



Media Landscape 2014

*Celebrating
20 Years of South
Africa's Media*

Media Landscape 2014: Celebrating 20 Years of South Africa's Media

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Foreword

In early 1994 South Africa was on the brink of democratic transformation. The mood in the country was euphoric, with citizens excited about the impending changes. Within the media, journalists revelled in their newfound freedom from harassment, banning and imprisonment – merely for reporting the news. Within government, policy makers grappled with how to transform the media to reflect the demographics of the country and to play a role in building an informed and inclusive South Africa.

A technological revolution that was to fundamentally change the way media sources and delivers news and information was also beginning to have a global influence. Twenty years ago the Internet, referred to then as the 'information superhighway', was gathering momentum as more and more users came online. Social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook were still only a dream in the minds of developers.

Two decades later, *Media Landscape 2014: Celebrating 20 Years of South Africa's media* reflects on the changes in the media environment and considers how far things have come in this time. In South Africa, there is cause to celebrate – the media definitely has 'a good story to tell'.

Media freedom is guaranteed; there is increasing media diversity; more community radio stations are on air; and journalists are able to work without intimidation or fear.

But there is more work to be done. Print media ownership is a cause for concern as transforma-

tion has been slow. Media diversity also needs to be deepened – citizens should be able to receive media in the indigenous languages and content should reflect a range of viewpoints. Government has also a duty to ensure that more and more citizens are reached and kept informed so that they are able to participate in issues that affect them and in taking South Africa forward.

With the revolution in technology we now also live in a world that is unrecognisable from that of 20 years ago. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have turned everyone into a reporter. Citizens are taking to social media sites to report, inform, debate and discuss. Journalists are adapting to the new media and media houses are diversifying their print media platforms and entering the realm of cyberspace. Government is also actively engaging with these platforms to introduce policy and programmes and to engage with citizens.

In the media landscape it is important for all of us to acknowledge and appreciate how things have changed. We should pause and reflect on the last 20 years of the media – and see what has worked and where we might have gone wrong. Let us discuss and debate robustly, but in the end aim to forge a vision for the media that ensures that all South Africans are kept informed, are educated – and are entertained.

This edition of *Media Landscape 2014* is devoted to tracing 20 years of the South African media with a view to crafting a way forward.

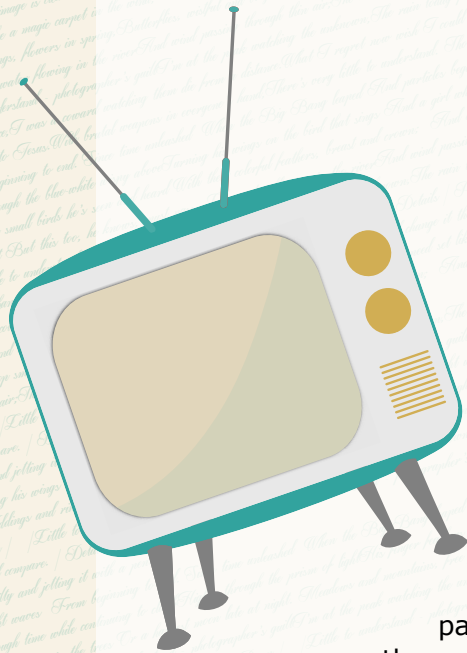
Ms Faith Muthambi, MP
Minister of Communications



Introduction

reflect on how far we have come, and to suggest a roadmap for the future. All were given the opportunity to present a range of views and opinions and to focus on the print, broadcast and digital media space where appropriate.

Broadly speaking, all the authors start from the premise that the South African media of today is in a far better position than it was 20 years ago. Many refer back to the key principles and policies that were discussed, debated and adopted during the transition to democracy and that now form the important foundational building blocks like those rights enshrined in the Constitution such as the right to freedom of opinion and expression, to receive and impart information, and freedom of the press. There is also the important aspect of transformation (of media ownership and within newsrooms) so as to ensure racial integration and economic redress. Media diversity is also recognised as a crucial principle – not only in terms of who owns the media but in language and content, so that all South Africans are able to receive information that reflects different views, and opinions that will enable them to participate actively in debates on issues that affect their lives.



South Africa is celebrating 20 years of freedom – a milestone for a country that in 1994 emerged from an apartheid past and had just started on the road towards building a democratic and inclusive society.

Building democracy is a process. All sectors of society, to a greater or lesser extent, have played a part in transforming South Africa so that today we live in a better place. In the media environment it has been no different.

