

A person wearing a yellow t-shirt and patterned shorts is climbing a tall, vertical wooden pole. The pole has several horizontal rungs. The person is seen from behind, reaching up towards the top of the pole. The background is a clear, light blue sky.

# **Improving Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones**

**Reconsidering Quality Categories**

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## ***Orientation***

This document presents a compilation of studies and research on media initiatives in conflict zones carried out in the period between 2009 and 2015. The main issues addressed are quality categories, evaluation and continual improvement.

**PART A** is a brief **Concept Note**, explaining why *constituting publicly accessible databases with rudimentary, journalistically validated information on social change* should be included in the design and implementation of media initiatives in conflict zones (for details see A.5).

**PART B** considers **Quality Categories** for media initiatives in conflict zones from a systemic and methodological perspective and elaborates on different perceptions of quality.

**PART C** presents **Field Research** undertaken in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In Part C only the abstract and some appendices are in English. The rest is in French to also make the material accessible and useful for people in the DRC.

The different papers were submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Advanced Study Degree in Peace and Conflict Transformation, accredited by the Advanced Studies Centre at the University of Basel. Parts A and C can be found as separate documents on [www.h-connect.ch](http://www.h-connect.ch) (Menu “Organisation” → Rubric “Media Projects in Conflict Zones”).

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## **Abstract**

The topic of this paper - quality of media initiatives in conflict zones<sup>1</sup> - implies two core questions: What is good and what is poor quality (regarding the topic) and what characterizes the *inside* of conflict zones in contrast to their *outside*. Communication channels between *inside* and *outside* are often scarce or shut down, for example when states with a high Human Development Index (HDI)<sup>2</sup> ask their citizens to refrain from travelling when violent clashes occur in Low-HDI-Areas. This is just one example of segregation between these two spheres of observation.

I contend that media initiatives in conflict zones must clearly extend beyond the remit of common media organisations, towards de-escalation, conflict regulation, and development etc. As these are not standard functions for media, the quality debate turns in circles. Two things, at least, are clear: Applying standard media quality criteria is not enough. And media in conflict zones are particularly well positioned to understand and explain their environment – society, social change, power balance etc. – in a holistic way. This second point is highly important for collective decision-making and administrative tasks inside conflict zones and also for objective quality assessments of outsider's aid activities<sup>3</sup>.

In order to empower conflict-affected societies and to improve the efficacy of aid in general, I propose an additional function to media initiatives in conflict zones: *To constitute publicly accessible databases with rudimentary, journalistically validated<sup>4</sup> information on social change* (for details see A.5). As media organisations constantly produce data on social change, the costs for these additional tasks appear to be reasonable when compared to the potential benefits.

The aim of this work is to be useful for practitioners and experts inside and outside conflict zones and particularly to contribute to better mutual understanding between different academic fields involved in media initiatives in conflict zones.

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<sup>1</sup> The definitions are to be found in B.1.1.1.

<sup>2</sup> The Human Development Index (HDI) has been developed by the United Nations as an alternative to the Gross National Income (GNI), in order to be specific on human development. (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.PP.CD>; <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi> (29.7.2014, for both sources)

<sup>3</sup> The terms “aid” and “aid activities” are used in this text to describe different forms of external support to conflict zones like for example humanitarian- and development aid, activities to enforce, maintain or build peace, to deal with the past etc.

<sup>4</sup> Feedback loops in media systems can validate data on social change, but this must involve also non-media actors, particularly public structures formally in charge for monitoring and documentation (statistical services etc.). Inclusiveness is of general importance in outsider interventions in violent environments. Context and stakeholders must be carefully and continually analysed in order to avoid doing harm by marginalising or privileging specific groups in conflict. See Anderson M (1999) regarding the *Do No Harm Principles*.

## PART A: Concept Note

### A.1 *About usefulness and quality*

Talking about quality is en vogue, but is also vague: Different sectors such as, for example, industry, education, health, aid activities, finance etc. have different understandings of quality. Simultaneously, new visions of quality emerge<sup>5</sup>.

One problem in the matter discussed here is that data from aid activities can potentially impact living conditions inside conflict zones without the concerned stakeholders being consulted. Therefore, the quality-question must be discussed together with the question of usefulness: Useful for whom and for what?

In accordance with my personal understanding of quality, I want this paper to be useful for improving living conditions in conflict zones. In order to go beyond simply debating media quality, the theoretical considerations in this paper were complemented with field research<sup>6</sup>.

One problem is that quality assessments regarding aid often lead to controversial debates: First because it is a political issue in the so called “donor countries”, second because the correlation between *impact* (social change in conflict zones) and *input* (aid activities) can rarely be attributed with certainty. This is particularly the case in peace building, under which media initiatives in conflict zones are to be subsumed<sup>7</sup>.

In a first phase, this work was oriented by the question: *How to evaluate quality of media initiatives in conflict zones?* First conclusions were formulated in 2009<sup>8</sup>. Subsequently, I included the question: How to *add value* to such initiatives? This with a focus not only on externally supported media initiatives but also on other media organisations in conflict zones, the international media system, interactions between different systems and possible synergies. I am sceptical about the idea of media concepts developed in “rich” countries<sup>9</sup> having the potential to de-escalate violent conflicts in “poorer” societies, without a specific

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<sup>5</sup> Some examples: The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI, <https://www.globalreporting.org/Pages/default.aspx>; 15.10.14), Transparency International (<http://www.transparency.org/> (19.2.2014) or the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI; <https://eiti.org/>; 15.10.14).

<sup>6</sup> Field research was undertaken in Bukavu (DRC; Capital City of the South Kivu Province) because of personal relations that I have in this region since a first visit in 1984. Please refer to chapter B.2 and Part C for Details. I am referring to this sample of fieldwork throughout this paper for illustrative purposes, referencing to it as “my fieldwork”.

<sup>7</sup> The term Peace Building sums up a variety of activities reaching from diplomacy to mediation or negotiation, institution building, dealing with the past etc. Some selected definitions for peace building can be found on <http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/2013/08/selected-definitions-of-peacebuilding/> (20.8.2014). The difficulties in establishing correlations between input and impact when evaluating peace building activities are further elaborated in B.2.3.1.

<sup>8</sup> Homberger (2009); briefly introduced in B.2.1.

<sup>9</sup> In this paper, the term “rich countries” is used to describe the group of states with high rankings in terms of Gross National Income per capita and/or Human Development Index, which are also referred as “industrialized” or “developed” countries in literature.

peace-building element being added.

## **A.2 Approaching reality in conflict zones**

Based on what I experienced in roughly two years spent in the Central African Great Lakes Region between 1984 and 2014, as well as on what I learned from international experts and students about other conflict zones, I assume that isolation is a major problem for people affected by violent conflicts<sup>10</sup>. I still remember how puzzled I was in 1993, when asking Mrs. Shangazo, a respected lady in Shabunda (DRC), what outsiders could do to benefit her district, which was already physically isolated then, three years before war affected it. Her somehow disturbing answer was *“Il faut seulement chaque fois venir nous voir”* - “You need only to come and see us every time”.

Poverty and violent conflicts segregate “insiders” like Mrs. Shangazo from the “outsider” community, which is in fact a very heterogeneous entity involving aid, military, business and many other sectors. Physical or armed protection effectively binds together most of this outsider community, with the effect that a specific communication system for outsiders emerges. In this communication system, security issues are often the core topic, together with specific project related issues and observations on social realities and social change.

For the majority of those most affected by violent conflicts, such information platforms are not accessible, with the effect that different communication systems, even different “truths” exist in parallel. Without relations of trust and objective, publicly accessible information on social realities and social change, factual errors and destructive propaganda can circulate unrecognized in these segregated communication systems.

The fact that the survival of those most affected by violent conflicts often depends on outsider’s emergency responses might provoke additional frustrations: Representatives of aid initiatives are perceived as powerful persons and the “beneficiaries” can expect that this power is used to correct unjust power balances in their environment.

Besides the scarcity of trustable relations and communication, traumas are a second element of segregation between *inside* and *outside*: In conflict zones, violence does not surprise but most of the time still happens unexpectedly. This traumatises victims, relatives, friends and bystanders. Outsiders most often do not share this type of experience, which implies a risk of re-traumatising victims by ignoring or recalling dramas behind smiling faces.

Aid to conflict zones contributes substantially to local or regional economies and

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<sup>10</sup> Another argument to support the assumption that scarce insider-outsider communication might be problematic is the fact that “conflict countries” covered intensively by international media over the last years appear as having low or very low internet connection rates (percentage of individuals using Internet). Some examples: Eritrea 0,9% (last on the list), Somalia 1.5%, DR Congo 1.9%, Afghanistan 5.9%, Iraq 9.2%, Libya 16.5%, Syria 26.2%, compared to industrialized countries, reaching up to 95% and more (Norway for example has 95.05% of all individuals using Internet). All data are according to the International Telecommunication Union ITU; <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>, 28.7.2014 (Downloadable Excel-Sheet in the rubric “Core indicators on access to and use of ICT by households and individuals”, comparing 228 countries and specific geographical areas).

subsequently influences power constellations. In such circumstances, illegal or immoral business practices (corruption etc.) are a third constitutive element for possibly diverging perceptions of reality among different communities: Individuals and groups involved in immoral activities have interests in dissimulating their practice, which is likely to hinder a realistic understanding of context, stakeholders and interests in a conflict.

To understand reality in conflict zones it is necessary to go beyond all those segregation lines. This is time consuming and demands relations of trust as well as access to objective information on social realities and social change. Understanding interests and needs behind power constellations can orient towards communalities, common interests and cooperation. Lack of care in this regard carries the risk of outsiders disconnecting themselves from reality inside conflict zones – and contributing to the deterioration of situations, sometimes even despite the best intentions<sup>11</sup>.

In all this, I see *strong arguments* for outsiders to work collectively with insiders on monitoring social change in conflict zones and on constituting *reliable, publicly accessible databases with essential information on social change in different geographical areas*. Media initiatives appear as potential catalysts to bridge insider-outsider gaps, to initiate meaningful insider-outsider cooperation, and to function as feedback channels for validating data according to journalistic standards – feedback processes that are also crucial for collective decision-making and state building in conflict zones.

### **A.3 Why Transparency on Social Change is Important in Conflict Zones**

Nobody doubts that objective data on social realities and social change is important for planning public services and infrastructure, for other administrative tasks and generally for collective decision making. Most states maintain statistical services for this purpose. But obtaining reliable data in this regard is complex and costly<sup>12</sup>. Warfare and poverty affect the capacity of such services and also public accessibility to objective data on social change.

Further, objective data on social change is a prerequisite to assess the quality and performance of aid activities<sup>13</sup>. It appears that *insider needs and outsider needs meet in transparency on social change*: Insiders need it to shape their future; Outsiders need it to evaluate the impact of their aid activities. These fundamentally different perspectives imply

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<sup>11</sup> Foreign Policy (2015.02.02) – as an example – reports on a well intentioned initiative – the so called „section 1502“ in the Dodd-Frank Financial Reform, passed by the US Congress in 2010 – aimed at stopping commercialisation of conflict minerals, which turned out to have „propelled millions of miners and their families deeper into poverty“ (quotation attributed to the Washington Post of November 30, 2014). <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/02/how-dodd-frank-is-failing-congo-mining-conflict-minerals/>; 14.2.2015

<sup>12</sup> For Switzerland, with roughly 8 million inhabitants, the budget for statistical services is approximately CHF 170 million. [http://www.efv.admin.ch/d/downloads/finanzberichterstattung/budget/2014/VA14\\_Band\\_2A\\_d.pdf](http://www.efv.admin.ch/d/downloads/finanzberichterstattung/budget/2014/VA14_Band_2A_d.pdf) (20.8.2014)

<sup>13</sup> The OECD (1991, 9; Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance) claim, “An evaluation must [...] contain such information as background [...]”.

the risk of insiders and outsiders monitoring social change separately, which would be first of all an economic nonsense and secondly could disconnect outsiders from realities inside the conflict zone<sup>14</sup>.

Therefore, the **key recommendation of this paper** is to consider the monitoring of social change as *a specific function in society* to which stakeholders should contribute *collectively*. In consequence, evaluations of aid should be referenced to such public monitoring of social change. Ad hoc data collected throughout evaluation processes can improve the aid system when made public and when it contributes to constant questioning, validating and completing of public databases<sup>15</sup>.

#### **A.4 Media's Role in Monitoring Social Change**

Literally, media means in the middle. But pragmatists argue that independence in media is not possible as long as news must sell. Market failure and market concentration in the media sector is often described as threatening democracy, whilst media and the entertainment industry tend to converge<sup>16</sup>. However, the role of media in social change is similar to the cultural sector: Both observe and reflect, which are vital functions in society.

##### **A.4.1 A few words on trust**

Trust is a keyword linking media sciences to conflict studies: In media, trust is an essential factor of economic success, as it binds recipients to “their” media. In conflict studies trust is often the key to conflict regulation<sup>17</sup>. When it comes to trust, everybody is an expert as trust is based on personal or collective experience and learning. As pointed out by Luhmann

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<sup>14</sup> In this regard, the nexus between journalists covering conflict zones from the outside and specialists for conflict analysis is of particular relevance for this paper: Without sufficient connections to reality in the conflict zones, the understanding of the conflict risks being actualized only by external experts, what can become an entry point for propaganda and (tactical) disinformation into international media and communication systems. A journalist interviewed in Bukavu / DRC says: “[*Understanding*] starts with living together with the population. I think that this is the first thing” (my translation).

<sup>15</sup> Which resonates with the above mentioned OECD Principles, stating: “*What is often needed is evaluation on a more comprehensive scale and an aggregation of evaluation results*” (OCDE, 1991; 8)

<sup>16</sup> Puppis (2007, 78, 65ff) demonstrates how market fails in the media sector: “*Because of the limited willingness of recipients to pay for media use, refinancing media organisation on the public market (alone) is not possible. Media need to orient themselves to alternative financing sources. If media are active in advertising market, the advertising industry obtains a possibility to influence content*”. Further (pp. 65 et seq.), he looks at media regulations and sees state subsidies as one regulatory instrument, among others. He distinguishes three arguments to justify media regulations: Technical reasons (e.g. limited availability of frequencies etc.), commercial reasons (market failure in public goods like information; danger of market concentration etc.) and socio-political reasons (vital importance of objective media for democracies; cultural value of media etc.). (My translations). Peace Nobel Shirin Ebadi is explicit: “*...the principal [five] owners of American media control and manage assets that amount to five thousand billion dollars. This concentration and accumulation of capital becomes so powerful that it eclipses the role of the individual in society*”. (Solbach et al., 2008, 17). In her opinion, freedom of expression must be biased to serve democracies: “*And, of course, that means freedom for the opponents of the government [...]. It is the opponents who should be free to disseminate their views in any way they wish*” (pp. 15).

<sup>17</sup> Field research in the DRC revealed that trust is also crucial to get information about remote, rural areas with difficult access when fighting occurs. Local media say that they work with „rural correspondents“ who serve as information sources but also as channels to receive feedback from recipients.



(1968, 53; see also B.1.2.5), trusting is *deliberately* taking the risk of being exploited or dominated. Taking risks and getting rewarded – a trial and error mechanism – allows trust to build up. He describes trust as a mechanism to reduce the complexity of social systems and points out that the pressure on individuals to trust in systems rather than other individuals is increasing: Public health and education systems, public transport systems, banking systems – and media – are just a few examples of trust-dependent systems.

When assessing the quality of media initiatives in conflict zones, one main challenge is to understand the “mechanisms” of trust in the context being observed. This challenge is manifold and implies a number of sub-questions: What levels, forms or expressions of trust exist in the conflict zone and how do they change or interact? Is a specific media seen as trustworthy? By whom? Can outsiders realistically evaluate trust related aspects in conflict zones?

Surveys and interviews are current methods to approach such questions but have substantial uncertainties: Do or can resource-persons tell the truth? Do they recognize behavioural change as such? Are evaluation procedures and quality criteria comprehensible to people living in conflict zones? Such studies demand extensive time frames and considerable financial means. If these resources are scarce, approximations based on existing statistical data appear feasible but must be at least rudimentarily validated. Feedback loops in media systems appears to be an interesting option in this regard<sup>18</sup>. As pointed out in A.3, surveys should certainly contribute to transparency with regard to social change and power constellations.

#### A.4.2 *Can propaganda be constructive?*

Manipulation is in fact not always as bad as the term suggests: Chiropractors manipulate their patients, technicians manipulate engines - to name just two examples of manipulation generally considered as *constructive*. Media initiatives and other peace building activities in conflict zones are designed to manipulate society. Promoters of such activities who are not transparent about their intentions might face difficulties when trying to convince stakeholders about the usefulness, legitimacy and constructiveness of their propaganda<sup>19</sup>.

The objective of propaganda<sup>20</sup> is to change the behaviour of recipients, most often by promising future advantages or by scaremongering. But before behaviour changes, trust needs to be established, at least to a minimal degree. Otherwise, promises or scare tactics

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<sup>18</sup> Study designs with statistical control groups are ambivalent in conflict zones: It can be seen as immoral to cut specific groups from specific services in order to figure out changes in other groups having these services delivered.

<sup>19</sup> In fact, promoters of media initiatives in conflict zones chose diverging slogans like for example “*Media for peace and human dignity*” (Fondation Hirondelle, <http://www.hirondelle.org/>); “[*Empowering*] groups and individuals who are the target of hate speech and ensuing acts” (Radio La Benevolencija Humanitarian Tools Foundation; <http://www.labenevolencija.org/la-benevolencija/mission-and-vision/>); „*End violent conflict*“, Search for Common Ground, <https://www.sfcg.org/>; All examples viewed on 28.7.2014.

<sup>20</sup> According to Jowett, G., & O'Donnell, V. (1986) “*Propaganda, in its most neutral sense, means to disseminate or promote particular ideas*”.

would not convince. Thus, to be constructive, campaigns promising future advantages must be first of all transparent about their authors, networks and interests.

But who has the legitimacy to define, what is constructive and what not? How to reconcile eventually diverging visions of sponsors, implementers and beneficiaries? One aim of this paper is to draw attention away from the destructive-constructive dilemma and focus on *mechanisms of propaganda* instead. These are similar for constructive and for destructive media outlets, as usually no separate media systems are installed. I am convinced that understanding how and why propaganda works is useful for people living in conflict zones. Insiders and outsiders certainly have their deficits, but they can always opt for cooperation.<sup>21</sup>

#### A.4.3 *Is the mediating function of media a potential or a duty?*

Impartiality links the roles of mediators and of media<sup>22</sup>: Both impact violently escalated conflicts, but only mediators have a clear duty: De-escalation and conflict regulation. Media reporting certainly has an impact on how actors and their (conflicting) interests are perceived, but this impact is not determined in advance as long as freedom of the press counts as the highest imperative in media. Howard (2002, 9) firmly questions, whether this is morally correct by stating: “[I]t is increasingly obvious that the professional norms of journalism do not trump fundamental moral obligations”. This dilemma inspired Johan Galtung et al to develop the concept of peace journalism<sup>23</sup> some fifty years ago. But not many of the elements of this are implemented in today’s leading media<sup>24</sup>.

Whether, and which, media are able and willing to control the impact of their reporting on escalated conflicts is an interesting question but must be left open here in order not to overstretch the paper. Of relevance are the media’s *potential to impact*<sup>25</sup> and the ways to

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<sup>21</sup> My field research provides some support for this assumption, but as it is also my personal opinion and the field study is based on a small sample, this cannot be considered as evidence. Explaining how manipulation and propaganda works is distinct from explaining that information, opinion and advertising must be separated – a golden rule in journalism, transferred to national laws in many countries.

<sup>22</sup> As media and mediators consider viewpoints of different (ideally all) parties, a rigid argumentation would rather claim *all-partiality* instead of impartiality, at least from mediators.

<sup>23</sup> Galtung J (2008b) recommends journalists “go for the less newsworthy to get a balanced picture” and “be conscious of the tendency to cast non-elite in a negative light, to disregard the structural, and to go for the negative, like the violence, rather than the positive, like the solutions”.

<sup>24</sup> This implementation problem of peace journalism inspired me to propose *Connective Journalism* as an alternative, more neutral concept (Hombberger, 2014). Howard (2001, 12) proposes “to view the media as several stages in a continuum of intervention”. His model moves from stage 1 (“conventional journalism”) to stage 5 which is “directly interventionist media programming, which includes and extends beyond conventional techniques to use soap operas, street theatre videos and comic books [...] with an intended outcome in mind to foster society ‘as we’d like it’”. Howard himself uses quotation marks for «as we’d like it» and leaves out whether he asked the beneficiaries if they “like it”. From the sources I interviewed in my field research, some were sceptical about entertaining media content, giving the credits rather to media offering space for dialogue. To all this, McGoldrick & Lynch (2001) contribute with a list of Do’s and Don’ts for peace journalism, enriching the original concept of Galtung.

<sup>25</sup> The potential of media to impact conflicts must not be questioned as such: The destructive role of media in the world wars and more recently in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda are two examples that are publicly not contested. In addition to which, none of the interviewed persons in my fieldwork questions the potential of media to end violence and some even go as far as seeing the end of violence as the ultimate goal of media.

*value this potential.* Again, the question of destructive or constructive could be asked, but it is more important to distinguish media initiatives in conflict zones from media in general: The first have a clear task with regard to the conflict, similar to the task of a mediator: De-escalation, in the first place, but it can go beyond this, towards development, economic growth, reducing social inequalities etc. Other media, inside and outside conflict zones have the same potential, theoretically, but most often adopt a neutral position in this regard.

In this regard, one problem is that media professionals covering conflicts from outside the conflict zone usually lack the necessary know-how to achieve de-escalation inside the respective conflict zone. Therefore, media initiatives in conflict zones must provide adequate support in terms of peace building and/or conflict analysis to regional and international media so these can value their potential to stabilize conflict zones.

### **A.5 How to move from reporting social change to monitoring it**

Having discussed why it makes sense to involve media in systematic and public monitoring of social change for peace building purposes, the question is now: How to do this? Regardless of their environment, media have the knowledge and the networks to cover social change. It is just that, after reporting, outlets usually end up in archives or, in conflict zones, sometimes in waste bins. The idea here is to create synergies between journalistic work and the constitution of publicly accessible databases on social change.

The following is just a very brief process description.

**Step 1: Identification of actors, relevant indicators and geographical limitations** – leads directly to the most difficult conceptual questions. How to decide which indicators reliably represent social change? Who to involve in this decision making process? How to manage the task under budget pressure?

The fact that the satisfaction of *basic needs* is determinative for individuals' and groups' social reality is an argument to link the choice of indicators to it<sup>26</sup>. Further, journalists' accessibility to data needs to have priority. Having highlighted scarce Insider-Outsider contacts as one characteristic of conflict zones, the physical presence of foreigners could be another possible indicator. But as all this is closely linked to quality definitions, the recommendation must be to involve the concerned beneficiaries in the detailed decision making regarding this question (to be further elaborated in chapter B.2).

On the other hand, indicators, data collection methods and geographical aspects must be determined at an early stage of the project because later changes might impede the creation of consistent databases suitable for comparative purposes. Therefore, a basic set of indicators needs to be defined from start; additional criteria or other geographical areas can

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<sup>26</sup> A classical source of inspiration in this regard is Maslow A.H. (1943). The framework of the Human Development Index (HDI) is another recommendable source of inspiration in the quest of indicators for the monitoring of social change, even if covering all 54 indicators included in this concept is far from realistic for the purpose discussed here. The website <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data> is transparent on methodological details about how to monitor social realities and social change.

be added later.

**Step 2: Investigation and focussed media coverage at fixed intervals** – is aimed at obtaining a baseline and subsequent datasets on the fixed indicators, and at crosschecking data through feedback loops in media systems. Covering topics related to basic needs and social change is likely to be of relevance for recipients in conflict zones and arouse their interest.

**Step 3: Documentation and presenting trends** – focusses on inspiring (political) dialogue and on minimizing disinformation, speculation, destructive propaganda and tensions related to this. The Internet appears to be the tool of choice for data storage and presenting overviews and trends. Additionally, the findings need to be presented and discussed in local media in order to assure they are constantly discussed and validated, and to include those communities that do not have access to the Internet. Moreover, an effort should be made to arouse the interest of outsider communities in order to bridge the insider-outsider gaps described.

Linking the monitoring and documenting of social change to journalistic activities helps minimize efforts. Steps two and three offer the chance for multiple synergies whilst step one is oriented at project design and mobilizing resources.

## **A.6 Expected outcomes of the proposal (Hypotheses / Theory of Change)**

These reflections, together with earlier studies and field research allowed the following three hypotheses to be developed, which all have the same starting point:

***(1) Public access to journalistically validated data on social change in conflict zones facilitates the constitution and maintenance of fact-oriented media landscapes, which in turn is constitutive for dialogue, trust building and inclusiveness in collective decision making.***

***(2) Further, publicly accessible, journalistically validated data on social change in a particular conflict zone can potentially raise interest from the “outside-world” (media, research, cultural sector, business, sports etc.), counter isolation and (re)integrate conflict zones in regional and international communities and networks.***

***(3) In regard to aid activities, publicly accessible, journalistically validated data on social change has the potential to avoid multiple parallel monitoring processes, which reduces spending and increases the efficiency of aid.***

Overall, the ***Theory of Change***<sup>27</sup> has *publicly accessible, journalistically validated data on social change* as its input variable. This is expected to effect changes in the following five

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<sup>27</sup> Church & Rogers (2006, 10 et seq.) dedicate a whole chapter to understanding change in conflictive situations and strongly recommend making theories of change explicit. In their words: “the changes sought [in peace building programs] should be [made] evident in a well designed programme”.

output variables: *Fact-orientation* in the media landscape (increase), *Trust* (increase), *Inclusiveness* in decision making (increase), *Interest* of outsider communities (increase), *(Re)-integration* into regional / international communities (increase) and *Efficiency* of aid activities (increase).

The expected causal links from the availability of objective (journalistically validated) information to the output variables are not automatisms but require deliberate promotion. Further, the cause effect chain, from input to output, is not restricted to media: Availability of objective information can potentially have the expected impacts also via other channels like for example public administrations, civil society organisations, diaspora, cooperation in terms of culture, education etc.

## **A.7 Challenges**

The following list of risks and challenges might look discouraging. Nevertheless, it would look quite similar even without adding the monitoring of social change to media initiatives in conflict zones.

The most critical element in the concept presented here is its dependency on the readiness of different actors inside a conflict zone to cooperate<sup>28</sup>. Cooperation is important to avoid market distortion: Charging one organisation with the whole task would allocate disproportionate funding to it and leave other local media organisations discriminated against and the initiative dependent on external funding. Further, cooperation between media organisations is required to assure data validation through different feedback channels.

The proposal to create public databases on social change in fact encourages media to go beyond their classical role “in the middle” and complement other (public) functions, most likely statistical services. This can create more problems than it solves when representatives formally in charge of this function interpret complementation as disrespectful or even threatening. Conversely, convincing specialists for statistics, social sciences etc. to become involved in the initiative might substantially increase overall performance. The end-goal must be efficient collective decision-making and financially independent structures that fulfil their role in society (media, statistical and other public services, civil society etc.). Combining initiatives in institution building, political dialogue, and in the media sector appears to be a highly synergetic option.

On a more general level, the acceptance of the idea by powerful individuals and ruling groups is not pre-given but must be acquired by making potential advantages comprehensible. The choice of indicators is essential in this regard: Many statistical figures

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<sup>28</sup> My fieldwork indicates a certain degree of mistrust in the media ecosystem of Bukavu/South Kivu, contrasted by the viewpoint of several journalists interviewed, who have experienced cooperation among different media as positive. Such exercises in media cooperation have apparently been organized by external donors to cover important events, i.e. elections etc.

such as, for example, the total population or ethnical attributions can be politicized or even abused for segregation and worse. Innocent indicators do not exist, but focussing on basic needs like health, education etc. and on trends instead of rankings (which potentially stigmatize the most vulnerable) are less sensitive or polarizing.

Motivating different stakeholders - some occasionally in competition with each other - to cooperate implies a danger of paralysis when having too many stakeholders on board. The issue can be managed by limiting the number of representatives per *type* of contributor in the system (which potentially opens the system for contributors from outside the media sector).

Another risk lies in the limitations that arise when monitoring of social change is realized as a “by-product” of media organisations: Small budgets allow only a few indicators to be monitored and only a small number of actualisations per time period. This need not be an obstacle (or can even be a plus) if information is systematized into accurate and relevant essentials. Considering the usual geographical fragmentation of conflict zones, priority should be given to monitoring different geographical areas, with few indicators.

Technological challenges are data storage, data safety and visualisation, and are linked to the choice of criteria and geographical areas to be monitored. The risk of creating “data cemeteries”, which nobody uses, and which even discriminate against people without Internet connection, is not negligible. Involving different stakeholders raises the chances that they exploit the “Wiki’s”, to which they contribute. In the case of media, an incentive could be that meaningful and accurate content can be produced with less effort.

The legal context and its practical implementation in conflict zones are particularly challenging issues, as media in conflict zones are often subject to oppression. Including the legal situation in the monitoring of social change increases the degree of complexity and carries a certain risk of conflict with stakeholders who have something to hide. However, not addressing this challenge carries a risk of being incomplete and having poor impact.

Overall, long-term engagement appears as a must in the matter discussed here, not only because short-term orientation would potentially put the life and wellbeing of project staff at risk.

## PART B: Quality Categories - Perceptions and Approaches

### B.1 *Systemic Considerations and Key Processes*

#### B.1.1 Structuring the research topic

##### B.1.1.1 *Definitions*

The research question implies the terms “Conflict Zone” and “Media Initiatives”, which are specifically defined hereafter for this paper:

**Conflict Zone:** A geographic area with *violence problems* and/or lack of *justice* where external actors or sponsors intervene in the local *media sector*, or consider doing so, in order to influence society to be less violent and/or more just<sup>29</sup>.

**Media Initiative:** Non-local actors providing assistance (financial, technical, intellectual or similar) to the local media sector in a conflict zone according to the definition above.

The combination of these two definitions limits applicability to specific activities in specific contexts. In return, a wide spectrum of possible interpretations of specific terms is intentionally left open in order to avoid imposing value systems from outside conflict zones.

**Violence** is not limited to direct violence but also includes other, more subtle or hidden forms of violence and human rights abuses, subsumed for example by Johan Galtung (2008a, 106) in the categories of structural and cultural violence.

**Justice** is not limited to its purely legal aspects but can also include, for example, elements like felt injustice, due to impunity.

**Media Sector** is not limited to “classical” media channels like press, radio and TV but can also include the internet and social networks as well as channels generally attributed to the cultural sector like Books, Films, Music, Events and the like. This logic also applies for the term **Media Landscape** used in the hypothesis. It should not be limited strictly to the channels mentioned above but also includes more personal communication patterns like, for example, the direct communication people use to verify information.

