



Mozambique

by Helge Ronning





A World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers project

Financially Viable Media in Emerging and Developing Markets

Project supported by



Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)

Country Report



Table 11: Mozambique Country Data

Data type	2010 (e)
Population	22.06 million
Literacy rate	47.8%
Per capita GDP	US\$1,000
Urban/rural population	37%/63%
Official language	Portuguese 6.5% (official; spoken by 27% of population as a second language)
Landline telephone connections	82,400 (less than 1%)
Mobile phone penetration	5.97 million (27%)
Internet penetration	615,000*

Sources: World Bank Development Indicators and other World Bank statistics, UN Population Information Network, Budde Communications Inc.

Executive Summary

Mozambique, an impoverished nation of some 20 million in southeast Africa, offers an example of a media market in an early phase of development. A per capita income of only US\$370 means that regular newspaper consumption is not a possibility for most of the population, and only half of the population is literate.

The country's limited print media serve a largely urban elite and exercise some influence over the political and economic powers. Both print and broadcast media are influenced

by the state through ownership patterns, political pressure, and shared interests. An important vehicle for alternative opinions is the country's "fax newspapers," which circulate to limited but influential audiences without the benefit of a printing press.

Mozambique has received extensive media assistance from a variety of donors. Although many of these efforts have benefited the media sector, they would also benefit from more coordination and follow-up.

* It is difficult to establish the exact figure for the percentage of broadband connections, but IP providers are expanding their services, and the cable along the East African coast has contributed to the expansion of broadband connections.

Country Indices: Mozambique



Political & Regulatory

Multiparty system, with one-party dominance over the past three elections

Corruption endemic

Judicial independence guaranteed by the constitution, but tensions between the judicial and executive branches remain; citizens rely on informal community courts for protection

Freedom of expression and association – constitutional guarantees undermined by increased number of defamation cases; murder of a prominent journalist has had a chilling effect on the press

No comprehensive government policy pertaining to the media sector development

Fairly easy to register a newspaper; foreign media ownership restricted to up to 20%

Law guarantees against state monopoly; state ownership and control dominant in the market

State and public advertisements directed to a selected group of media, discriminating against the rest



Economy & Market

Per capita income US\$370 (2008 data)

Mozambique ranked 172 out of 182 on UNDP 2008/2009 Human Development Index

More than 50% state budget financed by foreign aid

Natural hazards disrupt economic growth

Radio – dominant medium, over 70 operating community radio stations

Newspaper market: 3 daily newspapers totaling ca. 30,000 copies a day (see page 6); ca. 10 weeklies with circulation of ca. 80,000 copies a week; at least 10 email and/or fax-based newspapers

Journalism among the least-paid professions



Social

22 million people, 63% rural

42% of population under age 14; life expectancy at birth only 42 years

Official unemployment rate ca. 20% but estimated to be higher

Official literacy rate 47.8%; compare to World Bank estimates that the entire population averages only 1.1 years of schooling

Portuguese – mother tongue of only 6.5% of Mozambicans; majority of population speak one of 40 non-Portuguese languages

Only handful of media broadcast in non-Portuguese language; print media the purview of an elite Portuguese speaking-minority



Media & New Technologies

Electrification – 10%

Internet users – 2.8% of population

Less than 1% of population have landlines

Mobile penetration: 27 cell phones per 100 people – during the 2010 unrest, text/SMS features were disabled

Over 50% of population own a radio

10% of population own a TV set

Some level of media convergence

1. The Mozambique Economy and Newspaper Conditions

Mozambique offers an opportunity to study a media market in an early phase of development. The United Nations classifies it as a least developed state (LDS), and it has significantly lower economic and social indicators in a number of categories. Given these characteristics, Mozambique offers an important reminder that media systems evolve differently in dissimilar settings.

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranked 172 out of 182 countries on the 2008/2009 UN Human Development Index (UNDP, 2009). The country is prone to a wide range of natural hazards, including floods and draughts, which regularly cause major damage and disrupt economic growth. But the country has benefited from improvements in education, health, and nutrition indicators since the end of the civil war in 1992, and over the past four years it has achieved an economic growth rate of around 7 percent. The inflation rate in August 2010 was estimated at 17 percent (Open University, 2010).

