# MEDIA MONITORING TO PROMOTE DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS

*An NDI Handbook for Citizen Organizations*

*Robert Norris and Patrick Merloe*

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# ABOUT NDI

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. Calling on a global network of volunteer experts, NDI provides practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

Democracy depends on legislatures that represent citizens and oversee the executive, independent judiciaries that safeguard the rule of law, political parties that are open and accountable, and elections in which voters freely choose their representatives in government. Acting as a catalyst for democratic development, NDI bolsters the institutions and processes that allow democracy to flourish.

**Build Political and Civic Organizations:** NDI helps build the stable, broad-based and well-organized institutions that form the foundation of a strong civic culture. Democracy depends on these mediating institutions—the voice of an informed citizenry, which link citizens to their government and to one another by providing avenues for participation in public policy.

**Safeguard Elections:** NDI promotes open and democratic elections. Political parties and governments have asked NDI to study electoral codes and to recommend improvements. The Institute also provides technical assistance for political parties and civic groups to conduct voter education campaigns and to organize election monitoring programs. NDI is a world leader in election monitoring having organized international delegations to monitor elections in dozens of countries, helping to ensure that polling results reflect the will of the people.

**Promote Openness and Accountability:** NDI responds to requests from leaders of government, parliament, political parties and civic groups seeking advice on matters from legislative procedures to constituent service to the balance of civil-military relations in a democracy. NDI works to build legislatures and local governments that are professional, accountable, open and responsive to their citizens.

International cooperation is key to promoting democracy effectively and efficiently. It also conveys a deeper message to new and emerging democracies that while autocracies are inherently isolated and fearful of the outside world, democracies can count on international allies and an active support system. Headquartered in Washington D.C., with field offices in every region of the world, NDI complements the skills of its staff by enlisting volunteer experts from around the globe, many of whom are veterans of democratic struggles in their own countries and share valuable perspectives on democratic development.

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# FOREWORD

 T he will of the people—expressed in genuine, democratic elections—is the basis of authority of any democratic government. That authority cannot be established unless voters make a free and informed choice among the political contestants. The mass communications media provide information to most voters that is essential to the choice they exercise at the ballot box. Therefore, proper media conduct toward all political parties and candidates, as well as proper media conduct in the presentation of information that is relevant to electoral choices, are crucial to achieving democratic elections.

Monitoring media conduct—when done impartially, proficiently and based on a credible methodology—establishes whether this key aspect of an election process contributes to or subverts the democratic nature of elections. Media monitoring can measure the amount of coverage of electoral subjects, the presence or absence of news bias, appropriateness of media access for political competitors and the adequacy of information conveyed to voters through news, direct political messages, public information programming and voter education announcements. Media monitoring can help demonstrate that political competitors and the public at large should have confidence in the media, electoral authorities and the government that is responsible for providing genuine elections. Shortcomings in media conduct can be identified through monitoring in time for corrective action. Abuse of the mass media's power to affect voter choices also can be documented, which allows the population and the international community to appropriately characterize the true nature of the electoral process.

In effect, media monitoring in the electoral context addresses the interaction of several fundamental human rights, including: the right to genuine elections; the right of voters to receive accurate and sufficient information upon which to make a choice among electoral contestants; the right of electoral competitors to express their messages in a campaign to win the support of the electorate; and the right of the media to seek and impart information. All of these rights are affirmed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and every other major international human rights instrument. The relevant provisions of several of these documents appear in the appendices to this handbook. These documents create international obligations among states, while the constitutions and laws of every democracy protect civil and political rights related to genuine elections and freedom of expression.

Of course, there is more to an election process than the role of the media. Media monitoring should be treated as part of broader election monitoring efforts. An evaluation of the nature of an election process should address numerous factors, including among others: the legal framework for elections; legal recognition of political parties and the qualification of parties and candidates for the ballot; delimitation of election districts; accuracy of the voter rolls; free-

dom of movement to campaign; incidence of election-related violence, intimidation and vote-buying; performance of the electoral administration; the integrity of the voting, counting and tabulating of results; and functioning of complaint mechanisms. This media monitoring handbook therefore should be reviewed along with other materials, such as: *NDI's Handbook on How Domestic Organizations Monitor Elections: An A to Z Guide; Promoting Legal Frameworks for Democratic Elections: An NDI Guide for Developing Election Laws and Law Commentaries; Building Confidence in the Voter Registration Process: An NDI Monitoring Guide for Political Parties and Civic Organizations; The Quick Count and Election Observation: An NDI Handbook for Civic Organizations and Political Parties;* and other materials.

While it is impossible to have democracy in a country without genuine elections, the democratic process extends beyond election day. Democratic governance requires an active and informed citizenry, and the media play a vital role in providing citizens with information they need to exercise their right to take part in governmental and public affairs. The skills developed in media monitoring to promote democratic elections can be applied directly in non-electoral periods. Monitoring the media can continue to be important for promoting integrity in the broader political process. Media monitoring efforts also can produce knowledge, skills and a network to advocate for law and regulatory reform, as well as for the promotion of professional responsibilities by journalist associations and for improvements in media self-regulation.

Experience demonstrates that media monitoring is effective when taken on by dedicated citizens, who pledge themselves to act impartially, work diligently, carefully analyze the data they collect and present it responsibly. This activity has been conducted successfully by a number of civic groups around the world. It has also been performed successfully by journalist associations, which have a special interest in ensuring the integrity of media conduct during electoral periods and beyond. International organizations sometimes monitor the media or, like NDI, assist others in accomplishing this work. Electoral authorities, media oversight bodies and others also sometimes conduct media monitoring. It is hoped that this handbook will be helpful to any such effort.

This handbook takes a step-by-step approach to organizing a media monitoring project. It covers considerations in deciding whether to initiate a project, the project's planning and organization, as well as media monitoring methodologies for various media and political subjects. The reader will find specific instructions for monitors in the text and discussion of reporting the findings of monitors. The appendices present examples of monitoring forms, nonpartisanship pledges and codes of conduct, relevant international human rights provisions and sample reports from several media monitoring projects.

It must be stressed that this handbook is not intended to set forth a definitive or exclusive way of monitoring the media. Rather it presents a synthesis of lessons learned in hopes of providing useful assistance to those preparing to monitor the media in a wide variety of circumstances, with varying degrees of experience and resources. The authors greatly appreciate the cooperation that many groups and individuals have provided over the years in helping them to better understand approaches to monitoring the media. Many of these groups are mentioned in the text or are listed in Appendix 1.

It is hoped that those involved in monitoring the media will find this handbook useful. NDI looks forward to learning from other democratic activists about ways to improve media monitoring and monitoring election processes more generally.

**Robert Norris and Patrick Merloe**

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CHAPTER ONE

# Introduction

*"The only sure bulwark of continuing liberty is a government strong enough to protect the interests of the people, and a people strong enough and well enough informed to maintain its sovereign control over its government."*
Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Fireside Chat, April 14, 1938

No democracy can thrive unless citizens have the information they need to make free and informed choices among those who seek their authority to govern. The mass communications media—radio, television and printed publications—provide the means by which most citizens receive information that is central to making political choices. In every country, therefore, a critical question is presented: How can citizens be certain that the information that they read or hear in the media is accurate, fair and comprehensive?

In nations with long traditions of democracy and a free press, a number of safeguards have evolved to protect freedom of speech, freedom of the press and citizens' right to information, all of which make it easier for citizens to be well informed if they choose to be. Likewise, in established democracies, professional journalists often have developed self-imposed rules of conduct that protect against bias.

These traditions and safeguards are less developed in countries where democratic systems are not yet established. It is therefore even more important for citizens in such countries to demand media professionalism and objectivity and to monitor media coverage of political parties, candidates, government officials and public affairs.

There are numerous reasons why the media may fail to provide adequate and accurate information to citizens about government and politics, including government manipulation of the press, self-censorship or a lack of journalistic standards. A media monitoring project can demonstrate the extent to which the media has been compromised by such issues, as well as the extent to which it is fulfilling its fundamental responsibility to the public.

A media monitoring project should begin by considering the possible factors that lead to improper or inadequate coverage of public affairs. These factors may include:

- Direct censorship;
- Intentional manipulation of the media by government authorities;
- Intentional manipulation of the media by other partisan forces;
- Intentional manipulation of the media by private interests;
- Media self-censorship arising from fear of recrimination from government or private interests or from actual threats of violence directed against media outlets or journalists;
- Prejudice;
- Corruption;
- Inadequate access to government or political sources; and

• Incompetence, including a lack of under- standing of traditions relating to the rights and obligations of the media by owners, editors or reporters.

The *perception* that such problems exist is reason enough to launch a media monitoring effort. If the public, political parties, candidates or others lack con- fidence in the media, then a media monitoring project will serve an important purpose. Whether the ultimate findings of the project reassure a skeptical audience that they can trust the media or alert them that they should question the information they receive, a well organized media monitoring project will be a valuable contribution to the public interest.

At its most basic level, media monitoring to promote democratic elections consists of an independent, impartial observation of media behavior during the election period.

Although a lack of confidence in, or the perception of improper or inadequate coverage by, the media may be the cause for initiating a media monitoring project, the purpose of such a project is to docu- ment media performance in a professional, systematic and objective manner. At its most basic level, media monitoring to promote democratic elec- tions consists of an independent, impartial observation of media behavior during the election period. It involves an analysis of a government's actions and/or inaction to ensure the media's rights to gather and impart information to the electorate. Media monitoring concentrates on whether the elec- toral contestants have access to the media on a non-discriminatory basis to present sufficient mes- sages about their platforms to the citizens so that potential voters can appreciate the differences among them. It also concentrates on whether citi- zens receive accurate and sufficient information through the media so that they can make an informed choice at the ballot box.

Media monitoring examines whether news cover- age of the electoral candidates, government and political affairs is sufficient and free of bias, inaccu- racies and other factors that can undermine genuine political choice on election day. The analysis also can examine the media's ability to criticize the actions and/or inaction of the government and the ruling political parties. In addition, it can address the ability of the media to operate independently. In some countries, media monitoring has also exam- ined the presentation of voter and civic education through the media to determine whether it is polit- ically neutral and sufficient to address the population's need for information about the elec- toral process.

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

**When approaching media monitoring, four principal issues should be considered:**

- How the government acts to ensure the news media's right to gather and impart information and ideas;
- How the government and the news media act to provide access to political parties and candidates so that they may effec- tively and directly communicate with the public during election campaign periods;
- How the government and the media act to ensure accurate and fair coverage of political parties and candidates in news and information reporting; and
- How the government and media act to educate the electorate about how and why to vote.

**Determining Who Controls the Media**
While the media have certain internationally recog- nized rights to freely gather and impart information, they also have responsibilities to citizens regarding the information they provide. These responsibilities become especially sensitive during elections.

Determining who controls the media is one of the primary factors that must be considered before ini-

tiating a media monitoring project. Because of the different rights and responsibilities of state-controlled and privately-controlled media, it is useful and important to examine those outlets separately.

### State-Controlled Media

Television, radio and newspapers owned or controlled by the state should be held to the highest standards of accuracy and fairness, objectivity and balance. Government in a democracy is by definition derived from the people, and the will of the people is the basis of authority for democratic government. State media therefore—like all state resources—are the property of the citizens. They must be used in the public's interest and not for the private or political interests of a person or specific political party. All state-owned and state-controlled media therefore have an important obligation to provide citizens with accurate, impartial and balanced coverage regardless of which political party or parties are in power. It is proper and even necessary for citizens' organizations, political parties and candidates to insist on media fairness, balance and accuracy and to call upon government authorities to manage public media in a way that safeguards citizens' rights to the information they need as voters.

### Private Broadcast Media

Some television and radio stations are privately owned, and the owners' right to freedom of the press should preclude government interference. Yet, privately controlled broadcast media should be held to high standards because of the influence of broadcast media over public opinion, and because of the public nature of transmitting electronic programs. These media have ethical responsibilities to the public to present accurate information and therefore should cover political candidates and public affairs in an accurate, impartial and balanced manner. In addition, the use of the airwaves, even by private interests, brings with it public responsibilities.

It is generally accepted that the airwaves are a public resource. Their use by private broadcasters is therefore subject to government licensing and a degree of regulation to protect the public's interests. The interest in protecting the public's right to receive accurate and sufficient information about electoral contestants must be balanced against the rights of private broadcasters to operate free of unwarranted government regulation. This provides a basis for: requiring bias-free reporting; nondiscrimination in broadcast access provided to political contestants; and, at least where access to state-controlled broadcasting would be insufficient to meet the public's interest in receiving information about political choices, cooperation in providing free or state-funded broadcast time to political contestants.

### Private Print Media

Privately owned newspapers are usually treated differently by media monitors than state-controlled media and private broadcast media when considering media bias and access. In an environment that is free of unwarranted and improper government regulation, anyone with relatively modest means can print and distribute a newspaper with relative ease.

