

African Media Development Initiative (AMDI)



Strengthening Africa's Private Independent Media

South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA)
Jan Smuts House,
University of Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg, South Africa

19th - 20th June 2006

WORKSHOP REPORT



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PREFACE

The Workshop on Strengthening Africa's Private Independent Media was convened by the BBC World Service Trust as part of the development of the African Media Development Initiative (AMDI).

AMDI is a development programme which originates from the 2005 Commission on Africa report. This report recommended that "independent media institutions, public service broadcasters, civil society and the private sector, with support from governments, should form a consortium of partners, in Africa and outside, to provide funds and expertise to create an African media development facility".

AMDI is an effort by the BBC World Service Trust and its partners to develop new strategies for increased media sector support into Africa. With support from the UK Department of International Development (DFID), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), AMDI includes a significant body of research in order to inform the development of these strategies. The research is being conducted by local researchers in seventeen African countries and in collaboration with the University of Ahmadu Belo in Nigeria and the School of Journalism at Rhodes University in South Africa. The initiative is being coordinated with a parallel process of consultation being led by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

The Johannesburg workshop provided an important opportunity for members of the African private media to share their views of key challenges and opportunities for media sector support. The workshop addressed regulatory, financial and capacity issues affecting the operation and growth of private media. Participants were drawn from a diverse range of media owners and entrepreneurs, as well as from international organisations including the African Development Bank and NEPAD Secretariat. A list of participants is annexed.

The AMDI research findings will be available in late September and the project's final recommendations should be complete by the end of the 2005. These recommendations should form the basis for action by a wide group of African and international partners.

We would like to express our appreciation to the South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA) which hosted the meeting, and to the UK Department for International Development and World Bank (IFC) for providing financial support.

Moeletsi Mbeki
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Member, AMDI Advisory Board

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FINDINGS

1. Participants welcomed the AMDI initiative. It should continue to be conceived as a partnership between international and African partners, led by African institutions and maximising the way that all stakeholders can provide practical help to the development of the sector.

FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

2. The media is both an engine and tool for development, and itself benefits from the virtuous cycle. Growth creates demand for new media markets, which feeds further growth. A flourishing national media is important to democracy and growth.
3. Accelerating this requires new commercial lending in higher growth economies, donor support for low income, and mixed approaches in between. AMDI recommendations should address institutional gaps in each type of market.
4. Sector wide media support is required for low income countries which cannot sustain commercial media. This should be factored into development policy of donors.
5. A new facility could examine means to strengthen the commercial environment for media by:

5.1. Underpinning the Sector

- 5.1.1. Support for the establishment of independent national audience measurement and media monitoring facilities. This is necessary to build the advertising culture required to provide increase revenues. Once the infrastructure is in place, it is up to the media to develop the marketing skills to benefit.
- 5.1.2. The development of commercial, management and professional skills utilising the training resources of large media houses and regional centres (see below)

5.2. Lending

- 5.2.1. ROI on typical infrastructure investment (e.g. printing press) exceeds the normal lending cycle of local banks. AMDI should address how to provide funding, possibly on a regional basis, to underwrite long term debt which cannot be mobilised through local markets or financial institutions; or assisting by bringing smaller investments to market by bundling them, or assisting them to corporatise their operations.
- 5.2.2. Using concessional funds to mitigate risk for commercial lenders

CONTENT

6. Content is the bottom line product of the media. The critical obstacle to local content development is inability to conduct audience feedback. A secondary issue is the cost required to invest in training to adapt international material, or invest in new programmes. There is a large untapped market for local content.
7. The costs of cross border materials can be reduced by the new ICT backbone being developed by NEPAD E-Africa Commission. The Commission's model of public private cooperation is an interesting one for AMDI.

MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY

8. Management and commercial skills are one of the most important issues to the long term sustainability of the sector, and of great importance to investor confidence. The reason that most media enterprises fail is poor management. The skills and resources do exist in Africa, but are not readily accessible to those who need them.
9. There is scepticism about value and impact of short term workshops/courses. AMDI should concentrate on developing the use of African and developed market expertise – including Diaspora – to build capacity in less developed markets through in-house, sustained assistance.
10. It would be possible to set up an African-led, partially virtual facility, leveraging the leading media houses as nuclei for activities. A small team of experienced managers/leaders should be able to do organisational health and mentoring, on a regional basis, for media SMEs. The private sector should contribute to the cost of this. Support was expressed by media houses and international organisations present for this proposal.

