult because markets are poor and under-developed.

Macedonia – as part of the Civil Society Funding Facility, one of the grantees, SCOOP (a local NGO supporting investigative journalism), made a break-through in investigative journalism in 2015 with a series of important stories including: ‘How rich is the ruling party’ which was widely shared in Macedonia and picked up by international media. (See the story [here](#)). Through another partner, the Association of Journalists, SDC has helped support four journalists to file a case at the European Court of Human Rights which upheld the illegality of their expulsion from Parliament in 2012 after Macedonian courts had ruled that no law had been broken.

Reasons for Success: Wise choice of partner was made initially, and good donor-partner relations have been achieved and sustained. SDC as a medium sized donor, is able to be a ‘listening’ partner that is approachable and able to design and support projects in a hands-on style.

Some remaining challenges: Difficulties and frustrations still remain around setting appropriate indicators and demonstrating results.

Mali - *Radio Klédu*: during the 2013 post-crisis elections, SDC provided equipment and financial support to *Radio Klédu* which – for the first time in Mali – covered voting day live, relaying violent incidents in real-time and publishing the results live when the polling stations closed thereby ensuring that there was no possibility of electoral fraud at polling stations.

Reasons for Success: Being flexible and ready to make rapid one-off grants in urgent situations, when necessary.

Some remaining challenges: The SDC NPO expressed difficulties and frustrations around setting appropriate indicators and demonstrating results with the media activities of the current PEGA programme.

Niger - Studio Kalangou (Fondation Hirondelle) was recently hailed by French Ambassador as doing “*un travail formidable*”; Voice of America and Radio France Internationale use Studio Kalangou’s news as their reference point meaning it has high credibility.

Reasons for Success: Working through experienced, specialised local or international media-support agencies (in this case Fondation Hirondelle) who can select the most appropriate media

outlet(s), or set up new ones, as with Studio Kalangou, which is a news production studio working in five local languages, producing independent, non-partisan news and debate.

Some remaining challenges: The low status, educational and professional standards of local journalists/media-workers/media managers can mean inaccurate, partisan and biased reporting; capacity development often has to start from a very low base and needs to be a constant activity, due to turnover of journalists in media houses.

Tanzania - In 2016, almost four million Tanzanian youth reported that they had listened to the *Niambie* show, a BBC Media Action radio show, i.e. 24% of the 15-35 year old population, plus 155,000 fans on Facebook. Compared to non-listeners, young people who listened to *Niambie* were significantly more likely to be knowledgeable about political and current affairs, nearly three times as likely to discuss these issues with others, and more than twice as likely to engage in some form of political action, such as volunteering for a political party, or attending a local government meeting.

Reasons for Success: BBC Media Action is a highly professional partner which SDC has supported to produce an engaging radio show which has proved very popular. BBC Media Action has put emphasis on monitoring and researching the impact of its media content on audiences, so that a strong impact story can be told.

Some remaining challenges: Despite the programme's contribution to increased youth engagement, there is more to do when it comes to building youths' confidence that they can influence political decision-making. Within the context of a changing political climate and the implementation of laws that restrict freedom of expression, Tanzanian youth have become more uncertain, or unwilling to share their opinion, about whether they can have an impact on decision-making processes in the country. Listening to *Niambie* did not appear to have an impact on youths' perceived ability to affect political decisions⁴⁹.

Tunisia - After 5 years of SDC support starting in 2011, Radio Tunisienne can now boast five regional/rural stations in Gafsa, Kef, Tataouine, Monstir and Sfax which are fully equipped, re-trained, with 20 new staff using new and professional working methods.

Reasons for Success: Working through specialised local or international media-support agencies who, in turn, provide expertise, capacity-building and appropriate equipment to local media houses. In Tunisia SDC worked through Fondation Hirondelle and with a local coach to build the management capacity of Radio Tunisienne, the state broadcaster.

⁴⁹ *Niambie*: Final Project Report Annex 1: Endline Research Report, March 2017, BBC Media Action, London

Some remaining challenges: Sustaining the positive changes that this project has brought about is not guaranteed because the Tunisian government still controls Radio Tunisienne and is showing signs of still wanting to use it as its media mouthpiece. At the present time (mid-2017) opinion seems to be divided within SDC over whether the Radio Tunisienne project still needs support or whether the new SDC regional policy – which is to *de-prioritise* institutions directly linked to the government – will bear fruit.

Summary: Achievements and Reasons for Success

We present below: a summary of the main achievements and strengths/reasons for success⁵⁰, as communicated to us by SDC staff and partners.

Table 1: Achievements and Reasons for Success

Achievements	Countries/Examples ⁵¹	Strengths/Reasons for Success
SDC has contributed to more professional, diverse, inclusive/gender aware, independent (and/or public service) media houses in several countries	Morocco, DRC, Tunisia and others	- Working through specialised local or international media-support agencies who, in turn, provide expertise, capacity-building and can select and support the most appropriate media outlet(s)
SDC has enabled important messages, info, education and quality content to be communicated via media in several countries	W. Africa Regional, Afghanistan, Tanzania, Mali and others	- Identifying and supporting a range of media outlets that are already well-trusted by the public - Supporting efforts to monitor and research the impact of media content on audiences, so that a strong impact story can be told
SDC has enabled sensitive but necessary information and news to be broadcast in restricted/oppressive/fragile contexts	Bangladesh, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Mali	- Offering a degree of political/diplomatic protection due to Swiss neutrality in sensitive political contexts - Being flexible and ready to make rapid one-off grants in urgent situations, when necessary

⁵⁰ If an element or issue was mentioned by respondents from 3 countries or more we classed it as a 'main' strength, weakness or challenge.

⁵¹ The countries listed are those where the SDC staff or the SDC partners stressed the relevant point in response to our questionnaires and interviews. However the countries listed may not always represent an exhaustive list, i.e. often several more than the countries mentioned will possess aspects of these strengths/successful approaches.

Achievements	Countries/Examples ⁵¹	Strengths/Reasons for Success
There has been progress on legal aspects of the media landscape with more freedom, better status and/or protection for journalists	Benin, DRC, Rwanda⁵²	- Making efforts to lobby for freedom of expression at the government/diplomatic level
In some countries there has been progress on all fronts (legal, financial, capacity etc.) which means a positive and tangible contribution to the whole media landscape	Benin, Bhutan, Tanzania	- Supporting media in a holistic way by including capacity development, legal aspects, infrastructure, content, institutional and financial aspects all together in the same programme
In several countries, the best local media houses have achieved (or are moving towards achieving) sustainability and long-term impact	Benin, DRC, Great Lakes region, Tanzania, Afghanistan and others	- Offering consistent support over time, long time-frame, staying-power by SDC
SDC has helped leverage the support of other large donors and contributed to more joined-up approaches to media assistance	Tanzania, Somalia	- Coordinating closely with other donors at country level, pooling knowledge/learning about media and co-funding where appropriate
Good donor-partner relations have been achieved and sustained in many places	Macedonia, Tanzania, Somalia, Kosovo	- SDC being a medium sized and 'listening' donor that is approachable and able to design and monitor projects in a hands-on style

⁵² Progress on legal and regulatory issues in Rwanda is still at a very early stage.

8.2 Failures, challenges/weaknesses and strategies to overcome them

Failures

As to failures, we did not ask an outright question about failures but it emerged from our survey and interviews that there have only been two failures in terms of media projects cancelled, in recent years: the Mass-line Media Centre project in Bangladesh and the Great Lakes regional project run by the Institut Panos Grand Lacs. In both these cases, we understand it was primarily the weakness of the partner that was the issue (although, again, we are not able to take an independent view and are relying on data from interviews with SDC staff) but in the latter case the 2015 political crisis in Burundi was a major factor, and beyond the control of SDC or its partners.

This is not the place to enter into the detailed reasons behind difficulties experienced in these two cases: the important question to ask about any sort of failure is whether lessons have been learned from the experience. We *do* believe lessons have been learned from these and other programmes, and we discuss them below (see 8.4 and 8.5 below).

Summary: Challenges and Strategies to Overcome them

We present below a summary of the main challenges/weaknesses and strategies across SDC's current major media projects⁵³, as communicated to us by SDC staff and partners.

Table 2: Challenges and Strategies to Overcome Them

Challenges /Weaknesses	Countries / Examples	Strategies
- Conflict breeds partisan media: In areas experiencing violence, it is often difficult to identify genuinely independent, balanced and pluralistic media houses/outlets to support.	DRC, Great Lakes regional, Mali, Somalia	Avoid funding a single local media outlet directly - instead work through experienced, specialised local or international media-support agencies who can select the most appropriate media outlet(s), or set up new ones.
- External legal and regulatory environment is often very unfavourable to independent	Especially Great Lakes, Bangladesh, Tanzania... but almost everywhere	Do not take a 'one size fits all' approach: context is paramount and possible entry points will differ from one region or country to another. A thorough and continuous analysis

⁵³ If an element or issue was mentioned by respondents from 3 countries or more we classed it as a 'main' strength, weakness or challenge.

Challenges /Weaknesses	Countries / Examples	Strategies
media.	that SDC works	of the political economy of the media sector is necessary in every case.
- Pervasive poverty and corruption mean that reliable local media partners with strong institutional capacity are rare.	Great Lakes, Benin, Tanzania, Afghanistan, Somalia, Kosovo, Bangladesh, Mali	Concentrate on capacity-building to promote organisational, management and business know-how, whilst choosing partners with care and/or working through local media-support NGOs
- The long-term sustainability of media houses via commercial options/advertising is difficult because markets are poor and under-developed.	Particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa	Accept that donors have a key role in making up for lack of commercial possibilities and providing grant funding for public service media houses/media content on a relatively long-term basis. Meanwhile, governments should be lobbied to support community and public service media with state funds.
- The low status, educational and professional standards of local journalists/media-workers/media managers can mean inaccurate, partisan and biased reporting; capacity development often has to start from a very low base and turnover means that it is a constant activity.	Somalia, Niger, Mali	Capacity-building works best in-situ, where media workers can immediately put their new skills to use in their own day-to-day situations.
- Changing mind-sets and encouraging free and open debate is a struggle when a country is emerging from years of dictatorship/one-party rule, censorship and propaganda.	Tunisia, Burkina Faso, D R Congo	- Offer consistent support over a relatively long time-frame. Conduct trainings in-situ rather than outside the country. - Take time in the identification phase of the local partner's needs
- Monitoring and evaluation: difficulties and frustrations around setting appropriate indicators and demonstrating results.	Macedonia, Burundi, Bangladesh, Morocco, Afghanistan, Mali	Recognise that media results can rarely be quantified and that M&E frameworks for other types of development projects may not apply to media projects. Invest in M&E and accept qualitative measures of impact.
- Lack of diplomatic leadership and/or human resources and time within SDC/Swiss diplomatic	Kosovo, Tunisia, Great Lakes, Mali regional	Coordinate and meet regularly with other like-minded donors/embassies to share and spread the burden of diplomatic work and advocacy

