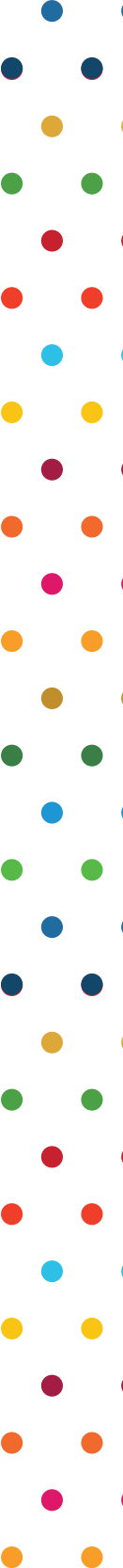




COMMUNICATION LANDSCAPE IN ETHIOPIA

Assessment of Legislative
and Operational Environment



Mekuria Mekasha and Theodros Wudneh

National Consultants

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Disclaimer

This report was prepared by Mekuria Mekasha and Theodros Wudneh and the views expressed are those of the consultants.

2018

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Executive Summary

In July 2018, the Federal Government Communication Affairs Office of Ethiopia (GCAO) embarked on an assessment of this communications landscape in Ethiopia with the goal of better understanding and analysing the administrative and operational contexts and dimensions of communications in Ethiopia. This effort included documenting the functional requirements of a communications structure that would be able to support collaboration and coordination of government communication systems among government institutions and promote the effective dissemination of official information and meaningful engagement with the Ethiopian people.

The assessment was supported by a grant from the Governance and Capacity Development Unit within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to provide technical support to GCAO aimed at putting in place a practical national communications policy consisting of revised reform packages, such as codes of conduct, guidelines and strategies.

This was a qualitative study, using a rapid assessment approach. Primary data were collected using in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions with government communication officers and coordinators during July and August 2018 in Addis Ababa and selected regional cities. Secondary data were obtained from a desk review of national communication laws, policies and strategies as well as other relevant documents and government reports in order to understand the context, dynamics and practice of government communication in Ethiopia.

Interviews and discussions with communications professionals revealed important perspectives regarding the existing government communications structure and identified problems associated with current practice in Ethiopia. For example, while regional state communication affairs bureaux are mandated to deal with local information, the horizontal working relationships they have with the federal GCAO make it difficult to aggregate information into a national government communications plan. Reforming the GCAO institutional structure, which also reflects a protectorate relationship in nature with regions and relationships with government ministries would allow a modern, coherent and transparent communications system across government communications establishments that would help to achieve accountability and transparency, and to create a more informed and participatory citizenry.

The assessment of the communications landscape and the accompanying media overview were undertaken to provide a comprehensive picture of the existing government communications system and information flow in Ethiopia. The findings of the report can inform the communications policy and strategy formulation process, its implementation and the role of key stakeholders on how best to prioritize government communication interventions as well as citizens' official information needs. It could also serve as an initial baseline to track and monitor the progress of the GCAO of Ethiopia in achieving its goal to be an effective and competent institution that ensures coherent and active communications between the government and the public.

The assessment focused on mapping legislation, policies and guidelines that can influence the government's communications practice, and examined trends as well as the operational environment, with the aim of exploring opportunities for and constraints to communication in Ethiopia. It also emphasized mapping the Ethiopian media, including the new communications technology, media reach and diffusion with respect to their role in extending the right to information to all citizens; to encouraging the democratization process; and promoting a more direct dialogue between the government and the people.

The assessment findings show that Article 29 of the Ethiopian Constitution provides strong protection for freedom of expression and of information. However, there is a need to review other media and information laws, proclamations and decrees such as the Freedom of Mass Media and Information Proclamation (590/2008) and the Broadcast Service Proclamation (533/2007). Through addressing the gaps identified in this assessment report, the legal platform in Ethiopia can become a more conducive environment for a coherent and transparent communications system across government communications establishments that can help to achieve accountability and transparency, and to enable citizens to be more informed and more participatory.

It is evident from the assessment that the infrastructural base for media activities—such as accessible digital media, satellite transmission and foreign broadcast programmes and syndicates—has been growing stronger, assisting the expansion of media in Ethiopia. As the communications infrastructure continues to be strengthened, opportunities exist to develop a comprehensive communications policy and strategy that accentuates the need for collaboration at all levels within, between and among government institutions in order to ensure effective communication and to use all forms of media in disseminating government information to citizens.

The assessment of the communications landscape in Ethiopia concludes by calling on the Federal GCAO and the Governance and Capacity Development Unit UNDP to seize the opportunity of the ongoing process aimed at formulating a national communications policy and strategy, to refine the current legal framework and professional guidelines and to renew the government communications structure, considering the recommendations presented in this assessment report.

01.

Introduction

1.1. Country Overview

Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa and the 13th in the world with a population estimated over 102 million in 2016 (World Bank, 2016) and a population growth rate of 2.6%. Ethiopia is the fastest growing economy in the region; it is also one of the poorest, with a per capita income of US\$783 in 2016. The government's aim is for Ethiopia to reach lower-middle-income status by 2025. The government is currently implementing the second phase of its Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II), which will run to 2019/20 and aims to continue work on physical infrastructure through public investment projects, and to transform Ethiopia into a manufacturing hub (FDRE, 2016; GTPII).

Ethiopia's main challenges are sustaining its positive economic growth and accelerating poverty reduction, which requires progress in job creation and improved governance. Sustainable ways to finance infrastructure, support private investment through credit markets, and tap into the growth potential of structural reforms can help the country maintain high economic growth.

1.2. Communications Policy and Government Communications

Scholars have defined communication in many ways. Generally, communication is a learned skill. However, while most people are born with the physical ability to talk, not all can communicate well unless they make special efforts to develop and refine this skill further. Very often, we take the ease with which we communicate with each other for granted, so much so that we sometimes forget how complex the communication process is.

As defined in the Dictionary of Media and Communications (Danesi, 2009), communication is an exchange of messages through some channel and in some medium. Communications theorists usually classify communication into **modes**, that is, different ways of exchanging messages: for example, **gestural** (hand-based communication); **vocal** (voice-based communication); **visual** (picture-based communication); **signaling** (bodily based communication); and so on. When pluralized as "communications", the term refers to media systems or technologies of communication (Danesi, 2009).

According to Pickard and G. Picard (2017), communications policy is central to many of the social and political issues that societies face today. In practice, policy principles are articulated and then used to set policy objectives and to determine the means to achieve them. The principles that we advocate are based on fundamental values such as accountability, dignity, dialogue, equity, freedom, inclusiveness, openness, security, self-determination, reward and responsibility. The principles thus address a basic question of policymaking: what is the public value being served? They set the base for choices by specifying what is valued and why it is valuable to the public (Moore, 1995). That is why we say government communication is the essential lifeblood and the strategic element in service delivery. Government's ability to deliver optimally transparent, productive, communications and interaction at all levels is key to a nation's future success. As Ethiopia lives in an era of rapid change and great complexity, the challenges facing societies, communities and organizations are complex and difficult, and there is a general need for leadership in communication from government. Government communication has a critical role to play in harnessing goodwill for productive purposes and in helping to shape the national mood and nation-building.

1.3. Communications Policy Principles Grouped Under Rubrics

The principles of communications policymaking are grouped under the following main rubrics:

- 1.** The Government Communications Platform: mandates, objectives, premises and principles;
- 2.** Communications Protocols and Principles;
- 3.** Key Performance Areas of the policy;
- 4.** Media Relations at Government Bodies;
- 5.** Developmental Communications;
- 6.** Communications Related to National Security and Defence;
- 7.** Government Communications and Support for Participatory Democracy;
- 8.** Government Institutions' Communication Campaigns;
- 9.** Internal Communications;
- 10.** Planning Government Communications;
- 11.** Social Media Guidelines;
- 12.** Crisis Communications.

02.

Communications In Ethiopia

Article 29 of the Ethiopian Constitution guarantees the right of thought, opinion and freedom of expression and the press. The mandate of the Government Communication Affairs Office (GCAO) is based on the constitutional law and on Cabinet regulation No. 158/2008. The task of GCAO is to handle government's communication business and assist the Government and ministers in their other activities. The overall goal is to be an effective and competent instrument for the Government in its task of governing the realm and implementing its policies.

In his inaugural speech, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Dr Abiy Ahmed said:

Democracy is unthinkable without freedom. Freedom is not a gift doled out to people by a government. Rather a gift of nature to everyone that emanates from our human dignity. We need to respect all human and democratic rights, especially to free expression, assembly and organization, by upholding the constitution that emerged from this understanding of freedom. The rights of all our citizens to take part in all structures and at all levels in a democratic manner need to be fully realized.

Communication has an important role to play in this regard. The GCAO is to base its work on the fundamental values of central government administration, namely democracy, the rule of law and efficiency. Democratic governance requires communication. How well a democracy functions is determined to a great extent by the knowledge of citizens and their access to facts, assessments of consequences, positions and arguments. Transparency, knowledge and dialogue help create understanding and legitimacy. The citizens are our employers. It should therefore be possible for them to have insight into the activities of government offices. In other words, government offices have a democratic responsibility to communicate externally.

03.

THE MANDATE OF GCAO

A new public relations and communications institution was established in 2008 as a result of the overall national public sector reform. Hence, the Federal Government Communication Affairs Office (GCAO), is one of the executive organs of the state that is mandated to carry out public communications responsibilities conferred on it by Regulation No.158/2008. The task of this government office is to prepare government business and assist the Government and ministers in their other activities. The overall goal of government offices is to be an effective and competent instrument for the Government in its task of governing the realm and implementing its policies. Communications has an important role in this regard.

