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Drefs, I and Thomass, B (2015) Literature review: Research findings about organisations engaging in media assistance in the fields of journalism training, civil society support, and good governance. Working Paper. MeCoDEM . ISSN 2057-4002 (Unpublished)

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Ines Drefs and Barbara Thomass

## Literature review:

Research findings about organisations engaging in media assistance in the fields of journalism training, civil society support, and good governance

June 2015

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Media, Conflict and Democratisation (MeCoDEM)

ISSN 2057-4002

Literature review: Research findings about organisations engaging in media assistance in the fields of journalism training, civil society support, and good governance

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WP Coordination: Ruhr University Bochum / Barbara Thomass

Editor: Katy Parry

Editorial assistance and English-language copy editing: Charlotte Elliott

University of Leeds, United Kingdom (2015)

All MeCoDEM Working Papers are available online and free of charge at [www.mecodem.eu](http://www.mecodem.eu)

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 613370. Project Term: 1.2.2014 – 31.1.2017.

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## Executive Summary

This literature review provides a systematic overview of findings on media assistance in the fields of journalism training, civil society support, and good governance. It covers both academic accounts as well as “grey literature” from media assistance organisations (MAOs), democracy development organisations (DDOs), or public bodies in order to shed light on approaches, goals, and measures in media development practice. The literature review identifies concrete reference points for future research activities towards developing an understanding of modern-day capacity building for journalists, activists and governments in conflict arenas.

- The reviewed literature differentiates between linear and relational approaches to development as regards overall trends in development cooperation. Today, conceptualisations of development as a linear process of cause and effect have widely been replaced by relational approaches which emphasize local expertise and the contexts and complexities of social change.
- The literature emphasizes the importance of accounting for specific needs when it comes to media assistance in conflict-ridden contexts. The reviewed recommendations boil down to establishing communication between different actors (such as oppositional players or media and public professionals) and to institutionalising this communication in the form of round-tables, press conferences, or other *modi vivendi* of dealing with one another in a democratic way.
- Two aspects are salient throughout the reviewed areas “journalism training”, “capacity building for civil society actors”, and “capacity building for political leaders”: The need for multi-stakeholder dialogue and an emphasis on creating awareness of the general value of communication.
- Differences across the reviewed areas seem rooted in the amount of practical experience gained so far with the respective group of beneficiaries. Future research is well-advised to adapt its focus accordingly. Examining “best practices” is especially relevant when it comes to journalism training. An understanding of support offered to activists can be gained by identifying specific challenges to civil society organisations. When it comes to capacity building for governments it seems especially informative to address the standing of improved communication skills within established training structures.

## 1. Introduction

MeCoDEM's overall goals are to:

- **Propose recommendations** for conflict-sensitive journalistic practices and ethics;
- **Suggest communication interventions** for governments and political leaders as to how to use strategic communication to moderate polarisation and enhance social cohesion;
- **Assist communities and political activists** in adopting effective communication strategies to make their voice heard and to broaden participation;
- **Provide knowledge and skills** on the effective use of new communication technologies as tools for conflict prevention and conflict management.

In Work Package 8 (WP8): “Dissemination and impact”, it is our task to produce suggestions as to how Media Assistance Organizations (MAOs) and Democracy Development Organizations (DDOs) can design their activities so that they contribute to the aforementioned goals. In order to do so, we need to investigate the current practice of MAOs and DDOs (implementers) as well as those of policy makers (donors) who finance them. Knowing these stakeholders’ practice and comparing it to MeCoDEM’s findings will allow us to identify where there is room for improvement. This knowledge will be crucial to designing our impact activities and delivering a policy brief (deliverable 8.5) with recommendations for effective media assistance in circumstances where democratic principles are disputed.

MeCoDEM acts on the assumption that the media cannot be sufficiently understood in isolation, but have to be seen as part of an arena of public communication that is occupied by multiple actors, each of whom is trying to shape the interpretations and outcomes of ongoing conflicts. Therefore, the project itself investigates how different conflict parties – governments, political parties, and political activists – communicate during conflict situations, and how and to what effect they use traditional journalistic media and new ICTs to achieve their goals. This focus on certain actors and institutions bears consequences for WP8’s research approach. In our interviews will need to cover specific fields of action in media assistance in order to ensure that our results are compatible with those acquired in Work Packages

4 to 7 (“Journalistic ethics and practices”, “Civil society / political activism”, “Governance and conflict management”, and “ICTs and conflict”). Therefore, we suggest differentiating the following three activity areas of our interview partners: “Journalism training”, “capacity building for civil society actors”, and “capacity building for political leaders”. We factor the use of information and communication technologies into each of these areas by understanding them as a part of each target groups’ media repertoire.

Beyond that, we also have an inclination about possible interview categories serving our research purposes. Our interest in the current practice of MAOs, DDOs, and donors can be divided into an interest in their overall approach, an interest in their goals or strategy, and an interest in their actual measures and activities. Thus, we have identified three further fields to structure our research.

Table 1 summarizes these categories and serves as an initial grid to focus our attention throughout the following literature review. The insights drawn from the literature will be used to further enrich the structure in order to provide useful guidance for developing the interview questions. The following grid shows how questions concerning different areas of work follow the same logic of interview categories.

Table 1: Grid for structuring data collection approach

		Interview partners’ area of work		
		Journalism Training	Capacity building - civil society actors	Capacity building - political leaders
Interview categories	Approach / strategy	Interview questions ....? - ....? - ...? - ...?	Interview questions	Interview questions
	Goals	Interview questions	Interview questions	Interview questions
	Measures / activities	Interview questions	Interview questions	Interview questions

This literature review serves to identify relevant aspects to be investigated when we interview MAOs, DDOs and policy makers. First of all it looks at overall trends in development cooperation in order to carve out the territory we are addressing (Section 1). Thereafter, this review narrows its focus on media assistance in conflict-ridden contexts – in general (Section 2) and then specifically in the area of journalism training (Section 3), the area of skills development for civil society actors (Section 4), and the area of skills development for political leaders (Section 5). Each section will outline what is the state of current development cooperation in this area (implementation, lessons learnt etc.), what special challenges and opportunities there are, and how this relates to our research interest in democratisation conflicts. In order to do so, this review consults a lot of “grey literature” from MAOs, DDOs, or public bodies themselves. Such reports are especially insightful when it comes to the practice of media development and to how it is perceived from within this professional field. However, whenever possible (and available), academic literature is taken into account. Based on the knowledge acquired from the review we will be able to deduce concrete categories and questions for our interview guide.

