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MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Media Freedom Indices

What They Tell Us – And What They Don't

A Practical Guidebook

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Laura Schneider

A Practical Guidebook

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RESPONSIBLE

Christian Gramsch, Petra Berner

AUTHOR

Laura Schneider

EDITOR

Dr. Jan Lublinski

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01

Preface

Preface

Every year, the publication of the global media freedom rankings by Reporters Without Borders and Freedom House causes an outcry in the political sphere of numerous countries. Depending on the country's performance, politicians praise their policies or justify them, opposition leaders criticize the respective government and governments denounce the rankings and their results. In 2009, for example, when Reporters Without Borders ranked Singapore 133th out of 175 countries, the Minister of Law called the index "quite absurd and divorced from reality"¹. In 2012, when Malawi dropped 67 ranks in Reporters Without Borders' ranking, the state's presidential spokesperson called the ranking "unrealistic" and said: "Dropping 67 places would mean something catastrophic is happening. (...) I am convinced that journalists in Malawi enjoy a measure of freedom that is not found in many countries in the world."²

In addition to the two global media freedom rankings of Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders, IREX, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and UNESCO also regularly carry out international media freedom assessments. Generally, the indices are frequently cited and their results are used for a range of different purposes by different people. The results not only receive broad international attention but also have huge consequences in a variety of fields: The scoring of a country fuels the domestic and international political debate, plays an important role for national media policies as well as the implementation of media laws and regulations, and is reflected in the academic discourse. Furthermore, the results of the media freedom rankings are taken into account when the recipients and the amount of development and media aid are determined.

However, many stakeholders are not familiar with important details regarding for example the concept and methodology of the different measures. Consequently, many people use the indices' findings without actually being able to understand and thus judge them. The best example for that is the media coverage that typically only portrays the (most scandalous) findings without reflecting them critically.

This guidebook aims to fill this gap and provide a systematic and easily applicable overview of the most important details we should keep in mind when using – or receiving – the existing media freedom indices. This analysis does not intend to simply criticize the initiatives but rather give them the serious attention they deserve.

Although the subject of this guidebook is more commonly known as "press freedom" and the measures as "press freedom indices", here the terms "media freedom" and "media freedom indices" are used instead. The reason for that is the following: Strictly speaking, press freedom only refers to the freedom of the printed press, i.e. newspapers, magazines and so on. The indices analyzed here cover the different kinds of media, however – not only the press but also radio, television and online media. Therefore it is more adequate and precise to use the term "media freedom" in this guidebook.

As a globally acting organization DW Akademie, the media development branch of Deutsche Welle, has a vital interest in discussing and using the major international media freedom indices. These indices provide us with important information in order to plan our strategies in selected developing countries and emerging economies.

At first sight an overall score for a single country can be compared to a thermometer in an oven. It provides us with a basic and relevant measurement: the inside temperature. In addition we are in many cases provided with a detailed country report. This is then like peeking through a small window in the oven: we get a very rough picture of what is happening inside.

For even more insight it is useful to consult a second source – another thermometer and also another window both placed in different parts of the oven. Overall the different indices available provide us with complementary information. Based on this and our own research we can decide when to get into the heat ourselves – and which kind of gloves to wear.

DW Akademie supports the development of free and transparent media systems. Our aim is to strengthen freedom of expression: We want to help people to access information and make their voices heard. In order to achieve this we support independent quality journalism produced in different media organizations. And we are particularly engaged in rebuilding media sectors following crisis and conflicts.

As media development is a complex field we believe that many issues can only be tackled based on an engaged process of research, learning and strategy development. For this reason we have decided to get more involved in research in the future.

This publication is the first of a whole series of applied research conducted by DW Akademie. The aim here is to produce and document information, analyze findings and to discuss issues of importance to experts in media development, research, NGOs and government bodies. This work is kindly supported by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

For our future planning and management of media projects we will continuously consult the media freedom indices, and we will need to get the most out of them. This is why with this publication we have decided to take a detailed, critical and yet constructive look at the most important ones. We hope that this contribution will help to lift their utilization to a new level.

Petra Berner
Head, Research and Development, DW Akademie

¹ *AsiaOne*, 2009.

² *Masina*, 2012.

02

Introduction

“Everybody knows that these numbers are not perfect and not without error. You have to use caution in interpreting the data, but they are really important and useful.”

Mark Nelson, World Bank Institute³

Introduction

The existing international media freedom indices are highly significant and have a strong impact in a variety of fields. But, as the quote above states, the indices' findings should be treated with caution. Publicly available information about the background, principles and methodology of these indices remains scarce⁴ - and thus only a few people are familiar with their details.

Which organizations stand behind the respective measures? When were they initiated and why? What is the conceptual background of the different media freedom indices and what goals do they have? How are they financed? Which methodologies are used to evaluate each country and, if applicable, create the ranking? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each international media freedom index? And, which index should be used for which purpose?

This guidebook aims to answer these questions in order to give the reader an overview of the existing international media freedom measures and how they can be used. By introducing the methodology and pointing out the strengths and weaknesses, it allows the readers to better understand, judge and thus critically reflect the indices' findings. This, in turn, enables them to ideally use and adopt the results for their own purposes. It addresses both stakeholders active in media development cooperation and journalists as well as all other people interested in this topic, such as politicians, academics or activists.

The following five international and global media freedom indices will be introduced and analyzed:

The Freedom of the Press Index by **Freedom House**

The Press Freedom Index by **Reporters Without Borders**

The Media Sustainability Index by the **International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX)**

The African Media Barometer by the **Friedrich Ebert Stiftung**

The Media Development Indicators by **UNESCO**

These five measures were selected for the analysis because they are the only initiatives that evaluate media freedom internationally and on a regular basis. Strictly speaking, these indices can be further divided into two subgroups: those that claim to measure media freedom and those that aim to measure the theoretically broader concepts of media development or media sustainability. But since media freedom is a crucial component of media development and media sustainability and because in practice it is difficult to properly distinguish between the two concepts, both are included in this analysis. Further, all five measures actually cover similar aspects and thus are commonly perceived as media freedom indices by the public.

This guidebook systematically analyzes the indices following the same structure for each of them:

Organization

that initiated and conducts the assessment

Background

history, original purpose, concept and funding of the measure

Methodology

how is the index compiled?

Strengths and weaknesses

advantages and what could be improved

This facilitates the readers' orientation and allows them to focus on the aspects that they are interested in. Further, in separate text boxes it provides a brief overview of the most important aspects of each index and indicates for what purpose the index can and should be used. All additional information tools that are published by the different organizations are not only named but also analyzed as to what they may be useful for. The extensive table following the five index chapters summarizes the information about all indices and thus allows for a direct comparison. Based on the table, the chapter “What to Keep in Mind When Using the Indices” summarizes the most important aspects we should consider when using one or several of the indices.

³ Quoted by Burgess, 2010, p. 7

⁴ There are a few articles that explicitly deal with media freedom measures (e.g. Banda, 2010; Behmer, 2009) and a book that analyzes different aspects of media freedom measurement (Price, Abbott & Morgan, 2011).

Moreover, this guidebook gives an insight into the opinions and aspirations of the indices' authors. Short interviews with the editors of the five media freedom measures were conducted; their answers to the following questions are depicted in separate text boxes:

What is the unique feature of your media freedom index?

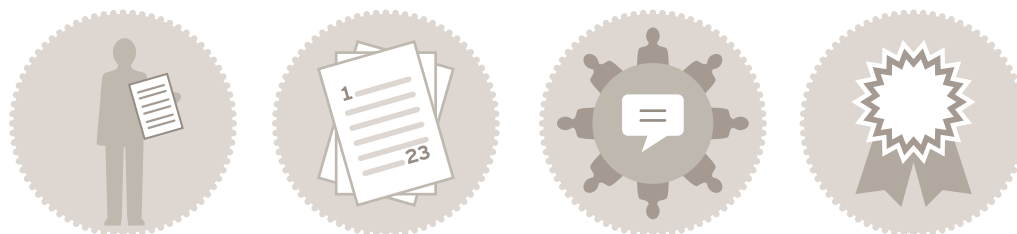
What does your media freedom index not supply?

What would you change about your media freedom index if you had double the budget available?

Which index should I use when I need ...

- a comparison of all countries on a global level?
Freedom House's *Freedom of the Press Index*
Reporters Without Borders' *Press Freedom Index*
- a general overview of one region?
IREX's *Media Sustainability Index*
Freedom House's *Freedom of the Press Index*
- a general overview of one country?
Freedom House's *Freedom of the Press Index*
Reporters Without Borders' *Press Freedom Index*
- detailed information about one region?
IREX's *Media Sustainability Index*
The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung's *African Media Barometer*
- detailed information about one country?
IREX's *Media Sustainability Index*
The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung's *African Media Barometer*
UNESCO's *Media Development Indicators*
- the development of one region over time?
Freedom House's *Freedom of the Press Index*
IREX's *Media Sustainability Index*
- the development of one country over time?
Freedom House's *Freedom of the Press Index*
IREX's *Media Sustainability Index*

How are the media freedom indices compiled?



Freedom House 1 expert scores 23 indicators. Regional meetings determine final score.



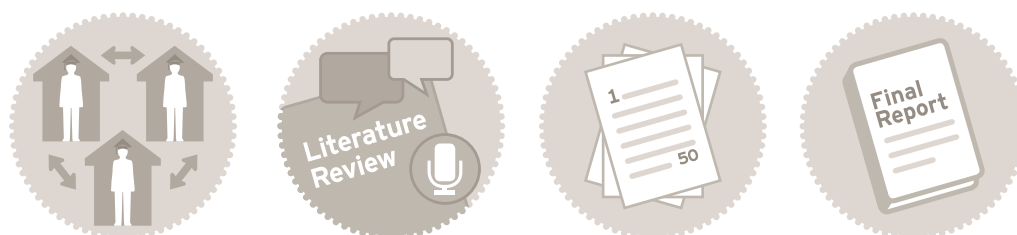
Reporters Without Borders Several experts score 87 indicators. Staff scores and determines final score.



IREX 10–14 experts score 40 indicators, discuss scores in panel, staff scores all indicators and determines final score.



African Media Barometer Panel discussion on 39 indicators, 10–12 experts score these, which determine final score.



UNESCO Research team applies different methods to evaluate 50 indicators; results are presented in report.

03

International Media Freedom Measurement – an Overview

International Media Freedom Measurement – an Overview

According to estimates⁵ there are more than 100 organizations throughout the world that engage in some form of media freedom assessment, evaluation or promotion. The author of this report, however, researched the contact details of more than 200 organizations – mostly NGOs – that according to their website focus primarily on the support of media freedom. The organizations follow the mission of promoting free and independent media through activism, monitoring media freedom violations, evaluating media systems through indices and written reports, and defending and protecting journalists working in conflict zones and under repressive governments.⁶

If national journalist associations and unions as well as human rights groups that monitor media freedom (although they might not solely focus on that topic) are counted in as well, this number rises even more. The majority of national media freedom NGOs are based in Eastern European countries, Asia, Africa and Latin America, as many of them were formed in the second half of the 20th century during and after the democratization process in these regions. While most of these groups have a national scope, there are also numerous organizations that promote media freedom internationally, regionally or even globally. They are either NGOs or intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations (UN),⁷ the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the African Union (AU). These organizations deal with and promote media freedom in different ways, for example by producing written reports, organizing workshops and training and/or publishing statistical data and descriptions of physical, psychological and legal attacks on journalists and media organizations.

Some of the most well-known international journalists' lobby groups are the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the International Press Institute (IPI), Article 19, PEN International, the Inter American Press Association (IAPA), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Internews, AMARC and Panos. These NGOs are further organized in membership networks like the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) and the International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX).

Moreover, foreign ministries also monitor media freedom and academic studies repeatedly deal with the state of media freedom in individual countries or regions.

Currently there are four NGOs that produce quantitative measures, i.e. numerical indices of media freedom:⁸ Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders, the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. UNESCO does not quantify its findings but has developed a very broad instrument for measuring media freedom. These five measures will be systematically introduced and analyzed in the following.

⁵ Becker & Vlad, 2009.

⁶ *Ibid.*

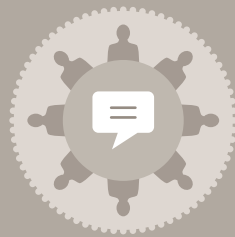
⁷ *The United Nations Human Rights Council appoints a Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.*

⁸ *Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders and IREX present their findings in the form of a ranking; and all organizations publish country reports that vary in number and length.*

Existing International Media Freedom Indices

04

The Freedom of the Press Index by Freedom House



Existing International Media Freedom Indices

The Freedom of the Press Index by Freedom House

Which organization conducts the Freedom of the Press Index?

Freedom House is a U.S. American watchdog organization dedicated to the promotion of freedom and democratic principles around the world. It was founded in 1941⁹, at the time of fascist expansion during World War II, by prominent American business leaders, journalists and former government officials. Formed “with the quiet encouragement of President Franklin D. Roosevelt”¹⁰, key figures among its earlier leaders were the Republican presidential nominee Wendell Willkie as well as Eleanor Roosevelt. The organization claims to have a “bipartisan character”¹¹ and to this day its Board of Trustees includes Democrats, Republicans and Independents “who agree that the promotion of democracy and human rights abroad is vital to America’s interests abroad and to international peace”.¹² In 1973, Freedom House launched its annual survey Freedom in the World which today is its renowned flagship publication. Although the organization claims to be independent, it is sometimes accused of bias because it receives significant amounts of money from the U.S. government, e.g. via the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of State.¹³ The fact that Freedom House declares itself a strong voice for U.S. foreign policy¹⁴ and an advocate for U.S. leadership¹⁵ fosters this assumption. Apart from its main offices in Washington and New York the organization has offices in Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico and South Africa.

What was the original purpose of the Freedom of the Press Index?

The *Freedom of the Press Index* owes its existence to Freedom House’s Freedom in the World map which has been rating countries since the 1970s on their overall freedom, using different colors for different states of freedom. Due to the map’s success the organization decided to produce a map for the more focused but related issue of media freedom as well.¹⁶ In 1980, the *Freedom of the Press Index* was launched. The annual survey is an advocacy tool that monitors global media freedom by assessing the various ways in which pressure can be placed upon the flow of information and the ability of print, broadcast and online media to operate freely and without fear of repercussions. The index covers 197 countries and territories, analyzing the events of each calendar year.¹⁷ The organization further publishes the Map of Press Freedom as well as country reports for all countries. Today, the index is the longest-running media freedom measure. It allows the tracking of broader trends on a country level as well as a regional level. Tracking over longer periods of time is also possible. According to Freedom House its findings are widely used by governments, international organizations, academics, activists, and the news media worldwide.¹⁸

The Freedom of the Press Index in a Nutshell

1. This index should be used when you need information about...:

- Media freedom around the world and global comparisons
- The general situation in one country
- The global trend of media freedom
- The development in one country or region since 1980
- General data with regard to global media freedom (see information tools)

2. Thematic focus: No special focus

3. Countries covered: 197

4. Publication: Annually, in May

5. Scoring system:

- 0–100; 0 = perfect media freedom,
- 100 = worst media freedom

6. Information tools available:

- Global and regional rankings
- Country reports
- Global and regional maps
- Country scores, subscores (categories) and status of almost all countries and regions from 1980 until today (in Excel files)
- Number and percentage of free, partly free, not free countries for all regions from 1980 until today (in Excel and charts).
- Number and percentage of world’s and region’s population living in free/not free media environments
- Infographic about countries with notable developments
- Charts: Distribution of scores, average scores, biggest gains and declines
- Additional report: Freedom on the Net

⁹ *Freedom House was the first American organization to advocate the advancement of freedom globally.*

¹⁰ *Freedom House, 2013.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Freedom House, 2013a.*

¹³ *Becker, 2003; Burgess, 2010; Freedom House, 2013b.*

¹⁴ *Freedom House, 2013.*

¹⁵ *Freedom House, 2013c.*

¹⁶ *Burgess, 2010, p. 9.*

¹⁷ *The 2013 report covers the time period from 1 January – 31 December, 2012 and so on.*

¹⁸ *Freedom House, 2013d.*

In order to ensure independence and quality of the index Freedom House declines to take money directly from the U.S. or any other government for the index. Instead, the organization tries to keep it completely privately funded through private foundations or individuals. Due to a budget crisis, however, in 2009 and 2010 money from the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which receives government support, was accepted.¹⁹

Freedom House claims that the *Freedom of the Press Index* is based on “universal criteria,” having as a starting point the smallest, most universal unit of concern: the individual.²⁰ The organization does not provide a detailed definition of its concept of media freedom that would disclose what the index actually attempts to measure. Rather, it bases the index on the principles constituted in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),²¹ approved by the UN in 1948. In a second step, the concept could be divided into two thematic categories that Freedom House methodologically deals with: On the one hand, the ability of people in a country to access a variety of information and on the other hand, the ability of people producing this information to do their jobs freely and without repercussions.²² It can be said that Freedom House has an institutionalized perspective, putting less focus on the individual journalist (than for example Reporters Without Borders’ index) and looking at constraints on the media mostly from institutional forces.