Challenges /Weaknesses	Countries / Examples	Strategies
service to do necessary political/diplomatic work in support of freedom of expression.		in favour of freedom of expression.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of staff specialisation and budget cuts at SDC restrict human resources and investment in media programmes and expertise. - Loss of media knowledge due to staff turnover within SDC. 	<p>Bhutan, Morocco, Tunisia, Great Lakes regional, DRC, Somalia</p>	<p>Keep internal guidance on media and governance up to date; consider internal training on media for SDC staff; organise further CapEx workshops in other regions beyond those already done by SENAP.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In some countries, SDC has no clear strategy and/or budgetary priority given to media; media is supported in an 'opportunistic' or short-term way 	<p>Mali regional, Niger, Morocco</p>	<p>Consider making media-development a strategic priority within SDC; integrate media into wider governance policy guidelines and internal procedures (i.e. consider a media checklist as a feature of all governance credit proposals)</p>

Commentary on Challenges

It is interesting to note that some of the same issues arise as both strengths and challenges, depending on the context. For example, in some countries (i.e. in Rwanda, Benin, DRC), SDC and partners feel that they are making efforts to combine lobbying for freedom of expression at the government/diplomatic level with tangible support at the practical level. But in other countries, there is a feeling that much more could be done at the diplomatic level: these include Burundi, Tunisia and Kosovo. It is not just partners who are saying this, but SDC NPOs. Outside our sample, countries with massive freedom-of-expression needs such as North Korea, Cuba, Ukraine and Myanmar were also mentioned by various SDC staff and partners, as gaps. And indeed, one senior SDC official we interviewed admitted that *“there’s room for improvement for pushing for freedom of expression rights by SDC and for human rights defenders as a whole.”* Nevertheless it is clear that the need to ‘walk the tightrope’ between defending rights and taking political risks is always present. As the same senior official said:

“It’s the responsibility of embassies to defend freedom of expression but we have variable embassies and ambassadors and good relations have to be maintained... The solution can be in working closely with other donors and supporting human rights commissions, as we do in Rwanda, Afghanistan and Nepal.”

It is also striking that SDC staff and partners did not make a major point of mentioning successful strategies in term of inclusion and gender equality, nor was much mentioned on these issues under weaknesses or challenges. (Although it must be said that the SDC offices in Tanzania and Morocco did mention and show that they cared about gender mainstreaming as a continuing challenge in media work in their responses to our questionnaire and interviews). The fact that gender and inclusion issues did not emerge strongly is perhaps an indication that within SDC there is not a great deal of systematically inbuilt thinking around these issues.

What emerges clearly is that context is paramount. An approach that works in one context will not necessarily work in another: for example, supporting media in a holistic way by including capacity development, legal aspects, infrastructure and financial aspects all together in the same programme may be possible in Benin, Great Lakes regional, Tanzania but in countries like Somalia, Ukraine and Myanmar, the options in terms of entry points and possible partners are very limited for political and security reasons. To take another example: promoting inclusion and paying attention to gender issues may be a higher priority in a country like Morocco which already has a relatively well-developed media sector, than in other contexts, where basic freedom and quality issues still need to be tackled, before inclusivity or gender issues.. Where the media space is constrained and captured by an elite/government, funding of media for development (to support governance and accountability) may have limited impact unless the media sector is addressed as a development issue in its own right. It is important therefore to understand the inter-connectedness of the pathways to a stronger more resilient media that can ultimately play its full role as agenda setter, watch dog, purveyor of information and platform for citizen voice and participation.

Furthermore, SDC's decentralised structure means that although SDC/Switzerland may be relied upon to have a particular characteristic in one geographical region, e.g. supporting media over the long term, giving it strategic priority etc., in other geographical regions this is not the case. Hence SDC staff and partners in countries like Benin, Great Lakes region, Tanzania applaud SDC's 'staying power' and long-term vision, whereas other countries such as Bhutan, Tunisia, Somalia are criticised for having short time-frames for media projects; and in Niger and Morocco there is a sense among staff that there is no real media strategy at all but they want to have one.

8.3 Risks and Mitigation Measures

We asked our sample of SDC staff what they saw as the main risks of supporting the media for SDC and its partners, in their particular countries, and how SDC is mitigating or reducing these risks. We have grouped risks together where similar ones were identified in more than one country, as follows:

Table 3: Risks and Mitigation Measures

Risks	Country where risk mentioned	Mitigation measures
Supported partners are endangered /put under pressure / threatened/ imprisoned by government/ armed	Burundi Bangladesh DRC	- Constant dialogue with partners - Context monitoring - Using Switzerland's neutrality / good

Risks	Country where risk mentioned	Mitigation measures
groups or other actors	Niger Benin Afghanistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reputation to lobby government and publicly defend media rights - Work to improve laws/regulatory environment - Make use of existing positive legislation (e.g. Right to Information Act, Bangladesh) - Keep supporting a diversity of media outlets - Provide emergency protection/support to independent journalists - Include political stakeholders in the project for sensitization - Training for media practitioners on journalistic standards - Limiting travel to safe areas only
Political /diplomatic/ reputational risk to SDC if 'wrongly' aligned partners are supported and SDC becomes seen in the same light as the media it is supporting – i.e. as the opposed to government	Bhutan Great Lakes Regional Somalia Burundi Macedonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multi-stakeholder approach, coordination, transparency - Adhering to humanitarian and/or drama content (Somalia, Afghanistan) to avoid political and contentious issues - Being transparent towards government to show there is nothing to hide - Better communication by SDC - Select international NGOs as partners as opposed to local NGOs or local media outlets
Failure to sustain the media project after SDC's support ends, so, in the long-term, efforts are wasted.	Tunisia DRC Benin Burundi Kosovo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training in institutional support, organisational development, business management to secure advertising revenue - Lobbying government for less punitive taxes, special status for community media and state support for public service broadcasting
Government backlash/further repression means good work is undone, media freedoms are reversed and media engage in self-censorship	Burkina Faso Bangladesh Rwanda Macedonia Morocco Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include government institutions among beneficiaries of projects - Seek dialogue with government to maintain space for freedom of expression - Involve SDC/Swiss Embassy/ Ambassador in media events

Risks	Country where risk mentioned	Mitigation measures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select NGO partners that have good reputation through which to support media - Training for media practitioners on journalistic standards - Push for the adoption of ethical charters by media owners and editors
Weak / biased / inflammatory media organisations are supported	Mali Mali/Burkina Faso Regional Kosovo Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good initial mapping of the media sector - Robust review criteria for selection and systematic monitoring - Training on ethical guidelines and conflict sensitive reporting - Pre-award assessment of potential partners, annual audits of partner and sub-grantees, payment upon delivery of progress report (tranches)
Media houses receiving grants divert funds to other activities e.g. paying salaries	Tanzania	Pre-award assessment of potential partners, annual audits of partner and sub-grantees, payment upon delivery of progress report (tranches)

Commentary on Risks

We found a mixed picture as far as risk is concerned. On the one hand we gathered some impassioned feelings from within SDC that defending media and free expression was worth the risk, for example, one Country Representative said: *“Never give up! Media is still a strategic priority. There are few ‘keys’ to working with media in fragile states without taking risks, but you just have to say: here are the risks that we have to take.”*

On the other hand we note the more cautious tone of SDC’s own guidelines and the views of some of the other staff we spoke to. One thematic adviser said: *“Exactly in those contexts where we should be doing media support, we’re not...it would be very impactful to do something. But do we dare to do it?”*

Like most organisations that are fairly horizontal and decentralised, SDC appears to be weighing up the risks it is willing to take on a case-by-case and a country-by-country basis. It also appears that it often depends on the individual decisions of those who are in senior posts at any one place or time, rather than any decree from HQ.

8.4 Key Lessons

In order to gather lessons learned, we asked our sample of SDC staff and partners what they would do differently, if they had the chance to redesign their projects or programmes; we also asked partners 'What are the main lessons you have learnt from your project that you would like to communicate to SDC?'. We then asked SDC staff if they felt that lessons were being learned within SDC about media support.

It should be noted that this is not the first time that lessons have been gathered about media support within SDC. 'Lessons learned' also featured in the media CapEx meeting that was held last year in Kigali (May 2016)⁵⁴ and we have included some from this workshop below. However, that exercise was relatively small as it brought together only five countries⁵⁵, whereas the present study covers 16 countries and two regional programmes. Furthermore, most of the lessons from the Kigali CapEx were formulated as recommendations rather than learning from experiences or mistakes⁵⁶.

Furthermore, back in 2007, SDC's *Operational Guidelines* presented a set of '10 Golden Don'ts of Media Assistance', as if they were based on lessons learned from the field, although it is unclear what actual operational experience these 'golden don'ts were based on'⁵⁷.

Considering that 'one learns from one's mistakes', we have concentrated mainly on the very challenging countries/regions and/or those that have experienced failures or mistakes (but see Box 6 for *positive* lessons from Tanzania and Benin). Considering, also that an exhaustive list of each project's lessons would be too long, detailed and repetitious to give here, we have picked out what we feel are key lessons that apply more widely than only one country or region.

⁵⁴ SDC (2016) Supporting the Media Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa Region - Capitalisation of Experience in SDC supported programs, Kigali 24-26.05.2016: Synthesis Report, SDC:Bern

⁵⁵ Benin, Burundi, DRC, Rwanda and Tanzania were the main focus countries of the East and Southern Africa Capex meeting in May 2016, although there were also representatives from Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

⁵⁶ E.g. 'Political will is a prerequisite' and 'Gender issues should be better integrated' SDC (2016) Supporting the Media Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa Region - Capitalisation of Experience in SDC supported programs, Kigali 24-26.05.2016: Synthesis Report, SDC:Bern (p. 5).

⁵⁷ SDC's 10 Golden Don'ts of Media Assistance (from SDC, 2007 'Orientation Guide', p. 23)

1. Don't support media which
 - spread propaganda
 - have a partisan editorial policy
 - are governed by undemocratic principles.
2. Avoid artificial creations coming from overdoing your support. It will undermine the credibility of a media organization if it totally depends on a sustaining flow of money from a foreign country.
3. Don't focus just on what's wrong with the country's media; find positive incentives for action, so local people will embrace the project.
4. Don't just focus on training and ignore structural issues. Consider managerial, financial, infrastructure and market issues as well.
5. Don't force a media outlet to completely fulfil your norms (e.g. to be multiethnic); this may not be realistic and may even prove to be counterproductive.
6. Don't undermine your credibility (and that of the local media being assisted) by not practicing what you preach.
7. Don't simply transplant «western» methods.
8. Don't expect media consumers to be either more reasonable or more rational in their behaviour than in your country.
9. Avoid becoming too close to one partner.
10. Do no harm (i.e. check your unintended, but potential influence on conflicting parties).