11. A similar approach could be adopted to developing journalism skills.
12. AMDI should therefore map the training capacity and the skills gaps, and work out how to bring providers together, and donors were urged to assist such a new initiative within AMDI. UNESCO is carrying out a review which will be helpful.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

13. How can the media influence the regulatory framework? A more collective approach to regulation by private media operators will help ensure that media regulation allows a free and independent media. The APRM mechanism offers a platform through which the media can advance good regulatory practice.
14. The media competes for influence with political leaders, so tension is inherent. Regulation is driven by four factors: government self interest, public support, media leadership and international pressure.
15. Investment Climate - regulation has to be transparent and predictable to encourage investment. Regulators lack the technical skills and don't always act consistently. Licensing can be used to put pressure on editorial positions.

PROCEEDINGS

The Economic Environment – Developing Commercial Revenues and Improving Competitiveness

How can the financial sustainability of private media be improved? How can advertising revenues be increased? Costs reduced?

The discussion focused on the challenges faced by start-ups and new media enterprises to become financially sustainable, though many of these factors also apply to existing or established media organisations. Socio-political and economic landscapes result in an array of constraints which mesh together in a complex way. For example, in Benin, the challenges for new media organisations include accessing equipment which may need to be imported. However, regulatory frameworks may not allow for such imports, acting as another barrier to development. Another example is Ethiopia where the various constraints on media enterprises include factors such as low literacy levels, multiple languages, restrictions on foreign investment into press, and a (partially) private banking system which is in its infancy.

Two key themes were developed in this session: improving revenues, specifically those of advertising, and attracting capital.

With regard to attracting funding, there is a strong feeling that many African media organisations are too small scale to attract institutional investors. Regional mergers could help here. However, there is little appetite in Africa for regional content, which presents a challenge to media organisations looking at cost-efficiencies by operating pan-regionally.

A number of preconditions are thought to be significant for attracting investment. With regard to the economic climate, growth in GDP is a key indicator, and part of a virtuous cycle stimulating consumer appetite for disposable goods which in turn increases opportunities for advertising. Other indicators might be advertising as a percentage of GDP. There is a desire to see some of these indicators mapped as part of an economic analysis.

There are currently too few opportunities in Africa for investors, who are generally looking for corporatised operations, which are required to transform media enterprises into attractive vehicles for investors. This implies scaling up enterprises and having appropriate governance mechanisms which allow transparency for investors. Transforming businesses in this way is seen as a pre-condition to attracting investment, whether foreign or African. In addition, clear exit strategies are needed for investors.

Putting in place the right management, or supporting existing management, through short term placements and support from experts either from within Africa or without, may be the fastest way of achieving transformation for media enterprises and ensuring that they become attractive to investors.

ROI in media organisations may be slower or longer term than in other businesses, (exceeding the typical lending cycle offered by banks of 3-5 years) and media organisations should therefore look to other media groups to invest in their businesses. Pension funds may offer another opportunity.

There is widespread support for the establishment of a facility, at regional or in-country basis from which investment funds can be made available to those organisations needing to grow in this way and to provide a range of commercial and mentoring skills to help media businesses achieve this transformation.

One suggestion is for a fund/facility where embryonic media businesses can take out loans and access management/financial expertise. In some countries, entrepreneurs may need support with business plans, revenue models, loan applications as well as finance.

It is recognised that some such facilities already exist – for example, the South African Media Development Fund – which does soft loans and shares risk so that organisations can qualify for commercial loans. Also the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (operating as a revolving fund.) Lessons can be learned from these facilities, but overall, they are perceived to be slow and cumbersome.

Financial development agencies such as the African Development Bank also support media. This agency aligns media in same categorisation as other development activities, categorising by low, middle and high income countries: the question then becomes one of what kinds of support would media from these different categorisations reasonably expect from investors and development banks. Those from lower income countries tend to be more donor dependent and have less access to markets, and the reverse is true for those at the top. Requirements will vary accordingly.

With regard to increasing advertising revenues, successful African media organisations need to be prepared to share examples of good practice and successful initiatives in this respect.