How is the Freedom of the Press Index compiled?

The methodology of the *Freedom of the Press Index* has been modified several times and was last substantially revamped in 2002. Since then, small changes and additions have been made, particularly in expanding on the language for the indicators.²³ Despite the changes, though, Freedom House has tried to retain sufficient continuity in questions and weightings so that a credible comparison over the years remains possible.

Until 1994, when a numerical scoring system was introduced, countries were only placed in a category of “Free”, “Partly Free” or “Not Free”. Today, in order to measure the status of media freedom in each country Freedom House uses 23 so-called methodology questions,²⁴ divided into three broad categories:

Legal environment: Encompasses an examination of both the laws and regulations that could influence media content and the government’s inclination to use these laws and legal institutions to restrict the media’s ability to operate. Hence, this category includes questions about the protection of press freedom through the constitution and other basic laws, the independence of the judiciary, Freedom of Information legislation as well as about the market entry for all kinds of media.

Political environment: Evaluates the degree of political control over the content of news media. Issues examined include the control over sources, censorship and self-

censorship, citizens’ access to a wide range of news media and the safety of both local and foreign journalists.

Economic environment: Examines the economic environment for the media, looking at media ownership and its concentration, limitations to news production and distribution and control through advertising and subsidies, among others.²⁵

The 23 methodology questions are intended to be fairly broad so they can be applied to every country in the world. Each question, however, consists of several sub-indicators (109 in total) that serve as guidance and reveal which issues should be covered under each particular question. The questions are weighted differently, i.e. they can be scored with varying amounts of points: 0 to 10 is the maximum possible score for some questions and 0 to 2 the potential score for others. With 40 possible points, the weighting of the political environment category is greater in the final index than the scores of the other two, accounting for a maximum of 30 points each. Generally, a score of 0 stands for the highest possible level of media freedom and the higher the score gets, the worse the state regarding media freedom. This is true both for each question and for the overall country score in the ranking. Freedom House still uses the categories of “Free” (overall country score of 0 to 30), “Partly Free” (31-60) and “Not Free” (61 to 100).

For each country a so-called analyst prepares the draft rating and country report. About one third of these analysts are Freedom House employees based in New York, while two thirds are external consultants, typically academics, NGO-workers and journalists.²⁶ Usually, each analyst evaluates several countries, i.e. between three and five. According to Freedom House, only one quarter of all analysts live in the country or region that they are rating, while around three quarters are based outside the countries, normally in the U.S. However, analysts are often originally from the country or the region that they cover.²⁷ The organization does not dictate certain sources or amounts of data that each analyst has to use for the evaluation. Consequently, both the sources and their variety differ between the analysts, but usually their conclusions are reached after consulting the news media, NGO reports and professional contacts, among others.

The analyst scores each question before all scores are summed up in order to determine the subtotal for each category as well as the “press freedom total score” of each country. In a next step, these ratings are reviewed individually and on a comparative basis in so-called regional meetings involving the analysts, Freedom House staff and advisers, who are experts in the particular region. Moreover, the ratings are compared with the previous year’s findings, and any major proposed numerical shifts or category changes are subjected to more intensive scrutiny.²⁸ Finally, after a cross-regional review which aims to ensure comparability and consistency in the findings, the final country score is determined.

What are the advantages of the Freedom of the Press Index – and what could be improved?

The *Freedom of the Press Index* is one of the most well-known and possibly the most cited media freedom index. Furthermore, it is the oldest regularly published international media freedom measure and thus provides the longest chronological chain of historical media freedom data. Consequently, it allows not only for comparisons across countries but also across time: Its data enables a juxtaposition of the current situation in different countries as well as the tracking and analysis of global trends over the last more than 30 years and monitoring of the developments in each country over the years. It is also the index with the broadest country coverage; with 197 countries and territories it includes basically all nations worldwide. The methodology questions cover a comprehensive set of topics and are broad enough to apply to almost any media situation,²⁹ while at the same time the sub-indicators provide enough nuance to specify what issues should be considered under each question. The fact that the scores for each category are provided is very helpful for anyone wanting to use them for a more specific analysis and thus can be considered an advantage. Further, Freedom House provides very informative and detailed country reports for the majority of countries that can be used as an enlargement on the scores. In general, the organization provides numerous different information tools: Apart from the global and regional rankings, the map and the country report, there are also charts and tables with global and regional data available (number and percentage of free, partly free and not free countries in one region and percentage of population living in free, partly free and not free countries). In addition, detailed information about the overall and category scores for all countries and regions from 1980 up to the present day is provided in extensive Excel files. Another strength of the *Freedom of the Press Index* is the declared aim to review each country rating individually, regionally and cross-regionally in specific meetings and with the help of regional experts. This fact helps to reduce subjectivity.

Although Freedom House openly admits that there is an element of subjectivity inherent in the index's findings, it states that its methodology "emphasizes intellectual rigor and balanced and unbiased judgments."³⁰ Still, despite the additional reviews, the fact that each rating is based on the opinion of one person only supports the assumption of subjectivity. This means that although the index quantifies the indicators and provides numbers, the process is very qualitative. The fact that one single analyst rates several different countries can be seen as another shortcoming. How can one person be a real expert and have in-depth knowledge of various different media environments? Further, the fact that both the indicators and the weightings were determined by very few people suggests subjectivity.

One of the most fundamental weaknesses of the *Freedom of the Press Index* is its U.S. bias. Although the organization explicitly states that it "recognizes cultural differences, diverse national interests, and varying levels of economic development"³¹, no evidence for this can be found in the methodology. In fact, the criticism of bias can be substantiated by various characteristics of the index: First, the indicators addressed in the methodology questions, i.e. the aspects that are assumed to influence the status of media freedom in a country, were defined by a few people with a U.S. American background. Second, the weighting of all indicators, i.e. the question of how much these aspects influence media freedom, was determined by a few people with a U.S. American background. The organization does not reveal what the weighting is based on and since it wants to reach a maximum possible number of points out of 100, it could be assumed that the points for each question were determined with the overall 100 target mark in mind. And third, most of those evaluating the countries are based in the U.S. and thus are likely to represent an American perspective.

The accusation of bias is of great significance because it is frequently used as a key argument against the ranking and its findings by repressive regimes that feel attacked by it. The fact that neither the scores for each methodology question nor the details about the analyst³² who scored a country are made public further limits the index's transparency and facilitates this criticism.

Regarding the methodological details of the index the following weaknesses should be underlined: Some questions contain two or more questions in one.³³ For the analyst it is hard to answer several questions with only one number and this, in turn, can lead to invalid and unreliable answers. Freedom House has tried to deal with the impact of the internet, social

¹⁹ Burgess, 2010; telephone interview with Karin Deutsch Karlekar.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Article 19 as well as the whole UDHR can be consulted under: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

²² Karin Deutsch Karlekar, 2011 (in a telephone interview).

²³ For example, in 2011 the term "bloggers" was specifically added to the methodological questions about journalists. (Deutsch Karlekar & Radsch, 2012)

²⁴ The complete questionnaire with all methodology questions can be consulted on Freedom House's website.

²⁵ Freedom House, 2013d; Becker, Schneider & Vlad, 2012.

²⁶ Deutsch Karlekar, 2011.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Freedom House, 2013d.

²⁹ With the exception of extremely closed environments such as Eritrea, North Korea or Cuba (Deutsch Karlekar, 2011a).

³⁰ Freedom House, 2013d.

³¹ Ibid.

³² If for security reasons no full names can be stated it should at least be revealed if the analyst lives in or is originally from the rated country.

³³ For example, there are questions that ask if specific laws exist and if so, if these laws are applied.

Short Interview with Jennifer Dunham

What is the unique feature of Freedom House's Freedom of the Press Index?

As the only index that combines global coverage with numerical, comparative country data and a unique time series of data stretching back more than 30 years, Freedom of the Press (FOTP) has become a crucial advocacy tool for numerous different stakeholders. In addition to the numerical ratings for each country, the publication features country reports – written by staff members and expert outside consultants – that provide analytical explanations for the country scores, an overview essay detailing trends and findings for the year, and a number of global and regional charts and graphs illustrating these trends. Freedom House also produces an annual Map of Press Freedom, which displays the index findings in graphical form; this resource is one of the most widely distributed and well-known components of the project.

What does the Freedom of the Press Index not supply?

FOTP does not have staff in the field to investigate press freedom violations, and thus does not supply timely first-hand reporting or interviews on these issues. Further, FOTP does not independently compile statistics on abuses such as the number of journalists killed or imprisoned each year. The methodology questions for the index focus on restrictions on the freedom of journalists, media outlets, and other content providers such as bloggers to do their jobs freely and without fear of repercussion, as well as constraints on the flow of news and information. As such, it does not address issues such as quality of media content, or the extent of media literacy of the population in each country.

What would you change about the Freedom of the Press Index if you had double the budget available?

I would not change FOTP, but rather enhance it. The project currently has two full-time staff members; expert consultants write the majority of the country reports. I would hire more full-time staff – one expert for each of the world's key regions – who would take on more responsibility for report writing and editing, as well as media interviews, compiling special reports, and writing timely press releases and alerts. These staffers, as well as the project director, would ideally also have more resources to conduct essential research and advocacy missions to countries identified as high risk. We would also like to enhance our capacity to provide targeted recommendations for expanding and promoting media freedom, based on our scores and analysis, for key countries of concern or countries in transition.

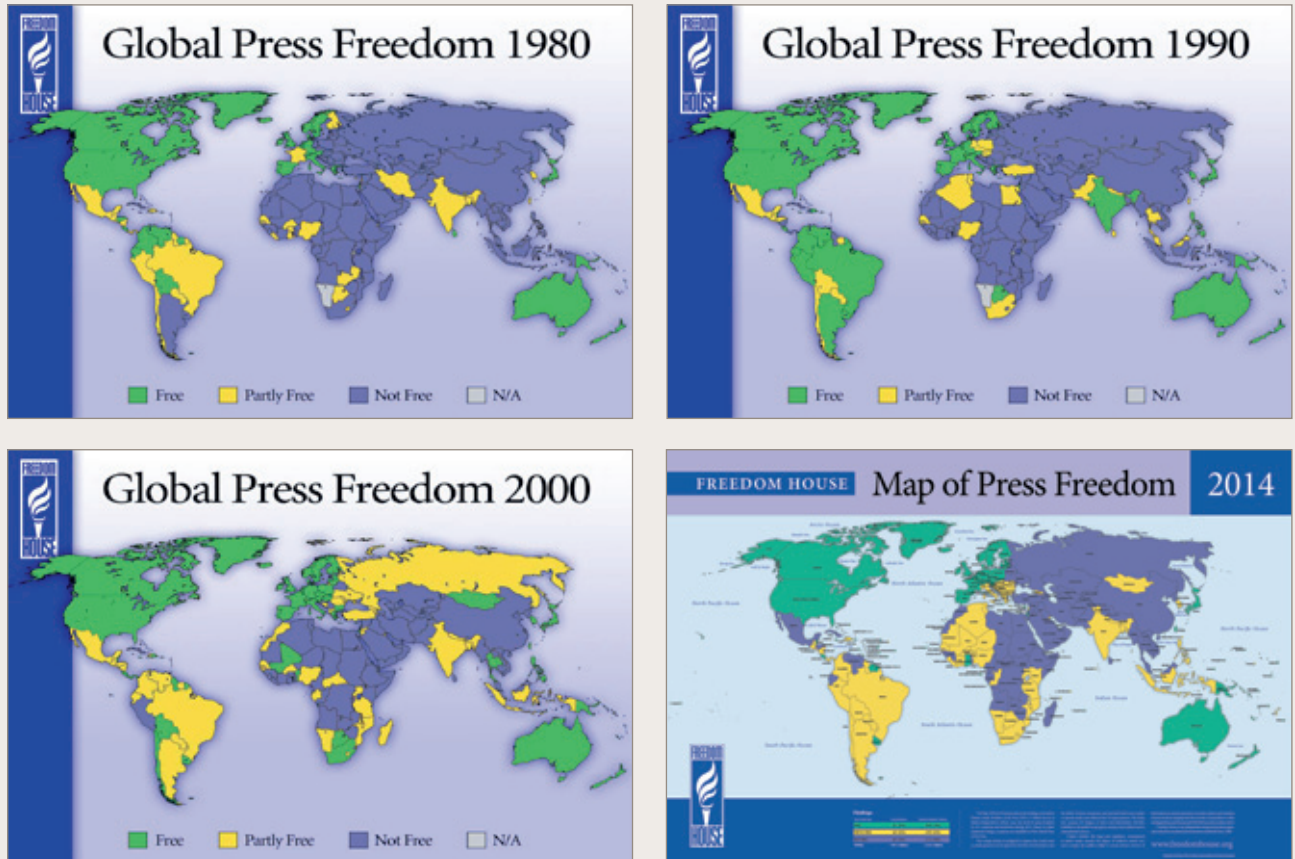


Jennifer Dunham,
Senior research analyst,
Freedom of the Press,
Freedom House

media and mobile phones by changing some formulations in its methodology and thus explicitly including bloggers for example. Still, for example the important question of how both media outlets and users employ digital communication platforms (access, ability, manner) is not covered by the index's methodology.³⁴ Another weakness is that both the sources and the amount of data used depend on each analyst and is not controlled by Freedom House. Further, the fact that a one point change from one year to another can move a country from one category to another ("Partly Free" to "Not Free") demonstrates that the broad categories have to be treated with caution and that for detailed analysis the more nuanced numerical data should be used. However, using numerical scores as a basis for comparison also has its limits.³⁵

³⁴ Freedom House also publishes an extra report about internet freedom, called "Freedom on the Net" (fourth edition in 2013).

³⁵ For example, in some cases a country score might not change despite great dynamism in the media environment because positive and negative trends cancel each other out (for more information see Deutsch Karlekar, 2011a, p. 33).



Source: Freedom House

The Development of Global Press Freedom in the last 30 years

Since 1980, Freedom House produces an annual Map of Press Freedom, which displays the index's findings in graphical form. Based on the numerical ratings, countries are classified as Free (green), Partly Free (yellow), or Not Free (blue). The four maps above show the development of global media freedom over the last three decades. According to Freedom House, the Map of Press Freedom is one of the most widely distributed and well-known components of the project.

05

The Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders



The Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders

Which organization conducts the Press Freedom Index?

Reporters Without Borders, also known under its French name Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF), was founded by four French journalists in 1985. The NGO has been registered as a non-profit organization in France since 1995 and promotes freedom of expression and information by supporting journalists worldwide. Today, the organization has three core activities: First, the daily monitoring of violations against journalists and freedom of expression; second, fighting cyber censorship; third, supporting and protecting journalists by provision of training, material, insurances and any kind of ad hoc aid.³⁶ At present, apart from its so-called International Secretariat in Paris, Reporters Without Borders consists of a network of about 140 correspondents around the world and 11 international sections, all of them in Western Europe and North America, and an additional one in Tunis. The NGO is governed by an International Council that comprises all these national sections and by the Administration Board consisting of 25 governors who are elected by the organization's members and which, in turn, elects an Executive Bureau. The board's members are almost exclusively French journalists and academics.³⁷

The NGO is well-known for its sometimes radical campaigns: "While Freedom House and IREX have acquired somewhat 'establishment' reputations over the years, RSF prides itself on being a street-savvy rabble-rouser, its ranks including men and women ready to go to jail for their convictions."³⁸ Like Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders is at times accused of bias because it receives money from the French government, e.g. via the French Development Agency. The organization stresses, though, that the two main sources of its funding are private, namely from the sale of publications and merchandising (36% in 2012) as well as from private sponsors and foundations (14%), while only 20% of its income comes from public institutions.³⁹

What was the original purpose of the Press Freedom Index?