However, it is important to determine whether the government creates barriers that hinder press freedoms, for example through licensing requirements, restrictions or duties on the import and access to newsprint and/or printing equipment. Other issues to examine include the distribution mechanisms for print media, which are sometimes government controlled. Governments also can interfere with press freedoms through decisions about placement of government advertisements and/or use of subsidies—and the threat of ending or withholding such sources of revenue.

In many countries, there are a large number of private newspapers and magazines that present a wide variety of political views. Political parties may even print and distribute newspapers to present their views. Of course, questions always should be considered about how widely privately owned newspapers and magazines are circulated and what overall percentage of the population reads print media. Close scrutiny of whether professional obligations are being met is especially important where media pluralism is restricted in practice and a small number of print media have a large impact on public opinion.

CHAPTER TWO

# Initiating a Media Monitoring Project:

## Developing a Strategy, Deciding What Media Outlets & Subjects to Monitor

Once a decision has been reached about the necessity of media monitoring, the work of initiating a media monitoring project can begin. The first phase of project development includes: developing project goals and a strategic plan; creating a mission statement; analyzing the relevant legal framework; deciding what outlets and subjects to monitor; and securing funding for the project.

### DEVELOPING PROJECT GOALS AND A STRATEGIC PLAN

The first step in initiating a media monitoring project is thinking strategically about the intended impact of the project and creating a list of project goals and objectives. This exercise will be the foundation for the entire project. Possible goals and objectives could include:

- Publicizing results with the hope of allaying concerns about unsubstantiated problems;
- Publicizing results with the hope of alerting citizens of the need to question their sources of information prior to an election;
- Convincing government authorities to enforce existing laws and regulations;
- Influencing journalists, editors and media owners to provide information that is more accurate, impartial and fair;
- Encouraging journalist associations to actively promote adherance to professional standards;

- Advocating for new laws to protect freedom of the press, citizens' rights to information and political contestants' rights to political expression;
- Educating other domestic civic organizations and international organizations about how media behavior has affected the pre-election environment; and
- Gaining skills that can be used to promote fair media practices beyond the elections.

Once the goals of the project are identified and prioritized, creating a mission statement and developing a strategic plan should be the next steps. A strategic plan should address: analysis of the legal framework and related issues affecting media performance in the electoral context; determining what media to monitor; deciding upon what subjects to monitor; deciding when to begin and the duration of the project along with a corresponding timeline for project activities; deciding upon the project's organizational form and name; adopting the monitoring methodology; determining the types of staffing needed; recruiting and training staff; developing a press and public relations strategy and plan; deciding on methods and procedures for developing and releasing reports; considering longer-range activity beyond elections; and developing an action plan for funding the project. The strategic plan will clarify many questions for project organizers and will set the foundation for funding proposals. These points are discussed below in more detail.

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**CREATING A MISSION STATEMENT**

Some time should be spent contemplating how to present the project to the public. How will the project's goals be explained? What will the project accomplish? Why was the project initiated? Developing a mission statement that will accompany all of the project's public pronouncements can be an effective way to answer these questions for the media and the public. The accompanying text box presents an example of a mission statement from MEMO'98, a Slovak media monitoring project. It addresses some of these concerns, while allowing flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.

**ANALYZING THE LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

Before beginning a media monitoring project, it is necessary to understand the relevant laws and regulations. The project therefore should develop a thorough analysis of the legal framework that is relevant to media performance in the electoral context, including the constitution, laws, regulations and international obligations and standards.

This analysis should also include any self-regulatory mechanisms that media owners or journalist associations may have adopted, such as codes of conduct to ensure professional standards and complaint review boards. The analysis also should identify any differences in the legal regime prior to, versus during, the official election campaign period.

One of the first steps in initiating a project is to hold a series of discussions with people who are familiar with the existing legal and regulatory framework, including lawyers, law professors, lawmakers, journalists, other civic activists and political party leaders, to identify relevant legal questions that could impede

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**HELPFUL INFORMATION**

*A mission statement succinctly presents the purpose of the project, for example:*

**MEMO'98 Mission Statement**
1. To monitor and report on media fairness concerning the treatment of political parties, public policy issues and civil and political rights;
2. To improve the knowledge, legal awareness and information base of the citizenry, with regard to public affairs and governance;
3. To advocate citizens' rights to receive information from official sources, including but not restricted to all levels of executive administration on national, regional and state levels;
4. To advocate for freedom of expression, including the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas pertinent to citizens being accurately and adequately informed about political and governmental processes;
5. To monitor and ensure transparency both of the ownership of private media and the process of appointment of the respective boards of the public media;
6. To advocate adoption of appropriate legislation pertaining to the media, the provision of information to the citizenry and the right to political expression;
7. To educate and train citizens, journalists, state administrators and local government officials to impart, seek and receive information;
8. To increase transparency of the decision-making process of both the state administrative and local governments, in order to provide for public discussion of bills, regulations and guidelines by public authorities on all levels;
9. To advocate citizens' responsibility and citizens' involvement in public affairs;
10. To aid and cooperate with other domestic and international groups and organizations with similar aims and intentions; and
11. To conduct other activities consistent with the above aims and intentions.

or promote presentation of accurate, fair and suffi-
cient political coverage by the media. Appendix 2
contains a list of questions that should be considered
to accurately assess the relevant legal framework. A
thorough and comprehensive media monitoring pro-
ject should attempt to understand all of these
questions and assess the impact of such factors on the
media's performance in the electoral period. (Also see
Appendix 3 for relevant provisions from internation-
al human rights documents.)

An analysis of contextual issues should help to shape
the design of the project, as well as provide back-
ground information for reports. It is important,
however, that analysis of contextual matters not be
confused with data presented on the monitoring of
media conduct. A thorough monitoring project will
separately address contextual, qualitative and quan-
titative issues.

The accompanying text box provides an example
of a media monitoring project that addressed con-
textual issues that were imbedded in the country's
legal and regulatory framework. To the greatest
extent possible, this information should be provid-
ed as background for all media monitoring efforts.

**DECIDING WHAT OUTLETS TO MONITOR**

In the context of an election, it is critical to under-
stand whether voters are getting the information they
need to make informed choices at the ballot box and
whether political contestants are getting a fair chance
to persuade voters to support them. To answer these
questions, it is necessary to identify where voters get
the information they use to make political choices.

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> understand whether voters are getting the
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> choices at the ballot box and whether polit-
> ical contestants are getting a fair chance to
> persuade voters to support them.

The obvious sources for information are newspa-
pers, radio and television. Information also is
available directly from political parties and candi-
dates, family members, friends, colleagues and
traditional opinion leaders in the society.

**Macedonia—European Institute for the Media
Evaluating Contextual Factors**
In 1994, the European Institute for the Media (EIM) launched a media monitoring effort in Macedonia. The
organization published a report entitled "The 1994 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in the Former
Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Monitoring of the Election Coverage in the Mass Media," which
combined analysis of the legal and regulatory framework for the media with an ambitious effort to monitor
the media's coverage of the elections.  Monitors interviewed a wide range of people including media out-
let owners, publishers, editors, reporters, etc. They reviewed the historical and regulatory background in
the country. They looked at financing sources of media outlets, circulation data, programming, and licens-
ing and distribution methods. They also looked at professional journalism standards, training and practice.
They examined perceptions of political fear and self-censorship and government attempts to limit access
and influence news. They also monitored coverage of political subjects both quantitatively and qualitative-
ly. This project attempted not only monitoring coverage to see that news reported the campaign fairly and
fully, but they sought to influence the media and the government to develop professional and open tradi-
tions. Other groups (for example, Open Society Fund) joined EIM in supporting a set of guidelines for election
broadcasting.

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It is necessary to determine the relative importance of specific media outlets as sources of information. Because conclusive answers will not be available without a separate research project on this subject, common sense and intuition must be employed. The following are some possible sources to consult when addressing this question.

### Polling

By far the best source to consult is a professional research survey that analyzes where voters get information about politics and government. It will be necessary to determine whether such research has been done, or whether a polling company might be investigating this question. If not, the media monitoring project could consider whether it has the time and resources to conduct such a poll. Scholars may have conducted studies on this issue, so it is important to check sources at universities.

### Ratings Data for Broadcast Media

Ratings data for news and public affairs programming that concern the elections is another source to consult to understand where the public gets information upon which it makes political choices. It is important to determine whether the data are broken down by region, language or other relevant factors. Both advertisers and marketing directors of television and radio stations employ these data when trying to convince businesses to advertise on their outlets and when setting advertising rates, so this information may be widely available. Ultimately, it will be necessary to thoroughly examine these data and decide how they relate to the project's goals.

### Circulation Data For Newspapers

For print media, data should be available that describes circulation and readership in some detail. These data will indicate which newspapers and magazines are read by how many people and where they live. Try to relate these facts to the project by exploring whether or not the data are useful. If, for example, the biggest selling newspaper is a tabloid that stresses sports, entertainment or other matters irrelevant to the election, then it should be excluded from the project despite the high circulation levels—unless it

runs some high-profile political coverage. Project organizers should use common sense in making such judgments after reading the papers and consulting local citizens to understand for what reasons these publications are purchased and read.

### Other Considerations

Language differences, literacy rates, voter registration records and other demographic data should play a role when deciding which media outlets to monitor. The significance of registration rates in determining a media monitoring program can be seen in the instance of a rural country with a low literacy rate and high registration. In such a country, monitoring of newspapers would not likely be a priority, while radio may be the most important media. Knowing the percentage of registered voters also will provide the monitoring program with valuable demographic information, such as whether the majority of eligible voters exhibit particular characteristics that could impact the influence of the media on their voting behavior. For instance, if 60 percent of the registered voters are below 30 years old, then they may be more likely to be influenced by newer technologies than by more traditional ones. Additional characteristics to look for include gender, employment, religion and education. Also determine the range of broadcast signals and whether there are significant populations that live in remote areas not reached by either print or electronic media.

Keep in mind that the goal in examining these factors is to understand where voters get the information they use to make choices at the ballot box. The most widely watched television programs, the most listened to radio shows and the most consulted newspapers are the targets. Resource limitations likely will require these choices to be prioritized.

### Monitoring Political Coverage on the Internet

Increasingly, the Internet is becoming a source of political information and may be a focus of media monitoring. The organization and nature of the Internet present specific challenges. However, the right to free political expression of persons who use the Internet to communicate ideas, including com-

petitors for political office, and the right of citizens to utilize the Internet to seek and receive information upon which to make free and informed political choices, correspond with the purposes of media monitoring.  There are a variety of sources on the Internet to consider for monitoring purposes, including: news services that cover political subjects and other issues that are relevant to electoral choices; websites of political parties and candidates; websites set up to parody party and candidate websites, sometimes used to incite hatred and violence; websites presented by independent political analysts; and numerous other sources.

A media monitoring project could develop a list of websites to monitor regularly, using methodologies similar to those used for newspapers described in Chapter 5.  Text, photos and other material could be assessed, as well as qualitative factors (such as positive, negative and neutral tone of material) and other criteria described in Chapter 4.  In addition, Internet search engines could be used to locate the names of political parties, candidates and other political subjects being monitored in order to see whether additional sources are providing relevant information about them.

In many countries, access to the Internet is restricted to small segments of the population; nonetheless, media monitoring projects should consider the relative importance of the Internet to the conditions surrounding specific elections.  Obtaining computers, printers and funding for Internet use can be incorporated into budgets and proposals.  It may also be possible to place an Internet monitoring team at a university or other place where access could be provided to the project free or at a reduced cost.

**DECIDING WHAT SUBJECTS TO MONITOR**
Whether monitoring daily news shows or all programming, the primary focus should be limited to programs that have relevance to the upcoming elections. The daily weather report usually will be

COUNTRY NOTE

**Determining Which Outlets to Monitor**

**Mexico**
In 1994, the Mexican Academy of Human Rights (AMDH), in collaboration with Civic Alliance's (Alianza Cívica) election monitoring effort, examined opinion poll data and determined that, of the various Mexican mass media, television was the most influential in disseminating information that affected public opinion. The Academy determined in particular that two television channels stood out beyond others in this regard. Based on this analysis, the project then concentrated on the news program coverage of the 1994 federal elections by those two television channels.

**Montenegro**
The Association of Young Journalists of Montenegro reviewed academic research and opinion data prior to the 2002 elections and determined that television programming between 4:00 pm and midnight had the biggest impact on public opinion, while for radio the time of the biggest audience was 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. This helped the association shape its monitoring effort.