In **Burundi**, in May 2015, following the attempted coup, the deterioration of public media into a vehicle for hate and propaganda was 'taken as an eye-opener' by SDC⁵⁸. Key lessons emerging here include:

- **Do a risk analysis before engaging in conflict contexts:** Burundi showed the limits of the context analysis done before starting a programme or a phase. SDC Great Lakes had correctly done risk analysis but did not foresee the worse scenario i.e the situation where all the partner media would be destroyed and journalists exiled. This calls for deeper analysis of risks in conflict contexts, their possible impact on results, emergency mechanisms and plans for managing emotions⁵⁹.
- **Keep looking for possible partners:** *"In a crisis situation there are always ways of supporting diversity of information to citizens",* said one SDC Regional Representative. *"Because of the Burundi crisis",* he continued, *"we went through each of the partners one by one and asked ourselves if the different media outlets being supported were too extreme or not. RPA [Radio Publique Africaine] we pulled out of but we're still supporting [Journal] Iwacu. We are also supporting online work by Burundian journalists in exile."*

The **Great Lakes** regional media programme that SDC mandated to Institut Panos Grands Lacs (IPGL) had to be suspended in mid-2015, apparently due to bad management by the partner⁶⁰ and the Burundi crisis. Key lessons for SDC that apply both here and elsewhere include:

- **Time, skills and the right tools are needed to do very close accompaniment of partners in fragile contexts.** As one SDC Regional Representative said, *"Compare [Great Lakes] with Palestinian Territories where we have one officer working on a civil society project 85% of his time, we just didn't have this kind of staff time available to work this intensively on media."* An SDC Project Officer, formerly involved in the Great Lakes, added that she did not have appropriate guidance about media (both generally and in the region) or tools in order to manage the programme better.
- **Do a good political and financial context analysis before designing the media project:** because, as SDC has realised in the DRC (and elsewhere), *'media owners can be driven by political and financial motives which can limit their actions'*⁶¹. A good political economy analysis should be able to identify which actors will have the strongest results, whether it is at the level of media actors, at SDC's level or at the diplomatic level.
- **Finding the right partners may mean international NGOs not locals** because local ones can easily become party to the conflict, as was found in the Great Lakes case.

⁵⁸ According to SDC participants at the Kigali CapEx in May 2016

⁵⁹ This is taken directly from the Kigali CapEx report, p. 4

⁶⁰ This is obviously SDC's version of the story. iMedia interviewed both SDC and a representative speaking for the partner's (IPGL). We do not take sides or have a view on this ongoing dispute, and wish to remain neutral and try only to bring out the lessons for the benefit of SDC.

⁶¹ Kigali Cap Ex report p. 5.

- **Do not impose onerous administrative and reporting requirements** but try to find ways to help young, inexperienced organisations deal with financial difficulties (in the Burundi case, the sudden devaluation of the Burundi Franc added to the partner's troubles but was beyond its control)
- **Involve political actors in freedom of expression issues** – particularly in Rwanda where *“it has proved necessary to involve political actors and more precisely the bodies responsible for regulating the sector in the issue of freedom of expression. However, this is a very sensitive issue, which needs to be accompanied by an exhaustive context analysis to determine particular strategies to be adopted.”*⁶²
- **Do not be over-ambitious.** In the Great Lakes case, one of the lessons is that the IPGL programme was probably given too large a budget and too wide-ranging a brief, particularly in geographical terms (i.e. three countries to cover) and a large number of sub-partners to manage, many of whom were small, financially fragile media outlets. This lesson is of course, not just limited to the Great Lakes.

In **Bangladesh** there have been problems with one of the SDC's media partners, the Mass-line Media Centre (MMC) where mismanagement has led to the contract being cancelled. In this and other similar cases, the lesson, according to the Programme Officer involved is:

- **To conduct risk analysis** *“in a very scientific way, with proper involvement of our management and of [SDC] headquarters,”* and to follow procurement rules relating to sending the tender out. But one SDC officer pointed out that since there is no media expertise at SDC headquarters, decisions taken there to make awards at country level may not be sufficiently well-informed.

In **Tanzania** it is not a question of learning from mistakes but rather learning from long experience of running a grant-making facility via a multi-donor basket fund. The Empowering Media in Tanzania (EMT) project continues and builds on earlier support to the Tanzania Media Fund (now Foundation), which is one of three partners in the EMT. The EMT is now in its second phase and has learned from the previous phase to:

- **Improve financial controls** among partners: donors in the past phases realised that their institutional strengthening needs to have a strong focus on financial management and integrity and are tying funding more strictly to measures aiming to reduce the risks of misappropriation and mismanagement.
- **Build capacity of media houses to increase revenue:** a key lesson from the previous support to **TMF** was the realisation of the strong link between quality media content and media houses being well managed and financially strong. Based on this understanding, TMF introduced their Transformation Grant category, which sought to build capacity of media houses to increase

⁶² National Programme Officer from the region.

revenue as well as set up investigative desks. (For more detail on how TMF's grant-making works, see Box 6: Positive Lessons from Tanzania and Benin).

8.5 The lesson-learning process within SDC:

Along with the question about which lessons have been learned, we also asked whether SDC is actually learning lessons about its media assistance. Twenty-five percent said a lot of lessons are being learned and applied - interestingly these included those from Bangladesh and Great Lakes which reinforces our contention that crises and difficulties help SDC (and any organisation) to learn. However, a small but perhaps significant proportion of respondents felt that lessons are NOT learned within SDC: 10 percent said that no lessons are being learned and 65 percent said SOME lessons are being learned. Some partners explicitly commended SDC for carrying out this global media CapEx. A few others noted that SDC does not appear to document and share its experiences widely or publicise results and learnings about media assistance.

Some of the opinions given included:

- Lessons learned by an individual [national programme officer] are not systematically absorbed by the rest of the organisation and just stay at the level of that individual (Mali)
- The DDLGN is a useful platform for sharing lessons across countries and regions. The previous CapEx event in Kigali is a good example of learning. Different countries exchanged experiences and lessons learnt such as having flexible programmes and making long term commitments (Tanzania)
- Knowledge is lost when people move on. The [SDC] system does not allow for going back and contributing to their last posting (Great Lakes)
- SDC is not formalising lessons learned "*they rely too much on consultants – they need to do their own deep political analysis on media*" (international NGO partner).

Box 6 | Positive Lessons from Tanzania and Benin

In **Tanzania and Benin** it is not a question of learning from mistakes but rather learning from long experience.

In **Tanzania**: The Empowering Media in Tanzania (EMT) project continues and builds on earlier support to the Tanzania Media Fund (now Foundation), which is one of three partners in the EMT. The EMT is now in its second phase and has learned from the previous phase to:

- **Improve financial controls** among partners: during past phases it was realised that institutional strengthening needs to have a strong focus on financial management and integrity and funding is now tied more strictly to measures aiming to reduce the risks of misappropriation and mismanagement.
- **Build capacity of media houses to increase revenue**: a key lesson from the previous support to TMF was the realisation of the strong link between quality media content and media houses being well managed and financially strong. Based on this understanding, TMF introduced their Transformation Grant category, which seeks to build capacity of media houses to increase revenue by re-examining company strategy, vision, marketing, audience and internal governance. Some 'content and transformation' grants have helped to set up investigative desks.
- **Offer different grants for different strategic purposes**: the TMF gives five types of grants: 1. Rural dispatches, 2. Fellowships, 3. Strategic commissioned content, 4. Content (only), and finally 5. Content with Transformation (see above) for media houses or other media institutions.

In **Benin**, media engagement has lasted 21 years, since 1996. The programme has gone through six phases of support to rural community radios, firstly under a project called ASCCom (*Appui suisse à la Communication Communautaire*), and now (since 2016) taking 12 of the original radio stations and building their capacity to make programmes about accountability at the grassroots level (*'la création et l'animation d'espaces d'expression et de pression en matière de redevabilité'*). It is planned that all 37 community radio stations (covering the whole country) will be supported during a future scale-up phase. Since the beginning, SDC has built up the programme gradually, learning from previous phases, and with each phase, expanding the number of radio stations supported and building their capacities step by step, starting with lobbying for a law which gave them the right to broadcast in the first place, giving technical equipment, training, support for community management, solving energy supply problems, and helping to cover specific themes like HIV/AIDS, gender, rural poverty – and, now, governance and accountability. Key learnings from this long engagement with the media sector in Benin include:

- **The need for regular analysis** of the context and the [political] positions taken by the partners supported, since in Benin, civil society actors (including community radio stations) tend to be associated with the political opposition – if radios become too political they have to be dropped or sanctioned;
- **The need to support an umbrella group** which brings together the best radio stations, monitors them and represents their interests at the national level (in this case FERCAB);
- **The need to combine practical support (e.g. studio equipment) with lobbying** for freedom of expression at the government/diplomatic level and pressuring government for less punitive taxes for community radios. This is essentially supporting media in a holistic way, thereby making the community radio sector viable in the long-term.

9 | Conclusions and Recommendations

Here we present iMedia's own conclusions and associated recommendations that we, as consultants, have concluded from all the findings in this report and from our own experience and literature/donor review. In formulating these conclusions and recommendations we have drawn on those we gathered from SDC and partners and have included those that we judged relevant. (For a list of SDC staff's recommendations (both strategic and operational), please see Annex 3). We have divided our conclusions/recommendations into 1. Strategic issues, 2. Operational issues, and 3. Areas for deepening analysis, learning and thematic guidance by DDLGN.

Overall, we applaud the DDLG's initiative in undertaking this CapEx⁶³ in the first place: most other donors have not spent as much time and energy on internal reflection on media as SDC has. Generally, we were impressed by the sophistication with which SDC programme staff think about media and see it as an integral part of their efforts to promote good, democratic governance, whilst at the same time they acknowledge that it is a delicate and complex area.

9.1 Strategic issues

- **Political risk and conflict issues**

Overall conclusion:

There are clear political risks to supporting media but this should not stop SDC from acting.

Specific conclusion:

SDC recognises that supporting a free media carries political risks and this is holding SDC back from being more committed to media, especially in conflict and fragile contexts. However, there are entry points to be found in most countries, as long as the risks and the political economy of the media are recognised and carefully analysed. Furthermore, SDC enjoys the trusted reputation of Switzerland as a neutral country without a colonial past or any hidden agendas: in many of the countries covered in this report, this has helped when working on media issues, and SDC could probably exploit this 'added value' further. SDC could be less risk averse in its media work whilst building risk mitigation into programme design by doing more scenario planning, so it has a 'plan B' if a crisis arises. If necessary, SDC can stick to humanitarian and/or drama content (as in Somalia, Afghanistan) to avoid political and contentious issues, while keeping open the possibility of moving to more news-based content when the time is right.