During the course of its work Reporters Without Borders felt that it needed its own specific numbers as hard evidence of where individual countries stood vis-à-vis their neighbors concerning media freedom. The survey was first an internal measure, but as the media began to show interest, it became a public document.⁴⁰ The first edition of the *Press Freedom Index* was published in 2002. Today, it is a well-known global ranking covering 180 countries and reflecting "the degree of freedom that journalists, news organizations and netizens enjoy in each country, and the efforts made by the authorities to respect and ensure respect for this freedom."⁴¹ The annual survey is a frequently cited advocacy tool that reflects the situation during a specific time period, usually from the start of December until the end of November of the year before the ranking is published. Reporters Without Borders further publishes a press freedom map as well as narrative reports for

The Press Freedom Index in a Nutshell

1. This index should be used when you need information about...:

- Media freedom around the world and global comparisons
- The general situation in one country
- The safety of journalists (Press Freedom Barometer)
- Specific incidents of media freedom violations in all countries worldwide (press releases)

2. Thematic focus:

Safety of journalists and journalists' working conditions

3. Countries covered: 180

4. Publication: Annually, normally in January

5. Scoring system:

0–100; 0 = perfect media freedom,
100 = worst media freedom

6. Information tools available:

- Global ranking
- Country reports (partly outdated)
- Number of journalists / netizens killed and imprisoned ("Press Freedom Barometer")
- Global indicator of media freedom (sum of all country scores that measures the overall level of media freedom in the world)
- Global map
- Constant monitoring of incidents in all regions (press releases)
- List of "Predators of Freedom of Information"
- Additional report: Enemies of the Internet

numerous countries, although some of them are not updated regularly. In 2013, the organization for the first time also calculated an annual global indicator of worldwide media freedom, which is the sum of all country scores and thus "measures the overall level of freedom of information in the world and the performance of the world's governments in their entirety as regards this key freedom."⁴²

³⁶ Reporters Without Borders, 2013.

⁴⁰ Burgess, 2010, p. 16.

³⁷ Reporters Without Borders, 2013a.

⁴¹ Reporters Without Borders, 2013c.

³⁸ Burgess, 2010, p. 14.

⁴² Reporters Without Borders, 2013d.

³⁹ Reporters Without Borders, 2013b.

In order to ensure independence of the *Press Freedom Index*, Reporters Without Borders tries to disconnect grants from public institutions such as governments from the measure: Under its funding procedures, donors do not give money exclusively to the index, but their grants can underwrite specific regional programs that generate information that goes into it.⁴³

Reporters Without Borders does not reveal which concept or definition of media freedom its measure is based on. Interestingly, according to the NGO the index measures the level of freedom of information; this term is used more often than the term media freedom or press freedom, despite the ranking's name. Consequently, the organization affirms that the measure "does not look at human rights violations in general, just violations of freedom of information."⁴⁴ However, it is stated that the index should in no way be taken as an indication of the quality of the media in the countries it analyzes. It is often said that Reporters Without Borders has a far more individualized approach than for example Freedom House does, i.e. that it focuses on the journalist's freedom as an individual, while economic factors play a subordinate role. However, this has changed since the recent revision of its methodology.

How is the Press Freedom Index compiled?

In 2013, Reporters Without Borders revamped its methodology including the questionnaire that is used to compile the index. While the 44 questions of the old questionnaire mainly concentrated on all kinds of violations against journalists as individuals, the new questionnaire, consisting of 87 questions, is much more comprehensive. Quantitative questions about the number of human rights violations against journalists and media outlets were excluded from the questionnaire; they are now answered directly by Reporters Without Borders' staff with the help of the organization's own research findings. These include counts of journalists killed, attacked, kidnapped, arrested, imprisoned, threatened, the number that fled into exile and media organizations censored and attacked.⁴⁵

The rest of the questions (that are part of the questionnaire) focus on issues that are harder to quantify; they consider six general criteria:

Pluralism: Measures the degree to which opinions are represented in the media.

Media independence: Measures the degree to which the media are able to function independently of the authorities.

Environment and self-censorship: Analyzes the environment in which journalists work.

Legislative framework: Analyzes the quality of the legislative framework and measures its effectiveness.

Transparency: Measures the transparency of the institutions and procedures that affect the production of news and information.

Infrastructure: Measures the quality of the infrastructure that supports the production of news and information.⁴⁶

As the number of the questions suggests, the new questionnaire is very detailed, and so are the questions themselves: They do not only ask for numbers, or "yes" or "no" answers, but also allow an indication for example of which entities inspire fear of reprisal or which topics are filtered online most frequently. The questionnaire further includes open questions under which the respondents are free to write their comments. The weighting takes place on two levels: each possible response of the different questions and the categories are weighted separately. The maximum possible points that can be allotted to one question differ greatly: While for some questions the maximum number of points is 4.5, some questions can score up to 100, 150 or even 200 points. These are the questions concerning the existence of privately owned media (100), prior censorship (150) and whether the death penalty is imposed on journalists (200).⁴⁷ Further, the questions that have a positive impact on media freedom are allotted negative points, such as the availability of journalism training (-9) or the existence of investigative journalism (-9). In general, the weighting reveals that violations against journalists' (physical) integrity still play an important role in the new methodology as well. As in Freedom House's index, the overall country scores of the *Press Freedom Index* range from 0 to 100, with 0 being the best possible score and 100 being the worst.

An e-mail with a personalized link to the online questionnaire (available in 20 languages) is sent to Reporters Without Borders' partner organizations, i.e. 18 freedom of expression NGOs located in five continents, to the network of around 150 correspondents as well as to journalists, researchers, jurists and human rights activists, usually procured by the correspondents. All respondents live in the country they evaluate, although around ten percent of them are foreign correspondents with a different country of origin.⁴⁸ The NGO stresses that its survey is qualitative and not representative. The number of completed questionnaires differs widely throughout the countries: While the organization has more respondents in European countries (around 50 in France and 20 in Germany), the number of questionnaires for African countries for example is very low (between one and five).⁴⁹

Biggest Changes Reflected in the Rankings

Positive Changes

Country	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	FH	RSF	FH	RSF	FH	RSF	FH	RSF
Tunisia	186	164	186	134	110	134	111	138
Libya	193	160	193	155	134	155	130	131
Malawi	119	79	119	147	135	147	116	75
Niger	151	106	132	29	101	29	105	43

Negative Changes

Country	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	FH	RSF	FH	RSF	FH	RSF	FH	RSF
Mali	52	28	46	25	45	25	92	99
Brazil	89	58	90	99	91	99	91	108
Malawi	119	79	119	147	135	147	116	75
Greece	63	73	65	71	65	71	85	84
Japan	34	12	34	22	38	22	41	53

Ranks of the countries in the Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders rankings between 2010 and 2013; biggest changes are marked in orange.

In a next step, two different scores are given to each country: One on the basis of the questionnaire summing up the scores (between 0 and 100) for each of the six categories, with the pluralism category having more weight than the others (score A). The other one incorporates the score reflecting the level of violence against journalists,⁵⁰ summing up all seven scores, with the violence score having a weight of 20 percent (score B). The final score of a country is the higher one of both (worse media freedom), in order to avoid a country being awarded a better rank simply because of the absence of violence.⁵¹ In other words, if the violence score makes for a better grade of a country, it is not included, but if it worsens the country's rank, it is considered. In the final ranking, both a score and a position are assigned to each country.

⁴³ Burgess, 2010.

⁴⁴ Reporters Without Borders, 2013d.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*; Reporters Without Borders, 2013e.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ For most questions the maximum possible points are 9, 10 and 18.

⁴⁸ Antoine Héry, 2013 (interview).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ The formulas used to determine the different scores can be found under Reporters Without Borders, 2013d.

⁵¹ In some countries, like North Korea, little is known about violations, so because of the lack of data the country would rise in the ranking. In others, self-censorship is widespread to such an extent that violence is scarce because of the absence of critical journalists (interview with A. Héry).

What are the advantages of the Press Freedom Index – and what could be improved?

Along with Freedom House's ranking the *Press Freedom Index* is the second annually published, global media freedom measure, and today is as well-known and frequently cited as the former. While the index to date has always had a reputation of focusing (almost) solely on violations against journalists, the new methodology has made it a serious counterpart to the Freedom House index. The new, very comprehensive questionnaire allows for the gathering of detailed data by subdividing the questions into several aspects that all require a response. The open questions,⁵² as well as the fact that all questions asking for quantitative information are now handled by staff, further support the possibility of getting accurate answers. Moreover, the questionnaire includes a very detailed section dealing with the internet and social media. Given the constantly growing importance of new media, this is a crucial feature that most other measures are lacking. Another strength of the index is that the questionnaire is provided in 20 different languages – a fact that should widen participation in the survey. Equally, it should be pointed out that Reporters Without Borders emphasizes the fact that almost all respondents are originally from the country they evaluate and that all of them live in this country.⁵³ Further, the scores of most countries are based on the opinions of various people and the organization takes a closer look at countries where there are only a few questionnaires in order to make sure that the answers are coherent.

Nevertheless, the *Press Freedom Index* faces similar overall challenges to Freedom House's measure, regarding for example subjectivity and bias. The findings for each country are generally based on the evaluation of very few people, so subjectivity is inherent. This is not a problem that automatically questions the legitimacy of the index per se but it should be revealed and discussed openly by the authors. That is to say that, like the Freedom House ranking, the Reporters Without Borders index quantifies the indicators and provides quantitative findings, while the process is qualitative. Further, the determination of both the questions and the weightings is based on a subjective process; the decisions were made solely by the team of the organization's Paris office.

These same characteristics of the development of the methodology are also fundamental for the criticism of bias: Both the questions and categories and the different weightings are based on the opinions of a few people all living in France and mostly with a European background.⁵⁴ This circumstance, however, is not dealt with openly.

Another bias arises because of the sampling procedure, i.e. the composition of the respondents: Although they ideally all live in the country they evaluate, typically all of them are contacts of the correspondent and therefore likely to belong to a certain circle of people, social class, ideology etc. and thus probably represent similar opinions in their evaluation.

Further, the organization does not reveal the overall concept or definition of media freedom on which its methodology is established. Rather, it constantly uses varying terms and claims that its index measures freedom of information, without explaining what is meant by that. The fact that neither the scores for each category or even question, nor the number of or details about the people who filled out the questionnaire are made public further limits the index's transparency and facilitates this criticism.

Regarding the methodological details of the index the following points should be underlined: Since the questionnaire is very long and requires knowledge about a huge variety of aspects, two problems are likely to come up. First, the respondent may get tired after a while and thus answer the last part of the questionnaire with less rigor or not at all. And second, the respondent cannot be an expert in all topics covered in the questionnaire and therefore may not answer all questions appropriately, if at all. The level of knowledge is likely to differ a lot between individual respondents, which means that the evaluations of the different countries are based on varying amounts of information. In the introduction to the German version of the questionnaire, though, the organization advises the respondents of the possibility to buffer the answers and continue filling out the survey at a later point in time. Further, it asks respondents to not answer questions that they are unsure of. These are not really weaknesses (nobody would prefer a less comprehensive questionnaire that cannot gather such detailed data), but challenges that should be dealt with openly in order to enable the user to get a genuine idea of the methodology and thus the findings.

A true weakness, though, is the methodology of Reporters Without Borders' global media freedom map. The colors of the different countries represent five categories ranging from "good situation" to "very serious situation". These categories, however, are not explained at all and no information about how each country obtains its color is publicly available.

Countries Ranked Very Differently by the Two Global Rankings:

Country	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	FH	RSF	FH	RSF	FH	RSF	FH	RSF
Togo	162	60	161	79	157	79	159	83
USA	25	20	22	47	24	47	26	32
Paraguay	129	54	133	83	136	83	139	91
United Arab Emirates	157	87	158	112	163	112	166	114

Ranks of the countries in the Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders rankings between 2010 and 2013; biggest differences are marked in orange.

Short Interview with Antoine Héry

What is the unique feature of Reporters Without Borders’ Press Freedom Index?

The unique feature is definitely the worldwide survey aspect of the index. Our research team’s input remains low and is restricted to facts - the violence indicator. The essence of the index is to collect answers from all over the world. It is one of the only surveys in history that collects answers from such a large scope of people in so many different countries. To manage this very large scale survey, we use an open source software, which allows us to work on a multilingual environment with a total control of the confidentiality and security of the data.

What does the Press Freedom Index not supply?

The index does not supply an indicator of the quality of the press. All Reporters Without Borders cares about is whether journalists and bloggers can spread information or not. We do not take into account the quality of the contents they spread.

What would you change about the Press Freedom Index if you had double the budget available?

I would definitely have the questionnaire translated into other languages. We have 20 languages for now, but it would be very useful to have more. We do not have Urdu, for example. And Reporters Without Borders would also be able to communicate the index in more non English-speaking countries.



Antoine Héry,
Project Coordinator,
Press Freedom Index,
Reporters Without Borders

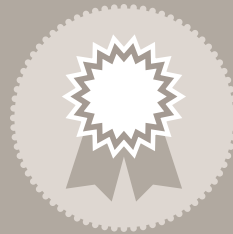
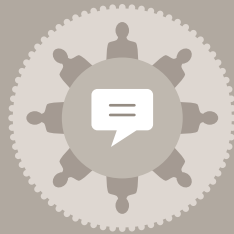
⁵² e.g. D.1.2 and D.7.1

⁵³ With a few exceptions like for example North Korea.

⁵⁴ See also the Strengths and Weaknesses section about Freedom House’s index.

06

The Media Sustainability Index by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX)



The Media Sustainability Index by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX)

Which organization conducts the Media Sustainability Index?

The International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) was established as an NGO by leading U.S. universities in 1968 to administer exchanges with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Today, it is an international organization based in Washington D.C. that employs over 400 development professionals. They work in more than 125 countries and have 20 field offices, in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine, among others. The official mission of the NGO is to help local individuals and institutions to build key elements of a vibrant society; for that it focuses on seven areas: civil society strengthening, conflict resolution, education, gender, media development, technology for development, and youth.⁵⁵ Like the other organizations introduced so far, IREX is also accused of bias. Although the NGO claims to be independent it receives significant amounts of its funding from U.S. federal agencies like the Department of State or the Agency for International Development (USAID). In 2012, approximately 78 percent of the funds received were through awards from the U.S. government.⁵⁶

What was the original purpose of the Media Sustainability Index?

Although IREX focuses on several areas, it has, since its foundation, been among the groups deeply involved in U.S. media aid programs. In the 1990s, the NGO conducted extensive programs aimed at building media organizations that would one day be sustainable without foreign aid. Around the turn of the century, when the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and Central Asia triggered a rise of media development aid, IREX-staff felt the need for an assessment tool that was based on the broader concept of “sustainability” (and not on media freedom like the existing measure by Freedom House) and that paid particular attention to journalistic quality and economic factors in a country’s media environment.⁵⁷ Consequently, in 1999 IREX officials together with USAID and external experts determined what issues to measure and what methodology to use in order to develop an instrument to better direct the growing wave of media assistance dollars. In 2001, the first *Media Sustainability Index* (MSI) was published for Europe and Eurasia; in 2005 IREX added a study for the Middle East and North Africa region; in 2007 it launched its Africa MSI and in 2008 its Asia MSI.⁵⁸ Today, the index is an annual assessment tool for the development of media systems, i.e. the conditions for independent media, over time and across 80 countries (published in regional MSIs only). The fact that only the Europe and Eurasia MSI has been carried out annually, however, reveals that the original strong focus on that region is still prevailing.