Seven missions are delegated to the office:

- A.** Ensure the smooth flow of information between the Government and the public and facilitate the process of building a society enriched with information and able to participate in public affairs and, in particular, facilitate the creation of equal opportunities for peoples and sectors that need special support in accessing government information;
- B.** Enhance the responsiveness of the Government to the needs of society through maintaining an efficient and effective communications and information system that serves government organs and the public sector as a whole;
- C.** Promote awareness of the opportunities that the developmental democratic system has brought to the country, and how to access them fully;
- D.** Create national consensus on the basic principles and values of the constitutional framework as well as the national interests of the country;
- E.** Assist the international community, with a view to developing goodwill towards the country, and to understanding its historical heritage and cultural values as well as the new reality emerging from the ongoing changes;
- F.** Create an awareness of the participation of the country in continental and sub-continental organizations and institutions established to promote common goals, and the efforts and achievements of the organizations and institutions in realizing the renaissance of Africa; and
- G.** Promote the expansion of modern, accessible and diverse media.

04.

COMMUNICATIONS LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

The Communications Landscape assessment report is an effort made to understand and analyse the administrative and operational contexts and dimensions of communications in Ethiopia based on a set of principles, desk reviews, key informant interviewing of communication heads and Focus Group Discussions. This assessment investigated the wider environment, assessing the contexts, dynamics and spaces for communications practice in Ethiopia.

4.1. Objectives of the Assessment

The main objectives of the consultancy as realized in the present document were to assist GCAO to put in place a National Communications Policy consisting of revised reform packages i.e. laws, polices, codes and plans. Based in the GCAO, and in close collaboration with the Governance and Capacity Development Unit within UNDP, the consultants will support GCAO in the reform process; assist in organizing dialogue forums with relevant stakeholders and bring in international good practices in communications policy and engagement.

More specifically, the consultants were expected to conduct desk research and provide analytical pieces and policy briefs on the policy, practices and trends that affect media, both public and private and to contribute, both substantially and operationally, to the design and implementation of a rapid assessment of the sector to inform development of the communications strategy.

4.2. Methodology

This Communications Landscape assessment is a qualitative study that used a rapid assessment approach during July and August 2018 in Addis Ababa and selected regional cities. Primary data were collected using in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions with government communications officers. Coordinators in the GCAO structure were employed to explore communications policy and strategy essentials and identify communications challenges and barriers in Ethiopia and ways to improve the provision of information to the Ethiopian public at large. Secondary data were obtained from a desk review of national communications laws, policies and strategies as well as other relevant documents and government reports in order to understand the context, dynamics and practice of government communications in Ethiopia. Documents about legislation, experiences, administration and operational requirements of communications by GCAO were also examined.

4.3. Key Questions for Assessment

Assessment and mapping of the Ethiopian Communication Landscape was conducted to answer the following questions.

- 1.** What are the key pieces of legislation, policies and guidelines, and institutions that influence communication practices in Ethiopia?
- 2.** What are the trends in the operational environment for communications in Ethiopia, with respect in particular to the Constitution and laws related to the media and communications?
- 3.** What are the opportunities that help formulation of communications policy and the constraints on communications in Ethiopia?

05.

STATE OF COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN ETHIOPIA

5.1. Evolution of Communications in Ethiopia

Following the downfall of the Dergue regime in 1991, the enactment of Media Law-34/1992 and the restructuring of the Ministry of Information, the country witnessed the emergence and establishment of more diverse communications practices. During 1991–2005, we witnessed the growth of communications practices that seek to contribute to addressing the country’s multiple development priorities in line with the Constitution and other existing national frameworks, policies and strategies. GCAO has been set up in line with the federal arrangements. Hence, GCAO operates as a federal level institution, and with branches in the regions. At the federal level, GCAO is led by one minister and two state ministers. Currently, there are 267 employees at the head office. In other federal line ministers, there are structured public relations/communication departments working in close relationship with GCAO. There are 185 federal ministries, agencies, and commissions, almost each has public relations (PR) offices with an average workforce of 10 employees. Some large ministries like those of Health, Agriculture, Revenue, and Education have more than 30 PR staff and huge budget allocations. The total number of PR staff at federal level, including GCAO, is roughly 1,500.

On the other hand, regional governments have their own PR structures. In almost all regions the communications head is a member of the regional cabinet. The four big regions—Oromiya, Amhara, Tigray and SNNR— have PR structures at *woreda* and *kebele* levels. The Oromiya and Amhara regions each contain a large communications workforce, averaging an estimated 5,000. Emerging regions, like Benishangul-Gumuz and Gambella each have a fair number of staff, estimated around 400. The Somali and Afar regions have similar PR structures but staff are limited to the Zonal structure level with an estimated number of 400 for both regions together. The overall national PR contingent reaches around 10,000 (GCAO Report, 2018).

The aftermath of the 2005 national elections affected communication between the Government and the public at large with the result that the public started to lose trust in the Government’s communications practices. Coupled with this, the political space for civil society has decreased after the enactment of the CSP 621/2009 and the introduction of sets new rules for follow-up regulations and directives. According to the latest USAID CSO Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa, Ethiopia was pointed out to be one of the least countries that have shown impediment in the overall indicators of CSOs sustainability, except in one area. The USAID’s Index measures six key areas that inform organizational sustainability (Legal Environment, Organizational Capacity, Financial Viability, Advocacy, Service Provision, Infrastructures and Public Image).

06.

DESK RESEARCH RESULTS FOR COMMUNICATIONS PRACTICE IN ETHIOPIA

Many factors determine the media practices, professionalism, and overall social functions of communications in Ethiopia. Factors that affect communications are assessed below.

6.1. The Existing Regulative Frameworks for Ethiopia

6.1.1. Assessment of the current situation

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right recognized under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and other human rights instruments. The right basically includes “freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers”.

6.1.2. The Constitution of the FDRE

Article 29 of the Ethiopian Constitution of 1995 (FDRE, 1995) provides strong protections for freedom of opinion and expression and underscores the importance of the independence of the media.

The Constitution prohibits censorship and affirms the need for access to information of public interest. It also states that “the press shall, as an institution enjoy legal protection to ensure its operational independence and its capacity to entertain diverse opinions. It notes that the importance of media “financed by or under the control of the State ... to entertain diversity in the expression of opinions.” (Article 29)

As well as recognizing Freedom of Expression (FoE) and freedom of the press, the Constitution stipulates that the provisions of Chapter Three (within which the right to FoE is included (Part Two)) should be interpreted “in a manner conforming to the principles of the UDHR, International Covenants on Human Rights and international instruments adopted by Ethiopia.” Therefore, the meaning and interpretation of human rights provisions included under Chapter Three of the Constitution (including FoE) can be understood in light of the ICCPR, the Banjul Charter and other human rights instruments ratified by Ethiopia.

The Constitution recognized FoE unconditionally. This gave rise to an unprecedented proliferation of private newspapers and magazines.

Article 29: Right of Thought, Opinion and Expression

1. Everyone has the right to hold opinions without interference.
2. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression without any interference. This right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of his choice.
3. Freedom of the press and other mass media and freedom of artistic creativity is guaranteed. Freedom of the press shall specifically include the following elements:

A.(a) Prohibition of any form of censorship

B. (b) Access to information of public interest.

4. In the interest of the free flow of information, ideas and opinions which are essential to the functioning of a democratic order, the press shall, as an institution, enjoy legal protection to ensure its operational independence and its capacity to entertain diverse opinions.
5. These rights can be limited only through laws which are guided by the principle that freedom of expression and information cannot be limited on account of the content or effect of the point of view expressed. Legal limitations can be laid down in order to protect the well-being of the youth, and the honor and reputation of individuals. Any propaganda for war as well as the public expression of opinion intended to injure human dignity shall be prohibited by law.

However, Article 29 also contains some qualifications to media freedom that are contrary to international law. It provides that limitations to freedom of expression cannot be based “on account of the content or effect of the point of view expressed, but does recognize the potential to legislate to limit FoE “in order to protect the well-being of the youth, and the honour and reputation of individuals” . it also prohibits “propaganda for war as well as the public expression of opinion intended to injure human dignity”.

These limitations, especially concerning “the well-being of the youth, and the honor and reputation of individuals” and “the public expression of opinion intended to injure human dignity” are overly vague and are vulnerable to broad and abusive interpretation.

Articles 9(4) and 13(2) are also important in the interpretation of the rights enshrined under the constitution, including FoE. As noted above, international human rights instruments can serve as a guide in interpreting FoE as stated in the Constitution. However, FoE as expressed in Article 29 is categorized as a democratic right; whereas the international understanding that it is a human right.

<FoE under the Constitution is not an absolute right and is rather subject to limitations provided under sub-Articles 6 and 7 of Article 29. Under sub-Article 6, there are grounds and preconditions for limiting FoE and sub-Article 7 puts the consequences of surpassing such proper limitations. It says “any citizen who violates any legal limitations on the exercise of these rights may be held liable under the law.” The separate reading of this provision would give an apparent suggestion that any limitation is proper so long as prescribed by law. Such kind of reading would amount to curtailing the overall sense of the right and would make putting grounds of limitation under sub-Article 6 meaningless. Therefore, the two sub-Articles (sub Articles 6 & 7) should be read cumulatively and sub-Article 7 should be understood as complementary to the preceding sub-Article 6.>

Sub-Article 6 stipulates illegitimate grounds of limiting FoE and put grounds for restricting the right. In the beginning, it makes clear that FoE can only be limited by law. However, it also puts a further qualification by stating that laws cannot restrict FoE on account of the content or effect of the point of view expressed. Thus, we can say that the Constitution prohibits both “content based” limitations and limitations based on the effect of the view point expressed.> T

6.1.3. Subsidiary Laws

A. Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation No. 590/2008

The law made some positive changes from the previous media law (1992), such as barring the pre-trial detention of journalists, but it added alarming new features, including broad powers to initiate defamation suits and to demand corrections in print publications:

- The version adopted by parliament seems certain to further restrict freedom of expression and intimidate journalists.
- It is incompatible with the (Ethiopian) Constitution and other international human rights laws, conventions and agreements.

One of the most disturbing aspects of the new law is that the government has appropriated the right to prosecute defamation cases against the media even if the allegedly defamed government officials do not initiate legal proceedings. Article 43 (7) of the proclamation says that defamation and false accusation against “constitutionally mandated legislators, executives and judiciaries will be a matter of the government and prosecutable even if the person against whom they were committed chooses not to press charges.

The Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation of 2008 establishes a licensing system for the printed press, where all written publications must be registered (Article 9) and the executive is given broad powers to impound periodicals and books (Article 42). Extensive duties are imposed on the media (Article 40), including a mandatory “right of reply” enforced through criminal penalties. Restrictions on media ownership (Article 7) also discourage growth and investment in the media industry.

This control is reinforced by a state monopoly over printing presses through the state-owned Berhanena Selam Printing Enterprise (BSPE) and standardized printing contracts with restrictive terms.

Article 41(2) of the proclamation stipulates: “ In an action for defamation through the mass media the court may award, having regard to the seriousness of the moral damage, compensation up to 100,000.00 Birr having regard to the seriousness of the damage”. Some say this amount is too large when compared with other penalties for criminal offences. Media need to be free of the fear of prosecution under defamation laws if they are reporting on official corruption? However, what is or is not defamatory is left to the interpretation and decision of the court.

B. Broadcasting Service Proclamation No. 533/2007

The Broadcasting Service Proclamation of 2007 empowers the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority (EBA) to regulate radio broadcasters—state-run, commercial (private), and community-based. Concerns persist about the independence of the EBA. While it is established as “an autonomous federal agency having its own legal personality,” it is legally accountable to the Office of the Prime Minister.

Lack of media independence and plurality

The Broadcasting Service Proclamation of 2007 gives the government extensive control over the broadcast media, including through the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority, which is appointed by, and financially dependent upon, the government.

In the media case, “Any program intended for transmission may not: Maliciously accuse or defame individuals, nation/nationalities, peoples or organization” (Broadcasting Service proclamation No. 533/2007, Article 30(4 c)). What if the statement made by the defendant is true and he/she made it for the public interest?

The proclamation also states that the public broadcasting service shall “enhance the participation of the public through the presentation of government policies and strategies as well as activities related to development, democracy and good governance.” This clause is absent in the law covering commercial (private) broadcasters, however the community broadcasting service shall among other things “carry out its activities based on the needs of the community regarding development, education and good governance.”

There are also limitations on broadcasting licences being granted to “an organization of a political organization or of which a political organization is a shareholder or a member of a political organization’s supreme leadership is a shareholder or member of its management at any level.” Restricting licences to organizations without political connections is contrary to constitutional provisions about the freedom of the media. As previously discussed, licensing and regulation of the broadcast media in Ethiopia is prone to politicization.

C. The Anti-Terrorism Proclamation No. 652/2009

The Anti-Terrorism law of Ethiopia is a new addition <10 years old!>to the traditional regulatory framework on FoE and media freedom.

There are provisions and extensive executive powers stated in the law which have significant impacts on the exercise of FoE and the working of media. The major points of concern in the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation (ATP) include its criminalization of incitement and encouragement to terrorism, irrespective of the direct or indirect nature of such acts, and extensive investigative powers given to the law enforcement authorities which may amount to significant restrictions on FoE and media activities.

- The ATP, under Article 3(7) proscribes threats of terrorist acts. The ATP simply criminalizes threats of terrorist acts regardless of whether they are “true” or “false.”
- The highly controversial provision introduced by the ATP in relation to encouragement of terrorism is Article 6. < explain?>

- Being a member of or participating in any capacity in a proscribed terrorist organization is a crime under Article 7 of the ATP. Therefore, a member could potentially be prosecuted merely because their organization “supports or encourages terrorism” or is “otherwise involved in terrorism”— even if the support or the encouragement or the involvement did not result in a terrorist act; and even if the person found to be supporting or encouraging terrorism did not intend to cause terrorism.

D. Criminal Code (2004)

Criminal Defamation and Calumny:

Article 613 <of the Criminal Code> recognizes four variations of defamation and calumny as “crimes against honor”, as well as the offence of “insult” (Article 615), with severe penalties available for each. Defences provide very limited protection for truthful statements, or statements that are in the public interest. Article 618 allows for aggravated sentences where these offences are committed against public servants.

In Ethiopian law defamation is not only taken as a civil case but also a criminal one. Anyone who defames the state is punishable with imprisonment for at least three months or with a fine of at least 500 Birr (Criminal Code, Article 244(1)). The crime is aggravated when the defamation is deliberately committed against a public civil servant. The penalty ranges from “simple imprisonment from one month to one year, and fine in cases of defamation” or “with simple imprisonment for not less than six months, and fine, in cases of deliberate act to ruin the victim’s reputation” (Criminal Code, Article 618).

What is more, the name of any person who has been punished for a crime cannot be mentioned, in the media. The Criminal Code, Article 613(1) states that “Statements made concerning a crime of which a person has been found guilty, has duly served the sentence or has been granted pardon or amnesty, with intent to injure his honor or reputation, shall be considered as defamation and are punishable with simple imprisonment not exceeding six months, or fine”.

The defamation against the state could be by word or by deed or by any other way of abuse, insult, defamation or slander which is made in public (Criminal Code, Article 244(1)).

Criminal Code Article 613 and subsequent articles provide that a person could be accused of defamation when the defamation was done with “ intent to injure his honor or reputation, an act, a fact or a conduct, where the allegation accords with the truth”; or “where the defamatory imputations or allegations constituting the injury to honor or reputation are false and are uttered or spread with knowledge of their falsity”; or “ where the criminal has acted with deliberate intent to ruin the victim’s reputation; or “where the imputation or allegation is false and made negligently” or “false accusation or denunciation to the authorities”

E. Protecting the State from criticism:

Article 244 criminalizes “attacks against the State and National and other Emblems” and includes abusing, insulting, defaming or slandering the State in public.

F. Civil Code (1960)

The Ethiopian Civil Code of 1960, which is still functional, cites defamation in Article 2044 as an offence: “A person commits an offence where by his words, his writings or by any other means he acts in such a way as to make another living person detestable, contemptible or ridiculous and to jeopardize his credit, his reputation or his future.” The Civil Code has specific provisions which deal with defamation in media, especially the press.

The Code in Article 2135 provides: “The managing editor of the newspaper, the printer of the pamphlet or the publisher of the book shall be liable under the law for defamation committed by the author of a printed text.” In the following articles, the law stipulates that the person who caused the damage and the one the law declares liable could be forced to repair the damage jointly.

G. Charities and Societies Proclamation (621/2009)

Civil society has continued to be targeted by restrictive legislation. The Charities and Societies Proclamation of 2009 remains in effect, despite recommendations at the last Universal Periodic Review rejected by Ethiopia to amend or repeal those provisions in the Law that were inconsistent with international standards on the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly. The recommendation to allow non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to receive foreign funding was similarly rejected.

The Charities and Societies Proclamation only allows “Ethiopian Charities and Societies” to engage in human rights activities and related social justice or political programmes. The definition of what “Ethiopian Charities and Societies” means is narrow and excludes entities that receive 10 per cent or more of their funding from foreign sources, thus making it impossible for any organization with foreign financial support to work on domestic human rights or political

issues. This essentially makes working on these issues impossible, as there are few funding opportunities for work in this field internal to Ethiopia.

H. Advertisement Proclamation No. 759/2012

Other problematic laws include the Advertisement Proclamation, which gives the Government arbitrary and broad control over the regulation of advertising. The law states that one of the intents of advertising is to “protect the dignity and interests of the country” and does not permit advertisement that “instigates chaos, violence, terror, conflict or fear among people.” These overly broad and discretionary terms can be used by the Government to control advertisement that does not promote government rhetoric or perspectives. It also prevents advertisements from firms “whose capital is shared by foreign nationals,” limiting the ability of publications to freely decide who to accept as an advertiser and depriving publications of much-needed foreign revenue.

6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is therefore recommended:

- To review the laws so that legislation is not abused to undermine professionalism and to control media freedoms. It is recommended that a wide range of media stakeholders should be involved in the reform process to ensure a participatory law-making process, and that the liberalized laws are supplemented with well-functioning self-regulation instruments. For example, the Media Council, and international partners like UNESCO, and Article 19 or others should be partners in this process.
- To engage in developing a national media policy that takes into consideration the elements listed in this assessment of the media landscape and the recommendations that are agreed through the stakeholder process for this report.
- For private-sector media workers to contribute to the development of a responsible, independent, effective media sector by promoting higher standards of professionalism and ethics and engaging in constructive dialogue with the government.

07.

ASSESSMENT OF MEDIA POLICIES OF from countries in Africa and Asia

The Assessment document portrays the role of media in the process of the building of a democratic system and in the political, economic and social growth of the country. For the practicality of these roles there need to have a separate media and communication policy.

The suggested policy document also embraces the following major directions and issues: freedom of the media; the right to impart thoughts and ideas freely; the right to access information; the role of media; content from the point of view of law and ethics; monitoring media ownership and sources of finance; infrastructure development of media technology; media relations with government; media regulation; and government support to media and media technology. Moreover, following the global espousal of media and technology, governments are found to include regulations on content across the range of broadcasting instruments (including computers and mobiles).

Though media policy is mostly the business of government, it can also be prepared by organizations (like the European Union), international organizations (like the WTO), by media professional associations and media councils. For a media policy to be fruitful, it must consider theoretical and empirical research, the input of professionals in different disciplines, the views of philosophers and different sectors of the society. The assessment also cited and discussed the considerations and contents of the policies of Nepal and South Africa.

08.