**Peru**
In Peru's 2000 elections, the broad election monitoring group Transparency (Transparencia) also examined academic and public opinion studies on media impact, selecting for its monitoring the six most widely viewed television broadcast and two cable channels, as well as the seven most widely read newspapers over a certain cost and six most widely read under that cost, which are mostly tabloids. The tabloids played an important role in carrying out negative, smear campaigns against opposition presidential candidates in that election.

irrelevant to the project goals (although misleading forecasts about weather on election day could conceivably be aired with the intention of increasing or decreasing voter turnout). Sporting events are usually irrelevant (although appearances of political figures in the crowd, the use of party insignia on uniforms, etc., could be relevant). A story about the death of a celebrity would usually be irrelevant (although an implication of foul play by a political figure or incompetence in an investigation by a government authority might make it relevant).

> It is coverage of the elections and issues that impact on a voter's choice at the ballot box that are the primary concern. These will depend on the specifics of the upcoming election, such as who or what will be on the ballot.

Usually, if a show or a story on the news is completely unrelated to political events, a monitor need not record its length or comment on its content. It is coverage of the elections and issues that impact on a voter's choice at the ballot box that are the primary concern. Of the relevant stories, it will be necessary to determine the specific subjects that will be measured. These will depend on the specifics of the upcoming election, such as who or what will be on the ballot.

### Parties and Candidates
Both political parties and candidates can be "political subjects" that are tracked in media monitoring. In most parliamentary elections, particularly in countries that use proportional representation to allocate parliamentary seats, parties are the real choices offered to voters. If there are several parties seeking seats in an upcoming parliamentary election, the coverage of these parties will be the main focus of the media monitoring project. When the prime minister or an opposition party leader or candidate is covered in the news, record these data separately, but include them in the total amount of time

devoted to the party he or she represents. If it is a presidential election or a mayoral contest, or any election with individual candidates, then coverage of these individuals will be the primary focus. This will be the case in elections for executive branch positions and in single-member-district elections for legislative bodies.

One problem that must be considered is whether or not to cover parties or candidates that have decided to boycott or are barred from participating in the election. There are circumstances in which such actors are important to the country's political process, and omitting them from the monitoring results would distort the political picture. In other circumstances, such parties or candidates may be unimportant political forces. The inclusion or omission of such actors is an important decision that should be explained to the public by the project. The decision, and the public explanation about it, should not be presented as taking sides on the merits of the boycott.

### Referenda
Referenda about important issues of governmental policy, often about proposed constitutions or constitutional amendments, are central to a country's political process. Campaigns to promote and to oppose such propositions are prime subjects for media monitoring. Practically all of the issues and methodologies discussed in this handbook apply and should be adapted to media conduct toward referenda.

### Government
Coverage of legitimate government activities presents a separate and difficult problem. News outlets should give citizens relevant information about important government activities. Yet, such coverage naturally gives the ruling party or coalition a distinct advantage in reaching voters with their message. Most incumbent governments are well aware of this opportunity and tend to exploit it by presenting new initiatives, opening new roads, talking more about public education, the environment or other issues important to voters during the run-up to an election.

It can be difficult to distinguish between important government activities and campaign events. Monitors must use clear criteria to make such distinctions. The project may decide to report on governmental coverage separately from coverage of political candidates. However, once the official campaign begins, it is proper to count all coverage of government officials as part of the coverage of the governing parties and incumbent candidates. It is possible to show the government data separately and present combined data as well.

### Relevant Public Policy Issues

Media monitoring projects may also examine coverage of public policy issues that are relevant to electoral competition. These issues can range from treatment of news about economic performance forecasts, to passage and/or implementation of key legislation on issues related to the environment, education, social services or electoral reform. Coverage of incidence of politically motivated violence can be significant in some countries as can information about national peace and reconciliation processes. It may also be important to monitor for incidence of inciting hatred and/or violence. Determining which issues should be included in or excluded from monitoring can be a complex process of weighing many subjective factors. It is also difficult to gauge the impact of such coverage on electoral choices. Monitoring such issues falls beyond the scope of methodologies discussed in this handbook.

### SECURING FUNDING

Media monitoring is a costly activity and a group must have adequate funding to undertake such a project. This section gives an overview of how a group might pursue funding for such a project.

### Calculate the Cost

The first step in securing funding is to calculate the estimated cost of the project. The project requires full-time staff, technical equipment, office space and supplies. Develop a simple budget to calculate the estimated cost. A discussion of staffing and a list of needed supplies for the project can be found in Chapter Three of this handbook. Budget consider-

ations should include the cost of printing and distributing reports and other aspects of a communications plan.

### Identify Potential Funding Sources

The next step is to identify potential funding sources, both in the local and international communities. Although local fundraising may be difficult in many countries, in-kind contributions might be possible. For instance, is there a local company or NGO that might be able to loan a computer, TV or VCR for the length of the project? Obtaining and keeping track of such contributions can be helpful in attracting other funders.

International sources of funding vary between countries, but typically they include foreign embassies, bilateral and multilateral development assistance agencies, intergovernmental organizations and international nongovernmental organizations. Speak to colleagues in the NGO community and compile a list of potential funders.

### Shop Your Proposal

Regardless of who are the potential funders, they will require a project proposal or concept paper. Draft a concept paper explaining your proposed activity, what you hope to achieve and what makes your group qualified to carry it out. Include a rough estimate of the cost of the project and be prepared to present a fairly detailed budget as well. The paper should be clear and concise. Next, schedule meetings with the appropriate representatives of potential funding organizations to share your ideas and find out whether resources might be available and how to apply.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Developing a comprehensive and professional approach to the press and public relations is a critical part of any media monitoring project. Chapters Three and Six contain information about staffing and considerations for approaching the press and broader public relations. The press and public relations secretary should develop an overall communications plan that is approved by the project's leadership, which will guide the project's activities in these areas.

CHAPTER THREE

# Planning and Organization:

## When to Start, Timeline, Recruiting Monitors & Team Structure

Don't struggle too long with the question of when to launch a media monitoring effort. The answer is: NOW! It is never too early to begin a project, and there is unlikely to be a time when the project will not be useful to a country's democratic development.

Usually the idea of monitoring emerges in the context of an upcoming election. A project that begins well before election day has numerous advantages. The project will be more effective if it has sufficient time to establish its credibility, and monitoring will have more impact if results are available over a longer period of time. An early monitoring effort also can help those advocating for changes in media access and coverage by allowing time for necessary reforms. However, since it may take considerable time to organize and gain funding, it may not be possible to launch a project until the election approaches. (See Appendix 4 for a sample timeline for organizing a media monitoring project.)

The monitoring project will be valuable to characterizing the nature of the election process and how the media performs its crucial role in the pre-election period. Media monitoring efforts in a number of countries have continued to contribute after the elections to civil society's ability to ensure against media bias and to advocate for media freedoms. In several countries, media monitoring findings have been central to post-election reforms. (See, for example, the Country Note at the end of Chapter 4.)

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### ESTABLISHING THE ORGANIZATION

A monitoring project may succeed or fail in large part based on perceptions about individuals and organizations participating in the project. Not only must the monitoring results be accurate, impartial and professionally done, the project must be perceived as nonpartisan, objective and professional.

Media monitoring projects are faced with a built-in dilemma: if results illustrate that some media outlets are biased or fail in their duty to report on the elections accurately and fairly, those outlets may react by attacking the project's credibility.

The initial announcement of the media monitoring plan therefore is very important. With this in mind, some outreach will be necessary prior to beginning the project to assess how the project is likely to be

**14** greeted and whether there might be powerful interests intent on discrediting the project's reports.

If the media monitoring project's leaders or the civic organizations affiliated with the media monitoring project have solid reputations for impartiality and professionalism, the problem may be minimized. However, if the individuals or organizations are perceived as allied with certain political parties or political figures, then extra steps must be taken to establish the project's credibility.

> Not only must the monitoring results be accurate, impartial and professionally done, the project must be perceived as nonpartisan, objective and professional.

One approach is to conduct the project in partnership with a second group that will enhance the perception of impartiality and effectiveness. A second approach is to invite noted individuals to conduct the project with a stated degree of autonomy. A third option is to establish a new organization. In any event, it is wise to consider establishing an oversight or advisory board for the project comprised of highly respected individuals with reputations for impartiality and professionalism, one or more of who knows the media profession as an academic or former practitioner. It is not always necessary or possible to form such a board, but it should be considered.

Leaders of the project and monitors also will be scrutinized, so care should be taken to establish credentials for impartiality and professionalism before going public. The monitors should be civic-minded people, who are not currently engaged in a particular partisan effort. Monitors should be asked to put their political biases aside. Express rules about impartiality and accuracy should be established and enforced. Monitors can be asked to sign a pledge to maintain complete objectivity and to lay aside their own partisan opinions prior to undertaking the project. The project can also issue and publicize a code of conduct for its activities. (See Appendices 5A-B for a sample pledge form and code of conduct.)

## DEVELOPING A PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY

Every media monitoring project should have a detailed public relations strategy that outlines what the project is, its goals, methodology and reporting plan. This strategy should be used to inform the public, political parties and candidates, electoral authorities, relevant government agencies and media outlets about the project. Meetings also should be set up with parties, electoral authorities, editorial boards and others to introduce the project. At an appropriate time, a press conference should be scheduled to publicly announce the launch of the project. Coverage of the monitoring project itself should be monitored to determine where friendly and unfriendly sources are in the media for future public relations activities. (See Chapter Six for a detailed discussion of public relations strategy and organizing press conferences.) In many countries, journalist associations, civic organizations concerned with freedom of expression and democratic elections, and representatives of the international community will be important allies for the project. Their support should be solicited as early as possible.

### Creating a Name and Logo

The first step in implementing a good public relations strategy is developing a name and an easily recognized logo. This will help sell your message and publicize your efforts. The importance of this initial task should not be underestimated as the name and logo will serve a wide-range of purposes, including attracting monitors, supporters and funders. A project website can also be a helpful way to promote the effort and make information regarding the effort easily accessible to the public. (See Appendix 1 for a list of media monitoring organizations along with their website addresses.)

## DEVELOPING A TIMELINE

As the media monitoring project develops, it is important to periodically review the progress of the project and plan ahead. Review and revise the project calendar on a regular basis. Look closely at how much time remains before the election. Keep in mind how much time will be needed for a rehearsal, how many reports will be issued prior to the elections, how long it will take to analyze data and prepare a report and how often results will be released.

Although there is no rule about how often reports should be issued, it is a good idea to have a sizeable collection of data well ahead of an election and to issue reports more frequently as the election nears. It is helpful to release data at regular intervals (e.g., every Thursday or every second Tuesday), so that the press and other interested parties can plan on when they will receive the information. It also is important for media monitors to issue reports beginning at least several weeks, if not months, before an election to allow citizens to understand the nature of the media's performance, to adjust their perceptions of the reliability of media-provided political information and to allow an opportunity for the media to correct bias and deficiencies in their coverage.

Once the pre-monitoring work has been completed, including: the analysis of the operational context for the media and the legal framework for freedom of expression; preliminary fundraising; recruitment of a good staff for the project; development of the methodology; establishment of a clear division of labor; and the procurement of adequate space and facilities, the project is ready to rehearse and begin monitoring. (Appendix 4 provides an example of a typical timeline for the pre-monitoring period.)

After the rehearsal is complete, continue with the monitoring and go forward as planned. If unforeseen problems are encountered, take time to resolve them, bearing in mind that it is important to develop a schedule that will be kept for the duration of the project. Once the project is announced and results are released, there will be little chance to change the methods. Be careful about setting expectations on release of reports. For example, if the project announces that it will issue bi-weekly reports until six weeks before the election and then weekly reports until the election, this schedule must be met.

## CHOOSING A LOCATION

There should be a central office for the project that should contain all of the equipment, newspapers, tapes and necessary forms. The office should be centrally located, secure and have a reliable electricity source. This headquarters also should be the venue for training and other meetings. Having a central office is essential for ensuring that monitors report on time, conduct their activities and turn in their forms. If the media monitoring project is part of a larger election monitoring organization or journalist association, ample separate space should be set aside for the project.

In some countries, more than one city is critical to the electoral and political process, and it is not possible to monitor broadcast and print media from one location. National media can be monitored along with local media in the country's main city, but separate monitoring centers might be required for other locations. In circumstances where a significant number of cities would qualify, it might be best to conduct projects separately and release reports locally, while making them available in the national office. Otherwise, local data or reports should be incorporated into the periodic national reports.

## RECRUITING MONITORS

One of the first challenges in establishing a media monitoring project is determining how to attract and retain a dedicated staff. This will be an ongoing and critical task.

All monitors must understand that they should commit themselves to the project for its duration. Project leaders should discuss with monitors their plans for the entire term of the project. Leaders should ask prospective monitors questions in this regard, such as: Do monitors have vacations planned? If they are

**16** students, when are their exams? Are there weddings or conferences they must attend? Are other jobs likely to interfere at particular times? Are there family obligations, such as crops to harvest or other tasks that are likely to interfere with monitoring activities for significant amounts of time? While any person may need reasonable time away from the project, leaders must be able to anticipate scheduling issues and should avoid staff availability problems.