⁶³ By 'this CapEx' we mean not only commissioning this report but the whole process that was kicked off by the meeting in Kigali in May 2016 and will be followed up by a wider workshop for the SENAP region on media in Kenya in June 2017.

Recommendation 1:

We recommend that: Political economy analysis / context analysis should always be done, along with risk analysis and scenario planning, prior to launching a media project/programme.

Recommendation 2:

We recommend that: Emergency and ad hoc grants for journalist safety/protection should be ready and deployed in urgent/crisis situations – for example to enable them to live safely in exile on a temporary basis, if need be.

Recommendation 3:

We recommend that: SDC should be more politically / diplomatically active in support of freedom of expression, journalist protection, and in support of media's exposure of corruption, i.e. doing more by ambassadors in-country to uphold rights and protect individual journalists and media outlets.

Recommendation 4:

We recommend that: SDC should coordinate systematically and frequently on media issues with other donors and members of the international community at country level, and share the burden and risk of diplomatic lobbying with other like-minded embassies/donors, at country level.

Recommendation 5:

We recommend that: SDC should generally avoid funding a single local media outlet directly – as this risks taking the 'wrong' side in a conflict and/or can bring SDC into disrepute for being associated with biased media. Instead, SDC should work through experienced, specialised local or international media-support agencies who know the context well and who can select the most appropriate media outlet(s), or set up new ones.

Recommendation 6:

We recommend that: SDC should NOT use the local media to enhance its own visibility, as instrumentalising the media in this way should not be the aim of media assistance. Furthermore, since the most popular local media outlets, which reach the biggest audiences, are often politically connected, there is a danger that by using them, SDC's motives and political allegiances could be questioned.

- Comprehensive/holistic approaches vs standalone activities

Overall conclusion:

Context is paramount and there is no 'one-size fits all' approach, however, where possible, a holistic approach to media support is desirable because more sustainable.

Specific conclusion:

This CapEx shows that in most of the countries where SDC funds media projects, they are not part of a comprehensive media-support programme aimed at strengthening the whole media sector in a country. Rather, SDC has tended to support stand-alone or one-off projects centred around just one media outlet (e.g. the state broadcaster (e.g. Tunisia) or a humanitarian radio station (e.g. Somalia)) or centred on a single issue like reducing corruption (e.g. Bangladesh, Mali). Exceptions to this rule have been in Benin, Tanzania and the Great Lakes where a more comprehensive and holistic approach has been taken, which attempts whole-sector media development by including capacity-building, legal aspects, infrastructure, content and financial aspects all together in the same programme, with a range of different media outlets (TV, radio, print, social media etc.). Such holistic approaches stand a better chance of a free, plural and sustainable media in the long-term. Clearly, context is paramount: an approach that works in one context will not necessarily work in another, but SDC's 'staying power' and willingness to consider long-term grants is an advantage when it comes to media development, which is often a slow and gradual process.

Recommendation 7:

We recommend that SDC invest in extra training and staff-time for NPOs responsible for larger-scale holistic media projects because starting or co-funding such programmes (such as Empowering Media in Tanzania) requires a level of media understanding and staff time devoted to media issues by SDC. Constant dialogue with partners is required, context monitoring, liaising with other donors, etc.

Recommendation 8:

We recommend that SDC develop/recruit some permanent in-house media expertise at HQ level.

Recommendation 9:

SDC cannot be expected to do everything, so **we recommend that:** HQ at SDC should set up (or continue with) permanent arrangements with one or several organisations specialising in media support, to provide technical advice on, for example, identification of partners, programme design and M&E, as well as capacity-development for SDC personnel. This could be a call-down facility with technical provider(s) to deliver long term expert advisory, consulting and backstopping functions (e.g. as has been done to some extent by IMS in Bhutan and University of Zurich in Tanzania, and with the existing institutional contract with Fondation Hirondelle).

- Programme design issues

Overall conclusion:

Media are not yet considered at all stages of the cycle of governance programming. There is a need for more integration of media and to build flexibility and sustainability into programme design.

Specific conclusion

More could be done to integrate media support with other areas of governance work by

- a. consistently and systematically considering media at all stages of the cycle of governance programming (scoping, designing, implementing and evaluating)
- b. bringing media partners together with other governance partners to create more synergies on the ground and
- c. working in synergy with Swiss diplomats at the country-level to match financial support to media with pressure on country governments to protect and guarantee media rights and freedoms.

With a medium-sized budget, SDC is large enough to be taken seriously and to afford to fund sizeable media projects (such as Empowering Media in Tanzania) yet small enough to be able to change course quickly if necessary (e.g. if a crisis arises) and to not be overburdened by the number of projects it has to manage at any one time. Media projects are arguably more time-intensive to manage than development projects in other sectors, but SDC's medium size allows it, in most cases, to be a genuinely listening donor.

More could also be made of the useful 'Menu of Options' laid out in SDC's *Media Orientation Guide* (2007) which lists 'possible interventions' at the different levels of the media sector, from support to 'individual journalists' (level 1) up to interventions at the level of 'societal beliefs' (level 6), as follows:

Media Assistance - Menu of options

Sphere and Possible interventions (examples):

1 Individual journalists Support in training professional skills and/or knowledge on specific issues

2 Organizational level of media outlets Support to independent, pluralistic media outlets, and improving the working conditions; on-site training for editors on ethics, journalism concepts; management courses

3 Media institutions Establishing missing institutions in support of a pluralistic media sector (research, education, associations, press councils)

4 Economic factors Enhancing sustainability of media (circulation, printing, broadcasting capabilities, anti-monopolistic activities, media management training)

5 Legal environment Establish and enforce media laws and regulations enabling freedom of expression and access to information; protection of journalists

6 Societal beliefs Support activities strengthening the values of freedom and exchange, the rights and duties in democratic societies, and forms of dispute settling.

Recommendation 10:

We recommend that SDC consider media at all stages of the cycle of governance programming and redouble existing efforts to build flexibility and sustainability into programme design.

Recommendation 11:

We recommend that SDC improve the distribution and awareness of SDC's *Media Orientation Guide* (2007:14) 'Menu of Options' among SDC personnel and promote it internally as a training and planning tool for media interventions.

- Inclusion and Gender Equality

Overall conclusion:

There are still some gaps when it comes to integrating inclusion and gender equality more systematically into media projects.

Specific conclusion:

Whilst SDC has undoubtedly contributed to more diverse, inclusive/gender aware media houses in several countries, gender and inclusion issues did not emerge strongly overall. So this is perhaps an indication that within SDC there is not a great deal of systematic or inbuilt thinking around these issues. More could be done on capacity-building for media professionals on gender, inclusion and to engage children and youth, as well as to promote more journalists who are women and who are from minority groups. Useful guidance on these issues is contained in [Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media \(UNESCO, 2012\)](#)

Recommendation 12:

We recommend that SDC redouble its efforts to integrate inclusion and gender equality more systematically into media projects. (See also Recommendation 13 below on disaggregating gender data and establishing gender and minority inclusion targets within media projects)

9.2 Operational issues

- Analysis, M&E, providing evidence, analysing value for money

Overall conclusion:

SDC still faces a challenge when it comes to evaluating media development projects.

Specific conclusion:

Monitoring, evaluating and generating evidence and success stories regarding media support is quite weak, although in this area SDC is not necessarily worse than many other donors or implementing agencies, because impacts are very hard to pinpoint and attribute to a particular intervention (i.e. it

is impossible to assert 'this TV programme caused peaceful elections...'). However, as we have detailed above (see Box 4), there are some tools such as content analysis that SDC could usefully consider supporting more widely. It could also place greater demands on partners to explore commercially available market research and it could pool resources with other donors to fund large-scale audience surveys. It may also be worth considering drawing up some benchmarks of what should constitute high quality media assistance which SDC country offices could voluntarily sign up to – for this, SDC's own 'guiding principles' (in [SDC's 'Orientation Guide' 2007](#) p. 10) would be a good starting point. Other useful tools for (mainly) qualitative evaluation of media interventions are Delphi panels, focus groups, network analysis and survey research, which are outlined in Taylor, Maureen, (2010), [Methods of Evaluating Media Interventions in Conflict Countries](#). Also, SDC could consider the possibilities of using value for money (VFM) metrics like those generated by BBC Media Action and Development Media International (DMI), (see again Box 4).

Recommendation 13:

We recommend that SDC Devote more time and effort to M&E and generating evidence of what has worked. Establish monitoring systems that disaggregate gender data and establish gender and minority inclusion targets within media projects.

Recommendation 14:

We recommend that SDC recognise that media results can rarely be quantified and that M&E frameworks for other types of development projects (e.g. Results Based Monitoring) may not apply to media projects.

Recommendation 15:

We recommend that SDC establish better M&E indicators that are SMARTer and ensure baseline assessments are done at the design stage to understand audience's prior knowledge, attitudes and practices, so that media's influence has a better chance of being measured. Consider innovative methods/tools to measure progress and impact, such as those mentioned above.

Recommendation 16:

We recommend that SDC pay more attention to measuring or encouraging partners to measure value for money (VFM).

- Approach to new media technologies

Overall conclusion:

New, digital, social and mobile media are a key component of the media scene in a growing number of countries, but they could be better understood.

Specific conclusion:

New, digital, social and mobile media are now generally seen as incorporated with the definition of media. Many SDC-funded media projects have assimilated new media quite smoothly – for example, it is quite natural now for most media houses, in countries where internet and/or mobile use is high, to adapt content for TV, radio *and* for Facebook and Twitter. However, there are specific advantages and disadvantages of new media that could be better understood; for example, the dangers of spreading ‘fake news’ and hate speech are higher with social media than with traditional media. The proliferation of new media platforms and their convergence with existing ones also provide challenges to legal and regulatory frameworks when technological developments are used by authorities and other power holders to restrain online freedom of expression, by blocking or shutting down websites, filtering content and threatening bloggers and online reporters.

SDC's main media *Orientation Guide*, 2007 does not have any mention of social, digital or mobile media, which is a surprising gap. However, it is perhaps understandable, since it is such a rapidly-changing field. Indeed, other donors have tended to leave specialist agencies and implementing partners to map the changing media landscapes and make country-level adjustments to activities as appropriate, rather than producing their own guidelines on new/social media, knowing such guidelines would soon be out of date.

Recommendation 17:

We recommend that SDC explicitly includes new media technology as part of its definition of media in all relevant publications and public-facing communications (e.g. SDC website). SDC should also update the 2007 *Media Orientation Guide* to include mention of digital/social/mobile media and discussion of their advantages and disadvantages, but should not worry about having separate guidelines on them.

- Approach to capacity-building

Overall conclusion:

Capacity-building is generally of good quality but it is important to remember that immersive, mentor-led, hands-on, and, where possible, in-situ training is best.

