

Agenda item for discussion
Analytical Summary of Implementation Reports on IPDC-supported Projects

INFORMATION NOTE

SUMMARY CONTENT OF DOCUMENT

This document presents the second in the series of Analytical Reports on IPDC-supported projects. As one of the outputs of the Knowledge-Driven Media Development initiative endorsed by the 57th IPDC Bureau, the report contributes towards generating a knowledge base for fine-tuning further IPDC media support in the interests of maximising development impact.

Analytical Summary of Implementation Reports on IPDC-supported Projects

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1. BACKGROUND

This marks the second in the series of IPDC Analytical Reports, based on implementation reports of IPDC-supported projects over the 2013-2014 period. Its main aim is to glean important lessons from implementation reports which can form a knowledge base to improve future media development efforts.

2. METHODOLOGY

The overall purpose was epistemological: to glean data and information from the IPDC implementation reports that could be subsequently ploughed back as coherent knowledge into the exercise of IPDC project formulation and implementation. These reports are compiled by UNESCO project officers in relation to completed projects that had been supported by IPDC. Out of a listing of over 143 possible implementation reports, a total of 63 IPDC reports were analysed as part of this *Analytical Report*. This initial *availability sampling* was aimed at facilitating a simple statistical computation of the general characteristics of project implementation, as indicated in tables 1, 2 and 3 below.

Out of the 63 implementation reports, a total of 26 reports were further selected as part of a *purposive sub-sample*¹ for some in-depth analysis. The criteria for their selection included their geographical-regional representation, thematic

¹ Both availability and purposive sampling are examples of non-probability random sampling. In particular, in a *purposive sample*, sample elements are selected for a specific purpose, in line with the overall goal of the research study.

coverage and general comprehensiveness of reporting. The main purpose here was to undertake a more detailed analysis that would yield useful knowledge about what IPDC and stakeholders could learn from the overall implementation of the projects.

A third methodological approach involved a theoretical review of emerging literature on media development, scanty though this appears to be. Explaining this near scarcity of theoretical contributions to media development – which in itself justifies the need for a type of *knowledge-driven* media development – Myers, Dietz & Frère, argue:

This may be partly because the area of international media assistance is at once very niche and one which bisects many other disciplines, so that scholarship is widely dispersed across the areas of media studies, development studies, foreign policy studies, public policy and other areas of political science and cultural studies. Many scholars may therefore be simply publishing elsewhere. But this also may be due to international media assistance being an opaque field of development which is difficult to study.²

Rather than avoiding such theoretical limitations, this *Analytical Report* represents precisely an attempt to further scaffold general knowledge about what works in the field of media development.

3. DESCRIPTION

Table 1: Distribution of projects by thematic category³

Thematic category	Number of projects
Promotion of freedom of expression and press freedom (including the safety of journalists), pluralism (particularly community media, youth and gender dimensions), and independence (self-regulation and professional standards)	23 (37%)
Capacity development for journalists and media managers	31 (49%)
Innovation in convergence and integration of legacy (traditional) news media and new communications.	2 (3%)
Media assessments by way of Media Development Indicators, Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media, etc.)	7 (11%)
Total	63 (100%)

Table 2: Distribution of projects by implementation status

Implementation status	Number of projects
Ongoing	44 (70%)
Completed	19 (30%)
Total	63 (100%)

Table 3: Distribution of projects by gender reporting

Gender reporting	Number of projects
Reports explicitly refer to gender	29 (46%)
Reports do not explicitly refer to gender	34 (54%)
Total	63 (100%)

² See Myers, M, Dietz, C & Marie-Soleil Frère, M.S. (2014). International Media Assistance: Experiences and Prospects. *Global Media Journal German Edition*. Vol. 4, No.2, Autumn/Winter 2014. [O]. Available: http://www.db-thueringen.de/servlets/DerivateServlet/Derivate-31149/GMJ8_Editorial_final.pdf. Accessed 21/01/2015.

³ The thematic categorisation is in line with the three priorities identified and approved by the IPDC Bureau of 2013. These are: (i) Promotion of freedom of expression and press freedom (including the safety of journalists), pluralism (particularly community media, youth and gender dimensions), and independence (self-regulation and professional standards); (ii) Capacity development for journalists and media managers; and (iii) Innovation in convergence and integration of legacy (traditional) news media and new communications. However, where a report did not seem to neatly fit any of the above – and where the main activity as such dealt with the *research* application of any of UNESCO's assessment tools – a fourth category was used, namely: **media assessments**. Furthermore, another caveat worth emphasising is that the categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, even if **Innovation** scores lowly, several projects covering the other categories use various ICT-based innovations as modalities of implementation.

4. ANALYSIS

Against the background of the above description, and keeping in mind the in-depth analysis of selected implementation reports, five key lessons can be highlighted here, as follows: (i) gender reporting; (ii) a focus on sustainable development; (iii) mobilisation for community radio projects; (iv) efforts at comparative media research; and (v) technology-driven projects.