The unemployment rate is estimated at over 20 percent, but it is actually much higher, given the dynamics of the informal economy. Foreign aid currently finances more than 50 percent of the national budget. Despite the government's strong anti-corruption rhetoric, corruption in the executive and legislative branches is perceived as endemic. The country was 116 out of 178 in the 2010 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index. (Sharing rank with Ethiopia, Mali, Guyana, Mon-

golia, Tanzania, and Vietnam.) The corruption consists of petty corruption by low-level government officials and high-level corruption by a small group of politically and economically connected elites. The press has joined local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Center for Public Integrity (Centro De Integridade Pública (CIP), www.cip.org.mz) in combating corruption by investigating and reporting numerous corruption cases.

However, the news media have been adversely affected by the recent economic trends, especially rising inflation and the increasing cost of living. Newspapers suffered decreases in sales as well as advertising during 2010, in particular in the last half of the year. Interviews with newspaper managers reveal their anxiety over the economic situation.

Mozambique also reflects another common characteristic of a least developed state: a scarcity of data. Wealthier countries have government agencies and businesses that gather information about social and economic trends. In the case of Mozambique, much of the relevant information must be gathered on a case-by-case basis. Readers will note that this report does not cite the wealth of published sources available for other countries; most of the research was gathered in interviews in Mozambique over the latter half of 2010.

Infrastructure presents another set of obstacles, especially for online media. Only 10 percent of Mozambique's households are electrified (the vast majority of the population still rely

on kerosene and wood as energy sources in their homes). As of June 2010, there were 612,000 Internet users (2.8 percent of the population). Less than 1 percent of Mozambicans have landlines. In much of Africa, cell phones are providing innovative new platforms for news delivery, but these developments are spreading slowly in Mozambique. Mobile phone penetration is reckoned at 27 subscribers (prepaid and postpaid) per 100 inhabitants – roughly equal to neighboring Zimbabwe but less than half of Namibia, South Africa, and Botswana (AudienceScapes, 2009 I). The country's first operator, the state-owned and operated mCel, was established in 1997; South Africa's Vodacom obtained the second license in 2002. mCel continues to dominate the Mozambican market, but Vodacom's share has expanded in recent years. Movitel, which is a unit of the Vietnamese Viettel, together with a consortium of Mozambican investors, won the bid for the third license in November 2010 (Club of Mozambique, 2010). As in much of Africa, radio is the dominant communications platform. Over 51 percent of Mozambicans have radio, while just 10 percent have television (AudienceScapes, 2009 II).

One of the main challenges facing the private media sector in Mozambique is the limited ability of the press to attract advertising revenues and remain viable and sustainable from an economic point of view. Current circulation levels tend to be small and do not allow for creation of content that would fill citizens' needs and prove popular and attractive to advertisers.

2. Socio-demographic Overview

Mozambique is a former Portuguese colony in southeast Africa situated between Tanzania and South Africa; its population is approximately 22 million, 63 percent of whom live in rural areas. Persistent poverty serves as a profound limitation on media and other forms of development. The country's per capita income was US\$370 in 2008, which means that most people have no disposable income to buy a periodical or support an advertising market for consumer goods. Over 44 percent of the population is under the age of 14, and life expectancy at birth as of the year 2008 is only 42 years (CIA, 2010). The total

number of years of education (primary to tertiary) a child can expect to receive is eight years (CIA, 2010). However, according to the World Bank's EdStats (2000), the entire population averages only 1.1 years of schooling (defined as average years of formal schooling received by adults over age 15). This figure may call into question the country's reported literacy rate of 47.8 percent.

The media market is further limited by language issues. Mozambicans speak some 40 different languages, the most common of which is Emakhua, spoken by about 26 per-

cent of the population. Local languages are used to a considerable degree in radio transmissions. However, Portuguese is the dominant language in the Mozambican media, particularly print – but it is the mother tongue of only 6.5 percent of Mozambicans. The greatest concentration of the Portuguese-speaking population is found between the ages of 5 and 19 (8.5 percent). Only 5.5 percent of people between the ages of 20 and 49 frequently use Portuguese in their communication, as do just over 2 percent of Mozambicans over age 50.³

3. Political Overview

Mozambique is an example of how a multiparty system can evolve into a dominant-party system. Following independence in 1975, Mozambique became a one-party state ruled by the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO). The country adopted a new constitution in 1990, and in the 1994 elections, the opposition Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) gained a substantial numbers of votes and corresponding seats in parliament. But over the past three elections, FRELIMO has increased its share to a two-thirds majority and now clearly dominates the political system (Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa, 2009).