**Volunteers or Paid Staff?**
There is a benefit to using volunteers as media monitors. Aside from budgetary issues, the use of volunteers helps instill a tradition of civic involvement that will provide long-term benefits well beyond the completion of a particular project. Those motivated by concern for their country rather than by financial considerations may be more likely to be energized by the project and become long-term civic activists who will fight to ensure that their country becomes a strong democracy.

> The continuity and credibility of the project depends, to a large measure, on the consistency of the standards kept throughout the project's life.

However, there are also good reasons to pay media monitors. More than most civic projects, monitoring the media requires trained and dedicated people who can spend significant amounts of time on the project. These monitors will not be easily replaced should personal or professional matters interfere with their involvement. The continuity and credibility of the project depends, to a large measure, on the consistency of the standards kept throughout the project's life. It might be unrealistic or unfair to ask volunteers to devote so much to a project with no remuneration. It may therefore be wise to pay modest fees to the monitors to ensure the continuity and integrity of the project.

**The Recruitment Process**
Whether or not monitors are paid, they can be recruited in the same way people are recruited for other political or civic efforts:

- Making personal contacts among those already interested in monitoring the media;
- Contacting university professors to ask for names of interested students;
- Posting signs on campus and calling meetings to explain the project; and
- Advertising in newspapers or on the Internet.

Also, it may be an option to approach other civic groups and offer to include them as sponsoring partners. Once a few dedicated monitors are enlisted, they can seek help from their friends or colleagues, which is a valuable way to complete the monitoring staff needs.

**Motivating and Retaining Volunteers and Paid Staff**
As noted above, credibility of the media monitoring project depends on the consistency of standards of impartiality and professionalism. The best way to ensure this consistency is through retention of well-trained, dedicated and highly motivated staff, both volunteer and paid. Those who join the monitoring project do so based on an understanding of the project's mission, and their motivation is likely to be based on advancing that mission. Thorough training will reinforce that commitment. Clear assignments and instructions for completing them successfully are also important. Attention should be paid to be sure that monitors have the materials that they need when they conduct their assignments and they should be thanked for their efforts.

Showing appreciation is not only the right thing to do; it is essential to retaining good staff. The project director and team leaders should assess volunteer and paid staff levels of satisfaction and determine if the project can take reasonable steps to maintain and improve it. Providing staff with t-shirts, hats, buttons and stickers with the project's name and logo can play an important role in establishing staff

cohesion and morale. Allowing staff to attend press conferences, giving them copies of all reports so they can see the results of their work and holding celebrations to mark achievements are also important.

> Showing appreciation is not only the right thing to do; it is essential to retaining good staff.

## TEAM STRUCTURE

Once a core team is together, there is the task of training the staff and the monitors to do their jobs professionally and impartially. Sufficient time should be taken to ensure this is done correctly. Initial planning and care are likely to determine success or failure for the entire project. Following are some suggestions about staff positions, duties and how these positions might evolve.

### Project Director

As the project is initiated, an ideal project director may be apparent based on past experiences. It also may be necessary to recruit a director from outside, or it may be possible to identify someone for this task as monitors are being recruited. It often becomes immediately apparent who on the core team is the most dedicated, who is spending the most time on the project, who is most engaged in discussion about the project's purpose and activities, who seems to win respect from the monitors and who understands the project best. This person could be the project director.

It is important that the project director be given ample authority to decide on the structure of the project. The project director also should be ultimately responsible for discharging or overseeing the project's many organizational tasks. These include: dealing with budgeting and payroll matters; scheduling monitors to view specific programs; designing, distributing, collecting and analyzing report forms; entering data into a spreadsheet program; producing charts and graphs; writing reports;

organizing press conferences; preparing oral presentations of data and responding to the press; and labeling and storing report forms and tapes of programs and copies of newspapers for the files. The project director should be responsible for finding the people to get all of this done and providing them with adequate supervision and guidance. Additionally, the project director should be at public presentations either as the lead spokesperson or as a secondary spokesperson, and be available to answer technical questions on methods and results.

### Team Leaders

Depending on what outlets and programming will be monitored, groups should be broken into teams. Television and radio require slightly different methods of monitoring, and print media requires a drastically different method. It is therefore advisable to employ one, two or three different leaders who understand these respective methods and who can train monitors and help gather and analyze results. Team leaders also can compare the forms filed by the monitors. When discrepancies occur, the leader can consult with the monitors and/or reexamine the story to decide on the correct evaluation. Team leaders also can train monitors in monitoring methods to ensure a unified approach, while also ensuring that each program is monitored on time. Finally, team leaders should be responsible for recording individual programs and making sure that all the forms are returned by a specified date.

### Monitors

The number of monitors needed will depend on the number of "monitoring events" to be covered. Each broadcast program and each edition of a newspaper that is monitored is counted as one monitoring event. Monitors will have to be recruited, trained, and tested in simulation exercises and assigned to teams to cover and analyze each monitoring event. Monitoring a half-hour news program can take up to one and one half hours per team to tape, set up, review the broadcast two times for accuracy and complete monitoring forms for subsequent analysis. Monitors can be assigned to cover more than one monitoring event but must remain alert and diligent.

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**Data Analyst and Data Input Assistants**

A good computer, good spreadsheet software and a proficient computer assistant are important to make data accurate and understandable for the audience. The data analyst will need assistance with entering data every day. Depending on the size of the project (number of media and monitoring events), one or more data input assistants will be required. In the days prior to the release of a report, the analyst will need time and support to produce the graphic presentation of data.

**Writer**

In addition to the analyst, a good writer will be needed to explain graphic presentations and integrate the graphics with other information into a written report and/or statement for public release. All of this will require input from team leaders and monitors to make sure that the final interpretations and conclusions are accurate and relevant.

**Press and Public Relations Secretary**

The first duty of the press and public relations secretary will be formulating contact lists of mailing addresses, e-mail addresses, telephone and fax numbers for all media outlets, reporters and editors of local and international media, advocacy, human rights and civic groups, political parties and candidates, international organizations and embassies, media regulatory bodies, electoral authorities and elected and appointed government officials. Most of these people should be invited to press conferences, and all should receive press releases and

copies of reports. The press and public relations secretary also will be responsible for preparing for the press conferences and distributing reports. (See Chapter Six for a more detailed discussion of public relations strategy and conduct of press conferences.)

> Every monitoring project must have an official spokesperson. The spokesperson must be carefully chosen to establish and maintain the credibility of the project.

**Spokesperson**

Every monitoring project must have an official spokesperson to conduct press conferences and represent the project in meetings with editorial boards, civic and political leaders and representatives of the international community. The spokesperson must be carefully chosen to establish and maintain the credibility of the project. While the spokesperson may not be involved in the everyday activities of the project, it is vital that she or he have a strong understanding of the objectives, methodology and findings of the monitoring project.

**ADDITIONAL TASKS**

Following are descriptions of other jobs that need to be done on an ongoing basis. Either the project director or a designated staff person should be assigned to each.

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**❗ HELPFUL INFORMATION**

**A weekly list of monitoring events might look like this:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| State TV nightly news, 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. daily | 7 | events |
| Independent TV nightly news, 7:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. daily | 7 | events |
| State Radio news, 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. Mon - Sat | 6 | events |
| State Radio news, 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., daily | 7 | events |
| Newspaper #1, daily | 7 | events |
| Newspaper #2, Mon - Sat. | 6 | events |
| Newspaper #3, daily | 7 | events |
| | | |
| Total monitoring events each week: | 47 | events |

**Slovakia—Scenario for Monitoring**

In Slovakia, MEMO'98 taped the TV Markiza news program at 7:00 p.m. each evening and STV news at 7:30 p.m. Radio Twist and Slovak Radio had two daily newscasts, at noon and at 6:00 p.m. Both of these were taped. Newspapers were purchased every day and kept in the office. They purchased one television set, one video cassette recorder, two radios with timed-recording capabilities and other equipment.

Monitors were divided into five teams: one team for television, one for radio, one for newspapers, one for data analysis and report preparation and one for press relations. Team leaders scheduled monitors to view or listen to each news broadcast and to read each newspaper. Forms were completed by monitors and turned over to their leaders throughout the week.

On the following Sunday, a new week would begin, and the analytical team compiled the data from the previous week. On Monday, the press team sent out an advisory alerting the press to the time and location of the weekly Thursday press conference. All quantitative time data and qualitative data concerning positive, negative and neutral ratings were entered into computer spreadsheets, and were then used to produce pie charts and bar graphs. These graphs would be used to write a summary of conclusions for the written report.

Team leaders then reviewed monitor "comments" and identified trends that were described in summary, with specific examples for the report. Such comments tended to focus on a lack of balance within a story or on biased language, inappropriate film footage or other unfair practices. Over time, these comments revealed clear and disturbing trends in the way particular news outlets presented the news; especially a trend on state-owned STV to refuse time to opposition subjects to explain their side of the story. The report was completed by Wednesday after the end of each monitoring period and presented in a public press conference on Thursday. The first report covered one week, and others tended to cover two-week periods or to present cumulative data as the elections neared. (See Appendix 4 for a sample monitoring timeline.)

**Scheduling Monitors**

Once a decision has been reached about which media outlets will be monitored and how often each outlet publishes or broadcasts relevant coverage (topics discussed below), the programs and publications should be divided into logical categories that represent monitoring events.

Each event can be entered onto a simple grid under the appropriate day and posted on the wall with a box to indicate the assigned monitors. At least two monitors should be assigned to each event to ensure against monitor bias. Once report forms are turned in, a check mark can be entered next to the monitor's name on the scheduling grid. Team leaders and other staff will have contact information for monitors who fail to turn in reports on time, and they will need to fill in gaps when needed.

Managing monitors is an important and demanding responsibility that requires an organized person who will be sensitive to the concerns of the monitors and understand that all events must be covered every week. Missing even one news program or skipping one newspaper can throw off the entire results of the project and reflect badly on the project's credibility and professionalism. It is a good idea to keep a log of monitor schedules and activities. The project director and/or team leaders need to know which individuals can be counted on to be prompt, reliable and consistent. Also, if monitors are being

Missing even one news program or skipping one newspaper can throw off the entire results of the project and reflect badly on the project's credibility and professionalism.

paid based on performance, a record of who did what is needed.

### Developing Forms
Monitoring forms for each type of monitoring event, as well as data compilation and analysis forms, must be developed and filled in meticulously. The types of data to collect on such forms are discussed in Chapters Four and Five, and sample forms are presented in the appendices.

### Record Keeping
In addition to keeping logs of monitor activities, a good monitoring project should keep meticulous records of all relevant materials. These materials should be kept in an organized and secure manner on designated storage shelves or cabinets.

The project's records should include the following materials:

- Labeled copies of all videotapes of television programs organized by time and date and news outlet;
- Labeled copies of all audiotapes of radio programs organized by time and date and news outlet;
- Copies of all monitored newspapers organized by publication and date;
- Copies of all forms turned in by monitors filed separately by date and news outlet;
- Copies of all other forms used for tabulation and collation of monitoring results organized by date and news outlet;
- Copies of all brochures, press releases, reports and other materials released by the project; and
- Records of all media coverage (newspaper clippings, audio and video tapes) of the monitoring project.

### Obtaining Supplies
The following is a suggested list of supplies that will be needed to conduct a monitoring project that includes television, radio and newspapers.

**Televisions and Radios**. After scheduling monitored events, decide how many televisions and radios are needed. If events occur simultaneously on different channels, more than one or two sets will be needed. Also, monitors may require sets to view tapes while other sets are recording programs. This can ensure that all monitoring events are appropriately covered.

**Newspapers**. A subscription to all monitored newspapers, or a system for purchasing them on a daily basis, is necessary.

**Video and Audio Recorders**. Video and audio recorders will be needed to tape events. Extra recorders may be necessary so that tapes can be viewed or listened to while other machines are taping programs. Recorders should have a function to set timers to record programs automatically. If this is not possible, reliable staff will be needed to turn on the recording devices at the appropriate times.

**Tapes**. Calculate the number of audio and video tapes needed for the duration of the project and purchase them well in advance. Make sure to purchase tapes that are of a reliable quality.

**Earphones**. Earphones may be needed to allow monitors to work without disturbing others in the office, depending on the provisions and space of the monitoring room.

**Video Camera**. A video camera can be used to tape practice news conferences and other events to help train those who will be speaking in public or to the press.

**Computer(s), Printer(s) and Software**. Computers, printers, and software are necessary for data entry, analysis, and for creating reports and other documents. Secure computer backup of documents is also required where possible.

**Copy Machines**. Copy machines, or access to them, are needed for copying forms, reports, etc.

**Stopwatches**. Stopwatches are needed in ample supply to record the times for the news stories.

**Rulers**. Rulers are needed in ample supply to measure newspaper story size.

**Pens, Paper, and Other Basic Supplies**. Pens, paper, paper clips, staplers, and other basic office supplies are needed in ample supply to conduct the project.