Media Landscape 2014 is a collection of chapters from media experts. Each of them was asked to consider the media landscape of 1994, to

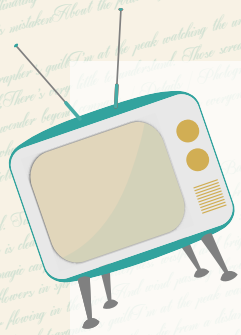
Media Landscape 2014 is a collection of chapters from media experts. Each of them was asked to consider the media landscape of 1994, to reflect on how far we have come, and to suggest a roadmap for the future.

From this common starting point, each chapter focuses on a topical issue. The media policy of the African National Congress (ANC) pre- and post-elections is considered in light of some of the more recent initiatives of the ANC government: namely the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA), the Media Appeals Tribunal (MAT) and the Protection of State Information Bill. Media diversity – of language and content – is explored by a number of authors. Evidence suggests that we still have a long way to go before we can argue that we have a truly inclusive media. Media ownership, especially in the print media environment, is still seen to be untransformed and requiring intervention. We also get a glimpse into the world of community and government media and see how far this has progressed along the continuum of freedom and democracy.

No current discussion would be complete without a look at the digital environment, but it is only touched on in this edition. Here we are introduced to Twitter and the role that it has played in changing the face of journalism. We also hear about how South Africa has taken advantage of technological innovations to support and stimulate development, more especially within the communications environment.

We hope that this *Media Landscape 2014* inspires ongoing discussion and debate. In order to build democracy and a media sector that reflects all our needs, wants and aspirations we need to take on board as many views and opinions as possible.





CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

Chapter 1:

Evolving media policy of the ANC: Time to go back to the drawing board?

Yacoob Abba Omar

During the early 1990s the African National Congress (ANC) was involved in debates and discussions not only about the future of the country but also about issues relating to media and communication policy. The approach adopted when the ANC was still a liberation organisation and not the government of the day is reflected in its Media Charter and 'Ready to Govern' documents.

In 1994 the ANC became the governing party. In giving effect to its democratic principles, it played a role in transforming the media environment, repealed censorship legislation, widened TV and radio access and created an enabling environment for diversity in the landscape.

More recently, leaders of the ANC-led government have been accused of becoming increasingly intolerant of the media and of being involved in setting up and using some media as a party mouthpiece. The Media Appeals Tribunal and Protection of State Information Bill have also been viewed as attempts to stifle press freedom.

This chapter explores whether, after 20 years, the more recent actions of the ANC are excesses, or the normal behaviour of a ruling party. The author concludes that many of the emerging issues require extensive debate and discussion as there are no clear-cut answers, but that many opportunities for this to take place have been lost. He argues for a broader dialogue on South Africa's media, bearing in mind that we are now entering the third decade of democracy.



Chapter 2:

Media diversity **Tawana Kupe**

South Africa's media system is undoubtedly the most pluralistic on the African continent and this gives it the appearance of catering for the needs of the entire nation. The system differs from that of the rest of Africa in that it is largely privately owned and commercially driven. Even the public service media relies to a large extent on a commercial source of funding – advertising – to survive.

Against this background the author questions whether South African media is both pluralistic and diverse. He looks at media ownership, content and audience needs and wants, and considers how far South Africa has come in ensuring media diversity. He concludes the chapter by arguing that government should take further steps to ensure pluralism and – depending on the media sector – diversification, suggesting how pluralism could be achieved in the broadcast, community and print media environments.