The principle of judicial independence was promoted in both the 1990 and the 2004 constitutions, but tensions between the judiciary and the executive branches remain. Most citizens rely on informal community courts or other local dispute mechanisms. Serious delays in criminal pro-

cedures are aggravated by laws that allow suspects to be held for up to six months before charges are filed; there are cases of people imprisoned for years without charge.

Mozambique meets the definition of a procedural democracy. There are regular elections, and the electoral practice is more or less free from fraud and approved by international observers of many kinds and from many quarters. Freedom of association and expression is respected to a considerable degree, allowing alternative political parties and various forms of civil society to operate freely.

Both government-owned and independent news media exist, but the government controls local television broadcasting through the local editorial offices of TVM and the stations associated with Instituto de Comunicação Social (ICS), an organ under the Cabinet of Information in the Prime Minister's office.

In past years there has been an increase in defamation cases against the independent press as well as incidents of harassment of journalists, particularly in provincial and small media. These are generally widely reported and attributed mostly to authoritarian local official overstepping their powers.

In February 2008 and again in September 2010, the country experienced a wave of riots in response to a sharp rise in the cost of living. Over 10 deaths were reported along with numerous injuries and arrests due to excessive police actions. There were extensive reports on the demonstrations in both independent and government media, and they have been followed by widespread public debates. During the 2010 unrest, the SMS functions of mobile phone networks were cut off (Open University, 2010).

³ For a full overview of languages in the country see: http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=MZ (last accessed 11 February 2011).

4. Media Legal and Regulatory Environment

Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression is enshrined in Article 48 of the constitution; it states that all citizens have freedom of expression, and there exists freedom of the press as well as the right to information. The constitution prohibits censorship in relation to both freedom of expression and the right to information. The Press Law also gives journalists the right not to obey editorial directives that do not come from the appropriate authority in their organ, thus guaranteeing their independence when processing information. An amendment to the law to expand access to information has been proposed but has not yet been passed by parliament. No specific regulations pertain to community media.

Media ownership

The frequency spectrum is defined by law as a good in the public domain and therefore public property for satisfying the collective needs of the media or radio communications. Broadcasting licenses are requested from the National Communications Institute (INCM) under the Ministry of Transport and Communications. This body makes license recommendations to the Council of Ministers, which has the power to grant them. The license is valid for 10 years and is renewable.

Article 19 of the Press Law states that all media are subject to registration, and this is carried out by the Office of Information (GABINFO). Registration is no more than a simple adminis-

trative procedure, and certificates of registration are generally issued within five days without cost. It is important to remember that newspapers need only the administrative registration to be able to start up their activities. Although Mozambique has three main ownership models for radio and television, namely state/public, private/commercial, and community, the law does not establish differentiated mechanisms for allocating broadcasting licenses.

According to the Press Law, only Mozambican institutions and citizens residing in the country may own media enterprises, and foreign ownership is restricted to 20 percent of the capital stock. It is also stated in the law that the state shall follow an anti-mo-



nopoly policy. However, there are no strong media groups in the country other than the SOICO Group, which owns three media organs: STV (television), SFM radio, and the O País newspaper. The Bank of Mozambique (the Central Bank) is the major owner of the daily Noticias, the Sunday paper Domingo, and the weekly sports paper Desafio. The state, which controls Radio Mozambique and TV Mozambique, is considered to be the dominant media actor in the country.