The Media Sustainability Index in a Nutshell

1. This index should be used when you need information about...:

- The situation of media freedom in one specific region and its countries
- The detailed situation in one country covered by the MSI
- A country’s performance and the development over time (last five years) regarding one or more individual categories (called objectives)
- Eastern Europe and Central Asia

2. Thematic focus:

Economic issues (sustainability); quality of journalism; management practices

3. Countries covered:

80 countries (divided into regional MSIs)

4. Publication:

Europe and Eurasia: Annually; Africa: Every 1–2 years; others: Irregularly

5. Scoring system:

0–4; 0–1: Unsustainable; 1–2: Unsustainable Mixed System; 2–3: Near Sustainability; 3–4: Sustainable

6. Information tools available:

- Regional classifications (plus last year’s changes)
- Classifications of objectives for each country (last five years)
- Detailed report about each country (divided into objectives)
- General and media-specific information for each country

Although IREX does not provide a detailed definition of the concept that its methodology is based on, it lays open its understanding of “sustainability”: It “refers to the ability of media to play its vital role as the ‘fourth estate’. How sustainable is a media sector in the context of providing the public with useful, timely, and objective information? How well does it serve as a facilitator of public discussion?”⁵⁹

⁵⁵ IREX, 2013.

⁵⁸ IREX, 2013b.

⁵⁶ IREX, 2013a.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Burgess, 2010.

Consequently, the MSI does not aim to measure media freedom in particular but rather the sustainability of independent media, i.e. the extent to which political, legal, social, and economic circumstances, institutions and professional standards within independent media promote and/or permit independent media to survive over time.⁶⁰

In contrast to Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders, IREX relies heavily on U.S. government funding for its index. The Europe and Eurasia MSI is financed by USAID and the Middle East and North Africa MSI by USAID and the State Department.⁶¹

How is the Media Sustainability Index compiled?

Although the first application of the MSI solely concentrated on the former communist countries, from the beginning IREX's goal was to make the methodology as universal as possible. For the first nine years, IREX used the same methodology. In 2011, in the MSI's tenth year, based on experiences to date, some refinements of indicators and wording were made, regarding online media for example. The NGO underlines, however, that the impact of these changes on scores is minimal and thus comparability across the years is ensured.

In order to evaluate media sustainability in a country the MSI assesses 40 indicators, divided into five so-called objectives:

Objective #1: Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information.

Objective #2: Journalism meets professional standards of quality.

Objective #3: Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable, objective news.

Objective #4: Media are well-managed enterprises, allowing editorial independence.

Objective #5: Supporting institutions function in the professional interests of independent media.⁶²

Each indicator is rated on a scale from 0 to 4, with 0 meaning that the "country does not meet the indicator; government or social forces may actively oppose its implementation" and 4 meaning that the "country meets the aspects of the indicator; implementation has remained intact over multiple changes in government, economic fluctuations, changes in public opinion, and/or changing social conventions."⁶³

The scoring is done in three parts: First, a panel of a dozen (between 10 and 14) local experts is assembled in each country consisting of representatives from the country's media outlets, NGOs, professional associations and academic institutions. IREX attempts to ensure that not only all types of media (private and state media⁶⁴) but also different geographical regions, gender, ethnic and religious diversities are represented in the panel. Further, in order to ensure consistency from year to year, at least half of the previous year's panelists take part in the following year as well. All panelists individually score each indicator and, in a second step, sit down together under the direction of a local moderator who is also the author of the written report, discuss their scores and, if desired, change them. Finally, one IREX staff member reviews the scores and also scores all countries of that regional MSI as a final contribution, carrying the same weight as an individual panelist. In the end, all individual indicator scores are averaged to obtain a single, overall score for each objective. The overall country score is an average of all five objectives.

IREX does not present its findings in a proper ranking but classifies all countries, depending on their scores, into four broader categories:⁶⁵

Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press (0–1): Country does not meet or only minimally meets objectives.

Unsustainable Mixed System (1–2): Country minimally meets objectives, with segments of the legal system and government opposed to a free media system.

Near Sustainability (2–3): Country has progressed in meeting multiple objectives, with legal norms, professionalism, and the business environment supportive of independent media.

Sustainable (3–4): Country has media that are considered generally professional, free, and sustainable, or to be approaching these objectives.⁶⁶

The NGO normally includes the names and affiliations of the panel members in the final report, though not their individual scorings. In some cases where panelists might suffer legal retribution or physical threats as a result of their participation, some or all of the panelists and the moderator can opt to remain anonymous. In highly repressive countries, no panel inside the country is convened; rather the study is conducted through research and interviews with experts outside the country, who then do the rating. Such cases are noted in the report.

What are the advantages of the Media Sustainability Index – and what could be improved?

IREX’s *Media Sustainability Index* is an elaborate instrument covering a large variety of aspects. By assessing the broader concept of media sustainability it manages to monitor the development of media systems in general. Indeed, compared to other measures, the MSI focuses more strongly on journalistic professionalism, training and the quality of media content as well as on economic factors in the media environment. It should be positively pointed out that both the indicators and the methodology used were not simply developed by a few people from the IREX-team and USAID but in consultation with outside experts. The NGO does not reveal, however, who these experts were and how many opinions were considered. Further, the fact that all panel members as well as the moderator are locals reduces bias. In comparison to Freedom House’s index for example, the MSI has the advantage that each country is evaluated by a dozen experts instead of only one. *Moreover, the fact that it is assured that the panelists come from different media, regions, ethnic groups and gender has a positive impact on the recurring subjectivity and bias problem. This, as well as the measure’s transparency, is reinforced by the publication of names and affiliations of panel members in the report.* Another strength of the MSI is the fact that not only the overall country scores but also the results for each objective are announced. The scores for each indicator, though, are not.

Despite these positive characteristics of the MSI some of the repeatedly raised criticisms apply here as well: Although IREX states to be independent it receives the majority of its funding from the U.S. government and further works closely together with USAID. It is an important player in the field of U.S. media policies that represent the American interest around the world and acts in lieu thereof. Although external experts were involved in the development of the MSI, it can be assumed that mainly U.S. Americans determined its indicators. Even the choice of terminology supports the assumption of it having a U.S. American bias: Puddephatt (2008) points out that in the MSI non-state owned media are described as “independent” rather than “commercial” or “privately-owned”.⁶⁷ That is, the wording reveals that in the U.S. the market is seen as the prime guarantor of media independence, while Western European countries put greater importance on state-regulated public service broadcasting models.⁶⁸

Moreover, although IREX states that it does not promote consensus on scores among panelists, the fact that panelists can change their scores during or after the discussion is double-edged: While a discussion could positively influence the scoring it is also self-evident or at least has to be considered that due to interpersonal interaction and manipulation within the panel, some experts might change their scores based on what they hear from other panelists, due to social desirability or in order to avoid conflict. This is even more relevant when a government media representative is among the panelists, although IREX states that people from state media are not included in cases where they could intimidate others.

Further, the fact that one IREX staff member scores all countries included in a regional MSI is questionable because of two points: First, it is impossible for one person to be familiar with the different media systems of all countries in one world region (in the Africa MSI, for example, 42 countries are included) and, second, it implies that the local experts’ scores are not sufficient and thereby disqualifies them. The question of the weighting of the indicators and/or objectives is not addressed at all and thus, from the author’s point of view, underrated. The fact that several indicators actually include two or more questions makes it difficult for the panelists to answer them properly.

⁶⁰ Becker, Vlad & Nusser, 2007; Trappel & Maniglio, 2011.
⁶¹ Burgess, 2010, p. 13.
⁶² IREX, 2013c; A list of all 40 indicators can be found there as well.
⁶³ Ibid.
⁶⁴ Representatives of government media are not included in the panel if IREX feels that they would intimidate those of private media (Burgess, 2010).

⁶⁵ Such overviews of the countries are made for all individual objectives as well as for the overall score.
⁶⁶ IREX, 2013c. Full explanations of what each category stands for can be consulted there.
⁶⁷ Puddephatt, 2008.
⁶⁸ Ibid.

Short Interview with Leon Morse

What is the unique feature of IREX's Media Sustainability Index?

First, the MSI is not a measure of media freedom; rather it is a measure of the health of the overall media sector, with media freedom – the legal environment – being one of five parts of the media sector being measured. The MSI also includes quality of journalism and the management practices employed by media, among others. Second, the MSI relies on a diverse panel of media practitioners and related experts from the country being studied for the scores and the supporting text. The MSI is transparent regarding who is providing the scores and evaluations, except in cases where disclosing the names could likely lead to their arrest or worse. Finally, the MSI does not only provide numbers but also extensive text reports, which are an in-depth analysis of the media sector in each country.

What does the Media Sustainability Index not supply?

The MSI does not gather first-hand statistics on the media or document every case of, for example, harassment of journalists. It does not present a consumer's evaluation of the media (although we have piloted a separate study in Lebanon to do so). It does not evaluate, with a couple of exceptions, sub-regions in a country. It does not evaluate separately different media platforms. IREX recognizes that many other important needs for researchers exist, but in order to accomplish this study in a timely and economical way it is limited to an evaluation as defined by its methodology. Therefore, what the MSI does not do is a matter of design, not neglect.

What would you change about the Media Sustainability Index if you had double the budget available?

First, we would expand geographic coverage beyond the current 80 countries to include countries in Western Europe and North America, among others. Our choice of countries is dictated by funder interest and availability of funds. The fact that the U.S. (or Spain, Italy, France, Israel, etc.) is not included in the index does not mean that IREX believes the media here to be perfect and not in need of study. It is simply a matter of funder interest. Second, we would roll out the evaluation of the media by a separate panel of media consumers, as has been piloted in Lebanon, to other countries. And, third, we would provide more publicity of the results within each country, including translation where it is not now done.



Leon Morse,
Managing Editor,
Media Sustainability Index,
IREX

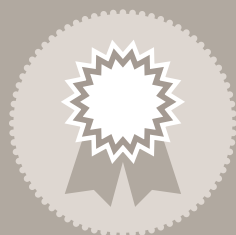
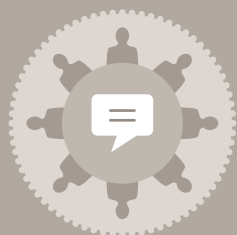
Global Rankings 2014

The 10 countries with the best and worst media freedom as depicted by Freedom House's and Reporters Without Borders' global rankings.

Rank	Freedom of the Press Index (Freedom House)	Rank	World Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders)
1	Netherlands	1	Finland
2	Norway	2	Netherlands
3	Sweden	3	Norway
4	Belgium	4	Luxembourg
5	Finland	5	Andorra
6	Denmark	6	Liechtenstein
7	Iceland	7	Denmark
8	Luxembourg	8	Iceland
9	Switzerland	9	New Zealand
10	Andorra	10	Sweden
...
188	Bahrain	171	Laos
189	Syria	172	Sudan
190	Cuba	173	Iran
191	Equatorial Guinea	174	Vietnam
192	Iran	175	China
193	Belarus	176	Somalia
194	Eritrea	177	Syria
195	Turkmenistan	178	Turkmenistan
196	Uzbekistan	179	North Korea
197	North Korea	180	Eritrea

07

The African Media Barometer by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung



The African Media Barometer by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

Which organization conducts the African Media Barometer?

Fesmedia Africa, which conducts the African Media Barometer (AMB), is the media project of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) based in Windhoek, Namibia.⁶⁹ It advocates a political, legal and regulatory framework for the African media which follows international human rights law and regional standards. The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung is one of six political foundations in Germany, politically affiliated with the Social Democratic Party SPD. Founded in 1925, it was banned by the Nazis in 1933 and re-established in 1947. The FES is a private cultural non-profit institution employing more than 600 people and working out of 107 foreign offices.⁷⁰ Its executive board comprises several German politicians and other people affiliated in some way with the SPD party. The organization is mainly financed by the federal government budget through the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, among others. Although the political foundations do not act on behalf of the government, they promote the principles of the party that they are affiliated with, social democracy in the case of the FES.

What was the original purpose of the African Media Barometer?

Together with its partners, fesmedia Africa promotes media freedom, access to information and the diversity of an independent media in Africa. The continent has traditionally been at the centre of the international activities of the FES; it is active in 19 Sub-Saharan African countries.⁷¹ Although most African countries enshrine principles of freedom of expression in their constitution, the practice often leaves much to be desired. Therefore, in 2004 fesmedia Africa and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) developed the African Media Barometer (AMB). The goal was to create a qualitative, home-grown self-assessment instrument based on African standards as well as a guided discussion among African experts.⁷² The reports of the new index were to provide the organization with both an analysis of the media landscape in a given country and an advocacy tool for media reforms. The particular feature of the AMB is that it is a self-assessment instrument based on African standards, i.e. the indicators were derived from African protocols and declarations such as the “Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa” by the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) and the “Windhoek Declaration on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press”. The aim is to conduct an AMB in each country every two to three years. By September 2013, 78 assessments in 29 countries had been completed.⁷³ In 2009, fesmedia Asia introduced the Asian Media Barometer (ANMB), which has only been held in five countries since then. In 2012, the FES conducted two Media Barometers in Eastern Europe for the first time, the Balkan Media Barometer (BMB).

The African Media Barometer in a Nutshell

1. This index should be used when you need information about:

- The detailed situation in African countries (or an Asian or Eastern European country that has been covered by a Media Barometer)
- An in-depth comparison of media freedom in African countries

2. Thematic focus:

(Public Service) Broadcasting

3. Countries covered:

30 African countries, plus a small selection of Asian and Eastern European countries

4. Publication:

Every 2–3 years

5. Scoring system:

No ranking, but each indicator is scored on a scale from 0–5

6. Information tools available:

- Very detailed country reports for 30 African countries
- Country, sector and indicator scores for each country
- Several Asian and Balkan Media Barometers

Although the FES relies heavily on the funding from the federal government, the accusation of bias is far less widespread than with respect to the other organizations introduced so far. Its affiliation to the SPD party cannot be put on a level with an affiliation to the German government. Between 2009 and 2013, for example, the SPD was not part of the government but an opposition party.

⁶⁹ There is also a fesmedia Asia and fesmedia Latin America section.

⁷¹ FES, 2013a.

⁷² Paasch, 2009.

⁷⁰ FES, 2013.

⁷³ FES, 2013b.

How is the African Media Barometer compiled?

At the end of 2008, the AMB methodology was revamped, i.e. the indicators were reviewed, amended and some new ones added in order to address the rapid developments in the field of communication. In contrast to the other indices introduced in this guidebook, fesmedia Africa explicitly states that due to the changes, the comparison neither of some indicators of previous reports nor of sector scores is applicable. The current 39 indicators of the AMB were developed from four African declarations, protocols and principles.⁷⁴ Since one purpose of the AMB is to provide the FES and MISA with information and data for their particular areas of work, the instrument had to reflect the organizations' focus on media policy, regulation and public broadcasting. Consequently, the indicators were grouped into four sectors:

Sector 1: Freedom of expression, including freedom of the media, is effectively protected and promoted.

Sector 2: The media landscape, including new media, is characterized by diversity, independence and sustainability.

Sector 3: Broadcasting regulation is transparent and independent; the state broadcaster is transformed into a truly public broadcaster.

Sector 4: The media practice high levels of professional standards.⁷⁵

A panel of 10 to 12 experts, consisting of at least five media practitioners and five representatives from civil society meets for one and a half days to evaluate the media environment in the country. The discussion of the experts is moderated by an independent consultant who also edits the AMB report. Although fesmedia does not reveal how panelists are selected it states that government and party political representatives are excluded from the panel in order "to ensure a critical but constructive debate and avoid political mudslinging or scoring."⁷⁶ Further, according to the organizers, an effort is made to ensure that the panel represents the urban-rural, geographical, gender, ethnic, language and religious variety of society. This cannot always be guaranteed, though. What is true for all AMBs, however, is that both the panelists and the moderator are local experts and come from the respective country, and that the founders decided against any analysis by foreign experts. This is to further strengthen the homegrown character of the measure and diminish outside intervention: "Nobody should be able to refute the self-assessment and analysis of our AMB reports by calling it 'foreign interference' in African affairs."⁷⁷ The names and affiliations of the panelists are normally published at the end of each AMB report.