**Shelves, Cabinets, and Other Storage Materials**. Shelves, cabinets and other storage materials are needed to store videotapes, audiotapes, newspapers, forms and reports.

**Refreshments**. Food and drinks (tea, coffee, water, etc.) help to make sure that monitors devote the necessary time to their jobs and, depending on local customs, are needed to offer to visitors.

**Projectors(s) and Transparency Paper**. Projector capacity is needed to display charts and graphs at press conferences, either projected directly from a computer or via overhead projections of "transparencies."

**Sound Equipment**. Sound equipment, such as microphones and speakers, are needed for press conferences and other public events. In some cases the facility where press conferences are held may provide this equipment.

## Accounting and Finance

Monitoring projects must keep meticulous accounts of funds received and all expenses paid for salaries, supplies, telecommunications, report distribution, insurance, rent and all other matters. It may be necessary to hire a specific person, such as an office manager, or combine these responsibilities with another person's tasks. It is also wise to obtain the services of a certified public accountant to set up accounting procedures and to periodically review them.

## PLANNING AND REHEARSAL

It is very important that all of the project participants—especially those who will be speaking publicly—are able to confidently address the impartiality, accuracy and credibility of the methods used by the project and be able to use this information to defend the project against critics and skeptics. For this reason, it is necessary to practice analyzing and releasing findings before going public. Every media monitoring project should practice monitoring techniques, analysis of data, report preparation and public presentations during a dress rehearsal period before the actual monitoring begins. Try to anticipate the questions that will arise and practice the responses until all the relevant staff can confidently express themselves and defend the methodology of the project.

> Every media monitoring project should practice monitoring techniques, analysis of data, report preparation and public presentations during a dress rehearsal period before the actual monitoring begins.

As part of the rehearsal, consider seeking the advice of outside experts. This will not only help design good methods, but it also may add further credibility to the project. There are numerous international groups that deal with media standards or have conducted media monitoring projects, and they might be willing to visit your office, attend a practice press conference or provide consultations by phone, e-mail or other means. The press sections of international observer groups and embassies might be able to give useful advice as well. (See Appendix 1 for a list of organizations that could be contacted.)

CHAPTER FOUR

# The Basics of Monitoring:

Quantitative Measurements, Qualitative Assessments,
Data Collection & Data Analysis

Once decisions have been made about which outlets, programs and subjects to focus on, a methodology for accurately measuring the coverage of the subjects must be adopted. The methods used by the project will largely depend on what types of outlets are being monitored. Monitoring television, radio and newspapers require different approaches. This section will address the methodological considerations applicable to these media.

There are numerous aspects of media performance that could be monitored, such as the amount of time or space devoted to each candidate, party or government activity and whether media statements about a party or candidate are accurate and/or based on credible sources. Generally, these issues require one of three types of analysis: quantitative, qualitative (or content) or a combination of the two.

For training purposes, tapes of radio and television news broadcasts and copies of the newspapers that the project intends to monitor should be used. Monitors should go through a typical news story several times and examine a variety of matters until they are comfortable with the process. After watching, listening or reading the whole news event once, monitors should discuss the program as a group and then go back and evaluate each story. Impressions likely will change after closer examination. Chapter 5 of this handbook discusses designing forms to record observations and suggests answers to some of the questions that typically arise.

## QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENTS

The most straightforward and easily understandable data that can be collected are simple quantitative measurements of the amount of media coverage offered to political subjects. For broadcast media, this means measuring with a stop-watch the length of time devoted to stories about each political party or candidate and comparing them. This answers questions, such as: What was the story about? How long was it? These are fairly simple data for monitors to record on forms. Furthermore, these data translate into pie charts or other graphic presentations that are easily understood. These charts can show amounts of coverage in numeric form and what percentage of coverage a certain political competitor received in relation to others.

In addition to measuring and recording the amounts of time dedicated to particular political subjects (political parties, candidates and top government officials) on television, monitors can also measure factors that highlight more subtle problems, such as the way different political subjects are portrayed. For example, some parties' candidates or representatives may always appear on the air and speak in their own voices, while others may be quoted or

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their statements paraphrased or summarized by an announcer. For broadcast news programs, time measurements can be subdivided as follows:

- Total time in seconds of a story on each relevant political subject (discussed above);
- Total time in seconds that the candidate/party appears and speaks on screen;
- Time in seconds the image of the candidate or party representative appears without speaking (e.g., even when a political subject might not be presenting his or her own version of events, he or she is shown on camera);
- Time in seconds the voice of the candidate or party representative is heard (even if there is no film or photograph);
- Order of the placement of the news item in the broadcast (first, second, etc.).

The results will offer quantitative data that on comparison illustrate the differences in amounts and several aspects of the quality of coverage for particular subjects in different media outlets. Consider that if all news outlets made similar decisions about the newsworthiness of the various political events,

then amounts of coverage devoted to these political subjects would be similar. When significant differences appear among the media, it may indicate bias, and that possibility should be examined over time in light of patterns that may emerge in coverage. If such differences appear consistently as the elections approach, it will become clear that voters are getting different information depending on which outlet they consult for news. If the differences consistently favor one political contestant on a particular media outlet, that bias will be apparent and documented through careful and accurate monitoring.

> Quantitative data tell only part of the story. It might be legitimate to give more coverage to some contestants over others, while numerically equal coverage could mask disparate treatment.

Quantitative data tell only part of the story. Certainly, a substantial difference in the amount of time offered to different political subjects (including differences in the amount of time, image and voice, etc.) can sharpen the focus on what might be a major problem, but the amount of coverage offered does not give full information about whether the coverage is fair. It might be legitimate for a television channel, radio station or newspaper to give more coverage to some contestants by virtue of their relevance to the race, the power of their ideas or the possibility that they could win seats or not. On the other hand, a television channel could numerically offer equal amounts of coverage to all parties, but consistently present opposition figures in a damaging light, while touting positive elements of others. News reporting might be full of lies or distortions and quantitative measurements would not indicate that. Be aware of the environment, and be prepared to tell the truth about what is really going on in light of the political context in which news coverage takes place.

## COUNTRY NOTE

**Togo—Reporters Sans Frontières Quantitative Analysis**

Reporters sans frontières (Reporters Without Borders) conducted a media monitoring project in Togo in 1998 that graphically and dramatically revealed media bias in favor of the incumbent president, General Gnassingbe Eyadema. In weekly public reports the project found that the television station devoted 99.8 percent of its relevant coverage to the government and ruling coalition parties, while opposition figures were mentioned only a scant 0.2 percent of the time. These data alerted the nation to a major problem and caused a debate that eventually resulted in slightly more balanced coverage as the election approached. (See Appendix 8D for a report from that project.)

Some context can be provided by:

- Comparing news coverage on different outlets;
- Comparing news coverage over a period of time; and
- Analyzing the amount of time particular subjects are covered in light of the importance of current events.

## QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Quantitative results can become much more revealing when presented alongside data about the way in which political subjects are portrayed by news outlets. Making a qualitative assessment, however, is more subjective and, therefore, more likely to raise questions about methods. Great care should be taken when developing these methods and when training the monitors who will employ them.

Qualitative measurements can be subdivided into two major categories, which will be discussed separately below.

1) The tone of the coverage (positive, negative or neutral). These data can be recorded for all stories and presented graphically to illustrate differences between outlets and differences over time.

2) Important additional comments relating to a content-based analysis that illustrate balance, fairness, accuracy or attempts to manipulate. These data are much more difficult to present via charts or graphs, but can offer more insight than simple positive and negative measurements. As conclusions are reached on these factors, they should be explained in public reports. If they are systematically documented and clearly presented, they can provide compelling evidence about media conduct.

### Positive, Negative and Neutral Ratings

It is important to keep in mind that it is the behavior of media outlets that is being measured, not the political subjects. Monitors should seek examples of how specific outlets tend to portray the various subjects. If these data differ significantly among the

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> ! **HELPFUL INFORMATION**
>
> **Positive, Negative and Neutral Ratings**
> The following is an example of a conclusion about positive, negative and neutral ratings:
> State Television consistently airs stories that portray the National Corngrowers Party in a positive light. Of 57 stories in the week beginning on July 14 about this ruling coalition party, 52 praised their exploits and 2 questioned their character (3 were neutral).
> During the same week, independently owned TV Channel 3 offered a different perspective. They ran 32 stories mentioning this party: 22 portrayed them negatively; 7 positively; and 3 were announcements about the upcoming party convention and rated as neutral. This difference, even without further analysis that examines bias, indicates that television viewers should be cautious about drawing conclusions concerning political choices based solely on one of these sources.

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various outlets, over time it will be apparent that not all outlets are following the same journalistic standards and/or that they are expressing different political biases.

Confusion sometimes may arise because a story can portray someone in a negative light, but this portrayal might be both balanced and fair. It is difficult to know if a story is fair or true. Positive and negative ratings therefore should refer to whether or not a viewer is offered a positive or negative impression of the subject, regardless of truth or balance, which should be measured separately.

This method does not mean that the concepts of "truth and balance'" are unimportant or that they should be overlooked by monitors. Separating elements of stories offers the opportunity to disaggregate and compare elements of coverage. However, monitors also should report about lies, distortions, unbalanced coverage, unfairness and anything else that is important to presenting information to voters, but report these data separately, integrating them in comments and conclusions in the project reports.

**26** These judgments are by definition subjective, but if monitors are trained and practiced, the answers are more obvious than might first be apparent. If news coverage is unfair, it will not be difficult for trained teams of monitors to make these judgments. Keeping tapes and offering the public the opportunity to view these records and to offer challenges to the project's characterizations, will make the monitoring effort more credible. Encouraging monitors, during training and rehearsals, to meet and discuss decisions about difficult or highly subjective characterizations will help ensure quality and uniformity as the project progresses. Team leaders and the project director should be called upon to review controversial news reports and reports about which monitors strongly disagree.

> Positive and negative ratings should refer to whether or not a viewer is offered a positive or negative impression of the subject, regardless of truth or balance, which should be measured separately.

When the quantitative and qualitative data are collated about how each outlet portrays each political subject, the data can be translated into pie charts showing the amount of coverage of each political subject and bar graphs showing the number of "positive, negative and neutral" stories about the subjects. The graphics help to present a more complete story about the coverage by a particular news outlet. (See the section below entitled, "Presentation of Results," for further discussion and sample charts.)

It is important to avoid drawing conclusions that are not supported by the data. Based on two graphs alone, for example, conclusions can not be reached about the integrity of the reporters, producers, editors and station owners. Rather, the data are simply offering comparative views of how different outlets tend to portray political subjects. The differences may demonstrate that something is amiss in reporting methods, or they may imply bias on the part of some news outlets. Other details about the fairness, balance and professionalism of the outlet, which are discussed below, can reveal more about specific shortcomings of news outlets.

Keep in mind that it might be proper to portray some subjects negatively. For example, if a party advocates views that are anti-democratic, then a good journalist reporting the truth would file a story that is likely to leave a negative impression. When different outlets portray the same subjects differently, however, a problem may be revealed. In

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

**Evaluating the positive or negative impact of a news story:**
The question that monitors should address is whether or not a news story tends to make a viewer think favorably or unfavorably of the subject. Using this method, for example a story about a candidate accused of kidnapping and torturing a political opponent would be considered negative. No judgment about the accuracy of the allegations or about a television station's presentation of opposing views would be made by this assessment. If the story could lead voters to the conclusion that the candidate might be less fit for office, then it would be rated a negative story, even if the accused candidate was allowed to present his views. On the other hand, if the accused candidate offers a rebuttal to the accusation, and the news outlet presents the accusation as an unwarranted attack against "the distinguished frontrunner," the story would leave a favorable impression on the viewer, in which case it would be characterized as a positive story. This illustrates the need for thorough training, multiple media monitors reviewing each story and careful analysis of monitoring report forms.

countries where all television and possibly all radio broadcasting is state-controlled, it is unlikely that a comparative analysis of broadcast outlets will be fruitful. Comparison to print media and other analysis is required in such circumstances.

### Positive, Negative and Neutral Ratings for Photographs

Confusion may arise as to how to rate a photograph on a positive and negative scale. How can a photograph tell anything but objective truth? The fact is that the newspapers and television stations airing photographs can choose photos to convey powerful messages. While the overall judgment of whether a photo conveys a positive, negative or neutral impression may be subjective, monitors should consider as many objective criteria as possible in reaching this judgment. For example, a picture of an opposition candidate walking away from the photographer or holding his hand up to his face could imply he is hiding something. A snap shot of a member of parliament sleeping at his desk could be used to imply lack of diligence to his job. Other questions also should be considered, such as: is the picture of one leader clearly an old file photo from years past when he or she was younger and more attractive; or does a picture of a candidate show him or her with an out of place scowl or a grimace or a frown? Is the picture of one candidate clear, while the other is fuzzy? Is one candidate's picture consistently larger than the other or more prominently displayed? The monitoring project should note trends of certain television stations and papers to display unflattering or compromising shots of some subjects and flattering ones of others.