## **2. Theoretical trends in development cooperation**

Theoretical models and concepts of development communication have undergone major shifts in the last decades. What was once referred to as “development aid” is now called “development cooperation” (cp. Glennie 2011). Conceptualizations of development as a linear process of cause and effect, such as *modernization*, *communication imperialism* or *diffusion of innovations*, have been replaced by relational approaches such as *interpersonal communication networks*, *participatory communication theories* or *complex innovation systems* (cp. Grossenbacher 1988). The media’s status has changed from a means of inducing social change to a crucial pillar of long-term good governance and development<sup>1</sup> (cp. Thomass 2005, Kalathil 2008) and, thus, to a purpose on its own. Overall, the shift in media development can be summarized as one that has moved from a rather technical and paternalistic, “we know best” approach to a more holistic one (cp. Melone et al. 2002) that recognizes local expertise and focuses on the contexts and the complexities of social change.

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the difference between *communication for development* and *media development*. However, these separate but related fields often tend to be confused in practice (cp. Kalathil 2011: 4).

In general, “participation” has crystallized as “the preferred communication strategy by a number of international development organizations including UNICEF, UNDP, FAO, and the World Bank” (Inagaki 2007: 7), and is deemed the current paradigm in development communication. According to Inagaki it involves some or all of the following themes:

(1) the participation of the intended beneficiaries in different or all of the project-cycle stages, (2) horizontal dialogue rather than vertical information transmission, (3) cultivation of trust and mutual understanding rather than persuasion, (4) local-level actions rather than national-level programs, (5) local knowledge, (6) the role of development specialists as the facilitator and equal participants rather than decision makers, (7) communication process rather than specific outcomes, and (8) the use of communication to articulate deep-seated social relations (ibid.).

To what extent this paradigm holds also on a practical level is up to examination. In fact, Waisbord (2008) suggests that institutional dynamics inside development agencies, donors, and governments often undercut the use of participatory approaches. He argues that “participatory communication runs contrary to a mentality that prioritizes achieving rapid results within time-bounded funding cycles” (ibid.: 512). Regarding the status of communication in development cooperation, the scholar points out: “As long as development goals are defined in terms of specific indicators in technical areas, communication is expected to support, rather than to lead, programs” (ibid.: 513).

In summary, these broad trends can inform our own research as follows:

- Our **interviewees’ general approach** to development communication can be examined along the lines of **linear and relational approaches**. Concrete points of reference for the **participatory paradigm** can be drawn from Inagaki’s eight themes.
- Allegiance to the participatory paradigm is insufficient. We have to question whether **institutional conditions** (human resources, desired program scale, programmatic goals etc.) actually allow for participatory action.
- An important aspect is what **value** our interviewees attach to the media: Do the interviewees regard it as one tool among others in a tool-kit to achieve a certain development goal, or is the support for independent media based on an understanding of their general value?

### 3. Media assistance in conflict-ridden contexts

MeCoDEM is a project that is specifically concerned with democratisation conflicts. When it comes to target environments for development cooperation, we find that conflict-ridden contexts are often categorised as cases with special challenges.

Grävingsholt et al. (2009), for example, discriminate between four political contexts, all of which imply different prerequisites for actors to engage in promoting democracy: *countries in transition*, *young democracies*, *stable authoritarian regimes*, and *fragile dissolving states*. With regard to the cases investigated by MeCoDEM both the context of *countries in transition* as well as the context of *young democracies* seem instructive. In *countries in transition*, that is, those countries where a democratisation process has been instigated, special support is said to be required by pro-democracy players. It is also deemed important to establish communication channels between oppositional players. What the authors give as examples for practical development efforts in *countries in transition* is organising round tables for decisions on the constitution or on political institutions. When it comes to *young democracies*, Grävingsholt et al. propose efforts that are concerned with guaranteeing the status quo of established democratic rule. Considering that the roles of different players (e.g. supporters of the old regime, the military, civil society etc.) and their mutual relationships are not yet settled, the authors argue that external support should focus on institutionalizing *modi vivendi* for dealing with one another in a democratic way (cp. Grävingsholt et al. 2009: 31f).

A similar pattern of differentiation can be found in the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's (Sida) guidelines for media development (cp. Puddephatt 2010). Here, the author's recommendations are tailored to the specifics of *authoritarian states*, *conflict and post-conflict situations*, *fragile democracies in the early stages of democratisation*, *stagnating democratisation processes*, and *new democracies in the process of consolidation*. Several of these different contextual frames (*conflict and post-conflict situations*, *fragile democracies in the early stages of democratisation*, and *new democracies in the process of consolidation*) may apply to MeCoDEM's country cases. In *conflict and post conflict situations*, in which a clash of interests is marked by violent conflict, media assistance is said to be a complex endeavour because it meets with an "anxiety that allowing freedom of expression is likely to exacerbate violence" (ibid.: 15). Therefore, the author deems conflict-

sensitive journalism “an important element of creating the conditions for peace” (ibid.).

Furthermore, Puddephat puts an emphasis on projects that support the establishment of a regulatory environment and regulatory institutions: “Experience of many conflict societies from Bosnia to Iraq has shown that the construction of a regulatory environment that promotes freedom of expression and which is sensitive to the problems of hate speech and incitement to violence is crucial” (ibid.: 17). In terms of *fragile democracies* Puddephatt points to societies’ “little understanding of the norms and values of a democratic culture [...] or of the role of the media in fostering such a culture” (ibid.: 18). Thus, he deems “a level of media literacy and an understanding by journalists of the importance of their own role”, crucial objectives in media assistance. In terms of *new democracies* in the process of consolidation, he highlights “intense politicisation of media and their dominance by political parties and factions” (ibid.: 19). In this situation, a focus is supposed to be on bringing together public officials and media professionals to understand each other’s role in order to initiate a change in institutional culture.

In a how-to guide published by the World Bank, Kalathil (2011) promotes an adaption of donor activities depending on whether the target country’s context is “permissive”, “semi-permissive”, or “non-permissive”.<sup>2</sup> With regard to this literature review’s three areas of interest - journalism training (here: “Improving Professional Skills”), skills development of political leaders (here: “Enabling Environment”) and skills development of civil society actors (here: “Media Organizations and a Media-Literate Public”) - the program design framework suggests diverse program components:

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<sup>2</sup> To determine a country’s context for media reform, Kalathil recommends a political economy analysis “that considers the role of institutions, stakeholder incentives, and political realities that shape the media sector” (2011: 11).