The panel members discuss each indicator and in the end, using a five-point scale from "Country does not meet indicator" to "Country meets all aspects of the indicator", allocate their individual scores in an anonymous vote. All individual indicator scores form the average score for each indicator. The average of all indicator scores of one sector – equal weight is given to all indicators – represents each sector score and, ultimately, the average of all sector scores result in the overall country score. The results of the AMB are presented in qualitative country reports that summarize the general content of the discussion and provide the average score for each indicator, each sector as well as the overall country score. In the report, panelists are not quoted by name to protect them from possible repercussions.

What are the advantages of the African Media Barometer – and what could be improved?

Since the AMB is an exclusively regional and not global assessment, it does not have to deal with some of the problems that the global indices face and that have been discussed here already. It further does not intend to rank or even compare countries at all – an AMB focuses on one country only and the report does not raise comparison with any other nations. Consequently, it is more a practical lobby tool⁷⁸ that provides a detailed overview of the media environment in the country as well as a way of gathering information and data that support the work of the organizers and other NGOs. The AMB has the general advantage of measuring performance against self-proclaimed continental standards.⁷⁹ Since it is a regional measure it is easier for the AMB to overcome the criticism of so-called Western⁸⁰ bias: Hence, its crucial strength is the emphasis of its homegrown character – concerning both the determination and the evaluation of the indicators – in order to "counter the argument that once again Western observers with their own concepts and preconceived notions judge African practices on the basis of their own interests."⁸¹ This approach attests that the widespread criticism of a Western bias when it comes to international and global media freedom measurement is crucial and frequently used as a key argument. Further, the AMB is the only index where all indicator scores, sector scores and the overall country result are published.

Short Interview with Sophie Haikali

What is the unique feature of FES's African Media Barometer?

The AMB is unique in several ways. Firstly, the African Media Barometer is a self-assessment of the media landscape in different African countries, which is based on African instruments. This makes the AMB a home-grown instrument. Secondly, a panel of local experts discusses and scores the indicators, guided by a trained facilitator who ensures that a range of issues is thoroughly covered. The draft report is sent to the panelists for comments to ensure that the results are fully owned by the members of the panel. Thirdly, the panelists are carefully selected based on certain criteria, which ensure that they not only bring expertise to the discussion but are also representing as many diverse voices in society as possible. As the exercise is repeated every 2 to 4 years the AMB allows for an analysis that takes the changes over time into account.

What does the African Media Barometer not supply?

The AMB does not supply any sort of country rankings based on its scores. Even if scoring would usually lend itself to compare different countries the AMB scoring cannot be used as such, as the scoring is based exclusively on the assessment of the panelists. And while some scores are based on facts, for instance the existence or absence of a law, others are based on rather subjective assessments, for example if citizens are free to speak their mind or assessing the standard of reporting.

Although, or precisely because the AMB is based solely on African principles, it also has an inherent cultural bias, albeit not a Western bias. Its normative character is evident in the importance it attributes to broadcasting in African countries. Broadcasting is even a sector in its own right and of equal weight with the other broader sectors. The AMB includes the requirement that the "state broadcaster should be transformed into a truly public broadcaster."⁸² This could also be a sign of the influence of the FES's values. The AMB displays a few other weaknesses: First, since the results of the AMB completely depend on the discussion, they rely on its interactivity and quality. In addition, mutual interaction and manipulation of the panelists cannot be precluded. Second, the quality of media coverage, which is an important aspect of media freedom, is not considered in the AMB.⁸³ Third, it is not revealed how the panelists are selected. And fourth, the question of the weighting remains unsolved and the equal weighting is not explained or justified properly. Further, fesmedia states that the ideal composition of the panels is a "tall order",⁸⁴ which means that the variety of views included cannot always be guaranteed.

What would you change about the African Media Barometer if you had double the budget available?

The African Media Barometer clearly points out critical areas and the "Way Forward" at the end of the AMB report highlights developments in the media sector, both positive and negative, and even outlines concrete activities. The AMB analysis shapes the media work of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung on the African continent and potentially that of other organizations. With double the budget, however, we could ensure that more follow-up ideas were implemented.



Sophie Haikali,
Programme Coordinator,
African Media Barometer,
fesmedia Africa

⁷⁴ Paasch, 2009.

⁷⁵ A list of all 39 indicators can be found under FES, 2013c.

⁷⁶ Paasch, 2009, p. 4.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷⁸ Panelists are told to score not so much the legal but more the real situation, to judge the practice, not the promises (Paasch, 2009).

⁷⁹ Banda, 2010.

⁸⁰ Strictly speaking, it is not correct to speak of a "Western" bias since

there are different concepts of media freedom within the Western world. There are not only differences between the U.S. and Western Europe, for example, but even between the different Western European countries, such as in Germany, France and Great Britain.

⁸¹ Paasch, 2009, p. 4.

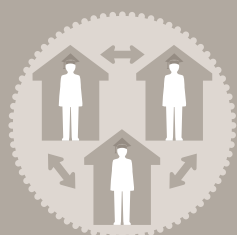
⁸² FES, 2013b, Banda & Berger, n.d.

⁸³ Behmer, 2009.

⁸⁴ Paasch, 2009, p. 4.

08

The Media Development Indicators by UNESCO



The Media Development Indicators by UNESCO

Which organization conducts the Media Development Indicators?

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specified UN agency whose declared purpose is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through education, science, and culture. It was founded in 1945, after two world wars in less than one generation, in the belief that political and economic agreements are not enough to build a lasting peace. Since UNESCO has a specific mandate to promote “the free flow of ideas by word and image,” the organization’s Communication and Information sector works to foster free, independent and pluralistic media in print, broadcast and online.⁸⁵ UNESCO has 195 member states and 8 associate members and thus has one of the UN system’s highest memberships.

What was the original purpose of the Media Development Indicators?

The idea of developing indicators for measuring media development originated within UNESCO in 2006, when the evaluation report of its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) revealed the need for a more systematic evaluation and follow up of the projects supported by the program. UNESCO’s *Media Development Indicators* (MDIs) were developed by the former director of the NGO Article 19, Andrew Puddephatt, through an exhaustive study of existing indicator systems that deal with media development, and reviewed and finalized with the participation of an international group of experts. They are theoretically based on the framework established by the five UNESCO declarations on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media (Windhoek Declaration and those of Almaty, Santiago, Sana’a and Sofia) and were endorsed by the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC in 2008. By September 2013, 12 MDI assessments had been carried out and 17 were ongoing. They are mainly conducted and published in English and French, though some of them are also in Spanish, Arabic and Portuguese, among others, and one - in Curacao - even in Papiamentu.

The general approach of the MDIs differs from that of the other measures presented here: In contrast to the other measures, they do not prescribe a fixed methodological approach but a “toolkit”, a diagnostic tool offering an inclusive list of indicators and methods from which selections can be made according to the particularities of the national context. The goal is to define a framework, within which the media can best contribute to and benefit from democracy and good governance, as well as to identify weaknesses of local media systems and provide recommendations for overcoming them. Hence, the MDIs are not designed to provide a longitudinal analysis over time or a means for comparing different countries, but aim to help stakeholders assess the state of the media and measure the impact of media development programs.⁸⁶

The Media Development Indicators in a Nutshell

1. This index should be used when you need information about...:

The detailed situation in one country for which an MDI report exists; indicators that influence the safety of journalists

2. Thematic focus:

No special focus, but Journalists’ Safety Indicators available

3. Countries covered:

12 countries, 17 assessments ongoing

4. Publication:

Irregularly

5. Scoring system:

The indicators are not scored or quantified in any way.

6. Information tools available:

- Very detailed country reports
- Journalists’ Safety Indicators
- New Media Survey Instruments (UNESCO Institute for Statistics)

Based on the MDIs, in 2013 the UNESCO developed another set of indicators, the Journalists’ Safety Indicators. They provide an extensive list of indicators that influence journalists’ working conditions on the national level. However, since these indicators are still very new they have not been applied so far. That means that there is no additional information about the topic available yet. Further, in order to support the MDI reports with quantitative data the organization developed its so-called New Media Survey Instruments – a set of questionnaires which evaluate data about the legal framework, broadcasting and newspaper statistics in one country. In a pilot phase between 2011 and 2012, UNESCO’s Institute for Statistics gathered data for around 60 countries, but due to budgetary limitations they have not been applied since then.

⁸⁵ UNESCO, 2013.

⁸⁶ UNESCO, 2008; Puddephatt, 2008; Puddephatt, 2011.

How are the Media Development Indicators compiled?

As already indicated above, UNESCO's MDIs do not determine a specific methodology, allot points to the indicators, rank countries or try to quantify the results in any way. Moreover, the assessments are not carried out on a regular basis, although the aim is to provide follow up assessments after approximately three years. The MDI-framework identifies five principal media development categories:

Category 1: A system of regulation conducive to freedom of expression, pluralism and diversity of the media.

Category 2: Plurality and diversity of media, a level economic playing field and transparency of ownership.

Category 3: Media as a platform for democratic discourse.

Category 4: Professional capacity building and support for institutions that underpin freedom of expression, pluralism and diversity.

Category 5: Sufficient infrastructural capacity to support independent and pluralistic media.⁸⁷

These five categories are further divided into 21 sub-categories (so-called "issues"), 50 key indicators and 190 sub-indicators. A means of verification is provided for every key indicator and for every issue potential data sources.

Typically, a research team consisting of both international and local researchers evaluates all key indicators, paying more attention to aspects that are crucial in the regional context. The researchers then write a report of around 100 pages in length. Normally, a local research institution is commissioned with the assessment and the process is coordinated by the regional UNESCO Field Office and/or the coordinator at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, who also edits the draft report. Accordingly, the MDIs, like the AMB also have a certain self-assessment character.

In order to gain information about the indicators, the researchers use various methods: The desk research include the analysis of laws, policies, third party and press reports and surveys while the field research normally consists of group and individual interviews, regional and thematic focus groups, consultative events and conferences as well as questionnaire-based surveys and media content analysis. Both the amplitude of the whole assessment and the use of methods depend on the time frame and the available financial resources.

What are the advantages of the Media Development Indicators – and what could be improved?

Due to the distinct approach, methodological framework and aims of the MDIs they do not face the problems and thus criticisms characteristic of the other measures presented in this guidebook. The MDIs offer a comprehensive list of indicators that allow for an in-depth assessment of all media environments around the world. Therefore, the reports are highly appreciated by advocates. Some even find them too long and criticize that they do not provide a brief overview. While, as with all other measures, their universality also depends on the extent to which someone shares the same values (e.g. regarding public service broadcasting), the tool carries important political weight because it has the blessing of UNESCO.⁸⁸

That is to say, although the instrument was developed by one person only, it was discussed and finally endorsed by the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC, which is composed of 39 member states. This fact, at least officially, reduces subjectivity and bias. The actual assessments, however, are carried out by very few people and thus have an implicit subjectivity. In addition, like all other measures introduced, the MDIs include indicators that can only be assessed qualitatively and thus subjectively.⁸⁹ Because the framework allows the authors to focus on the aspects relevant in the respective national media environment, not all MDI reports deal with the same sub-indicators in the same way. Consequently, in some reports specific sub-indicators might be elaborated in detail while in others they are not mentioned at all. Further, some critics complain that the MDIs do not allow for keeping track of the development of media environments due to the irregularity of the assessments.

Short Interview with Saorla Mccabe

What is the unique feature of UNESCO's MDIs?

Their endorsement by the international community via UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication, combined with their comprehensiveness. This gives them a legitimate and universal character. They lend themselves to assessing media development in all of its aspects, in any country – developed or developing. The legitimacy of the MDIs is reinforced by their application in partnership with national stakeholders in countries concerned, enabling them to become a widely acknowledged reference among the media development community.

What do the MDIs not supply?

They do not, nor are they intended to, supply a comparative rating of countries according to their level of media development. Also, they do not focus on international media, but on the unit of the state as a key site of policy-making and media practice.

What would you change about the MDIs if you had double the budget available?

We would organize a process of revision and updating of the MDI framework in order to adapt it to the evolving media context, and ensure that issues such as the increasing role of so-

cial media and citizen journalism, ICT and media convergence, and media sustainability are better reflected in the indicators. Concrete steps have already been taken in this direction. We would propose repeats of MDIs after some years within countries where there have been assessments, in order to map changes against the initial baseline information. Finally, we would further promote and develop a systematic distribution strategy for the MDI reports to ensure that they become a must-read reference for policy-makers, donors, development agencies, media practitioners and journalism students alike.



Saorla McCabe,
Coordinator,
Media Development Indicators,
UNESCO

⁸⁷ UNESCO, 2008.

⁸⁸ Banda & Berger, n.d.

⁸⁹ Puddephatt, 2011.

09

Overview of the Most Important Aspects of All Five Indices

Overview of the Most Important Aspects of All Five Indices

In order to make the best use of the information provided by the five major indices it is helpful, as a first step, to get a general overview of all of them and then to decide which elements can be combined for a particular application in question. The most important aspects of all five indices presented in this guidebook are assembled in the extensive table on the following pages. It allows for a helpful survey and comparison: Which different methodologies are used in order to obtain the results? How can the strengths and weaknesses of the indices be summarized? Which index can be used for what purpose? And finally, which (additional) information tools that complement the indices' findings are provided by the different organizations?



Freedom of the Press Index



Press Freedom Index



Media Sustainability Index



African Media Barometer



Media Development Indicators

	Freedom of the Press Index (Freedom House)	Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders)
Which organization conducts the index?	Freedom House is a U.S. American watchdog organization dedicated to the promotion of freedom and democratic principles around the world.	Reporters Without Borders (Reporters Sans Frontières, RSF) is a French NGO that promotes freedom of expression and information by supporting journalists worldwide.
What was the original purpose of the index?	The index is an advocacy tool that monitors global media freedom by assessing the various ways in which pressure can be placed upon the flow of information and the ability of print, broadcast and online media to operate freely and without fear of repercussions.	RSF felt that it needed its own specific numbers as hard evidence of where individual countries stood in comparison to their neighbours concerning media freedom. The survey was first an internal measure and later became a public advocacy and PR tool.
Since when has the index been published?	1980	2002
How often and when is the index published?	Annually, in May	Annually, usually in January
How is the index financed?	In general, Freedom House declines to take money directly from the U.S. or any other government for the index and finances it with the help of private foundations or individuals. In financial emergency situations money from the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy (NED) has been accepted.	RSF tries to disconnect grants from public institutions (e.g. the French government) from the index. Under its funding procedures, donors do not give money exclusively to the index, but their grants can underwrite specific regional programs that generate information that goes into it.
How many countries does the index cover?	197 countries and territories	180 countries
Which theoretical concept is used?	No definition is provided. The index is based on the principles constituted in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) approved by the UN in 1948.	No definition is provided. RSF states that the index looks at violations of freedom of information and is no indication of the quality of the media.