### OTHER CONTENT-BASED FINDINGS

Some data should not be recorded in numeric form, but rather should be recorded by monitors in a "comments" section of their form. These comments should be compiled, analyzed and included in public reports to illustrate good performance or inadequacies of specific media outlets. Some examples of other content-based findings are discussed below.

### Balance

One of the biggest responsibilities of a good journalist is to present more than one side of a story when appropriate, and this should be a focus of any monitoring project. When judging balance, monitors should ask whether all sides get a chance to tell their story.

Balance does not require that precisely equal time be given to all sides, but it does preclude inflated coverage of one side and/or disregard or omission of another. Issues related to balance become more clear if patterns of disparate treatment of political subjects emerge over time. Monitors should ask, for example: If a political party representative is shown denouncing another party's candidate, does that candidate have a chance to respond to the allegations? Monitors should also consider whether one

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### COUNTRY NOTE

**Bangladesh – FEMA**
**Monitoring Manipulative Use of Headlines and Photographs**
For the 2001 Bangladesh parliamentary elections, the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) sponsored a media monitoring project of electronic and print media. In their analysis of newspapers, FEMA focused particular attention to such qualitative aspects as positioning of articles, quality and number of photographs, use of color in photographs and selection of headlines to favor a particular political figure or party. During their six-week project, FEMA congratulated newspapers that provided balance in such qualitative aspects and criticized those that printed poor quality photographs or otherwise exhibited bias.

**28** side refuses to cooperate. A reporter must still try to get the opposing views and if refused should report on these attempts. Monitors must use their knowledge of the situation in their country, the reputation of the outlet being monitored and common sense to make these determinations.

> Balance does not require that precisely equal time be given to all sides, but it does preclude inflated coverage of one side and/or disregard or omission of another.

### Manipulative Use of Film, Pictures or Sound

Consistent use of camera angles that make the crowds at certain parties' or candidates' rallies appear larger than reality, while angles at other contestants' rallies make them seem smaller is another example of a content-based finding. Additional examples include: broadcasting film footage that does not correspond with the events reported in order to favor certain parties or candidates; using background music or visual effects that lend an ominous, satirical, patriotic or light-hearted tone to the story; and the use of manipulative voice tones or sarcasm by radio announcers or news anchors.

Some manipulations may be subtle, such as: always showing one candidate from the side, while another is shown from the front; one is shown at a distance, while the other shown up close; an angle upward may be consistently used for one candidate to depict leadership; or the candidate may be shown walking forward with admirers, while others are presented as stationary. All must be noted and analyzed as trends having impact over time.

### Opinion Polls

Opinion polling about political competition can have a powerful impact on potential voters. Media monitors should therefore examine the manner by which opinion polls are presented in the media. The following are among the questions that monitors should ask:

- Are opinion polls given undue prominence that could favor one party or candidate over others?
- Do polls come from reputable sources?
- Did the report reveal who commissioned the poll?
- Was the source revealed in the broadcast along with other contextual matters such as the margin of error, the time the poll was conducted, the size of the sample, the location of the sample and the actual questions?
- If gaps between political contestants were within the margin of error, was that reported?
- Were the results of other reputable polls on the same subject at about the same time included in the report?
- Were polling trends over time included in the report?

### Missing Information

Monitors, team leaders and other project staff will tend to become very well informed about current events. Monitoring television, radio and/or newspapers as well as the knowledge of findings from other monitoring teams will allow monitors to make a judgment about the accuracy of stories they review. Monitors also must note the omission of news coverage that is relevant to voters making political choices (e.g., stories that would positively or negatively affect opinions about candidates or parties). Examples could include: a major opposition party has a rally, but there is no coverage on the state TV or state radio stations; or no coverage was presented about a scandal involving misuse of government resources.

> Monitors also must note the omission of news coverage that is relevant to voters making political choices

### Unsubstantiated News

It is difficult for monitors to determine whether or not stories are substantiated properly. However, trained monitors should ask themselves questions about each story, such as: Does a story assert as fact something for which no evidence is given? If the

**Aspects of media performance to monitor include:**

- The amount of time or space devoted to each candidate or party (quantitative analysis for each and comparative analysis among and between them) and to government activities (this may allow advantage to a particular candidate or party);
- The way in which candidates and parties are presented (positive, negative or neutral rating);
- When in a news program a particular party or candidate is covered (is one party always the first story in the news?);
- The use of film and sound in a story and a comparative analysis to determine if there is a pattern favoring particular parties or candidates (e.g., are some candidates or parties always allowed to present their story in their own words while others are interpreted by a news reader?; do camera angles flatter or insult particular parties or candidates or distort crowd sizes at rallies and speeches?);
- Whether a journalist makes statements about a party or candidate which are based on questionable sources or which may not be factual (i.e., reporting rumor as fact);
- Whether live feeds or film footage of the actual event is used to cover certain parties or candidates, while others are covered by file footage;
- Whether there is an obvious bias by an interviewer or moderator;
- The manner of broadcasting opinion polls (e.g., are contextual data given like polling agency identification, who commissioned the poll, sample size, date of poll, questions asked, margin of error, polling trends, etc?);
- Whether relevant news stories about certain parties or candidates are omitted by a news outlet; and,
- Whether news stories are substantiated and whether opinion is presented as news.

answer to this question is yes, monitors should discuss whether the absence of evidence is significant or whether the factual basis is well-established common knowledge. Monitors also should ask whether editorializing is presented as news. For example: Does a journalist or announcer report as news his or her own opinion or the opinion of partisan or private interests? Does a reporter or news anchor use expressions, comments or descriptions that seem unfair, sarcastic, unsubstantiated, unprofessional or insulting?

**DATA COLLECTION**

After deciding on the subjects and coverage that will be monitored, and how to assess the way these subjects are portrayed, it is necessary to design a system for recording these data. Forms will differ depending on the type of outlet being monitored. Suggestions for forms designed for television, radio and newspapers are discussed in detail in Chapter Five: *Monitoring Instructions.* These forms should be

modified depending on the data that will be collected. In every monitoring project, team leaders should stress the importance of accuracy, consistency and clarity in data collection.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

After all forms are collected for a defined period of monitoring (for example, each day), the data should be compiled and reviewed by team leaders. Discrepancies between two monitors who reviewed the same story need to be reconciled. If it is a quantitative measurement which differs, consult the original paper or tape to determine the correct numbers. If it is a qualitative assessment that differs, monitors can review the story with their team leader and discuss the evaluations until a decision is reached.

Some differences in findings are bound to occur. If questioned about project methods, it is important to express confidence and acknowledge that the

**30** project is aware of these potential differences and has addressed them directly as an integral part of the methodology. This will go a long way to convince skeptics of the project's credibility. Occasional differences in views are usually not significant when reporting on well-documented trends over the course of a monitoring project. If frequent differences occur among monitors, team leaders should discuss the issue with them and identify the source. Perhaps further training is required. It is even possible that a certain bias will be discovered among monitors that must be addressed.

**PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

Spreadsheet software makes it possible to digest the data quickly and efficiently and to transform them into easy-to-read graphic presentations. Most word processing programs also have some graph and chart capabilities that will allow for the preparation of simple bar graphs and pie charts.

FIGURE 4-1: TWO CHARTS PRESENTED BY PERCENTAGES OF TRANSPARENCY'S (TRANSPARENCIA'S) MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT DEPICTING COVERAGE OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES ON STATE-CONTROLLED NATIONAL TELEVISION CHANNEL 7.

**Pie Charts**

Each pie chart should show the relative time devoted to each political subject as a percentage of total relevant news coverage on one specific media outlet. As the election nears, monitors can track increases or decreases in coverage of each subject on each media outlet. If these percentages vary significantly, there may be an issue of bias on one or more of the outlets. (See Figure 4-1 presented below.)

The data from the time, space and positive and negative ratings can be entered as the monitors turn in their forms or according to a regular schedule that ensures that all data are ready prior to writing the reports. For data that will be presented graphically, the following information should be compiled and entered into the database:

- The political subjects that will be the focus of the monitoring (e.g., candidates, parties and government officials).
- The total time or space devoted to the political subject by each news outlet during the monitoring period.



Gráfico 7.16
Televisión Nacional, Canal 7
Tiempo de aparición de los candidatos
-11 al 25 de enero de 2000-

Salinas 1%
Ataucusi 1.9%
Salas 2%
San Román 2%
Toledo 4.7%
Castañeda 6.3%
Andrade 6.6%
García Belaúnde no presenta apariciones
Fujimori 75.5%

Expresado en porcentajes y sobre cobertura realizada del 11 al 25 de enero de 2000



Gráfico 7.17
Televisión Nacional, Canal 7
Tiempo de aparición de los candidatos
en noticiero nocturno «Confirmado»
-28 de febrero al 3 de marzo de 2000-

Salinas 1%
Salas 3%
San Román 3%
Toledo 3%
Castañeda 3%
Andrade 4%
García 5%
Ataucusi no presenta apariciones
Fujimori 78%

Expresado en porcentajes y sobre cobertura realizada del 28 de febrero al 3 de marzo de 2000

MEDIA MONITORING

31

## COUNTRY NOTE

**Slovakia—Five Point Scale**
In Slovakia, MEMO'98 used a five-point scale to evaluate subjects. Grades 1 or 2 meant that a subject was presented in a positive light (1 being very positive and 2 being slightly positive). Grade 3 was a neutral mark. It meant that the coverage was unlikely to affect the views of a potential voter either favorably or unfavorably. Grades 4 and 5 meant that a political entity was presented in a negative light (5 being very negative and 4 being slightly negative.) A five-grade scale gave monitors more positive or negative marks to choose from, which tends to lower the number of neutral characterizations that result from a three-grade scale. These five values were converted into just three grades for reporting purposes. The number of positive, negative and neutral grades received by each subject were displayed with bar graphs for the reports.

- The number of positive, negative and neutral portrayals of that political subject during the monitoring period on each outlet.

These numbers will be converted into separate pie charts for each media outlet. The positive, negative and neutral ratings of each subject also may be converted into separate bar graphs for each media outlet. Be sure to consult software instructions and prepare several practice reports prior to the first public report to make sure this can be done easily in order to avoid last minute crises in developing public reports.

For television monitoring, monitors can portray data in other ways. Monitors can enter the data and construct graphs that depict the amount of time each subject is presented on camera, in his or her own voice or otherwise. Depending on the number of outlets being monitored and the number of factors being measured, the project can present the data in a way that demonstrates the problems that the analysis exposes. However, the project message must be kept simple. A few easily understood charts and

graphs will be more compelling than a massive amount of confusing data. Also, presenting the same data in the same way in subsequent reports will help keep the message consistent, understandable and relevant. (See Appendix 8 for sample media monitoring reports.)

For newspaper monitoring, there are many options for charts. For instance, a chart could show the amount of coverage of a particular political subject on the front page and/or in the entire paper. Charts could show the number of references to a political subject on the front page and on other pages. They could illustrate the space devoted to photos or headlines on the front page and on other pages concerning each political subject. It is also possible to add headline, article and photo size charts and present one figure for total space of coverage for each subject. If, over time, there appears to be an intentional effort to use headlines and/or photographs in a manipulative manner, this data also could be shown in a chart.

### Bar Graphs
Preparing bar graphs that show the number of positive portrayals and the number of negative portrayals of each political subject on each media outlet can demonstrate even more clearly than pie charts the possibility of bias in a particular news outlet. In the case of bar graphs, neutral ratings can be depicted numerically directly beneath the graph. It is also possible to represent positive and negative references by the total time of these portrayals, together with or instead of displaying the number of such instances.

Each graph should be labeled by media outlet and the time period in which the monitoring was done (e.g., State Television, Channel One, Evening News, week of June 1 through June 7). Consider making both color and black and white versions of each graph. The color graphs can be used in overhead projectors as props during a press conference and can be used on the project's website. The black and white versions are more easily photocopied and can
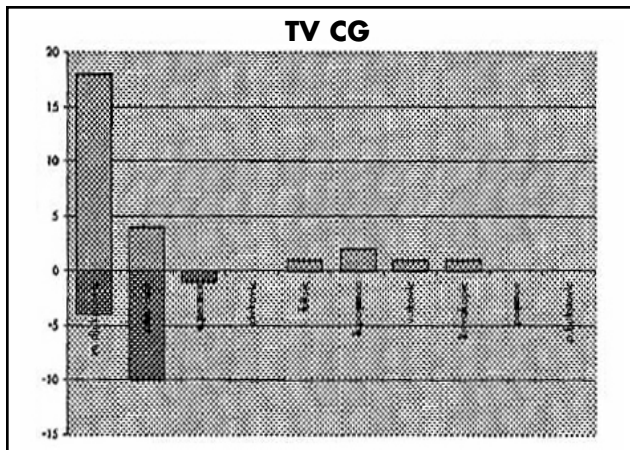
**TV CG**

FIGURE 4-2: BAR GRAPH BY THE ASSOCIATION OF YOUNG JOURNALISTS OF MONTENEGRO DEPICTING POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE COVERAGE OF THE 10 MOST MENTIONED POLITICIANS ON TV CG.