Table 2: “Improving Professional Skills“

Permissive Environments	Semi-permissive environments	Non-permissive environments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train/mentor journalists ++</li> <li>• Train/mentor editors and other content-related management executives +</li> <li>• Work with bloggers and other digital media content producers to generate high-quality products and carve out norms for online content production +</li> <li>• Encourage innovation in digital media production +</li> <li>• Train journalists and bloggers in investigative journalism +</li> <li>• Train specialized “beat reporters” +</li> <li>• Work with universities to improve journalism/media curricula ++</li> <li>• Help instil professional ethics ++</li> <li>• Set up and increase the capacity of local trainers/training centres +</li> <li>• Support productions that deal with governance or development issues while simultaneously training local journalists + [...]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train/mentor journalists and future journalists, particularly in an educational/university environment +</li> <li>• Train/mentor editors and other content-related management executives +</li> <li>• Set up national-level prizes for reporting, blogging, and other forms of media production ++</li> <li>• Work with digital media ++</li> <li>• Work with local media ++</li> <li>• Train media professionals and produce content on development goals +</li> <li>• Study tours for media leaders ++</li> <li>• Train journalists and bloggers in investigative journalism, as appropriate ++</li> <li>• Work with universities to improve journalism/media curricula ++</li> <li>• Support student publications ++</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think outside normal “media” parameters ++</li> <li>• Focus on content production on development topics ++</li> <li>• Consider focusing on digital media, if it is relatively less restricted than traditional media ++</li> <li>• Consider supporting exile or diaspora media +</li> <li>• Consider external/international broadcasting +</li> </ul>

+ simple activities/little political will required; ++ more complex activities/more political will required; +++ most complex activities/most political will required.

Source: Own graphic based on Kalathil (2011)

Table 3: “Enabling Environment“

Permissive Environments	Semi-permissive environments	Non-permissive environments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train government officials on how to respond to journalists ++</li> <li>• Educate law enforcement about the role of reporters and the media +</li> <li>• Train legislators and legislative staff on aspects of media law ++</li> <li>• Support local bar associations and professional associations related to media law +</li> <li>• Support the streamlining, transparency and accountability of the broadcast license approval process +++</li> <li>• Promote enabling policy and legislation for community media +++</li> <li>• Support legal and judicial training in media law +</li> <li>• Support the establishment and/or further professionalization and strengthening of an independent broadcast regulator +++</li> <li>• Work with government and civil society to pass freedom of information legislation +++ [...]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train government officials on how to respond to journalists ++</li> <li>• Set up media legal defence funds +</li> <li>• Build the capacity of local media NGOs +</li> <li>• Support advocates against the licensing of journalists or print media +</li> <li>• Build the capacity of local media NGOs +</li> <li>• Help set up a media self-regulatory body +++</li> <li>• Support local bar associations and professional associations related to media law +</li> <li>• Support transparency and professionalism in the broadcast license approval process +++</li> <li>• Promote enabling legislation for community media +++</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up media legal defence and protection funds +</li> <li>• Support local actors trying to revoke the most punitive legislation against free expression and independent media, or apply pressure ++</li> <li>• Support links to international advocacy organizations +</li> </ul>

+ simple activities/little political will required; ++ more complex activities/more political will required; +++ most complex activities/most political will required.

Source: Own graphic based on Kalathil (2011)

Table 4: “Media Organizations and a Media-Literate Public”

Permissive Environments	Semi-permissive environments	Non-permissive environments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist media-related civil society organizations with fundamental training in organizational development, lobbying, and coalition-building +</li> <li>• Support media monitoring organizations +</li> <li>• Support journalist/blogger/editor associations +</li> <li>• Work with citizen journalism groups to encourage media literacy and high standards +</li> <li>• Support community listening club ++</li> <li>• Support media literacy education, particularly within the educational system ++</li> <li>• Support tools to measure media literacy in developing countries ++</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support journalist/blogger/editor associations +</li> <li>• Support press freedom watchdog organizations +</li> <li>• Assist media-related civil society organizations with fundamental training in organizational development, lobbying, and coalition-building +</li> <li>• Support community listening clubs ++</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support independent media NGOs +</li> <li>• Support media literacy through other development goals ++</li> </ul>

+ simple activities/little political will required; ++ more complex activities/more political will required; +++ most complex activities/most political will required.

Source: Own graphic based on Kalathil (2011)

Kalathil’s tables give an idea of the range of possible media assistance activities in MeCoDEM’s fields of interest. Beyond that, the framework is instructive because it illustrates how diverse the suggested program components turn out depending on the environment at hand. Whereas a permissive environment would allow for journalists being trained in investigative reporting, for instance, a non-permissive environment forecloses such local training and has to be circumvented by support of exile media.

In conclusion, it can be noted that it must be a basic objective of our research to identify whether there is **awareness of special needs and requirements** of societies in democratisation conflicts among our interviewees and, if so, how they define these special needs and requirements. Kalathil's framework may serve as a useful tool for us to review our interviewees' fields of activity and, thus, to **identify redundancies or neglected areas** in media assistance. An important field of activity that crystallizes both in Puddephat's and Kalathil's deliberations is training of regulators and legislators. These actors are presently outside of MeCoDEM's research focus. Yet, the communication capacity of the different actors MeCoDEM focuses on (journalists, activists and political leaders) it is to a large extent affected by media law and the persons who enforce it. Thus, at the final stage of the project legal actors might need to be reflected as crucial players whose role deserves further inquiry. For WP8 this implies that while identifying redundancies and neglected areas in media assistance we might consider to pay **attention to training in the legal system**.

#### **4. Journalism training**

Journalists seem to be a natural target group for international media assistance. Against the background of MeCoDEM's goal to propose recommendations for conflict-sensitive journalistic practices and ethics, it will be WP8's task to run impact workshops for raising pertinent awareness with MAOs, DDOs and policy makers who are engaged in journalism training. Hence, we will now turn to literature that informs us about the state of affairs in journalism training and about associated challenges and opportunities. Prior to that, however, there will be a side note to the topic of universality in journalism standards. This section will inspect this much debated issue in terms of its relevance for contemporary journalism training.

##### **4.1. Universality in journalism standards**

Ever since the debate about a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) in UNESCO in the 1970s, journalism training was confronted with a special challenge: the question of universality in journalism standards (cp. Berger 2008). In an attempt to question claims to universality alternative concepts of journalism for developing countries came up. They can be subsumed under the

notion of *development journalism*. Within academic literature on communication and development the concept of *development journalism* is prevalent, but at the same time quite ambivalent. Yet, there are certain distinct points the concept revolves around.

