

FROM THE MEDIA PROJECT

The monthly newsletter from the UNESCO/UNDP project:

"Strengthening Democracy and Governance through Development of the Media in Mozambique"

POSITIVE EVALUATION OF MEDIA PROJECT'S PHASE II

A two-member team of consultants, has just ended a comprehensive, final evaluation of the Media Project's Phase II, and came out with very positive results, concerning activities implementation rates, relevance and impact, management and organization, project strategy and partnerships and cooperation.

At the end of a week-long review of project documents, field visits, open discussions with different stakeholders, such as media institutions and practitioners, donors and the concerned government institutions, the evaluators' team concluded that the Project could greatly contribute for:

- an improved access to the media through creation of media facilities at provincial and community levels and decentralization and management capacitation of public broadcaster -Radio Mozambique;
- a greater diversification of the media, through the strengthening of independent newspapers and the improvement of their content quality;
- an increased participation in the media, through an expanded ownership of radio stations by communities, the empowerment of communities to communicate their concerns, the creation of associations, as well as an increased involvement of women with the media.

Crucial and uncontrollable was the question on long term sustainability of the project's outputs, with special focus on the eight community radios established with the project's support as well as small independent newspapers in the provinces.

In this regard, while acknowledging the effectiveness of the strategies that the Media Project has been pursuing, through strengthening the different partners capacity in the areas of management, fundraising, training and technical support, the report recommends a greater focus on financial sustainability.

Furthermore, an extended partnership strategy to strengthen Communication Centres in Tete and Nampula is to be considered, the report recommends.

This newsletter is produced by the UNESCO/UNDP Media Development Project

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The newsletter is distributed free of charge within Africa to those interested in Media Development in Mozambique

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STAKEHOLDERS CONFIRM PHASE III

A meeting of all Media Project stakeholders and partners – UNDP, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, the Information Office under the Prime Minister, donors and media institutions – held early July formally confirmed Phase III of the Media Project for a period of two years, up until June 2006. The meeting, with the technical name of Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) consolidated the principle of an exit phase, with concentration on, only, three areas: Community Radio, Independent Media and the Public Broadcaster.

The primary and overall aim of this phasing out period is to consolidate the project's achievements and impact. The following are the planned products for Phase III:

- Increased impact and sustainability of community radios;
- Increased impact and sustainability of independent print media;
- Increased management capacity and editorial autonomy of Provincial delegations of Radio Mozambique.

ELECTIONS COVERAGE IN PREPARATION

The "Media Working Group", coordinated by the UNDP, has just resumed its technical meetings aimed at discussing the most effective ways to support the media in their efforts to cover the forthcoming general elections in December.

The Portuguese Embassy hosted a meeting with representatives from

Ireland, Norway and Sweden as well as from the UNDP, the Media Project, MISA-Mozambique, the Editor's Forum (EDITMOZ) and SARDC to initiate discussions on a new project submitted by the later, to strengthen media capacity to cover the elections in a manner that is independent from political parties and ethically adequate.

Following previous experiences, donors are expected to provide financial support to ensure that journalists and editors can meet and discuss the elections legal package and the media organizations can send reports to cover campaign and voting periods throughout the country.

The Media Project has been asked to host a second meeting on the subject, scheduled for 11 August.

REINFORCING PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY RADIO

The Media Project strategy to ensure sustainability for the community radios focus, among other, on the establishment of partnership relations between the stations and other, different institutions with social commitment in their missions.

In line with this, the Media Project has just started a major campaign aiming to strengthen the stations level of dialogue and interaction with potential partners in the provinces.

Following a decision taken by the Management team, all project officers with responsibilities at the content and management level are holding discussion meetings in the provinces with local authorities, NGO's and the private sector, with the view to foster the stations long term viability potential. The campaign is covering the provincial capitals of Inhambane, Sofala, Manica, Zambezia and Niassa, from July through August.