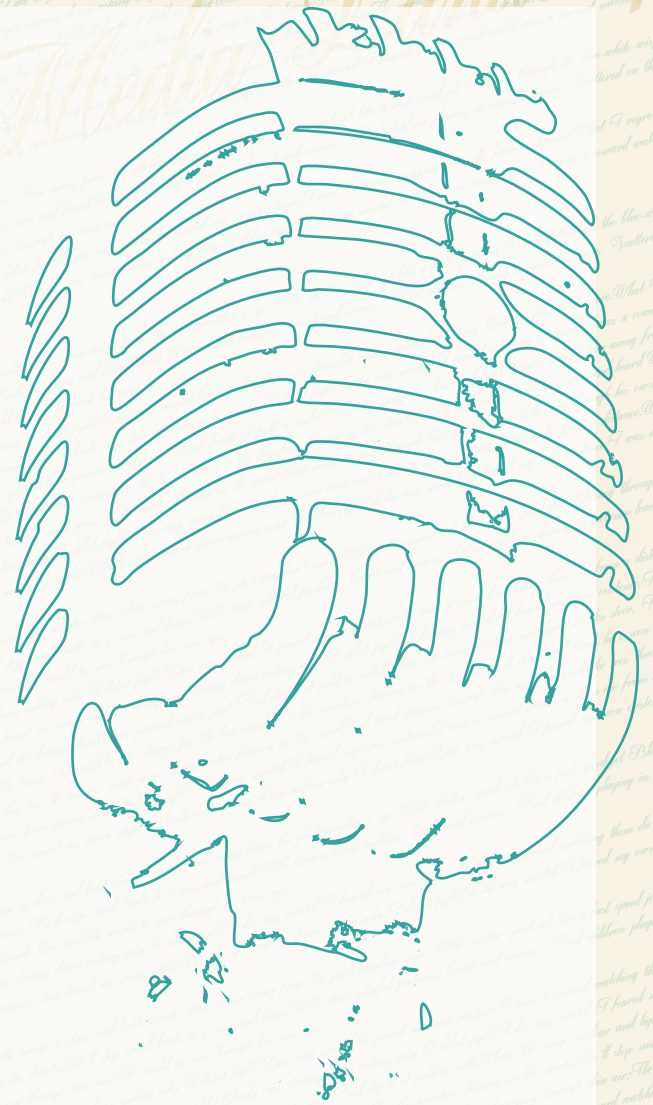
Chapter 3: Twenty years of media ownership Reg Rumney

Post-1994 political pressure to transform racial ownership patterns had a significant impact on the media landscape, and caused major shifts.

At the dawn of democracy, the media had been controlled by white interests for decades and the alternative press was in decline owing to lack of funds and loss of senior journalists to the mainstream press. At the time, the print media was owned by the four big media groups, Naspers, Independent News and Media (INM), Times Media Limited (TML) and Caxton. The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) had a monopoly on broadcasting.

In 2014, the four big print media houses remain, although they have undergone shifts in ownership and influence over the past 20 years. In the broadcasting environment, government regulation initially drove ownership changes which included the privatisation of radio stations and support for the community media sector through the issuing of licenses. However, the SABC, a public broadcaster, still dominates.

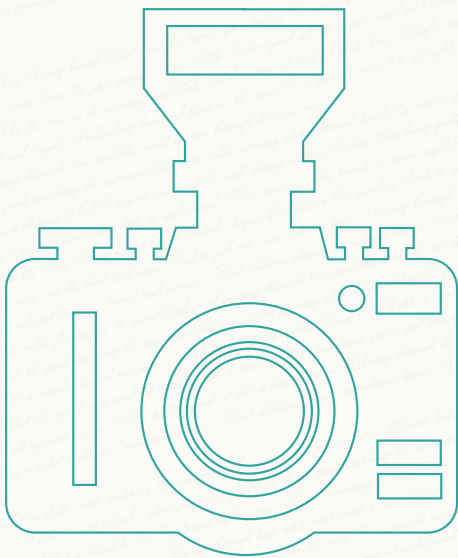
This chapter takes us through the shifts and changes in media ownership from 1994 to 2014 and suggests that although there has been massive reshaping of the sector, in other ways not much has changed. The author argues that South African media, with the growth of broadband Internet access and the mobile revolution, stands at the cusp of tremendous transformation in line with global media trends that it cannot escape.



Chapter 4: Indigenous languages and South Africa's media environment Cyril Madlala

After 20 years of freedom, there is a multiplicity of voices in the media although the question is whether the vast majority of South Africans who are comfortable speaking indigenous languages are being catered for.

The use of indigenous languages in the media and the impact that this has had on diversity is explored, particularly in relation to the print and broadcast media in KwaZulu-Natal. In addition, a role is suggested for government in ensuring the survival of indigenous languages.



Chapter 5:

Twenty years of freedom: Whose democracy are we reporting?

William Bird

The media is light years away from where it was in 1994. There is a Constitution that guarantees media freedom; industry bodies that ensure media accountability; and a burgeoning community print and broadcast media sector.

However, problems still persist within the mediaspace, and transformation is necessary. The author argues that transformation requires a commitment to go beyond the regulatory and legal requirements of Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) and should include building a media sector with a diversity of views expressed across a range of platforms and in a variety of voices.

The chapter explores content and how and if there have been changes within a news media environment over the past 20 years. This is done through an analysis of the reporting on five critical aspects of our society: race, racism and xenophobia; elections; children; HIV and AIDS; and gender and gender-based violence (GBV).