The issue of truth-telling can be considered one of these points. It refers to the fact that some “journalists and media critics dismiss old-age values of objectivity, freedom of expression, and professional independence as reflective of the individualistic and capitalist values of Western society [...]” (Musa/Domatob 2007: 320 f.). While Western notions imply that these values are universal because they enable journalists to perform their essential job to tell the truth, non-Western journalists tend to put a lot more emphasis on the common good. As a result, their reporting is based on an understanding of truth-telling that is different from the Western one: “While these journalists would not lie, they would also not tell the truth if that would cause personal harm, or social and religious disharmony” (ibid.: 321).

Development journalism may furthermore endorse the professional role of the people’s advocate. In this case it focuses on “the concerns of the large majority of underprivileged people in the backwoods of developing nations” (Gunaratne 1996: 70), their empowerment at the grassroots level and the welfare of the whole society. Here, values such as religion, respect for elders, and prioritising the community may conflict with professional standards that stress conflict, competition and sensationalism (cp. Musa / Domatob 2007: 323).

Development journalists may also be depicted as potential economic boosters and liberators. In this case, it is considered to be the journalists’ job to “encourag[e] residents in their harsh environment of economic misery, uncertainty, and turpitude to continue to struggle, survive and aim at success” (ibid. : 326). This is suggested to be accomplished by, for example, reporting about concrete projects: “Such reports should illustrate how the projects were accomplished, so that they can provide inspiration to other people” (Ansah 1990: 34). More recent accounts tend to remove themselves from the fixed concept of “development journalism” and rather emphasize differences in “journalism cultures”. Predominant in this respect is the continuous study “Worlds of Journalism” conducted by Hanitzsch et al. (2010) which, in its latest version, builds on data from 21 countries.

Today, the issue of universality in teaching journalism standards does not seem that heavily contested anymore. It seems as if the paradigm change towards a

greater recognition of local circumstances has put the former alleged dichotomy between “Western journalism” and alternative concepts such as “development journalism” into perspective. “Parachute-in media trainers” (Olsen 2007:6), are said to be a thing of the past. Especially in conflict-ridden environments, calls for a consensual rather than a confrontational journalism practice do not seem to contradict calls for principles of accuracy and impartiality. According to Skjerdal’s (2011) quite recent experience in setting up a post-graduate journalism programme at Addis Ababa University the notion of a fixed schism between an African journalism philosophy and a general journalism philosophy is “misleading”. What he observes is an “approach to journalism which maintains rigidity on the principal level while still being open for contextual influences in journalistic style and performance” (ibid.: 47). In the end, an authoritative style in teaching journalism standards would also thwart the objective of establishing an independent professional culture (cp. Thomass 2012: 402). Of course, recommendations veering towards those we know from “development journalism” are still to be found. Putzel/van der Zwaan (2006), for example, recommend policymakers to “encourage national and local media initiatives not simply as a check on the state, but rather with the aim of contributing to the establishment of effective state organisations where they have collapsed” (ibid.:23). At the same time there is a clear emphasis on journalism to provide “independent and balanced sources of information about the conflict to the local population (there is always a high demand for accurate unbiased information in conflict situations)” (Puddephatt 2010:17).

To recap, universality claims in teaching journalism no longer seem to be an issue against the background of today’s pragmatic, context-sensitive approaches. However, we should not stop to scrutinise journalism training as an encounter of different worlds of experience. It remains important to identify **possible conflict lines or incongruities** between implementers and beneficiaries early on and to make these actors aware of them. Therefore, it will be important to explore what aspects our interviewees perceive as challenging or delicate nowadays when working with journalists in conflict situations.

#### 4.2. Practical trends

Given that the professional development of journalists has always been an important part of media assistance, journalism training has come a long way. There is

a substantial body of grey literature highlighting lessons learnt. Three aspects seem particularly prominent in the current discourse on “best practice”: (1) the importance of local knowledge, (2) the recognition of external conditions, and (3) a long-term perspective in evaluation.

In line with the broader trends in development cooperation discussed earlier, journalism training has come to attach great importance to specifics on the ground and to the knowledge thereof, which often can be high with locals. It turned out that “imported expectation often cannot root in foreign soil” (Howard 2003: 23), and that “improving media is a local project that requires local remedies, local partners, and deep understanding of local values and circumstances” (CIMA 2007: 4). In this context the journalists to be trained are increasingly regarded as experts when it comes to identifying training needs (cp. Jannusch 2002; CIMA 2007; Puddephatt 2010). In order for organisations to ensure that these needs are being addressed Jannusch (2002) suggests sending out questionnaires prior to the trainings, to have flexible curricula, and to use participatory methods (cp. *ibid.*: 48f.).

Another aspect reflected in many of the stated lessons learnt is that journalism needs to be seen in context with broader conditions. An emphasis on the role of a media-supportive environment can be found in a number of reports (cp. Norstedt et al. 2002; Howard 2003; CIMA 2007). What resonates here is the hindsight that journalism training has limited impact when there is a lack of media-supportive infrastructure. As a consequence there are calls for “engaging power brokers” (CIMA 2007: 6), and for regarding the professional capacity of journalists as one cornerstone besides the legal/regulatory environment and the economic base (cp. Puddephatt 2010: 7f.). With special attention to conflict or post-conflict environments, this may even imply that media development is not necessarily a prioritized endeavour (cp. Howard 2003: 23 f.).

The issue of evaluation is another prominent aspect when lessons learnt are being offered. There seems to be a growing consensus that impact assessment needs to consider “long-term goals and qualitative goals” (CIMA 2007:4), “instead of recording how many journalists were trained” (Howard 2003: 25). Thus, what is called for is a sustainable approach to journalism training that gives up on short-term funding and on demanding quick outcomes.

Let us now move on to special challenges and opportunities for journalism training. There are a number of reports that put forward particular approaches when it

comes to journalism in conflict societies. What seems to be a pronounced ambition is the idea of bringing journalists together with other relevant groups in order to foster mutual understanding. A case study report by Panos London (2010), for instance, describes methods, activities, and results of a workshop in Kenya designed to improve media coverage on complex subjects. This workshop involved both journalists and scientists. They collaborated in different sessions, the initial one being an ice-breaker session in which

journalists are given open, but managed, space to state their frustrations and concerns about researchers, and vice versa. Each group discusses separately what annoys them most about the other. The discussion is then opened up and each professional group is given the opportunity to respond to the other's views. Both professional groups are able to see that each has a unique role to play, and that they can work together in putting research on key development issues into the public domain. This process begins to break down much of the mistrust that exists between these groups, providing an opening for them to work more closely together in the future (ibid.: 11).