MEDIA POLICY IN ETHIOPIA

The assessment report also shows that media play a major role in political, economic and social growth, including in the process of building democracy. Whether a country is democratic or not is revealed in the rights of citizens to express their thoughts freely and media are one of the major instruments they use to for this. For the role of media to be intact, there needs to be a solid policy and legal framework that ensures the sector's freedom and guarantees the security of relative rights. Though our country does not have a uniform media policy, we can understand the policy framework the media currently guided by is taken from different relevant policies in place

In a policy paper entitled "Issues in the building of democratic system in Ethiopia", limited policy issues are included regarding media and the building of a democratic system under the heading "our struggle." This policy paper has put a detailed account on the importance of media

Without a uniform policy document with which the media can be guided, many other policy issues that can assist the growth of the media sector didn't bear results. The following are some of the major policy issues identified in the policy paper in brief:

1. A policy needs to be established and the funds allocated, including through the expansion for government media, to ensure universal access to media and the right of access to information.
2. The Government needs to support the expansion, upgrading and expansion of the media.
3. Establishing media requires large amounts of capital and the law requires that criteria for the acquisition of initial capital must be met before permits are granted. This creates a hurdle for citizens and the private sector, especially amateurs, and makes it difficult for private citizens to participate in the sector or become media owners. Therefore, as with other small-scale enterprises, the Government needs to assist young amateurs in the field by offering them work places, loans and similar assistance.
4. The Government needs to reach a policy decision on the following points: building capacity and skills in media activities; removing barriers related to access to information; establish a special support scheme that can address input problems to establish media seen in the industry;; establishing an equal distribution scheme for government advertisements, by reinforcing the Media Council > ; putting a policy decision that can help devise a system where the media itself can exercise mutual monitoring/control and address multifaceted problems.
5. The government-run/public media landscape has several characteristics that need to be altered. Public media organizations and their boards generally comprise people from one political group. Ethnic diversity is impeded by the fact the language and ethnic group of the established media organizations tend to predominate and local issues tend to take precedence over national issues. Transmission in different languages is not carried out and a fair chance to participate is not granted to competing political parties. Therefore, diverse views are not entertained; investigative reporting on issues of good governance is not carried out without fear or favour (subject to the question of legal protection). Programme and experience-sharing are not practiced because of a tightly knit relationship with each other. So, there needs to be a policy that can facilitate these scenarios.
6. Concerning public broadcasters' news and programme sharing among themselves, their objective is one and the same. <garbled ?meaning?> Hence, there needs to be a policy for the public media to successfully play

its media role and carry out its constitutional mission, to make nations, nationalities and people accessible to information by exchanging current, national and local programmes and news that can play big roles for the political, economic and social growth.

- 7.** Public media depend on the Government budget and income generated from the sale of advertisements. As a result they have often resorted to transmitting programmes that sponsors will pay for rather than emphasizing social values. There are instances when important programmes that do not generate income are denied transmission. This needs to be addressed in policy.
- 8.** There needs to be a policy to decide on how to ensure fair competition, between public and commercial broadcasters in use of their air time for advertisements.
- 9.** To reduce costs, local news agencies need to be strengthened to be able distribute current news and information to broadcasters
- 10.** The various media networks and outlets are converging; delivering broadcast service programmes, newspaper and magazine content and telecommunications services through TV, computers, or cell phones has become common practice. The establishment of a regulatory body whose sphere of activities reflects this convergence has become a matter of urgency. The assessment document also cites examples of regulatory bodies in different parts of the world. currently, the body that regulates the broadcast sector, the body that controls the postal sector and those that regulate the communications sector are organized independently, which is not optimal. This arrangement has created a gap in the execution and growth of the sector. Because it is necessary to establish strong regulatory system necessary for the growth of the sector, this gap needs to be addressed in the policy.
- 11.** The policy paper relating to “the building of democratic system in Ethiopia” and both the media and investment laws prohibits the participation and ownership of media for diaporans who are Ethiopians by birth. Individuals who are participating in different investment fields being Ethiopians by birth and secured residence permit are demanding a policy support to participate in the media ownership sector. So, it has to get a policy decision by weighing its importance.
- 12.** The media law acknowledges the right of journalists to organize professional associations, but its realization is still difficult. A policy response is required.
- 13.** Though a policy regarding the quantity of coverage of content is not set in our country, the broadcast proclamation obliges a given regional broadcaster to dedicate 60 per cent of its weekly broadcasts to regional issues and 60 per cent to local issues. This has led them to be hemmed in by local issues and encourages them not to cover national issues. So, a policy decision considering that promotes the national value, broadcasting content with national agenda in all media can be given focus and assistance for the media stations that work in this respect to be put in place.
- 14.** The media law does not allow religious organizations to broadcast. But many religious broadcasters are operating without a permit and it is difficult to enforce the law. It is essential to review this prohibition.
- 15.** Many countries hold annual media editors’ forums, which is not the case in Ethiopia, but such a forum would play a useful role in facilitating experience-sharing and development of the media.
- 16.** Ethiopia currently does not organize annual media awards. These should be started, with the assistance of ratings companies in order to enhance competition in the media sectors.
- 17.** An effort should be made to provide training and capacity-building in editing, camera work, journalism, directing, graphics, animation and similar professions.
- 18.** Discussing alternatives for economic broadcasting, the policy paper suggests establishing a common broadcasting network or collectively renting channels from satellite owners and giving collective services to licensed broadcasting service providers. This would permit economies of scale and scope and should be promoted by a policy decision.
- 19.** There is currently no legal establishment covering monitoring and regulating content delivered through the Internet or mobile phones. This needs to be addressed by the establishment of a media policy to regulate social media and Internet broadcasting matters.

09.

MEDIA LAWS OF Ethiopia AND DIFFERENT NATIONS

9.1. Gaps observed in the laws and their translation in our country

By way of introduction, the document raised the following points. For the media to play a full role there needs to be a legal framework that ensures the freedom of the sector and guarantees the protection of rights. To ensure that the information, ideas and views necessary for the building of a democratic system are freely entertained, the media as an institution needs to enjoy freedom of exercising its role and have legal protection.

Media laws of different countries

One international agreement established with respect to rights to express ideas and views is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), where the right to express ideas is stated in Article 19. Another equally important agreement about the right to the free expression of ideas is the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Media laws are passed so that government can control the media. Media and communications laws cover varying subjects apart from the right to express ideas freely. The document also cites the media laws of South Africa that deal with local content and prescribe mandatory percentages. For example, music quotas requiring that South African music is broadcast by different radio stations, programme quotas for TV broadcasters, quotas for independent programme productions, obligations to broadcast in a national language, finance as one follow-up criteria

Media awards are granted to community radio and small print media by a media development and diversity agency for best performers. < is this specific to South Africa?>

The assessment document also cites examples of the media laws of different countries: Republic of Korea: Kenya, Botswana, the United Kingdom, Singapore and Australia.

9.1.1. GCAO's Perspectives on Ethe FDRE Constitution and Media Laws:

Different policies are drafted and laws promulgated in line with the intention to expand the media in a manner for them to work for the renaissance of the country, coupled with the respecting the right to express ideas freely and freedom of the media.

A. EFDR's constitution and international agreements

As noted, the Ethiopian Constitution has endorsed international agreements/declarations; according to Article 9/4: "All international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land." Article 13/2 also states

that the Ethiopian Constitution conforms to international agreements/ declarations: “The fundamental rights and freedoms specified in this Chapter shall be interpreted in a manner conforming to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenants on Human Rights and International instruments adopted by Ethiopia.”

B. Broadcasting Service Proclamation 533/2007<OK?>

This assessment document notes that the broadcasting proclamation <?OK> is a law that permits the participation of the private sector in broadcast services. It was necessary to legislate because of the important roles that broadcasting plays in political, economic and social growth by providing information, education and entertainment for the public and to ensure the effective use of limited resources of radio frequency.

The document also states that the types of broadcast services and programmes should observe legal and ethical standards and consider accountability. The proclamation allows the establishment of the broadcast service authority to grant permits to broadcasters, to cancel, suspend and work towards the expansion of quality broadcast services in a manner that contributes to the all-round growth of the of the country.

To enable the broadcast sector expand to the best level and play the expected role for the all rounded growth of the country, there are some necessary amendments and issues to be included. <are these discussed anywhere here? If not delete?>

C. Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation 590/2008

The policy paper states, that the first proclamation that ensured press freedom was the Press Law of 1992. After this had been in force for 15 years, another, improved freedom of the mass media and access to information proclamation was issued in 2008. Listing all its activities, it has also put the media organizations' obligations, accountability and the manner of pronouncing suspension. .

D. Directive No. 158/2001 delivered by the Council of Ministers for the establishment of the Office of Government Communication Affairs

According to this directive, the <GCAO?>office is tasked with seeing to it that there is an information flow between government and people and to expand modern, accessible, multi-faceted media and similar tasks, but with some hiccups .

E. Proclamation on Advertisement 759/2004 <or is it 2012?, see References>

The livelihood of the media, specially the commercial media is based on advertisements and sponsorship incomes. <Delete>Advertisement by its nature is a conduit for commercial, public and private messages. Therefore, proclamations included in the advertisement law are directly or indirectly related to freedom of the media. The advertisement law is a kind of support for the advertisement work to play its own role in the all rounded growth of our country. <delete?> Listing its <whose?> duties, the document suggests that for the proclamation to be able to deliver its expected duties, legal and problems of execution must be identified and addressed. <reword>

F. Criminal code

Anyone found to breach legal requirements in Article 29/7/95 of the Constitution that covers the right to hold and dispense information may be liable to punishment. Lists of accountabilities are provided but there are problems in the area of legislation and enforcement that need to be identified and addressed. <edit OK?>

G. Legal framework for public broadcast service providing organizations

The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, which provides a nationwide broadcasting service, was reestablished by Proclamation 73/1989 to provide current information, educational and entertainment through radio and TV. Its tasks are to deliver broadcast service programmes, to establish and to administer instruments for dissemination of broadcast services and it is answerable to Council of People's Representatives. It is now found delivering services of establishing broadcasting instruments and preparing broadcast contents. The draft lists related duties that the broadcast service provides.