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<sup>29</sup> This definition is not in contradiction to other definitions for areas with violence problems and/or lack of justice but aims at *focussing on media initiatives* in such zones. In international relations, different frameworks are used to describe situations of violent conflict like, for example, the term “complex emergency”, defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “*Situations of disrupted livelihoods and threats to life produced by warfare, civil disturbance and large-scale movements of people, in which any emergency response has to be conducted in a difficult political and security environment*” ([http://www.who.int/environmental\\_health\\_emergencies/complex\\_emergencies/en/](http://www.who.int/environmental_health_emergencies/complex_emergencies/en/), 14.7.2014). This definition is much larger than for example the definition of war used by the German based “Working Group for Research on the Causes of War” (AKUF, “Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriegsursachenforschung”), which defines a war as a “*violent mass conflict [involving at least one] regular force [and] a minimum of centrally controlled organisation [and armed operations taking place] with a certain frequency*”. Violent clashes that do not fulfil the above criteria are considered as “armed conflicts”. <http://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/en/fachbereiche/sozialwissenschaften/forschung/akuf/akuf/kriegsdefinition-und-kriegstypologie/#c84532>, viewed 28.1.2015

**Social change** – a key term of this paper – is referred to as “[...] *alteration of mechanisms within the social structure [...]*” by Encyclopaedia Britannica<sup>30</sup>. As in practice the separation of mechanisms and structures might be challenging, I would tend to also accept *alterations in structure* as a form of social change.

#### **B.1.1.2** *A generalist perspective as the theoretical framework for this paper*

Intentionally, this work is not based on one particular theory but explores the extent to which, and how, different (or contrasting) fields of research can contribute solutions or answers to the two-fold research question: How to *measure* quality and how to *add* quality to media initiatives in conflict zones? Mainly, the following perspectives were explored:

- Collective Decision Making Processes
- Communication and Media Sciences
- Conflict Analysis / Peace building
- Economics / Project management
- Social and Evaluation Research

Systems theory is used to connect the different perspectives but not in the sense of an overarching theory but as an underlying conceptual framework to orient reflections and to bridge possible gaps. In order to facilitate mutual understanding among specialists with different academic backgrounds, the essentials of the above mentioned perspectives are summarized in the following sections of this chapter.

To ground these theoretical explorations, field research has been included in the work, which orients particularly the chapters A2.2, B.2, and B.3. Whilst acknowledging that these samples of field research are not sufficient for generalizations, they have nonetheless been useful or discussing practical aspects with specialists and activists.

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<sup>30</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/550924/social-change> (30.7.2014)



## B.1.2 Processes related to Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones

### B.1.2.1 *A few systemic thoughts on decision-making and evaluations*

Although this paper is based on a generalist and practical perspective, systems theory appears to be an appropriate framework for the different elements touched by the research. Well established in different fields of application, systems theory also has important affiliations to social research. Niklas Luhmann developed this angle, among others, some 40 years ago. Systems theory describes groups as social systems whilst individuals are described as cognitive systems, to make just one initial distinction.

Another fundamental distinction in systems theory is between system and *environment*. We can structure and orient our reflections by asking: What is part of the system and what not? For example: In order to resolve a given problem, should the focus be on the part of society potentially able to receive the signal of a specific radio station? Or on those suffering from a brutal militia? Or on the militia itself? Or on all together? This example shows that in almost every context different social systems exist in parallel. Some include others, some are congruent, some overleap each other, some are not in contact at all and most of them interact with others. This indicates that understanding context is crucial for the design, implementation and quality of aid activities in conflict zones. It also gives an idea of the crucial role communication plays in socially orientated systems theory.

Systems have the *ability to learn*. This has to be seen in the light of a specific “inertia” of systems with regard to change: As they constitute out of themselves, their urge is to maintain balance between the status quo (what is already learnt) and new external stimuli (“inputs”). In the 1970s, Maturana and Varela<sup>31</sup> introduced the term *autopoiesis* to describe this “inertia”, which can be seen as a learning process: Learning as a desire to stay in balance. Luhmann later transferred their biological approach to sociology.

Learning also means *filtering* what is relevant out of the millions of stimuli available every instant<sup>32</sup>. And learning is *evaluating* and *deciding*: Decisions are made after reflecting on a situation - after evaluating. Therefore, evaluations cannot be separated from the decisions they are intended to influence. This also needs to be considered when evaluating aid activities, as different scholars highlight<sup>33</sup>.

When systems theory was developed, the focus was – naturally – on ordering principles and

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<sup>31</sup> Paraphrased according to Zirkler (2001)

<sup>32</sup> Spitzer (2006, 53) calculates that a data volume equivalent to 100MB reaches the human brain every second. This has to be seen in relation to the capacity of human brain to immediately memorize information, which is limited to approximately seven (+/- 2) elements for only a few seconds (pp. 5).

<sup>33</sup> As an example, Froschauer and Lueger (in Flick, 2006, 321) argue that rationality mainly serves as meta-communication of decisions and as strategies to legitimize safeguarding of power structures. They conclude that evaluations therefore must not aim at verifying but at critically questioning the efficacy of rational interventions.

possible generalizations, not so much on power and power imbalances. But when applying the approach in conflict zones, it is exactly these elements - power and power imbalances – that must get most attention, despite all challenges, as they shape, for instance, the quality definition of media initiatives in conflict zones (see chapter B.2)

Psychological and interpersonal processes influence Collective Decision-Making (CDM), which over time results in social change and human development – and also vice versa. Therefore, besides context analysis, it is crucial to understand CDM-processes when carrying out research and projects in conflict zones and particularly when assessing the quality of aid. Key questions are for example: What is (the) collective? Who is not part of the collective? Why? Who has the power to determine the collective, its organisation and the rules shaping it?<sup>34</sup>.

Comparing social structures on different points of a timeline allows social change to be identified and extrapolated to future, for example the exponentially increasing complexity of world society due to the increasing number of possible communication channels over the last approximately five centuries, from physical travelling to mass communication and Internet. All these changes in the global communication system strongly influence collective decision making, rendering it more and more challenging – and unpredictable. Stichweh (2008, 20) concludes: “The nexus of diversity and spatial differentiation dissipates worldwide” (my translation).

Mass communication today is often described as following market logic, but in reality considerable public and private subsidies and market regulation characterize the sector. Puppis (2007, 68) states that in media, the market clearly fails<sup>35</sup>. This dependency on subsidies, sponsoring and earnings from advertising and PR tightly links the media with the cultural sector. In conflict zones, outsider interventions usually do not give priority to cultural life in the intervention zone but focus on survival (Humanitarian Aid) and on infrastructure, agriculture, the economy etc. (Development Aid). In this view, media initiatives appear to be among the rare outsider contributions to the *cultural sector* of societies inside conflict zones, despite different perceptions of this issue in donor nations, which are based on a much clearer separation between the cultural and the media sector. When assessing the quality of media initiatives in conflict zones, such contextual aspects definitely need to be taken into consideration.

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<sup>34</sup> Enayati (2002) describes *group dynamics* as a particular challenge in collective decision-making. She goes back to „*classic experiments*“ by Salomon Ash (1951, 1956) and puts a particular emphasis on social influence in group decision making processes: „*when a persons private judgement was unlike the judgements expressed by others, they soon abandoned their own judgements, even when their own judgements was verifiably correct*“ (pp78). “*Together we are often more stupid*” (“Le Temps”, 27.10.2012) is the summary of a review of French sociologists’ Christian Morels’ Book “*Les décisions absurdes II. Comment les éviter*”, in which the author describes that groups tend to take factually wrong or dangerous decisions when they 1.) are composed of experts, 2.) have a formal leader, 3.) are too big to involve everybody in dialogue and 4.) are composed mainly of men but have some women involved.

<sup>35</sup> As already exposed in A.4

### B.1.2.2 *Some clarifications on aid, in a nutshell*

In French, “aider” means to help. Altruism and solidarity might be important motives for aid, but it is basically a transfer of resources from so called donor countries to recipient countries. These resource transfers are part of world economy with an estimated volume of 74.9 trillion US\$ in 2013 (World Gross Domestic Product, GDP). Statistical information on official development aid (ODA) is provided by the OCDE and estimated at roughly 127 billion US\$ in 2012<sup>36</sup>.

Factually, donor countries have the economic power to impose rules and conditions on the world’s economic system and also on aid. And there is strong evidence that this power imbalance is discriminating against the weakest economies. Stieglitz & Charlton (2006, 7) calculate that protectionist trade policies of “donor” countries penalize the “recipient” countries with charges twice as high as all aid efforts cumulated. This point is related to the discussion on the possibility of growing social inequalities on a worldwide level, seen as a risk for global stability by experts<sup>37</sup>.

This leads to the question, whether aid is of greater benefit to the societies affected by violence or to the donor countries, a question of great relevance for media initiatives in conflict zones. The following statement from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) - as just one example - is honestly illustrating that there are often various interests at play in aid and that the priorities are not always transparent: *“Our Mission: We partner to end extreme poverty and to promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity”*<sup>38</sup>.

The ambiguity in this situation is certainly not an argument to stop solidarity but it might be a dilemma for aid workers sent out from donor countries to conflict zones, as it can constitute an obstacle for trust between stakeholders inside and outside of conflict zones: I

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<sup>36</sup> The dataset presented is just for a broad illustration of dimensions. The volume of aid as provided by the OECD might be relativized because it is limited to 33 donor countries and to official aid only (ODA), possibly not considering all private initiatives etc. Additionally, the resources allocated to purchasing goods and services inside donor countries are not necessarily transferred integrally to recipient countries. Source for data on ODA: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/development-aid-net-official-development-assistance-oda\\_20743866-table1](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/development-aid-net-official-development-assistance-oda_20743866-table1) (28.1.2015). For the World GDP, actual data can be found by entering the term in the search engine at <http://worldbank.org> (19.9.2014)

<sup>37</sup> “Inequality matters” titles a United Nations (2013) publication reporting on the world social situation. This report makes clear that, first, measuring social inequality is complex and, second, that increasing social inequalities can lead to tensions and even violence. The following quotation focuses on development projects and their impact on indigenous peoples: *“Large-scale and resource-intensive development projects can not only result in eviction and loss of traditional territories and land, but also generate challenges related to migration and resettlement, depletion of resources necessary for physical and cultural survival, pollution and destruction of the traditional environment, social and community disorganization and, in some cases, harassment and violence.”* Le Monde diplomatique (Mai 2013) is even less diplomatic and titles: *“Social inequality undermines democracy”*.

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/mision-vision-values>; 15.2.2015. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) recalls that Switzerland’s tradition of humanitarianism and solidarity is enshrined in Article 54 of the constitution and adds, *„A world with less poverty, less inequality and less conflict also means a better world for the Swiss economy“*. <https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/sdc/strategy/switzerland-committed.html>; 25.2.2015

heard many implicit or explicit statements of mistrust with regard to the international community when carrying out field research in the DRC<sup>39</sup>. Situations like this are challenging for externally financed media initiatives, particularly when it comes to pointing at immoral practices of external actors or requesting the compensation of inequalities. Looking at aid from within the aid system must lead to considerably different quality definitions than observing it from the perspective of its beneficiaries (see also A.1 and B.2).

### **B.1.2.3 Systemic orientations to media initiatives in conflict zones**

When applying systemic approaches to media projects in conflict zones, the determination of boundaries between environment, system and subsystems is challenging: According to the definition (B.1.1.1), such initiatives involve basically the following subsystems:

- One or several media related organisations implemented inside conflict zones
- An external supporting structure in charge for financing, training and eventually other assistance of technical, logistical, legal or similar nature

Already on this level, important questions, for example, with regard to autonomy could be asked. But reality is more complex, as illustrated by the following exemplary listing of societal subsystems interacting in one way or another with or through media in conflict zones (the categories used in this section might differ from one conflict zone to another).

- Local authority (authorities)
- Armed Groups
- Local Civil Society Organisations
- Local Media Professionals
- Local Recipients (of media outlets)
- “Aid community” (international or bilateral aid, NGO’s, advocacy groups etc.)
- Project support system (including trainers, managers, equipment-suppliers, etc.)
- Legal systems
- “Distant stakeholders” (interested public outside the conflict zone, diaspora, tourists, artists, sports sector, the entertainment industry etc.)

Thus, the “overall system” constituted by a specific media initiative in a specific conflict zone is an immensely large, heterogeneous entity. This might be of advantage from some perspectives but it is problematic with regard to evaluations, as it makes overall quality assessments appear to be highly complex or even unrealistic. On the other hand, limiting the scope of evaluations to selected subsystems carries a risk of incompleteness or even bias (more in B.2.3.1).

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<sup>39</sup> And in fact, this is not surprising because in this particular case the UN already made it clear in 2001, that outsiders do not only provide aid to the DRC but are also involved in the looting of natural resources and other forms of wealth. For details see the paragraphs 213-218 in the report of a “Panel of experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo”, published in a letter of United Nation’s General Secretary Kofi on April 12, 2001 (Document S/2001/357, accessible via <http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/letters/2001.shtml>; 28.1.2015.

An interesting alternative to analysing structural aspects is the analysis of interactions between different subsystems of society with or through such initiatives, illustrated by the following exemplary list:

- Financing / getting finance (includes technical support, training, etc.)
- Encouraging disarmament, peace building, development, economic growth, etc.
- Advertising on products and services
- Entertaining / getting entertained
- Selecting and training media professionals and project staff; Making / enabling careers
- Conveying / receiving factual information
- Contextualization
- Conveying / receiving educational content with the aim of changing society for example towards more freedom, peace – or towards more authoritarianism etc.
- Conveying / receiving (tactical) disinformation, propaganda etc.
- Networking / providing channels for feedback loops
- Archiving / establishing (historical) transparency
- Disclosure of (societal) problems
- Setting quality standards and assessing the achievement of goals
- Influencing or balancing power constellations

A general view on societal interactions is important but for the purpose of this paper, a limitation has to be made. A brainstorming exercise (appendix 6) helped me identify the following cases of specific interest, some because they are characterized by a sort of one-way interaction, others because different stakeholders might have conflicting interests. Anticipating the conclusion in chapter 5, the following four points are formulated as recommendations.

- ⇒ Feedback loops with recipients must be deliberately planned and implemented because otherwise these stakeholders are forced into the role of consumers, without any opportunities to voice their needs, particularly if they live in isolated (rural) areas and in times of violence and atrocities in such areas.
- ⇒ Deliberate efforts are necessary to involve stakeholders from inside conflict zones in the setting of quality standards and (project) goals to avoid imposition by “outsiders”.
- ⇒ The potential of external actors to name problems that might be taboo for insiders appears as a trump when it comes to encouraging media to assume their “Watchdog” role. Deliberate efforts are necessary in this regard, as the disclosure of (societal) problems does not occur automatically. These efforts must include also encouragement to critically question the role of donors and implementers of media initiatives in conflict zones.

⇒ Participatory decision-making must be deliberately organized in order to orient educational media content to the needs of the most vulnerable. There is no given legitimacy for donors and implementers to impose educational content<sup>40</sup>.

Behind these considerations, one element is omnipresent: Media initiatives in conflict zones shape power constellations – willingly or not. This can mean that interests of two or several stakeholders conflict. *Transparency* on goals, intentions and resources appears therefore to be the only way to avoid imbroglia in such circumstances – and is certainly a quality criterion<sup>41</sup>.

#### B.1.2.4 *Conflict - theoretical considerations*

Conflict should not be confused with war, brutality, violence and similar terms, which are in fact forms of conflict *escalation*. Neither is conflict the absence of peace, or vice versa. To be specific, instead of talking about conflict, the focus could or should be on conflicting *interests* and *needs* instead. These are less visible (implicit), compared to explicit *positions* people or groups take in order to *defend* them<sup>42</sup>.

When interests are in conflict – in other words: when communication systems turn into conflict systems<sup>43</sup> – escalation towards violence is the real problem. Glasl (1998) visualized escalation as a downward stairway: Changing the direction is possible at every step of escalation but the way up is longer, the further “down” the relation is. De-escalation requires stakeholders to recognize the legitimacy of other stakeholders needs and to agree on future cooperation. Power imbalances can be an obstacle to de-escalation when powerful factions are tempted to dominate. Discussing needs (instead of positions) can be of help to de-escalate conflicts, but there is a risk that dialogue turns in circles on the question of the *legitimacy* of these needs. This is as relevant for media (initiatives) in conflict zones as it is at the level of international diplomacy: a tendency exists to consider an interest as legitimate when basic needs or basic human rights<sup>44</sup> are involved. Although not questionable in itself,

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<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, the people interviewed during field research in the DRC did not fundamentally question the legitimacy of attempting to change behaviour patterns via media, although they recognize that only a thin line separates education from propaganda. As a condition for this legitimacy it has been clearly indicated that this propaganda must be oriented to generally improving living conditions in the conflict zone.

<sup>41</sup> My field research indicates that a key challenge in media projects in conflict zones is to convince local elites that diverse and free media are not in contradiction with their interests. Transparency might help.

<sup>42</sup> The term „conflict“ is rooted in the Latin term “confligere”, which means to clash or to be in opposition. The distinction between position and interest is a key element of the *Harvard Concept*, a methodology for successful negotiations. Fischer, R. & Ury, W. (2009, 65) recommend a rather simple method to uncover the interests hiding behind positions: “Ask: ‘Why?’“ and “Ask: ‘Why not?’“

<sup>43</sup> As shown in B.1.2.1, communication systems and conflict systems have several similarities: Both constitute a form of relation, both follow sequential logics etc. In this view, regulating a conflict is similar to transforming it (back) into communication. Luhmann (1984, 530) defines conflict as “*an objection gaining operative independence through communication*” (from German: “*operative Verselbständigung eines Widerspruchs durch Kommunikation*”) and then specifies that a conflict involves at least “*two communications in opposition to each other*” and that a conflict “*takes over the autopoiesis, the continuum of communication for a while*” (my translations).

<sup>44</sup> The differentiation between basic rights and basic needs is necessary, as only basic rights represent a

the transformation of escalated conflicts into debates on the legitimacy of needs implies a risk that access to diplomats, to media, to propagandists, to people able to translate into English etc. privileges specific groups in escalated conflict whilst others – who also have perfectly legitimate interests – are simply not seen, not heard and not taken into consideration. This highlights – again – the importance of having deep and actualized knowledge of the local context when engaging in conflict zones.

An old conflict in conflict research juxtaposes discursive approaches to conflict regulation with peace *enforcement*. The issue is sometimes traced back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century when people, confronted with brutal wars, came to the conclusion that mankind should enter a social contract. Thomas Hobbes postulated the transfer of the right to use violence from individuals to a higher power wise enough to use it for the good of mankind. He names this power Leviathan, as the title of one of his publications (GetAbstract, 2007 [1651]). Jacques Rousseau (2001 [1762]), agreed on the idea of such a social contract – which is in fact the title of one of his most noted publications– but he firmly denies that this power should be in the hands of anyone other than the people itself, whose “*general will*” (« *volonté générale* ») is best suited to achieve collective prosperity.

Different approaches in conflict analysis and peace building recommend widening the scope of observation if something looks dualistic or bipolar, and to search for options, alternatives, combinations etc. Galtung (2008a, 50), for example, draws on a comparison of the philosophical aspects of Buddhism and Christianity to propose an “expansion from dilemma to tetralemma”, with the key question: “What about *both-and* or *neither-nor*?” (Accentuation from the original).

A reality check shows that military solutions often get priority over discursive ways of conflict regulation. It also shows, that many of the conflicts fought out militarily have a tendency to persist – sometimes over decades and/or under the surface, as “low intensity wars”<sup>45</sup>. Peace is in most cases is not “solved” or “settled” but a regulated conflict, giving the involved stakeholders a perspective for satisfying vital needs. Conflict regulation can be seen as *transforming* conflicting interests into a collective decision making process (Conflict Transformation).

Other paradigms focus on conflicts as important drivers for improvement in social structure and functioning and also for adaptation to altered environments. Simmel (1908) viewed conflict as less problematic than indifference in the overcrowded German cities of the early 20th century. Stephane Hessel – who participated in the elaboration of the Universal

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formalized and internationally recognized conceptual framework, based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and associated documents; <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>, 29.1.2015.

<sup>45</sup> According the German based “Working Group for Research on the Causes of War” (AKUF, “Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriegsursachenforschung”): “*It is remarkable that over two thirds of the interstate wars end without changes in the political power balance or with the re-establishment of the status quo ante*” (my translation). <http://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/en/fachbereiche/sozialwissenschaften/forschung/akuf/war-archive/> 29.1.2015)

Declaration of Human Rights after World War II – shares this view in « Indignez-vous » (2010, published at the age of 93). In his words: *“The worst of all attitudes is indifference. [It makes you lose] an essential component of humanity: The faculty of indignation and the commitment which is its consequence”* (my translation, pp. 5-6).

Context and stakeholders are the basic elements of conflict analysis. In this, one can look for *dividers* and/or *drivers* leading to escalation or for *connectors* facilitating communication and cooperation among conflict parties. Conflict regulation can be sought either through direct negotiation (without third parties involved, what keeps ownership in the hands of the conflict parties) or – the other extreme – issues can be fought out or brought to arbitration (courts etc.). In between these poles, different modes of mediation exist. Galtung again (2008a, 118 et seq.) proposes elaborated guidelines for conflict intervention (“Transcend Perspective”), which recommend starting by distinguishing Attitudes from Behaviours and then identifying and dissolving Contradictions (“ABC-Triangle”).

Other approaches to conflict regulation exist, for example models based on investigating war economies (financing of conflict parties, weapons supply etc.)<sup>46</sup>, models highlighting the importance of rebuilding state authority<sup>47</sup> or dealing with the past<sup>48</sup>, movements that deliberately enter non-violent conflicts in order to contribute to peace<sup>49</sup> etc. Unfortunately, it is impossible to give more than this very broad overview here. For models aimed at understanding intrapersonal, psychological dispositions and their links to social phenomena, a detailed presentation would be at least partially redundant, as the system-theoretical approaches explored here are not blind to the intrapersonal (see B.1.2.1 for aspects like learning, evaluating, decision making etc.). In regard to contemporary models of conflict analysis that explore specifically how people act and react, for example, when they can choose between a more cooperative and a more egoistic or dominant behaviour or between escalating and deescalating, it has to be noted that this angle of research, based among

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<sup>46</sup> A source exploring this angle is Lock (2002).

<sup>47</sup> In response to the question of how to re-organize post-conflict states, Lijphart (2004), states that *“in such deeply divided societies, the interests and demands of communal groups can only be accommodated by the establishment of power sharing”*, which is in fact regulating conflicts originating from societal divisions at the constitutional level, thereby assuring *“group autonomy”* which means that *“these groups have authority to run their own internal affairs, especially in the areas of education and culture”*. Fact is, that power sharing is often detailed in peace or ceasefire agreements, negotiated during or shortly after armed fighting by small delegations and/or external experts. Bell & O’Rourke (2007), find provision for civil society involvement in only 41 of 389 analysed peace / ceasefire agreements on intra-state conflicts. Main obstacles for participatory democracy appear to be the difficulties on agreeing who is representing civil society, the negotiating of this civil society’s relation to the state and the clarifying of the accountability of both.

<sup>48</sup> Swisspeace (2012) provides basic knowledge in the matter of Dealing with the Past. Schaap (2004) puts an emphasis on *recognition*, which he says, *“provides the rough ground in terms of which an ethical encounter between former enemies becomes possible”*. Weinstein (2011) is far more critical and qualifies *Closure* and *Reconciliation* as a *“Myth”* and an *“Illusion”*, in a journal dedicated to *Transitional Justice*, which is aimed at re-establishing justice after periods of mass violence.

<sup>49</sup> As for example War Resisters International, <http://www.wri-irg.org/> (19.2.2015), or more generally movements that do not address conflict but violence as root-problems and pro non-violent campaigns. Johanson (2007) is an exemplary source for this angle (<http://jjohansen.net/>, 19.2.2015).



others on game theory<sup>50</sup>, is often carried out under laboratory conditions.

#### B.1.2.5 *Communication processes and media effects*

It is not an oversimplification to state that communication is reliant on communication: Relational aspects like trust, sympathy, understanding but also hatred, aversion etc. cannot develop without some kind of communication. Besides communication, relations are the result of learning, thus of evaluating and deciding (see B.1.2.1) – or they can be constituted through conflicting interests: Communication systems and conflict systems therefore have various familiarities, as will be further elaborated.

A conversation between two people is two cognitive systems interacting. Memories, knowledge, ideas, opinions and other “content” is locked inside cognitive systems and cannot be transferred without translation into gestures, sounds, text (including pictures or other forms of artistic expression), symbols etc., which are in fact stimuli for others. Cognitive systems capture such external stimuli and bring these new inputs into line with the way they are already structured and organized. Based on these learning processes, decision making and social change take place<sup>51</sup>.

As direct conversation between two individuals is by far not the only possible mode of communication<sup>52</sup>, systems theory proposes considering communication processes as systems as such: Communication systems<sup>53</sup>. Points of interest from this angle are for example the rules and codes shaping communication processes or the ways in which misunderstandings and the like can turn a communication system into a conflict system<sup>54</sup> – and back again etc.

Before going deeper into the field of media effects, let’s add that communication processes – similar to learning processes – operate sequentially, meaning that a time-factor is involved: A stimulus sent out from a system needs to be received and processed by the receiving system(s). Although it might be only milliseconds, this processing needs time, which is also required for recipient(s) of media content to decide whether or how to react. These sequences of acting and reacting, also the changing roles of senders and recipients, are characteristic of private communication. In the modern and postmodern eras, these patterns

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<sup>50</sup> Spitzer (2006, 303 et seq.) looks at experimental studies based on games from a neuroscientist perspective and concludes – citing Carlsmith et al. (2002) – that it is mainly “the wish for justice and not deterrence that shapes decisions – even when deciding persons express a clear conviction that deterrence was an essential aspect of punishment” (my translation).

<sup>51</sup> Neuroscientist Spitzer (2006, 318) takes a position against claims that human nature must be ruthless and egoistic, as social engagement has to be learned. He asks back: “*What [...] if learning was our nature? Who would seriously claim that speaking is not in our nature only because we have to learn it?*” (my translation). He concludes that cooperation is deeply rooted in human nature – but we need to learn it.

<sup>52</sup> The communication mode is determined for example by the number of individuals or groups communicating, by time aspects (real-time or recorded), individual or public, direct or indirect (mediated) etc.

<sup>53</sup> Not to be confused with purely technical communication systems

<sup>54</sup> See B.1.2.6 for details

– sometimes rituals – are ongoing but there are many more options for one-way communication.

A closer look at indirect (mediated) communication is therefore required. In this communication mode, stimuli are transmitted (distributed, broadcasted etc.) through a medium or several media (persons, technical devices etc.). The crucial question here is: Does the medium *participate* in the communication process or not. The postal service that carries my letter to a friend functions as a catalyst in a process, not a participant in communication. But what if my letter gets lost? And what if media need to convey commercial advertisements in order to economically survive in a failing market?

Media initiatives in conflict zones – as defined in B.1.1.1 – appear to be first of all neutral information conveying structures. But they are also – second – outsiders aiming to influence local society. A third, maybe the most important element is the *human relations* between the outside and the inside of conflict zones established by such initiatives. In this light, continuous and collective learning about context, stakeholders and interests appears again to be crucial (maybe a moral duty) for promoters of such initiatives, together with open access to this knowledge.

Feedback loops are crucial in communication processes, particularly in conflictive situations. Every stimulus received by a system could be a threat to its internal stability, thus a potential risk of escalation. According to this logic, billions of conflicts are regulated every second on this planet and only a very few escalate. This mode of stabilisation in cognitive and social systems is achieved through feedback loops - in its simplest form just asking back, getting reaffirmation: Did I understand that correctly? May I reframe what I heard from you?<sup>55</sup>

Through feedback loops, trust can build up<sup>56</sup>. In conflictive situations, feedback loops are crucial to avoid trivial misunderstandings escalating. This is a factor to be carefully observed for media initiatives in conflict zones as broadcasting is pure one way communication and needs intentionally installed feedback loops, as highlighted in B.1.2.3.

Studies on media effects are tightly linked to the phenomenon of propaganda (that will be

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<sup>55</sup> Feedback loops as described here are important, for example in concepts of non violent communication, to which Marshall B. Rosenberg among others contributed not least in founding a centre to specifically explore this angle; <http://www.cnvc.org/about/marshall-rosenberg.html> (15.2.2015). In German literature, Schulz von Thun (1991, 26 et seq.) is an often-cited source for his model of understanding interpersonal communication, using the picture of individuals having four ears and four tongues. One is for facts, one for self-disclosure, one for relational aspects and one for appeals. The theory is that most statements in interpersonal communication are composed of all four components but they are only rarely equally weighted. The source of misunderstandings and worse is, according to this source, when people have their ears partly closed because they expect the speaker to communicate on another channel.

<sup>56</sup> Affirmation through feedback loops can have effects commonly perceived as positive, for example increased trust. Luhmann (1968, 52) insists that the precondition for trust to build up is that a substantial risk for breach of trust is taken. Mistrust is not the absence of trust but its “functional equivalent” (pp. 92), created through the same mechanisms: Feedback loops. And in the same way that negative reaffirmation can constitute mistrust on the interpersonal level, it can also have negative effects on the intrapersonal level, for example believing oneself to be inadequate and a failure as a consequence – or reinforcement of prejudices or by only perceiving what confirms the prejudice.

discussed in B.1.2.7) and are probably as old as communication itself<sup>57</sup>. But systematic studies on media effects as such started basically with the era of radio broadcasting. Bonfadelli (2004, 29-32, for this whole paragraph) mentions a series of paradigm shifts in research on media effects: In the early stages, this angle of research was oriented by a quite mechanical “S-R-model”, saying basically that Senders (S) influence Recipients (R). That was in the era of mass propaganda, when for example the US-Army wanted to convince young Americans to fight Nazis in Europe or the Nazis themselves were trying to convince young people to fight Russia. Thus, the first examples of the potentially disastrous effects of mass broadcasting are quite old, and striking. Later, research on media effects focussed more towards individuals as “mediating organisms” (O) in mass communication processes, which changed the standard model from S-R to S-O-R. This paradigm shift reached a turning point in the 60ies, when research tended to entirely deny media effects at all, recognizing individuals as the only decision-making element in the cause-effect-chain.