Media Sustainability Index (IREX)	African Media Barometer (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung)	Media Development Indicators (UNESCO)
<p>The International Research & Exchange Board (IREX) is a U.S. American NGO that helps nations to build key elements of a vibrant society. IREX is deeply involved in U.S. media aid programs.</p>	<p>Fesmedia Africa is the media project of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) based in Namibia, which promotes media freedom in Africa. The FES is a German political foundation, affiliated with the Social Democratic Party.</p>	<p>The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specified UN agency with the aim of contributing to peace and security by promoting international collaboration.</p>
<p>When the collapse of the Soviet Union prompted an increase in media development aid, IREX felt the need for an assessment tool that was based on the broader concept of “sustainability” and that paid particular attention to journalistic quality and economic factors in a country’s media environment.</p>	<p>Although most African countries enshrine principles of media freedom in their constitution, the practice often leaves much to be desired. The goal of the African Media Barometer (AMB) was to create a home-grown instrument that provides a qualitative self-assessment based on African standards and a guided discussion among African experts.</p>	<p>UNESCO felt the need for a more systematic evaluation and follow up of the projects supported by its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). The MDIs were endorsed by the IPDC’s Intergovernmental Council.</p>
<p>2001: Europe and Eurasia; 2005: Middle East and North Africa; 2007: Africa; 2008: Asia</p>	<p>2004: African Media Barometer; 2009: Asian Media Barometer; 2012: Balkan Media Barometer.</p>	<p>2008</p>
<p>Europe and Eurasia: Annually; Africa: Every 1–2 years; others: Irregularly</p>	<p>Every 2–3 years</p>	<p>Irregularly</p>
<p>In contrast to Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders, IREX relies heavily on U.S. government funding for its index. The Europe and Eurasia MSI is financed by USAID and the Middle East and North Africa MSI by USAID and the State Department.</p>	<p>Although the FES relies heavily on the funding from the federal government, the accusation of bias is less widespread. The foundation’s affiliation with the Social Democratic Party (SPD) cannot be put on a level with an affiliation with the German government. Between 2009 and 2013, for example, the SPD was not part of the government but in the opposition.</p>	<p>Budget of UNESCO’s International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).</p>
<p>80 countries (divided into regional MSIs)</p>	<p>By September 2013: 30 African countries (78 assessments) plus a few Asian and Eastern European countries</p>	<p>By September 2013: 12 countries, 17 more assessments are still ongoing</p>
<p>Does not measure media freedom but media sustainability, i.e. the ability of the media to play its role as the “fourth estate.”</p>	<p>No definition provided; instrument is based on African protocols and declarations (e.g. “Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa”)</p>	<p>Measures media development. No detailed definition provided, but MDIs are based on the five UNESCO declarations on “Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media.”</p>

	Freedom of the Press Index (Freedom House)	Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders)
Which categories / indicators are used in order to measure media freedom?	Three broad categories: legal environment, political environment, economic environment; 23 indicators, 109 sub-indicators.	Categories: Pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, infrastructure; 87 indicators
Which methodology is used in order to obtain the results?	For each country, one analyst scores all indicators and writes a country report. A quarter of the analysts live in the country they evaluate, the others typically in the U.S. The analysts' ratings are reviewed in regional meetings and cross-regionally and compared with the previous year's findings before the final country score is determined by Freedom House.	For each country, the questionnaire is answered by a varying number, between 1 and 50, of people (RSF's partner organizations, correspondents, journalists, researchers etc.). All respondents live in the country they evaluate. The scores of the questionnaire plus the score for violence against journalists are evaluated by RSF staff. They determine the total country score.
Which scoring system is used?	The possible score for each indicator lies between 0–2 and 0–10. The overall country score is between 0 and 100. A low score means high media freedom, i.e. 0 = highest possible level of media freedom, 100 = lowest possible level of media freedom.	The maximum possible score for each indicator lies between 4.5 and 200. Positive questions are scored with negative points (-9). The overall country score is between 0 and 100. A low score means high media freedom, i.e. 0 = highest possible level of media freedom, 100 = lowest possible level of media freedom.
What are the strengths of the index?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Oldest regularly published index: Data allows analysis of national and global trends over more than 30 years. – Index with the broadest country coverage – Indicators cover broad range of topics – Scores for each category provided – Detailed and up-to-date country reports for the majority of countries – Scores are reviewed individually, regionally and cross-regionally – Gives a good overview of global media freedom – Huge variety of different information and data tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Questionnaire comprises a detailed section dealing with internet and social media – Focus on journalists' safety and working conditions – Indicators cover broad range of topics – Questionnaire provided in 20 different languages – Report available in six languages – Media freedom is evaluated by people who are originally from the country and live in it – Scores are based on the opinions of various people (though not in all countries)

Media Sustainability Index (IREX)	African Media Barometer (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung)	Media Development Indicators (UNESCO)
<p>Five so-called objectives: free speech, professional journalism, plurality of news sources, business management, supporting institutions; 40 indicators</p>	<p>Four so-called sectors: protection and promotion of freedom of expression; diversity, independence and sustainability; broadcasting regulation and public service broadcasting (PSB); professionalism; 39 indicators.</p>	<p>Five categories: regulation system, Plurality and diversity, democratic discourse, capacity building, infrastructure; 50 indicators and 190 sub-indicators.</p>
<p>The scoring is done in three parts: First, a panel of 10–14 local experts (journalists, NGOs, academics etc.) is assembled in each country and all panelists individually score each indicator. Second, panelists discuss their scores and, if desired, change them. Finally, one IREX staff member scores all countries of the regional MSI in question. The overall country score is an average of all indicator / objective scores.</p>	<p>A panel of 10 to 12 experts, consisting of at least five media practitioners and five representatives from civil society meets for one and a half days to evaluate the media environment in the country; variety of panelists assured, but government representatives are excluded. The panelists discuss each indicator and in the end allocate scores individually in an anonymous vote. The overall country score is an average of all indicator / sector scores.</p>	<p>A research team consisting of both international and local researchers evaluates all key indicators with the help of various methods: desk research, focus groups, interviews, surveys etc. The researchers then write a report of around 100 pages of length; all indicators are dealt with in text form. The report is presented at a national validation conference and reviewed by the UNESCO coordinator and, preferably, also by a small number of peer reviewers.</p>
<p>Each indicator is rated on a scale from 0 to 4, with 0 meaning that the “country does not meet the indicator” and 4 meaning that the “country meets the aspects of the indicator”. IREX then classifies all countries into four categories: 0–1: Unsustainable; 1–2: Unsustainable Mixed System; 2–3: Near Sustainability; 3–4: Sustainable</p>	<p>Each indicator is rated on a scale from 0 to 5, with 0 meaning that the “country does not meet the indicator” and 5 meaning that the “country meets all aspects of the indicator”. The AMB consists of detailed national country reports and does not provide a ranking or any other direct comparison.</p>	<p>The indicators are not scored or quantified in any way. The results are presented in the form of a text.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Indicators cover broad range of topics, focus on professionalism, quality of media content and economic factors – Indicators and methodology used were not only developed by a few people from the IREX team but in consultation with outside experts – The fact that all panel members as well as the moderator are locals reduces bias – Each country is evaluated by a dozen experts – Variety and at the same time consistency of the panelists is assured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Very detailed information about each country along the indicators – Only index that publishes indicator, sector and overall country scores and their development over time – The scores of each panelist for each indicator are published – Measures performance against self-proclaimed continental standards – Homegrown character concerning both the determination and the evaluation of the indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Offer a comprehensive list of indicators that allow for an in-depth assessment of all media environments around the world – Very detailed country reports give an in-depth overview of the situation in one country and also deal with specific issues in detail – Carry important political weight – Endorsed by 39 UNESCO member states – Toolkit from which selections can be made according to the particularities of the national context

	Freedom of the Press Index (Freedom House)	Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gives a good overview of global media freedom - “Press Freedom Barometer” indicates numbers of journalists/ netizens killed and imprisoned for each year and country
What are the weaknesses of the index?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subjectivity/ bias: Indicators and weighting developed by very few people (with U.S. American background) and not explained - Scores are based on the opinion of one person - Majority of people evaluating the countries based in the U.S. - Qualitative method for quantitative indicators - Some indicators contain two or more questions - One analyst rates several countries - No scores for each indicator published - No details about analysts published - No in-depth analysis of a country possible - Importance of internet only marginally taken into account (but special report: Freedom on the Net) - Report only available in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subjectivity/ bias: Indicators and weighting developed by very few people and not explained - Qualitative method for quantitative indicators - Number of filled out questionnaires differs a lot between countries – for some, especially African, countries the number of respondents is very low - The number of respondents is not published - No category or indicator scores available, only overall country scores - No in-depth analysis of a country possible - Country reports are not updated regularly. - Global media freedom map: No explanation about how each country obtains its color is available and categories are not explained.
How can the scores vs. ranks be used?	<p>The rank gives a broad idea of where the country stands in comparison to other countries or globally (first third, second third, last third of the world). The rank always depends on the rating of the other countries. The score, in contrast, is the overall result of each indicator score. It can be used to analyze a country’s individual performance over time. A one point change can move a country from one category to another (e.g. “Partly Free” to “Not Free”).</p>	<p>The rank gives a broad idea of where the country stands in comparison to other countries or globally (first third, second third, last third of the world). The rank always depends on the rating of the other countries. The score, in contrast, is the overall result of each indicator score. It can be used to analyze a country’s individual performance over time. Changes in scores due to changes of the overall methodology have to be dealt with carefully, though.</p>

Media Sustainability Index (IREX)	African Media Barometer (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung)	Media Development Indicators (UNESCO)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Names and affiliations of panel members are published – Not only the overall country score but also the results for each objective are announced (for last five years) – In-depth analysis of each country (not only scores but detailed text about each indicator) – General and media-specific information for each country provided 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Although external experts were involved in the development of the MSI, it can be assumed that mainly Americans determined its indicators – Criticized for bias due to its close collaboration with the U.S. government and specific wording – Scores of indicators are not published – One IREX staff member scores all countries – although it is impossible for one person to be familiar with the different media systems of all countries in one world region – Does not give an overview of global media freedom – The equal weighting of all indicators and sectors is not explained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No Western, but African bias – Results depend on the discussion of panelists – mutual interaction and manipulation cannot be precluded. – Quality of media coverage not included – Not revealed how the panelists are selected – The equal weighting of all indicators and sectors is not explained – Does not give an overview of global media freedom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Assessment carried out by few people (risk of subjectivity / bias) – Does not provide a brief overview, neither of the global nor of a national situation – No comparison possible – Due to different research teams for each MDI assessment the quality of reports varies substantially – Lack of continuity: The small number of assessments does not allow for a regular tracking of the development due to irregularity
<p>The findings of the MSIs are not presented as proper ranking but just classified into the four mentioned categories. The scores can be used both to compare countries and to analyze the performance of one country (also over time).</p>	<p>Since an AMB report only deals with one country, no ranks are used. The scores can be used both to compare countries (looking at different AMB reports) and to analyze the performance of one country (also over time).</p>	<p>Neither scores nor ranks are used.</p>

	Freedom of the Press Index (Freedom House)	Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders)
Which information tools are available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global and regional rankings - Country reports - Global and regional maps - Country scores, sub-scores (categories), status of almost all countries and divided into regions from 1980–today summarized in Excel files. - Number and percentage of free, partly-free, not free countries for all world regions from 1980-today (in Excel and charts) - Number and percentage of world’s and region’s population living in free / not free media environments - Infographic stating countries with notable developments - Charts: Distribution of scores, average scores, biggest gains and declines - Report: Freedom on the Net 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global ranking - Country reports (partly outdated) - “Press Freedom Barometer”: number of journalists / netizens killed and imprisoned - Global indicator of media freedom (sum of all country scores that measures the overall level of media freedom in the world) - World Press Freedom Map - Constant monitoring of media freedom incidents in all regions, press releases - Report: Enemies of the Internet - List of “Predators of Freedom of Information”
When should this index be used (when looking for...)	<p>This index should be used when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You want to get an idea of the state of media freedom around the world and countries’ performance - You want to get an overview of the situation in a country (and in comparison to other countries worldwide) - You want to analyze the global trend of media freedom or the developments in one country or region since 1980. - You are looking for general information about global media freedom (overall situation in regions, population living in unfree countries etc.; see information tools above) 	<p>This index should be used when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You want to get an idea of the state of media freedom around the world and countries’ performance - You want to get an overview of the situation in a country (and in comparison to other countries worldwide) - You need information about the safety of journalists (Press Freedom Barometer) - You are looking for specific incidents of media freedom violations in all countries worldwide (press releases)
What is the unique feature of this index?	The number of different information tools and amount of data available from this global survey going back to 1980.	Global survey, focus on journalists’ safety and working conditions

Media Sustainability Index (IREX)	African Media Barometer (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung)	Media Development Indicators (UNESCO)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Regional classifications (plus last year’s changes) – Classifications of objectives for each country (last five years) – Detailed chapter about each country (divided into objectives) – General and media-specific information for each country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Country, sector and indicator scores for 30 African countries – Individual indicator scores of each panelist – Several Asian and Balkan Media Barometers – Very detailed country reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Very detailed country reports – Journalists’ Safety Indicators – New Media Survey Instruments (UNESCO Institute for Statistics)
<p>This index should be used when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You want to get an overview of the state of media freedom in one specific region and its countries – You are especially interested in Eastern Europe and Central Asia – You are looking for detailed information about one country covered by the MSI – You are interested in a country’s performance and the development over time regarding one or more individual objectives 	<p>This index should be used when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You are especially interested in African countries (or an Asian or Eastern European country that has been covered by a Media Barometer) – You are looking for very detailed information about the state of media freedom in an African country – You want to make an in-depth comparison of media freedom in African countries 	<p>This index should be used when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You are interested in one of the countries for which an MDI report exists – You are looking for detailed information about one country – You do not want to compare several countries or regions
<p>The inclusion of the quality of journalism and management practices and the focus on regions.</p>	<p>Homegrown character: Self-assessment based on African instruments. Results as qualitative reports.</p>	<p>Endorsement by 39 UNESCO member states, their comprehensiveness and toolkit character</p>

10

What To Keep in Mind When Using the Indices

What To Keep in Mind When Using the Indices

This chapter provides more background to the information given in the table: It focuses on the crucial aspects that readers should keep in mind when using one or several of the indices.

What does the methodology tell us about the results?

Obviously, the methodology used for each index influences the results and the way they can and should be understood and analyzed. Since it is impossible to assess the state of media freedom worldwide – and even in one country – objectively, without any bias and based on representative information for each indicator, one should look at how the results were obtained and reflect on possible challenges. The findings of Freedom House’s index, for example, are based on the opinion of one single person per country. Although the organization claims to review each rating individually, regionally and cross-regionally, the analyst’s evaluation is normally not changed much, so that the results of one country go back to one opinion. The other indices presented here are based on a methodology that involves a few more evaluators per country. Reporters Without Borders, however, does not reveal the number of respondents per country at all. It is known, though, that the results of the African countries in particular are based on a very low number of respondents and that generally the number of completed questionnaires varies significantly among countries. The low number of evaluators of Freedom House’s and Reporters Without Borders’ indices makes it very hard to judge the findings. They are likely to be subjective and biased – a fact that should be kept in mind and discussed when using the index. One of the explanations for the low number of evaluators is the high number of countries that these measures cover: Due to time and budgetary limitations it is almost impossible to include a large number of evaluators for all 197 and 180 countries respectively. Since the other three indices presented here cover a significantly smaller number of countries, it is easier for them to include more evaluators. The fact that their results are based on the opinions of various people, who (almost exclusively) are national experts, reduces the criticism of both subjectivity and bias.

What overall strengths and weaknesses do the indices have?

The overall strength of all indices presented is the broad range of topics that they cover. Although all of them deal with the most important topics that influence media freedom, some indices focus on certain issues. Reporters Without Borders, for example, focuses on the safety and the working conditions of individual journalists, while IREX focuses on professionalism and the quality of media content as well as on economic factors. The African Media Barometer, in contrast, emphasizes the situation of broadcasting in general and especially the topic of Public Service Broadcasting. While the indices by Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders cover a huge number of countries and thus allow for a global comparison, the other three focus more on individual countries that they evaluate in detail. A crucial strength of the Freedom House index is its longevity; being the oldest regularly published index, it provides an enormous amount of data for each country and region over more than 30 years. Further, the organization provides a variety of different additional information sources (see table 1). The crucial strength of the index by Reporters Without Borders is that it uses a global survey in order to obtain its results. In contrast to all other indices, the opinions of people from all around the world are included. This is only possible because the questionnaire is available in 20 languages. The final report is provided in six languages. The strength of IREX’s index lies in its broad concept of media sustainability, allowing the inclusion of important economic factors, as well as in the consistency of its methodology: The organization chooses the panel members carefully; they are all locals and represent different groups of society and its sub groups (ethnic minorities, women etc.). The same is true for the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung’s African Media Barometer. Here, the Western bias is kept to a minimum due to its homegrown character. The particular strength of UNESCO’s MDIs is their comprehensiveness and the fact that they provide a toolkit that can be adapted according to the national context.

The overall weakness of all five indices is their subjectivity and bias. All instruments were developed by very few people, mostly from Western countries, and their indicators are evaluated by very few people in order to measure media freedom. Neither the selection of indicators nor the weighting of them and/or the various categories is explained and discussed in full transparency. Although some organizations reveal their theoretical concept (Freedom House bases its index on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung on different African protocols and the UNESCO on its declarations on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media), none of them provides a detailed definition of the concept of media freedom or alternatively, media sustainability and media development that they are actually measuring.