The main objective of such training activities is to build relationships, which is not only achieved during the sessions but also through less formal interaction during lunches or dinners, and to make formerly opposed groups comprehending one another as resources. A similar approach was taken in a program described by Putzel/van der Zwaan (2006), who also point to the importance of such multi-stakeholder trainings in terms fostering what is called "beat journalism". The authors argue that "in particularly poor crisis states it is difficult to find journalists who have an understanding of the issues they are covering, whether it be politics, economics or legal issues" (ibid.: 20). Thus, encouraging and enabling journalists to become specialists on certain subjects "helps to mediate conspiracy theories and sensational reporting" (ibid.). Beyond that Putzel/van der Zwaan emphasize the need for greater self-reflection among media practitioners in conflict environments. According to them, donors and international organisations should facilitate "local dialogues that offer a critical debate and force journalists to reflect on how they in fact may be partly contributing to an adverse state-independent media relationship or polarising political environment" (ibid.)

Of course, activities involving multiple stakeholders cause increased challenges for the organisations who implement them. Such activities require skilful preparation and moderation to ensure a discursive, non-confrontational working atmosphere (cp. Panos 2010:11, Thomass 2012: 400).

In summary, these insights into current journalism training approaches can inform our own research as follows:

- In view of the large body of literature that puts forward **lessons learnt and recommendations** it will be interesting to see on a general level to what extent MAOs, DDOs and their policy abide by them when carrying out or funding journalism training.
- The three main aspects that have been identified within the current discourse on “best practices” offer helpful points of reference. Our interviewees’ understanding of best practices in journalism training should be examined with regard to the **importance they attach to local knowledge**, their **awareness of journalism’s reliance on a media-supportive infrastructure** as well as their **evaluation strategies and goals** (along the lines “short-term/long-term” and “quantitative/qualitative”).
- A special challenge in conflict-ridden societies is seen in the interaction between journalists and other civil society actors (such as scientists, politicians, activists etc.). Usually, the problem is said to lie in misunderstandings and a lack of trust or lack of respect for each other’s expertise. This, however, holds an opportunity for journalism training to serve as a setting for **multi-stakeholder workshops** in which the different groups develop an understanding for their distinct roles in a democracy. Our research can investigate whether such activities are being supported by our interviewees and what their experience is. Furthermore, based on our interviewees’ experience we could **identify critical factors for successful implementation** of such multi-stakeholder trainings.

## 5. Media training in civil society organisations

Turning to media training for activists involved in civil society organisations (CSOs) we find a situation that is quite different from the one we have seen before with regard to journalism training. Whereas MAOs, DDOs, and donors have a long history of engaging in improving the professional skills of journalists, their support of civil society actors seems to be in its fledgling stages. What can be called the state of affairs here is that implementers and donors recognize how important it is to support CSOs in the first place. As we can tell from a briefing paper by the German Development Institute (GDI) this recognition was not yet prevalent in 1999. At that time the GDI argued that “the diversity of the functions of civil society and its significance for creating a framework conducive to development are still underrated” (ibid.: 1). Hence, the institute encouraged the promotion of civil society groups especially pointing to their appeasing potential in conflicts: “These organizations help to break up decrepit structures, articulate the concerns of disadvantaged groups, and

thus promote political participation. In so doing, they contribute to solving social conflicts and to monitoring government action” (ibid.).

Against the background of a growing compliance with holistic approaches in development cooperation the relationship between CSOs and the media has started to attract more and more attention. However, it still seems to be a fairly new area of activity. This becomes evident in Billing’s (2011) analysis of “Support to Civil Society Within Swedish Development Cooperation”, for example. The report discloses that Sida provides “information and communication grants” to support CSOs. However, these grants do not cater to CSOs’ communication work, they are allocated for Sida’s communication work: “The overall objective with the support for communication and information work is that the Swedish public has good knowledge of the situation in developing countries, Swedish aid and its results, and the driving forces of development” (ibid.: 28). Even though educating the donor country’s public about development cooperation activities is certainly an important issue, it seems surprising that information and communication work by the CSOs themselves is not taken into account.

Yet, other reports look at media-related activities of CSOs specifically. Those reports usually offer a diagnosis of the status quo based on observations rather than on practical training experience or lessons learnt. They find CSO-media-relationships to be affected by certain flaws. These flaws can be summarized as revolving around three interrelated issues: (1) a lack of trust, (2) a lack of role understanding, and (3) a lack of efficient communication. The issue of insufficient trust between CSOs and the media is brought up by several authors (cp. Wood/Barnes 2007, von Kaltenborn-Stauchau 2008, Vlahovic 2013). According to Vlahovic (2013) one indication for it is that the media “show a lack of willingness to support CSOs in their social role and refuse often to understand and accept their leadership role” (ibid.: 14). Wood/Barnes (2007) make out various sources for mistrust while primarily highlighting their inhibiting effect: “Whether the result of real differences, misunderstandings or a tendency to stereotype, the views the media and CSOs often hold about each other limit the emergence of more productive relationships” (ibid.: 40). This suspicion may be related to a lack of clarity about one’s own tasks in relation to the other group. In fact, Wood and Barnes report on “the not uncommon practice of CSOs paying for media coverage and the media accepting such payments” (ibid.), a practice which is even sometimes used by donors on behalf of CSOs to boost neglected issues.

Considering that “their self-understanding had previously been shaped by the experience of political resistance” (von Kaltenborn-Stachau 2008: 19) a lot of CSOs do not yet seem to be aware of their agenda’s relevance for public debate. In this respect, a number of reports point to problems of CSOs in understanding the importance of using media for advocacy purposes and of generating sustained media coverage (cp. Wood/Barnes 2007, Rhodes 2007, Von Kaltenborn-Stauchau, Vlahovic 2013). Closely related to this is a lack of efficient communication between CSOs and journalists: “Often journalists are not able to follow or comprehend the relevance of issues, and civil society organisations lack media strategies and fail to influence public debate and opinion formation effectively” (von Kaltenborn-Stauchau 2008: 29). This situation is often being put down to the level of practical skills at CSOs: “A frequent lack of knowledge of how best to package analysis and materials for the media is symptomatic of the fact that advocacy is still a relatively new role for many CSOs in low-income countries” (Wood/Barnes 2007: 41). Some authors also point to the fact that CSOs often miss out on building networks, coalitions or alliances with one another (cp. von Kaltenborn-Stauchau 2008, Vlahovic 2013), which would strengthen their voice in the public sphere.