There is an overriding need for regular and robust market research and media monitoring is needed, especially in high growth markets in order to attract and build an advertising culture.

SMEs and fledging media houses need expertise in selling and attracting advertising, and this needs to be backed up by advertising research, based on financial estimates in order to make a persuasive case.

An alternative model to attract advertising was cited by Breeze FM in Zambia. Their advertising strategy included the development of a three-tiered rate-card for businesses, which included a very low entry ratecard for personal advertising. This became a surprise success and helped to reconfirm the station's position as part of the community.

A feature of the South African environment is the existence of the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) - a non profit organisation founded in 1974 to provide comprehensive and valid media audience and product consumption measures and funded by a levy on advertising revenue from media organisations.

Accessing capital investment and growing advertising revenue are key facets of developing sustainable media enterprises, but there are multiple other facets to consider. The Mail and Guardian in Zimbabwe was cited as an example of a newspaper which became profitable within three years of its new owner taking over. Applying sound business principles was key to its success, while a track record helped to deliver finance. A benign operating environment (both availability of staff and labour laws) facilitated the hiring of appropriately qualified staff. The message for other businesses was that they should not romanticise the media - "the fundamental thing we should do is to treat papers as a product."

Content

What are the key issues surrounding content and the production of local content?

Content is the defining product of media organisations; it is content which distinguishes one media business from another and content which attracts advertising support. The debate focused on the experiences of those media owners with experience of developing content at a local and regional level and across multiple platforms, and there was input from NEPAD explaining a number of projects including the support of the new ICT backbone which will facilitate transfer of content in East Africa. The key themes which emerged are the importance of training of staff to ensure quality and to compete for audiences, and the urgency of research to understand consumer needs and media performance. Key points of the discussion were:

Audiences are growing more sophisticated in their appetite for high quality content and content providers need to recognise this. Audience appetites and preferences need to be determined through research. However, much of the content found in press and on television is of poor quality and without much imagination. There is too much acquired product of low quality even though audiences clearly respond to and want local material. Funding is required to assist and support in the development of such local content.

Without good content, the business model does not exist. The Nation Group has an integrated strategy which approaches content from a number of angles. These

include: ongoing training of staff; regular critiquing of the papers; comparison and benchmarking of the paper with others from around the world; regular research in order to understand audience needs and track performance; convergence of content across platforms. Of these strategies, training is deemed to be critical, and embraces the establishment of clear editorial guidelines and training in professional ethics - both fundamental to ensure that audiences and readers retain their trust in the media organisations: "The worst thing is where the public loses faith in a media house, because then your business model has gone."

NEPAD is supporting a project to reduce the cost of communication across Eastern Africa, through a project for joint ownership of a new ICT submarine cable across this side of the continent. Once this goes ahead, it will enable cheaper telecommunications traffic and transfer of content across borders more easily and at a cheaper rate. NEPAD is also supporting an ICT project for schools which involves co-operation between donors, governments and private partners, and presents an interesting partnership model.

There is a need to consider alternative business models which allow for grass-roots content production. Paradigms might include citizen production, utilising existing distribution networks (e.g. GPS), and leveraging creativity and energy of the youth market for developing content.

There is a belief that many African media organisations do not serve audience needs sufficiently. For example, there is a need to embrace more localised content which reflects the different languages and cultures within Africa and does not confine itself to official languages and a euro-centric view. (There may be a tension between this requirement and the financial imperative to achieve cost-efficiencies through production of more regional content, though this was not discussed). Newspapers are thought to concentrate too much on politics at the expense of other facets of life which might be of interest to readers. Journalists and media practitioners need training in order to help them develop their ability to develop media content which is not simply focused on the official events of the day. Focused content can also be a key strategy to attract advertising revenue.

Content regulation is not desirable although in terms of taste and public decency, media organisations should continue to self-regulate. Some countries (e.g. South Africa) have quotas for local production and this is generally approved as helping the local industry.

The importance of audience research needs to be reflected by building capacity in organisations to facilitate them carrying out their own research.