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<sup>57</sup> Sun Tzu (2008, edition Flammarion), a Chinese strategist who lived about five centuries before Christ, is cited in the French version of his classic “The art of war” with the following introduction of five fundamental factors to consider in war: “The first of these factors is moral influence”. (pp. 118)

### B.1.2.6 A communication model that reduces the complexity of this topic

The described paradigm-shifts in research on media effects and the fact that research in this field has mainly been carried out in industrialized environments and not in contemporary conflict zones, inspired me to start thinking from zero and to design a specific communication model for this paper in order to reduce the complexity of the topic. This model relates individuals (cognitive systems) to an extremely distant *Universal System*, which includes all other systems and environments of relevance. The reduction to only two levels of observation – the *Individual* and the *Universal System* – is justified by the fact that today communication can be seen as in some way linking everything to everything, directly or indirectly, thus constituting the aforementioned universal system. The following graphic illustrates that this is constitutive for two basic types of interaction:

Activities of individuals (including indirect communication), constituting the Universal System

Direct effects of the Universal System on individuals

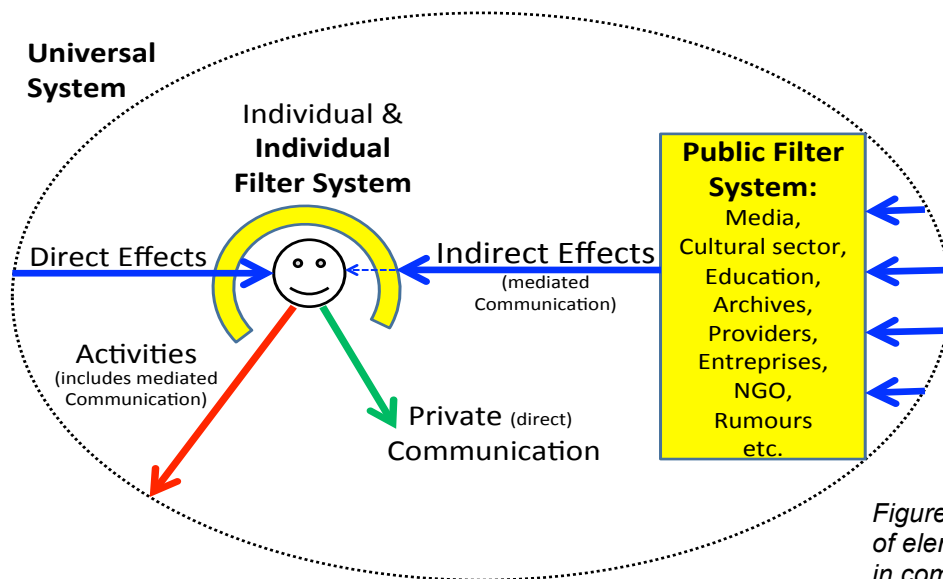


Figure 1: Visualisation of elementary aspects in communication

In this model, direct (private) communication is separated from indirect communication, which is mediated through a public filter system, constituting the third element in the model. The *Public Filter System* includes – naturally – media, but also other communication channels like the educational and the cultural sector, archives, providers, enterprises, NGO and even rumours etc.

In addition to this Public Filter System the *Individual Filter System* (briefly introduced in B.1.2.1) constitutes the fourth element in the model. It allows individuals to orient themselves in the Universal System, particularly in terms of distinguishing the relevant from

the irrelevant<sup>58</sup> in the indirect communication streaming constantly towards them from the Public Filter System.

This model helps me to distinguish the small amount that I personally know and that I'm able to influence from the enormous quantity of things occurring. It also allows me to distinguish what I learned from my own experience and what I learned through one channel or another of the public filter system. And my individual filter system allows me to distinguish what I want to believe, whom I want to trust, what I want to question and research and what I want to do, how I want to act. The simplicity of the model was never a problem in the research presented here but helped me to stay oriented in the complexity of the matter.

### ***B.1.2.7 The potential of propaganda techniques in de-escalating conflicts***

As we know that media can escalate conflicts, we can assume that de-escalation through media should also be possible. The increasing number of media initiatives in conflict zones over the last approximately two decades is based on this assumption that constructive propaganda can achieve de-escalation<sup>59</sup>. But in escalated, violent conflicts, peace builders are not the only ones in search of communication channels to spread propaganda.

Chomsky (2007, 35) states:

“Good propaganda invents a slogan to which everybody can agree upon without necessarily knowing, what its significance is. Its value resides in drawing attention away from relevant questions<sup>60</sup>”

And continues: “propaganda is most effective when it is supported by educated elites” (pp. 30). In illustrative examples he shows how for instance make-believe political discourses have been initiated in order to impose red lines of thinking on that same discourse. Make-believe debates are just one example of manipulation among far too many to be discussed here in detail<sup>61</sup>. But at least one pattern needs to be looked at closer: “Us-versus-Them”.

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<sup>58</sup> What is relevant for one system might appear as irrelevant for others. This is more than a banality as it focuses attention on the *coding* of individual filter systems: If their coding is not synchronized - if two people speak different languages for example, or have prejudices against each other – this can lead to misunderstandings or even escalation. Coding the individual filter system is similar to learning and evaluating and happens through communication – or non-communication. Conflict regulation – seen from this angle – often involves or requires recoding of the individual filter system, again through communicating, evaluating and learning.

<sup>59</sup> The stabilizing potential of media in conflict zones seems to be recognized by specialists: The statistics on official development aid (ODA), published by the OECD indicate a significant increase of funds allocated to the field of communication, from about 100 million US\$ in the early 60s up to more than two billion in 1988, 90, 92 and 93. A rupture in this trend after the early 90s coincides with the creation of a new rubric for “Conflicts, Peace and Security” in these statistics, which reaches a volume superior to three billion US\$ since 2008. <http://stats.oecd.org> rubrics “Data > Database Access > Development > Aggregate official and private flows > Aid (ODA) per sector and donor (DAC5)” (29.1.2015)

<sup>60</sup> Chomsky's Book “Necessary illusions” (1989) is in fact a collection of propaganda examples. Citing one specific part of the book would therefore not make sense. The quotations are my retranlations to English from the German version (2007) of the aforementioned book.

<sup>61</sup> A combination of two sources: Jowett, G. & O'Donnel, V. (1986, 153) present a “ten step plan of

Successful politicians know by heart: Success in relations needs communication. The goal is to create an atmosphere of togetherness, cosiness, solidarity and the like – a feeling of “We”: Yes, we can, we are better if we collaborate, and we are strong, stronger than<sup>62</sup> ... All convincing slogans – but why do “We” need to be stronger? Why is it not enough to collaborate?

The “Us-versus-Them”- pattern is an indispensable part of election campaigns - and has started many wars. Systemically, “We” are a social system, among others<sup>63</sup>. “Them” could be all the others together but it could also be one or several specific groups of people. If so, qualifying “them” can be emphatic, can be an expression of healthy competition or can be discriminatory, even a spark to the powder keg: From discriminating “Them” it is only a small step to violating basic rights, as for example the right to participate in collective decision-making. (Chapter 4 is dedicated to the challenges of qualifying).

For situations, in which the underlying root causes of violence are not addressed, the term *negative peace* is used sometimes (Galtung, 2008a, 127). Making the root causes of escalation explicit – often unsatisfied vital needs – is a prerequisite for negotiating constructive peace agreements in violent conflicts and for designing meaningful peace building and development projects in conflict zones. In this regard, mediators and media have a similar role to play. Also linguistically, media and mediating have the same roots, referring to “the middle” or, clearer, “taking no sides”. In conflictive situations, media and mediators can cause damage with either only one small step perceived as not being impartial or by neglecting just one actor in a negotiation process. This puts media and mediators in a powerful position and raises questions about accountability and legitimacy: Who has the power to decide about the legitimacy of the interests of which stakeholder? Is it morally acceptable to leave potential means for de-escalation unvalued for the sake of impartiality or neutrality? What if impartiality is masking complacency and a lack of deep knowledge of reality in conflict zones, leading to (more) suffering in conflict zones? In my

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*propaganda analysis*” including “*identification of ideology and purpose, context, identification of the propagandist, investigation of the structure of propaganda, selection of the target audience, understanding of media utilisation techniques, analysis of special techniques to maximize effect, audience reaction, identification and analysis of counter propaganda and an assessment and evaluation*”. Domenach (1950) identifies four propaganda “laws” that he derives from analysing the systems of Hitler and Stalin: The law of simplification and of a common enemy (pp. 49), the law of inflation and disfigurement (pp. 54), the law of orchestration (pp. 55) and the law of transfusion (pp. 62). (My translations)

<sup>62</sup> Domenach (1950) quotes Lippman as saying: “*Political leaders always first appeal to the prevalent feeling of the masses. [...] This method can be traced back to the great orators of antiquity, Demosthenes and Cicero*”. Further he appeals for a distinction between reprehensible elements in propaganda from others, which are vital for democracies: “*Those who pretend to serve democracy and systematically refuse propaganda methods are in contradiction: Real democracy only exists where the people are up to date and required to know about and to participate in public life*” (pp. 121; my translation). Lippman himself (1961 [1922], 43) states with regard to the preconditions for propaganda that “*Access to the real environment must be limited before anyone can create a pseudo-environment*”, which he says constitutes for example through the protection of the private sphere. With regard to improving the functions of institutions in democracies he states that “*the only institutional safeguard is to separate [...] the staff which executes from the staff that investigates*” and proposes to “*introduce into the existing machinery, wherever you can find an opening, agencies that will hold up a mirror, week by week, months by months*” (pp. 384-386)

<sup>63</sup> Exemption: “We” used for describing all living beings

opinion, everything contributing to better knowledge and understanding of the context in conflict zones, the stakeholders and their interests is useful for de-escalation and therefore legitimate. Sharing information and cooperating in order to obtain objective and publicly accessible data on social change in conflict zones appears to be solution oriented.

## **B.2 Considerations on Quality and its Evaluation**

### **B.2.1 Defining quality for outsider interventions in conflict zones**

To answer the research questions – *How to evaluate and how to improve the quality of media initiatives in conflict zones* – a vision and a definition of quality is indispensable. But quality is firstly a matter of taste and secondly a dynamic concept: What was good quality years ago might look mediocre according to contemporary standards. This leads to the question of legitimacy in defining quality standards for aid in conflict zones.

Providers of aid have *the power to impose* quality standards as far as their own activities are concerned. To gain an understanding of the opinion of beneficiaries, I carried out field research<sup>64</sup> in South Kivu / DRC, after having analysed the topic from a theoretical perspective in 2009<sup>65</sup>. Basically, the following aspects have been explored in the field study:

*Perceptions: How do people in a conflict zone perceive the media landscape around themselves?*

*Expectations: What do people in a conflict zone expect from the local media around them?*

The material provides a rich and differentiated description of the specific context in which the interviews took place. For the purpose of this study, these statements were re-examined in order to obtain a picture of what the interviewed persons *recommend* directly or indirectly to promoters of media initiatives in conflict zones. Appendix 5 sums up the two studies and proposes 15 quality categories for media initiatives in conflict zones (to be discussed in chapter B.3).

A considerable discrepancy appears between the theoretical approach of 2009 and the synthesis including beneficiaries' viewpoints. Naturally, the following reflections cannot be generalized, as I was only able to carry out field research in one place. But considering the field research and also what I learned from literature and specialists leads me to the conclusion, that *in a conflict zone, a media project is not a media project*. It must also (or rather) fulfil requirements that are typical for peace building projects. And therefore, an intense cooperation between specialists from the media sector and from the peace building / conflict transformation sector must be seen as a condition sine qua non for this type of project.

Not only do realities diverge inside and outside conflict zones, so do quality standards: ISAS BCP 9001:2010 is a quality management standard dedicated to media industries (radio, TV,

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<sup>64</sup> The sample of field research consists in eight in-depth interviews with fourteen persons in Bukavu (capital city of the South Kivu Province). These interviews were conducted in winter 2011/12 (Homberger 2015; Content Analysis). A context analysis conducted in rural areas of the Provinces South Kivu and Maniema (Homberger 2014) was helpful to complete the picture but is not systematically explored in this paper.

<sup>65</sup> Homberger (2009, 2010) proposes eleven quality categories, formulated as questions that project promoters could or should ask themselves before investing in a media initiative in a conflict zone.



print media, Internet<sup>66</sup>), applying the well-known ISO 9001 norm<sup>67</sup> to the media sector. It is pure speculation, whether and which media in a conflict zone could be certified according to these standards. But it is a fact, that people in contexts like for example the DRC also face other challenges: According to the organisation “Journalistes en danger”, there were 131 attempts to restrict the freedom of the press in 2012 alone and eight journalists were killed between 2001 and 2012, to give just one illustrative example regarding the DRC<sup>68</sup>.

Robertson, Fraenkel, Schoemaker & Himelfarb (2011, 6) acknowledge that the past fifteen years, in which most media initiatives for peace building purposes have been implemented were “*a period of intensive experimentation*” and propose an elaborated methodology they name “IONA” (Intended-Outcomes Needs Assessment) to cope with the challenges identified. Although this is not an international quality standard, the intention to move in this direction is evident. The question can be left open whether a (new) quality standard for a (new) industry is what is most needed for people suffering from violence, or whether the adaptation of existing standards from neighbouring fields of application could be an elegant option, for example OECD (2012), which is a detailed framework for *Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility* (DAC Guidelines and Reference Series).

Listening to the people interviewed in South Kivu, none of them questions the potential of media to end violence. Some go even much further and describe this potential as the core function – the core quality criterion – of media in their society. This expectation goes far beyond the usual understanding of media as neutral, catalytic information conveying structures and implies that ways must be found to bring beneficiaries together in defining quality for media initiatives in conflict zones, as local participation is requested also in international standards<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.media-society.org/en/isas-bcp-9001-standard>; 7.9.2014

<sup>67</sup> [http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/management-standards/iso\\_9000.htm](http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/management-standards/iso_9000.htm); 18.9.2014

<sup>68</sup> <http://radiokapi.net/actualite/2012/10/11/rdc-8-journalistes-assassines-sous-la-presidence-de-joseph-kabila-selon-jed-rsf/#.U9imzkifJT5>; 7.9.2014

<sup>69</sup> OECD (2012) states, “*It is generally accepted that there is a need for external partners to increase the involvement of local people and intended beneficiaries in evaluation. Local involvement may contribute to ensuring a more transparent, stronger relationship between external actors and local communities, in line with the Fragile States Principles and extensively borne out by evaluation experience. Engaging with knowledgeable local people and those targeted by programmes can provide critical input for understanding the context and conflict and carrying out the evaluation analysis. Involvement of people from different sides or with different perspectives on the conflict can be critical to understanding links between the intervention and conflict dynamics. Nevertheless, planners must take great care when deciding whom to involve, and how to involve them, in the context of fragility and violent conflict. The need to protect those involved and safeguard the objectivity and impartiality of the evaluation may influence such decisions*”.

## B.2.2 Process logics

Quality - per definition - qualifies, and is therefore an element of competition. And quality definitions shape overarching decision-making processes. In the case of media initiatives in conflict zones, the key elements of this decision-making - put schematically - are the following<sup>70</sup>:

- Recognition of the necessity for an intervention in a conflict zone
- Project design
- Allocation of resources
- Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Project end - or recognition of the necessity of continuation or adaptation

This logic can be interpreted in two different ways: Linear or circular. The starting point is the same: The identification of problems, theories of change, goals and intended outcomes. Circular process logic focuses on constant improvement, linear process logic focuses on cause and effect chains<sup>71</sup>.

No fundamental dilemma exists between linear and circular process logic, but scholars rightly point out that in many implementing organisations, discussions about the superiority of one or the other approach occur<sup>72</sup>, particularly when project funders (ab)use their power to impose their preferences. In such cases, the application of specific process logic is an imposed quality criterion, which eventually deprives beneficiaries of their right to participation.

In fact, it is business logic that runs aid activities, despite one fundamental difference: Aid activities are not oriented to financial benefits but to social, cultural or similar goals. The paradox is that no new (financial) resources are allocated before earlier allocated resources are used and justified by evaluation reports. Therefore, evaluation is constantly at risk of being abused in order to assure economic survival of aid organisations.

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<sup>70</sup> See for example EuropeAid (2004, 16)

<sup>71</sup> From the various concepts offered in project management, the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) is an example of *linear process logic* and currently used in many aid projects (see for example: EuropeAid, 2004, 57 et seq.). In the planning phase, the linear logic starts with defining objectives and continually steps to purposes, (expected) results and activities. Implementation and evaluation follow the logic in the opposite direction. *Circular project logic* is widely used in industrial environments and corporations. "Plan – Do – Check – Act" is the fundamental logic. The Internet offers multiple varieties of the method for specific purposes. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO, 2012) opts for circular process logic by stating: "*Continual improvement of the organization's overall performance should be a permanent objective of the organization*".

<sup>72</sup> Neufeldt (2007), exploring the assumptions of "Frameworkers" and "Circlers" (and tension between the two), finds that linear ("Frameworker") approaches prevail in peace building and development work. The concerns about this situation are said to be twofold (pp. 9): "*One is that the apparently rigid structure and reporting requirements of projects that accompany logical frameworks will constrict and inhibit creative and responsive programmatic change. The second concern is that the linear logic embedded in logframes, together with the predictive nature of logframe construction, will hinder creative responses and engagement*".

### **B.2.3 Conceptual orientations for evaluations**

No standard recipes to evaluate media initiatives in conflict zones are presented here. Sufficient literature on evaluation techniques in the aid and peace building sector is available, much of it for free on the Internet<sup>73</sup>, and it seems doubtful that one singular method can “work” in all contexts. The following essentials are aimed at providing a broad orientation and showing distinctions, and at inspiring meaningful evaluations, particularly auto-evaluations on the level of local media in conflict zones, regardless whether they are externally supported or not.

As shown in this chapter, evaluations or quality assessments are determined by process logic and quality criteria. In the optic of project implementers, the achievement of goals is a prominent quality criterion, which means that pre-defined goals or benchmarks are among the most important elements in standard evaluation procedures in aid. But in the light of the multitude of actors and interdependencies (see B.1.2.3), it appears that the most difficult questions are: What to evaluate? And: What for?

#### **B.2.3.1 Systemic boundaries**

From a systemic point of view, the scope of evaluation for a media initiative in a conflict zone can be either based on the system constituted by the supported *media*, on the system constituted by the *conflict* or on *interactions* or other *interdependencies*. In the project managers’ view, the focus on the system constituted by the featured media might look conclusive - and attractive, as a focus on recipients reduces the complexity compared to an analysis of the entire conflict system. But in the view of people living inside this conflict affected area, this limitation to one specific media system might not be sufficiently broad as they experience society, social change, conflict and all media together as their environment, their context, their reality.

Whatever scope is chosen for an evaluation in a conflict zone, it must include systematic monitoring of social change, which is the basis for any realistic conclusion. Doing so demands relations of trust and substantial resources. Limiting the scope of evaluations might look tempting but does not automatically reduce the complexity of analysis, because it raises the question of how to (artificially) isolate societal subsystems. To cope with this dilemma, collective and public monitoring of social change appears highly recommendable (see Part A, Concept Note, for details).

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<sup>73</sup> As examples: EuropeAid (2004, 2006), OECD (1991, 2000, 2012), Church & Rogers (2006), UNICEF Guide for Monitoring and Evaluation (<http://preval.org/documentos/00473.pdf> ; 20.2.2012), etc. Additionally, some organisations publish evaluation reports on their homepages. Access to an impressive amount of illustrative documents is also possible via the resource centre of the Catholic Media Council, CAMECO: <http://camecolibrary.faust-web.de/dzeig.FAU?sid=6AEADF8811&dm=1&thes=4&ipos=%230000010B%23> , 20.2.2015

Further, “proofing” correlations between resources allocated and results is never certain: Whether the situation is improving or worsening, nobody can know how it would be without intervention. Bächtold et al (2013) come to the conclusion that result orientation in peace building projects is more of a hindrance than a help. Orientation to predefined goals might also lead to ignoring results that look unspectacular or that are not obviously connected to project activities, like for example the creation of communication channels or increased cooperation (cultural, economic, scientific etc.) between the inside and the outside of conflict zones or alterations in the legal framework and similar changes in conflict zones, improving working conditions in the media sector or other aspects<sup>74</sup>.

For these reasons, this paper argues for *collective efforts* to understand and publicly document social reality and social change in conflict zones as a whole instead of multiple individual (and costly) efforts to analyse specific and partial aspects of it.

### **B.2.3.2 Theoretical aspects of evaluations**

Kardorff (in Flick, 2006, 69) makes clear, how closely evaluation techniques and empirical social research are related: The art in both cases is to ask the right questions, choose a sound methodology and assure objectivity, reliability, validity, clarity and completeness<sup>75</sup> of arguments and to systematically progress from questioning to conclusions / recommendations.

In terms of evaluation typologies, an initial distinction between external evaluations and self-evaluations (auto-evaluations) can be drawn. In most evaluations and social research, triangulation<sup>76</sup> and mixing methods are recommended practice and should, as Flick (2006, 17) argues, “end earlier paradigm wars (between quantitative and qualitative research)” (my translation, parenthesis from the original). Beywil (in Flick, 2006, 94) categorizes evaluations according to the *valuing*: They can either *include* valuing (types of evaluations looking at decision-making, stakeholder interests or usefulness), *delegate* the valuing to other instances and focus on factual claims (looking at goals, costs etc.) or *avoid* valuing by focussing on controversial issues, dialogue, ideas or capacity building. Besides valuing, the time-factor needs to be carefully observed: A decision making process considering only short-term aspects might come to different conclusions from the same evaluation than one that considers mid- and long-term aspects: What appears ill-founded in the present might be proven wise in future.

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<sup>74</sup> Whether an impact can “count” when evaluating media initiatives in conflict zones depends on the role originally attributed to different actors. Arsenault, Himelfarb & Abbott (2011, 7) enlarge the traditional role concept by including for example “*Promoting an enabling environment*” in their list of possible roles for media. Differentiating the roles of the supported media organisations in conflict zones from their (external) supporting structures or other actors in the network certainly helps to stay focussed in evaluations.

<sup>75</sup> These standard requirements for scientific work are quoted here from Dahinden, Sturzenegger, Neuroni (2006; 38)

<sup>76</sup> According to Flick (2006, 15), triangulation is basically the complementary use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to crosscheck findings but also to get beyond the individual limits of the two approaches.

Another key question is the positioning of evaluators in the system. Kardorff again (in Flick, 2006, 71) lists three typical roles for evaluators, namely the role of a neutral, objective *observer*, the role of a *companion* and the role of an *agent of change*. This involves the question of (in)dependence of research and evaluations: As such activities have a cost and are likely to shape the future, the element of power introduced earlier plays a constant role also in the evaluation business. Different sources therefore insist on transparency about goals and resources in evaluations, for example the aforementioned OECD Principles for evaluation of development aid<sup>77</sup>. Transparency of underlying decision-making processes ensure that decisions are taken with regard to evaluation results – and avoids the situation where evaluations legitimize decisions that have been taken beforehand.

#### **B.2.4 Evaluation techniques**

Evaluations in the aid sector require – first of all – defined *Terms of Reference* (TOR)<sup>78</sup>: Purpose, methodology, resources, reporting requirements etc. must be transparent.

Whether the peace building or the journalistic aspects of a media initiative in a conflict zone ought to be evaluated is determinative for methodological choices. And this question links traditions of two different academic fields: Aid and media. Meaningful evaluations in these types of projects absolutely need to consider both.

This paper does not enter the huge field of *indicators*<sup>79</sup> or *criteria* that are usually predefined in an early project phase in order to be able to “measure” progress (or its absence) in the course of the project or ex post. The focus here is on the questions surrounding project design and quality assessment (see conclusions, chapter B.3). Once these preliminary questions are answered, the choice of indicators is not too difficult anymore as they derive from goals and objectives. As highlighted in B.2.1, participation of beneficiaries in defining quality and indicators is a must. And as introduced in A.5 the Human Development Index (HDI) is a rich source of inspiration for defining indicators<sup>80</sup>

##### **B.2.4.1 Evaluation techniques in the media sector**

Standard quality assessments in the media sector consider *recipients* and *content* as the main subjects of interest. *Market share* and *Audience reach* are vital figures for media in industrialized countries because the higher these figures are the higher the rates advertisers

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<sup>77</sup> OECD (1991, 7), „*The credibility of evaluation depends on the expertise and independence of the evaluators and the degree of transparency of the evaluation process.*“

<sup>78</sup> See for example EuropeAid (2004; 51, 98, Section 9 etc.).

<sup>79</sup> A possible definition of indicator is: “*Measurable variable used as a representation of an associated (but non-measured or non-measurable) factor or quantity*”. An example is measuring temperature to indicate the risk of icy roads. <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/indicator.html> ; 15.2.2015

<sup>80</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>; 18.2.2015.

are ready to pay. For peace building purposes, the usefulness of these indicators is questionable, firstly because of difficulties in carrying out representative surveys in contexts with violence problems, particularly in isolated, rural areas<sup>81</sup>. Secondly, if donor money is invested for de-escalating conflicts, why compete with local media for market shares?<sup>82</sup>

Content analysis is another field of research in the media sector and certainly crucial in conflict zones as content is the only “thing” recipients receive from a media. Therefore, content must be seen as the main cause that creates impact in such projects. Content can be evaluated in detail (looking at specific media outlets) or in a broad manner (looking for example at program structures, at representation of different social groups – particularly vulnerable groups – in programming or by comparing different media etc.). Clearly, in-depth content analysis demands much more resources than observations on the level of programming.

The following documents, freely available on the Internet, focus on evaluating media initiatives in conflict zones. Howard (2002) starts with a distinction between five types of media interventions in conflict zones and proposes a strategy and indicators for all of them. Taylor (2010) presents a useful inventory and technical details for the following evaluation methods: Content analysis, Delphi Method (expert panels), Focus Groups (end users), Network Analysis<sup>83</sup> (cooperation in the media sector) and Survey Research (market oriented). Arsenault, Himelfarb & Abbott (2011) describe efforts to develop common principles for a community of donors and implementers of media interventions in conflict zones and provide arguments to expand financial support for their evaluation, based on the conclusion that documenting a “direct causal link between media and violence” is particularly challenging in this type of project. They further compare the logframe-systems of seven donor agencies, which confirms the assumption that linear process logic is common practice in aid. All three approaches look at the situation mainly from inside or through the (supported) local media. In aid and peace building the perspective is inverted: First subject of interest is society and social change, of which media are one element among others. Robertson, Fraenkel, Schoemaker & Himelfarb (2011, 13) with the “IONA”-Approach briefly introduced in B.2.1 open the field for more context-oriented evaluations, as it is said to be “a data framework to capture social change”. To be of use also for administrative tasks inside

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<sup>81</sup> My field research indicates that in the case of South Kivu, rural areas are more affected by war and violence whilst media are more diverse and “professional” in urban areas. For media initiatives, this implies that specific measures are indispensable to avoid discrimination against already discriminated segments of society.

<sup>82</sup> Specialists may argue that “bad”, polarizing media in conflict zones must be eradicated and propose “external media monitoring” in conflict zones in order to contribute to peacebuilding when local regulation services are not (yet) capable of assuming this responsibility (Arsenault, Himelfarb & Abbott (2011, 7).

<sup>83</sup> Neue Zürcher Zeitung (24.2.2015) describes the research of Uwe Krüger (University of Leipzig) who analyses personal networks to investigate interactions between leading media and elites in Germany. This alternative manner of applying Network Analysis apparently led to some disputes as opinion making does not only occurs through close relationships between an elite and journalists but involves also scientists like Krüger and those who maintain that his conclusions (for example that leading media in Germany tend to be biased in favour of the NATO) were scientifically inaccurate.

conflict zones etc., it will be of great importance to ensure that collected data are going to be publicly accessible.

### B.2.4.2 Evaluation techniques in aid

In aid and peace building, evaluation techniques are not fundamentally different from those used in the media sector: Most are oriented to standard methods from social research<sup>84</sup>. The basic question is, whether beneficiaries get what they need (with the associated question of who defines their needs, discussed earlier). Aid and peace building are oriented – per definition – towards satisfying the needs of the most vulnerable. This contrasts with the media sector, in which a distinction of this type might be problematic: First because limitations of media are more geographical than social and second because privileging a specific social group – the most vulnerable – must be deliberately intended and implemented to avoid conflict with the principles of impartiality and freedom of the press.

The following graphic illustrates the standard elements of evaluations as often applied in aid activities. A working paper (DDA, 1991) inspired the illustration.

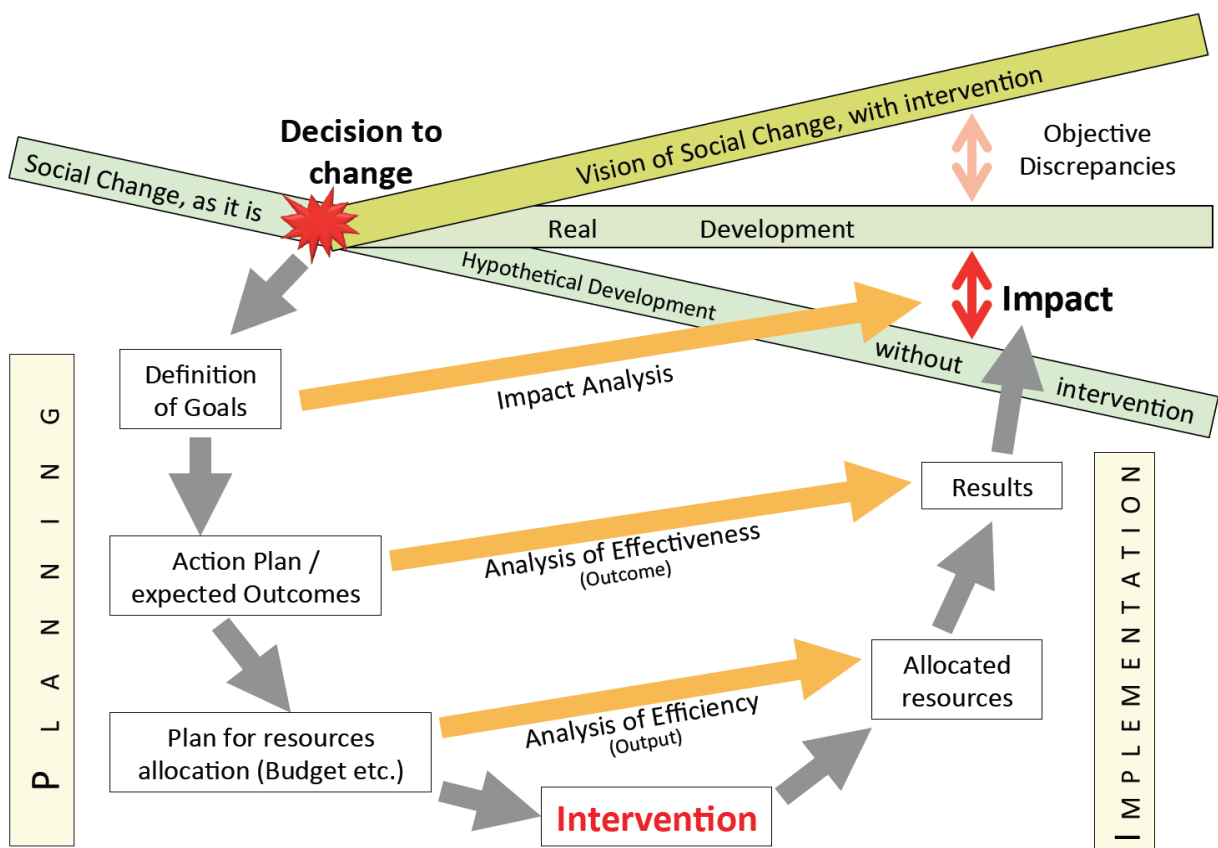


Figure 2: Visualisation of elementary aspects of evaluations

<sup>84</sup> According to Atteslander (2010, Table of content), social research differentiates basically between Observation, Interrogation, Experiment and Content Analysis. For every of these categories there exists a multitude of distinct approaches from which researchers can choose in order to find explanations on social realities and social change.