When it comes to practical suggestions drawn from these status quo descriptions as to how development cooperation could support media-related activities of CSOs the authors remain quite vague. This may be explained by the lack of first-hand experience in this field of activity. Accordingly, von Kaltenborn-Stachau (2008) just re-emphasizes the relevance of media training in CSOs – “working with civil society to develop a more constructive understanding of its role and to enhance communication and negotiation skills can help to improve its input to the public sphere significantly and can contribute to more constructive citizen-state relations that are required for long-term state building” (ibid.: 20) – while her recommendations for action turn out quite limited: “Develop media and outreach strategies. Improve communication, negotiation and presentation skills” (ibid.: 71). Wood’s and Barnes’ (2007) conclusions are on a similar level. They call upon international NGOs and donors to devote “more attention and resources to building CSOs’ media and communications capacity to complement their growing advocacy and policy research” (ibid.: 42). Rhodes (2007) even goes to such lengths as to demand that “the focus on international engagement in media development should be the development of civil society institutions” (ibid.: 39). Fairly concrete recommendations stem from Vlahovic

(2013) who suggests including the following directions into a capacity building strategy for CSOs:

- General management skills and competencies
- Classic media relations
- Social media relations
- Inter-personal communication
- Stakeholder dialogue, public speech and persuasion (ibid.: 13).

What becomes evident in these recommendations is a clear tendency of the authors to underscore the general importance of media training for CSOs. They urge fellow implementers and donors to make it a higher priority on the development cooperation agenda. However, this framing of CSO support as a desirable endeavour per se also holds a certain risk to foster heedless action. Civil society promotion must not be tackled blindly. Especially the question of which organisations to support should not be underestimated by donors and implementers. GDI (1999) calls into consideration that “external promotion of civil society [...] requires sensibility because not all civil society activities are automatically conducive to development” (ibid.:1). Thus, the selection of suitable opposition groups or social movements to support may present a major challenge – especially because there is not yet much wealth of experience to build on.

In summary, the reviewed descriptions of the current situation regarding CSOs media skills bear on our own research as follows:

- Since media training for civil society players has been identified as a field of activity that is still in its infancy our research will take quite an **exploratory form**. In doing so, focusing on goals, strategies and measures – as initially suggested – will still serve as a useful strategy for guiding our attention. However, since the reviewed literature does not provide us with concrete hints to shed light on the pertinent practice, we have to make sure that the way we phrase our **questions offers enough leeway and openness** for identifying unknown aspects. Especially when it comes to practical **measures and activities**, it seems promising to work towards an initial systematisation by digging up insights about experiences and challenges that are **particular to working with CSOs**.
- The three main flaws that the reviewed reports bring to light can serve as points of reference to assess our interviewees’ accounts of the current situation in CSO-media-relationships. As part of exploring their approach and strategy it should be interesting to see to what extent **a lack of trust, a lack of role understanding, a lack of efficient communication and their**

**considerations about a problematic media environment** is reflected in their attestations. Considering its relative novelty it seems valuable to include questions on **what motivated them** to start this kind of training in the first place.

- A notable feature of the identified flaws is that they are no internal CSO issues. The flaws rather refer to how the CSOs position themselves in relation to others. This takes us back to a point that was already brought up in terms of journalism training: in conflict-ridden societies there is a need for different actors to develop an understanding for their distinct roles in a democracy. **Multi-stakeholder workshops** have been suggested as a training format catering to that need. Thus, our research can investigate to what extent this format is taken into consideration by donors and implementers for training CSO activists. We would be able to explore whether **training activities for this fairly new target group** (CSO activists) are designed based on existing knowledge in other fields (such as journalism training) or whether such activities are being developed from the scratch. This, in turn, gives us an opportunity to judge whether the highly praised **holistic approach** is really put into practice.
- Against the background of this area's novelty, it will also be interesting to find out about the pertinent **awareness of those donors' and implementers' who do not (yet) engage in training CSO activists**. What importance they attach to civil society actors in the greater context of democracy promotion would be an important aspect to explore.

## 6. Media training for political leaders

Governments and political leaders form the third target group we address. Media training for these actors is usually provided in connection to what is called *strategic communication*. Fortune/Bloh (2008) define strategic communication as “a set of guidelines or a framework by which an entity or a government communicates using various media or related channels in an organised fashion, with an intended result on a particular reform policy or strategy” (ibid.: 18). This definition includes two major points that seem to characterize the current state in this field of activity: (1) media training is usually offered in connection with a certain project; (2) such projects are usually geared towards a fixed outcome.

These two tendencies become apparent in quite extensive literature on cases where development cooperation focuses on government communication. Bruni (2008), for example, describes a concrete public sector reform in Nicaragua which entailed a communication program; Lardner (2008) mentions training activities in context with a program titled “Strengthening Government Capacity to Develop and Implement Public Information Programs in Support of Economic Reforms”

established by the Slovak government in cooperation with the World Bank; Cabañero-Verzosa (2008) illustrates government communication activities using the example of procurement reform in the Philippines. Further project-based depictions are offered by Cabañero-Verzosa/Garcia (2009). In all of these projects, capacity building among government officials was one component among others. It seems to flank rather project-focused measures such as image creation (Bruni 2008), stakeholder analyses (Landner 2009), multimedia campaigns (Cabañero-Verzosa 2008), or press conferences (Cabañero-Verzosa/Garcia 2009). In a recently published report, Sullivan (2014) makes a critical remark about the status of media training in the political realm: “Too often government communication has been plugged in as an afterthought in a development project, and treated as part of a communications campaign strategy rather than as an integral part of achieving media freedom” (ibid. 2014: 4).

The other prominent feature describing the current status seems like a logical consequence of the fact that media training for political leaders is predominantly offered within the scope of particular (reform) projects: There is a focus on achieving an intended (and often quantifiable) outcome. While general trends in development cooperation point to holistic approaches with long-term perspectives (as discussed in Section 1), rapid results still seem to be an important parameter in the realm of government support.

Oftentimes the conclusions drawn by authors describing such projects are mixed. Bruni (2008), for example, states: “The strategic coaching on strategic communication enabled high-level officials to communicate more coherently. This change, together with the media campaigns, helped to condition the attitude of the media, both broadcast and print, toward their coverage choices” (ibid.: 349). He describes how, as a consequence of the government communication program, the Nicaraguan media started to inform about public sector issues rather than indulging in sensational coverage of political conflict. However, this effect did not prove to be sustainable: “The 2006 election campaign brought the communication situation back to the situation of 2004, with the headlines in print and on broadcasted media focusing again on conflict between politicians” (ibid.). Mixed evaluations are also uttered by Cabañero-Verzosa/Garcia (2009) regarding an economic reform named the “Bulldozer Initiative” in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Although the initiative's well-designed communication plan helped influence many local entrepreneurs' changes in attitude and behavior, negative sentiment continued in some sectors of society. Critics and opposition groups led anti-Bulldozer campaigns to discredit the initiative's leaders and goals (ibid.: 35).