As there are issues that called public outcry and issues that have registered gaps in the legal and execution arena and evaluating and identifying areas that exhibited shortcomings, it is imperative to produce a media policy and improved laws. <garbled please explain>

9.1.2. Gaps and problems of execution observed in the media law

The assessment report leaves unresolved several issues that need a policy and legal framework. A few are listed here: ownership of newspapers and magazine simultaneously; the right of journalists to be organized in professional association; the state of political parties and plurality of ideas in public broadcasters; air time to be allocated for advertisements in public and commercial broadcasters; the practicality of accessing government information; the airing of religious programmes and broadcast licences of religious institutions; prohibition of ownership for diaspora ; the registration of newspapers and magazines; ,the duties of the press regulator; broadcast authority controls if the broadcast service aired has breached the law and cannot consent on contents of programmes that can contribute to political, economic and social growth of the country <garbled> ; the fairness of free air-time allocation for political parties during elections; the structure/organization of the regulatory body and its accountability, authority/power, duty and name; the state of regulatory work/regulation on broadcast services aired from abroad in our languages; content regulation on delivery of programmes via computers and mobile phones. This report argues that all these areas need policies, amendments and the inclusion of legal provisions.

In the broadcast proclamation and in the directives issued by the Council of Ministers for the establishment of the GCAO, issues related to media development, advertisement, media research and study have problems with regard to implementation There is a problem of overlapping authority so that similar tasks are performed by different bodies.

The threats forwarded on journalists and the media or blackmail or a libel charge by executive bodies, following a content disseminated is creating a threat on the very existence of media freedom and the journalist <garbled>. The report recommends a clear proclamation that provides protection to journalists and media institutions and helps to take legal actions on the perpetrators of fear and threats, to be put in place.

Though accommodated in the existing laws, it needs to pass proclamations to issues related to media works like; proclamations on intellectual property right, access to information and protection, services to be delivered in times of emergency and accessing services for people who need special and other similar things. <reword and explain>

9.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering myriads of policy issues, gaps and findings mentioned in the report the following recommendations are forwarded: <who is making the recommendations?>

- Considering the role of media in the process of building a democratic system and in the political, economic and social growth of the country, it is imperative to have a separate media and communications policy that can support these vital roles.
- As much as different laws are promulgated pursuant to the constitution so as to help expand the media and to materialize the right to express ideas freely and considering periodic glitches with regard to legal provisions, it is necessary to identify laws that need amendment and constitute new legal provisions based on studies <To eliminate the threats to journalists and the media by officials following a content disseminated, a clear proclamation that provides protection to journalists and media institutions and helps to take legal actions on the perpetrators should be put in place.

10.

THE FDRE DEVELOPMENTAL AND DEMOCRATIC MEDIA POLICY AND STRATEGY DRAFT DOCUMENT ASSESSMENT

The policy paper > analyses the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Developmental Democracy Media Policy and Strategy <this is a real document?

Media reflect the prevailing sociopolitical structure. Hence the media in the developed world are at the service of the privileged few who own and control the means of production. The anti-thesis is the social groups which are devoid of the means of production are far from power share and only participate in elections sometimes. and media serve and seek to perpetuate the liberal/neo-liberal system <or liberal market system> within the system of multinational corporate institutions.

The role of the corporate <what does "corporate" mean here?> media is to serve the system that created and nurtured it. By extension, the role of the journalist under this arrangement is either to compromise his professional ethics or resign. A developmental democracy seeks to ensure a fair distribution of the fruits of wealth to all, subject to the country's socioeconomic and political growth unlike the neo-liberal alternative. The base of the social system consists of rural farmers, pastoralists, labourers in small-scale industries, government employees and developmental investors/capitalists. The ultimate goal of developmental democracy is to make a fully developed capitalist system a reality and thereby help our country join the ranks of middle income nations and eventually become a developed nation.

Hence, when the alignment of our current political and social forces is investigated the developmental democracy alternative is an imperative. So, the media that is to be built in such a political economy has no choice other than to work by siding with the interest and security of the masses. The reverse is the case with neo-liberalism. From this perspective, the design of our media sector's growth is intertwined with directions of the ruling developmental democracy political economy and the structure of the social bases. For people who liberated themselves from a devastating civil war by their fierce struggle, it demands to build a media industry that advocates, and serves as a conduit for sharing experience and disseminate objective and credible information not to indulge in such atrocities again.

10.1. The Importance and Basic Characteristics of Ethiopian Media.

The assessment report entertains the following statements regarding these points

From the point of view of our objective reality; to have the majority enjoy a common view and belief on basic agenda, by kindling the public's information based movement/ activity and all rounded participation, it is possible to agitate the public for the realization of development, democracy and good governance through current and credible dissemination of information. It also serves as the voice for the public by singling out inefficiencies/ineptitude and working for solutions so as to keep the political endeavor healthy. From this vantage point, the media sector has a key role to play to ensure the sustainability of the ongoing developmental democracy system and for the outlook to enjoy prominence in the minds of the masses.

The East Asian which have registered success following the developmental path have happened to carry out two successful missions: changing the scenario where the political economy of rent seeking has an upper hand step by step and doing away with market deficits that hamper our growth by interfering in a selected and fruitful manner. Like Korea and Taiwan at the outset of their pursuance of the developmental path, the political economy of rent seeking has an upper hand in our country. Therefore, the developmental state to be established in our country has to shoulder these two missions. In the same vain, the media to be established in our country should be a media that is prepared to fight by recognizing this objective reality and take it as its key mission.

The assessment report further states the media need to be able to present the importance of peace, development, democracy and good governance in news, news analysis and other forums of debates and dialogue. Accordingly, the media should be based on these three pillars of development, democracy and good governance. From a political economy standpoint, national media need to support the developmental state in its selective market interventions to remove bottlenecks and to be free from interference from private sector owners who may have different ideological or economic priorities. This is not to deny the value of private/commercial media, but to emphasize the need for the media to be free from any pressure from owners and for there to be an understanding that journalism and commerce are different fields of work and should remain separate.

The media to be established in our country should presuppose some three basic characteristics of the system: that it takes development, democracy and good governance as questions of survival and has unwavering stand on the questions; being free from the owner/investor politically and economically; that gives prominence to developmental ideology and interfering in a selected and fruitful manner to do away with bottlenecks that can or would hamper development.

As the reigning ideology is free from the interference of the investor's/capitalist's political economy, the media has to follow and reflect this arrangement. But this doesn't mean that private or commercial media cannot exist or denying the existence of owners that operate the media. When it is said that the media should have a relative freedom from its owners, it means that as long as commercial work and journalism are two different fields of work by their nature, they have to keep on moving by observing their relative freedom and by not mixing up their roles.

It is at the juncture of the renaissance years when the country started to embark on building a developmental state, that neo-liberalism gained momentum and hence there are situations to be seen where this force in collaboration with internal forces is working against it. Our diversity is also another scenario that serves as best hiding place for rent seeking views and that creates a dire problem coupled with neo-liberalism. So the media to be established should work untiringly toward the prominence of developmental ideology by rightly recognizing objective global and internal challenges.

10.2. The necessity for the media policy

The report went on to describe <which document?> the hurdles that face the media. Though the media sector's development is seen as vital tool for development democracy, it confronts structural and administrative problems ,and knowledge, skill and input challenges. is a media that goes on a derailed thought frames and that has fallen captive to neo-liberalism by forgetting its national and popular responsibilities and obligations. <garbled> Though it has registered some improvements in recent years, the media sector does not compare well with those of other nations which have rapidly developing media. that are registering development in the industry. So, the developmental democracy media policy is produced in a manner that can provide enough response to problems identified by incorporating the roles of different bodies.

10.3. Policy and Strategic Focuses of The Developmental Democracy Media

Like all other development sectors, human resources play a vital role in the media of a developmental democracy. However, there are considerable limitations in the availability of enough educated and competent personnel for the media industry.

The industry needs to adopt new technology wisely and make use of social media as an outlet, which will require access to cutting edge technology.

10.4. General Views on Print Media

As enshrined in the Constitution, press freedom is guaranteed. The key role media play in the building of a democratic system is also mentioned in policy documents. M

Economic development and the growth of comprehensive schools and higher education institutions have enhanced the need for stronger media institutions. The multiparty system in play also needs media networks to encompass a variety of views. In addition, many civic associations may resort to printing/publishing based on their goals and interests. With the favorable conditions that the free market system has created, a number of print products have started being printed and distributed. Here, it should be remembered that the “golden days of print products” only lasted for brief years.

The other fact this segment of the assessment report raises is the emergence of new media outlets, which are reaching a wide audience following the modernization of information communications networks.

This segment of the document envisages the following scenarios:

- A.** The rapid development of education and information communications, has stimulated the interest of investors in this sector.
- B.** There are still sectors of the population who have not benefitted from access to media. The print media need to be guided so as to foster their role in reflecting a variety of views while supporting the existing political economy system.

10.5. General views on broadcast media

Traditionally broadcast media refers to television and radio and are defined as private, public and community. In this document, film and news agencies are included. This sector has the advantage of reaching a wide audience and has been established for a number of years. But it does not possess modern technology and needs to undergo a fundamental change.

The document also notes that the sector should include marginalized sections of society to be a conduit for mature political dialogues and discussions on ideas. Capacity-building of leaders and practitioners is emphasized, including the need to deliver media via modern technology that can compete with that of international media.

10.6. News Agencies

Though this sector has a history of half a century, it remains unmodernized, in technology and human resources. There needs a public wire service that can meet the information needs of the public.

10.7. Digitalized/social media

This is another area the document discusses. It is recognized that, coupled with the growth of communications technology, media outlets are converging on digitalized media communications technology, so as to be accessible by end users in real time through the Internet.

Using digitalized media to access information has now become a common practice around the globe. In accordance with the growing number of mobile and Internet users, the Government will make every effort to widen access to digitalized media.

10.8. Development of art and film industry

Being a mosaic of diverse people and cultures and with the advent of a democratic system, Ethiopia needs to deploy the arts and films to showcase hitherto neglected culture, folklore and languages.

There are occasional art exhibitions and film productions but they do not reflect national diversity and foreign culture and values are overrepresented. Therefore, the document has outlined a policy that requires the art sector in general and the film industry in particular to reflect diversity in the spirit of the national renaissance. .