Taxation and advertising

The media are not exempt from VAT and are treated as any other business by the tax authorities. Official advertising is commonly placed in a paper with the highest circulation – such selective advertising policy benefits only some newspapers such as Noticias, whose main shareholder is Bank of Mozambique. The general advertising market in Mozambique is limited and lackluster due in large part to the underdeveloped market for consumer goods. According to interviews with editors and managers of the major newspapers in August 2011 and substantiated by analyses of the papers, the two major advertisers are the two cell phone companies mCel and Vodacom; banks have also become more-prominent advertisers in recent years. Commercial advertising is regulated by the Advertising Code, which offers guidelines on issues such as the separation of editorial and advertising content, concealed advertising, truth in advertising, and consumer rights.

Violations of media freedoms

The most notorious and most publicized case of threats and violence to journalists in Mozambique was the murder of the prominent journalist and editor Carlos Cardoso (Fauvet & Mosse, 2003). On 22 November 2000, Carlos Cardoso was assassinated while he was investigating the theft of US\$14 million from Mozambique's largest bank, Banco Comercial de Moçambique (BCM) for his fax-paper Metical.

Six people were convicted of murdering Cardoso in January 2003 and sentenced to long prison terms. There is little doubt that the accused expected to get away with murder because of being well connected in Mozambican society. But there was an international campaign and heavy pressure on the authorities to solve the case, accompanied by a rift in the ruling elite.

The murder of Cardoso created a climate of fear among Mozambican journalists. In 2009, a journalist from Noticias was threatened by the provincial governor of Tete. In May 2010, the editor of the independent weekly Magazine Independente, Salomão Moyana, received several threatening text messages. Although they were anonymous, they were believed to have originated from supporters of the opposition political party, the Mozambican National Resistance Movement (RENAMO).

Defamation

The Mozambican press has experienced an increase in defamation charges in recent years, although in general the country's environment is regarded as favorable for press freedom. The defamation charges are based on constitutional protection of citizens' rights to honor, good name, reputation, public image, and privacy. Under the penal code, defamation is simultaneously a civil and a criminal offense and can give rise to a prison term. (Many international freedom-of-expression organizations consider such punishment excessive.)

The greatest danger to press freedom in Mozambique in the last years has been posed by several lawsuits for alleged defamation that have been filed against journalists and their companies accompanied by demands for vast sums in compensation for the alleged moral injury. Most of these remain in court due to the appeals process and the notoriously sluggish nature of the Mozambican judicial system. The most prominent of these is the case brought against the then-editor of the weekly Zam-

beze, Fernando Veloso. Veloso was first accused of a crime against state security. The paper had published a front-page story in May 2008 that cast doubt on the nationality of the prime minister, Luisa Dias Diogo, because in 1981 she had married an alleged Portuguese citizen. Under the terms of the constitution prior to the democratic constitution of 1990, a Mozambican woman married to a foreign citizen lost her nationality.

The prosecution requested a sentence of two years in prison and compensation of US\$540,000. A chorus of protests in the private media embarrassed the political and judicial authorities, and on 29 August 2009 the Maputo City Court tabled the charge of a crime against the security of the state and convicted the director, editor, and author of the news item of defamation with sentences of six months' imprisonment that was suspended, and a fine of 30 Meticals (approximately US\$1) per day. The case has been appealed and has yet to be decided (History Central, n.d.).

Ethics

There is no formal self-regulation mechanism within the Mozambican media, but there have been efforts to establish rules of conduct and good professional practices, particularly with regard to election coverage. The Journalists' Union in principle has a deontological council with its own code, the function of which is to enforce principles of ethics, professionalism and deontology among journalists. However, this body has been inactive for a number of years. Currently complaints and grievances concerning alleged media excesses are usually sent to the Conselho Superior de Comunicação Social (CSCS), which, while not a regulatory body, is by constitutional decision a "disciplinary and consultative body" appointed by the president following the nominations by the media sector and others. Its duty is to ensure the independence of the media in exercising the right to information and freedom of expression.



5. Portrait of the National Media

Although the government has often said that it views the media as an important component in the country's development process, it has been very modest in undertaking deliberate policies to help the development of the media, particularly in the private sector. Indeed, no significant media development program featured in the government's development plan for 2005–2009. That same plan contains a specific policy statement on the development of information and communications technologies (ICTs), in which one of the stated objectives is the implementation of a project of community multimedia centers. It is difficult to document media penetration in Mozambique. Statistics are not reliable and often point in totally opposite directions. There are no systematic audience measurement data available for radio, television, newspapers, or Internet, and no dedicated media market research companies are active in Mozambique. Below are reflections on the use of different media in the country based on a variety of sources.