There is something puzzling about such conclusions. This is their tendency to consider media and civil society groups who express criticism towards the reform undesired. The authors regard it as a failure if the communication program did not manage "to change behavior, to prompt people to do something in a manner that differs from how they are doing it when the communication effort begins" (ibid.: 2). If one looked at the outcome from a different angle, the program's failure could be seen in missing out on including people in the process of defining the desired results and in building pertinent consensus. Thus, the present project-dependent approach reveals an understanding of government communication as a cause for a certain previously defined effect, rather than a value of its own in a pluralistic and democratic society. In fact, Sullivan (2014) observes that government communications capacity building is not yet a regular part of media development organizations' portfolios. Even though government communication capacity is part and parcel of an independent media system the focus is usually first and foremost on journalism:

When an autocratic government falls and a new, more democratic one emerges; when there is a dramatic change in government; or when an existing administration wants its communication environment to be more open, media development specialists rush in. Their first targets are journalists. The theory goes that creating better journalists leads to better journalism and that developing the independent media and working with reporters to practice balanced, unbiased reporting will result in credible information that will lead to a more informed citizenry and result in a stronger democracy. Only much later is attention paid to government officials who should be providing information to journalists. And then it may be too late (Sullivan 2014: 4).

This project-centred approach notwithstanding, there are a number of general challenges taking root in the field of media training for political leaders. They can be summed up in three interrelated points: (1) low professionalism in government communication, including efforts to manipulate media; (2) a lack of trust toward government communication; (3) internal resistance towards transparent communication.

First of all, what resonates in many reports is that governments' capacity to engage in strategic communication activities is generally low in the first place (cp. Fortune/Bloh 2008; CommGAP 2009; CommGAP 2011; Sullivan 2014). "Dreary backwaters of low skill" is how the Communications for Governance & Accountability Programme (CommGAP 2011: 4) calls the government communication functions in developing countries. Professional communication positions often do not even exist; and if they do the assigned civil servants often lack clear job descriptions (cp. CommGAP 2009) and resources (cp. CommGAP 2011). Uninvolved in the communication efforts of government as a whole, the civil servant is said to often end up carrying out low-priority tasks and running the risk of becoming "an uninformed technician—the person who puts up microphones at a press conference—not a strategist who can offer advice to senior colleagues and speak knowledgeably on government plans and policies with reporters" (Sullivan 2014: 8).

Another challenge in the field of training political leaders is that they are not being trusted when launching information. Indeed, there are political contexts where no distinction is being made "between government and political communication (that is, partisan, pro-administration), leading to a lack of credibility and an erosion of overall government capacity" (Aday/Brown/Livingston 2008: 9). Due to this "tendency to use information dissemination and strategic communication interchangeably" (Fortune/Bloh 2008: 19), government communicators are often seen as "mouthpieces" (CommGAP 2009: 6) or "propaganda machines [...] with no real capacity to engage in meaningful dialogue with constituents" (CommGAP 2011: 4).

The third challenging factor in media training for political leaders comes from within government. Authors often observe resistance (cp. Mastly 2008) or the fear of being held accountable (cp. Fortune/Bloh 2008) among political leaders when it comes to transparent and proactive communication. CommGAP (2009) supposes that "political elites and bureaucrats may believe that knowledge is power and that sharing it results in diminished influence" (ibid.: 3).

What arises out of media training for government officials and the reviewed challenges are some practical recommendations when it comes to improving future training activities. As mentioned above, the fact that government communication is primarily treated as an add-on to other projects has already provoked criticism. Accordingly, there are quite some calls for adopting a holistic view in this field of development cooperation. CommGAP (2009) points out that implementers and

donors must be aware about the fact that governments “are more likely to pursue improving capacity when they find themselves ‘threatened’ and unable to ‘keep up’ on certain issues” (ibid.: 7) and that they “usually express demand for assistance on their communication capacities close to election time” (ibid.: 6). This, however, should not entice implementers and donors into engaging in ad-hoc action only. An example cited by Sullivan (2014) illustrates what pitfalls the project-based approach can involve:

An NGO doing communications capacity building in an African country unfortunately got so involved with the government that it wrote the state’s press releases and speeches, crafted its communications strategy, and spent little time partnering with the staff to do its own communications work (ibid.: 15).

To achieve a more sustainable outcome it is suggested to rather take a long view: “When governments communicate effectively, crises can be averted. Focusing on responsive government, media development, and communication in support of various development goals represents an effective approach to promote government communication capacity” (CommGAP 2009:6).

Other recommendations focus on the structural issues which tend to inhibit effective capacity-building. In this respect CommGAP (2009) emphasizes the importance of country-specific solutions since starting points in government communication capacity differed from country to country. To tackle the lack of professionalism in government communication the authors suggest “drawing on traditional systems of communication that are already in place and developing professional associations among spokespeople” (ibid.: 5). This could contribute to a better involvement of spokespeople within governmental structures and to an improved establishment of their professional position.

Another major aspect for training government officials is building trust – both towards journalists and towards the greater public. When it comes to the government-journalist relationship, the suggestions point to the same direction we have come across earlier in Section 3.2. Again, authors point to the importance of each group’s understanding of the other’s role: “Governments [...] need to understand the principles of journalistic work: effective communication relies on independent media to ‘shape the grayness’ of government communication into a ‘black/white’ framework for public consumption” (ibid.). Here, too, multi-stakeholder

workshops would suggest themselves in order to avoid a scenario like the one described as typical by Sullivan (2014):

A country opens up. Unlike the way things worked under the previous government, newly trained reporters ask questions off the designated topic of a press conference; they produce stories on topics on which a government wants to remain silent; reporters on deadline need information right now, not next week. They may write negative but valid stories about government policies. Not understanding the Fourth Estate's role as government watchdog, the officials may return to their former authoritarian behavior and clamp down on the independent media (ibid.: 4f.).

In addition to its relationship to journalists, a government is also well advised to give attention to its relationship to the public. Communication is regarded an effective tool for earning confidence of the population. Fortune/Bloh (2008) note that “the government [...] needs to communicate in a way that connects people to the reform plans, and ensures their support in a language that is clear, focused and targeted” (ibid.: 21).

Lastly, many reports encourage implementers and donors to focus their activities on resolving internal reluctance towards government communication. Many recommendations are targeted on changing the governments' general attitude towards communicating with the public. CommGap (2009) points out that “governments need to be made aware of the incentives for communicating” and, therefore, suggests that “leaders need to be shown examples of counterparts from other countries or localities who have successfully amassed political capital, served consecutive terms, and built legacies by effectively engaging with their own constituents” (CommGAP 2011: 10). Special attention needs to be paid to the difference between government communication and propaganda. Media training is supposed to stress that “government communication involves not only sending out persuasive messages to the public, but also explaining working policies, creating awareness of the rights of citizens, and developing mechanisms that enable two-way communication between citizens and government” (CommGAP 2009: 5).