10.9. Media research and diffusion

The document states that the media industry is still in its infancy and that its practitioners do not yet have the necessary capacities to foster democratic values and build national consensus. The policy document identifies goals and strategies to further these ends.

10.10. General Execution Methods of Developmental Democracy Media Policy

It will require the participation of all stakeholders to put the developmental democracy media policy into practice and to scale up its role in the development of the country. The document lists and details the roles of the stakeholders: federal government; regional governments; cities; rural and lower administrative units; the private sector; civic and mass associations, research centres of higher institutions; and political parties.

In the document, the concept of developmental democracy journalism involves: modernizing media technology, the issue of making information accessible to the public; questions of knowledge, skill and the inputs for best performance <meaning?>; the various challenges this type of media faces; the participation of the public in bringing about national consensus; image building; and development democracy and democracy. Be that as it may, according to Baran and Davis (2010), American journalists argue that the media should never compromise their power to criticize government policies, whatever the consequences. So, the policy document should accommodate this role of the media. <meaning>

On page 13 of the document, there is a statement that seems to suggest that, irrespective of ownership, the media must serve the ideology of the developmental democracy political economy. But literature on journalism show that “who owns the media owns the content.” This might be taken to imply that the privately-owned media should align content with developmental democracy’s ideals and have no control over content and is contrary to the ideal of freedom of speech enshrined in the Constitution and press laws. It also implies that the media cannot serve as a forum to entertain diversity of thoughts and ideas, which could threaten the viability of privately-owned media.

Therefore, as the market is liberalized so should the media be. The media should be able to bring different ideas, opinions and information to the public sphere and compete for an audience. It should not be forgotten that the media are also marketplaces for ideas.

Another equally important point (on page 30) deals with the question of a press agency. The rationale for establishing and running a news agency is to provide information to the media by gathering news and events from around the country and the globe. It should not be forgotten that the motive is to earn profits and survive by the profits.

The news agency in Ethiopia operates with the government budget and sends the information it gathers to government/ public media, filling a gap that the national media cannot gather and disseminate by themselves.

10.11. RECOMMENDATIONS

The policy document which will be drafted contains vital points that are important to run a vibrant media industry, armed with good understanding of how the media operates. It also lists handicaps to be addressed regarding the utilization of appropriate technology and capacity-building of leaders and practitioners in the sector.

11.

THE FDRE DEVELOPMENTAL DEMOCRACY COMMUNICATION POLICY AND STRATEGY DRAFT

This policy document attempts to describe the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Developmental Democracy Communications Policy and Strategy is a published document? . It has four chapters with headings and subs and an index serving as a glossary .

The media and communications ecology reflects the prevailing sociopolitical structure. Hence the media and communication sector in the developed world serves the privileged few who own and control the means of production, a system which it perpetuates through multinational corporate institutions.

The fate of the corporate media and communication is to serve the system that created and nurtured it. By extension, the fate of the journalist under this system is either to compromise his professional ethics or resign. Trying to do otherwise involves a price to pay. <This repeats; delete>

Developmental democracy is a system that can ensure a fair distribution of wealth to all, subject to the country's continued socioeconomic and political growth, unlike the neoliberal alternative. Countries that are now fully developed did a great deal to support and modernize the agricultural sector as capitalism was emerging and direct government support was also important in the creation of local/indigenous capitalists, according to the literature. It was after the Second World War that the practice of developmental journalism and communications proved a vital tool in involving mass participation in and ownership of the proceeds of development.

The design of our media and communication sector's growth is intertwined with the evolution of the ruling developmental democracy political economy and the structure of the social bases. For people who have liberated themselves from a devastating civil war by their fierce struggle , it is necessary to build a media and communications industry that advocates, teaches, and serves as a conduit for sharing experience and disseminating objective and credible information, to avoid the repetition of such atrocities.

The country's developmental democracy media and communications policy and strategy is one of the key focus areas of the country's development, democracy, and good governance agenda. The focus of the policy is on issues that have strategic importance. The document identifies the issues as follows: development of human resources; establishing a system of developmental democracy communications; a continuous widening of the reach of communications; formulating best practices for the best execution of developmental democracy communication; research and diffusion of developmental democracy communication; the Government's social media and web services and the Government's developmental administration of advertisements.

The policy document is organized in four chapters. The first chapter deals with the policy's basic characteristics, importance and initial conditions; Chapter two puts the policy's vision, mission, purpose, goals and strategic focuses; Chapter three describes the focus areas of developmental communication and finally Chapter four dwells on the role of stakeholders to ensure the transformation of the policy into practice and the methods of the policy's execution.<Useful to know how many Chapters?>

11.1. Developmental Democracy's Communication and Basic Characteristics, Initiating Factors and Importance

The document states that communications is a major way in which developmental democracy can gain and maintain popular support.

With no exception, the communication and media industry to be built or built in any country is hinged on the political economy of the system. A communication industry that cannot accommodate the thoughts and outlooks of the reigning political economy and go to action, doesn't last. This also works in our situation. <delete garbled>

Establishing a developmental state in Ethiopia will require similar efforts and will necessitate the creation of communications institutions which will support these aims and establish the primacy of peace, democracy and good governance. <edit OK?>

11.2. Initiating Factors for the Policy and Strategy of Developmental Democracy Communication

Though there are many global and local reasons that dictated the designing of this developmental democracy communication, the major social, political and economic initiators are the following: the federal constitution and the laws, the importance of developing the common values that people have nurtured despite their diversity; the importance of raising national consensus, democratic thoughts, cultures and values; strengthening wide public participation and ownership and being beneficiary, to create a challenging and influential public; to enable social organizations carry out their democratic roles and to insure Ethiopia's renaissance by sustaining our peace and development; the importance of reinforcing the successes of past public relation and communication works.

11.3. The Importance of the Policy

The development communication is one from among the issues the Ethiopian government gave emphasis and is working on like strategic peace, development, democracy and good governance. Though, the national developmental democracy communication sector is registering growth, it still is not found to be satisfactory.

Therefore, the importance of the policy presupposes to prepare comprehensive law and mode of execution framework for issues that are not fully developed, for issues that have laws decreed for their execution but not fully developed and for issues that need additional law and methods of execution.

6.3The document also lists and tries to give details on the visions, missions, goals and principles of the developmental democracy communication sector.

12.

STRATEGIC FOCUS OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL DEMOCRACY COMMUNICATION POLICY

The suggested policy document describes the developmental democracy communication's strategic focus as follows: development of human resources; establishing a system of developmental democracy communication and formulating best practice for its promulgation; conducting research and communicating the findings into developmental democracy communication; and establishing and fostering the Government's social media and web services and use of advertisements.

12.1. Human resource development: General view

The spread of education and has greatly increased citizens' need to access and use government information. Trained communicators are needed to address people's information needs and to foster developmental democracy communication practices. The federal developmental democracy communication policy recognizes the need to develop human resources to carry out these roles.

12.2. General view on developing methods of execution for the developmental democracy communication

The Constitution requires the Government to follow the principles of transparency and accountability. To carry out this constitutional obligation, communications institutions at every level should be supplied with modern technology, appropriate to the level of development the country has reached. To provide a continuous flow of information, the Government needs to organize information centres in every institution and provide the public with all available information modalities. It also needs to devise modern methods to disseminate information easily for those who do have access problems, for whatever reason. The document also sets goals and purposes that should be realized throughout the country, by designing appropriate communications strategies for all places.

12.2.1. Sustainable formulation of practices of developmental democracy communication: General view

Spreading the best practices of countries with advanced communications ecologies can be facilitated by focusing on four areas: ensuring that the implementation of communication is closely tied with the work of higher decision-making bodies of government; designing ways of addressing pressing and current/topical issues; establishing the

crisis communication work to be followed when crisis and emergency situations are encountered; and dealing with issues of protecting copyright and patent rights.

12.2.2. Research and diffusion of developmental communication: General view

According to the document, there is insufficient communication about major government policies and strategies, decisions and actions using modern communication methods and tools. <correct as shortened and edited?>

It therefore suggests the establishment of goals, purposes and strategies for communicating so that the work of national consensus-building is conducted soundly based on study and research.

12.3. Government's social media and web services: General view

Most people but the youth that takes the greater chunk of the population is now seen using modern information networks, specially the internet, webs and social media. Those who are out of the domain of this social group, make use of the internet as an income generating means beyond using it for information exchange.

The policy document gives details of goals, purposes and strategies that are expected to embody appropriate strategies to provide the public with current information and enable them participate in an informed manner in national development, democracy and good governance processes. These processes include the use of websites and social media by central and local government as well as community associations.

12.4. Administration of the Government's developmental advertisements

The way in which advertisements are currently publicized has the following handicaps: advertisements paid for by the government budget do not entertain a plurality of ideas; they do not attempt to address the interests of particular social segments and areas that need special support and attention; they do not take into account the need for fairness in allocating expenditure among different media bodies; and many are not found to be guided by the principles of transparency and accountability. The Government has decided that it will learn from the experience of countries and institutions with a wealth of experiences in this area to address these issues. Here too, the document enumerates goals, purposes and strategies.

12.5. Methods of Policy Execution: General view:

The Government has promulgated the freedom of mass media and of access to information and is working for its realization. It has conducted information dissemination work on major policies, strategies and programmes in different ways, to bring about national consensus. It has conducted capacity-building among leaders and practitioners of communication and provided the public with information on current situations and the national agenda through government officials delivering responses and clarifications. There are signs that public/private print and broadcast media are moving in the right direction and that the creation of institutions to make government information accessible to the public is taking effect. The document asserts that the major direction is to press ahead at renewed speed and strength with current policies and strategies.

12.6. Follow-up and evaluation:

The GCAO is charged with the responsibility to carry out the policy as well as with monitoring and evaluation.