When should which index be used?

The five media freedom indices presented here differ significantly from each other and provide distinct kinds of information.⁹⁰ That makes it hard for people active in media development and other experts interested in the topic to know which index is best suited for which purpose. In the following an attempt to answer this question is made.

For an overview of the state of media freedom around the world and the general performance of one country in comparison to others, opt for both the Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders indices. They are the only two global rankings that exist. Both indices further provide general information about the situation in one country (with the help of their overall and category scores, brief country reports and press releases). However, they do not reveal information about each particular indicator (and Reporters Without Borders does not even publish single category scores). For cross-regional comparisons, again take a look at the Freedom House index, since it is the only one that divides results into regions and at the same time covers all world regions. Further, this index is the only one that allows for an analysis of the global trends of media freedom as well as for tracking the developments in one region or country across time, i.e. over more than 30 years. Freedom House has been providing detailed data since 1980. Moreover, among its various information tools are charts displaying the number and percentage of the population living in free or not free media environments worldwide or in a given region.

For information about the safety of journalists and their working conditions in a specific country or compared between different countries, the Reporters Without Borders index and its Press Freedom Barometer are the best measures. Further, this index is the one that includes most indicators about the internet and social media. However, since it neither provides category nor indicator scores, it doesn't provide detailed information about this specific topic. On the list of positives, it should be pointed out that the organization's press releases monitor all incidents of media freedom violations around the world.

Those with a special interest in Eastern Europe and Central Asia should use IREX's Media Sustainability Index, which has a strong focus on that region and annually provides detailed information about all Eastern European and Central Asian countries. IREX also produces comprehensive information about the situation in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, Africa and Asia, though not that regularly. For a comparison of the countries in these regions this index is invaluable; it provides both an overview of the region and very detailed information for each country over the last ten years. The MSI is also a useful index for anyone interested in any specific media freedom-related topic in one of these countries or across one region, or for an analysis of the developments pertaining to such a topic over a period of time. It illustrates very clearly the scores for each objective and their changes in

the last five years and its country reports are divided into the different objectives.

When a more detailed analysis of the situation is required – with particular reference to the African continent – it is best to use the African Media Barometer, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung index. A limited number of Asian and Eastern European countries have also been assessed, in the Asian Media Barometers and the Balkan Media Barometers respectively. The very detailed country reports allow both for an in-depth analysis of the status of media freedom in a given country and for an exhaustive comparison of various African countries. However, while all necessary information is provided, the comparison itself is not available and thus has to be done individually. The African Media Barometer is the only index that does not only provide the overall country score and the scores for each category but also the average score for each indicator and even the individual scores given by the different panelists for each indicator. The breadth of available information means that thorough analyzes of many different topics are possible. Unfortunately, since the AMB is only conducted every 2 to 3 years in each country, the information available for some states such as Chad, Algeria and Cape Verde is as often as not outdated.

Out of the five indices, UNESCO's Media Development Indicators provide the most detailed country reports, typically around 100 pages in length. This index is therefore most useful as a source of comprehensive information about any one of the countries that are covered by the MDIs. Unfortunately, the nations for which MDI reports exist are still very limited: By September 2013, the MDIs had only been applied to 12 countries; 17 assessments were ongoing. Since the indicators are not scored or quantified at all, it is not advisable to use this index when a comparison of various countries or regions is desired.

For a summarized overview of which index should be used for which purpose please see box 1 "Which index should I use when I need..." in the introductory chapter.

Which additional information tools are provided and how useful are they?

All organizations presented here not only publish the findings of the indices but also provide numerous other information tools.

Freedom House

The organization that makes by far the most additional data sources available is Freedom House: Apart from the **global and regional rankings**, which are an illustrative way of getting an overview of the global or regional status of media freedom, **Freedom House further publishes short country reports (1–2 pages) for almost all countries.**

The **global and regional media freedom maps** that Freedom House publishes certainly are nice visuals. But they are sketchier than the rankings. They do not indicate any scores or ranks but only the status (free, partly-free, not free) of a country; nuances between the countries inside one category are not identifiable here. Therefore, the maps can only be used as a graphic tool that gives a very broad overview and should only be used as such.

Further, Freedom House provides **Excel sheets displaying the overall country scores, category scores and status of almost all countries** and divided into regions, from 1980 until today. These Excel files provide helpful data that can be used for an analysis of the development of media freedom in one country or region over time. Since the category scores are also available, it is possible to monitor trends in the political, economic or legal environments. Moreover, Freedom House publishes numerous **charts that provide more general information about global media freedom**, e.g. the number and percentage of free, partly free and not free countries in all world regions since 1980, or the number and percentage of the world's and regions' populations living in free, partly-free and not free media environments. In order to track variance, an infographic identifies the countries with notable changes. And last but not least, the organization provides charts illustrating the distribution of scores, the average scores as well as the biggest gains and declines. These can be used to analyze the index itself and overall changes over the years. While Freedom House only includes the internet and social media marginally in its Freedom of the Press Index, the organization regularly publishes a special report dealing with internet freedom, Freedom on the Net.

Reporters Without Borders

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) also publishes its findings in numerous different ways: Its main publication is the **annual World Press Freedom Index report** which comprises a summary of global trends as well as of the situation of media freedom in each region in the respective year. Its predominant tool, which at the same time is the most important PR tool of the NGO, is its global media freedom ranking. The report is published in six languages.⁹⁰ Reporters Without Borders also publishes **country reports**. However, reports are available only for a selected number of countries and the majority of them are outdated. While these reports provide general information about the overall situation in one country, the constant monitoring of incidents, which is communicated via press

releases for each country, allows for a more detailed and up-to-date understanding of the national media environment. They are also very helpful when information about a specific case is needed, for example. Further, the NGO tracks cases of violence against journalists: In its **Press Freedom Barometer** RSF constantly monitors the number of journalists, media assistants, netizens and citizen journalists killed and imprisoned. The overall numbers for each year since 2002 as well as the countries, names and media institutions of the affected journalists are published.

Reporters Without Borders also provides a so-called **World Press Freedom Map** as well as a special report about internet freedom called **Enemies of the Internet**. The world map, however, simply identifies the state of media freedom in each country as “good”, “satisfactory”, with “noticeable problems”, “difficult” or “very serious”. It is not explained what these categories actually mean or how each country's classification is determined. Therefore, although the map certainly gives a very broad overview of global media freedom, it should not be used for analyzing differences between countries. As of 2013, the NGO also provides an annual Global Indicator of worldwide media freedom, which is the sum of all country scores and aims to measure the overall level of media freedom in the world. In 2013, this indicator stands at 3395, a point of reference for the years to come. The indicator can also be broken down by region and, by means of weighting based on the population of each region, can be used to get an overview of the situation in each region (a score between 0 and 100) – though very cursory only. Reporters Without Borders further publishes a list of **Predators of Freedom of Information**, which is published annually on World Press Freedom Day on May 3rd, stating the around 40 leaders and groups worldwide that are the biggest enemies of media freedom.

⁹⁰ Apart from these, there are numerous other sources that provide information about the state of media freedom in one country or on an international or even global level.

⁹¹ Reporters Without Borders is the only organization that publishes its findings in so many languages; these are English, Arabic, Turkish, Italian, German and Chinese (Reporters Without Borders, 2013f).

Additional data sources provided by Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders:
Global media freedom in two world maps



Source:
Freedom House
Green = Free;
Yellow = Partly Free;
Purple = Not Free.



Source:
Reporters Without Borders

IREX

IREX publishes its findings in regional reports that are divided into specific country chapters. These chapters are subdivided into the objectives; the single indicators are not addressed individually, which makes it harder for the reader to find particular results. Depending on how many countries are included per region, the reports have a length of between 200 and 400 pages, with each country chapter normally comprising between 10 and 20 pages.⁹² The organization does not give proper rankings but publishes its findings as regional classifications. They do not have the typical form of a ranking (allotting numeric ranks to each country) but arrange the countries' performances within the four categories between "Sustainable" and "Unsustainable", stating the overall scores for each nation. Nonetheless, although no numeric ranking is provided, the best and worst countries and those in between can be easily identified and thus generally compared. The national chapters further illustrate the scores for each objective and their development in the last five years. Consequently, the reports enable a general overview of the state of media freedom in the respective region and tracking of changes, as well as an analysis of the different topics (objectives) in each country and their development over the last years. In addition, IREX provides general and media specific information for each country, i.e. the number of active print outlets, radio and television stations, newspaper circulation statistics, broadcasting ratings, news agencies, annual advertising revenues as well as internet usage.⁹³

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

Apart from its African Media Barometer, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung also publishes an Asian Media Barometer and a Balkan Media Barometer. The organization publishes its findings in very detailed country reports of around 100 pages in length (plus or minus 20 pages). They are divided into the different sectors, which, in turn, are sub-divided into the individual indicators. That is, each African Media Barometer provides information about each indicator in text form. However, the FES also publishes scores: Both the average scores for each sector and the average scores for each indicator are provided. Moreover, not only the average score for each indicator but even the individual scores allotted by each panelist are revealed.⁹⁴ On the other hand, not every AMB provides an average overall country score. It can be easily calculated using the average sector scores, though. The African Media Barometer is the only index that provides indicator scores and thus allows for a very detailed analysis of each topic. However, these reports are the only information tools available.

UNESCO

The same is true for the Media Development Indicators: UNESCO's findings are presented in very **detailed country reports** (of around 100 pages in length) structured among the different categories and indicators. So, detailed information about each indicator is provided in text form. Since the indicators are not quantified and the assessments are not conducted regularly, the information provided by the MDIs allows for an in-depth analysis of the state of media freedom in one country but not for any kind of comparison. Apart from the MDIs and their reports the UNESCO provides another set of indicators dealing with journalists' working conditions, which is based on the MDI framework: the **Journalists' Safety Indicators**.⁹⁵ However, these indicators were only developed in 2013 and have not been applied so far. That means that there is no additional information about the topic available yet. The organization also developed the so-called **New Media Survey Instruments**.⁹⁶ They are a set of questionnaires which evaluate data about the legal framework, broadcasting and newspaper statistics in one country. In a pilot phase between 2011 and 2012 UNESCO's Institute for Statistics gathered data for around 60 countries, but due to budgetary limitations they have not been applied since then.

⁹² *The latest MSI for Europe and Eurasia, IREX's flagship, can be consulted under IREX, 2013d.*

⁹³ *IREX, 2013d*

⁹⁴ *FES, 2013d.*

⁹⁵ *UNESCO, 2013a.*

⁹⁶ *UNESCO, 2013b.*

Conclusion

The analysis of the five regularly carried out international media freedom measures shows that all of them were originally designed for different purposes, have different conceptual backgrounds and apply different methodologies. These differences are reflected in the findings: Diverse instruments produce diverse and sometimes even conflicting results. Therefore, it is not a simple or neutral matter to utilize and rely on one particular measure.⁹⁷ Although this insight may seem obvious, it is not sufficiently taken into account when the indices' findings are used or received.

This guidebook points out that the most crucial criticisms of the international media freedom indices are these of bias and subjectivity. Although the organizations, at least Freedom House, Reporters Without Borders, IREX and UNESCO claim that their measures are universal, there are always geo-ideological assumptions that underlie them: For example, the weighting of the different aspects (indicators or categories) determined by a few people from the same cultural background will always be highly normative and somewhat ideological, and thus intrinsically carries a cultural bias. For instance, Freedom House's methodology reflects the organization's neo-liberal predisposition towards the state as predatory. Likewise, IREX's indicators and objectives have an ideological, normative emphasis because they concentrate especially on conditions for privately-owned media.⁹⁸ The FES's African Media Barometer, in contrast, attributes a huge importance to broadcasting in general and public service broadcasting in particular. This bias by no means makes the media freedom indices useless, but it should be made transparent and dealt with openly.

It is further emphasized in this guidebook, and the different approaches of the media freedom measures are evidence for it, that it is not correct to speak of a 'Western' and 'non-Western' bias. Concepts of media freedom differ considerably around the world, not only between Western countries and other parts of the world, but also between the U.S. and Western Europe, for example. There are even remarkable differences between points of view held in different Western European countries, such as Germany, France and Great Britain.⁹⁹

The second fundamental criticism, subjectivity, is a difficulty inherent in almost all international comparisons. Of course, it can be reduced by including the opinion of numerous people when an instrument for international media freedom measurement is designed. But it is difficult, if not impossible, to conduct representative surveys in each country in order to avoid subjectivity. Both the time and the financial, i.e. resource aspect impede that. Generally, it is a big challenge to collect adequate and comparable data for each country included. Particularly if numerous countries are involved, comparisons would require quantitative research methods. On the other hand, the larger the number of countries, the coarser the evaluation of each individual country is, ultimately leading to loss of detail.¹⁰⁰

It can be summarized that, due to natural limitations, no ideal international, let alone global, media freedom measure is possible. However, it is crucial to deal with the shortcomings of the existing assessments openly and transparently. This critical analysis aims to emphasize the significance of international media freedom measurement by providing background information and discussing it in detail. Only if the challenges are critically reflected – and this should be done to a greater extent by the authors themselves – will the different stakeholders be able to judge the measures individually. As a result, everyone will be able to use them and their findings adequately for their own purposes – with the scrutiny that the international media freedom indices deserve.

⁹⁷ *Banda, 2010.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid., p. 45.*

⁹⁹ *Holtz-Bacha, 2004.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

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Appendix

Appendix

Appendix 1: Indicators of the Freedom of the Press Index by Freedom House

Questionnaire with 23 key indicators, so called “methodology questions” and 109 sub-questions (not shown here due to space limitations).

A. Legal Environment

1. Do the constitution or other basic laws contain provisions designed to protect freedom of the press and of expression, and are they enforced?
2. Do the penal code, security laws, or any other laws restrict reporting and are journalists or bloggers punished under these laws?
3. Are there penalties for libeling officials or the state and are they enforced?
4. Is the judiciary independent and do courts judge cases concerning the media impartially?
5. Is Freedom of Information legislation in place and are journalists able to make use of it?
6. Can individuals or business entities legally establish and operate private media outlets without undue interference?
7. Are media regulatory bodies, such as a broadcasting authority or national press or communications council, able to operate freely and independently?
8. Is there freedom to become a journalist and to practice journalism, and can professional groups freely support journalists’ rights and interests?

B. Political Environment

1. To what extent are media outlets’ news and information content determined by the government or a particular partisan interest?
2. Is access to official or unofficial sources generally controlled?
3. Is there official or unofficial censorship?
4. Do journalists practice self-censorship?
5. Do people have access to media coverage and a range of news and information that is robust and reflects a diversity of viewpoints?
6. Are both local and foreign journalists able to cover the news freely in terms of harassment and physical access?
7. Are journalists, bloggers, or media outlets subject to extra-legal intimidation or physical violence by state authorities or any other actor?

C. Economic Environment

1. To what extent are media owned or controlled by the government and does this influence their diversity of views?
2. Is media ownership transparent, thus allowing consumers to judge the impartiality of the news?
3. Is media ownership highly concentrated and does it influence diversity of content?
4. Are there restrictions on the means of news production and distribution?

5. Are there high costs associated with the establishment and operation of media outlets?
6. Do the state or other actors try to control the media through allocation of advertising or subsidies?
7. Do journalists, bloggers, or media outlets receive payment from private or public sources whose design is to influence their journalistic content?
8. Does the overall economic situation negatively impact media outlets’ financial sustainability?

Appendix 2: Indicators of the Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders

Questionnaire with 87 questions (please note: This questionnaire is not divided into key indicators like all others but into a variety of questions with sometimes numerous answer possibilities. Due to space limitations it is not possible to illustrate the whole questionnaire with all possible answers here. Therefore, the questions are summarized as topics in the following).

A. Accounting for human rights violations

Information gathered by RSF staff. Space for submitting information concerning violence inflicted on journalists and media organizations.