How do these insights inform our investigation of the current practice of MAOs, DDOs, and donors? In summary, the following points are important for our interviews:

- When it comes to the **goals** of our interviewees in the field of capacity building for government communication, it will be interesting to find out whether they mention **rapid, project-related results** or whether they see their **goals in the**

**context of a larger framework of a free media system.** The interviewees' perception regarding whether they have met their targets in the past would be quite revealing considering that tendency we found among many authors' conclusions. Do our interviewees, too, consider it bad when – despite their training efforts – **civil society groups or journalists still mobilise against a certain government project or reform?** Or are they able to reflect about what ongoing resistance on the part non-governmental groups means in terms of the governments' capability to communicate?

- Another important aspect is what attitude informs our interviewees' approach in this field of activity. Do they adopt a **holistic approach** in which media training for political leaders is considered a crucial part or do they feature an **understanding of such training as an add-on?** Why is or isn't capacity building among political leaders a **regular part of their portfolio?**
- As for concrete measures and training activities in this field the literature review delivers useful points of reference. The issues of **raising professionalism, raising trust** and **raising internal awareness of the value of communication** can be juxtaposed to our interviewees' statements about their curricula and about what they perceive as important training content. Apart from that, we can examine to what extent the training of political leaders is regarded as an opportunity for **multi-stakeholder workshops** in which the different groups develop an understanding for their distinct roles in a democracy. Just like in terms of journalism training, our research can investigate as to whether such activities are being supported by our interviewees and what their experience is. Here again, we could **identify critical factors for successful implementation** of such multi-stakeholder trainings.

## 7. Summary

This literature review set out to provide a systematic overview of findings on media assistance in the fields of journalism training, civil society support, and good governance. To begin with, it discussed overall trends in development cooperation along with concepts on media assistance in conflict-ridden contexts. The literature review served as a basis for deducing categories and questions for semi-structured interviews with representatives of MAOs and DDOs as well as with policy makers who finance media development programs.

With regards to the overall trends in development cooperation the reviewed literature differentiates between *linear and relational approaches* to development. Today, conceptualizations of development as a linear process of cause and effect have widely been replaced by relational approaches, which emphasize local expertise and the contexts and complexities of social change. What seems to have

been established as a paradigm in contemporary development cooperation is participation. The participatory paradigm envisages beneficiaries to be actively involved in project-cycle stages while development specialists act as facilitators and equal participants, rather than decision-makers. At the same time, the media's status has shifted from a means of inducing social change in some aspects, to a crucial pillar of long-term development. All of these trends can serve as reference points to be examined throughout interviews. In doing so, it can be inspected to what extent these trends are reflected in the interviewees' practice of development cooperation.

Narrowing the focus to media assistance in conflict-ridden contexts, the literature emphasizes the importance of accounting for conflict-specific needs. Thus, examining to what extent there is awareness among implementers and donors would be a relevant point in qualitative interviewing. Various suggestions for young democracies and conflict situations to be found in the literature boil down to the establishment of communication between different actors (such as oppositional players or media and public professionals) and to its institutionalisation in the form of round-tables, press conferences, or other *modi vivendi* of dealing with one another in a democratic way.

To sum up the literature reviewed for each activity area of interest – “journalism training”, “capacity building for civil society actors”, and “capacity building for political leaders” – we first focus on similarities and then look at differences. What is salient in each field is that there are claims for multi-stakeholder dialogue. These claims tie in with what has been summarized with respect to media assistance in conflict societies in general. The suggestions become more precise on the more specific level of looking at activities catering to specific beneficiaries. Multi-stakeholder workshops are put forward as a means to bring journalists, political staff, and civil society actors together against the background of a core lack of trust between these actors. The workshops are considered to provide room for these actors to develop an understanding of their distinct roles in a democracy and to develop respect for each other's expertise. However, the literature also highlights that a multi-stakeholder approach itself involves potential for conflict and thus requires much experience to ensure a non-confrontational working atmosphere. As a consequence, for interviews it should be examined whether or not implementers and donors support this workshop format, what their reasons are, and where they see opportunities and challenges.

Another similarity can be found in capacity building for civil society actors and political leaders alike: How communication is valued by these groups is raised as an issue in the literature. The reports attest to a low level of external communication activity for both groups. While civil society actors are said to often attach little importance to communication work because they rather focus on conventional activism and political resistance, political leaders are said to give little attention to it because they deem transparent communication detrimental to their power and influence. Thus, raising awareness of the value of communication is a prominent point in the media assistance literature. This insight suggests that asking for fundamental challenges of providing media assistance would be relevant with regard to interviewing implementers and donors.

Let us now turn to differences in recommendations to be found in the literature for the three activity areas. These differences seem to be rooted in the amount of practical experience gained so far with each group of beneficiaries. Whereas journalism training has been an important part of media assistance early on, capacity building of civil society groups is a fairly new area of activity. Accordingly, the body of literature on journalism training draws on extensive practical experience when formulating lessons learnt. Literature dealing with the media skills of civil society actors, on the contrary, only offers mostly a diagnosis of the status quo based on observations rather than on practical training experience. Again, the nature of experience in training political staff is different. Here, media training has usually been offered as an add-on to larger political projects or campaigns.

These differences become evident when we look at how reports on training journalists, civil society actors, and political leaders reflect the alleged *relational approach*. As for journalism training, a high level of reflection was developed over the years with numerous reports emphasizing the importance of local knowledge, awareness of journalism's reliance on favourable infrastructure, and long-term evaluation strategies. Such issues are not yet being raised in reports on media training for civil society actors. Meanwhile, much literature is devoted to explaining the need to expand media development to civil society groups in the first place. In terms of training politicians the relational approach is even being undermined in some reports.

The project-centred practice of training political staff seems to prompt some authors to favour rapid, quantitative results over a holistic approach with long-term

perspectives. With regard to interviewing implementers and donors, this knowledge is helpful for identifying topics that lend themselves for further elaboration. Interviewees engaging in journalism training can surely be encouraged to deliberate on “best practices”. Interviews with professionals supporting civil society actors rather offer a chance to learn more about motives for initiating this training and about first perceptions of CSO-specific challenges. Topics worth elaborating on with implementers and donors who engage in training for political staff would be their goals and the importance they attach to media training. Here again, the literature review compiles a variety of detailed reference points for conducting and analysing interviews in media development cooperation.

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