Broadcasting

Ratings for broadcasting media are not reliable and often are conflicting; however, they all indicate sharp disparities between media access in urban areas and the countryside. Some figures that currently circulate are: 98 percent of the urban population had listened to the radio in the past 12 months; 91 percent of them had listened to radio in the past seven days. The same (urban areas only) study found that three-quarters of the urban population owned a television set, and 88.5 percent of the respondents had watched television in the past seven days on their own set or someone else's (InterMedia, 2005).

The government website Observatorio (2003) offers the following figures on radio and TV penetration: 45.5 percent of the families had a radio (54.9 urban and 41.5 rural), while 6.3 percent of the families had a television set (19.5 urban, 0.7 rural). Radio Mozambique has a broad reach within each province and nationally

due to the high broadcasting capacity of its transmitters, which private stations, with limited funding and advertising revenues, lack. It also broadcasts in several local Mozambican languages as it has 11 affiliate radio stations in all provinces. Together, these factors ensure that Radio Mozambique has access to rural, non-Portuguese speaking audiences (AudienceScapes, 2009 III).

Radio: Mozambique's most important news source

The most important news medium in Mozambique is radio, and Rádio Moçambique (RM) provides by far the most extensive coverage. It is state-owned and has almost universal coverage of the country, though it is weak in some areas. RM has stations in every province and functions mostly according to public service remits.

There are around eight active commercial radios in the country, mostly in the Maputo area. They comprise Rádio 9 FM (with repeater stations in

Sofala and Nampula provinces), SOICO FM in Maputo, KFM Rádio, Rádio VOR (or Radio Terra Verde), Rádio Savana, and Top Rádio. Outside Maputo, Rádio SIRT is registered for Tete province, and Rádio Progresso is based in Inhambane province. Miramar FM operates in Beira, Maputo, and Nampula. 9FM Rádio operates in Maputo. 99.6 FM belongs to the Maná Church.

Mozambicans also receive foreign radio broadcasts, including programming from Portuguese RTP África, the BBC, and Radio France International (RFI). However, the BBC World Service announced the closure of its Portuguese service, which has an estimated 1.5 million listeners in Mozambique, in February 2011 (BBC, 2011). These cover mainly the Maputo area, but RTP also reaches other cities. There is a significant Catholic broadcasting network, Rádio Maria, with eight transmitters. There are also more than 70 community radio stations, the majority of which are organized in FORCOM (Fórum das Rádios Comunitárias). There are also 22 radio stations that operate under the auspices of Instituto de Comunicação Social (ICS), which is a government-controlled communication institute (AudienceScapes, 2009 III).

The state owns the national television broadcaster TVM, which now

transmits to every province in the country. The most important commercial station is STV, which is owned by Sociedade Independente de Comunicação, Lda (SOICO), the biggest private commercial media actor in the country. It transmits 24 hours a day, reaching Maputo City and urban areas in every province except Niassa. In regard to television audiences, a recent but unpublished survey conducted by a South African company gives STV a higher share of the audience in Maputo than TVM, with Miramar in third place. Another important media operator is the "Igreja Universal do Reino do Deus", originally a Brazilian Pentecostal church outlet, which owns the TV channel Miramar, also transmitting in all provinces except Niassa. Independent Television of Mozambique (TIM), began transmitting in 2006 as 9TV. TV Maná belongs to the Maná Network of the Maná Church. KTV is owned by Media Events. RTP África is the African channel of public Portuguese Radio and Television (RTP), which was established in Mozambique by an agreement between the two governments. It transmits via satellite, with re-transmission via terrestrial for Africa, covering Maputo, Sofala, and Nampula provinces. TVCabo, a Portuguese company, and Multichoice, a South African company, introduced cable and satellite television respectively.