**INQUILAB**

FIGURE 4-3: BAR GRAPH BY FEMA (BANGLADESH) SHOWING NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF POLITICAL PARTIES OVER THE SIX-WEEK PERIOD PRIOR TO THE 2001 ELECTIONS.

be printed with the reports distributed to the press and others.

### Non-Graphical Analysis

While graphs are attractive, they can be misleading without accompanying explanation and analysis of other data that do not fit into graphs and charts. Recall that monitors should record comments on their forms regarding instances when they notice unbalanced or unfair news coverage. These issues should be analyzed and conclusions presented in reports when findings are significant. In such cases, monitor findings should be included in reports in a bulleted list or other format. These data might ultimately be more important to the conclusions reached in reports.

> While graphs are attractive, they can be misleading without accompanying explanation and analysis of other data that do not fit into graphs and charts.

Remember that reports must present the context of the findings and should demonstrate trends over time as the project evolves. Reports nonetheless should be brief and the presentation crisp. It may be wise to prepare a one-page press release to accompany reports.

Where findings and conclusions identify significant problems in media conduct, the monitoring project should formulate and offer appropriate recommendations to the media outlets, governmental authorities and the political contestants. Such recommendations can lead to immediate improvements that benefit the electoral and broader political process.

> Regular, periodic reports on media coverage of electoral competitors and other relevant subjects in the pre-election period are important to promoting democratic elections.

### FINAL REPORTS ON ELECTION COVERAGE

Regular, periodic reports on media coverage of electoral competitors and other relevant subjects in the pre-election period are important to promoting democratic elections. These reports and their recommendations can lead to immediate improvements in the political environment, and they make an important contribution to those who are monitoring the overall election process.

The media monitoring project will also have presented its analysis of the legal framework surrounding media activity, including strengths and weaknesses in laws and regulations and their implementation. This and analysis of other factors, such as the history of press freedom or censorship and intimidation against the press should appear separately from periodic monitoring reports. When these

## Cambodia

COMFREL and other election monitoring organizations conducted an advocacy campaign around the 2002 local elections to amend regulations that required the election commission (NEC) to pre-approve all voter education materials and programming. The effort won a significant partial victory. The regulations were amended to make review of materials purely voluntary, however, the groups found that local officials in many provinces still required submission of all materials for approval.

## Mexico

As a consequence of the highly regarded 1994 media monitoring project of the Mexican Academy for Human Rights (AMDH), which was conducted in association with Civic Alliance (an election monitoring coalition of over 400 civic organizations), Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) set up a commission to examine media conduct. The findings of the Academy and IFE's commission led IFE to call on the media to respect the public's right to information and to behave in a manner that is truthful, objective, balanced and fair. Following the elections, Civic Alliance presented media monitoring findings to President Salinas after which he called for implementing measures to ensure fair and objective media coverage. The two principal television channels responded by granting all political parties and candidates free media time to present messages.

## Slovakia

MEMO'98 and other Slovak civic organizations mounted a successful post-election advocacy campaign to gain passage of a freedom of information act to ensure media and citizen access to government-held information. In addition, the Slovak parliament asked MEMO'98 to provide suggestions for a white paper on reforming laws governing broadcasting.

issues are combined, the media monitoring project will develop an indepth knowledge of conditions affecting media coverage of political processes.

Soon after the electoral process is completed, the monitoring project should prepare a comprehensive report on the media and its coverage of political processes. This report should synthesize the relevant monitoring findings and contextual analyses. The report should offer recommendations for improvements in the legal and regulatory framework. It should also offer broader recommendations for government action to protect and promote press freedoms, freedom of expression of political competitors and the right of the population to seek and receive information needed to participate effectively in public affairs.

The comprehensive report (sometimes called a "final report on the media in the elections") can provide a basis for inviting public discussion, organizing roundtables and setting the stage for advocacy and ongoing monitoring of the media's coverage of governmental and political processes.

CHAPTER FIVE

# MONITORING INSTRUCTIONS:

Monitoring Television News, Radio News, Newspapers & Direct Access Programming

A key element for the success of media monitoring is the effective training of monitors and other staff. Training must stress the importance of accuracy and impartiality in monitoring, analysis and presentation of findings. (See Appendices 5A-B for a sample media monitoring pledge form and code of conduct.) Central to the training and ongoing monitoring operations is developing easy to use forms that capture essential data in ways that match the methodologies to be employed by the project. Equally critical is providing clear instructions about the proper use of forms. This chapter will address using monitoring forms for different media, distinguishing between monitoring headlines versus story content, and monitoring differing types of programs. The forms presented in the text and more complete sets of forms appearing in Appendix 6 are not intended to be conclusive. There are many ways to design forms, and they must always be adapted to the specific circumstances of a country. This chapter presents approaches distilled from comparative experience.

### TELEVISION NEWS
Illustration #1 (on page 37) provides a sample first page of a television monitoring form. An ample supply of these and other forms should be available to monitors wherever they are reviewing the news.

> Training must stress the importance of accuracy and impartiality in monitoring, analysis and presentation of findings.

A typical television or radio newscast will open with a short presentation of the headlines. This gives a preview of the top stories and an opportunity to see which relevant political subjects will be presented. On television, this introductory segment likely will be accompanied by film, photographs and perhaps short sound bites from political actors. Monitors should note on forms: the headlines in order of appearance and word-for-word; the subject of the headline stories; their impressions of how political subjects (political parties, candidates, top government officials, etc.) are portrayed; the length of time of each headline; the type of graphic or picture presented with the headline, if any; and the order in which the stories are presented in the headline segment. This should be covered on the first page of a television or radio monitoring form. Separate pages also should be available for recording data about each story as it is broadcast in full. It is likely that a monitor will have to watch a news program several times on tape to gather all the information necessary for analysis.

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**Headline Segment Monitoring Instructions**
Monitoring of television news programs begins with a headline segment. The first page of the television monitoring form is used to record information about this segment. The page captures both general and specific information. (See Illustration #1 on page 37 and Appendix 6.)

**General Information**
**The Monitor Identification Number**. It is recommended that monitors be assigned numbers and use them on forms rather than their names. This can help protect them from possible intimidation by government authorities or other interests who might be angered by the results.

**Broadcast Outlet Being Monitored**. For example, State Television Channel 2.

**Program Title**. For example, 6:00 p.m. nightly news program.

**Date and Time**. The monitor should record the date of the program, the time the program begins and the time it ends. From this information, the monitor can identify the specific program being monitored, and might later decide to report on the total amount of politically relevant information compared to total time of a news program. Significant differences between stations or differences over time might be of interest.

**Specific News Coverage Information**
**Headline Story Information**. A series of numbered lines are available to list the headlines of stories announced at the start of the show, in the order in which they appear. This should be a word-for-word transcript of the headline, which will make it easier to go back to the tape and confirm monitoring results at a later time. On this form it is worthwhile to list headlines of all stories, not just those considered relevant to election coverage. This allows monitors to make some judgment later about the order of politically relevant stories compared to all news for the day. For instance, if one party is consistently featured as the lead story of the day, but

stories about all others are consistently reported last—perhaps after weather and sports— there may be a trend worthy of comment and analysis.

Monitors would then record the topic of the headlines (e.g., economic news, local fire or natural disaster, political coverage, government event). Next, the length of time would be entered and then the type of graphic or photo that accompanied the headline, if any (e.g., still picture of a political candidate or government official, a political party logo or symbol, graphic of a fire, etc.). Then, each monitor would record whether the impression of the subject was positive, negative or neutral.

**News Program Item Summary Instructions**
Illustration #2 presents a sample of page two of a television news monitoring form. On this page monitors can record information about the full stories reported on the newscast identified on page one, as well as stories reported but not listed in headlines. Each story will require a separate form and can be completed as follows.

**General Information for Story Identification**
**Monitor Number**. This data is entered again to ensure that forms are not misplaced or confused.

**Outlet and Program Being Monitored**. The outlet is entered again (e.g., "State Television Channel 2" ). The program name is entered again (e.g., "Evening news"). Program date and time are entered again. These entries will help those collating and analyzing the data to keep the right forms together.

**Story Number and Title**. If the story ("item") was mentioned in the headline segment of the program, then monitors can enter the headline number from page one of the form. They should also enter a few words to indicate the title of the item.

**Specific Information about Story Subjects**
**Story Length**. Enter the time that this story started and the time that this story ended, as well as the total elapsed time of this story. A stopwatch or the time counter on the video recorder can be used to make these time measurements.

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

### Sample Television News Monitoring Forms

Illustration #1: Television News Monitoring Form—Headline Segment; Illustration #2: Television News Program Item Summaries Form; Illustration #3: Television News Program—Brief Commentary Form. (Please see Appendix 6 for these and other sample forms used for summarizing daily monitoring findings, as well as weekly tally sheets.)

**❶ Television News Monitoring Form — Headline Segment**
*Please write very clearly!!!*

Monitor Number _____
Broadcast Outlet Monitored _____
Program Name _____
Date _____ Time Start _____ Time E...

News Item: Word-for-word headlines in order of presentation
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

| Subject of the Headline | Length of Time of the Headline | Type of Graphic or Picture Presented with the Headline | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 1. | 1. | |
| 2. | 2. | 2. | |
| 3. | 3. | 3. | |
| 4. | 4. | 4. | |
| 5. | 5. | 5. | |
| 6. | 6. | 6. | |
| 7. | 7. | 7. | |
| 8. | 8. | 8. | |

**❷ Television News Program Item Summaries Form**
*Score for each RELEVANT news item only.*
*Use separate sheet for each news item.*

Monitor Number _____ Outlet _____
Program Name _____ Program Date/Time _____
1. Item Number/title (from news program headlines) _____
2. Item Start Time _____ End Time _____ Elapsed Time _____ min.
3. Transcribe the opening line, word-for-word
_____
_____
4. Summary of Main Theme of Item
_____
_____
5. Name and organizational affiliation of individuals on camera, in order of appearance (do not include reporter)

| Name/Affiliation Gov't/Party/Other | Picture/Voice (P/V) Voice Only (V) Picture Only (P) | Time on Camera Minutes/Seconds | Positive/ (1-5) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |
| 6. | | | |
| 7. | | | |

6. Name and organizational affiliation of individuals/organizations quoted but not on camera, in order, and by time

| Name/Affiliation | Time | Positive/Negati... |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |
| 6. | | |
| 7. | | |

**❸ Television News Program — Brief Commentary Form**

Monitor Number _____ Outlet _____
Program Name _____ Program Date/Time _____
1. Were any important News items of the day NOT reported?
(if it was reported in other media, please say here)
_____
_____
2. Did you note any "Media Effects" that could indicate bias or distortion?
(please cite item and time, and describe fully)
_____
_____
_____
3. Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful, or prejudicial against certain individuals or groups.
(please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)
_____
_____
_____
4. Were there any descriptions or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? Please be as specific as possible.
(please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)
_____
_____
_____

**Please feel free to use the back of this sheet for additional comments.**
**Please be sure to note date, time and name of any program mentioned.**
**Please be as specific as possible in your comments. Thank you!**

### Story Identification

Monitors should enter a word-for-word transcription of the opening line of the story to help with future identification.

**Story Summary**. Monitors should enter a brief summary of the main theme of the story.

A series of lines can be used to enter the basic data necessary for an analysis of this story. Each line could have a column for:

- The name of each of the political subjects mentioned in the story;
- An indication as to whether the subject appeared on camera with his or her picture, voice only or both picture and voice;
- The time that the subject appeared on camera can be recorded in a different column;
- Finally, the monitor should make a judgment about whether or not the subject was portrayed in an overall positive or negative manner using a numerical scale (e.g., 1 for very positive, 2 for somewhat positive, 3 for neutral, 4 for somewhat negative and 5 for very negative). (See page 31, Country Note: Slovakia—Five-point Scale, for an explanation of a five-point scale.)

A separate space can be devoted to recording information about subjects quoted or cited in the story, but not on camera.

- Record the name of the subject, the time devoted to that subject and a score for positive and negative.
- Record subjects only mentioned or quoted; this could be recorded without an indication of time, if they were mentioned only in passing. These remarks can also be rated on the positive and negative scale and will reveal trends on this outlet as to how subjects are sometimes portrayed even when not given a measurable amount of time.

It is important to record all of these data even though it may not all be included in the reports. Over time, monitors may notice certain trends of a particular station, for example, to summarize political subjects' remarks rather than allowing them to use their own voice. Several instances may not be significant, but if this is noted as a pattern, it can be reported in later press conferences and written reports. Otherwise, it may be easier to present data by combining the time of the entire story into a total time dedicated to a given subject.