Specific conclusion:

Since training and other types of capacity-building are such a large part of media-support programmes, it is important they work well, give value for money and promote long-term sustainability. The world has moved on from workshops where journalists from the South were trained during short one-off sessions in Europe or USA and sent back to their newsrooms and expected to put what they had learned into practice. The style of training that works best is immersive, mentor-led, hands-on, in-situ coaching – not one-off workshops. On the whole, SDC projects appear to do this but perhaps not consistently enough. It is therefore worth a recommendation, just as a reminder to always and consistently observe best-practice.

Recommendation 18:

We recommend that the style of training that SDC promotes in the media project it supports should always be immersive, mentor-led, hands-on, and, where possible, in-situ (i.e. within trainees' own media houses/newsrooms/work environments).

- Administrative procedures

Overall conclusion:

SDC's administrative/financial requirements can be overly burdensome in some cases.

Specific conclusion

When talking to partners we generally gained an impression of very smooth and collaborative relations between media partners and SDC. However, we did hear some very robust complaints in some countries such as Tanzania and the Great Lakes about the inflexible, burdensome and over-long administrative and financial procedures stipulated by SDC. Particularly new, small and local NGOs appear to find SDC's procedures very difficult to deal with. Media-related NGOs arguably have special needs, such as a need for quicker response time in emergencies than the average development project. Some are also likely to be less experienced at writing reports and budgets and generally less organisationally mature. There is therefore an argument for SDC to take more risks in terms of supporting young – but often dynamic and cutting-edge – media-related NGOs whilst at the same time accepting that these partners will take up proportionally more of SDC's staff-time and energy than the average partner. For those larger and more long-standing partners who ALSO feel that the financial reporting requirements are over burdensome (and we came across one or two), it may be worth opening a dialogue between SDC Bern, the SDC country office and the partner(s) about how this could be ameliorated.

Recommendation 19:

We recommend that SDC should pay attention to complaints about inflexible and over-long administrative procedures raised by some media partners and consider either easing HQ's requirements for financial reporting in the case of some media projects and/or offering extra help or accompaniment to media projects struggling to fulfil financial reporting requirements.

9.3 Areas for deepening analysis, learning and thematic guidance by DDLGN

- Policy guidance by DDLGN

Overall conclusion:

DDLGN has a key role to play within SDC to lobby for a more prominent place for media within SDC's overall governance strategy.

Specific conclusion

At country level, we found SDC's commitment to media-support a little variable, or 'patchy', dependent on context, opportunity, regional strategy and, sometimes, just the personality of senior staff in that country. For example, there is no media strategy with a budget attached at country or regional level in Mali, Niger, Benin, Mali/Burkina Faso Regional, Afghanistan, even though there are media projects currently underway. There is a lot of scope for expanding media support both in and beyond the countries where it is concentrated at present. But there is no clear overall strategic commitment by SDC to media-support, neither does SDC clearly state the need to mainstream it. Obviously, the DDLGN is committed to media-support and has a key role to play to lobby for it internally.

Recommendation 20:

We recommend that DDLGN redoubles its efforts to promote media-support within SDC and considers making media-development a strategic priority within SDC; integrate media into wider governance policy guidelines and internal procedures and consider a media checklist as a feature of all governance credit proposals.

Recommendation 21:

We recommend that SDC country offices should be made more aware of the HQ institutional partnership arrangement with Fondation Hironnelle (FH) and how to take advantage of FH's services

- Guidance, knowledge resources and learning

Overall conclusion:

SDC guidance and internal learning on media-support could be improved.

Specific conclusion

The DDLGN is a useful platform for sharing lessons across countries and regions. The previous media CapEx event in Kigali (2016), this study and the 2017 workshop in Nairobi are good examples of learning. But there is a need for better written guidance on media for SDC staff. As we have seen,

SDC's 2007 Orientation Guide could usefully be updated and better disseminated. Currently it contains no actual case-studies and examples from SDC's experience and nothing on how traditional media is transitioning to digital, social or mobile media. Furthermore, the style of written English could be improved.

There could also be more opportunities for more internal learning through CapEx exercises in other regions (for example, Latin America) and exchanges of experience between countries. This applies both to SDC staff learning from each other and SDC partners going on exchange visits and doing the same.

We found no clear examples of activities to promote media literacy across any of the projects analysed (although it may be happening but is not obvious). Promoting media literacy involves helping media consumers develop a discerning and critical approach to news coverage and promoting Internet literacy to combat misperceptions, prejudices and hate speech. This is a little surprising, since media/information literacy is being promoted quite energetically by other agencies, such as UNESCO and Internews.

Recommendation 22:

We recommend that SDC should consider appointing a task-force within the DDLG network to draw up some benchmarks of high quality media assistance and, once drafted, encourage SDC country offices to sign up to them and report on them on a regular basis.

Recommendation 23:

We recommend that DDLGN should document and share knowledge more widely: media CapEx meetings are a good start – but short research and practice briefings with key findings from media programmes and from evaluations could also be considered, perhaps starting from some of the peer-reviewed articles that we note have been coming out of the Tanzania work.

Recommendation 24:

We recommend that SDC should update the 2007 *Media Orientation Guide* to include digital/social/mobile media, orientation on promoting media literacy, better English, clearer sections and more real-life examples and lessons learned from SDC's experience.

Annex 1: The media assistance programmes reviewed

The following project descriptions were prepared by SDC's DDLG Policy Advisers, accompanied by lists of their media assistance activities, as identified through this review.

COUNTRY	PROJECT	PARTNERS	DATE
Afghanistan	1. Healthy Families, Healthy Societies	Afghanistan Educational Production Organization	2014-17
<p>The project uses creative radio dramas, feature programs and complementary print and online outputs to raise awareness and enable women, men and youth to make informed decisions in the areas of: elections and civic engagement, sustainable livelihoods and economic opportunities, healthy eating practices to combat nutrient deficiencies and food-related health problems of children and adults, and water management including drinking water and irrigation. The project includes a strong component of civic information and engagement as well as water governance. Media is a powerful tool in this Afghan context with high outreach.</p>			
Activities:	<p>i) Capacity building for organisational development of AEPO through training e.g. in project cycle management, building on recommendations from an evaluation commissioned by SDC in 2013.</p> <p>ii) Radio: programming includes several drama strands and feature/magazine programs produced and broadcast in Dari and Pashto through BBC World Service and 25 local FM stations, and rebroadcast through Salaam Watandar network of over 60 FM stations and ERTV.</p> <p>Online: All the programs are published online on AEPO's website at www.tajalla.af for free community access.</p> <p>Print: comic strip/cartoon contain key messages from the long running New Home, New Life (NHNL).</p>		
Bangladesh	2. Building Integrity Blocks for Effective Change	Transparency International Bangladesh	2014-19
<p>The project intends to promote a more enabling environment for reducing corruption. Three complementary approaches taken are: a) (research-based) advocacy work with key national institutions (Parliament, Judiciary etc.) and in five sectors b) Civic engagement including awareness raising and capacity development and c) Oversight, dialogue and social accountability mechanisms in local level institutions.</p> <p>The media are considered as promoters of change and are strategically engaged with the project. Activities like media awards for investigative journalism and media campaigns are critical in garnering support for the anti-corruption movement and creating public pressure through public discourses at the local and national levels.</p>			
Activities:	<p>- Investigative journalism training</p>		

	- Coordination of investigative journalism awards and fellowship		
Bangladesh	3. Citizens Voice for Improved Local Public Services	Mass Line Media Centre	2010-15
<p>The programme intends to strengthen the capacities of local grassroots journalists to report on local governance issues and to establish regional LGov Resource Centers for information services to local journalists & the public. The aim is to enhance transparency & social accountability of local governments and to broaden public debate on local governance. It was a programme to support grassroots journalism that encountered many difficulties and can probably serve as one example to learn from failures. It was not continued.</p>			
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train grassroots journalists - Exchange and learning visits to grassroots journalists - Establish Local Government resource centers - Establish Journalist Forums - Create IEC materials on social accountability 		
Bénin	4. Programme Redevabilité	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Watch Bénin - La Fédération des radios communautaires Bénin - La maison de la société civile Bénin 	2016-19
<p>The strengthening of the political anchorage of democracy through the expression of citizenship contributes to better socio-economic services for citizens. In this context media are important, notably local radios.</p> <p>Specific focus on corruption and civic education. Several years of supporting private rural radios in previous phases. A capitalization has been conducted of nineteen years of Swiss Cooperation support to community radio in Benin.</p>			
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FERCAB accompanies 37 member stations to produce accountability programmes reaching 7 million people - FERCAB is strengthened organisationally - Direct re-broadcast of meetings of 'conseils communaux' - Phone-ins with leaders - Education of young people via radio about accountability run by Maison de la Soc Civile (who pay for airtime on radios) 		
Bhutan	6. Democratic Governance Programme (DG+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC) - International TA providers 	2013-17

		and local NGOs	
<p>The Democratic Governance Programme is Switzerland's main support to Bhutan to help make its young democracy more robust, citizen-centered and accountable. The programme sets out to combat corruption at its roots, to enhance public services in the mountainous country, to foster a pluralist media, and to engage Bhutan's young population in the democratic process.</p>			
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) short-term traditional and new media skills training for journalists; awareness-raising for journalists, editors/managers on ethics & standards; institution-building of media support organisations; ii) grants for content especially focused on rural issues; establish annual journalism awards iii) funding of development of and amendments to media-related policy/laws/charters and FOE/RTI related activities iv) grants to community radio stations; subsidized loans for equipment and infrastructure; establishment grants for CR; grants to private media to diversify revenue through digital platforms in exchange for reporting on governance issues v) assessment of MDIs preceded programme design; planned consultancy to improve Media Impact Study and Media Development Indicators; direct commission of media capacity assessment; circulation audit/private media sustainability study; review of advertising policy of government etc. 		
Burkina Faso	7. Programme d'appui à la Radiodiffusion Télévision du Burkina	Fondation Hironnelle	2015-16
<p>Organizational and structural support project for the reform of Radiodiffusion Télévision du Burkina (RTB), as a public service in its own right. This follows the popular insurrection of November 2014, and is at the express request of the Ministry of Communication.</p> <p>RTB is the only state media channel that today covers all regions of the country; it contributes to informing and educating the population.</p>			
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme d'Appui à la Radiodiffusion Télévision du Burkina (ARTB) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better TV programmes (training and coaching by Fondation Hironnelle) – economic, social and political issues – ‘grands reportages’ - Organisational development at top of RTB - Providing equipment after ransacking - Improving RTB's website 2. Programme d'appui aux réformes et aux Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme d'appui à la décentralisation et à la participation citoyenne (DEPAC) 		
Burkina Faso & Mali	Programme APC3: Promotion de la	Laboratoire Citoyennette	2014-17