Development agencies are not deemed to fully understand the role of media in development, or to recognise its centrality in development. Media owners also have a responsibility to reflect development issues through their organs, and there is a sense in which this is not always happening. There may be a conflict between producing the development agenda and content which is relevant to the lives of

readers and audiences. However, at a local level, the social agenda can be covered in ways which are appealing (for example through campaigns or competitions). The issue is one about who drives the agenda and has implications for partnerships between development agencies and media enterprises.

Strengthening Professionalism – Improving Capacity

Can the private media work together to improve standards and skills can development partners support this?

Management and commercial skills are essential for development and sustainability of the sector. The session drew on a number of accounts given by entrepreneurs of the lessons learned from their own experience, which underlined the importance attached to the recruitment and capacitating of staff at all levels of media enterprise, from the top down. Key points arising were:

Recruiting the appropriate management team is the foundation for success in the sector. Media start-ups often lack the appropriate management skills which results in businesses with unrealistic business plans that are unlikely to succeed. An example given here was a newspaper business in Ethiopia which had not taken account of the costs of printing, and had to downsize the scale of its operation to survive.

Despite the need for effective management, there is recognition that entrepreneurs are often reluctant to relinquish control over their business and consider themselves indispensable. Media entrepreneurs may come from a state broadcasting background with little understanding of commercial imperatives or are former journalists with few management skills. Entrepreneurs were urged to accept that the quid pro quo for capital investment which allows for expansion and financial stability might mean passing control to a management team or board of directors, and to recognise that "cemeteries are full of indispensable people." There is also a need, both at senior and middle management level, to overcome the cultural bias that exists against 'training' or the need for acquiring more skills.

There is a belief that managers with the right skill sets and experience exist in Africa and the African Diaspora, and there is a belief that these talents should be exploited. However, more important than their provenance is the fact that managers should share the vision of the enterprise and have the right qualifications.

Mentoring is also important and there is a need to broker introductions between established media players and new enterprises.

A range of other skills necessary for the survival and growth of media enterprises are also needed. Advertising sales, distribution, human resources, the use and exploitation of new technologies are all areas ongoing training is imperative.

There is therefore a key need for a variety of training schemes to support media enterprises. Such schemes should be supported by the private sector in partnership

with other agencies. There is an opportunity to establish a facility which could be a virtual media training facility, drawing on support and expertise from successful private sector organisations. One possible model being utilised in South Africa for the support of failed local authorities is to bring in a team of 'trouble-shooters' to work with the LA for a period of time - this could also work with media enterprises.

Training for journalists is also fundamental to the success of media enterprises; such training needs to be systematic where possible and to embrace new technology. Creative approaches to recruiting quality media practitioners (such as highly skilled individuals from other professions) needs to be partnered with an approach to teaching fundamental journalistic skills.

There is fairly widespread belief that short-term journalism training courses overseas lack impact; however targeted short-course training should not be abandoned completely as it can offer a focused solution in the short-term while a more systematic approach towards training is being developed.

UNESCO is initiating an Africa-wide training mapping survey which will seek to rate training agencies against established criteria and result in setting up a number of centres of excellence of training. The project will aim to ensure that training is more readily accessible and build on work previously carried out on developing a model curriculum for training.

Regular fora can be useful tools for the exchange of good practice between media organisations.

The Regulatory Environment

How can governments be encouraged to foster press freedom and diversity?

Working collectively and building partnerships is key in order that private media can influence the regulatory environment in which they operate. Capacitating and strengthening media is the pre-requisite for being able to exert pressure on the environment.

The media has huge power, and is vital as the watchdog of government, who often perceives the media to be competing with it for influence. The regulatory framework is important to protect this role of watchdog, and a means of ensuring good governance and accountability. There is a lack of will (by some governments) to put such a framework in place, and the media has a responsibility to advocate for such frameworks, while recognising that achieving this goal may be a long and hard road in some countries.

There is also a lack of skills to among those tasked with designing such regulatory frameworks appropriately, particularly in this era of expanding technologies and

new media. There is a need to share capacity across the continent in this respect, and for the media to increase its advocacy and advisory role in this respect.

The African Peer Review Mechanism offers a platform through which the media can advance good regulatory practice, though there is scepticism in some quarters as to whether all governments will submit themselves to its processes.