Firstly, almost half of the reports (46%) analysed include, to varying degrees, some gender-disaggregated data on the actual implementation of the activities. Several reports go so far as to highlight the cultural factors that account for the under- and/or over-representation of women in particular types of activities. For example, whereas one report laments that ‘a more structured gender component would have been useful in Gaza’, another celebrates women as having been the ‘majority of participants in the three courses’ undertaken in a project aimed at training journalists to more effectively use the Brazilian Freedom of Information Law, reflecting the fact of ‘female prevalence in newsrooms’ across the country.

An important point to note here – and one that could be framed as a *recommendation* for future implementation reports – is that there is an obligatory need to include in one’s reporting how the implementation of the activity reflects the generality or specificity of UNESCO’s Global Priority Gender Equality in a given cultural context. Such gender-sensitive reporting can logically be better facilitated if gender parameters are consciously and comprehensively included in the project proposals submitted to the IPDC Secretariat. This does not negate the fact that projects which did not originally include gender parameters could, during the course of their implementation, turn out to have an impact on gender aspects. An example includes a project on Media Development Indicators (MDIs) in Uruguay which reported on ‘a change in implementation, in response to the introduction of ‘gender Indicators [which subsequently] provoked many changes in research protocols’.

Secondly, against the backdrop of an evolving post-2015 development agenda, it is clear, from some activities analysed, that the IPDC is making a significant contribution in enlisting journalism to realise social, economic and environmental sustainability. For example, several projects expressly linked journalistic practice to the realisation of national policies aimed at mitigating and preventing climate change as well as raising journalistic awareness about ‘ethical coverage of emergencies and disasters’. This is evident in such countries as the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Senegal, Togo and Rwanda, among several others. A key message to recognise here is that future IPDC project submitters can confidently include the aspect of sustainable development in their proposals, particularly within the framework of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), with the focus on how free, independent and pluralistic media can effectively contribute towards realising aspects of sustainable development.

Thirdly, in projects focusing on the setting up of community radio stations, it is important to stress the need for greater community mobilisation and participation. For example, whereas one project in Jamaica may have experienced ‘some interpersonal conflicts with community members as to how to run the radio station’, a similar project in the Dominican Republic anticipated such a challenge by organising ‘a community meeting’ to introduce the concept of Community Radio and recruit volunteers who would be active in the further development of the station. This particular project also counted “on local authorities’ support in project planning and implementation”, ensuring that the project responded to ‘local needs while keeping its alignment to provincial media and educational sectors priorities’. This again reinforces the importance of local ownership by all stakeholders in order for projects to succeed.

Fourthly, for projects involving comparative media research, such as the one undertaken on media self-regulation in Jordan, there is need for ‘better estimation of the time needed for the implementation of activities’, especially for preliminary research. The deployment of the results of research also needs a realistic time frame. Transnational research projects of this type also require the development of multiple partnerships, as was evident in Argentina on a project that sought to, among other things, investigate ‘a variety of international models of media self-regulation in preparation for (national) consultations’. In themselves, such comparative studies demonstrate the global reach and appeal of IPDC media support.

Fifthly, in terms of technology-driven projects, it must be recognised that technologies are fraught with practical challenges of application, particularly in developing countries. For example, in a Latin American project involving the pioneering of a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to offer training to judicial officers on the international legal framework for freedom of expression, several problems were evident, notwithstanding the fact that MOOCs represent a high-tech, innovative solution for course delivery. Lessons included the fact that, characteristically, a proportion of the participants did not complete the course. This reflects the 'opt in, opt out' nature of MOOCs. Even so, 932 of the 1,000 people registered for the MOOC ended up being active participants, and 256 requested and obtained a certificate of completion. Another challenge was technical: some participants were not able to access the course from their offices, due to system restrictions imposed by the IT administrators in their own organisations. Future such projects should take account of these kinds of issues in terms of targets, planning and delivery.

5. CONCLUSION

In general, the project activities reported on would seem to respond to the three-fold analytical schema proposed by some evaluation experts. These are *Media for Development*, *Media Development* and *Community Engagement*.⁴ Some projects aimed at supporting the media for particular types of content, such as climate change, as indicated above. Other projects sought to improve the status of the media industry itself, as in the case of those projects focused on capacity-building of media professionals as well as research-based advocacy for an enabling environment for the industry. Some other projects were more concerned with stimulating community action in support of broader goals which superseded the media industry, such as setting up an online media platform for inter-religious dialogue.

These activities represent the conscious choices that the IPDC makes in relation to what can be meaningfully supported. As Martin Scott puts it: "If media development interventions are to be made as effective as possible, it is important to fully understand the many choices that need to be made, as well as the implications of each decision."⁵

Therefore, the value of the IPDC Analytical Reports will continue to lie in their ability to shape how future implementation reports are prepared, and how the analysis based upon such reports subsequently helps the IPDC fine-tune its media assistance effort globally.

6. BUREAU ACTION

The Bureau, having discussed this document, may wish to:

- *Note* the findings and conclusions of the Analytical Report as forming an important *knowledge* component of IPDC media assistance within the framework of the Knowledge-Driven Media Development initiative.

⁴ Manyozo, L. (2012). *Media, Communication and Development: Three approaches*. New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, London, Singapore SAGE Publications.

⁵ Scott, M. (2014). *Media and Development: Development Matters*. London/New York: Z Books.