REGIONAL	coopération transfrontalière		
<p><i>General objective:</i> To promote cross-border access to local public services, as a factor of regional integration</p> <p><i>Specific objective 1:</i> To contribute to citizens' better knowledge about, and appropriation of, the texts and regulations issued by the UEMOA and ECOWAS bodies in terms of free movement.</p> <p><i>Specific objective 2:</i> To contribute to better knowledge around the local dynamics feeding into sub-regional integration policies.</p> <p><i>Specific objective 3:</i> Contribute to capacity strengthening of local actors (border authorities, CSOs, private sector, etc.) in the provision of basic public services, by promoting cross-border cooperation networks.</p>			
Activities:	- Workshops organised by partner Laboratoire Citoyennete with broadcasters to explain cross-border issues		
Great Lakes	Appui aux médias des Grands Lacs (Rwanda, Burundi, RD Congo)	Consortium comprising Institut Panos Grands Lacs (IPGL) and the Association Burundaise des Radiodiffuseurs (ABR)	2015-17
<p>Strengthen democratization processes in the Great Lakes region (Rwanda, Burundi, DRC) through the professionalization of pluralistic and responsible media, operating in an environment conducive to respect for fundamental rights. NB. The mandate established with Institut Panos Grands Lacs (IPGL) was suspended in mid- 2015 following the Burundi crisis and management problems. The IPGL programme dealt with two out of the 3 parts of SDC's overall Great Lakes regional media programme. Part 1 = capacity building of media professionals in terms of quality and diversity of content; media management, marketing and governance; part 2 = improved access to information by the population, especially the production of investigative reports; and part 3 = legal, human rights and regulatory aspects. When the contract was awarded to IPGL, part 3 was retained by SDC and implemented on a country-by-country basis in the three countries, as set out below (see Burundi, DRC and Rwanda).</p>			
Activities: Burundi	Journal <i>Iwacu</i>		2015-17
<p>Due to the 2015 crisis, actual activities in Burundi are currently reduced to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support to Burundian journalists in exile in Rwanda (living expenses) - Support to 2 online news-services: Humura and Inzamba - Journal <i>Iwacu</i> in Burundi – core support 			
Activities: DRC	Internews		2015-17
<p>SDC is funding part of Internews' (mainly USAID-funded) Media Sector Development Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Press freedom and advocacy – especially supporting Journaliste en Danger (core) and bridging 			

<p>between journalists and magistrates (through workshops) to stop impunity of secret service in threatening and detaining journalists without reference to due process of law</p> <p>- Support to democratic debate through programming on South Kivu's radio stations</p>			
Activities: Rwanda		Rwanda Media Commission	2015-17
<p>- In-situ journalist training</p> <p>- <i>"Enforce the journalistic code of ethics, act as the primary and highest adjudicator of complaints against the media, represent the broader interests of journalists and defend media freedom and media consumers in general."</i></p>			
Kosovo	11. Democratic Society Promotion (DSP)	Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF)	2014-18
<p>The overall goal of DSP is to support the development of a democratic society in Kosovo. The project aims at supporting projects, initiatives or activities arising from civil society with a potential to contribute to significant changes in society at national, regional and local level. One key output is that diaspora, civil society and media contribute to policy- and decision-making processes that advance diaspora social and political rights.</p> <p>There are a lot of applications from media, but they tend to be less successful than other actors in receiving grants.</p>			
Activities:	<p>- Give grants and guidance to strengthen the work of media house grantees e.g. Radio Kim</p> <p>- Give grants and guidance to strengthen the work of grantees which are umbrella media</p>		
Kosovo	12. Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts in Kosovo (SAEK II)	UNDP	2016-20
<p>One of the three components (besides central and local pieces) is to increase citizen awareness and participation in anti-corruption. In this component, a media organization plays the central role, including managing a website – kallxo.com—which allows citizens to report corruption.</p>			
Activities:	<p>- Support kallxo.com research unit to efficiently triage the growing numbers of reported corruption cases</p> <p>- Create digital infrastructure through design and establishment of transparency tools</p>		
Kosovo	13. Decentralization and Municipal Support (DEMOS)	Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Association of Kosovar Municipalities (AKM)	2013-17

<p>As part of DEMOS, SDC's flagship local governance programme (successor program of the previous LGP), SDC provided at least 2 cycles of support to Balkan Investigative and Research Network Kosovo (BIRN Kosovo), who did some very important interventions through media projects in increasing accountability at the local level.</p> <p>BIRN is present in the region, but very prominent in Kosovo (whose weekly show is 'Life in Kosovo'). SDC supported a first television reporting series interviewing mayoral candidates, then followed up with them 2 years later to take stock of their achievements/ promises.</p>			
Activities:	- DEMOS: Research, film and produce TV Mayoral debates		
Mali	14. Programme Partenariats pour l'Exercice d'une Gouvernance Partagée	- Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et de la Coopération Internationale - Oxfam Novib	2015-18
<p>The corruption in Mali finds itself practically at every level and appears under various forms, causing enormous losses of resources for the State, degrading the quality of the public service and affecting the credibility of the public institutions. Creating synergies between citizen's control and accountability initiatives, media and traditional leaders will allow to improve the transparency and to reduce the growing impunity.</p>			
Activities:	<p>Oxfam works mainly with rural/local radio stations through URTEL (media union) to train, mentor and give advice to them so they can pass on messages and demand accountability of leaders by covering issues on: conflict management, peace-building around land conflicts, elections, advocacy about regional budgets, involvement of citizens in local affairs. Outputs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 3 radio broadcasts and 1 TV broadcast about corruption and impunity produced per year - Annual budgets of Regional Councils are published and simple versions distributed through local media - 100% of the interpellation spaces held are covered by the local media 		
Macedonia	15. Civil Society Support Facility (CSSF)	NIRAS (lead) MCIC (national partner)	2014-18
<p>The overall objective of the fourth phase of the Civil Society Support Facility (called Civica Mobilitas) is the following: Better cooperation among CSOs and between CSOs and the Authorities reflect the expectations, problems, needs and priorities of the Citizens. For Media CSOs: promotion of professional journalism (investigative journalism), oversight role (e.g. over prosecution), access to media products and information for citizens, strengthening of professional association of journalists.</p> <p>Organizations/initiatives supported through Civica Mobilitas, include the council on Media Ethics, who seeks to raise the standards of journalism within Macedonia, as well as SVEDOK, who – with only 7000CHF – was able to have a very large impact by reporting on the work of the special public prosecutor.</p>			

Activities:	<p>i) institution building of media support organisations and CSOs working on press freedom, FOE, policy and advocacy issues; professionalization of media workers and media practices; support to CS for communicating with constituents and campaigning on issues of interest</p> <p>ii) supports media NGOs and indirectly supports media houses to report on issues relating to civil society, create space for public discussion and to provide counter-balance to mainstream partisan (pro-government) media e.g. supporting platforms for investigative journalism</p> <p>iii) indirectly mostly through activities that fall under i)</p>		
Morocco	16. Promoting freedom of expression, diversity and inclusive journalism in Morocco	Media Diversity Institute (MDI)	2013-16
<p>The legislative reform period in Morocco, after the adoption of the new constitution, is an excellent opportunity to engage both journalists and media decision-makers in strengthening freedom of expression and including diverse voices in media products. This project engages directly with media professionals and (political) decision makers. Through collaboration with like-minded organisations the project seeks to advocate for the insertion of concerns about diversity and inclusion into future media regulations and legislative frameworks.</p>			
Activities:	<p>i) skills training for journalists centred on reporting diversity and generating content for publication; workshops and joint actions to bring journalists and CSO activists together to report on specific problems/issues; capacity building for CSOs/Human Rights/marginalised groups to gain advocacy and media relation skills (NB short term training pitched at different levels of journalists/skills)</p> <p>ii) production and airing of special broadcast programmes involving multiple stakeholders to debate inclusion and diversity in the media; support to production of audio diaries; support to CSOs to develop communication campaigns using traditional and digital media</p> <p>iii) activities to advocate for and foster debate around freedom of expression diversity and inclusion in the media as part of constitutional reform process including analysis of specific media reform issues; promotion and adoption by media houses of a 'Diversity Charter'</p>		
Niger	17. Programme d'Appui aux processus Electoraux du Niger	Fondation Hirondelle	2015-16
<p>Aim: to enable citizens to have access to independent and good quality information on their development priorities. The dissemination of information makes it possible to improve the accountability of elected officials to the citizens, and to monitor the progress of achievements and the evolution of democracy in Niger.</p>			

<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up a multimedia production studio which will produce independent, multi-perspective and good quality journalistic content that will be broadcast on local radios and televisions. - This project has a structuring scope since it will train journalists from the existing public and private media, thus raising the level of the information sector in Niger. - Support the state Radio Niger as well as television broadcasting. 		
<p>Somalia</p>	<p>18. Radio Ergo Humanitarian Information for Somali Speaking Regions</p>	<p>International Media Support (IMS)</p>	<p>2015-17</p>
<p>The project contributes to amplifying the voices of Somali men and women across the Somali speaking regions of the Horn of Africa, providing them with credible humanitarian and public service information and catalysing positive discussions on issues of concern between Somali populations and the international community, while at the same time building local radios 'capacities to produce quality and balanced information. An essential part of the project is the mobile phone-based voice-SMS text messaging service that allows listeners across Somalia to get in touch and send their feedback to the radio.</p>			
<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Training of local FM station partners in skills for content production and interactive programme formats; support to institution-building of Radio Ergo ii) Funding for research, production and broadcast of humanitarian news and feature programmes on SW transmission, with FM rebroadcasts via local FM stations in Somalia 		
<p>Tanzania</p>	<p>19. Support to Tanzania Election Cycle: Niambie</p>	<p>BBC Media Action</p>	<p>2013-16</p>
<p><i>Niambie</i> ('Talk to Me') is a three-year civic engagement project which focuses on local (2014), parliamentary and presidential elections (2015) in Tanzania. <i>Niambie</i> seeks to provide relevant information through radio and social media so that young people, particularly young women, play an active and constructive role in democratic decision-making processes that affect their lives.</p>			
<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training and mentoring of 3 national radio stations to produce high-quality reporting during the election cycle. (incorporates elements of ii) - Training and mentoring of owners and editors from the Media Owners Association of Tanzania (MOAT) and the Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF) to improve their leadership and editorial skills, and guide the establishment of strong electoral units within their media houses/radio stations. - Production and airing of high quality radio shows with spin off discussions on social 		