Chapter 6:

Journalism in a new world of social media **Shaka Sisulu**

The invention of the World Wide Web in 1983, which gave rise to the use of the Internet, has revolutionised the world. Worldwide, over 2.5 billion users access the Internet – with many of the interactions carried out on smartphones. Users of social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter expand daily.

Media professionals have been caught up in the social media environment and some journalists have made a name for themselves in the way that they use social media. Media houses have also started paying a lot of attention to social media and have begun to invest in it, realising that this is the future. This has required an understanding that news can now be created by ordinary citizens and by professional journalists. This is the new world of journalism.

In this chapter we are introduced to the changing nature of journalism since the introduction of the World Wide Web and the take-up of social media platforms.

Chapter 7:

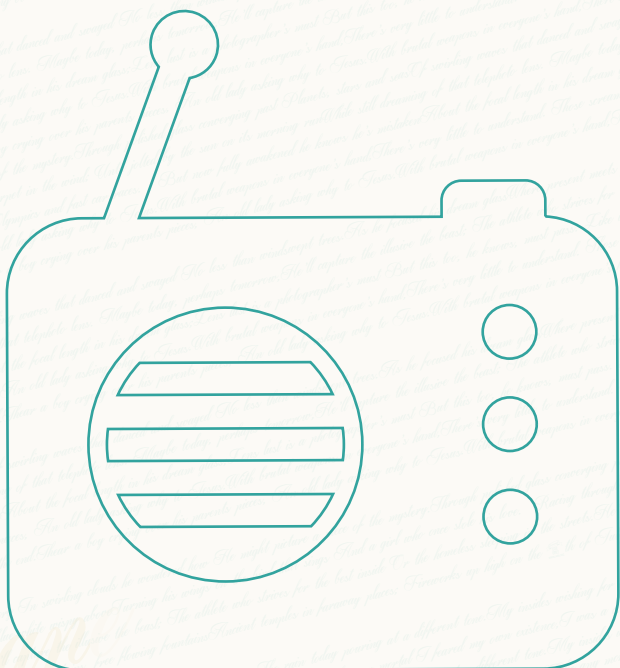
Mind the perception gap

Stephano Radaelli

The media has an important role to play in keeping the public informed and aware about what is happening in society, and should present the facts in a balanced and objective way. Journalists are only human, though, and represent facts from their own point of view. This might not always reflect reality. A perception gap is therefore created between what is being reported and what is fact. This could possibly lead to a situation where attitudes, beliefs and stereotypes are reinforced.

In this chapter the author explores 'public perception' and considers four ways in which the media influence or contribute to the widening of the perception gap: through the sources they select; inadequate balance in reflecting the society's demographics; the topics they choose to report on; and the tone of the reporting.

In this chapter we find out how South Africa compares with international media, especially in relation to the widening or closing of the perception gap. A case study that reflects a 'constructive journalism' approach is suggested as one way that this challenge might be overcome.



Chapter 8:

Twenty years of media development and diversity Lumko Mtimde

The Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) was set up as a public entity to encourage ownership, control and access by historically disadvantaged groups to the media; to raise public awareness of and research issues relating to media development and diversity; and to encourage the channelling of resources to community and small commercial media. These objectives were supported by its vision: 'Access to diversified media for all'.

Since its establishment in 2004, the MDDA has made significant inroads into ensuring media development and diversity. Community radio stations have expanded and now command over 25 per cent of listenership; 570 media projects have been supported; over 2 000 people have been trained – the list goes on. One area of increasing concern, however, is media ownership and transformation, more particularly print-media ownership and the value chain that is still largely controlled by white monopoly capital.

In the chapter, the author demonstrates what the MDDA has been able to achieve within the constraints of resources and time. At the same time, consideration is given to how the lack of transformation in the print-media environment and lack of media diversity pose a real threat to media freedom. In conclusion, the author argues for government to institute a Green/White Paper process that will inform government proposals for initiating new transformational programmes to meaningfully influence media development and diversity.

Chapter 9:

Community Radio: A snapshot of the landscape after 20 years

Jayshree Pather

Community broadcasting, enabled by the liberalisation of the airwaves that led to the setting up of a three tier broadcasting system (public, private and community), has grown exponentially in the last 20 years. Recent figures show that there are currently over 160 community radio stations with close to 8.3 million listeners, compared to the 65 licensed stations that existed in 2001.