Social change as observed or experienced, extrapolated to a hypothetical future social change is the basis of project logic. If this trend is recognized as unsatisfactory or frightening, initiatives intending future changes are likely to be triggered, based on a vision of social change deviating from the observed, unsatisfactory trend. Neither the hypothetical nor the visionary trend need be congruent with real development. Over the project cycle, evaluators can look:

**Output** (analysis of efficiency), compares the effectively implemented with the allocated resources (budgets etc.)

**Outcome** (analysis of effectiveness), compares the real and the intended (immediate) results of an intervention

**Impact** analysis, compares the real and the intended social change after a longer project period or beyond the project cycle

#### **B.2.5 Data sources**

Two approaches to access data for evaluations can be distinguished: One is from (existing) data to the explanations they provide, the other is from questions to answers, which determines research for the needed data. The second approach appears to be more conclusive but also more expensive in most cases, as specific surveys need to be carried out. Under budget pressure it might therefore be tempting to look for data, which are accessible with minimal effort, usually data available inside the respective (media) organisation. In between these two options – carrying out own (costly) surveys or analysing inhouse data – the use of *third party data*, appears as an option to render evaluations less costly.

The table on the following page gives a more detailed overview on how data can be accessed in order to evaluate media in conflict zones. No commercial details are added to the list, but a distinction is made, whether the initial orientation is more towards the media project, more towards the context (social change) or both. In reality, distinctions might not always be as rigid as presented here.



<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Inhouse</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Parties</b>	<b>Own surveys</b>	<b>Orientation towards</b>
Internal Audits (working procedures, resource flows, objectives, documentary proofs etc.)	X			Media Project
Internal quantitative and qualitative investigations (number of errors, number of positive/ negative feedbacks, fluctuation of employees, etc.)	X			Media Project
Analysis of content, program-structures etc.	X	(X)		Media Project
Recipient's surveys (large, deep, etc.)		(X)	X	Not predefined
Social research (on general trends in society, social change etc.)		X	X	Context
Quantitative Data (statistics established by hospitals, security forces, registry offices, refugee camps, etc.)		X	X	Context
Network-Analysis	X	X		Both
Good journalism	X	X	X	Both

*Table 1: Possible ways for accessing necessary data for evaluations*

The question of budget always plays a role in evaluations: Not everything that is possible is feasible and not everything that is feasible makes sense. The choice of methods must be subordinated to the *objectives* of the project and of the evaluation. The importance of monitoring context (social change) having been highlighted (B.2.3.1 etc.), it appears that this demands considerably more resources than evaluating internal aspects of media in conflict zones. On the one hand, this supports the proposal of this paper to move towards collective and public monitoring of social change. On the other hand it appears that journalistic techniques have a certain potential to bridge gaps, basically due to the journalists (theoretical) right to access “all areas” and their ability, experience and networks to verify information and to present findings in a conclusive and commonly understandable manner.

## **B.3 Conclusions and recommendations**

### **B.3.1 Summary**

In this concluding part, the following elements are brought together with the reflections in the previous chapters:

Findings from the 2009 basic study

Findings from field research 2011/12 in South Kivu / DRC

Both studies are briefly introduced in B.2.1. In a synthesis, it appears that, in general, the concluding elements of 2009 found resonance in practice. Appendix 5 summarizes the findings in the following *15 Quality Categories for Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones*. During subsequent development of the topic after 2009, six categories were found to be missing, and two elements of the 2009 study were integrated in other categories. These categories are *not* indicators but aimed at structuring quality reflections, project design and the definition of suitable indicators within the economic capability of promoting and implementing organisations. The categories are attributed to the project phase in which I think they are most relevant, but the message is that *all categories contribute to quality in all project phases*. The six elements added after 2009 are in bold hereafter and will subsequently be further elaborated.

1. Project initiation phase

- Trust

- Advocacy

2. Feasibility Study

- Aid coherence**

- Local Media Landscape

- Conflict Analysis

3. Planning Phase

- Space for Dialogue**

- Connecting of “Inside” and “Outside”

- Collective Decision Making**

- Documentations and Archives

- Transparency on Intentions

- Independence (autonomy)

4. Implementation Phase

- Transparency on Resources

- Avoidance of Negative Side Effects**

- Arousing Interest

- Empowerment of Peace Building Capacities**

5. Ex Post Phase

- Objectivity**

My answer to the first of the two research questions in this paper – *How to evaluate quality of media initiatives in conflict zones?* – would simply be: Find ways to continually improve in all these disciplines and document this improvement process carefully. Journalistic approaches in quality assessments appear to make sense, at least in self-evaluations of media initiatives in conflict zones: First because of existing knowhow on investigation techniques, second because of existing knowhow on presenting findings and arousing interest and last but not least in economic terms.

For the second question – *How to add value to such initiatives?* – Research encouraged me to present a concrete proposal, which is detailed in the concept note (Part A).

### **B.3.2 Lessons learned: Reconsidering Quality Categories**

This presentation of findings focuses on the quality categories found missing after the basic study in 2009. For detailed information please refer to Appendix 5 or to the original documentation, as introduced in B.2.1.

#### **a) Project Initiation Phase**

When an emergency triggers aid activities, **Trust** and **Advocacy** are determinative for quality, from the beginning. So far, theoretical and practical findings are in resonance. From a practical viewpoint, limiting advocacy to protecting journalists in media initiatives appears questionable: As the core aim of aid is *satisfying the needs of the most vulnerable*, it is evident that this objective should also be put at the top of the agenda of media initiatives in conflict zones, and equilibrate it with the claim for objectivity in journalism. The potential of external actors to name problems that are taboo for locals appears as a particular strength to be valued<sup>85</sup>.

#### **b) Feasibility Study Phase**

**Aid coherence** was not explicitly recognized as a quality category from a theoretical viewpoint in 2009, but is widely demanded in the aid sector<sup>86</sup>. Its importance became explicit in field research, when a substantial amount of frustration was expressed about living conditions stagnating at a low level in South Kivu, despite enormous efforts of the international (aid) community over the last 15 years. In such circumstances, promoters of media initiatives are challenged to go beyond “classical” journalism, for example by engaging in political dialogue with authorities, by using networks to generally advocate aid coherence or by promoting constructive projects or dynamics. The neutral position of media and their

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<sup>85</sup> In the case of South Kivu, severe media legislation and its arbitrary application are concerns expressed by several of the interviewed sources. Advocacy of external actors eventually has the potential to improve this situation and indicates – again – that media initiatives in conflict zones must go (far) beyond media work.

<sup>86</sup> The demand for coherence in international aid exists since many years. As an example, one can look at the efforts of the United Nations Development Group (created 1997) for more coherence in the UN. <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=20> (29.1.2015).

(theoretical) right to access all sectors are an excellent basis for this type of advocacy, which does not compromise objectivity as such. Even if international media are not part of the international aid system, it appears desirable to aim at including them in the conception of media projects in conflict zones, for example in order to facilitate objective reporting on conflict or to arouse interest<sup>87</sup>.

Further, practical and theoretical considerations indicate that constant and profound **Conflict Analysis** and analysis of the **Local Media Landscape** are crucial elements to be considered in early project stages, in order to avoid negative side effects like, for example, the stifling of promising local media initiatives or the (unrecognized) introduction of propaganda in local, regional and international communication and/or media systems.

### c) Project Planning Phase

From the practical perspective, **Space for Dialogue** appears as an important quality category when conceiving media initiatives in conflict zones. My field research indicates a clearly positive perception of media offering space for (political) dialogue, debates etc., which are seen as countering segregation of social or communication systems<sup>88</sup>. The equilibration of interests (particularly those of the most vulnerable and of powerful elites) is challenging, and a unifying position focussing on common interests appears recommendable for any media in such contexts. Local languages are a particular challenge for external actors: Its use might intensify dialogue on the one hand but eventually enhances segregation of communities on the other. In quintessence, space for dialogue is most needed where it is absent as such, between disconnected communities or disconnected realities.

**Collective Decision Making** – the basic mechanism of functioning societies and functioning states – might be dysfunctional in most conflict zones. This challenges external promoters of media initiatives in conflict zones to purposely *value the mediating potential of media* in project planning and further on, although this not a predefined or standard media function.

In consequence, contact with recipients must be deliberately promoted when implementing media initiatives in conflict zones. This follows from systemic consideration (B.1.2.3) and is also congruent with my field research and a similar study in Liberia (Lopata, Spurk, Joseph & Sackie, 2008, p. 9).

In the case of South Kivu, one key issue that arose in the interviews concerned uncertainties with regard to the legal framework and its application. Legal certainty is the root and the fruit of collective decision-making. Its absence is a serious hindrance to economic, social and

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<sup>87</sup> This became explicit in the case of Bukavu / South Kivu, where frustration was not only expressed about international aid but also about international media, said to convey a negativist image of the DRC. *“International broadcasting”* is also on the list of possible (new) roles for media in conflict zones of Arsenault, Himelfarb & Abbott (2011, 7)

<sup>88</sup> Ojebode & Akingbulu (2009) basically agree on positive effects of space for dialogue in media, but point out that this space risks being restricted by authorities in an attempt to consolidate the power balance, which is said to have happened in Nigeria in 2007, after a longer period of relative liberty.

cultural development. This can be considered as common knowledge and is also clearly indicated through field research. Absence of legal certainty correlates, to a certain extent, with the absence of state control, which has been the case in parts of eastern DRC over long periods since the mid 90s and can certainly be considered as typical for other conflict zones worldwide.

In such circumstances, peace building is closely intertwined with state building<sup>89</sup>. This is, by nature, not the business of media, to which the watchdog function in society is attributed<sup>90</sup>. This dilemma appears also quite clearly in field research and as a key challenge for promoters of media initiatives in conflict zones, which have an inherent potential to initiate and moderate public debates. Field work and systemic considerations can be synthesized in a strong urge to value this mediating potential, for example by probing, proposing and fine tuning ideas, cooperation and constructive projects, which does not compromise the principle of objectivity as such.

*The risk in this specific proposal is that external donors and/or actors could substitute vital state functions, which would seriously undermine sustainability. This is a reason for scheduling the issue in early project stages: It needs to be negotiated with the competent authorities, which can be a headache when state power is absent, when authorities mistrust outsiders (or even accuse them of influencing domestic affairs) or when elites profit from external support to crack down on their opponents. But these are in fact challenges for all types of aid, what leads back to aid coherence.*

Another quality category is the connecting of different realities, specifically the **Connecting of “Inside” and “Outside”** with regard to conflict zones, as suggested already in 2009 and which also appears highly recommendable following newer research. Theory and practice also resonate in the claim for **Transparency on Intentions** of external interventions in conflict zones and on the centrality of **Independence (Autonomy)** of media. This last category was represented in 2009 by the claim for *long term engagement*, in order to avoid endangering project staff. Field research revealed, first, that lack of independence of local media is a serious challenge in the case of South Kivu. Second, indications exist that creating one externally supported media does not automatically increase the autonomy and independence of the whole media ecosystem. Based on these findings, reflection on how to improve general media quality (and living conditions) in a conflict zone instead of focussing on the specific media to be supported appears recommendable.

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<sup>89</sup> Rocha Menocal & Sharma (2009), state that not only “Citizens’ voice”, but also *government accountability* is an important dimension of governance. “Citizens capacity to express and exercise their views effectively has the potential to influence government priorities and processes”. This is certainly true and important but should not segregate or even oppose government and citizens, which under ideal circumstances are individuals exercising different functions in the same society.

<sup>90</sup> See for example Arsenault, Himelfarb & Abbott (2011, 5), stating that the motivation of their initiative is to “strengthen existing independent media organisations or build new ones, with an eye toward improving the medias ability to serve as information providers and political and social watchdogs”. In a systemic perspective, this should include critically watching the whole system constituted by media initiatives, thus also its supporting structures.

As an overall conclusion, the substitution of public functions by external actors must be absolutely avoided, in order to achieve their sustainable independence and autonomy over time.

Last but not least, the category of **Documentations and Archives** needs to be integrated in the project-planning phase, which was seen 2009 mainly from the donor perspective, in the light of traceability. Further research revealed that the potential of documentations and archives was underestimated, as efforts in this direction can help create databases useful for administrative tasks locally and also as a reference for implementing and evaluating external aid activities. Therefore, a proposal to constitute publicly accessible databases with rudimentary, journalistically validated information on social change is integrated in this study (see Part A / Concept Note)

#### **d) Project Implementation Phase**

**Avoidance of Negative Side Effects** might look trivial as a quality category and was not specifically noted in 2009. From a practical perspective, the potential damage of errors in media regarding conflict zones justifies preventive measures or even the imposition of them. Negative side effects can be, for example, the dissemination of propaganda – willingly or not – stigmatization through excessively negative reporting, the resurrection of frozen conflicts or the “turning” of media into polarisation. Following the sources interviewed in Bukavu, three priorities could minimise such risks: *Contextualisation* of information, *deepening the knowledge* about conflict and context, and *correction of stereotypes and prejudices*. If these were duties, they would apply for actors inside and outside conflict zones. A precondition for quality on this level is the existence of, and transparency of, peace oriented editorial lines<sup>91</sup>.

The aforementioned risk of stifling promising local media by providing external support to the local media market exists through all project phases and must be constantly countered by activities aiming at general improvements in the local media sector, basically by implementing the measures described in the previous paragraphs.

**Valuing Peace Building Capacities** is another quality category added after 2009. Field research indicates some interests for media content showing examples of peaceful cohabitation, whilst some sources are also sceptical, particularly when it comes to fictional, entertaining formats. Two sources have concrete proposals for media: One is to explain how peaceful cohabitation was achieved in other places of the world, the other is to present positive results from local pacification efforts, in order to encourage regulation of remaining problems and – maybe even more important – to present the *tools and procedures* that have been successfully applied in these cases. Deliberate efforts are necessary to value peace building capacities in media initiatives, as this is not the scope of media in a classical understanding. One possible way could be to integrate conflict analysis and peace building

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<sup>91</sup> Widening his concept of Peace Journalism Galtung (2008a, 187 et seq.) lists some inspiring principles , whereas my adaptation into Connective Journalism could be another source of interest (Hombberger, 2014)

into journalistic training.

Additionally, establishing **Transparency on Resources** appears as an important quality category from both the theoretical and the practical perspective, together with **Arousing Interest**. This last point has been discussed in 2009 mainly from a domestic perspective, focussing on feedback mechanisms involving recipients. Fieldwork indicates that participation is in fact often positively perceived by recipients too, whilst systemic considerations (B.1.2.3) lead to the conclusion that feedback loops with recipients must in fact be deliberately installed to avoid stakeholders being forced into the role of consumers, without any opportunities to voice their needs.

For improved peace building effects, it might be recommendable to provide, first, media content focussed specifically on arousing the interest of extremely violent people in order to persuade them to reintegrate into civil life. Second, efforts should be concentrated also on arousing interest outside the conflict zone, in order to bridge the previously described insider-outsider segregation. Last but not least this appears as a possible source of revenue or something that could eventually trigger more constructive cooperation.

#### e) Ex Post Phase

**Objectivity** is the last of the six new quality categories introduced after 2009. There are a multitude of indications from the practical perspective that media initiatives have to comply with other requirements than media in non-conflict-zones, which are basically expected to be neutral, impartial and objective all together. The difference is that externally financed media initiatives in conflict zones have an *objective*, which is less violence and more justice according to the definitions in B.1.1.1. This formulation is intentionally broad, as it is not up to an external researcher to make generalisations in this point: It must be left up to the people (beneficiaries) in whichever conflict zone they may live. Field research indicates that in the case of South Kivu, generally improved living conditions privileging the most vulnerable, and an end to stigmatisation etc. could be added as more precise objectives of aid and of externally financed media. More field work, more listening to people in this area, more trying to understand, more information and data sharing would certainly allow the “discovery” of more constitutive elements for a sound objective to media projects in *this specific area*, probably even including regional differentiations etc. And it is just as certain that in other conflict zones, successful media would have distinct objectives. In conclusion it can be said that the *development, over time, of sound objectives* for media is among the most precious elements that external actors can add to improve the situation in conflict zones: Develop objectives for objectivity.

These observations have to be read with regard to the necessity for an “exit strategy”: Promoters of media initiatives in conflict zones must aim at becoming superfluous, must leave behind a vibrant ecosystem of objective, constructive media in a post-conflict environment, leave behind authorities that do not fight media but support them in

developing societal objectives that make sense for all stakeholders, leave behind elites who understand that media performing their role of critical observers are in their own interest etc. Shared objectives appear as prerequisites for sustainability. Objectivity is neither neutral nor impartial. In the best of all cases its objective is to be all-partial. And with a little luck, media initiatives in conflict zones contribute to more objectivity also in non-conflict-zones: In *our* media landscapes, in developed-industrialized zones.

February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015



## PART C: Enquête sur le terrain / Field Research

### C.1 *Abstract on Field Research (English)*

From a systemic perspective, local media and also the local cultural sector (such as artists etc.) appear to be in the right position to monitor social change in conflict zones. Such a monitoring is essential for aid and also for collective decision-making and administrative tasks inside the conflict zone itself. The specific focus here is this “insider”-perspective: In-depth interviews carried out in Bukavu (Democratic Republic of the Congo<sup>92</sup>) portray the perceptions and the expectations of fourteen people with regard to the media in their environment. Based on content analysis (appendix 3), the following ten categories were identified to classify all the direct and indirect recommendations from the interviewed persons, addressed to promoters of media initiatives in conflict zones (details in appendix 4):

1. Advocacy
2. Aid coherence
3. Space for dialogue
4. Inside – outside connections
5. Collective decision-making
6. Documentations and Transparency
7. Avoidance of negative side effects
8. Arousing interest
9. Empowerment of peace building skills
10. Objectivity

The interviews give the overall impression that *in a conflict zone a media project is not a media project*. Different sources claim more or less explicitly that aid must lead to better living conditions, which has not really happened in their case over the last roughly 15 years, despite substantial efforts by the international aid community. And what is expected from aid in general is also expected from external media initiatives, according to the people interviewed. Promoters of such initiatives also face the challenge of complying with quality criteria that were commonly used in the evaluation of peace building projects and not just with standard criteria for media quality.

This study provides an *understanding of what constitutes better living conditions* in the local context of South Kivu. Additionally, it can inspire the conception and the evaluation of media projects in this particular context and eventually initiate improvement processes beyond that geographical area.

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<sup>92</sup> In the period from December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, until January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012

In order to make this work comprehensible also for people in Congo, the main text is in French whilst the aforementioned appendices 3 and 4 are in English.

### c.1.1 *Abréviations et définitions essentielles*

ASBL	Association sans but lucratif
FARDC	Forces armées de la RDC
FDLR	Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda
ITW	Interview (avec numéro d'interview et paragraphe, p.ex. ITW1/10)
NU	Nations unies
MONUSCO	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo
OCDE	Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Economiques
RDC	République démocratique du Congo
RTNC	Radio Télévision nationale congolaise

**Zone de conflit** : espace géographique où des violences et/ou l'absence de justice amènent des acteurs externes à intervenir directement ou indirectement dans le secteur des médias ou à envisager une telle initiative, afin d'influencer la société de cette zone particulière de devenir moins violente et plus juste.

**Projets médias** : assistance (financière, technique, intellectuelle ou pareille) d'acteurs non-locaux dans le secteur médias d'une zone de conflit selon la définition précédente.

## C.2 *Introduction*

Le présent document s'inscrit dans un travail plus exhaustif sur la qualité des projets médias dans les zones de conflit. Basé sur une étude théorique (Hombberger, 2009, 2010<sup>93</sup>), le présent document exploite des recherches pratiques conduites en Afrique. Concrètement, il s'agit de huit interviews avec quatorze personnes, menées durant les semaines suivant les élections présidentielles et législatives de novembre 2011 à Bukavu, chef-lieu de la Province du Sud-Kivu, en République démocratique du Congo (RDC)<sup>94</sup>. L'objectif de la présente étude est de connecter les conclusions de 2009<sup>95</sup> avec la pratique sur terrain.

En substance, deux questions furent élucidées dans ces entretiens à Bukavu : comment les interlocuteurs *perçoivent* les médias de leur environnement et quelles sont leurs *attentes* envers « leurs » médias. L'intention générale est d'ouvrir le champ d'observation et d'obtenir une vue d'ensemble après l'étude focalisée de 2009.

Dans cette optique d'ouverture maximale, les personnes interviewées ont abordé un grand

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<sup>93</sup> Le document de 2009 est en allemand, résumé en anglais en 2010. Tous les documents sont disponibles sur [www.h-connect.ch](http://www.h-connect.ch) (menu « Organisation », rubrique « Projet actuel de recherche »).

<sup>94</sup> Ce choix géographique est dû au fait que la région des Grand Lacs africains m'est familière depuis 1984, donc bien avant l'éclatement des guerres ouvertes de grande envergure à partir de 1996.

<sup>95</sup> La conclusion de l'étude de 2009 porte sur onze critères de qualité possibles pour les projets médias en zone de conflit, sous la forme d'un questionnaire orienté aux promoteurs de tels projets.

nombre d'éléments. L'annexe 3 (Content Analysis) condense toutes les interviews en 302 éléments, regroupés en sept catégories principales et 28 sous-catégories. Les chapitres 2 et 3 introduisent d'une manière assez sommaire le contexte général du Sud Kivu, son paysage médiatique ainsi que les problèmes et défis soulevés<sup>96</sup>. Le chapitre 4 développe les différentes visions du rôle et de la qualité des médias exprimées dans les interviews, et le chapitre 5 traite spécifiquement l'aspect de la confiance. Le présent document conclut en résumant les recommandations des personnes interviewées pour améliorer la qualité des projets médias dans les zones de conflit.

Sur le plan méthodologique, l'intention au départ était de privilégier des voix en dehors du secteur médias et de se rapprocher de la réalité en choisissant des interlocuteurs représentant différents milieux sociaux (notamment des secteurs gouvernementaux et non gouvernementaux, etc.). Les personnes interviewées disposent toutes d'une formation ou d'expériences leur permettant d'analyser les changements, perspectives et tendances d'ordre social. En conséquence, la génération de moins de 30 ans n'est pas représentée dans cet échantillon. Profitant des opportunités sur place à Bukavu, deux interviews avec six journalistes ont été ajoutées spontanément. Ces interviews d'experts ne suivent pas la logique originale, mais sont à considérer comme une triangulation par rapport aux propos recueillis dans les autres interviews et aux impressions générales du séjour à Bukavu. La note méthodologique (annexe 1) informe de manière plus approfondie à ce sujet.

### **C.3 Brève description du milieu social et du paysage médiatique local**

Officiellement terminée depuis 2003, la guerre qui commençait à prendre de l'ampleur en 1996 marque encore le quotidien de nombreux habitants de la Province du Sud Kivu, surtout en milieu rural. « *Le peuple congolais est fatigué de la guerre* » commente laconiquement une source (ITW1/1210). Une autre source résume :

*« Or, les questions qui fâchent ici, ce sont les questions d'ethnie, les questions de l'exploitation illégale, les questions [...] de trafic d'armes et les questions de terre. Et sur ces questions-là, les médias [...] sont un peu limités. » (ITW8/280)*

Bukavu en soi est une agglomération impressionnante avec environ 800'000 habitants, située à la frontière rwandaise sur les rives du Lac Kivu à une altitude de 1800 mètres. Compte tenu du fait que l'est de la RDC est approvisionné en marchandises majoritairement via les ports maritimes de l'Afrique de l'Est et non via la capitale (Kinshasa), Bukavu est aussi une importante plaque tournante du commerce. En plus, on y remarque la présence massive d'organisations d'entraide, à commencer par le système des Nations Unies (NU ; qui déploient entre autres environ 20'000 casques bleus dans toute la RDC<sup>97</sup>). Au Sud Kivu, les

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<sup>96</sup> Pour en savoir plus sur ce contexte, les écrits de Marie Soleil Frère et Blaise Sanyila sont à recommander. Personnellement, j'ai élaboré six portraits de personnes rencontrées en 2012 (pas les personnes interviewées) et une analyse de contexte dans le Kivu-Maniema rural en 2014 (voir bibliographie).

<sup>97</sup> <http://monusco.unmissions.org/>; 20.1.2015

NU collaborent avec de nombreuses organisations bi- ou multilatérales et ONG locales ou étrangères.

La plupart des médias du Sud Kivu sont des radios. On en compte environ une vingtaine<sup>98</sup>, dont une station nationale (RTNC) et une autre qui opère dans les structures des NU (Radio Okapi) et arrive aussi à couvrir toute la RDC. Pour le reste, il s'agit de stations qui appartiennent à des hommes politiques ou d'affaires de la région, ou ce sont ce que l'on appelle des « radios communautaires », gérées soit par des associations locales soit par des congrégations religieuses.

Les chaînes TV sont moins de dix à Bukavu, dont la RTNC. En plus, on note plusieurs cybercafés et quelques titres imprimés. A part la Radio Okapi, l'appui du secteur médias par des partenaires étrangers se fait plutôt de manière discrète, et les engagements ne sont pas tous pris à long terme. Ainsi, il est connu que la radio communautaire *Maendeleo* entretient de tels partenariats, comme le journal *Le Souverain*. En plus, il existe l'antenne d'une agence de presse (*Syfia Grand Lacs*) et un centre de production audiovisuelle (*Centre Lokole*) qui ont des partenariats avec l'extérieur.

Les interviews donnent l'impression d'une population locale bien informée sur le contexte dans lequel elle vit et capable notamment de déchiffrer à qui (ou à quel courant politique) appartiennent les différents médias, même si la transparence est lacunaire à ce sujet.

Plusieurs sources soulignent la fonction vitale de l'information en zone de conflit. Ainsi, la population semble constamment branchée sur les médias, mais se tourne aussi (surtout ?) vers des relations personnelles de confiance pour se faire une image réelle des dangers et des comportements à adopter au quotidien.

*« [A]près avoir entendu une information [...] on peut discuter avec les amis : tel a dit ceci, tel a dit ceci. Et là je peux vous dire, en zone de conflit les gens ils cherchent l'information. En tout cas, les gens balayent<sup>99</sup>. » (ITW2/260)*

Quant à la fonction publique, il est important de rappeler qu'à partir de 1996, le pouvoir central en RDC n'a exercé qu'un contrôle partiel du territoire national<sup>100</sup>. Dans ces années d'absence d'un pouvoir légitime à l'est de la RDC, la société civile a au moins partiellement remplacé les services publics essentiels, souvent avec l'appui de bailleurs de fonds externes. Cela semble avoir creusé la distance entre la population et les élites, surtout de la sphère politico-militaire, dont la réputation est plus ou moins répressive depuis l'époque coloniale.

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<sup>98</sup> Toutes les présentes indications se réfèrent au début de l'année 2012. Pour une analyse approfondie du paysage médiatique congolais : Frère, Marie Soleil (2008 ; un travail d'ailleurs actualisé en 2014 ; voir bibliographie)

<sup>99</sup> Le terme « balayer » est utilisé ici pour exprimer le fait que les gens consacrent beaucoup de temps à suivre et comparer différents médias.

<sup>100</sup> Après la défaite de la milice M23 en novembre 2013 par les Forces armées de la RDC (FARDC ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-20438531>; 4.2.15), une nouvelle offensive vient d'être lancée en janvier 2015 pour traquer d'autres groupes armés (<http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAWEB20150129133313/#ixzz3QIbF5Rtg>; 4.2.2015)

Il est donc peu surprenant qu'une source décrive la nécessité d'améliorer les relations entre civils et militaires. L'espoir qu'une autorité publique capable de stabiliser la société se mette en place est palpable à travers les interviews, mais aussi relativisé par l'expérience de plusieurs décennies durant lesquelles on n'a rarement vu la fonction publique réellement au service de la population.

Quant aux législations et normes en vigueur et leur application en RDC, aussi en dehors du secteur médias, la moitié des huit interviews indique des incertitudes. Quant au statut juridique des médias non étatiques, plusieurs sources révèlent que la majorité est constituée en association sans but lucratif (ASBL). Une source explique que les ASBL sont nettement moins soumises à des tracasseries que les entreprises commerciales. D'autres renchérissent que la société à Bukavu serait dominée par des ASBL courant derrière l'argent des bailleurs de fonds ou que cette situation aurait étouffé l'esprit entrepreneurial et amènerait plutôt les gens à aspirer à des carrières dans le système politique.

Le système politique actuel de la RDC fut mis en place en 2006 avec le référendum populaire sur une nouvelle constitution, mais des élections au niveau local par exemple n'ont jamais été organisées depuis. Le résultat est une considérable concentration du pouvoir – et des avantages économiques – dans les mains du pouvoir central à Kinshasa<sup>101</sup>. Plusieurs remarques explicitant l'influence des « hommes politiques » sur le contenu des médias leur appartenant ont été exprimées dans les interviews. À titre d'exemple :

*« [...] il y a [...] un cas, dans un territoire, où, bon, il était aussi venu avec sa radio, il l'a installée, il a mis le groupe [électrique], pendant toute la période de la campagne. Après les élections, la radio s'est tue. Ah ! Mais qu'est-ce qui se passe – on entend plus la radio ? Il n'y a plus de carburant. La radio est là. C'est votre radio. Si vous voulez, payez le carburant et faites marcher la radio. » (ITW7/520)*

Concernant les appuis et subsides publics aux médias - une pratique courante dans nombreux pays du monde<sup>102</sup> - la Constitution de la RDC stipule : « *Les pouvoirs publics collaborent avec les associations qui contribuent au développement social, économique, intellectuel, moral, et spirituel des populations et à l'éducation des citoyens. Cette collaboration peut revêtir la forme d'une subvention* »<sup>103</sup>. Donc, il existe théoriquement une obligation pour les pouvoirs publics d'appuyer et subventionner aussi certains

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<sup>101</sup> Selon <http://afrique.kongotimes.info/rdc/parlement/4934-nouveau-salaire-deputes-senateurs-congo-honteuse-augmentation-salariale-honorables-deputes-senateurs.html> (16.1.2015), le salaire mensuel des 500 députés et sénateurs nationaux peut être estimé à 13'000 \$ actuellement.

<sup>102</sup> Puppis (2007 ; 65ff) parle de régulations du marché dont les subsides sont un élément parmi d'autres. Ces régulations se justifient selon cette source par des raisons techniques (disponibilité limitée de fréquences, etc.), des raisons commerciales (dysfonctionnement du marché dans le domaine des biens publics, dangers de concentration de marché, etc.) et des raisons socio-politiques (importance vitale de médias impartiaux pour le fonctionnement des démocraties, valeur culturelle des médias, etc.).