	<p>media under the brand <i>Niambie</i> to engage Tanzania's youth audience.</p> <p>- Support to research indirectly through internal M&E requirements fulfilled by BBC Media Action – generating evidence of interest to wider development sector</p>		
Tanzania	20. Empowering Media in Tanzania-EMT (contribution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNESCO - Tanzania Media Foundation (TMF) - Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) 	2015-18
<p>This programme aims to contribute towards transparent and accountable state systems. By supporting media to play its role as a fourth estate, citizens will be better informed and will engage more effectively in decision making, oversight and advocacy regarding development policy processes at local and national levels.</p> <p>Tanzania is an example of supporting media with a comprehensive approach and with several years of experience.</p>			
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Training of journalists to enhance their professional capacities for reporting on issues of public interest, particularly through investigative journalism; organisational development through institutional grants to media houses; National, regional and local/community radios strengthened in terms of financial sustainability and governance (TMF and UNESCO) ii) Indirectly, through i) above, production by beneficiaries of high quality reporting on issues of public interest iii) Advocacy for enactment of Right to Information and Media Services Acts; monitoring of press violations; increased representation of community media in national dialogue (MCT and UNESCO) iv) Infrastructure, equipment, technology: to support community stations and for journalists to collect information; and to facilitate citizen engagement with programmes and get audience feedback to stations – building on existing ICTs for local radio project (UNESCO) v) Support to research indirectly through internal M&E requirements, promoting use of proprietary audience research for marketing to support financial sustainability of media outlets, commissioning of feasibility studies to support interventions (ALL partners) 		
Tunisia	21. Renforcement des capacités de	Fondation Hirondelle	2015-16

	Radio Tunisienne (Phase 2)		
<p>The project, built on the success of the Swiss-funded pilot project since mid-2011, proposes to extend the same support to other regional radio stations, as well as to create an editorial pool dedicated to covering key political processes – such as the National Constituent Assembly, general elections, parliament, and so on.</p>			
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant to Fondation Hirondelle for 5 years to change newsroom working practices at 5 regional radios of Radio Tunisienne, e.g. daily editorial meetings - Grant to Afromed and Mimirac Ogilvy to coach the PDG and to reform working practices at central level 		
Global	Strategic institutional partnership	Fondation Hirondelle	Since 2013
<p>This institutional partnership is a core grant to Fondation Hirondelle, a Swiss NGO specializing in creating and supporting radio stations and other media in crisis countries, including D R Congo, Mali, Niger, Tunisia, and Burkina Faso. In 2016 SDC's funding to Fondation Hirondelle constituted around 25 per cent of the organisation's total funding.</p>			

Annex 2: List of Interviewees

COUNTRY	NAME	ROLE	ORGANISATION
Afghanistan	Shaker Sayar Mohammad	Programme Officer	SDC
Afghanistan	Pietro Ienna	Task Manager for Communication, Media and Visibility	EU Delegation to Afghanistan
Afghanistan	Asif Omar	Director	AEPO
Bangladesh	Melina Papageorgiou Trippolini	Programme Officer	SDC
Bangladesh	Sabina Yasmeim Lubna	Programme Officer	SDC
Bangladesh	Rezwan-ul-Alam	Director of Outreach and Communication	Transparency International Bangladesh
Bangladesh	Arshad Siddiqui	Ex Deputy Executive Director	Mass-line Media Centre
Benin	Sylvain Corderoy	Programme Officer	SDC
Benin	N'da Hilaire	Radio Director	FERCAB
Benin	Madougou Boni	Radio Director	FERCAB
Benin	Denise Diakité	Chargée de Programmes	Maison de la Société Civile
Benin	Armand Vignon	Directeur	Maison de la Société Civile
Benin	Gerard Laleye	Programme Officer	SDC
Bhutan	Matthias Meier	Programme Officer	SDC
Bhutan	Kinley Shering	News Editor	Journalist Association of Bhutan
Bhutan (based in Denmark)	Lars Bestle	Head of Asia Department	IMS
Burkina Faso	Nathalie Nikiema	Programme Officer	SDC
Burkina Faso	Denis Vincenti	Responsable de la FH à Ouaga	Radiodiffusion Télévision du Burkina (RTB)
Burkina Faso	Jean Emmanuel Ouedraogo	Rédacteur en chef de la télévision	Radiodiffusion Télévision du Burkina (RTB)
Burkina Faso	Diallo Micoulay	Responsable du Centre de Presse 'Norbert Zongo'	Radiodiffusion Télévision du Burkina (RTB)
Burundi	Antoine Kaburahe	Directeur du Groupe de Presse <i>Iwacu</i>	Journal <i>Iwacu</i>
Burundi	Elisabeth Pitteloud	Country Director	SDC

COUNTRY	NAME	ROLE	ORGANISATION
Burundi	Dona-Fabiola Nshimirimana	Programme officer	SDC
DRC	Marie Louise	Programme Officer	SDC
DRC	Karim Benard Dendé	Chief of Party	Internews
DRC	David Winiger	Country Director	SDC
ex Great Lakes	Brigitte Oederlin	Programme Officer	SDC
France	Guy Berger	Director, Division of Freedom of Expression and Media Development	UNESCO
Grand Lacs - regional	Giancarlo de Picciotto	Regional Director	SDC
Great Lakes	Annonciata Ndikumasabo	Regional Gov. Adviser	SDC
Kosovo	Saranda Cana-Pruthi	Programme Officer	SDC
Kosovo	Arjan Shabani	Programme Officer	SDC
Kosovo	Norbert Pijls	Project Manager	HELVETAS
Kosovo	Fatmir Curri	Project Manager	KCSF
Kosovo	Shqipe Neziri	Project Manager	UNDP
Macedonia	Ibrahim Mehmeti	Programme Officer	SDC
Macedonia	Aleksandar Krzalovski	National Team Leader	MCIC
Macedonia (based in Brussels)	Petrus Theunisz	International Team Leader	NIRAS
Mali	Dieng Abdoul Wahab	Programme Officer	SDC
Mali	Tiéoura Sounkara	Chargé de Programme PEGA (Partenariat pour l'Exercice d'une Gouvernance Appropriée)	OXFAM Novib
Mali	Mahamadou Mandjou	Directeur Europe	Ministère des affaires étrangères
Morocco	Mouloud El Kamel	Programme Officer	SDC
Morocco	Dasha Ilic	Director	Media Diversity Institute
Morocco	Abdellatif Lambaraa	ISIC Alumni Director	ISIC (journalism institute)
Niger	Ibrahima BA	Programme Officer	SDC
Niger	Pauline Bend	Représentante Niger	Fondation Hirondelle
Rwanda	Nadege Kanyange	Programme Officer	SDC
Somalia (based in Nairobi)	Lillian Kilwake	Programme Officer	SDC
Somalia (based in Nairobi)	Finn Rasmussen	Senior Programme Manager	International Media Support

COUNTRY	NAME	ROLE	ORGANISATION
Nairobi)			(IMS)
Somalia (based in Nairobi)	Louise Tunbridge	Programme Manager	Radio Ergo/IMS
Switzerland	Marie-Thérèse Karen	Thematic Advisor for Southern, Eastern, Northern Africa and OPT	SDC
Switzerland	Caroline Vuillemin	CEO	Fondation Hirondelle
Switzerland	Jean-François Cuénod	Deputy Head of the Southern Cooperation Department	SDC
Tanzania	Emanuele Sapienza	Policy Specialist, Civic Engagement Officer	UNDP
Tanzania	Eric Kalunga	Programme Officer	SDC
Tanzania	Rose Mwalimu	Radio trainer & advisor	UNESCO,
Tanzania	Neema Yobu	Programme Manager	BBC Media Action
Tanzania	Fausta Musokwa	SPO - Strategic and Communications	Tanzania Media Fund
Tanzania	Kajubi Mukajanga	Executive Secretary	MCT
Tanzania	Sonya Dettelbacher Elmer	Embassy of Switzerland	SDC
Tunisia	Souhaib Khayati	Programme Officer	SDC
Tunisia	Lassadd Dehech	Chef de projet réformes	Radio Tunisienne
Tunisia	Maher Abderahmane	Coach du PDG de Radio Tunisienne	Afomed Media
Tunisia	Michel Codaccioni	Chef de projet	Fondation Hirondelle
Tunisia	Romain Darbellay	Programme Director	SDC
UK	James Deane	Director, Policy & Learning	BBC Media Action re. DFID
West Africa	Kader Abdoul Dicko	Regional Gov. Adviser West Africa	SDC
Zimbabwe	Rashweat Mukundu	Freedom of Expression Activist	IMS

Annex 3: List of Recommendations from SDC country offices

The following table summarises the main strategic and operational recommendations⁶⁴ that our team gathered from SDC staff and partners for this CapEx. A strategic recommendation is included (in the left-hand column) if it was made by at least three country offices. They are not in any particular order. Recommendations were worded by different country offices in different ways, so we have tried to group similar ideas together, even though they may have been expressed differently. For the operational recommendations (right-hand column), we have selected the clearest and those that could possibly be applied beyond just one country or region. We have omitted operational recommendations that were either very detailed or specific to that country or programme⁶⁵:

Strategic recommendations	Operational Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SDC should formulate a media strategy with a budget attached, at country/regional level where none exists at present (Mali, Niger, Benin, Mali/BF Regional, Burkina Faso, Afghanistan) - SDC should be more politically / diplomatically active in support of freedom of expression, journalist protection, and in support of media's exposure of corruption (Kosovo, Benin, Great Lakes, Burundi, Rwanda, DRC, Morocco) - SDC should be less risk-averse (Kosovo, DRC, Burundi) - SDC should include political stakeholders and state-run media where possible and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country offices should be made more aware of the HQ institutional partnership arrangement with Fondation Hirondelle and how to take advantage of their services (Mali) - Political economy analysis / context analysis should always be done, along with risk analysis, prior to a media programme (Bangladesh) - Learn more from the experiences of other SDC media programmes, for example, consider (more) exchange visits (Mali, Bangladesh) - Formulate better, SMART indicators to measure media project achievements (Mali, Kosovo, DRC)

⁶⁴ The full country-by-country list of recommendations, gathered from all 18 countries and regions surveyed, is available from iMedia.

⁶⁵ For example, instead of this: 'Oxfam in Mali should go on an exchange visit to Benin', we have written this: 'Learn more from the experiences of other SDC media programmes, for example, consider (more) exchange visits' (Mali, Bangladesh etc.)