There are tensions between those who may choose to openly defy legislation which is thought oppressive or restrictive, and those who choose a more tactical approach. Some examples were given; in Zimbabwe, the *Mail & Guardian* chose to comply with a requirement to register in order that they could challenge other aspects of legislation in court, while the *Daily News* chose not to register at all on principle. For those working in countries with controlling or repressive regimes, change is unlikely to happen without some degree of confrontation and both media practitioners, media organisations and their owners risk imprisonment. In these instances, support from other media organisations both internally and across the continent can be key to advancing regulatory reform.

The lack of a healthy regulatory environment - or uncertainties within it and how it is applied - make for an environment which is unattractive to investors, who seek transparency, or at least consistency.

South Africa was cited as an interesting model where the media regulatory environment has been developed through a process of consultation and research and which offers an environment with are minimal constraints (other than foreign ownership restrictions) on media operators. However, even in such a benign regulatory environment, it is important for media organisations to monitor the impact of regulatory changes; e.g. the ending of obligation of governments to advertise legal notices would have a massive impact on media organisations that are heavily dependent on government legislation.

One model for thinking about regulation might be to consider that regulation is driven by four elements: government self-interest; public support for media; media leadership and international pressure. At the heart of this, the dialogue between media and government is crucial. Media organisations need to take a self-critical stance in order to perform a useful role here; by questioning the degree to which their actions are governed by self-interest, examining the extent to which they can support a government agenda before compromising their integrity.

Many African countries have an operating environment which militates against business development; employment laws restricting the ways in which owners can 'hire and fire'; lack of a skilled workforce and other issues act as serious constraints.

The Private Media and AMDI

It was observed that as part of the wider scope of this project, DFID has given support to ECA to undertake a process of consultation with a) owners of media in Africa, b) media practitioners, c) media trainers and d) media support institutions. The findings from this consultative process will be merged with those from the larger AMDI research process. The overall aim is to back two or three ideas to take forward which will feed into the Technical Workshop.

The World Bank's IFC is a co-sponsor of this event. The IFC has a portfolio of around \$20USmillion invested in emerging markets, with around \$1.5 million of that invested in new media markets.

An introduction to the research programme, its objectives, design and scope, was given.

The research was welcomed by all contributors, and results are anticipated eagerly. It is important that it is recognised both as a) embracing other research work, b) presenting data which is new and not available before, and c) which has been conducted in Africa by an African team.

The scale and scope of the research was judged significant. It was suggested that the research might be extended to other countries and repeated triennially for example. Modalities - for example - selection of countries for the research - will be closely scrutinised and this is an important point to note for the research team when preparing its outputs.

Patterns of media density, indices of journalists and insight into the regulatory frameworks within the sampled countries are all of key interest. While key themes will be important for informing discussions at the Technical Workshop, the country-level detail is also thought to be important for those from those countries. For this audience (largely private media owners) there is little interest in public or state media, and the importance of taking a holistic perspective of media will need to be stressed.

From an investment viewpoint, the research will offer useful profiling but lacks analysis of investment flow into countries. There is an appetite to answer the question about the conditions which create markets for private investors, and it was pointed out that this was work which might be conducted as part of the 'private sector' study, complementing the main AMDI research.

ANNEX 1: AGENDA

AFRICAN MEDIA DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (AMDI)

Strengthening Africa's Private Independent Media

19th and 20th June 2006

Venue:

**South African Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA)
Jan Smuts House, University of Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg, South Africa**

Draft Agenda

Monday 19th June

09.00 Introduction and Welcome

Welcome Remarks and Objectives - Meeting Co-Chairs:

Moeletsi Mbeki, Deputy Chair, SAIIA and Member AMDI Advisory Board

Wilfred Kiboro, Managing Director, Nation Group and Member AMDI Advisory Board

Sina Odugbemi, Programme Manager and Adviser, Information and Communication for Development Information and Civil Society Department, DFID

Darren Massara, Telecom & Media Group, International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank

09.30 Background to AMDI

Julia Moffett, BBC World Service Trust

Introduction to AMDI Research, Kathy Lines, Fuse Group

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Introductions by Participants and Agreement of Agenda and Objectives

Prof Steve Godfrey, Facilitator

12.30 Lunch

14.00 The Economic Environment – Developing Commercial Revenues, Investment and Improving Competitiveness

How can the financial sustainability of private media be improved? How can advertising revenues be increased? What are the key factors determining investment in the industry? How can the enabling environment be improved?