12.7. Roles of stakeholders:

Communications work by its nature is an activity that requires mutual support, collaboration and interaction among different stakeholders and government institutions. Communications work is more successful when there is collaboration with high-level government executives and with the higher leadership of the judiciary and the legislature to deliver the information that the public needs. The document identifies the following stakeholders as playing a key role in the leadership and practice of communications work: officials in their own respective institutions; communications offices at every level; the private sector; higher education institutions and institutions of research and diffusion; social groups, civic institutions, non-governmental organizations and mass organizations.

12.8. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The policy draft document contains vital points that are important to run a vibrant media and communication industry. Nonetheless I will try to put some of consultant's observations and suggestions.

As McPhail (2009) puts it:

Development communication is the process of intervening in a systematic or strategic manner with either media (print, radio, telephony, video, and the Internet), or education (training, literacy, schooling) for the purpose of positive social change. The change could be economic, personal, as in spiritual, social, cultural, or political.

In other words, the whole point of making information accessible to the public is not only for the sake of delivering it, but to influence the thinking of the recipients and thereby bring about social change. Therefore, the policy document should emphasize this aspect of development communications and adjust policy in accordance with the idea that communications are agents of transformation as well as sources of information.

13.

ETHIOPIAN COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE ON MEDIA'S RESPONSE

Below is the review of Ethiopian Communication Structure on media response status identification survey. Article 11/12 of the Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information Proclamation (590/2008) states: "All persons/ citizens have the right to seek, obtain and communicate information held by public bodies..." Accordingly, citizens have forwarded 1,547, 430 requests seeking information from government bodies . As compared to 68,160 requests registered in 2004 EC (2012), it shows a dramatic increase.

Employees discontented with their organizations can appeal, first to the higher managing bodies of their respective organizations, then to the public ombudsman institution and finally to the courts of justice. In this respect, 1,163 appeals to higher managing bodies, 5 administrative appeals to the public ombudsman and 400 appeals to courts have been presented in 2008.

In this survey 44 federal institutions participated and as to the selection. Seven institutions are picked from each of the five clusters. However, eight institutions are picked from the economic development sector considering their size. The institutions in these clusters are of different levels: ministries, the authority for the control of development organizations, commissions, boards, and institutions. These arrangements are taken into consideration when samples are taken from each of the clusters.

Regions are classified in three ways. They are: four major regions, five emerging regions and two city administrations. The survey is conducted by taking samples through a random sampling technique from the communication bureaux of major regions like, Tigray, Amhara and SNNP; from communication bureaux of the Harari national regional government and from city administrations front, communication bureaux of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa. In this sample, 207 participants from communication bureaux of different regional states and 22 participants from communication bureaux of the two city administrations have taken part.

The media can be divided into press, TV, radio, news agencies and modern media. Based on this, a selection is made from: TV stations, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, the Amhara, Tigray, Harari and Addis Ababa media, plus from Oromiya and SNNP radio and TV organizations.

From the print products sector; Addis Zemen, Reporter, Capital, Sendek, Addis Admas are included based on their circulation and readership. From the radio stations sector; Fana Broadcasting Corporate and Shegerand Zami are included, while the Ethiopian News Agency represents the agency sector. However, modern media/web pages are not included in this survey.

The following emerges from analysis of the survey:

13.1. Work Relation Between Communication and Media Professionals

Most media professionals say that the working relationships between communications and media professionals is effective <is that what is implied by “based on mutual needs?” although quite a number claim that the relationship is antagonistic. Currently, communications professionals give limited information to media, whom they may see as opponents rather than partners in the profession.

13.2. General Condition of The Information Obtained from The Public Relations (Communication Officers) Sector

When the information obtained from the PR department is viewed against quality, most put it in middle level and fairly enough number of survey participants have rated it to be in the lower level. With regard to fast and speedy provision of information, most media professionals have put it in middle level while half of them rated to be slower and sluggish.

Most <respondents?> rate the quality of information from public relations departments <of what?> as reasonable and the speed of delivery as adequate, though a sizable number see the quality as low and the speed as slow.

The survey also revealed that respondents feel that communications professionals wish to have all the information they provide to the media reported, to have only the best practice publicized and that expressions of discontent are suppressed.

Communications professionals are also felt to be excessively bureaucratic and of low capacity. In particular, participants said information about crises is not made available in a timely manner.

Some participants felt that communications professionals are not proactive in their approach to information provision, that they wait to be asked for information and may even see it as a favour for which they expect gratitude. In their response to survey questions in regard to the provision of information to the media in times of crisis communication, participants said information is made available to the media after it is overdue. What we can understand from this is the PR department doesn't play its proactive role in the provision of information and also indicates that there is a gap in the provision of current information by appraising the problems experienced.

The survey also reveals that most of the participants put that availing information is not taken as a duty by the PR department and they even want to be begged for it. Fair number of participants also put that the PR department counts their provision of information as a favor and need gratitude in return.

13.3. The Method Employed by The Communication Sector to Reach the Public

Respondents reported that radio, television and the press are the most commonly used methods of communication and that the use of websites is in its infancy. Some communications sector institutions do not even have a web page.

13.4. Gaps Observed in The Utilization of The Proclamation of Freedom of The Mass Media and Access to Information

Communications professions, especially those new to the profession, lack familiarity with the proclamations on Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information. As a result, they may forget that that the information in the hands of Government is public property, to which the public has the right of access, and that provision of information is an obligation. Other problems identified include linking the provision of information with vested interests, not knowing what kind of information can be released or withheld and difficulties for journalists and the type information to be allowed or withheld /prohibited, impracticality of the protection put for journalists and their vulnerability to problems when coming across gaps. Moreover, the impracticability of the charter of citizens' access to information is raised as a problem.

13.5. Other gaps seen on communication professionals

Criticisms by media professionals of the attitudes of some communications professionals include: seeing media professionals, not as partners, but as critics aiming to expose faults; being fed up with their work and failing to be proactive; having limited capacity and failing to be organized; only considering the interests of the Government; insisting that information be modified after releasing it; waiting for instructions to come from their heads, limited

capacity, not having an organized information, not having a serving spirit, mistreating media professionals, reflecting the interest of the government only, wanting to have things claimed to have been accomplished but not reported by the media, knowing not the very essence of the profession, a situation of being tied with endless meetings, pestering the media to add or remove statements after giving away the information and not planning the work.

13.6. The organization of information

Because information is not properly organized and filed, communications professionals often fail to provide information to the media when needed. Moreover, some communications professionals cannot get information from other departments within their own organization, or there are situations where instead of information being provided by communications professionals, departments provide information to the media by themselves. Hence, gaps in the organization of information are seen.

13.7. The Role of Ethiopian Public Ombudsman Institute in enforcing the exercise of the proclamation

The nine months report released in 2008 E.C (2016) from EIO reveals that the information the Ombudsman asks for and what is actually gathered by government institutions is different and that the information can be contradictory; this means that there is inconsistency between data listing public requests for information and data covering requests that are permitted or denied. The figures of the public's request for information and the ones permitted and the ones that are prohibited. Moreover, the fact that the public doesn't follow the procedure when forwarding their requests and the reason why the information requested are prohibited is not explained.

13.8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn the following recommendations are forwarded:

- Communications professionals need the assistance of the media and it is important for them to strengthen their relationship with the media. To do this, a media and communications forum should be set up.
- Some organizations (communications offices) do not organize information that could be an input to the media appropriately. Since the organization of information varies from one office to another, it is important to identify best practices established in offices that have a good reputation for this so that others may follow suit.
- Intensive awareness-creation efforts need to be undertaken to address communications professionals' lack of knowledge about the legal framework. These efforts need to cover: the right of the public to access information to be respected as enshrined in the proclamation; what types of information must be revealed or withheld; letting citizens know their rights to access information and their right to appeal by following the due procedures if denied these rights; ratifying in accordance with the charter for the rights of citizens to access information; and understanding how to deliver timely information.
- Trainings should be conducted to enlighten and build the capacity of communications professionals to carry out their role in not only in building their organization's image but also of finding ways of addressing problems, in the importance of the PR structure and the importance of the provision of information.
- Awareness needs to be raised on the importance of understanding that information is public property and that it should be delivered without undue bureaucracy and at a reasonable price and not be withheld without good reason.
- The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Public Ombudsman, endowed with the power to enforce the Access to information proclamation, has the duty to assist organizations to fulfill the proclamation, to mandate compliance with the proclamation and to make efforts to correct faulty reports sent from different organizations.
- It is also important to offer trainings on the best use of modern media for speedy delivery of information alongside the traditional media.

14.

ETHIOPIA MEDIA MAPPING

The Ethiopian media can be divided into the broadcasting and print media sectors. There are three different kinds of broadcasters: 1) Government-funded television and radio services owned by national and regional media agencies or networks; 2) private sector radio stations; and 3) community stations that serve the interests of the community in different parts of the country.

In total there are 10 state-owned radio and six state television stations (terrestrial) and seven state TV stations (satellite). In total there are 13 commercial radio stations and 10 commercial TV stations, and one foreign broadcast programme syndicate. In all, 50 community radio stations are registered and out of these 40 FM stations are actively on air in different regional states.

Currently four state-owned newspapers and one state-owned magazine are published by the Ethiopian Press Agency. Regional states own nine newspapers and nine magazines circulating in their area. Unlike the broadcasting media the print media are highly concentrated around Addis Ababa. The significant difference is that there is a much larger presence of private print media. Currently, 11 newspapers and 13 magazines are registered with the EBA. These print media products are published in Amharic, which is the major language of the media, followed by English.

Table 1: Diffusion of Ethiopian Media by Ownership and Type

I. Ethiopian Broadcast Media							
1.	State radio broadcaster	State TV Stations (Terrestrial)	State TV Stations (Satellite)	Commercial TV Stations	Commercial Radio Stations	Foreign Broadcast Programmes Syndicate	Community Radio
	10	6	7	10 (ENN snuffed out of the media market) <meaning><	11	1	50 (10 of them not yet on the air)
II. Ethiopian Print Media							
1.	State- Owned Newspapers	State- Owned Magazines	Regional States- Owned Print Media		Privately-Owned Print Media		
	4	1	Newspapers	Magazines	Newspapers	Magazines	
			9	9	11	13	

Source: GCAO Document,2018<please identify and cite>

15.