<sup>103</sup> Constitution de la RDC, article 37. En plus, l'article 38 de la Loi N° 004/2001 du 20 juillet 2001 portant les dispositions générales applicables aux associations sans but lucratif et aux établissements d'utilité publique, renchérit : « *L'Etat associe les Organisations Non-Gouvernementales à la conception et à la réalisation de sa politique de développement au niveau local, provincial et national* ». <http://www.leganet.cd>; 19.9.2014

médias privés, au moins ceux constitués en ASBL. Mais aucune source n'a connaissance d'un tel appui. Une source estime plutôt que la RTNC serait l'unique structure de médias bénéficiant de subsides du trésor public. Ceci est un point névralgique pour des promoteurs de projets médias en zone de conflit : si un acteur externe se substitue à ces devoirs de la fonction publique locale, cela peut entraîner une situation de dépendance et même s'avérer discriminatoire pour d'autres médias locaux.

L'opacité financière caractérisant un certain nombre de médias locaux représente un défi de plus, selon les personnes interviewées, qui indiquent aussi que l'autonomie financière est un véritable casse-tête pour les médias au Sud Kivu. Bien entendu, il s'agit là d'un problème connu un peu partout dans le monde : les médias ne vivent pas du journalisme, mais plutôt des recettes publicitaires ou éventuellement des subsides<sup>104</sup>.

#### **C.4 Problèmes et défis soulevés dans les interviews**

Le fait que le quotidien dans une zone de conflit diffère fondamentalement des pays industrialisés n'est palpable dans les interviews qu'à travers des remarques dites « en passant ». Pourtant, c'est une distinction essentielle pour éviter des conclusions erronées. Deux exemples : des journalistes parmi les personnes interviewées évoquent à peine leurs peurs, les menaces et leurs confrères tués<sup>105</sup>, et deuxièmement, aucun commentaire ne déplore directement la pauvreté en RDC, ce qui contraste fortement avec les médias européens que je consulte, qui mettent cette pauvreté et d'autres problèmes de la RDC souvent en avant, selon mon observation personnelle.

Les disparités entre les perspectives intérieures dans la zone de conflit et l'extérieur nourrissent de nombreuses frustrations exprimées dans les interviews, qui peuvent aller jusqu'à soupçonner des acteurs extérieurs d'être impliqués dans des stratégies de déstabilisation en RDC :

*« [V]ous entendrez par exemple RFI qui précipite un évènement. Et pendant la guerre ces médias ont contribué à attiser le conflit. On vous dit telle ville est déjà tombée alors que les rebelles ne sont pas encore arrivés là-bas. Donc il y a des médias internationaux qui ont contribué à cela parce que c'est une politique. Ces médias, ne vous en faites pas, ils sont aussi commandités ou télécommandés par certaines institutions internationales qui ont leurs intérêts dans des conflits armés » (ITW1/1440)*

Cette méfiance peut d'abord être attribuée au fait que malgré des efforts énormes de la communauté internationale durant les quinze dernières années, les conditions de vie en RDC

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<sup>104</sup> Puppis (2007/78) conclut : « En raison d'une tendance chez les utilisateurs d'éviter si possible de payer pour les médias, leur refinancement (uniquement) via le marché public n'est pas possible. Les médias doivent se procurer des financements alternatifs. Si ces médias sont actifs dans des marchés publicitaires, l'économie qui finance ces publicités obtient ainsi la possibilité d'influencer le contenu de ces médias ». (Ma traduction de l'allemand).

<sup>105</sup> L'organisation *Journalistes en danger (JED)* fait état de 8 journalistes assassinés depuis 2001 et 131 atteintes à la liberté de la presse en RDC pour la seule année 2012; <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2012/10/11/rdc-8-journalistes-assassines-sous-la-presidence-de-joseph-kabila-selon-jed-rsf/#.U9imzkifJT5>; 7.9.2014

peinent à s'améliorer<sup>106</sup>. A ceci s'ajoute le problème qu'à côté des non-Congolais qui amènent de l'aide au Congo, il y aussi des non-Congolais profitant de pratiques immorales, par exemple dans l'exploitation illégale des ressources naturelles, identifiée par un groupe d'experts des NU comme le moteur de la guerre depuis 2001 déjà<sup>107</sup>. Un troisième élément qui pourrait alimenter la méfiance envers des acteurs externes est la stigmatisation potentielle suite à des communications excessivement négatives, pointées du doigt par cette source :

*« [Ç]a perturbe, ça augmente même le conflit ou même le problème. Vous imaginez : on a violé toute un village et on en parle comme ça – que deviennent les membres de cette communauté ? » (ITW2/120)*

Ces critiques mènent à un point crucial : les difficultés d'experts non locaux à y voir clair dans le contexte extrêmement complexe de la RDC et surtout dans les rouages du système du pouvoir et d'élites congolaises, y compris leurs affiliations internationales. Le problème, c'est que des experts externes mal informés risquent d'approuver des pratiques immorales – même si ceci n'est pas intentionnel – et, pire encore, l'introduction et la perpétuation de la propagande et de la désinformation tactique dans des systèmes internationaux de communication et de médias :

*« C'est ça le malheur que souvent les enquêtes que font les Occidentaux - par exemple quand on chante, bon, on a donné pour contrôler la fraude au niveau des élections - ils ne verront rien. [...]. Les tricheries se sont passées de plusieurs manières, tellement que les pauvres qui sont à Kinshasa [...] - qu'est-ce qu'ils verront là-bas ? Ils ne verront rien ! [...] Alors, ils diront oui. C'est très bien. C'est bien passé. » (ITW3/310)*

Clairement, il y a aussi des aspects positifs résultant d'interventions externes en RDC qui sont mentionnés dans les interviews, par exemple – crucial ! – *le potentiel d'acteurs externes d'aborder des problèmes qui sont tabous ou délicats pour des acteurs locaux.*

Pour le cas d'interventions externes dans le secteur médias, le danger d'étouffement d'organisations locales par la supériorité des projets financés ou appuyés par l'extérieur est à prendre au sérieux. Des telles remarques sont formulées de manière prudente, mais elles reviennent dans plusieurs interviews :

*« Je suis convaincu que ces journalistes, si on les mettait dans les mêmes conditions [...] qu'ils ont à la Radio Okapi, ils peuvent produire un bon travail. » (ITW1/500)*

*« En tout cas, la plupart des radios qui sont financées [...] font un travail beaucoup plus professionnel, ils sont beaucoup plus écoutés aussi, mais il y a quand même des radios personnelles qui sont bien, bien, bien, bien. Je pense que c'est assez important. »*

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<sup>106</sup> Malgré une très légère augmentation depuis 2000, l'indicateur du développement humain (IDH) de la RDC stagne depuis 1980 ; <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-2-human-development-index-trends-1980-2013>; 8.9.2014

<sup>107</sup> Voir les articles 213-218 dans le « Rapport du Groupe d'experts sur l'exploitation illégale des ressources naturelles et autres richesses de la République démocratique du Congo », établi par un panel d'experts des Nations Unies et rendu public par son secrétaire général Kofi Annan le 12 avril 2001 (document S/2001/357, accessible via <http://www.un.org/fr/sc/documents/letters/2001.shtml>; 20.9.2014).

(ITW2/480)

D'une manière plus générale, une source « *doute fort* » que tous les objectifs de projets médias au Sud Kivu ne soient réalisés (ITW1/610).

Quant aux problèmes sociaux plutôt endogènes dans le Sud Kivu, les interlocuteurs mentionnent régulièrement la corruption et l'impunité, conjointement aux problèmes des infrastructures en délabrement (routes, approvisionnement en eau et énergie, hôpitaux, écoles, etc.) ainsi que des tracasseries et de l'inefficacité des services publics. Plusieurs sources indiquent que les problèmes sont beaucoup plus aigus dans des endroits où l'aide et les médias internationaux n'arrivent que difficilement : dans les milieux ruraux, dans les vastes forêts et savanes vallonnées de l'est de la RDC.

Quant à l'absence d'une autonomie (financière) des médias au Sud Kivu, déplorée à plusieurs reprises par des interlocuteurs, cela concerne les médias en soi comme les journalistes individuels qui manqueraient souvent jusqu'aux simples moyens de déplacement pour enquêter. Il y a derrière ce constat de nombreux défis qui sont résumés dans la citation suivante :

*« [L]es médias forts appartiennent à des hommes forts. Et d'autres médias communautaires qui voudraient bien faire le travail n'ont pas de subventions pour le faire. Alors, ils travaillent avec les moyens de bord. Et comme on travaille avec les moyens de bord, on ne peut pas ne pas tomber dans le piège du coupage. Voilà que les journalistes sont vraiment de plein pied dans le coupage qui est au fait un terme utilisé ici pour parler du monnayage de l'information. Donc : on ne parle de vous et de vos actions que lorsque vous avez payé. Vous avez payé non seulement le média pour qu'il diffuse des informations sur vous, mais vous payez aussi pour le journaliste qui est venu vers vous. Parce que sa maison ne le paye pas. Donc des journalistes travaillent sans contrat. C'est difficile. Donc c'est un contexte un peu difficile. A Kinshasa j'avais vu un journaliste qui m'avait dit que lorsqu'il avait été engagé, son chef lui avait donné le micro. Et il avait posé la question à son chef comment il le payera à la fin du mois. Le chef lui a dit : ' Dis, je te donne le micro, je te donne le pouvoir et puis tu me demandes encore de te payer ? Tu dois te faire payer avec ton micro-là ! Le journaliste devait créer même de faux reportages propagandistes pour trouver de quoi vivre. » (ITW4/270)*

Plusieurs sources expriment des soucis parce que l'écosystème de leurs médias ressemble de plus en plus à l'arène où se joue la concurrence politique. Ceci entraîne un risque de polarisation sociale, bien palpable dans les interviews, mais dont le degré et d'éventuels dangers pour la cohésion sociale ne peuvent pas se mesurer sur la base de la présente étude. Le dilemme se trouve entre ce risque de polarisation et le devoir des médias de montrer la vérité. A titre d'exemple : dans une interview avec des journalistes, ils rapportent une prise de décision collective de leur rédaction de ne pas informer sur le cas d'une Congolaise tuée au Rwanda voisin, par peur que cette information puisse susciter des troubles. Cet exemple contraste fort avec l'opinion d'une autre source qui s'indigne qu'à Kinshasa même les Nations Unies filtrent les informations provenant de l'est de la RDC par « souci de la paix » (ITW7/340). Ce dilemme entre vérité et risque de polarisation semble



marquer considérablement le quotidien en RDC.

La liste des défis, faiblesses et obstacles dans le système des médias (voir annexe 3) comprend aussi les problèmes concernant la *formation des journalistes* (une source indique que 80% des journalistes de Bukavu n'ont jamais reçu de formation adéquate), *l'accès difficile à l'information* (par manque de documentation ou par empêchement) et *le niveau technique* (manque d'équipement). En ce qui concerne les plaintes sur la formation insuffisante des journalistes, elles sont contrastées par une remarque que les jeunes journalistes dévoués seraient éventuellement boycottés. Quant aux critères de qualité des médias soulevés dans les interviews, un grand nombre est lié aux domaines susmentionnés – indépendance, ressources et formation. Au niveau des auditeurs, atteindre des personnes traumatisées à un jeune âge est décrit comme délicat, qu'il s'agisse de victimes ou de bourreaux :

« Et les gens sont limités comme ça. [...] Dire : « Moi je suis ton frère » - mais quand [...] je ne connais pas la définition de « frère », c'est quoi ? A tout moment je peux te couper la tête. (ITW8/30)

### **C.5 Rôle et qualité des médias du point de vue des personnes interviewées**

Les estimations par rapport à la qualité générale des médias à Bukavu sont plutôt disparates : on trouve des commentaires les qualifiant de superficiels, biaisés, inconstants, voir « pyromanes », mais aussi des commentaires explicitant leur rôle constructif, faisant particulièrement allusion au processus électoral de 2011.

Conscient des dangers potentiels des médias en situation de conflit violent, les interlocuteurs ne remettent aucunement en question le potentiel des mêmes médias à mettre fin à des violences et voient ça même carrément comme la « responsabilité dévolue » (ITW1/250) ou « l'objectif ultime » (ITW2/680) des médias<sup>108</sup>. Une source renchérit qu'en milieu rural l'arrêt d'une station peut provoquer la fuite de la population. D'autres commentaires vont jusqu'à proposer de diffuser des appels dans les médias, par exemple pour ne pas se laisser entraîner dans des campagnes de haine, de s'impliquer et contribuer individuellement au développement, etc.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ce potentiel stabilisateur des médias en zone de conflit semble être reconnu parmi les spécialistes, au moins quand on se réfère aux statistiques de l'OCDE sur l'aide, qui indiquent une augmentation significative des moyens dépensés dans le secteur de la communication (environ US\$ 100 millions à la fin des années 60 jusqu'à près de 2 milliards de US\$ en 1988, 90, 92 et 93. Le fléchissement de cette hausse à partir des années 90 coïncide avec la création de la rubrique « Conflits, paix et sécurité », qui ne figurait pas dans ces statistiques auparavant mais qui atteint un volume supérieur à 3 milliards de US\$ à partir de 2008. <http://stats.oecd.org/?lang=fr&#>, rubrique « Aide (APD) par secteur et par donneur [CAD5] » ; 5.9.2014.

<sup>109</sup> Des tels appels axés sur le changement de comportement portent les caractéristiques de la propagande, définie par exemple comme « *manipulation of information to influence public opinion* » (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/propaganda>, 4.2.2015). La question de la limite de la propagande admissible pour remplir la fonction éducative des médias apparaît discutable. Frère (2012), en

Il apparaît assez clairement que les personnes interviewées attendent des médias qu'ils aillent au-delà du rôle catalytique de transmetteur d'information, vers la prévention des violences et vers un impact pacificateur et stabilisateur. Les « bénéficiaires » ne jouissant pas de tous leurs droits fondamentaux sont en droit de les réclamer :

*« Nous ne sommes pas condamnés, nous Congolais, à vivre dans la misère et dans la souffrance. [...], on est dans un pays où il y a une catégorie de personnes qui vivent et les autres vivent. Alors pour faire vivre tout le monde, en dignité, [les médias doivent] vraiment être l'outil qui mobilise, qui fait réfléchir, qui donne des idées [...] qui ouvre l'esprit des gens. » (ITW7/680)*

Cette vision du rôle des médias indique assez clairement que les critères de qualité des médias dont on parle dans les pays industrialisés<sup>110</sup> divergent fortement des attentes des personnes interviewées. J'en retiens la conclusion que *dans une zone de conflit, un projet médias n'est pas un projet médias*. Il doit répondre (plutôt) aux exigences d'un projet de promotion de la paix. Pour sa mise en œuvre et l'évaluation de sa qualité, une coopération étroite entre spécialistes en promotion de la paix et en médias et communication est donc une condition sine qua non.

Vu les trois rôles « classiques » des médias - information, éducation et distraction - la grande partie des commentaires se réfère au rôle éducatif. L'intention de changer le comportement des consommateurs de médias est à peine critiquée par les personnes interviewées, qui reconnaissent pourtant qu'une fine démarcation seulement sépare l'éducation de la propagande. Différentes sources sont prêtes à accepter des formats éducatifs ou même manipulateurs dans les médias si l'orientation reste sur *l'amélioration des conditions de vie*. Cela signifie différentes choses pour différentes sources : informations sur l'agriculture, l'environnement, l'économie, le développement communautaire, le respect des biens communs, l'amélioration de la fonction publique, les traditions, etc. Une source s'intéresse à connaître des exemples concrets de cohabitation et de développement pacifique dans d'autres régions du monde, une autre décrit l'éducation à travers les médias comme un processus d'apprentissage mutuel, impliquant journalistes et public.

Des commentaires essentiellement positifs ont été enregistrés quant à *l'espace que les médias offrent aux débats publics* opposant des représentants de diverses conceptions et visions sociétales. Les deux sources suivantes sont unanimes :

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comparant les systèmes des médias francophones et anglophones en Afrique, indique une distinction essentielle à ce sujet : les médias africains de sphère francophone seraient « *deeply imbued with the principles of 'communication for development' and of the radio as a tool for 'social communication' (Capitant 2008). This perspective has little in common with the situation prevailing in English-speaking countries, where the reference is commonly for commercial, profit making stations, often part of a broader media group, operating within a network, or with other radios offering programmes in other regions or languages.* »

<sup>110</sup> Par exemple : ISAS BCP 9001:2010 : A quality management standard dedicated to media industries (radio, TV, print media, Internet); <http://www.media-society.org/en/isas-bcp-9001-standard>; 7.9.2014.

*« [V]ous sentez qu'il y a un débat. Oui. C'est très important. C'est très pertinent. [...] vous pourriez même supprimer toutes les autres émissions, [...] Parce que les gens qui viennent débattre là-bas - vu leur diversité - ils transportent les préoccupations de toute la communauté. » (ITW1/400)*

*« [...] ça favorise le contact entre les personnes [...] Il y a la défense de ses idées, mais [...] ce ne sont pas des attaques [...]. On le fait dans l'orthodoxie. Donc c'est vraiment un choc d'idées et pas un choc physique où les gens ils doivent développer l'animosité, non. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous disons que la démocratie ça devrait se faire comme ça. » (ITW2/150+360)*

Par contre, l'idée d'utiliser des formats distrayants (infotainment, téléromans, etc.) pour changer le comportement du public est à peine mentionnée dans les interviews, sans qu'une question précise ne soit posée à ce sujet. Et les réactions à ce genre de questions sont soit vagues, soit clairement négatives :

*« Mais si tout le temps on nous parle de musiciens, de footballeurs [...] pendant que les conditions de vie des paysans ne sont pas améliorées, je trouve qu'il ne faut même pas financer de tels médias qui à longueur de journées ne diffusent que des films, parfois des films pornographiques en contradiction avec nos valeurs culturelles. » (ITW1/380)*

Quant à la couverture géographique des médias, le tableau d'opinions est contradictoire : une source estime qu'une grande couverture est un signe de qualité et va jusqu'à qualifier des stations rurales couvrant des surfaces minimales de « problématiques ». D'autres soulignent l'importance de telles stations rurales pour permettre aux habitants de ces contrées – qui sont souvent les plus affectés par de violents affrontements – de connaître les risques du quotidien et de prendre leurs précautions.

## **C.6 Un aspect spécifique : la confiance**

En visualisant un projet médias en zone de conflit, on voit un système dans lequel la confiance joue un rôle clé à plusieurs niveaux : entre médias et « consommateurs », entre journalistes et sources (surtout dans des contrées inaccessibles et en périodes de combat) et encore entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur de la zone de conflit, par exemple entre le bailleur de fonds et le personnel du projet sur place. Certains des témoignages recueillis indiquent un climat de méfiance généralisé au Sud Kivu, contrasté par d'autres observations faisant état d'un niveau de confiance élevé dans des relations intimes, familiales et amicales.

Plusieurs personnes interviewées décrivent des structures appelées « Radio Clubs » ou « Clubs d'écoute ». Il s'agit là d'une particularité par rapport aux pays européens que je connais : les « Radio Clubs » sont des associations (villageoises) fonctionnant en même temps comme relais vers des sources à cet endroit spécifique et aussi comme canaux de feedback sur la qualité des émissions. Des entretiens avec des spécialistes (en dehors des interviews) indiquent que cette pratique devient courante dans le paysage des médias dans les Grands Lacs africains et serait parfois soutenue par des bailleurs de fonds extérieurs. Il y a lieu de retenir ici les frustrations (surtout chez les journalistes interviewés) quant à

l'impression que les médias régionaux et internationaux ne tiennent à peine compte des efforts au Sud Kivu de sortir de la crise et faire de bons médias. Les sources indiquent qu'au niveau des médias internationaux, on se limiterait à des correspondants dans les capitales, donc soit à Kinshasa (éloignée de 2000 km), soit dans les pays voisins. Ce dernier cas semble être perçu comme un affront, vu l'histoire récente du Sud Kivu, envahi 1994 par des millions de réfugiés après le génocide au Rwanda et contrôlé au moins partiellement par l'armée rwandaise entre 1996 et 2002<sup>111</sup> :

*« [...] la corde sensible, chez nous, c'est lorsqu'on dit que tu es Rwandais. [...] parce que les blessures, les plaies qu'on a eues avec la rébellion du RCD [...] avec les FDLR, ne sont jamais pansées. Et alors, lorsqu'on te colle cette étiquette-là, de Rwandais, directement, celui qui a déjà été violenté par les FDLR, il trouve en toi son bourreau [...] qui l'a fait souffrir. Ce n'est que ça, c'est un jeu politique en fait. » (ITW4/500)*

Il est difficile d'appréhender la question de la confiance / méfiance de manière scientifique. Au travers des interviews menées à Bukavu, j'ai trouvé des indications d'une certaine méfiance à plusieurs niveaux : entre la population et les élites locales, entre acteurs locaux et non locaux, entre des milieux ruraux et les centres et même à l'intérieur du paysage médiatique, etc. Fort probablement, la méfiance représente un handicap pour la stabilisation de cette région : elle peut créer des ségrégations entre différents systèmes de communication. D'où ma conclusion que toute initiative de contact est une opportunité pour améliorer le niveau de confiance.

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<sup>111</sup> La BBC informe le 5 octobre 2002 que le Rwanda aurait terminé la retraite de plus de 20'000 effectifs de son armée de la RDC. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2302125.stm>, consulté le 4.2.2015.

## **C.7 Améliorer la qualité des projets médias dans les zones de conflit**

La force d'études qualitatives comme celle présentée ici ne réside pas dans des conclusions spectaculaires. Elles servent plutôt de sources d'inspiration, en vue d'obtenir une vision globale, holistique d'une situation. Dans cette logique, la dernière partie de ce papier se concentre sur les recommandations, conseils, avertissements etc., qui sont exprimés directement ou indirectement dans les interviews. Pour les classer, les catégories suivantes ont été définies :

1. Plaidoyer
2. Aide cohérente
3. Espace de dialogue
4. Connexion « Inside - Outside »
5. Promotion de la délibération collective (Collective Decision Making)
6. Documentations et transparence
7. Prévention des effets secondaires négatifs
8. Susciter de l'intérêt
9. Capitalisation du savoir-faire en pacification
10. Objectivité

Des réflexions spécifiques suivent dans ce chapitre pour chacune de ces catégories, tandis que l'annexe 4 (Recommandations) présente pour chaque catégorie les différents sous-aspects recueillis à travers les interviews. Du fait, il s'agit d'un deuxième filtrage de ces propos afin de comprendre ce que les sources conseillent aux acteurs externes de préconiser pour améliorer la situation et les médias au Sud Kivu et éventuellement au-delà. En voici un défi principal :

*« Est-ce que nous avons besoin de leur radio ? Nous n'avons pas des routes ici. Nous n'avons pas d'électricité ici. Nos enfants ne vont pas à l'école. Et maintenant ils nous amènent une radio pour faire quoi ? » (ITW7/510)*

D'un point de vue moral, il serait intéressant de discuter si les attentes recueillies à travers les interviews auront un caractère contraignant pour des promoteurs de projets médias en zone de conflit. Mais le format restreint du présent document ne permet pas de développer les détails de cette question.

L'utilité de ce travail réside donc dans le témoignage des personnes interviewées au sujet de leurs exigences pour améliorer leurs conditions de vie. En outre, cette étude peut surtout inspirer la conception et l'évaluation de projets médias au Sud Kivu et éventuellement favoriser des améliorations au-delà de cette région.

**1. Plaidoyer :** parmi les devoirs de toute intervention externe dans une zone de conflit, il y a la protection du personnel sur place. C'est primordial dans le domaine des médias, mais suivant les sources interviewées à Bukavu, on doit aller au-delà de la protection et surtout mettre en valeur le potentiel d'acteurs externes d'aborder des propos tabous ou sensibles pour les locaux. Des médias pour « *nous endormir pour mieux nous exploiter* » sont perçus négativement (ITW7/690).

Quant à l'aide extérieure dans une zone de conflit, celle-ci doit privilégier les plus démunis – donc par exemple des contrées éloignées, isolées, dans le monde rural, où l'accès à des informations objectives peut être vital, par exemple à cause de la présence de groupes armés. L'attente que l'aide extérieure privilégie les plus vulnérables est palpable à travers les interviews, mais c'est aussi sa raison d'être tout court. Le défi pour les promoteurs de projets médias en zone de conflit réside donc dans le fait que l'impartialité requise pour les médias interdit ce que la situation pratique impose : un penchant en faveur des plus vulnérables. Ces considérations sont à mettre en relation avec le sentiment de ras-le-bol perceptible dans plusieurs interviews devant le fait que la présence de nombreux acteurs internationaux durant environ les dernières 15 années n'a pas substantiellement amélioré les perspectives du Sud Kivu.

On peut retenir des interviews que dans le contexte du Sud Kivu, des médias trop neutres ne rempliront pas les besoins des « bénéficiaires ». Plusieurs sources soulignent plutôt l'importance que les médias puissent (mieux) remplir leur fonction de lanceur d'alerte (watchdog function) :

*« Vous n'allez pas aider l'autorité en lui cachant la vérité. Il faut lui dire la vérité pour qu'elle puisse s'améliorer. » (ITW1/770)*

**2. Aide cohérente :** les recommandations des personnes interviewées pour rendre l'aide internationale plus efficace vont dans deux directions au moins : premièrement, il faut des efforts conjoints pour rendre compréhensible ce contexte extrêmement complexe des Grands Lacs africains. Deuxièmement, il y a l'attente que des initiatives externes dans le secteur des médias aillent clairement au-delà du journalisme « classique » et qu'elles contribuent à l'amélioration des conditions de vie à long terme. L'orientation au long terme est particulièrement importante dans ce type de projets pour ne pas mettre des gens en danger, comme c'est aussi un élément clé pour la cohérence de l'aide.

Pour assurer la durabilité des projets médias en zone de conflit, plusieurs sources proposent des modèles incluant la perspective économique (création d'agences de presse, vente d'informations et de documentations utiles, activités publicitaires, etc.). Mais il est bien connu que de tels modèles ont aussi leurs limites<sup>112</sup>, ce qui incite aussi les promoteurs de

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<sup>112</sup> Voir aussi chapitre 2 pour le phénomène de dysfonctionnement systémique du marché des médias, qui a

projets médias en zone de conflit à aller au-delà d'un journalisme classique, par exemple en s'impliquant dans un dialogue politique avec les autorités, en s'engageant pour davantage de cohérence dans l'aide et en créant des sources de revenu socialement responsables.

Un aspect particulier est le rôle des médias internationaux :

*« Je n'ai jamais été d'accord avec les médias de l'Europe qui passent leur temps à ne diffuser que des [...] images misérabilistes sur l'Afrique, sur le Congo, sur le Sud Kivu, sur l'est du Congo. [...] Les jeunes Européens, les adultes européens qui ne font que suivre cela chaque jour, ils développent une attitude négative vis-à-vis du Congo. [...] On a vu un stagiaire qui est venu avec sa culotte vraiment trouée, et il pensait que c'était l'habit qu'il fallait parce qu'il savait qu'il allait à l'enfer [...] Et arrivé ici, il était étonné de voir que nous vivons quand même, nous respirons. » (ITW4/650)*

Même si les médias internationaux ne font pas partie du système de l'aide internationale, il semble pertinent de chercher à les inclure dans la conception des projets médias en zone de conflit, par exemple pour faciliter une vue objective sur l'Afrique centrale et susciter l'intérêt d'en apprendre davantage sur ces réalités.

**3. Espace de dialogue :** plusieurs sources soulignent l'importance d'un dialogue ouvert pour donner des perspectives à leur société et pour éviter une ségrégation des différents systèmes sociaux et de communication. Les médias sont censés offrir des tels espaces et de promouvoir, voire initier ce dialogue. La pondération des intérêts des différents groupes sociaux (groupes vulnérables, élites, etc.) a déjà été identifiée comme un défi majeur dans des telles démarches. Une source propose donc de se positionner en rassembleur pour éviter le risque de polarisation.

*« Mais à mon avis ça doit être un apport commun de toutes les associations, tous les organes, de la société civile, des forces vives, qui doivent se mettre ensemble pour [...] essayer de changer des comportements, changer la mentalité. » (ITW5/210)*

C'est aussi un plaidoyer en faveur de la coopération circonstancielle entre différents médias et journalistes, qui semble se réaliser au Sud Kivu<sup>113</sup>. En plus, certaines interviews contiennent des avis favorables à l'implication des langues locales dans des telles démarches. Mais quelle langue ? Les langues font les communautés. Et par rapport au communautarisme, une autre source critique, commente :

*« Et du coup on sent que le communautarisme c'est une antivaleur qui cherche à banaliser l'humanité de l'homme. Nous luttons contre le communautarisme. Si vous venez avec un discours de communautarisme, on ne peut même pas faire allusion à ce que vous faites. Nous allons mentionner vos propos pour montrer que vous représentez un danger. »*

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amené de nombreux gouvernements à mettre en place des régulations de marché dont les subsides étatiques sont un élément.

<sup>113</sup> A titre d'exemple cet extrait d'interview : *« [I]l y a quand même déjà des idées de synergies [...]. [L]ors des grands événements, p.ex. les élections [...] la journée de SIDA [...] les médias quand même ont déjà pris certaines initiatives de se mettre ensemble [et] diffusent au même moment la même information - une information qui est vraiment bien traitée, équilibrée, parce que ce sont les journalistes de toutes les rédactions qui sont ensemble. » (ITW5/60)*

(ITW4/530)

En quintessence, on peut conclure que le dialogue serait à promouvoir là où il n'a pas lieu de fait, donc entre des communautés distantes ou déconnectées, entre différentes réalités.

**4. Connexion « Inside - Outside » :** plusieurs sources déplorent que le comportement d'acteurs non locaux (internationaux) aurait parfois un impact négatif sur les conditions de vie au Sud Kivu. En conséquence, on trouve des recommandations – ou exigences – cherchant à mieux exploiter des projets médias pour contrer des ségrégations entre « Insiders » et « Outsiders » :

*« Avec un titre ' Dix femmes enlevées par les FDLR à Mwenga ! ' » - Tout le monde va [...] acheter le journal pour lire. Mais dix femmes de dix associations qui se battent pour la survie de leurs familles, ça n'intéresse à personne. Malheureusement. Je pense que le journalisme européen – parce qu'il est beaucoup plus avancé que le nôtre ferait mieux de nous donner des formules pour mettre un peu de sensationnel dans [...] les titres [...] positifs aussi. Pour aussi attirer le public à lire ces articles. » (ITW4/680-690)*

Une autre source déclare : « les médias qui ont des moyens devraient s'ouvrir à ceux qui n'en ont pas, pour ce transfert de compétences » (ITW1/530). Cette proposition ignore peut-être qu'ils ne sont pas trop nombreux, les médias qui ont des moyens. Toutefois il est fort probable qu'une coopération plus étroite entre médias locaux dans des zones de conflit et différents acteurs en dehors de ces zones peut s'avérer avantageux pour les deux côtés.

*« Moi je pense que les gens sont faits et même les médias sont faits pour se compléter. » (ITW4/630)*

L'Internet joue déjà un rôle important pour des connexions « Inside – Outside », aussi dans les médias. Mais les récits indiquent que l'utilisation du web est souvent embryonnaire et surtout un défi financier pour une partie des organisations de médias au Sud Kivu. En plus, l'Internet doit être considéré comme un média élitiste au Sud Kivu – un média auquel d'importants segments de cette société n'ont pas accès.