Print media

Mozambique has three daily newspapers that have a combined estimated print run of around 30,000 copies. Two of them, the government-controlled Notícias and the independent O País (owned by the media group SOICO) based in Maputo, also have online editions. The third daily, Diário de Moçambique, is published in the second-largest city, Beira. There are currently more than 10 weeklies, but these come and go, and their total circulation is hard to establish; a fair guess would place their combined print runs at approximately 80,000 copies per week. These publications struggle economically; over the last three years some new weeklies have appeared, but many have also folded. Proprietors and editors often move from one paper to the next.

Mozambique is also home to at least 10 e-mail/fax newsheets, an interesting local phenomenon, and these publish much of the country's investigative and critical journalism. They are directed at subscribers with access to the Internet, who then copy and distribute them in relatively high numbers of at least 25 copies per subscriber. In this way the newsheets reach audiences beyond their few hundred online subscribers.



6. Mozambican Newspapers

The estimated print runs of the major Mozambican newspapers are as follows: the dailies Notícias, 13,000; O Pais, 9,000 (14,000 on Fridays); and Diário de Moçambique, 3,000. The e-mail and fax-papers have a circulation of a maximum 400 dedicated subscribers, but they are copied in great numbers, making it difficult to establish their actual total readership. There are currently 10 to 15 such newsheets. The most prominent and longest-lived ones are Mediafax, Diário de Manhã, Coreio da Manhã, Tribunafax, Wambulafax, and Diário de Zambeze (the last two based in the provinces).

The estimated print runs of weekly publications are: Domingo, 13,000; Savana, 15,000; Zambeze, 7,000; Magazine Independente, 5,000; Desafio, 12,000; Escorpião, 2,500; Canal de Moçambique, 3,000; Publico, 2,500; A Verdade (a free paper), 20,000.

As a point of comparison, the average print run of new Mozambican books is 500. The various magazines in the country probably have real sales of a couple of thousand each, the most important of which are Prestígio, Capital, and Tempo. If one estimates that each copy of a newspaper or magazine is read by 7 to 10 people, one concludes that in a coun-

try of nearly 23 million people, there are only around 150,000 who read newspapers, magazines or books on a daily basis⁴.

The number of printing houses has grown at great speed over the last 10 years, which means that printing is now quite fast and efficient. The situation in Maputo is particularly improved, with supply now meeting demand. As one media manager pointed out, it is no longer necessary to go to South Africa for quality printing, since Mozambique has acquired its own capacity for quality printing (including color) through businesses such as Brithol Michcoma, CEGRAF, and S-Grafica, which belongs to the SOICO Group. SOICO set up its printing press with a soft loan from Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF). For years, Notícias operated a newspaper printing press that was also used by other papers, but it became outdated. It has now been completely renovated, transforming it into an important competitor in both price and quality.

Electronic platforms

The weekly free paper A Verdade is one of the few Mozambican publications that is experimenting with mobile platforms (www.verdade.co.mz).

Some other newspapers have online editions, including Notícias (www.jornalnoticias.co.mz), O Pais (www.opais.co.mz), Savana (www.savana.co.mz), and Canal de Moçambique (www.canalmoz.com). These are used mostly to disseminate the printed paper's content. Again, A Verdade is an exception, with a daily update. The online versions do not really generate income as they carry no direct advertising.

As noted earlier, Mozambique's daily online newsheets offer an interesting hybrid. The genre started out as a fax publication, Mediafax, established in 1992. Later this form evolved into e-mail papers. These are often at the forefront when it comes to investigative journalism and the promotion of important public debates.

Mozambican journalists and intellectuals produce a few blogs that are read with great interest by participants in the national debate. One example is by sociology professor Carlos Serra (oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com), which includes pertinent analysis of politics and social events in the country. Another contains reflections by various authors: comunidade-mocambicana.blogspot.com. A third is found at mocambiqueonline.blogspot.com.

An elite medium

Mozambique's print media must be regarded as the purview of an elite minority as a result of the country's high rate of illiteracy. Newspapers are mainly a phenomenon of the capital city of Maputo. Print runs are limited, and the distribution system consists mainly of street vendors in the city.

The elite nature of the press is also revealed by the story selection, the writing style, and the layout. The written Portuguese may not always be absolutely correct, and many journalists and academics complain about the lack of elegance and finesse in Mozambican journalism. The papers often contain relatively long essays and reports. Even rumor mongering and scandal-oriented pieces of investigative journalism will contain references to elements such as legal terminology and economic analysis – unfortunately often not always entirely correct.