ASSESSMENT OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION STRUCTURES:

The relationship between the Head Office of GCAO and every ministry's communications office is determined by the spirit and principles of Articles 50, 51 and 52 of the Constitution. The Freedom of Information and Mass Media Proclamation (590/2008) Article 13: "Duty to publish", Article 14: "Request to obtain information" and subsequent provisions under Articles 16-28 also have an impact on the GCAO. The other foundation for the relationship is the one stated under Regulation 158/2008, which specifies the duties and responsibilities of GCAO.

A. HORIZONTAL RELATIONSHIPS

Article 50 of the Constitution delimits the power and functions of the Federal Government whereas Article 52 covers the powers and functions of the regional governments. Both levels of government have the right to organize the three branches which are of government. Federal and transregional and international issues are federal matters, for example the Federal GCAO. Regional and local issues are left to regional governments and Regional Communication Bureaux.

<Despite that fact that, the nature of the Ethiopian Constitution can be explained as collaborative rather than competitive <what is this sentence saying? Contrast with what follows , There are several areas where the federal Government intervenes in the affairs of regional governments. For example, the constitutive regulation of the GCAO stated that the Federal GCAO office plays a leading role in the Government's communications and information system. Hence, the relationship between federal and regional GCAOs is by and large horizontal with few exceptional cases related to: implementation of access to information law in the regions (Article 4 sub.1) ; developing strong working relations; providing capacity-building services to regional public relations professionals (sub Art 9), media infrastructure development (Art 14); and related cross regional issues.

B. VERTICAL RELATIONSHIPS

The relationship between GCAO's head office and federal ministries structure is by large designed vertically. The constitutive regulation of GCAO, Article 5 defines the nature of the vertical relationship between the head office and respective line ministries. Sub Article 2 says: "GCAO sets directions for public relations activities of federal government offices and coordinates their executions".

Sub Article 3 says: Undertake capacity building activities for public relations officers of federal government offices and provide general guidelines for their deployment and promotion."

The GCAO head office determines the public relations offices' career structure, sets standards and guidelines for the line ministry communicators and sets overall directions for the conduct of public relations.

In addition, the Freedom of Mass Media and Access to Information proclamation 590/2008, clearly states the roles and responsibilities of public relations offices in all federal government offices. It is the PR officer that is tasked with the provision and protection of classified information. The Office of the Ombudsman has the responsibility to review the performances of government offices in their delivery of information, together with GCAO. In this case the PR officers have dual accountability for their performances.

16.

ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION POLICY IN AFRICA: OVERVIEW

According to UNESCO, no African country has, to date, evolved or implemented a comprehensive, integrated and holistic communications policy. The general approach to communications policy in Africa has been partial and based on piecemeal considerations. Different kinds of explicit and implicit communications policies have been drawn up or verbally pronounced to govern and regulate the operations and “behaviour” of communications in such countries as Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Congo, and others (Boafo, 1980). Each African country south of the Sahara has separate sets of regulations and guidelines on the print media, the electronic media, film, news agency, telecommunications, communications training and government information. Communications policies in African countries are often embodied in the speeches of national leaders, government official pronouncements and directives, decrees, legislation, and in some instances enshrined in national constitutions. Existing policies relate, *inter alia*, to the perceived functions of communications systems in the society, “press freedom responsibilities/telecommunication services, the management of the predominantly state-owned national mass media (especially radio and television stations) and to the importation and distribution of communications materials, books and films. A critical analysis of existing policies on communications systems in African countries indicates a number of disquieting elements. First, many of the policies made through official directives, legislations, decrees or through pronouncements by national leaders do not seem to have been based on any comprehensive research and analysis of communications systems in the countries. There are no systematically gathered data on the implications of communications policies on the social fabric or on development of communication systems in many of these countries. Very often communications policies and regulations seem to have been hurriedly drawn up or announced as a reaction to some event or response to a problem generated by a particular use of communication technology.

Many communications policies in the region do not seem to have resulted from extensive deliberations and broad consultation with individuals and agencies expected to implement the policies, or who, in one way or the other, may be affected by the policies. There is a high degree of centralization and concentration of communications policy and regulation-making capacity among a few government officials and national leaders.

Very often, the professed general policies in African countries of harnessing available communications systems, especially the mass media, for national socioeconomic, cultural and political development have, in reality, been translated into using available communications facilities to project the image, policies, ideology and programmes of the government of the day. Simultaneously, attempts are made to suppress criticisms of government policies and programmes and expression of diverse views and opinions on national issues. There are numerous instances when communications facilities, power and channels in most African countries have been consciously utilized by the ruling elite, in the words of Twumasi, “as instruments for building personality cults, an enterprise which does not necessarily promote development.

Moreover, although in their speeches and pronouncements national leaders and government officials in Africa refer to the significance of communications systems in development, little has been made

by political leaders and planners of national development programmes to incorporate communications strategies and processes into national development planning. Most 10-year or 5-year development plans in African countries give little or no attention to communications systems. Among national policy and decision-makers there seems to be low awareness of the need for a comprehensive policy to incorporate communication processes and strategies and utilization of information in planning for development (Boafo). Communication and telecommunications systems in most African countries largely serve the needs of the 25 per cent of the people who live in urban centres while neglecting those in rural areas. Africa's communications and telecommunications infrastructure is predominantly marked by high centralization and concentration in the few urbanized areas with inadequate communications facilities and resources and limited accessibility to available facilities for most people living in rural areas. Overall, modern communications technology in African countries provides services mainly to the rich—the political, administrative, military and business elite and to multinational corporations and their local affiliates.

These dominant characteristics of the communications and telecommunications infrastructure, coupled with the essentially synchronic communications patterns and processes in African societies hinder the effective participation of the population in discussing and making decisions on significant national issues. The gaps and disparities in the distribution of communications facilities and systems are detrimental for national development since they could create, among people cut off from the mainstream of information flows, severe disagreement with or ignorance of national development objectives and strategies. Such conditions can frustrate or retard development efforts in the continent.

Further, oral and traditional communications methods such as interpersonal networks, drama or folk theatres, drums, games, linguists and town criers are important features of the communications environment of African rural communities (Bame). The bulk of the population living in rural areas depend extensively on those traditional media rather than on modern technologies for information transmission and reception. Nevertheless, hardly any policies have been devised in any African country to integrate the traditional with the modern communications and telecommunications systems or to consciously use and encourage sustained use of the widespread traditional communications media for Africa's development.

16.1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Develop a comprehensive communications policy that incorporates communications strategies and processes into national development planning and provides a diversity of opinions and viewpoints on national issues to foster national unity and consciousness;
- Develop ways of ensuring adequate manpower, financial and technical input into the communications systems;
- Streamline communications activities in various sectors in order to avoid duplication of resources and efforts;
- Promote, plan and coordinate assessment of new communications technology which is to be introduced;
- Promote, support, coordinate and provide guidelines for communications education and training;
- Organize a national communications policy council to undertake all steps required to implement a national communications policy.

17.

MAJOR FINDINGS of the Assessment:

1. There is a dire need to review media and information related laws that help to expand and enhance access to information that enables the public to participate in the country's political transformation.
2. Collaboration between the regional and the federal communications offices is not strong enough. There is a need to produce a communications policy and strategy document that supports the work of communicators.
3. Regional communications offices are not engaged in providing information on national matters even if they will have direct or indirect impact on their respective regions. Generally, the government communications system is not yielding maximum impact. Factors such as a lack of knowledge and skills gap within the system are posing a challenge to effective communications.
4. Political leaders (ministers, head of departments or directors) are not always aware of the requirements or impact of effective communications. For the coordination of communications system creating a communications forum is essential. This forum would coordinate communications between ministers and other levels of government. The communication policy council should be created to oversee implementation of the policy.
5. There is no clear coordination system between the prime minister's office's communications system and the GCAO. There is a dire need to clearly establish the effective leadership of the communications machinery.
6. There is a need to use the development communications approach to make public programmes and policies real, meaningful and sustainable.

18.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on the assessment findings, the consultants have made recommendations for UNDP and GCAO for future communication strategies formulation and interventions.

The assessment has attempted to identify certain general factors which have to be considered in designing a comprehensive national communications policy for development in Ethiopia. A comprehensive, systematic and coherent national communications policy will exert an influence on citizens, society and the international community. That is why communications must be part of all facets of government activity from planning to final implementation.

Regions and federal communications bureau in Ethiopia deal with issues in their respective domains only. This ties regional bureau to domestic issues. The relationship between federal and regional communication bureau needs to be reviewed.

GCAO is the maker and breaker of communications activities in different ministries. It influences career structures, guidelines, and promotions in ministries, as well as indoctrination. Seen from the employees' perspective, this erodes a sense of belongingness and creates a sense of being a stranger in one's own domain. This protectorate type arrangement and bondage to the federal communications office must be avoided and ministries must be liberated to manage all their affairs, guided by a communications policy.

To produce a new communications policy and strategy, it is important to review the principles that will lie behind GCAO's future activity. The new policymaking environment will require consideration of GCAO's draft documents addressed in the assessment process.

The communications policy principles are guided by the principles indicated in the assessment of this report. The policy principles that are used to formulate the policy are universal and commensurable overtime and across countries, with considerable changes with the historical and cultural contexts of Ethiopia. And we look forward that this assessment will help not to miss all necessary policy principles. >

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የሚዲያ ፖሊሲና ህጎች፣ እንዲሁም በሀገራችን የሚዲያ ፖሊሲና ህጎች የሚታዩ ክፍተቶች (ቀን አልተገለፀም)

በፌዴራል፣ ክልል/ከተማ አስተዳደር የሚገኙ የህዝብ ግንኙነት፣ መዋቅሩ ለሚዲያ መረጃ ምላሽ ሰጪነት ጥናት ያተኮረ ዳሰሳዊ ጥናት፣ 2009

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