**5. Contribution à la délibération collective (Collective Decision Making) » :** dans le Sud Kivu, différents pouvoirs sont en place : pouvoirs centraux, provinciaux, locaux, la communauté internationale, des groupes armés, etc. En cas de concurrence entre ces pouvoirs, des décisions importantes sont parfois prises sans concertation avec les milieux qui en connaîtront les conséquences. Dans ces circonstances, les médias – locaux et aussi internationaux – obtiennent un *potentiel de médiation* entre les différentes sphères du pouvoir et les milieux civils, et ils peuvent contribuer à ce que des décisions importantes soient prises de manière concertée par les parties concernées. Voici la vision d'un journaliste interviewé :

*« Il faut commencer par vivre avec cette population-là. Je crois que c'est la première chose. Il faut se mettre à l'écoute de la communauté. Il faut savoir lire les signes, des éléments [qui] peuvent vous aider à comprendre. Même les différents débats qui passent dans des*



*différentes stations de radio peuvent aussi aider à comprendre [...] les besoins nécessaires d'une communauté. » (ITW6/160)*

Certains témoignages font état de radios communautaires impliquant leur auditoire à la production d'émissions et jusqu'à la constitution de leur grille des programmes ou leur ligne éditoriale. Ce modèle de coopération pourrait aussi inspirer la coopération entre Etat et citoyens : tout dépend des objectifs qu'on se fixe collectivement. La délibération collective est finalement le mécanisme qui fait fonctionner la société. Une source estime que la focalisation sur des biens publics aurait aussi le potentiel d'accroître la cohésion sociale. Et les médias – grâce à leurs possibilités d'initier et de modérer un débat public (feedback loops) – ont le potentiel de sonder, proposer et affiner des idées, coopérations et projets constructifs, par exemple entre entités étatiques et société civile.

L'objectif de la délibération collective – dont le système politique est un élément – est la concertation d'intérêts divergents dans la société. Et les interviews donnent une impression de la multitude d'intérêts à concilier au Sud Kivu : arrêt des violences, meilleures conditions de vie, reconstruction, fin de stigmatisations, patriotisme, médias au service de la population, jouissant de la pleine liberté d'expression, etc.

## **6. Documentations et transparence :**

*« [C]e qui est vrai, c'est que les médias ont accès à tous les secteurs, donc on peut parler de tout. » (ITW5/260)*

Cette description d'une des forces primaires des médias est contrastée par le fait que l'accès aux informations est décrit comme un des problèmes clés des journalistes au Sud Kivu. Contribuer à des documentations publiquement accessibles, utiles pour les besoins locaux mais aussi pour un public intéressé à l'extérieur, jusqu'au niveau international, apparaît donc comme un autre devoir si l'on intervient comme bailleur de fonds dans le Sud Kivu : Des documentations objectives sur la situation sociale et ses changements, ainsi que l'accès facile à des telles informations, sont des éléments importants pour la cohérence de l'aide comme pour les tâches administratives dans la zone de conflit.

Ce point plutôt faiblement représenté dans les interviews apparaît crucial d'un point de vue systémique. Des initiatives de transparence seront aussi recommandables au niveau des médias eux-mêmes :

*« Mais je sais que [...] la plupart de fois ici à Bukavu dans les médias financés par les hommes politiques, les agents ne savent pas d'où vient l'argent. » (ITW6/570)*

**7. Prévention des effets secondaires négatifs :** pour contrer les risques esquissés antérieurement, les recommandations des personnes interviewées peuvent se résumer comme suit : premièrement la contextualisation des informations, deuxièmement l'approfondissement de connaissances sur le Sud Kivu et troisièmement la correction des

fausses informations, stéréotypes et préjugés.

Aucun bailleur de fonds ne prévoit les erreurs, mais elles surviennent. Un journalisme jugé stigmatisant car trop axé sur la présentation sensationnaliste des problèmes de la RDC, sans contextualisation, est une préoccupation dans la perspective des personnes interviewées. Pour les acteurs externes dans le domaine des médias, il est donc essentiel de préconiser activement des mesures pour éviter des effets secondaires négatifs. Par exemple en évitant de répandre de la propagande sans s'en apercevoir.

*«Et on fait cette comptabilité macabre : ils ont tué là-bas [...] mais ce ne sont que des internationaux de genre Human [Rights Watch] ou [International] Alert qui peuvent vous donner la gravité de cette situation. Parce qu'eux, ils font des études avec des structures locales [...] et ils peuvent vous donner ce qui se passe réellement. Alors quand ils font ça sur les médias, on croit qu'ils exagèrent [...] parce qu'on va comparer directement à Okapi. Pourquoi Okapi ne dit pas tout ce que Human vient raconter là-bas ? Ou pourquoi la radio de la RTNC n'a pas vu ça ? » (ITW3/540)*

La même source recommande aussi de veiller à ne pas ressusciter des conflits « latents », par exemple en montrant l'opinion d'un camp sans immédiatement donner la parole aussi à l'autre camp. Ou parfois déjà par la simple couverture médiatique à proprement parler :

*« Les médias, parfois, ressuscitent un conflit déjà oublié. [...]. Le fait qu'on le rappelle, et la façon dont [...] ils présentent la question [...] bon, je prends le cas précis : Génocide des Hutu contre les Tutsi. Vous voyez comment cela se répercute dans la mémoire collective de la population. Dans cet aspect-là, les médias peuvent être un élément – disons – qui suscite, qui entretient le conflit. » (ITW3/20)*

Un risque déjà mentionné est la discrimination, voire l'étouffement des médias locaux par des appuis externes dans ce secteur. Cela soulève la question des limites et des partenariats dans de telles initiatives. La création d'un média excellent dans une zone de conflit apparaît moins désirable que l'augmentation de l'objectivité du système des médias dans son ensemble.

*« La première chose à promouvoir c'est le pluralisme médiatique. Et non la multiplicité de médias. Ça parait une répétition mais ce n'est pas la même chose. [...] la meilleure chose ça serait d'accompagner les médias qui existent déjà dans ce souci-là de pluralisme médiatique. » (ITW5/470)*

**8. Susciter l'intérêt :** il s'agit là d'un défi à deux niveaux : le premier niveau, ce sont les personnes très violentes. Pour les intéresser à des modes de vie plus paisibles (qu'ils n'ont peut-être jamais expérimentés), pour les atteindre à travers un média, il faut que le contenu ait le potentiel d'alléger leur quotidien. De nombreux thèmes sont proposés : l'agriculture, l'organisation de la fonction publique, l'économie, les traditions etc. Mais les opportunités concrètes de réintégrer une vie civile digne sont rares pour de telles personnes. Les médias n'ont pas le rôle d'offrir de telles opportunités, mais ils sont censés ouvrir des voies, créer des dynamiques, en impliquant leur public et des projets constructifs dans leur travail journalistique.

Le deuxième niveau est lié au fait que les projets médias cofinancés par l'extérieur sont parmi les rares canaux de communication à travers lesquels les dynamiques susmentionnées peuvent s'élargir et se répandre aussi en dehors de la zone de conflit. Donc, susciter l'intérêt d'un public en dehors de la zone de conflit peut bel et bien être vu comme une forme d'échange culturel. Trouver un public en dehors de la zone de conflit a aussi le potentiel d'alléger les contraintes économiques du secteur médias au Sud Kivu et d'impulser d'autres coopérations.

**9. Capitalisation du savoir-faire en pacification :** montrer des exemples de cohabitation pacifique dans les médias est une proposition que l'on retrouve dans plusieurs interviews. Ils sont sans doute nombreux dans le Sud Kivu, ces experts en pacification sans nom, sans renommée, qui risquent leur vie pour régler des conflits, calmer, réconcilier... Leur donner de l'espace dans les médias est perçu positivement même si certaines sources estiment qu'il y a aussi le risque de mettre en scène une paix apparente pour les caméras et le chiffre d'affaires des organisations des médias :

*« C'est avec des fonds américains. Ils font des spots et des émissions [...] pour le règlement de conflits, tout ça [...]. Mais la façon aussi de distribuer des contrats : on focalise le tout au niveau d'ici. Et ça n'atteint pas tellement la cible de là où se passent beaucoup de bévues. » (ITW3/580)*

*« Le journaliste qui écrit juste pour répondre, je ne sais pas à [...] à quelle intention d'un bailleur de fonds [...], il ne peut pas être pris au sérieux. » (ITW1/350)*

Et voici une proposition assez concrète pour faire la paix :

*« [Si le journaliste] fait allusion à quelque chose qui s'est passé, qui a déjà été résolu, [...] qu'il puisse montrer les [...] effets positifs de cet aspect qui a été résolu [...] en faisant maintenant un parallélisme : si vous voyez les résultats que nous avons eus grâce à la résolution d'une telle partie [d'un conflit], donc voici qu'il n'est pas aussi impossible de résoudre l'autre partie qui reste. » (ITW3/230)*

Des efforts ciblés et concertés seront nécessaires pour capitaliser le savoir-faire en pacification à travers des projets médias dans des zones de conflit : de principe, cela ne rentre pas dans le but des médias selon une compréhension classique. Il faut donc mettre la pacification au programme de tels projets. Par exemple en incluant des théories d'analyse et de résolution de conflits dans la formation de journalistes.

**10. Objectivité :** la formation des journalistes est mentionnée dans presque tous les interviews comme recommandation afin d'accroître la qualité des médias à Bukavu, bien qu'il est évident que cette mesure doit être accompagnée d'autres démarches. Une proposition est d'utiliser les médias pour instruire le public sur « *cette fine ligne de démarcation entre ce qui est manipulation et ce qui est professionnel, ce qui est éducation* » (ITW3/470). Ou dans d'autres termes :

*« La ligne rouge n'est pas toujours perceptible. Et c'est ça le danger, parce que tous les médias ne sont pas animés de bonnes volontés. Et tous les programmes qui passent dans les médias ne sont pas toujours [...] une nourriture qu'il faut absolument consommer. Il faut toujours prendre tout avec des pincettes mais se donner aussi le temps de comparer avec tout ce qu'on sait ou de comparer cela avec d'autres sons de cloche [...]. » (ITW5/230)*

Une autre source déplore un manque d'objectivité se manifestant dans la tendance des médias à attribuer la responsabilité par exemple pour des atrocités à des acronymes de groupes armés au lieu de donner des précisions sur les auteurs ou leurs motivations :

*« On dit, le FDLR a fait – FDLR c'est qui ? [...] Ce FDLR, il a le mandat de qui ? Les droits de qui sur les autres ? » (ITW7/300-320)*

Dans le même ordre d'idée, une source avertit que le profil des groupes armés change parfois au fil du temps et qu'il faut donc constamment actualiser l'analyse pour éviter le risque de répandre et perpétuer de fausses images des groupes armés et d'autres rumeurs dans les systèmes des médias :

*« Si vous [...] présentez [un groupe armé particulier] comme un groupe qui cherche à libérer l'est de la République [...], il faut faire attention, vous allez peut-être aller à côté. Parce que quand vous voyez leur mode d'action, quand vous voyez ce qu'ils font maintenant sur le terrain : ils sont là pour leurs poches. » (ITW8/70)*

Une ligne éditoriale claire et partagée servirait à garantir l'objectivité des médias et à éviter des dérapages, selon un journaliste interviewé. Mais l'auto évaluation joue aussi un rôle important :

*« [I]l serait quand même bien que le journaliste - qu'on soit un journaliste international, qu'on soit un journaliste local - que chaque journaliste individuellement, à un certain moment, qu'il s'arrête un peu et qu'il s'évalue lui-même. Par rapport à son rôle et l'impact [...] sur le public qu'il sert. Moi je pense que si beaucoup des journalistes européens faisaient cet exercice, beaucoup seraient, je dirais, confus et même honteux de se rendre compte qu'au lieu de [...] promouvoir la diversité culturelle, au lieu de promouvoir l'humanité [...] la rencontre entre les civilisations, entre les gens - ils ont créé des fossés, des fossés même pour éloigner certaines civilisations [...] certaines personnes des autres. » (ITW4/711, 720)*

L'évaluation des projets du genre promotion de la paix représente en effet un défi particulier : que la situation s'améliore ou s'aggrave, on ne sait jamais avec certitude comment elle se présenterait sans intervention<sup>114</sup>. Pour que des évaluations répondent aux

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<sup>114</sup> BÄCHTOLD et al (2012; Abstract) élucident la tendance à privilégier des approches quantitatives pour

attentes des personnes interviewées à Bukavu, un point essentiel semble être leur publication, comme les principes de l'OCDE sur l'évaluation de l'assistance au développement<sup>115</sup> l'exigent d'ailleurs. Une source exige ce droit d'accéder aux résultats d'études extérieures directement auprès de l'auteur concerné :

*« Mais je sais que lorsque vous allez publier ce que vous allez publier, ça va nous aider peut-être à retrouver même cette indépendance. Ça va contribuer. » (ITW4/630)*

Dans des pays industrialisés, les médias sont appelés à être neutres, impartiaux et objectifs à la fois. Cette étude, s'il faut la résumer en deux phrases, livre des arguments pour privilégier l'objectivité dans les projets médias en zone de conflit. Et pour donner un objectif à cette objectivité : l'amélioration des conditions de vie des plus vulnérables.

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évaluer l'aide internationale, et concluent : « result orientation in its currently practiced form is more of a hindrance than a help for achieving better results. »

<sup>115</sup> „Dissemination and feedback must form a continuous and dynamic part of the evaluation process“. From the OECD Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance (1991; 11).  
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>; 2.2.2015

## PART D: Appendices / Annexes

### ***Annexes relatives à l'enquête sur terrain / Related to field Research (2011/12)***

ANNEXE 1 : Note méthodologique

APPENDIX 2: Coding List (English)

APPENDIX 3: Content Analysis (Listings in English)

APPENDIX 4: Recommendations (Listings in English)

### ***Appendices related to systemic aspects, quality categories and conclusions***

APPENDIX 5: **Quality Categories** for Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones, as developed in a summary of theoretical considerations from 2009 updated with later reflections, and with special focus on the field study in the DRC

APPENDIX 6: **Interaction analysis** - A brainstorming experiment looking at interactions between externally supported media projects and society in conflict zones

APPENDIX 7: Bibliography

APPENDIX 8: Research Protocol

APPENDIX 9: Gutachten Universität Basel

APPENDIX 10: Acknowledgements and Outlook

# Médias en zone de conflit : perceptions et attentes

## ENQUÊTE SUR LE TERRAIN

### ANNEXE 1 : Note méthodologique

#### A : Phase préparatoire

Pour cette enquête, les conditions suivantes furent retenues au préalable (décembre 2011) :

**Contexte et objectif :** le cadre est une étude plus exhaustive sur la qualité des projets médias en zone de conflit. Le but est de connecter une étude plutôt théorique datant de 2008/09 sur la même question avec la pratique sur terrain. L'objectif principal est de se rapprocher d'une image fidèle de la réalité vécue par la société dans des régions où des projets médias sont en implémentation

**Méthodologie :** l'intention de base est la réalisation d'une série d'interviews peu structurées permettant une vue la plus large que possible. Comme la région des Grand Lacs africains m'est familière depuis 1984, j'ai décidé de commencer la démarche dans ce contexte pour éventuellement répéter l'exercice avec la même méthodologie dans d'autres contextes plus tard.

Les interlocuteurs recherchés devraient disposer d'une formation ou d'expériences leur permettant d'analyser les changements, les perspectives et les tendances dans la société à laquelle elles ou ils appartiennent. Dans ce choix, la représentation de personnes associées aux systèmes gouvernementaux et non gouvernementaux (ONG) est censée être plus au moins équilibrée.

Avant de contacter des interlocuteurs potentiels, deux questions clés furent arrêtées pour donner un minimum de structure aux interviews :

1. La perception des médias et de leur rôle dans la société
2. Les attentes vis-à-vis des médias

**Conditions de l'interview :** l'anonymat et une stricte confidentialité sont assurés aux personnes interviewées. Pendant l'interview, l'interlocutrice / interlocuteur s'exprime librement sur les questions clés susmentionnées. L'intervieweur est tenu de se limiter à un minimum d'interventions et de s'en tenir aux sujets évoqués par les personnes interviewées.

#### B : Déroulement de l'étude et considérations analytiques

Les interviews ont dû être convenues directement sur place à Bukavu après mon arrivée le 16.12.2011. Les tentatives pour fixer des rendez-vous au préalable n'ont pas donné de résultats. Au total, six interviews ont été conduites avec huit personnes qui ne sont pas des journalistes actifs (quatre interviews à huis clos ; deux interviews avec deux personnes).

Profitant des opportunités sur place, deux interviews avec au total six journalistes locaux (un

groupe de deux et un groupe de quatre) ont été ajoutés spontanément au programme, ceci avec l'intention de discuter des propos recueillis dans les autres interviews avec des professionnels des médias. Dans ces interviews (d'experts), les aspects suivants ont été approfondis :

*Qualité des médias* : définitions ? Aspects positifs et négatifs ? Comment l'assurer ? Garder-fous pour éviter qu'un média ne devienne partial ?

*Rôle des médias* : considérations générales ? Question spécifique : légitimité d'une intention de changer le comportement des auditrices et auditeurs, par exemple à travers des émissions éducatives ?

*Transparence dans le secteur des médias locaux* : aspects financiers ? Lignes éditoriales ? Partenariats ? (Auto)-évaluations de qualité ?

*Relations entre « Insiders » et « Outsiders » de la zone de conflit* : influence des médias internationaux sur le contexte local (opinions ? conseils ?) ? Relations avec les bailleurs de fonds pour des projets médias en zone de conflit ? Potentiels d'amélioration ?

Plusieurs des personnes non-journalistes interviewées occupent ou occupaient différentes fonctions dans leur vie, ce qui fait que sur ces huit personnes, cinq seulement peuvent être attribuées clairement soit au secteur public (2), soit au secteur ONG (3). Les trois autres personnes occupent plusieurs fonctions, plutôt du côté ONG, mais aussi dans l'enseignement. L'âge des personnes interviewées n'a pas été demandé systématiquement mais devrait se situer entre 35 et 55 ans. Une parité hommes-femmes a été recherchée, mais les circonstances ne l'ont pas permis : seulement trois femmes ont pu être interviewées, dont deux à huis clos. La durée des interviews varie entre 38 et 75 minutes, pour un total de 7h35 min de matériel enregistré.

La compréhension de la réalité au Sud Kivu étant fixée comme le sujet d'intérêt principal, l'analyse du matériel recueilli est focalisée sur le *contenu des interviews*. Comme Atteslander (2010[1969] ; 198) précise, il n'existe pas de méthode uniforme pour des telles analyses qualitatives, et ce sont les *connaissances recherchées* qui déterminent le choix méthodologique. L'analyse du contenu commençait donc par l'identification de sujets clés sur lesquels les sources avaient choisis de s'exprimer. Successivement, ces 7 catégories principales ont été divisées en 28 sous-catégories auxquelles différents constats, affirmations et déclarations sont attribués au fur et à la mesure, selon la liste ci-dessous. L'annexe 3 (Content Analysis) répertorie l'ensemble des 302 éléments retenus des interviews, dont 145 ont pu être réduits à 44 vu leur contenu semblable. Cette analyse de contenu est élaborée en anglais conformément aux exigences de l'académie.

Des informations supplémentaires concernant les catégories principales et sous-catégories d'analyse se trouvent dans l'annexe 2 (Coding List).



# Media in Conflict Zones: Perceptions and Expectations

## FIELD RESEARCH

### APPENDIX 2: Coding List

Category	Sub-Category	Codes	Comment
<b>Society</b>	Description of society as it is	SAI	
	Conceptual aspects of society and Cohabitation	SCA	
	Interdependencies between society and media	SCM	
	Societal visions	SCV	
<b>Social Problems</b>	Social problems inside the conflict zone	SPI	
	Signs of Manipulation / Repression inside conflict zone	MRI	1.)
	"Outsider's" involvement in local social problems	SPO	
	Signs of Manipulation / Repression with "Outsiders" involved	MRO	1.)
<b>Local Media Situation</b>	Neutral descriptions of the local media situation	LMN	
	Challenges, Weaknesses and Obstacles in the local media system	LMCH, LME, LMO	2.)
	Potentials and strengths of media in South Kivu	LMP	
<b>State (Power)</b>	Expectations in regard of local (state) power	STE	
	Legal and administrative aspects related to media	STL	
<b>Trust</b>	Aspects of trust, inside conflict zones	TI	
	Aspects of trust in insider-outsider relations	TO	
<b>Quality</b>	Prerequisites for media quality	QP	
	Positive perception of media which...	Q+	
	Negative perception of media which...	Q-	
	Appeals in media seen as positive	QA	
	Quality aspects of media content	QC	
	Impact of outsider interventions on media quality in South Kivu	QOI	
	Visions for quality (local media and internationally financed media projects)	QV, QOI	3.)
<b>Role of media</b>	The media's role of media in social fabric	RSF	
	Role of media in regard of behavioural change	RBC	
	Dangerous aspects of media in society	RDA	
	Comments related to the educative role of media	RED	
	Comments related to the entertaining role of media	REN	
	Comments related to the informing role of media	RIN	

#### Comments:

- 1.) Main category "Manipulation / Repression" integrated in "Social Problems" during analysis
- 2.) Three subcategories for "Weaknesses", "Obstacles" and "Challenges" in the media-sector combined to one during analysis as differentiations appeared to be often too vague
- 3.) Recommendations from the QOI-Subcategory transferred to QV during analysis

# Media in Conflict Zones: Perceptions and expectations

## FIELD RESEARCH

### Appendix 3: Content Analysis

Column A: Number of STANDARD interviews in which the statement appears

Column B: Number of EXPERT interviews in which the statement appears

Column C: Number of interviews in which speakers put emphasis on the statement

**Note:** The Term "Description" is used to characterize clear, descriptive statements, in contrast to "Indication" for rather unsure statements (hearsay, assumptions etc.). For statements in between the two (like opinions, etc.), the term "Estimation" is used. This terminology does not in any case make a distinction between true or false.

#### 1.) Society in Bukavu / South Kivu

	A	B	C
<i>Description of society as it is</i>			
Estimation that people in South-Kivu are war-tired	1	0	0
Estimation that Congolese society changed fundamentally since the nineties, due to "events" (might be the wars or the "Conférence nationale souveraine")	1	0	0
Estimation that the "Conférence nationale souveraine" 1990-92 in Kinshasa induced positive change in Congolese society (birth of a movement, sense of responsible citizenship; the comment leaves open if this impact was more due to the event as such or due to its integral nationwide broadcasting)	1	0	0
Estimation that Pacification, Reconciliation and Decentralisation are the societal priorities in the RDC since pace talks in Sun City (2001-03)	1	0	0
Description of a society in which "everything" depends on a powerful elite	1	0	0
Description of a trend to search (economic) success in politics as entrepreneurship is difficult	0	1	0
Description of a tradition to not disclose financial aspects in public	1	0	0
Description of a society composed of associations (asbl) in search of donor money	1	0	0
Description of a voluntary segregation between rich and poor	1	0	0
Description of a Government-run stabilisation program, highlighting the importance of reintegrating refugees and people from the diaspora	1	0	1
Description of people who don't travel as narrow-minded	1	0	0

#### *Conceptual aspects of society and cohabitation*

Expressing hope for the DRC by describing democratisation as learning by doing	1	0	0
Estimation that communication is the basis for peaceful cohabitation	1	0	0
Estimation on priorities in post-conflict societies: Consolidate pacification, democratisation and rebuild the nation	1	0	0
Estimation that the economy is fundamental for social change	1	0	0

## Interdependencies between society and media

### Recipients said to understand the local media landscape

Estimation that recipients are aware of who owns the different media in South Kivu	2	0	0
Estimation that recipients in South Kivu are capable of distinguishing "good" and "bad" media	2	0	0
Estimation that recipients in South Kivu are capable of recognizing bias in different local media - and link it to ownership	2	0	0
Estimation that in Bukavu, a majority attentively follows media and analyses context and trends collectively	1	0	1

### Media described as vital in South Kivu, particularly in violence affected rural areas

Estimation that media and information are vital in conflict zones	2	0	1
Estimation that local news is vital for people living in violence affected rural areas, as it makes their environment comprehensible	1	0	0
Estimation that functioning media have an appeasing effect, particularly in rural areas affected by violence (shutting down a rural radio can make people flee their homes)	1	0	1

### "Limited" media coverage for socially relevant topics

Indication that arms trade, land property, ethnicity and illegal exploitation of resources are the most "perturbing" questions in South Kivu - and that local media coverage in these questions is "limited"	1	0	1
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### Complementarity of actors in public affairs

Exemplary description, why it is important that different societal actors (State, Media, etc.) complement each other in order to overcome social problems (like corruption, impunity etc.)	0	1	1
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### Relations between senders and recipients

Attribution of responsibility for "auto-information" to recipients	1	0	0
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### Dialogue as a way to approach truth

Estimation that truth is never complete, that dialogue is vital to approach truth and that media's role in society is to continually approach truth	1	0	1
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### Societal visions

Estimation that citizens should dare to claim ownership in political decision making	1	0	0
Estimation that focussing on commons (public property) has potential to enhance social cohesion and development	1	0	0
Expressing hope that a power-confiscating elite will be replaced by forces willing to develop the DRC (the state president explicitly excluded from critique)	1	0	0
Clear statement that the UN and humanitarian organisation ought to leave Congo, in order to avoid dependency on aid	1	0	0
Proposal to invest in projects for better relations between military and civilians	1	0	0
Proposal to invest in projects for better relations between military and civilians - naming poverty as root cause for the absence of progress	1	0	0

## 2.) Social Problems

### *Social problems inside the conflict zone*

Estimation that women's rights must be better promoted in the DRC	1	0	1
Estimation that poverty and logistical problems discriminate against rural areas particularly	1	0	0
Estimation that armed groups have converted from political motivation (or popular defence) to "groups of predation", not hesitating to use violence against their own villages, even families	1	0	1
Description of social problems: Bad infrastructure (roads, hospitals, schools)	1	0	0
Description of social problems: Harassment (taxes etc.)	1	0	0
Description of social problems: Insecurity in rural areas	1	0	0
Description of social problems: Corruption and impunity	0	0	0
Expression of fear about infrastructure problems (electricity, internet etc.) that could stifle "this impulsion"; comment probably related to an earlier described popular "movement" in the early nineties (CNS), aiming at participation in collective decision making	1	0	0
Estimation that verbal attacks in local media during the 2011 election campaigns are not ethnically but politically motivated	1	0	0
Estimation that domination of Global English could amplify discrimination in South Kivu / DRC	1	0	0
Expressing hope / optimism to overcome possible ethnic and national polarisations, by focussing on basic rights instead of differences and privileges.	1	0	0
Indications of electoral fraud (Nov 2011)	1	0	1

### *Signs of Manipulation / Repression inside the conflict zone*

#### **Role of influent political leaders / businessmen**

Clear description of media owners influencing local media, possibly fueling conflicts with biased or false information	2	0	0
Exemplary description of influential politicians / businessmen running their own media	2	0	0
Exemplary description of influential politicians / businessmen running their own media and limiting freedom of expression of journalists working for these media	1	0	0
Clear description of media owners influencing local media, describing this as a threat	2	0	0
Indications of ideological bias in media of South Kivu run either by the state or by influential businessmen (in comparison to community radios)	1	0	0
Estimation that local journalists are not independent but obliged to chose between following an influential politician / businessmen or following the Government line	1	0	0
Indications that political leaders "buy their journalists" in different media, which is in fact exploiting the precarious living conditions of independent journalists in South Kivu	0	1	0
Indications that political leaders can afford to install their own media, which are used (only) during election campaigns	0	1	0
Clear description of media owners influencing local media, but also of journalists self-censoring themselves	1	0	0

Clear description of media owners influencing local media, but also of journalists self-censoring themselves, in order to economically survive	1	0	0
Estimation that some private owned media might broadcast in favour of the political party in power - and indications that these owners receive financial compensations for this	0	1	1
Exemplary description of a politician who installed a local radio for his election campaign and left it to the population afterwards to pay for the fuel to continue	1	0	0

#### **Factual errors**

Exemplary description of exaggerated numbers of massacre victims and sexual violence	2	0	2
Exemplary description of tactical disinformation in media during the 1996 war	1	0	0

#### **Physical repression**

Description of crushed manifestations (of political opponents, by state authority)	1	0	0
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#### **Manipulation in institutions**

Exemplary description of vote-buying in institutions by powerful elites	1	0	0
Congolese national media regulation body seen as lacking independence (aligned to powerful elites, via vote-buying); Additional problem: Restructuration of this body shortly before elections	1	0	0

#### **Informal exploitation of resources eventually linked to ethnic mobilisation**

Report on armed groups recruiting fighters with uniform tribal attributes - and on media eventually following this trend, resulting in increased polarisation	1	0	0
Estimation that informal exploitation of resources is at the origin of armed groups, of looting mafias and of ethnic polarisation - adding that media are constantly in danger of fueling these tension (intentionally or involuntarily), but have also the potential to impact appeasement	1	0	1

#### *"Outsider's" involvement in local social problems*

Estimation that media are often biased - in South Kivu but also in "Northern Countries"	1	0	0
Description of unhealed wounds in the collective memory of eastern Congo, due to human rights violations attributed to Rwandans (for the period of war that started 1996)	1	0	0
Description of violence prevention mechanisms not addressing the right of victims for reparations and the associated risk of later re-escalation of conflicts	1	0	1
Description of social problems: Lack of efforts in (development) projects to assure continuation after co-financing (sustainability)	1	0	0
Estimation that international evaluators could (involuntarily) approve immoral practices of Congo's ruling elites, as a result of not being sufficiently familiar with context and therefore incapable to uncover such practices	1	0	0
Expression of frustration after a local activist's unsuccessful efforts to get support from representations of international aid / cooperation for a project aiming at improved relations between military and civilians. Representatives of aid organisations said to acknowledge that access to local population is difficult for international staff	1	0	0
Description of social problems: Nationality-question (who has the right to be considered Congolese?)	1	0	0