The community broadcasting sector was widely supported post-1994 as a means of ensuring diversity of content and ownership of the media. Community ownership has created the potential for community members to engage, making this a participatory form of media. This opens up possibilities for development to be promoted while broadcasts could be used to educate and entertain.

The sector has made an important contribution towards diversification and democracy, but there are still many challenges. This reflection examines the community radio landscape in South Africa through its growth and development and considers a number of key dimensions: community ownership, control and participation, content and programming, and financial sustainability.

Chapter 10:

20 years of empowerment and development GCIS

Government communications pre-1994, managed by the South African Communication Service (SACS), was characterised by censorship and propaganda, control of the public broadcaster, limited or no engagement with citizens, misinformation campaigns and clampdowns on press freedom.

The advent of democracy ushered in a diametrically different government communications dispensation. The establishment in 1998 of the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in place of the SACS formalised a range of reforms of the communications practices of government that had started in 1994.

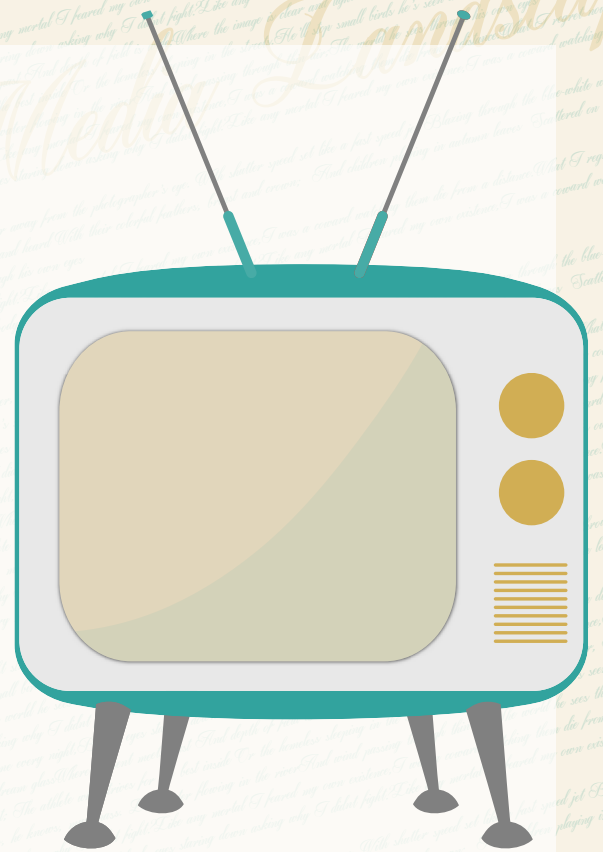
Under democracy, government communications was founded on the principles of transparency, accountability, and the right to know. Communication could no longer be one-sided and top-down. In being accountable, government would need to provide access to information, to regularly engage around its programmes, and to empower citizens better to understand their rights. Media freedom was established as a constitutional right.

The GCIS set about creating the platforms and programmes to realise the key founding principles. For the past 20 years, there has been intensive face-to-face engagement with communities in all corners of the country, the creation of various publications, and the provision of an array of services.

This chapter explores the changing role of government communication since the end of apartheid by comparing and contrasting the communication approach of the SACS and GCIS. The GCIS, its projects, programmes and services are explored and considered against its founding principles. While it is clear that the country has come a long way since the days of apartheid propaganda, there is recognition that there is still much to do in order for the impact and reach of government communications to be felt far and wide.

Fact Sheet 1: South Africa and the ICT revolution

This fact sheet explores how South Africa has responded to the global technological revolution – especially the changes that have been seen in the telecommunications environment in the last two decades. The growth in the number of South Africans with access to the Internet and mobile phones has been phenomenal – and this provides opportunities for the country that could have a positive influence on developmental objectives. The potential opportunities are explored and the particular issues facing South Africa introduced as a way of ensuring that these are tackled and ICTs are harnessed to meet our developmental goals including those of job creation and poverty alleviation.



Fact Sheet 2: Competition Tribunal update: Competition Commission vs Media 24 Limited Nandi Mokoena

The Competition Commission of South Africa is a statutory body established in terms of Section 19 of the Competition Act, 1998 (Act 89 of 1998) as amended, and is responsible for investigating anti-competitive behavior, considering exemptions from competition law and regulating mergers. The Competition Tribunal hears complaints brought by the Competition Commission and in November 2013 it started a hearing into a complaint against Media 24. This fact sheet explores the nature of the complaint.

Each edition of the media landscape series will provide an update on those cases that have been brought before the Competition Commission and that have an impact on the media environment.