Strategic recommendations	Operational Recommendations
<p>appropriate (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Kosovo)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SDC should consider funding and being more flexible and supportive to small, young, local media NGOs and help boost their capacity if they are organisationally weak (Bangladesh, Rwanda, Tanzania) - SDC should devote more resources to M&E of its media work and better documentation of results (DRC, Macedonia, Afghanistan) - SDC should consider how to (better) use the local media at country level to increase the visibility of its aid programmes (Mali/BF Regional, Kosovo) - SDC should consider longer time-frames for its media projects (Tunisia, Morocco, Bhutan) - SDC should be clear that media is a cross-cutting issue that is fully mainstreamed in its governance programmes (Somalia, Bhutan, Afghanistan). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure baseline assessments are done at the design stage to understand audience's prior knowledge, attitudes and practices (Afghanistan) - Consider starting a call-down contract with international media NGOs to provide specialist and back-stopping services globally and to provide continuity of advice and monitoring (Niger, Great Lakes, Bhutan) - Emergency and ad hoc grants for journalist safety/protection should be ready and deployed in urgent/crisis situations (Kosovo, Great Lakes) - SDC should help build the capacity of staff and partners on social/digital/mobile media (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Mali/Burkina Faso Regional) - SDC should consider larger grants and do more to help with the equipment and infrastructure needs of local media houses (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Macedonia) - SDC should do more on sustaining media outlets in the long-term by boosting business and marketing skills, organisational development (Bhutan, Tanzania) - Capacity development for media professionalization should particularly

Strategic recommendations	Operational Recommendations
	<p>emphasise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) editorial standards (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Bhutan) ii) accountability (Benin, Afghanistan) iii) engaging children and young people (Benin, Afghanistan, Tanzania) iv) gender issues and inclusion (Macedonia, Afghanistan, Tanzania) v) data journalism / social media (Tanzania, Bangladesh) <p>- Style of training should be immersive, mentor-led, hands-on, in-situ – not one-off workshops (Somalia, Morocco, Afghanistan, Tanzania)</p> <p>- SDC should consider training all its staff on media issues, particularly in fragile contexts (Great Lakes, Mali/Burkina Faso Regional)</p> <p>- SDC should consider improving/disseminating its internal guidelines and provide checklists for design of media projects (Great Lakes)</p>

Annex 4: SDC 's Guiding Principles on Media compared with DFID and DANIDA

SDC's Guiding Principles (from 2007 'Orientation Guide') ⁶⁶	DFID's 'Priorities' (from 2008 Briefing: Media and Good Governance) ⁶⁷	DANIDA's Key Messages (from 2011 'How To' Note: Media and Freedom of Expression) ⁶⁸
<p>Overall statement: "Media is a key factor for achieving transparency and accountability and is a promising entry point to encourage positive change in development (sic) and transition countries"⁶⁹</p>	<p>Overall statement: "A diverse, dynamic and free media is vital to development. This can be accomplished by strengthening media infrastructure, capacity and professionalism; and supporting improvements in the quality and diversity of media content."⁷⁰</p>	<p>Overall statement: "Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of any democratic society and a universally accepted human right...[it] is a fundamental precondition for a nuanced, inclusive and transparent public debate - and for the exercise of other human rights."⁷¹</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Efforts must be people-oriented, not technology-driven 2. Pay attention to local needs and involve local partners 3. Be prepared for a long-term intervention 4. Embed media assistance in a broader approach 5. Place emphasis on (donor) coordination 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify how and why media matter in the lives of people living in poverty 2. Understand what can and cannot be supported⁷² 3. Treat information, communication and the media as public goods and invest accordingly 4. Encourage country level coordination 	<p>Danish support to the media and freedom of expression should be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implemented in partnership with national partners. 2. Coordinated with other media donors. 3. Based on a holistic approach to media development to increase long-term impact. 4. Carefully and rigorously monitored

⁶⁶ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), (2007) Media assistance in the Swiss development cooperation: media - a key player for realizing social accountability. Orientation guide, Governance Division; Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. https://www.eda.admin.ch/content/dam/countries/countries-content/india/en/resource_en_160505.pdf

⁶⁷ DFID, (2008), Briefing: Media and Good Governance, <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090605213903/http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/briefing-media-good-governance.pdf>

⁶⁸ DANIDA, (2011), How To Note: Media and Freedom of Expression, http://www.netpublikationer.dk/um/11096/pdf/media_and_freedom_of_expression.pdf

⁶⁹ SDC, (2007), p. 21

⁷⁰ DFID (2008), p.15

⁷¹ DANIDA (2011), p.1.

⁷² This point is explained as follows: "Direct support to individual media organisations may be politically or commercially inappropriate (particularly if media organisations are allied with specific political groupings)." (DFID 2018, p. 15)

SDC's Guiding Principles (from 2007 'Orientation Guide') ⁶⁶	DFID's 'Priorities' (from 2008 Briefing: Media and Good Governance) ⁶⁷	DANIDA's Key Messages (from 2011 'How To' Note: Media and Freedom of Expression) ⁶⁸
<p>6. Design media assistance in a careful planning process</p> <p>7. Monitor status and progress/evaluate outcomes.</p>	<p>and coherence</p> <p>5. Analyse the political implications of support to the media</p> <p>6. Support an enabling communication environment.</p>	<p>and evaluated so as to document results.</p>

Annex 5: Original Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

Capitalization of SDC's Engagement in Media Assistance

Context

The SDC thematic unit and network on democratisation, decentralisation and local governance (DDLGN) is responsible to advance the conceptual thematic work within SDC, provide thematic expertise to cooperation offices and geographical divisions, and to facilitate horizontal learning on proven operational practice across the organization. It is expected to contribute to thematic quality assurance of SDC's operational work and to the thematic profile of SDC at international level.

In the area of democratisation SDC is promoting a systemic perspective and approach which implies comprehensive support to different pillars of democracy and exploring new ways of engaging with a wide range of relevant actors. Thereby SDC emphasises the political dimension of its engagement: Politics are shaping the performance of state institutions, the nature of civic engagement and State society relations. This is particularly important when working with media. They play a key role in informing the public and offering a platform for the articulation of different voices, in acting as a watch dog over public transactions and political processes and as such, contributing to the legitimacy of politics and trustful relations between the State and society.

SDC has a long history of media assistance in different geographical regions, while following a twofold approach: support to media as a vector within sector programmes and strengthening media as a sector in its own. Several SDC guidance documents serve as a reference for media programming⁷³, however, SDC has never done a comprehensive review of its media assistance at a global level.

In May 2016 the division of South, East, North Africa and Palestine (SENAP) realized a regional capitalization workshop of its media assistance, in close collaboration with the thematic unit DDLG. The findings will be integrated in the broader capitalization exercise of the network. All related documentation (digital stories, videos, summary of WG discussions etc.) can be found:

<https://www.shareweb.ch/site/DDLGN/events/2016%20Media%20Capitalisation%20Workshop/Seiten/default.aspx>

Objectives

During past years DDLGN has engaged in several learning trajectories on different actors and processes of democracy, such as for example: citizen's participation and accountability, informal local governance institutions, parliaments and elections. With this capitalization, DDLGN aims to analyse current approaches, experiences, and lessons learnt in the area of SDC's Media Assistance and to facilitate experience sharing and joint learning among its network members. The *overall objective* of the capitalization is to enhance SDC's approach and effectiveness in media assistance, and to strengthen its profile against international good practice.

The capitalization exercise will include the following elements:

⁷³ Media Assistance in the Swiss Development Cooperation: Media – a key player for realizing social accountability, Orientation Guide, SDC 2007; Media and Governance, Orientation Guide, SDC 2004; Information and Governance, Orientation Guide, SDC 2004.

1. Literature review and review of donor documents with the aim of identifying good practice approaches in media assistance.
2. Analysis of current SDC programmes and their previous phases, as well as guidance documents and synthesis of main lessons.
3. Conclusions with regard to current SDC approach and profile against good practice, as well as the accuracy of existing guidance documents.
4. Recommendations in view of future positioning, strategic approaches, areas for deepening analysis and learning and thematic guidance by DDLGN.

Scope

- **The capitalization exercise shall focus** on SDC programmes that support media as a development actor/sector in its own right and where media play a key role in promoting DDLG. It shall be limited to the actual media support programmes including their previous phases.
- It shall include programmes supporting the role of media (by which is meant traditional as well as digital, social and mobile media) with regard to balanced public information and civic education, providing an independent platform for different societal and political voices and for stimulating peaceful dialogue; promoting social cohesion and holding state institutions accountable.
- It shall include programmes with the following type of support: Individual capacity development of journalists, strengthening of media outlets (private or public) and of supporting media institutions, legal, political enabling environment and their independence and sustainability.
- Particular attention shall be given to the aspect of **context sensitivity**, dealing with political risks and with situations of fragility and conflict, i.e. to what extent media programmes work on the prevention of societal, political polarization, violent conflicts and reducing fragility, and how they support media in adjusting their interventions to situations of fragility and conflict.
- Special focus shall be provided to the question of how far these programmes address the promotion of **non-discrimination**, social inclusion and gender equality in media work.
- The programmes to be analysed include the actual
- **The following methodologies shall be used for the capitalization exercise:** desk review of relevant publications, selected donor literature (focus will provisionally be on media assistance programmes of Sweden (Sida), DFID (UK), Knight Foundation and UNESCO/UNDP), desk review of selected SDC program documents (credit proposals, project documents, including impact hypotheses and outcomes) and of SDC policy documents and evaluation reports (and average of 8 documents per country-programme is assumed plus global and regional policy and programme documents); phone interviews with responsible SDC staff and implementing partner organisations in selected partner countries (3-5 per country); presentation and discussion of findings in ½ day workshop at SDC headquarters; and subsequent e-discussion and possible participation in the DDLGN face to face meeting in ~2017/2018 (the latter is not part of these ToR). For the selection of countries, scope of SDC documents and interviews see annex 1.
- The capitalization is not an impact evaluation and the assignment therefore does not include an analysis of program impacts on beneficiaries. Rather, the capitalization exercise aims to identify programming approaches, lessons learnt, as well as challenges encountered, with a view of

providing common understanding, for SDC and partners, about current media assistance and recommendations for the future positioning and aspirations. With respect to lessons learnt, the capitalization shall capture notable successes as well as failures identified by SDC staff or partner organizations. **The following criteria could guide the analysis of SDCs work:**

- What are our ambitions: What do the programmes at global and country level want to achieve, what change do they want to contribute to?
- How has SDC's approach to media assistance in current programmes evolved and changed over the last 10 (ten) years (since 2006)? How has our theory of change (explicit or implicit) changed over the years, if at all?
- How do we support media today (current programmes): what are our strategic choices and why; what support modalities do we choose, what is our approximate global spend on media assistance per annum, what are strengths & weaknesses, failures; challenges and risks and ways of dealing with it; what are the key lessons?
- Role of SDC: What are major features of SDC support at global and country level; are there regional particularities, differences; how relevant, effective and cost-efficient is our support for partners at country level; how is SDC positioned vis-à-vis international good practice, and what is its (possible) value added; is there a need to improve, adjust, learn more?

The mandator will specify the fields and questions that will be included in the capitalization exercise in more detail during a short inception phase.

Expected Deliverables and Timeline

The overall timeframe for the completion of this assignment is 6 months (October 2016 - June 2017). The first three steps of the capitalization shall be completed no later than Mid-March 2017, so that the results and the recommendations can be presented in a ½ day workshop (date tbc) and follow up activities for DDLGN can be identified by April.