### *Signs of Manipulation / Repression with "Outsiders" involved*

Expression of indignation about "Outsiders" presenting local social problems in a media-effective manner (crass examples etc.), without contextualisation	2	0	1
Estimation that outsiders reporting on South Kivu without having access to independent sources also in remote areas can be entry points for propaganda, tactical disinformation etc., perpetuating itself in communication and media systems	2	0	1
Accusation of RFI, specifically, of non-objectivity / agitation	2	0	1
Expression of indignation about "Outsiders" focussing on ethnic aspects in their reporting on Congo, contrasted by a feeling of strong national unity in Congo.	1	0	1
Accusation of international media influencing local context with tactical disinformation, bypassing local actors	1	0	0
Attribution of responsibility to project donors, for media coverage that exaggerates the problem of sexual violence in the DRC	1	0	1
Estimation that some project funders might have interest in (local) media conveying a negative image of the DRC	1	0	0
Expression of fear about plans to destabilize the DRC and about international media eventually involved in these plans.	1	0	1
Estimation that some international media are "remote-controlled" by international institutions and do have interests in armed conflicts	1	0	0
Indication that project donors might have tried to influence local media in Bukavu, leading to refusal of the money by the targeted media	0	1	1
Indication that project donors might have tried to influence local media in Bukavu, contrasted with the perspective of local media professionals interpreting such cooperations as business opportunities	0	1	1
Description of "others" influencing local media, describing this as discriminatory for South Kivu (unclear whether "others" are only influential locals or also non-Congolese actors)	1	0	1
Description of massive corruptive practices on the back of victims of sexual violence - and alerting media to be aware and to denounce	1	0	1
Negative perception of media presenting armed groups as liberators without recognizing that they might have converted from local defence to "groups of predation" - And a warning: Not understanding context is "not positive"	1	0	0

### **3.) Local Media Situation**

#### *Neutral description of the local media situation*

Description of a media landscape that was entirely Government-controlled until 1990/92	2	0	0
Indication that a number of media (programs) exist in the Great Lakes which are oriented at (peaceful, social) cohesion	0	1	0
Indication that most media in South Kivu / the DRC are associations (asbl), compared to media with purely commercial orientation	1	0	0
Indication that religious congregations have considerable influence in local media, particularly on community owned media	1	0	0
Estimation that international media are important sources of information for local media in the DRC	1	0	0

Estimation that local newspapers reach up to 40 readers per copy in Bukavu	1	0	0
Description of a community radio station adapting its broadcasting schedule in function of feedbacks from recipients	0	1	0
Description of community radios in rural areas depending on Internet connection to receive national and international news	1	0	0
Description of local media designing projects in order to apply for support by (international) donors	0	1	0
Description of people using internet to verify information	1	0	0
Description of the internal functioning of a media (that receives support from Non-Congolese donors): In terms of external transparency, the only issue mentioned are fixed tariffs for advertising services	0	1	0
Exemplary description of a journalist from Burundi sharing his experience in a media organisation in Bukavu, which is enabled through a program financed by international donors	0	1	0
Exemplary description of a solidarity-intervention by European stakeholders in order to support existing independent media in Bukavu	1	0	0
Exemplary description of content representing "realities of life", produced by European media organisations and broadcasted on a radio station in Bukavu. (Contradictory indication whether such content is produced in West Africa or in Bukavu; probably both, with different providers)	0	1	0
Exemplary description of difficulties to realize print media in South Kivu because of logistical difficulties (most media are radios)	1	0	0
Exemplary description of journalists covering peaceful cohabitation of individuals representing social groups that tend to live in segregation (foreigners, examples of mixed marriages etc.)	0	1	1
Exemplary description of personal satisfaction of independent journalists when they succeed to publish and get encouraging feedbacks from recipients	1	0	0
Exemplary description of problems (logistics, finances etc.) related to independent media work in Bukavu	1	0	0
Indication that different media in Bukavu do not have fixed tariffs for advertising services and that individuals might take personal advantage of this lack of clarity	0	1	0
Indication that TV is an elitist media in South Kivu	1	0	0
Report on local journalists having agreed upon a "code of conduct" - expression of doubts whether it is already applied	1	0	0

#### **General estimations on local media quality**

Description of local media as superficial	2	0	0
Estimation that media diversity as an advantage, theoretically, but practice in South Kivu is arbitrariness, not support for development	1	0	0
Estimation that, overall, media quality is unsatisfactory in Bukavu	1	0	0
Indication that stations (not in Bukavu) have been closed down by the Congolese national media regulating body, for misbehaviour during elections	1	0	0

## Challenges, Weaknesses and Obstacles in the local media system

### Complexity of context

Estimation that the complexity of context in the Great Lakes is a core challenge for media, who must invest in adequate training and networks	1	0	0
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### Violence / Intimidation

Exemplary description of violence against journalists - and of journalists still loving their job, despite these threats	1	0	0
Indication of risks for journalists in South Kivu ("vulnerability")	1	0	0
Indication of risks for journalists ("to burn their fingers")	1	0	0
Indications that intimidation of journalists is frequent in South Kivu	1	0	1

### Polarisation

Description of a dilemma between telling the truth and avoiding polarization / extremism	2	1	1
Exemplary description of a "hot dispute" among journalists in radio in Bukavu about informing on the killing of a Congolese woman just across the border in Rwanda. The decision was for self-censorship in order to avoid a possible rise of tensions	0	1	1
Description of a basic problem that journalists can influence conflict without necessarily being trained in conflict analysis and peace building	1	0	0
Estimation that media in Bukavu are not entirely neutral (impartial), not even those operating on a peace building budget and having excellent reputation	2	0	1
Estimation that media quality is acceptable in Bukavu, despite tendencies to polarize	1	0	0
Description of "pyromaniac" media in South Kivu - occasionally playing firemen	1	0	0
Indication that the Kinshasa broadcasts of an internationally financed nationwide radio-network could omit details about the situation in the eastern DRC "for the sake of peace"	1	0	0
Description of state-run media as aligned to power (powerful elites) and discriminating against political opponents	2	0	1

### Discrimination of rural areas

Estimation that focussing on urban/political issues is problematic, as it discriminates against rural areas	2	0	0
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### Precarious economic perspectives in independent media, resulting in bribery ("coupage")

Description of precarious economic perspectives for staff engaged in independent media	1	0	0
Description of precarious economic perspectives for staff engaged in independent media, resulting in widespread bribery ("coupage") among local journalists	1	1	1

### Non-transparency regarding financing and objectives of local media

Description of non-transparency in regard of (financial) ownership of local media	1	1	1
Description of non-transparency in regard of (financial) ownership of local media, adding that this is particularly the case in media owned by politicians	0	1	0



Description of non-transparency in regard of (financial) ownership of local media, completed with indications that transparency is also lacking inside (some) media organisations (regarding salaries, hiring policy, assets etc.)	0	2	1
Indication that young, well educated (devoted) journalists risk being boycotted in Bukavu's local media	1	0	0
Description of the internal functioning of a media (that receives support from Non-Congolese donors): In terms of external transparency, the only issue mentioned are fixed tariffs for advertising services	0	1	0

#### **Fears of weakened social cohesion as political concurrence increasingly characterizes local media**

Expression of fear for social cohesion as political concurrence (increasingly) characterises local media	0	1	0
Expression of fear for social cohesion as political concurrence (increasingly) characterizes local media, much more than other sectors of the public sphere: 90% of the media in Bukavu said to be owned by politicians	0	1	1
Description of a climate of mistrust in the local media sector	1	0	0
Description of journalists working isolated in the local media sector	1	0	0
Report on media involved in "intercommunity tensions" during election campaign 2011: Candidates said to campaign without programs but offering to represent interests of specific geographical areas or tribes on national level	1	0	1

#### **Frustration about "Insider-Outsider Gaps"**

Expression of frustration about the fact that international media don't consult local media in South Kivu but have correspondents in Kigali, Bujumbura and Kinshasa - completed with an exemplary description of a false information conveyed internationally due to this physical distance	0	1	1
Expression of indignation about RFI broadcasts in Swahili, which are accessible only in Rwanda (where Swahili is not an official language), in Kinshasa (where most people speak Lingala). This deprives millions in Eastern Congo from immediate access to essential regional and international information (which is, in consequence, conveyed by local media; Lack of clarity whether this situation is created intentionally or is just a technical problem)	0	1	1

#### **Lack of documentation or difficult access**

Congolese (media) history poorly documented; Access to information often depends on personal relations	1	0	0
Report on representatives of state power hindering journalists accessing information	1	0	0
Estimation that access to information is a major problem for media in South Kivu	1	0	0

#### **Technical Challenges**

Estimation that lack of equipment is problematic in South Kivu's media landscape	1	0	0
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#### *Potentials and strengths of media in South Kivu*

#### **Cooperation among journalists and media**

Estimation that cooperation between externally financed media (from peace building budgets) and local (rural) media is desirable and could help international stakeholders to access realistic information about the DRC	2	0	0
Exemplary description of cooperation among different media in Bukavu	1	1	0

Description of a community of journalists in South Kivu who are open for cooperation - estimating that this is encouraging	1	0	0
Report on local Congolese journalists working as correspondents for international media	1	1	0

#### **Media plurality is not media multiplicity - but (very) desirable)**

Estimation that the power of media resides in their - theoretical - right to access "all sectors"	0	1	0
Description of a climate of open political discourse in media in South Kivu	1	0	0
Estimation that, overall, media played a constructive role in the electoral process of 2011 in the DRC	1	0	0
Indication that different local dialects are represented in local media, without excluding that ethnically motivated power games influence decision-making in media and politics	1	0	0
Description of "Radio Clubs" - associations assigned for giving (critical) feedback to specific stations and organized as information sources, specifically in remote areas	1	2	0
Description of a "fresh wind" injected to the local media-landscape by young / well trained media professionals	1	0	0
Estimation that some stations in South Kivu broadcast constructive content	1	0	0
Estimation that some local media organisations are capable to self-evaluate themselves, as they have corresponding know how and experience	0	1	0
Estimation that sufficient market potential exists for local media to assure their (financial) sustainability	0	1	0
Exemplary description of a local media in Bukavu maintaining a website in order to allow access to local information for people outside of the geographical area of the medium. Adding that this service is mainly used in the Congolese diaspora	0	1	0
Estimation that local media quality nowadays is lower than during the "period of occupation", [ca. 1996 - 2002] when media played a "great role" in order to achieve "reunification"	1	0	1

#### **4.) State (Power)**

##### *Expectations in regard of local (state) power*

Expectation addressed to the Congolese state to assure financial sustainability to media	1	1	0
Expressing hope that state power further encourages liberty of expression	1	0	0
Indication that mono-ethnic units in the Congolese army are to be avoided, following a (new?) recruiting policy document	1	0	0

##### *Legal and administrative aspects related to media*

Description of a basic problem that existing legislations are not applied in practice (for media subventions, but not only)	1	0	0
Lack of clarity in regard of an eventual duty for the Congolese state to support domestic non-state media; No indication that such support is being realized	2	2	1
Indication that running a company is far more complicated in South Kivu / the DRC than running an association (Asbl; because of taxes, formalities etc.)	1	0	0
Estimation that severe media legislations in the DRC represent a hindrance for liberty of expression	0	1	0

Report on a Congolese national media regulation body (to counter hate messages etc.)	2	0	1
Indications that only the national radio and TV network benefits from state subsidies	1	0	0
Report on modified legislations regarding the Congolese national media regulation body, during the electoral process 2011	1	0	0
Estimation that the Congolese national media regulation body intervenes only on request and not as a structure to constantly monitor media (except eventually in urban centres) or to support media in improving their quality	1	0	0
Description of a Congolese journalists union (in charge of training, defining ethical standards etc., complementing the national regulation body, who is in charge to counter hate messages etc.)	2	0	0
Estimation that the accreditation procedure for media as national affairs, with only limited influence of provincial/local power	1	0	0
Estimation that broadcasting educational content is not foreseen in the legal framework of the DRC	1	0	0

## 5.) Trust

### *Aspects of trust, inside conflict zones*

Estimation that private communication (friends, relatives) is crucial for information verification in South Kivu	2	0	1
Description of a general climate of mistrust leading people to verify information in personal networks	1	0	0
Estimation that trustful relations between radio makers and their recipients are vital to get access to local sources, particularly in rural areas (where most fighting and atrocities occur)	1	0	0

### *Aspects of trust in insider-outsider relations*

Estimation that the level of trust is related to the media-organisation, not only to individual journalists	1	0	0
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## 6.) Media Quality

### *Prerequisites for media quality*

#### **A clear editorial line**

Prerequisite for media quality: A clear editorial line, to which staff of the media subscribe (seen as a guarantee to avoid media "turning" into partiality)	0	1	1
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#### **(Financial) autonomy / independence**

Prerequisite for media quality: Financial autonomy / Independence (despite state funding!)	2	1	0
Prerequisite for maintaining objectivity of media and making them resistant against bribery: Financial autonomy, combined with good organisation	0	1	0

#### **Material / Technical resources**

Prerequisite for quality: Time, money, human resources, equipment	1	2	0
Prerequisite for media quality: Internet access	1	0	0
Prerequisite for media quality: Resources for investigation (transport)	1	0	0

### Readiness to "live with the population"

Prerequisite for media quality: Journalists who "live with the population" and listen to people, to debates	0	1	1
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### Trained staff

Prerequisite for media quality: Well trained staff (university level, specialisation in communication etc.)	1	1	1
Prerequisite for media quality: Well trained staff, particularly in regard of verifying information	1	1	0
Estimation that untrained / inexperienced staff is problematic in South Kivu's media landscape	1	0	1
Estimation that 80% of the journalists in Bukavu did not receive a professional training before starting media work	0	1	0

### Prepared recipients

Prerequisite for media-impact: Capacity of recipients to analyse (situations, media content etc.)	1	0	0
Prerequisite for media-impact: Capacity of recipients to analyse (situations, media content etc.) - and their readiness to get involved in improvement processes	1	0	0
Prerequisite for media-impact: Instruction of recipients and mutual learning with journalists, in order to allow both to play a constructive role in society	1	0	0
Problematizing that violent individuals are difficult to reach with awareness raising campaigns, might refuse to see anything wrong in their violence, might refuse to think about future	1	0	1

### *Positive perception of media which...*

#### **... provide space for (political) dialogue**

Positive perception of space provided by media for (political) dialogue	4	0	2
Positive perception of space provided by media for (political) dialogue, as well as the fine art in journalism to conduct substantial public debates (by asking good questions, holding back actors tending to insult opponents etc.)	1	0	0

#### **... orient themselves to community needs**

Positive perception of journalism oriented to community needs	1	1	0
Positive perception of media that serves the people, promote democracy and liberty of expression	1	1	1
Positive perception of community radios (run by local associations)	2	0	0
Positive perception of journalism oriented at the inclusion of different social groups	1	0	0
Positive perception of media that serves the recipients	1	0	0

#### **... let recipients participate (in content production, media orientation etc.)**

Positive perception of media including the community (population) for the production of media content	1	1	0
Positive perception of media developing their editorial line ("vision") collectively with their recipients (seen as good mechanism to assure media quality)	0	1	1

**... are objective**

Positive perception of objectivity in journalism	1	0	0
Positive perception of impartiality and truth in media	1	0	0
Positive perception of media offering unbiased media coverage during election campaigns	1	0	0
Positive perception of media explaining what separates education and manipulation (propaganda)	1	1	1
Positive perception of media simultaneously maintaining critical distance to power (state) AND to "the population"	1	0	0

**... are committed**

Positive perception of committed journalists	1	0	0
Positive perception of media going beyond what everybody already knows	1	0	0
Positive perception of journalists not ceding to pressure and threats	1	0	0
Positive perception of media covering actuality	1	0	0
Positive perception of long term constancy for activities in the media sector; sceptical about following hypes	0	1	1

**... have high audience reach**

Positive perception of media with high audience reach	1	0	1
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**... promote "Patriotism" and "Congolese interests"**

Positive perception of media coverage oriented at "Congolese interests" and "patriotism"	1	0	0
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*Negative perception of media which...*

Negative perception of media lacking feedback loops / interaction with recipients	1	1	0
Clearly negative perception of media "making people fall asleep in order to better exploit them"	1	0	0
Expression of indignation about foreign films not compatible with African cultural values	1	0	0
Negative perception of media attributing responsibility for violence to acronyms of armed groups, without being precise about individuals behind the violence	1	0	0
Negative perception of "diabolisation" in media and "disturbing" reportages	1	0	1
Negative perception of "proximity"-information (gossip)	1	0	0
Negative perception of entertaining content in media, qualifying it as useless, sometimes pornographic	1	0	0
Negative perception of journalism to please funders	1	0	0
Negative perception of media "vilifying the state"	1	0	1
Negative perception of media disclosing private details	1	0	0
Negative perception of speculation in journalism	1	0	0
Estimation that rural community-stations and others with limited geographical reach could be problematic (escalation of local conflict without this being noticed outside this specific zone)	1	0	0
Negative perception of the period when media in Congo were fully state	1	0	0

controlled [before ca. 1990]			
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### *Appeals in media seen as positive*

Encouragement for appeals in media to not get involved in hate-campaigns and extremism	1	0	0
Encouragement for appeals in media to vote for a societal vision, a programme - and not for a person distributing gifts	1	0	1
Encouragement for appeals in media towards self responsibility, involvement in collective decision making etc.	1	0	0
Encouragement for appeals in media urging individuals, groups and authorities to cooperate for development	2	0	1
Encouragement for journalists appealing to their guests to refrain from aggression, hatred messages etc.	1	0	0

### *Quality aspects of media content*

Estimation that media coverage on the economy (economic restoration) is useful for recipients	2	0	0
Positive perception of journalism uncovering (hidden) problems, acknowledging that this will always hurt some people	1	0	0
Estimation that media coverage on agriculture and environment is crucial for society in South Kivu, as well as education in general, but these topics are said to be underrepresented in local media	0	1	0
Positive perception of media content oriented at better organizing public functions, in order to get out of "misery"	1	0	1
Estimation that media coverage on agricultural techniques has potential to improve living conditions	1	0	1
Estimation that media broadcasting in local language is useful for recipients	1	0	0

### *Impact of outsider interventions on media quality in South Kivu*

#### **Risk of stigmatisation**

Danger of stigmatisation through conveying excessively bad news (e.g. regarding sexual violence etc.)	1	0	1
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#### **Risk of stifling local initiatives and systems**

Quality of local media described as probably underestimated because of the superiority of externally supported media	2	0	1
Estimation that resource divergences between local and externally financed stations are problematic (technical equipment, finances, know how etc.)	1	0	1
Estimation that resource divergences between local and externally financed stations are problematic (technical equipment, finances, know how etc.), but cooperation could create win-win situations	1	0	0

#### **Potential to speak up**

Estimation that international actors have potential to name social problems which might be taboo for locals in South Kivu	1	0	0
Estimation that external support for media in conflict zones can make it more difficult for other actors to manipulate local media and journalists	1	0	0

### Understanding local context is crucial for external actors

Prerequisite for quality in external media interventions in conflict zones: Understanding local context and history (traumas, frustrations etc.)	1	0	1
Prerequisite for quality in external interventions in the media sector of conflict affected areas: Understanding how local media are organized	1	0	0
Estimation that donors of media initiatives are at risk to (involuntarily) support one or another camp in a political dispute, acknowledging that no such case is known by now	0	1	1
Estimation that local actors are better prepared for conflict analysis, compared to external actors	1	0	0
Estimation that goals of implemented media projects in South Kivu are not achieved	1	0	1

### *Visions for quality (local media and internationally financed media projects)*

Proposal addressed to externally funded media to be (more) open for sharing know how and experience	1	0	0
Proposal to orient externally financed media initiatives in conflict zones towards sustainable development (Millennium goals etc.) and peace-building	1	0	0
Request addressed to foreign promoters of media projects in South Kivu to go beyond classical media work and mobilize towards poverty alleviation / reduction of social inequalities	1	0	1
Expectation addressed at international media to balance the negative image of the DRC by also covering promising initiatives and changes in this country	1	0	0
Expectation addressed at international media to help Congolese journalists to produce positive headlines	1	0	0
Proposal to orient reporting on latent (frozen) conflicts towards the RESULTS of the parts of the conflict already regulated (in order to encourage regulation of the remaining elements)	1	0	0
Proposal addressed to international donors to assure financial sustainability of local media, for example through encouraging cooperation in the local media sector - indicating also that this could eventually lead to discrimination	0	1	1
Recommendation to assure (self-) evaluation in media work (identifying improvement potentials)	0	1	0
Proposal to exploit potential to selling useful information (as business model)	2	0	0
Proposal to create local news-agencies	1	0	0
Proposal to invest in the quality of locally produced content	1	0	0
Proposal to report on local traditions instead of orienting content towards international norms	1	0	0
Proposal to invest in (collective) learning by reporting on traditional (rural) practices	1	0	0
Report on a planned campaign urging media owners to sign employment contracts with their journalists, in order to counter widespread bribery in the Congolese media sector	1	0	0
Expectations that (international) project donors request transparency from local media they cooperate with	0	1	0

Expectations that (international) project donors invest in making existing media more pluralistic, highlighting that pluralism is not (only) a question of the number of media existing in a given context	0	1	1
Estimation that initiatives in the local media sector should aim at overcoming three limitations: Fear (because of intimidations), Lack of resources and Polarisation/Politicization	1	0	1
Proposal addressed to international donors to assure financial sustainability of local media, for example through journalistic trainings	1	0	0

## 7.) Role of Media

*The media's role in social fabric*

### **Possible duties for media in conflict zones:**

Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to advocate the needs of the powerless on the level of the powerful	1	1	0
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to advocate the needs of the powerless on the level of the powerful, adding that establishing transparency is crucial in this	1	0	1
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to stop violent conflict (ultimate goal for media in post conflict societies)	2	0	0
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to contribute to the amelioration of living conditions	2	0	1
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to claim accountability when legislations are not applied in practice	1	0	1
Critique addressed at media (domestic and international) oriented at sensational journalism, saying that this often omits positive developments in society.	1	0	1
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to provide objective information, in order to avoid rumours	1	0	1

### **Media have a peace building and a state building potential**

Estimation that media have a peace building potential	2	0	1
Estimation that media have potential to avoid social division (à la Somalia, Ivory Coast)	1	0	0
Estimation that media have potential to connect isolated regions	1	0	0
Estimation that media should be engaged in state building (consolidation, authority restoration)	1	0	1
Estimation that increased media diversity in the DRC probably contributed to social cohesion, as different channels exist to counter social division.	1	0	0

### **Watchdog function of media might be difficult but is important in South Kivu**

Estimation that the watchdog-function of media is crucial for societal development	1	1	1
Estimation that media have potential to improve state functioning trough critique	1	0	0
Estimation that media have potential to uncover hidden problems and to prevent violence	1	0	0



*Role of media in regard of behavioural change*

Neutral description of medias' potential to change behaviour	1	1	0
Estimation that media change behaviours (as a result of information, in order to avoid problems)	2	0	0
Estimation that initiating behavioural change is a task of the society as a whole and not of media alone	0	1	1
Spontaneous denial of a legitimacy to intend behavioural change of recipients (later relativized)	0	1	0
Intention to change behaviour is seen legitimate as far as oriented towards peaceful cohabitation / "mutual acceptance" / reducing prejudices	0	1	1
Intention to change behaviour is seen legitimate as far as it is oriented towards respecting other peoples property and recognizing the own self in public properties / services	1	0	0
Intention to change behaviour is seen legitimate as far as oriented towards community development	1	0	0
Estimation that media are legitimized to intend behavioural change to stop corruption	1	0	1

*Dangerous aspects of media for society*

Danger: Media = Double sided sword in conflict zones	3	0	0
Estimation that journalism in its actual form creates or accentuates divides between cultures, individuals etc.	1	0	1
Danger of escalating conflicts through broadcasting unverified information	1	0	0
Danger of re-escalating latent conflicts or problematizing such conflicts in the public memory through (excessive) media coverage	1	0	1
Communitarianism identified as dangerous for society, which, in consequence should be banned by media. (Communitarianism apparently understood here as orienting life towards a community – family, clan, tribe etc. – instead of humanity).	1	0	1

*Comments related to the educative role of media*

Estimation that education is a key function of media (together with information)	3	0	0
Estimation that the educational function of media is a mutual learning process of journalists and audience	1	0	0
Estimation that the educational function of media can be fulfilled by giving examples of how peaceful cohabitation is achieved in other parts (conflict zones) of the world	1	0	0
Estimation that the educational function of media can be fulfilled by initiating debates (mutual learning)	1	0	1
Estimation that the educational function of media in South Kivu should be explaining "the why of existence" to (young) people who have experienced killing and atrocities. Request to orient awareness raising towards patriotism, readiness to fight interests of Congolese nation before own interests, and to be a "pillar" of society	1	0	1

*Comments related to the entertaining role of media*

Sceptical perception of educative content embedded in entertaining media formats like soap operas, sketches etc. (indicating no knowledge of such content)	1	0	0
Estimation that entertainment is a (possible) role of media	2	0	0
Clearly negative perception of media broadcasting advertising and "banal sketches, repeated over and over", which is said to be the case in many of Bukavu's media	1	0	1

*Comments related to the informing role of media*

Estimation that information is the key function of media	3	0	0
Estimation that information is the key function of media - adding that information must be verified	1	0	0

# Media in Conflict Zones: Perceptions and expectations

## FIELD RESEARCH

### Appendix 4: Recommendations

(as directly or indirectly expressed by the interviewed people)

*Column A: Number of STANDARD interviews in which the statement appears*

*Column B: Number of EXPERT interviews in which the statement appears*

*Column C: Number of interviews in which speakers put emphasis on the statement*

**Note:** The Term "Description" is used to characterize clear, descriptive statements, in contrast to "Indication" for rather unsure statements (hearsay, assumptions etc.). For statements in between the two (like opinions, etc.), the term "Estimation" is used. This terminology does not in any case make a distinction between true or false.

#### Category 1: Advocacy

	A	B	C
Estimation that international actors have potential to name social problems which might be taboo for locals in South Kivu	1	0	0
Estimation that external support for media in conflict zones can make it more difficult for other actors to manipulate local media and journalists	1	0	0
Estimation that local news is vital for people living in violence affected rural areas, as it makes their environment comprehensible	1	0	0
Description of social problems: Insecurity in rural areas	1	0	0
Estimation that poverty and logistical problems discriminate against rural areas particularly	1	0	0
Estimation that focussing on urban/political issues is problematic, as it discriminates against rural areas	2	0	0
Estimation that functioning media have an appeasing effect, particularly in rural areas affected by violence (shutting down a rural radio can make people flee their homes)	1	0	1
Estimation that armed groups have converted from political motivation (or popular defence) to "groups of predation", not hesitating to use violence against their own villages, even families	1	0	1
Indications that intimidation of journalists is frequent in South Kivu	1	0	1
Description of precarious economic perspectives for staff engaged in independent media, resulting in widespread bribery ("coupage") among local journalists	1	1	1
Positive perception of journalists not ceding to pressure and threats	1	0	0
Positive perception of media going beyond what everybody already knows	1	0	0
Estimation that women's rights must be better promoted in the DRC	1	0	1
Description of social problems: Bad infrastructure (roads, hospitals, schools)	1	0	0

Description of social problems: Harassment (taxes etc.)	1	0	0
Description of social problems: Corruption and impunity	1	0	0
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to stop violent conflict (ultimate goal for media in post conflict societies)	2	0	0
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to contribute to the amelioration of living conditions	2	0	1
Clearly negative perception of media "making people fall asleep in order to better exploit them"	1	0	0
Expressing hope / optimism to overcome possible ethnic and national polarisations, by focussing on basic rights instead of differences and privileges.	1	0	0
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to advocate the needs of the powerless on the level of the powerful, adding that establishing transparency is crucial in this	1	0	1
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to advocate the needs of the powerless on the level of the powerful	1	1	0
Estimation that trustful relations between radio makers and their recipients are vital to get access to local sources, particularly in rural areas (where most fighting and atrocities occur)	1	0	0
Expectation addressed at international media to balance the negative image of the DRC by also covering promising initiatives and changes in this country	1	0	0
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to claim accountability when legislations are not applied in practice	1	0	1
Estimation that the watchdog-function of media is crucial for societal development	1	1	1
Estimation that media have potential to improve state functioning trough critique	1	0	0
Estimation that media have potential to uncover hidden problems and to prevent violence	1	0	0
Positive perception of journalism uncovering (hidden) problems, acknowledging that this will always hurt some people	1	0	0

## Category 2: Aid Coherence

Estimation that the complexity of context in the Great Lakes is a core challenge for media, who must invest in adequate training and networks	1	0	0
Indication that arms trade, land property, ethnicity and illegal exploitation of resources are the most "perturbing" questions in South Kivu - and that local media coverage in these questions is "limited"	1	0	1
Estimation that international evaluators could (involuntarily) approve immoral practices of Congo's ruling elites, as a result of not being sufficiently familiar with context and therefore incapable to uncover such practices	1	0	0
Request addressed to foreign promoters of media projects in South Kivu to go beyond classical media work and mobilize towards poverty alleviation / reduction of social inequalities	1	0	1
Proposal to orient externally financed media initiatives in conflict zones towards sustainable development (Millenium goals etc.) and peace-building	1	0	0

Positive perception of long term constancy for activities in the media sector; sceptical about following hypes	0	1	1
Prerequisite for maintaining objectivity of media and making them resistant against bribery: Financial autonomy, combined with good organisation	0	1	0
Prerequisite for media quality: Financial autonomy / Independence (despite state funding!)	2	1	0
Prerequisite for quality: Time, money, human resources, equipment	1	2	0
Proposal addressed to international donors to assure financial sustainability of local media, for example through journalistic trainings	1	0	0
Prerequisite for media quality: Resources for investigation (transport)	1	0	0
Estimation that sufficient market potential exists for local media to assure their (financial) sustainability	0	1	0
Proposal to exploit potential to selling useful information (as business model)	2	0	0
Expression of indignation about "Outsiders" presenting local social problems in a media-effective manner (crass examples etc.), without contextualisation	2	0	1
Accusation of international media influencing local context with tactical disinformation, bypassing local actors	1	0	0

### Category 3: Space for Dialogue

Positive perception of space provided by media for (political) dialogue, as well as the fine art in journalism to conduct substantial public debates (by asking good questions, holding back actors tending to insult opponents etc.)	1	0	0
Positive perception of space provided by media for (political) dialogue	4	0	2
Description of a climate of open political discourse in media in South Kivu	1	0	0
Positive perception of journalism oriented at the inclusion of different social groups	1	0	0
Estimation that the educational function of media is a mutual learning process of journalists and audience	1	0	0
Estimation that the educational function of media can be fulfilled by initiating debates (mutual learning)	1	0	1
Estimation that media have potential to connect isolated regions	1	0	0
Proposal to invest in projects for better relations between military and civilians - naming poverty as root cause for the absence of progress	1	0	0
Estimation that initiating behavioural change is a task of the society as a whole and not of media alone	0	1	1
Exemplary description of cooperation among different media in Bukavu	1	1	0
Description of a community of journalists in South Kivu who are open for cooperation - estimating that this is encouraging	1	0	0
Proposal addressed to international donors to assure financial sustainability of local media, for example through encouraging cooperation in the local media sector - indicating also that this could eventually lead to discrimination	0	1	1
Estimation that media broadcasting in local language is useful for recipients	1	0	0
Indication that different local dialects are represented in local media, without excluding that ethnically motivated power games influence decision-making in	1	0	0

media and politics			
Communitarianism identified as dangerous for society, which, in consequence should be banned by media. (Communitarianism apparently understood here as orienting life towards a community – family, clan, tribe etc. – instead of humanity).	1	0	1