B. Media legal status

- B.1 Existence of private media, regulatory agencies, codes of conduct, ombudsmen
- B.2 Factors preventing the creation of independent, privately owned media
- B.3 Administrative and financial constraints for independent private media companies
- B.4 Transparency of the process for granting TV and radio licences
- B.5 Official interference in appointments to directors of regulatory agencies and public broadcasters
- B.6 Possibility of authorities to force the firing of journalists and executives of public and private media
- B.7 Economic dependence of private media on direct or indirect state subsidies
 - B.7.1 Equitable distribution of state subsidies to private media
 - B.7.2 Adaption of private media content in order to get state subsidies
- B.8 Equal distribution of government advertising among different media
 - B.8.1 Preferential media when distribution of government advertising is unequal
- B.9 Government pressure towards advertisers to favour certain media
- B.10 Factors leading to officials favouring certain media (access, interviews etc.)

C. Legal status of journalists

- C.1 Availability of journalism training
- C.2 Degree to which the supply of journalism post-graduate training meets demand
- C.3 Factors prohibiting or discouraging the practice of journalism
- C.4 Possibility for women and minorities to enter media-related professions
- C.5 Degree to which media reflect the population's language diversity
- C.6 Procedure to obtain the license of professional journalist
- C.7 Accreditation procedures for foreign journalists
- C.8 Coverage of events
- C.9–C.9.1 Coverage of and access to all regions
- C.10 Repressions of journalists by government or other interest groups
- C.11–C.12 Press “goodies” that weaken the objectivity and laws against them
- C.13 Bribery of journalists
- C.14 Freedom to form and join unions

D. Pluralism and editorial independence

- D.1–D.1.2 – Existence, number and names of completely independent media
- D.2 Media's reflection of the range of opinions among members of the public
- D.3 Public media's coverage of all political currents
- D.4 Development of investigative journalism
- D.5 Government monitoring or threatening journalists
- D.6 Media's freedom to publish revelations concerning all topics
- D.7 Journalists' practice of self-censorship
- D.7.1 Sources that inspire fear of reprisals
- D.8 Media owners' conflicts of interest cause of journalists' self-censorship
- D.9 Extent to which radio and television stations with the largest audiences present independent and critical news
- D.10 Ignorance of news sensitive for the government by public media
- D.11 Media concentration
- D.12 Proportion of general-interest media owned by companies with other interests in non-media sectors of the economy
- D.13 Equitable distribution of appearances by candidates during election campaigns
- D.14 Government demanding radio and television time outside election campaigns
- D.15 Citizens' ability to directly and freely contact journalists
- D.16 Influence of the government on media staff
- D.17 Influence of major economic interests on media staff
- D.18 Advertisers' influence of editorial policy

E. Legal doctrine and practice

- E.1–E.1.1. Guarantee of media freedoms in constitution/laws and their enforcement
- E.2 Access to public information guaranteed by law
- E.3–E.4 Difficulty of journalists when seeking access to public data
- E.5 Existence of prior censorship or monitoring in print and broadcasting
- E.6 Prevention of disclosure of matters of public interest by constitution/law
- E.7 Confidentiality of journalists' sources
- E.8 Threats to the protection of confidential sources
- E.9 Laws against cybercrime violating the freedom of the Internet
- E.10 Free debate about certain historic facts
- E.11 Time limit for filing a libel case arising from a press report
- E.12 Legal action against information providers based on what they publish
- E.13 Penalties imposed on information providers
- E.14 Temporary detention of journalists
- E.15 Journalists' rights in case of arrest
- E.16–E.16.1 Opinion crimes such as blasphemy or disrespect for authority
- E.17 Obstacles to public debate posed by defamation laws
- E.18–E.18.1 Individuals' right of response to a news article
- E.19 Specified right of response for some people
- E.20–E.21 Impunity

F. The internet and technical resources

- F.1 Official authorization for news website before going online
- F.2 Individuals' access to high-speed Internet at a reasonable price
- F.3 Print press' access to adequate printing and distribution facilities at reasonable cost
- F.4 Willingness of local and national officials to expand Internet access
- F.5–F.5.2 News filtering on the Internet
- F.6 News websites suffering cyber-attacks
- F.7 Cancellation, blocking, or hijacking of social network accounts
- F.8–F.9 Government's monitoring of internet users
- F.10–F.11 Internet users face sanctions for putting up sensitive internet content

Appendix 3: Indicators of the Media Sustainability Index by IREX

Objective #1:

Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information.

1. Legal and social protections of free speech exist and are enforced.
2. Licensing or registration of broadcast media protects a public interest and is fair, competitive, and apolitical.
3. Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries.
4. Crimes against media professionals, citizen reporters, and media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare.
5. The law protects the editorial independence of state or public media.
6. Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and offended parties must prove falsity and malice.
7. Public information is easily available; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media, journalists, and citizens.
8. Media outlets' access to and use of local and international news and news sources is not restricted by law.
9. Entry into the journalism profession is free and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

Objective #2:

Journalism meets professional standards of quality.

1. Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced.
2. Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards.
3. Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship.
4. Journalists cover key events and issues.
5. Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption and retain qualified personnel within the media profession.
6. Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming.
7. Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient.
8. Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political).

Objective #3:

Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable, objective news.

1. Plurality of public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet, mobile) exist and offer multiple viewpoints.
2. Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted by law, economics, or other means.

3. State of public media reflect the views of the political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
4. Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for media outlets.
5. Private media produce their own news.
6. Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge the objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates.
7. A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.
8. The media provide news coverage and information about local, national, and international issues.

Objective #4:

Media are well-managed enterprises, allowing editorial independence.

1. Media outlets operate as efficient and self-sustaining enterprises.
2. Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources.
3. Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market.
4. Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards.
5. Government subsidies and advertising are distributed fairly, governed by law, and neither subvert editorial independence nor distort the market.
6. Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor the product to the needs and interests of the audience.
7. Broadcast ratings, circulation figures, and Internet statistics are reliably and independently produced.

Objective #5:

Supporting Institutions function in the professional interests of independent media

1. Trade associations represent the interests of media owners and managers and provide member services.
2. Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights and promote quality journalism.
3. NGOs support free speech and independent media.
4. Quality journalism degree programs exist providing substantial practical experience.
5. Short-term training and in-service training institutions and programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
6. Sources of media equipment, newsprint, and printing facilities are apolitical, not monopolized, and not restricted.
7. Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, cable, Internet, mobile) are apolitical, not monopolized, and not restricted.
8. Information and communication technology infrastructure sufficiently meets the needs of media and citizens.

Appendix 4: Indicators of the African Media Barometer by the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation

Sector 1: Freedom of expression, including freedom of the media, is effectively protected and promoted.

- 1.1 Freedom of expression, including freedom of the media, is guaranteed in the constitution and supported by other pieces of legislation.
- 1.2 The right to freedom of expression is practised and citizens, including journalists, are asserting their rights without fear.
- 1.3 There are no laws or parts of laws restricting freedom of expression such as excessive official secret, libel acts, legal requirements that restrict the entry into the journalistic profession or laws that unreasonably interfere with the functions of media.
- 1.4 Government makes every effort to honour regional and international instruments on freedom of expression and freedom of the media.
- 1.5 Print publications are not required to obtain permission to publish from state authorities.
- 1.6 Confidential sources of information are protected by law and/or the courts.
- 1.7 Public information is easily accessible, guaranteed by law, to all citizens.
- 1.8 Websites, blogs and other digital platforms are not required to register with, or obtain permission, from state authorities.
- 1.9 The state does not seek to block or filter Internet content unless in accordance with laws that provide for restrictions that serve a legitimate interest and are necessary in a democratic society, and which are applied by independent courts.
- 1.10 Civil society in general and media lobby groups actively advance the cause of media freedom.
- 1.11 Media legislation evolves from meaningful consultations among state institutions, citizens and interest groups.

Sector 2: The media landscape, including new media, is characterised by diversity, independence and sustainability.

- 2.1 A wide range of sources of information (print, broadcasting, internet, mobile phones) is accessible and affordable to citizens.
- 2.2 Citizens' access to domestic and international media sources is not restricted by state authorities.
- 2.3 The editorial independence of print media published by a public authority is protected adequately against undue political interference.
- 2.4 Transparency of ownership of media houses in print/broadcasting is guaranteed by law and enforced.
- 2.5 Adequate competition legislation/regulation seeks to prevent media concentration and monopolies.

- 2.6 Government promotes a diverse media landscape with economically sustainable and independent media outlets.
- 2.7 All media fairly represent the voices of both women and men.
- 2.8 All media fairly represent the voices of society and its minorities in its ethnic, linguistic, religious diversity.
- 2.9 Media cover the full spectrum of economic, cultural, political, social, national and local perspectives and conduct investigative stories.
- 2.10 Private broadcasters deliver a minimum of quality public interest programmes.
- 2.11 The country has a coherent ICT policy and/or the government implements promotional measures, which aim to meet the information needs of all citizens, including marginalised communities.
- 2.12 Government does not use its power over the placement of advertisements as a means to interfere with editorial content.
- 2.13 The advertising market is large enough to support a diversity of media outlets.

Sector 3: Broadcasting regulation is transparent and independent; the state broadcaster is transformed into a truly public broadcaster.

- 3.1 Broadcasting legislation has been passed and is implemented that provides for a conducive environment for public, commercial and community broadcasting.
- 3.2 Broadcasting is regulated by an independent body that is adequately protected by law against interference and whose board is not dominated by any particular political party and is appointed – in an open way - involving civil society and not dominated by any particular political party.
- 3.3 The body, which regulates broadcasting services and licenses, does so in the public interest and ensures fairness and a diversity of views broadly representing society at large.
- 3.4 The state/public broadcaster is accountable to the public through an independent board which is representative of society at large and selected in an independent, open and transparent manner.
- 3.5 The editorial independence of the state/public broadcaster from political influence is guaranteed by law and practised to ensure balanced and fair news and current affairs programmes.
- 3.6 The state/public broadcaster is adequately funded in a manner that protects it from political interference through its budget and from commercial pressure.
- 3.7 The state/public broadcaster offers diverse programming formats for all interests including local content and quality public interest programmes.

Sector 4: The media practise high levels of professional standards.

- 4.1 The standard of reporting follows the basic principles of accuracy and fairness.
- 4.2 The media follow voluntary codes of professional standards, which are enforced by independent/non-statutory bodies that deal with complaints from the public.
- 4.3 Salary levels and general working conditions, including safety, for journalists and other media practitioners are adequate.
- 4.4 Journalists and other media practitioners are organised in trade unions and/or professional associations, which effectively represent their interests.
- 4.5 Journalists and media houses have integrity and are not corrupt.
- 4.6 Journalists and editors do not practise self-censorship in the private broadcasting and print media.
- 4.7 Media professionals have access to training facilities offering formal qualification programmes as well as opportunities to upgrade skills.
- 4.8 Equal opportunities regardless of race or ethnicity, social group, gender/sex, religion, disabilities and age are promoted in media houses.

Appendix 5: Indicators of the Media Development Indicators by UNESCO

Category 1: A system of regulation conducive to freedom of expression, pluralism and diversity of the media

- 1.1 Freedom of expression is guaranteed in law and respected in practice
- 1.2 The right to information is guaranteed in law and respected in practice
- 1.3 Editorial independence is guaranteed in law and respected in practice
- 1.4 Journalists' right to protect their sources is guaranteed in law and respected in practice
- 1.5 The public and civil society organizations (CSOs) participate in shaping public policy towards the media
- 1.6 Independence of the regulatory system is guaranteed by law and respected in practice
- 1.7 Regulatory system works to ensure media pluralism and freedom of expression and information
- 1.8 The state does not place unwarranted legal restrictions on the media
- 1.9 Defamation laws impose the narrowest restrictions necessary to protect the reputation of individuals
- 1.10 Other restrictions upon freedom of expression, whether based on national security, hate speech, privacy, contempt of court laws and obscenity should be clear and narrowly defined in law and justifiable as necessary in a democratic society, in accordance with international law

- 1.11 The media is not subject to prior censorship as a matter of both law and practice
- 1.12 The state does not seek to block or filter Internet content deemed sensitive or detrimental

Category 2: Plurality and diversity of media, a level economic playing field and transparency of ownership

- 2.1 State takes positive measures to promote pluralist media
- 2.2 State ensures compliance with measures to promote pluralist media
- 2.3 State actively promotes a diverse mix of public, private and community media
- 2.4 Independent and transparent regulatory system
- 2.5 State and CSOs actively promote development of community media
- 2.6 State plan for spectrum allocation ensures optimal use for the public interest
- 2.7 State plan for spectrum allocation promotes diversity of ownership and content
- 2.8 Independent and transparent regulatory system
- 2.9 State uses taxation and business regulation to encourage media development in a non-discriminatory manner
- 2.10 State does not discriminate through advertising policy
- 2.11 Effective regulation governing advertising in the media

Category 3: Media as a platform for democratic discourse

- 3.1 The media – public, private and community-based – serve the needs of all groups in society
- 3.2 Media organizations reflect social diversity through their employment practices
- 3.3 The goals of public service broadcasting are legally defined and guaranteed
- 3.4 The operations of public service broadcasters do not experience discrimination in any field
- 3.5 Independent and transparent system of governance
- 3.6 PSBs engage with the public and CSOs
- 3.7 Print and broadcast media have effective mechanisms of self-regulation
- 3.8 Media displays culture of self-regulation

D Requirements for Fairness And Impartiality

- 3.9 Effective broadcasting code setting out requirements for fairness and impartiality
- 3.10 Effective enforcement of broadcasting code
- 3.11 The public displays high levels of trust and confidence in the media
- 3.12 Media organizations are responsive to public perceptions of their work
- 3.13 Journalists, associated media personnel and media organizations can practice their profession in safety
- 3.14 Media practice is not harmed by a climate of insecurity

Category 4: Professional capacity building and supporting institutions that underpins freedom of expression, pluralism and diversity

- 4.1 Media professionals can access training appropriate to their needs
- 4.2 Media managers, including business managers can access training appropriate to their needs
- 4.3 Training equips media professionals to understand democracy and development
- 4.4 Academic courses accessible to wide range of students
- 4.5 Academic courses equip students with skills and knowledge related to democratic development
- 4.6 Media workers have the right to join independent trade unions and exercise this right
- 4.7 Trade unions and professional associations provide advocacy on behalf of the profession
- 4.8 CSOs monitor the media systematically
- 4.9 CSOs provide direct advocacy on issues of freedom of expression
- 4.10 CSOs help communities access information and get their voices heard

Category 5: Infrastructural capacity is sufficient to support independent and pluralistic media

- 5.1 Media organizations have access to modern technical facilities for news gathering, production and distribution
- 5.2 Marginalised groups have access to forms of communication they can use
- 5.3 The country has a coherent ICT policy which aims to meet the information needs of marginalised communities

Laura Schneider

Laura Schneider works as a project manager for Deutsche Welle Akademie's Research and Development department. In her PhD project at the Research Center for Media and Communication at the University of Hamburg she studies global media freedom measurement; her thesis provides ideas for a new instrument for measuring media freedom globally. Schneider has been a consultant for UNESCO, an analyst for Freedom House and project coordinator at the International Media Center in Hamburg. She has worked as a freelance journalist for several German media outlets and was a radio and newspaper reporter in Mexico. Laura Schneider completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism and communication science at the universities of Hamburg, Guadalajara (Mexico) and Sydney.

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Laura Schneider,
Project Manager,
DW Akademie
E-Mail: laura.schneider@dw.de

About Us

DW Akademie is Germany's leading organization for international media development. It supports the development of free and transparent media systems, quality journalism and expertise. DW Akademie helps countries rebuild their media sector following crises and conflicts, and contributes internationally to the training of media professionals.

In its offices in Bonn and Berlin DW Akademie offers traineeships for future DW journalists as well as intercultural and professional media training workshops.

DW Akademie also runs the "International Media Studies" Master's program which combines the areas of media development, media management, journalism and communications.

Please contact us for further information

Dr. Jan Lublinski
Project Manager
Research and Development
DW Akademie

T +49.228.429 22 81
jan.lublinski@dw.de

Deutsche Welle
53110 Bonn, Germany

Petra Berner
Head
Research and Development
DW Akademie

T +49.228.429 35 39
petra.berner@dw.de

Deutsche Welle
53110 Bonn, Germany



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