15.30 Tea

16.00 Creating Content

Discussion on the development of local content and programming/language issues

17.30 Close of Session

19.30 Dinner Hosted by Co-Chairs

Tuesday 20th June

08.30 Strengthening Professionalism – Improving Capacity

Can the private media work together to improve standards and skills? Can development partners support this?

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Ethics, Values and the Operating Environment

How can the media improve its own standards of integrity? How can governments be encouraged to foster press freedom?

12.00 Closing Session: Conclusions and Recommendations

What are the next steps, and what are the main recommendations to AMDI for governments, donors, investors and the industry itself?

12.30 Lunch and Departure

ANNEX 2: AFRICAN MEDIA DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (AMDI)

“.....Independent media institutions, public service broadcasters, civil society and the private sector, with support from governments, should form a consortium of partners, in Africa and outside, to provide funds and expertise to create an African media development facility”

*Our Common Interest
Report of the Commission for Africa, April 2005*

During 2005, the BBC World Service Trust coordinated input from the African and international media development community to the Commission for Africa. The Commission report *Our Common Interest* - highlighted the critical role of the media in creating government transparency, internal accountability and greater responsiveness, as well as recommending that this be addressed through the establishment of an “African media development facility” to boost support for the sector.

The key consensus reached was that work to strengthen the capacity of the media in Africa needs to be more long term and strategic, and better tailored to local needs. There is also a clear appetite for a collaborative approach between African practitioners and some of the world’s leading media organisations to achieve these objectives.

The African Media Development Initiative (AMDI) been set up to establish how best to achieve these goals. AMDI was launched by the BBC World Service Trust (WST) in January 2006 as an inclusive and open process which aims, by the second half of 2006, to mobilise a range of African and international stakeholders to significantly boost support for the development of the state, public and private sector media.

The project will aim to generate a common understanding of and agreement on specific steps to:

- i. Provide support for the development of more effective and responsive public service models of broadcasting;
- ii. Stimulate a better investment climate and operating environment for the private media;
- iii. Improve the range and scale of professional media training (to include journalism and media management) and a system of accreditation; and

- iv. Improve advocacy with African and multilateral bodies to develop policy in favour of a strengthened and more pluralistic media throughout Africa.

Programme Activities

The programme commenced in January 2006 and has three components:

Research and Analysis: The work will be underpinned by the widest independent assessment of media development undertaken in recent years. This will be based on a survey of the media landscapes across the continent as well as sub-regional and sector reports. Sixteen in-depth country reports will cover Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. This “mapping” of the media landscape will include qualitative interviews with practitioners – including state and public broadcasters, private and community media, large and small - as well as a set of overview assessments by leading practitioners. The findings will emphasise lessons learned and critical gaps, and set out areas for reform and development. The reports will also be published in association with a leading publisher in a stand-alone, seminal study of the state of the Africa media.

Sector Planning: The research will be considered at a high level technical workshop led by the members of the Advisory Group, which will be held in June 2006. This workshop will review the reports, and identify the priority areas which the initiative should address. It will set out options for the design and logistics of the AMDI facility to be presented to stakeholders at a Media Development Forum. The aim of the technical workshop will be to agree an overview analysis, and to outline costed, specific programme activities which support the four sub-sectors set out above.

Mobilisation: A Media Development Forum in August/September 2006, which is likely to take place in South Africa. The Forum will bring together practitioners, donors/investors, governments, civil society and other stakeholders to discuss and agree the arrangements for a new programme, and set out a plan to establish it. The Forum will consider the report of the Advisory Group and the set of specific recommendations prepared at the technical meeting. It will include preparatory meetings of donors, the private sector, government regulators on the day prior to the Forum.

Project Organisation

The overall project is being developed in consultation with the UN Economic Commission for Africa, which is assisting in engaging African partners. An Advisory Group of African media experts is guiding the work. Further details are available at http://www0.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/specials/1552_trust_amdi/index.shtml

The research activities which form the foundation for the project are being carried out through partnerships with the Ahmadu Bello University (Nigeria), and the School of Journalism at Rhodes University (South Africa). Initial funding for the work is being provided by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Other donor and private sector investors are currently being approached – with the aim of creating a strong platform for engaging with donors and investors in the media sector.

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