#### Category 4: Inside-Outside Connections

Expression of frustration about the fact that international media don't consult local media in South Kivu but have correspondents in Kigali, Bujumbura and Kinshasa - completed with an exemplary description of a false information conveyed internationally due to this physical distance	0	1	1
Expression of indignation about RFI broadcasts in Swahili, which are accessible only in Rwanda (where Swahili is not an official language), in Kinshasa (where most people speak Lingala). This deprives millions in Eastern Congo from immediate access to essential regional and international information (which is, in consequence, conveyed by local media; Lack of clarity whether this situation is created intentionally or is just a technical problem)	0	1	1
Critique addressed at media (domestic and international) oriented at sensational journalism, saying that this often omits positive developments in society.	1	0	1
Estimation that local actors are better prepared for conflict analysis, compared to external actors	1	0	0
Estimation that goals of implemented media projects in South Kivu are not achieved	1	0	1
Estimation that cooperation between externally financed media (from peace building budgets) and local (rural) media is desirable and could help international stakeholders to access realistic information about the DRC	2	0	0
Proposal addressed to externally funded media to be (more) open for sharing know how and experience	1	0	0
Expectation addressed at international media to help Congolese journalists to produce positive headlines	1	0	0
Expectations that (international) project donors request transparency from local media they cooperate with	0	1	0
Report on local Congolese journalists working as correspondents for international media	1	1	0
Prerequisite for media quality: Internet access	1	0	0
Exemplary description of a local media in Bukavu maintaining a website in order to allow access to local information for people outside of the geographical area of the medium. Adding that this service is mainly used in the Congolese diaspora	0	1	0

## Category 5: Collective Decision Making

Description of a society in which "everything" depends on a powerful elite	1	0	0
Description of a voluntary segregation between rich and poor	1	0	0
Expression of fear for social cohesion as political concurrence (increasingly) characterizes local media, much more than other sectors of the public sphere: 90% of the media in Bukavu said to be owned by politicians	0	1	1
Exemplary description, why it is important that different societal actors (State, Media, etc.) complement each other in order to overcome social problems (like corruption, impunity etc.)	0	1	1
Estimation that citizens should dare to claim ownership in political decision making	1	0	0
Prerequisite for media quality: Journalists who "live with the population" and listen to people, to debates	0	1	1
Positive perception of journalism oriented to community needs	1	1	0
Positive perception of media that serves the people, promote democracy and liberty of expression	1	1	1
Positive perception of media that serves the recipients	1	0	0
Intention to change behaviour is seen legitimate as far as oriented towards community development	1	0	0
Estimation that focussing on commons (public property) has potential to enhance social cohesion and development	1	0	0
Intention to change behaviour is seen legitimate as far as it is oriented towards respecting other peoples property and recognizing the own self in public properties / services	1	0	0
Estimation that media are legitimized to intend behavioural change to stop corruption	1	0	1
Estimation that local media quality nowadays is lower than during the "period of occupation", [ca. 1996 - 2002] when media played a "great role" in order to achieve "reunification"	1	0	1
Estimation that media diversity as an advantage, theoretically, but practice in South Kivu is arbitrariness, not support for development	1	0	0
Description of "Radio Clubs" - associations assigned for giving (critical) feedback to specific stations and organized as information sources, specifically in remote areas	1	2	0
Positive perception of media developing their editorial line ("vision") collectively with their recipients (seen as good mechanism to assure media quality)	0	1	1
Positive perception of community radios (run by local associations)	2	0	0
Expressing hope that state power further encourages liberty of expression	1	0	0
Estimation that severe media legislations in the DRC represent a hindrance for liberty of expression	0	1	0
Expectation addressed to the Congolese state to assure financial sustainability to media	1	1	0

Description of a Congolese journalists union (in charge of training, defining ethical standards etc., complementing the national regulation body, who is in charge to counter hate messages etc.)	2	0	0
Report on a Congolese national media regulation body (to counter hate messages etc.)	2	0	1
Report on modified legislations regarding the Congolese national media regulation body, during the electoral process 2011	1	0	0
Estimation that the Congolese national media regulation body intervenes only on request and not as a structure to constantly monitor media (except eventually in urban centres) or to support media in improving their quality	1	0	0
Positive perception of media coverage oriented at "Congolese interests" and "patriotism"	1	0	0

### Category 6: Documentations and Transparency

Estimation that the power of media resides in their - theoretical - right to access "all sectors"	0	1	0
Prerequisite for quality in external media interventions in conflict zones: Understanding local context and history (traumas, frustrations etc.)	1	0	1
Prerequisite for quality in external interventions in the media sector of conflict affected areas: Understanding how local media are organized	1	0	0
Estimation that access to information is a major problem for media in South Kivu	1	0	0
Report on representatives of state power hindering journalists accessing information	1	0	0
Congolese (media) history poorly documented; Access to information often depends on personal relations	1	0	0
Description of non-transparency in regard of (financial) ownership of local media, adding that this is particularly the case in media owned by politicians	0	1	0
Description of non-transparency in regard of (financial) ownership of local media, completed with indications that transparency is also lacking inside (some) media organisations (regarding salaries, hiring policy, assets etc.)	0	2	1
Report on a planned campaign urging media owners to sign employment contracts with their journalists, in order to counter widespread bribery in the Congolese media sector	1	0	0
Indication that young, well educated (devoted) journalists risk to being boycotted in Bukavu's local media	1	0	0

### Category 7: Avoidance of Negative Side Effects

Estimation that some project funders might have interest in (local) media conveying a negative image of the DRC	1	0	0
Attribution of responsibility to project donors, for media coverage that exaggerates the problem of sexual violence in the DRC	1	0	1
Expression of indignation about "Outsiders" focussing on ethnic aspects in their reporting on Congo, contrasted by a feeling of strong national unity in Congo.	1	0	1
Description of massive corruptive practices on the back of victims of sexual violence - and alerting media to be aware and to denounce	1	0	1



Danger of stigmatisation through conveying excessively bad news (e.g. regarding sexual violence etc.)	1	0	1
Estimation that outsiders reporting on South Kivu without having access to independent sources also in remote areas can be entry points for propaganda, tactical disinformation etc., perpetuating itself in communication and media systems	2	0	1
Danger of re-escalating latent conflicts or problematizing such conflicts in the public memory through (excessive) media coverage	1	0	1
Expectations that (international) project donors invest in media pluralism, highlighting that this is not (only) a question of the number of media	0	1	1
Indication that project donors might have tried to influence local media in Bukavu, contrasted with the perspective of local media professionals interpreting such cooperation as business opportunities	0	1	1
Estimation that donors of media initiatives are at risk to (involuntarily) support one or another camp in a political dispute, acknowledging that no such case is known by now	0	1	1
Quality of local media described as probably underestimated because of the superiority of externally supported media	2	0	1
Estimation that resource divergences between local and externally financed stations are problematic (technical equipment, finances, know how etc.)	1	0	1
Estimation that resource divergences between local and externally financed stations are problematic (technical equipment, finances, know how etc.), but cooperation could create win-win situations	1	0	0

### Category 8: Arousing Interest

Prerequisite for media-impact: Capacity of recipients to analyse (situations, media content etc.)	1	0	0
Prerequisite for media-impact: Capacity of recipients to analyse (situations, media content etc.) - and their readiness to get involved in improvement processes	1	0	0
Prerequisite for media-impact: Instruction of recipients and mutual learning with journalists, in order to allow both to play a constructive role in society	1	0	0
Attribution of responsibility for "auto-information" to recipients	1	0	0
Problematizing that violent individuals are difficult to reach with awareness raising campaigns, might refuse to see anything wrong in their violence, might refuse to think about future	1	0	1
Negative perception of media lacking feedback loops / interaction with recipients	1	1	0
Positive perception of media including the community (population) for the production of media content	1	1	0
Estimation that media coverage on agriculture and environment is crucial for society in South Kivu, as well as education in general, but these topics are said to be underrepresented in local media	0	1	0
Positive perception of media content oriented at better organizing public functions, in order to get out of "misery"	1	0	1
Estimation that media coverage on agricultural techniques has potential to improve living conditions	1	0	1

Estimation that media coverage on the economy (economic restoration) is useful for recipients	2	0	0
Proposal to invest in (collective) learning by reporting on traditional (rural) practices	1	0	0
Proposal to report on local traditions instead of orienting content towards international norms	1	0	0
Proposal to invest in the quality of locally produced content	1	0	0
Proposal to create local news-agencies	1	0	0

### Category 9: Empowerment of Peace Building Skills

Estimation that media have a peace building potential	2	0	1
Estimation that media have potential to avoid social division (à la Somalia, Ivory Coast)	1	0	0
Description of a basic problem that journalists can influence conflict without necessarily being trained in conflict analysis and peace building	1	0	0
Estimation that increased media diversity in the DRC probably contributed to social cohesion, as different channels exist to counter social division.	1	0	0
Estimation that media should be engaged in state building (consolidation, authority restoration)	1	0	1
Intention to change behaviour is seen legitimate as far as oriented towards peaceful cohabitation / "mutual acceptance" / reducing prejudices	0	1	1
Estimation that the educational function of media can be fulfilled by giving examples of how peaceful cohabitation is achieved in other parts (conflict zones) of the world	1	0	0
Exemplary description of journalists covering peaceful cohabitation of individuals representing social groups that tend to live in segregation (foreigners, examples of mixed marriages etc.)	0	1	1
Sceptical perception of educative content embedded in entertaining media formats like soap operas, sketches etc. (indicating no knowledge of such content)	1	0	0
Negative perception of entertaining content in media, qualifying it as useless, sometimes pornographic	1	0	0
Clearly negative perception of media broadcasting advertising and "banal sketches, repeated over and over", which is said to be the case in many of Bukavu's media	1	0	1
Negative perception of journalism to please funders	1	0	0
Estimation that initiatives in the local media sector should aim at overcoming three limitations: Fear (because of intimidations), Lack of resources and Polarisation/Politicization	1	0	1
Proposal to orient reporting on latent (frozen) conflicts towards the RESULTS of the parts of the conflict already regulated (in order to encourage regulation of the remaining elements)	1	0	0
Encouragement for journalists appealing to their guests to refrain from aggression, hatred messages etc.	1	0	0
Encouragement for appeals in media urging individuals, groups and authorities to cooperate for development	2	0	1

Encouragement for appeals in media to vote for a societal vision, a programme - and not for a person distributing gifts	1	0	1
Encouragement for appeals in media to not get involved in hate-campaigns and extremism	1	0	0
Encouragement for appeals in media towards self responsibility, involvement in collective decision making etc.	1	0	0

### Category 10: Objectivity

Positive perception of objectivity in journalism	1	0	0
Positive perception of impartiality and truth in media	1	0	0
Positive perception of media offering unbiased media coverage during election campaigns	1	0	0
Positive perception of committed journalists	1	0	0
Danger of escalating conflicts through broadcasting unverified information	1	0	0
Exemplary description of exaggerated numbers of massacre victims and sexual violence	2	0	2
Exemplary description of tactical disinformation in media during the 1996 war	1	0	0
Estimation that 80% of the journalists in Bukavu did not receive a professional training before starting media work	0	1	0
Prerequisite for media quality: Well trained staff (university level, specialisation in communication etc.)	1	1	1
Prerequisite for media quality: Well trained staff, particularly in regard of verifying information	1	1	0
Estimation that a DUTY exists for media to provide objective information, in order to avoid rumours	1	0	1
Positive perception of media explaining what separates education and manipulation (propaganda)	1	1	1
Prerequisite for media quality: A clear editorial line, to which staff of the media subscribe (seen as a guarantee to avoid media "turning" into partiality)	0	1	1
Positive perception of media simultaneously maintaining critical distance to power (state) AND to "the population"	1	0	0
Expression of astonishment about media attributing responsibility for violence to acronyms of armed groups, without being precise about individuals behind the violence	1	0	0
Negative perception of media presenting armed groups as liberators without recognizing that they might have converted from local defence to "groups of predation" - And a warning: Not understanding context is "not positive"	1	0	0
Estimation that journalism in its actual form creates or accentuates divides between cultures, individuals etc.	1	0	1
Recommendation to assure (self-) evaluation in media work (identifying improvement potentials)	0	1	0
Estimation that some local media organisations are capable to self-evaluate themselves, as they have corresponding know how and experience	0	1	0

## Improving Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones

### APPENDIX 5: Quality Categories for Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones

*As developed by summarizing theoretical considerations from 2009 with later reflections and a special focus on the field study in the DRC*

Project-Phase	Category	Observations 2009	Complements 2015
Project Initiation Phase	Trust	Assumption, that trust is a condition sine qua non for media projects in conflict zones.	Field research indicates that the issue is important, maybe crucial. But this is <b>relativized</b> by the fact that already entering a conversation on trust appears to be difficult, which puts clear limits to ideas about outsiders trying to evaluate trust. In the case of Bukavu / South Kivu, trustful relations (among friends, relatives etc.) play a vital role for recipients to crosscheck information. In parallel, a climate of mistrust is described, locally, but also and particularly regarding "outsider" interventions.
	Advocacy	Initially, this point was limited to the question whether the funding / implementing organisation can influence the local context, i.e. to protect local project staff.	Field research indicates that limiting advocacy to protecting journalists is not sufficient. According to the interviewed sources, the potential of external actors to <b>name problems that might be taboo</b> or difficult for local actors must be valued. Different sources urge <b>privileging the most vulnerable</b> – a core aim of aid – which must be equilibrated with the claim for impartiality in media. The general hope that outsider interventions in conflict zones improve living conditions locally has been poorly met in the case of Bukavu / South Kivu over the last roughly two decades. Against this background, field research leads to the conclusion that media initiatives in conflict zones are expected to comply with <b>quality requirements of peace building projects</b> as well as of media. Furthermore, it reveals a fairly clear claim that international actors should advocate countering the negativist image of the DRC perpetuating itself in international media systems.

Feasibility Study	<p><b>Aid coherence</b></p> <p>Media Landscape</p>	<p>Identification of a necessity to avoid stifling promising local media initiatives with external support to media in conflict zones</p> <p>Conflict Analysis</p> <p>Identification of solid and continuous conflict analysis as indispensable for orienting media initiatives in conflict zones.</p>	<p>This point was not recognized as a quality category in 2009. See the detailed comment in 5.2.</p> <p>Field research indicates significant discrepancies in terms of resources between externally financed and private media South Kivu, which are said to be highly politicised and possibly contributing to social polarisation. The interviewed sources recommend <b>aiming at improving the media system as a whole</b>. One source explicitly wishes that externally financed media were more open for cooperation with local media.</p> <p>Field research can be interpreted as confirming the 2009 conclusion. Some statements indicate that <b>local capacities in conflict analysis</b> could or should be better valued by international experts in order to avoid segregation of insider and outsider communication systems. Such segregation, together with inaccuracy in conflict analysis could potentially provide entry points for tactical disinformation and propaganda.</p>
Project Planning Phase	<p><b>Space for Dialogue</b></p> <p><b>Collective Decision Making</b></p>		<p>Field research indicates a clearly positive perception of media offering space for (political) dialogue, debates etc. One source goes as far as stating that "all other broadcasting could stop as long as public dialogue remains". Generally, this point was not recognized as a quality category in 2009. See also 5.2 for a more detailed comment.</p> <p>In South Kivu, which the Congolese Government did not entirely control for more than a decade, relations between authorities and population seem to be characterized by mistrust. Some of the interviewed sources see a mediating potential for media in these circumstances, in which peace building is closely intertwined with state building. One of the challenges will be to convince powerful stakeholders to encourage objective media that sometimes - constructively - bite the hand that feeds. Even if it is a hand promoting media initiatives in conflict zones. See also a more detailed comment in 5.2.</p>

Project Planning Phase	Transparency on intentions	From a theoretical perspective, a claim for transparency in regard of project intentions is highly recommendable, particularly when international actors promote educational content in media.	Field research indicates that the interviewed persons measure the legitimacy of conveying educational content against its <b>contribution to better living conditions</b> .
	Independence (autonomy)	Claim for a long time perspective in media initiatives in conflict zones, more with a view to protecting local project staff than of sustainability.	Field research indicates that lack of (financial) autonomy and independence is one of the core problems, particularly regarding private media of South Kivu. Encouraging exceptions seem to exist but efforts are necessary to improve the general level of media quality. This is challenging for external aid initiatives, as there is a <b>risk to unwillingly substitute (dysfunctional) public services</b> , what would seriously undermine sustainability.
	Connecting “Inside” and “Outside”	Recommendation to establish networks also outside the conflict zone when supporting a media initiative inside.	In the light of the frustrations mentioned above regarding unsatisfactory relations and cooperation between inside and outside of the conflict zone, the importance of this point appears as <b>highly relevant</b> and was probably underestimated in 2009.
	Documentations and Archives	In 2009, the importance of useful documentations and archives was seen mainly in the light of traceability.	Further research revealed that the peace building potential of documentations and archives goes far beyond traceability. This was finally the <b>motivation to conclude this study with a proposal</b> (see chapter 2 and explicitly 2.5). In the case of Bukavu / South Kivu, access to information is said to be highly problematic for journalists (restricted access, non-existence of public documentations, lack of resources for investigation etc.). A point not explicitly recognized as a quality category in 2009. See also 5.2 for a more detailed comment.
Implementation Phase	Valuing Peace Building Capacities		
	Transparency on resources	Identified as indispensable to assure the credibility of an externally financed media in a conflict zone. Implies also conflicting interests, cooperation etc.	Field research indicates poor transparency on resources in the media landscape of South Kivu but the problem of lacking independence and autonomy in local media is highlighted more than the transparency problem. As the two phenomena are apparently interdependent, promoters of externally financed media initiatives are probably well advised to go ahead with as good examples.

Project Implementation Phase	<p>Avoidance of negative side effects</p> <p>Recommendation to pre-define rules and scenarios to handle extreme situations like threats, extremist behaviour etc.</p>	<p>Field research indicates that the recommendation of 2009 is of little relevance compared to the level of frustration about negative side effects of external interventions in South Kivu. The potential damage in the case of errors in media work (for example stigmatisation through excessively negative media coverage, resurrection of "frozen" conflicts etc.) requires preventive measures. Sources interviewed in Bukavu highlight the importance of <b>contextualisation, deep knowledge on context, actors and interest, correction of stereotypes and carefully crafted editorial lines</b> for orienting media. In the case of Bukavu / South Kivu, not all media seem to allow public access to their editorial line.</p>
Project Implementation Phase	<p>Arousing interest</p> <p>Feedback loops with the public recognized as the only communication channel to learn about needs and ideas of recipients.</p>	<p>Field research considerably enriched this category. On the local level in South Kivu, a key challenge seems to be to interest very violent (young) people to reintegrate in civil society. Media cannot offer perspectives for such people but can be door openers, i.e. by promoting constructive projects etc. On another level, it appeared that media initiatives are not only (rare) communication channels between "Inside" and "Outside" but also among the rare external contributions to cultural life in South Kivu during times of war and violence. This seems to indicate that arousing interest from a public outside the conflict zone could have stabilizing effects inside it, and encourage intensified insider-outsider cooperation.</p>
Ex Post Phase	<p><b>Objectivity</b></p>	<p>As media initiatives in conflict zones have a peacebuilding objective compared to media, as we know it, objectivity appears as a long-term goal that makes sense in such initiatives. This was not explicitly formulated as a quality category in 2009. See also 5.2 for a more detailed comment.</p>

## Improving Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones

### Appendix 6: Interactions between externally supported media projects and society in conflict zones

A Brainstorming Experiment to reduce complexity, as introduced in B.1.2.3, focused only on main interactions and particularly on what can be considered as or can become one-way communication.

- ↓ Interaction directed from the respective societal subsystem toward or via the project
- ↑ Interaction directed from the project toward or via the respective subsystem
- ?, () Clarification required / ambiguous or contradictory aspects etc.
- \* Areas of particular interest for this work, as introduced in B.1.2.3

<i>Stakeholder Group</i>	<i>Local authority</i>	<i>Armed Grps</i>	<i>Local Civ.Soc. Org.</i>	<i>Local Media Prof's</i>	<i>Local Recipients</i>	<i>Project Sponsors</i>	<i>Distant stakeholders</i>
<i>Type of interaction</i>							
Financing / getting finance (incl. techn. support, training, etc.)				↑		↓	↓ Indirect
Enabling disarmament, peace building, development, economic growth, etc.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓ often a declared goal	↓ Indirect
Advertising on products and services	↓		↓		↑		
Entertaining / being entertained				↓	↑	? ↓	
Making / enabling careers				↑		↓ ↑	
Select and train media pros + project staff	? ↓			(↓) ↑		↓	
Conveying / receiving factual information (contextualization, warnings, orientation, etc.)	↓	? ↓	↓ (↑)	↓	↑	? ↓	↑ potentially
Publishing <b>educational content</b> * aiming at more freedom, peace, etc.	? ↓ (↑)	↑	? ↓ (↑)	? ↓	↑	↓ often a declared goal	? ↓ Indirect
Publishing <b>educational content</b> * aiming at more autocracy, control etc.	? ↓	? ↓	? ↓ ↑	? ↓ ↑	↑	? ↓	
Conveying / receiving propaganda, (tactical) disinformation etc.	? ↓ ↑	? ↓ ↑	? ↓ ↑	? ↓ ↑	↑	? ↓ ↑	? ↑
* Networking / Providing channels for feedback loops	↓ ↑ potentially	↓ ↑ potentially	↓ ↑ potentially	↓ ↑ potentially	↓ * potentially	? ↑	↑ potentially
Archiving / establishing (historical) transparency				↓ potentially	↑	? ↓	↑ potentially
* Uncovering problems (Watchdog function)	? ↓ *	? ↓ *	↓ *	↓ *	↓ * potentially	↓ * potentially	? ↓ * Indirect
* Setting quality standards and assessing the achievement of goals	↓ *		(↓) * If intended	↑ ↓ *	(↓) * If intended	↓ *	? ↓ * Indirect
* Intending to influence or balance power constellations	↓ *	↓ *	↓ *	* Evtl. hidden agendas	↓ * potentially	* Evtl. hidden agendas	* Evtl. hidden agendas
* Monitoring and documenting social change	↓ * potentially	↓ * potentially	↓ * potentially	↓ * potentially	↓ * potentially	↓ * potentially	↓ * potentially



# Improving Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones

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## Improving Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones

### APPENDIX 8: Research Protocol

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Documents</b>
Feb. 2009	Degree dissertation; Basic research on quality criteria for media projects in conflict zones	Medienprojekte und Medienwirkungen in Konfliktzonen – Grundlagen für die Herleitung von Qualitätskriterien
Nov. 2010	Interim Study Report (Summary of the 2009 paper in English)	Evaluating the Quality and Impact of Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones – A Set of Guidelines
March 2011	Plans to complement the basic research of 2009 with field research in the DRC, as Thesis in the MAS Programme of World Peace Academy	Study Concept (in German)
Nov 2011	Establishment of a formal framework for field research	Conditions d'interview (in French)
Dec 2011 – Jan 2012	Eight in-depth interviews in Bukavu / DRC, as part of a one month stay in Bujumbura (Burundi) and Bukavu	Recordings, Transcripts of Interviews 1 and 2 and some attempts at categorisation
Feb. 2012	Development of an essay about impressions during the stay in Bujumbura and Bukavu	Bukavu, via Bujumbura: 6 portraits – and some open questions (in German; French Version followed in 2013)
March 2012	Extension of the research focus towards <i>"How to add value to media initiatives in conflict zones by combining quality and performance assessment with the monitoring of social change?"</i>	Research Proposal
July 2013	Rethinking the system for categorisation and coding of the interviews from winter 2011/12, as the first version appeared to be too detailed	
Nov. 2013 – Jan. 2014	Another two months stay in South Kivu for <i>a)</i> Further developing the MAS Thesis and <i>b)</i> Conducting an external evaluation for a local NGO after ten years of existence	Context Analysis of the rural Kivu-Maniema Region (as part of the evaluation report, which is not public; both documents in French)
Oct. 2014	Presentation of provisional findings on the occasion of the Swiss African Research days in Berne	Towards improving media initiatives in Conflict Zones (Draft Concept Note in English and a Draft Report on Field Research in French)
Jan. 2015 – Feb. 2015	Transcribing and coding the remaining interviews and conclusion on field research, focussing on <i>recommendations expressed by the interviewed persons and addressed to promoters of media initiatives in conflict zones</i>	Media in Conflict Zones: Perceptions and Expectations; Report on Field Research, in French, with an Abstract and Content Analysis in English

UNIVERSITÄT BASEL

PHILOSOPHISCH-HISTORISCHE FAKULTÄT

DEPARTEMENT GESELLSCHAFTSWISSENSCHAFTEN

Gutachten zur Diplomarbeit von Hansueli Homberger zum Thema

«Qualität von Medieninitiativen in Konfliktzonen –

Neubewertung der Qualitätskriterien»

**«Improving Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones – Reconsidering  
Quality Categories»**

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In der vorliegenden Arbeit will Hansueli Homberger die Qualität von Medieninitiativen in Konfliktzonen beurteilen. Er sucht nach Kriterien, die deren Wirksamkeit und Durchführbarkeit sicherstellen. Hansueli Homberger stützt sich dabei auf eine frühere Untersuchung, die er um qualitative Interviews ergänzt - mit Gesprächspartner\_innen in Bukavu, der Hauptstadt der Provinz Süd-Kivu im Osten der Demokratischen Republik Kongo. Im Zentrum seines Interesses steht die Frage, was gute und schlechte Qualität in Bezug auf ein gegebenes Thema bedeuten und wie sich Innen- und Aussenaspekte in Konfliktzonen unterscheiden.

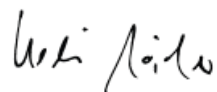
Hansueli Homberger geht von der These aus, dass Medieninitiativen in Konfliktzonen Kompetenzen und Engagements entwickeln, die weit über den Aufgabenbereich üblicher Medienorganisationen hinaus reichen. Er wendet sich systematisch Fragen zur Deeskalation von Konflikten, zur Konfliktregulierung und zur Friedenskonsolidierung sowie zu politischen und gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung zu. Das Ziel, das er mit seiner Arbeit verfolgt, weist - transparent deklariert - normative Züge auf. Seiner Meinung nach müssen Medieninitiativen in Konfliktzonen stärker für den Aufbau öffentlich zugänglicher Datenbanken eintreten, die rudimentäre, von Journalisten validierten Informationen über den gesellschaftlichen



Wandel enthalten. Das ist eine recht anspruchsvolle Forderung. Sie verlangt entsprechende konzeptionelle oder theoretische Bezüge. Hansueli Homberger diskutiert interessante und weiter führende Ansätze. Er bezieht sie auf seine Fragestellung und erhellt, wie sie sich für Praktiker\_innen und Expert\_innen innerhalb und ausserhalb von Konfliktzonen nutzbar machen lassen. Er versucht so, das gegenseitige Verständnis der Akteur\_innen zu fördern, die medieninitiativ in Konfliktzonen tätig sind.

Die vorliegende Arbeit enthält viele interessante Gesichtspunkte und relevante Anregungen. Sie macht deutlich, wie wichtig die Aufgaben sind, die Medieninitiativen in Konfliktzonen übernehmen. Zur Verantwortung gehört u.a. auch der Einfluss auf das Bewältigen von Interessenkonflikten und sozioethnischen Spannungen. Das ist wertvoll.

Ich gratuliere Hansueli Homberger zum Abschluss seiner überaus aufwändigen und gut gelungenen Arbeit. Der Einsatz hat sich gelohnt.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ueli Mäder', written in a cursive style.

Prof. Dr. Ueli Mäder

15. März 2015

## Improving Media Initiatives in Conflict Zones

### APPENDIX 10: Acknowledgements and Outlook

I dedicate this work to the children, women and men whose lives are unnecessarily wasted in violent conflicts and who appear in media only rarely, as numbers, casualties.

My acknowledgements then go to the women and men, kept anonymous, who allowed themselves to be interviewed in Bukavu and the whole network that made this possible. It allowed me to approach reality in this particular context with all my senses, which was challenging, as I originate from an entirely different reality, but also enriching, touching, wonderful.

A special thank is due to Professor Ueli Mäder for always letting me do what I believed made sense. In fact, this feeling of gratitude goes also far beyond, to everybody involved in the “adventure” of the World Peace Academy – to staff, lecturers and classmates. I experienced being part of a Swiss minority in Switzerland and I think it is not exaggerated to remember all the names of this incredibly diverse and powerful body, in alphabetical order:

*Lawrence Acherekoh, Isaac Adjei, Birgit Allerstorfer, Rubina Amin, Charlotte Bachmann, Elisabeth Baumgartner, Dzikamai Bere, Adrian Bergmann, Catherine Brunner, Pierre Brunner, Hans Christophers, István Csákány, Taylor deGraffenried, Sascha Doenges, Fred Dubee, Mathias Fenner, Dietrich Fischer, Elías Abraham Fóscolo, Domino Frank, Richard Friedli, Benno Fuchs, Laurent Goetschel, Daniela Maudett Valdivia Gutierrez, Lesli Gutierrez, Minu Hemmati, Gabriela Hidalgo, Sun-Do Hyun, Luisa Insignares, Ashaney James, Jorgen Johansen, Briony Jones, Patrick Kafuka, Samuel Kodua, Be Leirner, Margaret Lobb, Vérane Lorient, Alin Loviste, Jowita Maciejewicz, Farai Maguwu, Jelena Mair, Denis Matveev, Irène Meier, Werner Meyer, Richard Mnenga, Mary Neff, Vivian Ninsiima, Jan Oberg, Ingrid Oliveira, Joseph Kyekyeku, Oppong, Heela Papa, Ashley Roque, Diane Ross, Yara Rossi, Vicky Rossi, Adam Roufberg, Sandra Rubli, Shadije Rushiti, Stella Sabiiti, Eduardo Sanin, Lisa Seidel, Habibat Sheidu, Elisabeth Shelley, Derrick Smithson, Bruno Stoeckli, Nenad Stojanovic, Bikash Subedi, Sarmad Tamer, Joseph Tartisio, Tanuja Thurairajah, Petra Vahle, Noah Wong, Pia Zeugin, Momen Zyod, Carlos Zorrilla*

Many names, relatives, friends needed to appear here for their precious support. Thank you all.

For the future, I look forward to test, fine-tune and optimize the concept proposed in chapter 2. On a more visionary level, I wish that the concept becomes obsolete, that specific media for conflict zones are no longer necessary because humanity agrees on something other than violent conflict regulation mechanisms. Media have the choice and the expertise to step in this direction and to stop segregation between conflict zones and the “rest of the world” – or to do the opposite.

On a practical level, I hope that this paper is going to be read – not only in externally financed media initiatives in conflict zones – and that readers – media makers, activists, officials etc. – get inspired and dare to measure peace building impacts of their activities by themselves, to document their findings and to improve continually. Improving is not dependent on huge budgets or high specialisation. It needs a vision, some concrete objectives, a first step, and endurance to create a network and a slowly growing impact.

In this order of thoughts, I will appreciate any comment, critique or complement to this study. I will be more than happy to help putting these visions and conceptual aspects into practice.