Programme

Media and fragile states

Wednesday 9 – Friday 11 October 2013 | WP1278

The High Level Panel of Eminent Persons Report recommending a new development framework to replace the existing Millennium Development Goals has proposed an 'indicative' set of twelve new universal goals, including - within a goal of ensuring 'good governance and effective institutions' - that 'people enjoy freedom of speech, association, peaceful protest and access to independent media and information.'

This is arguably the first time that support to media and access to independent information have been so explicitly defined as a core element of a future development agenda. This conference will examine what such support means, especially in those fragile and conflict affected states which have become high development priorities and where the challenges to independent media are often greatest.

The 2011 New Deal for Engagement with Fragile States, agreed at the Busan Conference on Aid Effectiveness, articulated a fresh consensus on the principles and strategies underpinning development assistance to fragile states. The role of the media, however, and of support to the media within the Busan framework, is not yet clearly developed.

Designed primarily for officials responsible for strategy and policy on fragile states in the development and diplomatic agencies of international donors, and with the participation of media and civil society representatives from those states themselves, the conference objectives are to:

- map the role of media in fragile states in the 21st century and assess whether media and communication should be an increasing priority for those policymakers engaged in supporting fragile states;

- explore which strategies have and have not worked to date in supporting media in fragile states and assess the most useful steps development and diplomatic organisations can take in understanding and supporting media in these contexts.

- consider linkages between international support to the media and broader governance assistance that aims to strengthen domestic accountability in fragile and transition states.

In association with:

Wednesday 9 October

1600   Participants arrive and tea/coffee available

1630   Conference photograph

1700   **Welcome and introduction**

Robert Grant
Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

James Deane
Director of Policy and Learning, BBC Media Action, London

1730-1900   **1. Media in fragile states and countries in transition: an overview**

- What are fragile states, why they are a diplomatic and development priority, what have development actors been seeking to achieve and whether and how media has featured as an issue in existing donor strategies and political economy analysis?

- What is the role of media in governance, including its effects on accountability, state-building, rule of law and freedom of expression?

- What are the prospects and reality of media shaping democratic change in fragile states and countries in transition?

- What are current media trends in fragile states, including growth in media and digital media (or lack of it), cooption of media by factional actors, the incidences of hate media, threats to freedom of expression and attacks on independent journalism?

Jean-Louis Ville
Head of Unit, Governance, Democracy, Gender and Human Rights, European Commission, Brussels

Lynne Muthoni Wanyeki
Former Executive Director, Kenya Human Rights Commission, Brussels

Mark Robinson
Chief Professional Officer, Governance, Social Development, Conflict and Humanitarian, Department for International Development, London

1915   Reception followed by dinner

Thursday 10 October

0800-0845   Breakfast

0900-1030   **2. Media as a driver of accountability and peace-building**

- How does the media interact with other institutions (eg parliaments, political parties, civil society) and systems (elections) as sources of accountability?

- How effective is the media as a driver of accountability in countries where other accountability mechanisms are weak? Conversely, if there is insufficient access to independent media and information how effectively can other institutions and processes drive accountability?

- What is the role of political leaders, political parties and state bureaucracies in enabling the media to play its watchdog role?

Are changes to media, social media and technology undercutting or increasing its accountability role in society? What mechanisms are needed for media to contribute to the development of a democratic culture based on dialogue?

- How can social media and freedom of expression translate into meaningful political debate?

- Can the media play a role in fostering political cohesion across diverse communities? If so, what conditions need to exist to enable it to do so?

- Have donor strategies and support helped the media in fragile states play a positive role as a driver of accountability and peace-building? What have the strengths and weaknesses of donor approaches been?

Corina Van Der Laan
Head, Stabilisation and Rule of Law Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague

Maria Teresa Ronderos
Editorial Director, VerdadAbierta.com, Bogota

1030-1100	Tea/coffee

1100-1230	### 3. Challenges to Media in Fragile states: Conflict Co-option, Corruption and Censorship

This session will examine the extent to which fragmented media systems can exacerbate political polarisation and division in society and weak political institutions can impinge on media's ability to carry out its watchdog function.