Journalists – particularly the senior reporters and editors – belong to a network of people who meet in the same cafés, go to the same receptions, and interact with each other in many circumstances. Within this network one also finds politicians, senior civil servants, people working for international and national NGOs, academics, diplomats, and aid workers, both national and international. Everyone knows everyone else.

Members of this group discuss the stories in the papers as well as pass along rumors that then end up as newspaper reports. Members of this elite often react to what the papers print, both privately and publicly; the stories then play into conflicts between different subgroups and factions of the politico-economic elite.

The newspapers thus play an important role as a kind of seismograph

for the tensions and quakes that occur within the different sections of the nomenclature. There have been several instances when papers have transgressed unwritten rules about how to behave and what subjects to touch and have also published rumors rather than checking and double-checking sources.

Media support organizations

The National Organization of Journalists was established in 1978, under the one-party state, as one of the country's many mass organizations. In 1997 it was transformed into the National Union of Journalists (SNJ), and its focus was re-oriented toward the defense of the legal and labor rights of its members. The SNJ currently has over 560 members, mainly from the public sector media, but it is uncertain how active the organization is. (It held its last conference in 2006.)

MISA-Mozambique (www.misa.org.mz), formally established in August 2000, is part of the MISA Southern Africa network aimed at promoting and defending freedom of expression and of the press and guaranteeing the free flow of information. One of its most influential activities in Mozambique is the publication of annual reports on the state of press freedom. It also carries out one-off studies that serve as tools for lobbying and advocacy work with various public bodies. It is currently the most active media organization in the country.

Civil society

Mozambique has approximately 5,000 civil society organizations with a total membership of around 140,000. Many of these groups have regular contact and interaction with the media, but the most representative of the sectors is the League for Human Rights (Liga dos Direitos Hu-

manos de Moçambique) (LDH) (www.ldh.org.mz) and Centre for Public Integrity (Centro De Integridade Pública) (CIP), which is dedicated to studying and exposing corruption and other abusive practices in public administration. The human-rights situation in the country in general is not bad in comparison to many other African countries, but abuses do occur. The police and penal system commit the most serious offences.⁴

Mozambican journalists are among the poorest-paid professional groups in the country, with an average monthly salary of around US\$150, particularly in the small fax or electronic publications, in which journalists are employed on insecure short-term contracts.

In the WAN-IFRA survey, Mozambican respondents from the media industry reported that the poor economic climate represents the single biggest obstacle to business development and editorial independence, followed by regulatory and judicial pressures.

⁴ For a full overview of the human rights situation see: <http://www.historycentral.com/nationbynation/Mozambique/Human.html> (last accessed Feb 13, 2011).

7. International Aid to Mozambique Media

One must also be aware of the fact that the media have the double bottom line – being both businesses and channels for information, addressing their audiences in both the capacity of citizens and consumers. Thus, support for media must encompass both of these aspects as well as taking into consideration that financial sustainability of private commercial media, public media, and community media is a prerequisite of a pluralistic media environment.

So far, the easiest way of supporting the news media has been to back various education schemes. This is important, but it is also easy, because it is not too controversial. Journalistic and

media training without guaranteeing that the competence will be applied to independent media is just a half-way measure. Consequently, the support for media advocacy and monitoring through organizations such as MISA must be an essential element in the creation of free media in a country such as Mozambique.

According to the respondents to the WAN-IFRA survey, training programs should better match local needs. The training areas receiving the least investment are in the skill sets that apply to commercial departments and audience market research. But these are exactly the two areas that the respondents see as the most critical for

developing revenue generation and efficiencies over the next one to three years.

Financial support is also critical. The Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF) has contributed to the development of the press in Mozambique through a soft loan to SOICO, which provided the company with the opportunity to launch its daily *O País*. SAMDEF also provided support that allowed the group to acquire equipment for its TV and radio operations. Mozambican respondents to the WAN-IFRA survey stated that the most trusted source of external support is international nongovernmental and nonprofit support.



Photos are courtesy of Agence France-Presse (AFP)