- Do fractured media systems reinforce ethnic, religious, political or other factional tensions in society?

- In what ways and how can media interaction in fragile states with organised political parties and/or political/religious/various interest groups lead to co-cooption, fostering of corruption, and censorship?

- Under what conditions can the economics of media in fragile states leave media more vulnerable to co-option and capture? Is the lack of an adequate advertising base the key issue? Are there others?

- Overall, what combination of conditions is most likely to lead to censorship and media complicity in corruption?

- How effective have donor strategies and support to media in fragile states been in attenuating conditions that lead to conflict co-option, corruption and censorship? Have there been contexts in which donor involvement has made these conditions worse?

Steve Surujbally
Chairman, Guyana Elections Commission, Georgetown

Tim Allen
Head, Department of International Development, London School of Economics, London

1230-1430	Lunch

1430-1630	### 4. Lessons from support to fragile states: case studies

What works and does not work and what have we learned from interventions to support media in fragile states?

Afghanistan
Shirazuddin Siddiqi
Country Director, Afghanistan, BBC Media Action, London

Sudan and South Sudan
Leon Willems
Director Programmes and Policy, Free Press Unlimited, Amsterdam

How do these lessons apply to fresh challenges in other countries?

Myanmar
Than Htut Aung
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Eleven Media Group Company Ltd, Yangon

Mali
Makan Kone
Editor in Chief, Nouvelle Libération, Mali

Egypt
Fatemah Farag
Founder and Director, Welad Elbalad Media Services Ltd, Cairo

1630-1700	Tea/coffee
1700-1900	**5. Break out groups**

a. **Media freedom and freedom of expression in fragile states; what are the special challenges? How can freedom of expression and journalists' safety be supported and bolstered in fragile settings? What is the role of international broadcasters in support to media freedom?**

Co-chairs:
Guy Berger
Director, Division of Freedom of Expression and Media, UNESCO

Huma Yusuf
Columnist, Dawn, Pakistan

b. **Improving domestic and social accountability in fragile and transition countries: what are the entry points for donor strategies and what needs to happen to ensure a comprehensive approach and to make donor support more effective in this area?**

Co-chairs:
Mark Thompson
Policy Editor, Open Society Media Programme, London

Donica Pottie
Director, Peace Operations and Fragile States Policy, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Ottawa

c. **The economics of media in fragile states: The impact of the new media landscape and market conditions on financial sustainability. Which support strategies should be pursued?**

Co-chairs:
Premesh Chandran
Chief Executive Officer, Malaysiakini, Kuala Lumpur

Thomas Hughes
Executive Director, Article 19, London

d. **Digitally divided or united support strategies: how should donors and development actors design support in ways that integrate both digital and traditional media in fragile states? Are strategies aimed at support to individualised freedom of expression (such as bloggers) more or less effective**

than those focused on building media institutions? How to combine human rights protection with the development agenda and ensure the public good of independent media persists?

Co-chairs:
Charles Onyango-Obo
Executive Editor, Africa and Digital Media Division, National Media Group, Nairobi

Ivan Sigal
Executive Director, Global Voices, USA

1930	Drinks Reception followed by dinner

Saumura Tioulong
Member, Parliamentary Network on the World Bank; Member National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Phnom Penh

Friday 11 October

0800-0845	Breakfast and check out
0900-1030	**6. Break out groups (continued)**
1030-1100	Tea/coffee
1100-1230	**7. Report back from break out groups and discussion**
1230-1400	Lunch

1400-1500

8. Beyond the MDGs: ensuring support to media and access to information is reflected in the post-2015 development agenda

- How this commitment can translate into support and what form it could take;
- How actors can work to keep independent media, access to information and freedom of expression on the development agenda;
- How to engage with new actors, such as the private sector (Ruggie principles)

Jan Pronk
Former Development Minister; Professor Emeritus, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague

1500-1600

9. Conclusions

What next for media in fragile states?

Alan Whaites
Team Leader, Governance for Development and Peace, OECD, Paris

Tin Htar Swe
Editor, BBC Burmese Service, London

1630	Participants depart