**News Program Brief Commentary Instructions**
Illustration #3 and Appendix 6 present a sample third page television monitoring form. For each story, monitors should re-enter all the identifying data from pages 1 and 2, to ensure that forms will not get mixed up or lost. On this page, monitors should record information that does not necessarily lend itself to quantifiable measurement. For example, the monitor should be asked:

- Were there important news items not reported that day;
- Did the media outlet attempt to provide balanced information (i.e, if a story presented controversial information about a political subject, was that subject allowed to respond to the story or were his or her political opponents allowed to tell the story);
- Did the reporter or announcer attempt to insinuate his or her own opinions into the story;
- Were unusual or misleading camera angles employed to attempt to portray someone positively or negatively;

- Did the images used appear to accurately reflect the subject of the story;
- Were other graphics, music or effects used to change the tone of how the subject was portrayed;
- Were lies or misrepresentations included in the story, or was derogatory language used by a journalist;
- Was there an interview in which the candidate was not allowed to answer completely on the air;
- Did it appear that film footage had been edited in an unfair way; and
- Did the film footage or sound appear to be contemporaneous with the events reported in the story.

It is impossible to predict the various ways that an outlet might attempt to manipulate a story, but a monitor should describe whatever practices he or she thinks noteworthy. As the project progresses over time, trends will become apparent and contribute to the overall analysis of the project. (In addition to the media monitoring forms discussed in the text, see Appendix 6 for summary forms for daily top stories and weekly tally sheets for television, radio and print media.)

**RADIO NEWS**
Monitoring radio news programming can be done using the same basic methods used for television, except for visual data. (See Appendix 6 for sample radio monitoring forms.)

Radio is the principal means by which the population of many countries receives information about political contestants and other electoral subjects. Radio plays a key role in this respect in countries where television and print media are also important. Where radio is concentrated on one or two state-controlled broadcasters, monitoring is simplified and all the more important. Where there are private radio stations, pluralism may exist, and it may also be necessary to organize monitoring in places beyond the country's principal city. Training monitors, managing multiple monitoring operations

**Kenya—Kenya Human Rights Commission and Article 19**
**Monitoring Radio News**
In the months before Kenya's December 1997 elections, the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), in partnership with Article 19, the Global Campaign for Free Expression (London), monitored the state-owned Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) television news, KBC radio's National Service (broadcast in Kiswahili) and KBC radio's English Service. In addition, the KBC's Central, Western and Eastern stations were monitored. The privately run Kenya Television Network and several national print media were reviewed for comparison purposes.

The project found numerous problems with KBC's coverage of political subjects, including among other things: highly disproportionate coverage of the President and his political party (KANU) over other political subjects; constant presentation of presidential events first in the news; significant omissions of issues of political importance that could have reflected negatively on the government; and coverage of political events in ways that differed from private news sources. For example, the project's report on October's news coverage found that KBC radio devoted 57 percent of news time to presidential events and activities and 26 percent to KANU, while only eight percent focused on the political opposition and nine percent focused on general local and national news. It also found that 100 percent of KANU's events were covered positively, while 80 of the opposition coverage was negative.

and consolidating reports in a timely way will present special challenges in such situations.

### NEWSPAPERS
Reading a newspaper requires a more active role than watching television or listening to the radio. When someone is viewing or listening to broadcast news, they have little choice about what they hear and see. This is not so with newspapers, where readers more actively decide what to read. Nevertheless, some generalizations can be made. For example, a headline on the front page likely will reach a much wider audience and have more of an effect than a detailed discussion of issues on page five. A photograph will attract attention and leave an impression even if the reader skips the detailed written explanation in the story. Lead stories on page one might reach voters who may not even read the paper. For instance, when riding the bus, a passenger might see a headline or a photograph that changes their view of a political subject. Many people look at the front page, but might not follow a story onto an inside page or might read the lead paragraph and move on to another story. Headlines, photographs,

story placement, lead paragraphs and the parts of stories on page one, therefore, are more significant for many people than the part of the story that carries over to an inside page.

Such detailed considerations complicate monitoring. Newspaper monitoring requires the collection of much more data than are collected from broadcast media, and this can lead to a time-consuming process for data analysts.

Keeping separate data for front-page news, photographs and headlines and the same for inside pages makes sense and adds little burden to the monitors. However, it is possible to end up with an enormous amount of data that can be difficult to analyze and present. Presenting findings in a clear and concise manner is therefore very important in newspaper monitoring.

### Story Topic
A media monitoring project can be simplified in a credible way by deciding that the main political subject of a story is revealed by the headline and the

lead paragraph. Once the main subject has been identified, consider the story size attributable to that subject. All political subjects mentioned can be recorded with an assessment as to whether they are portrayed positively or negatively, but, if some are mentioned only peripherally, a project may decide against reporting the amount of space dedicated to such subjects in that story.

## Story Size

Headlines can be categorized by political subject and measured (in square centimeters with a ruler); photographs and story size can be treated in the same way. Front page data can be recorded separately.

It also is possible to report space as combined totals of story, headline and photograph area in square centimeters. Although headlines might convey less substantive information in larger print than the stories themselves, the overall impression they give the reader (whether one perusing the paper or reading it carefully) can mean that they deserve relatively greater weight. The same is true for photographs, which may convey no substantive information, but leave a strong impression.

If monitors measure and record data on these factors separately, but combine them to show total space for each political subject, then additional data will be available for anyone who asks, or this data can be reported at a later time if it seems merited.

Illustration #4 presents page one of a sample form for newspaper monitoring. (See page 41 and Appendix 6 for print media monitoring forms.) In this example, all relevant front page data is recorded. The analysis can be treated as suggested above.

Illustration #5 presents a sample of a proposed second page of a newspaper monitoring form. This page records information from inside pages of the newspaper. It is otherwise identical to page one.

Illustrations #6 and #7 are samples of an alternative means of measuring the amount of coverage relevant political subjects receive in a newspaper. In this method, all the subjects mentioned in the newspaper (or on the front page or on inside pages) are listed, and the number of times they are mentioned is recorded.

Illustration #8 is a sample of a proposed additional page for newspaper monitors on which other con-

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

**Newspapers - various factors that can be monitored:**
- Stories appearing on the front page could be monitored separately, since they are arguably more important and reach more readers. If one party is always covered on page one and other parties only on page ten, this trend should be reported.
- Total space devoted to political subjects (parties, condidates, etc.) can differ on page one or in the entire paper, leading to the need to monitor inside stories separately, even if they are continuations of stories which began on page one.
- Headline size can be measured separately to reveal tendencies to focus the readers' attention on one political subject more than another. Headlines on the front page could be measured separately from headlines on inside pages.
- Photographs can be measured separately to reveal similar attempts to attract reader attention. Photographs on the front page could be measured separately from photographs on inside pages.
- One story might cover a wide range of issues and political subjects, even though some of the subjects might be mentioned only at the end of a story, very briefly or deep inside the newspaper – making it difficult to decide how to assess the space devoted to each subject.

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

### Sample Print Media News Monitoring Forms

Illustration #4: Print Media Monitoring Form—Front Page Coverage; Illustration #5: Print Media Monitoring Form—Inside Coverage; Illustration #6: Print Media Monitoring Form—Front Page References; Illustration #7: Print Media Monitoring Form—Inside References; Illustration #8: Print Media Coverage Brief Commentary Form. (Please see Appendix 6 for these and other sample forms used for summarizing daily monitoring findings, as well as weekly tally sheets.)

❹ **Print Media Monitoring Form – Front Page Coverage** (page 1 of 4)
*Please write very clearly!!!*

Monitor Number _____
Newspaper Monitored _____
Date _____

News Item: Word-for-word headlines in order of size on front page
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Front Page News Articles

| Subject | Square CM | Positive/Negative |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |

Front Page News P

❺ **Print Media Monitoring Form – Inside Coverage** (page 2 o
*Please write very clearly!!!*

Monitor Number _____
Newspaper Monitored _____
Date _____

Headlines Not on Front Page (word-for-word)

| Subject | Pg. # | Square CM | Positive/Negative (1- |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |

❻ **Print Media Monitoring Form – Front Page References** (page 3 of 4)
*Please write very clearly!!!*

Monitor Number _____
Newspaper Monitored _____
Date _____

List total number of references to a political figure or political party on the front page of this newspaper, in alphabetical order.

| Name | # of References |
|---|---|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |
| 9. | |
| 10. | |
| 11. | |

❼ **Print Media Monitoring Form – Inside References** (page 4 of 4)
*Please write very clearly!!!*

Monitor Number _____
Newspaper Monitored _____
Date _____

List total number of references to a political figure or political party on the inside pages of this newspaper, in alphabetical order.

| Name | # of References |
|---|---|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |
| 9. | |
| 10. | |
| 11. | |
| 12. | |
| 13. | |
| 14. | |
| 15. | |
| 16. | |
| 17. | |
| 18. | |
| 19. | |
| 20. | |
| 21. | |
| 22. | |
| 23. | |
| 24. | |
| 25. | |

❽ **Print Media Coverage Brief Commentary Form**

Monitor Number _____
Newspaper Name _____ Date _____

1. Were any important News items of the day NOT reported?
(if it was reported in other media, please say here)
_____
_____

2. Did you note any "Media Effects" that could indicate bias or distortion?
(please cite item and time, and describe fully)
_____
_____
_____

3. Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful, or prejudicial against certain individuals or groups.
(please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)
_____
_____
_____

4. Were there any descriptions or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? Please be as specific as possible.
(please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)
_____
_____
_____

Please feel free to use the back of this sheet for additional comments.
Please be sure to note date, time and name of any program mentioned.
Please be as specific as possible in your comments. Thank you!

tent-based factors can be recorded. A monitor might list major stories not reported by this paper, the use of biased or manipulative wording by reporters, the use of especially inflammatory or unflattering language, photographs or cartoons and other factors that come to a monitor's attention. Other possible ways to monitor newspapers would be to:

- Count the number of words instead of measuring space because not all newspapers use the same font or print. Space may be a better measure because larger print may convey a greater impact even in fewer words.
- Measure the number of column inches given to each political subject instead of the area of the story.

## DIRECT ACCESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMMING

There are several ways that candidates and/or parties can present their views directly to the voters, without the editorial influence of media outlets. Monitoring such broadcasts therefore requires a different approach than monitoring news coverage. The most common of these are free party and candidate access that is legally mandated to provide an opportunity for political competitors to reach the electorate with their campaign messages. A second common means of such direct access is paid political advertisements. In both instances, the political competitors themselves should be allowed to develop their own messages freely. The law may provide for such messages only during the official election campaign period.

The monitoring project should examine the contextual aspects for these messages to determine and report on whether they are developed and presented free of government censorship or undue burdens and whether they are free of political discrimination by those who own or control media outlets.

It should not be the role of the monitors in such cases to judge the content, or the accuracy or balance of each message or political advertisement. Rather, in this case monitors should focus on the behavior of the media outlets, not the parties. The fact that parties are given time or can buy time to present their messages directly may be viewed as a positive sign that broadcasters are attempting to get information to voters and that the electoral competitors are provided an opportunity to express their views to the public. Monitors may, however, examine these messages to determine whether or not they incite hatred or violence, as well as whether they comply with a code of campaign conduct. (See Appendices 7A-B for a sample voluntary media code and mandatory procedures.)

### Free Broadcasts

In the case of free, legally mandated broadcasts, a monitoring project might focus on factors such as:

- Whether the criteria for qualifying for access is objective and fairly applied;
- Whether the amount of time parties are allowed in order to present their views is adequate for voters to be informed about the political choice to be made on election day;
- Whether the messages or political advertisements are aired at times that are easily accessible to voters;
- Whether they appear in random or rotating order;
- Whether the parties or candidates are allowed to present their materials unedited or without review by government or broadcast officials; and
- Whether parties and candidates are given equal opportunity to use government-controlled facilities to produce their messages where alternative facilities are not readily available.

Once these contextual factors are analyzed and reported on, monitoring should focus on whether legally mandated free broadcast requirements are implemented properly. In addition, events such as technical difficulties with broadcasts, electrical power outages and other matters should be tracked to see if they present a pattern of political discrimination.

> Once contextual factors are analyzed and reported on, monitoring should focus on whether legally mandated free broadcast requirements are implemented properly.

### Paid Political Advertisements

Many countries ban paid political advertisements, but this is not always the case. When monitoring such ads, a media monitoring project should consider all of the same factors discussed above for free political messages.

In these situations, monitors can measure the time used by each party or candidate and the placement of the ads to determine fairness. These data can be presented in a similar way as the data from news

programming, but there is little need for content analysis since the political competitors are presenting their own messages. Monitoring content can be important, however, in instances where parties and candidates have agreed to a code of conduct. The messages also can be monitored to determine whether they incite hatred or violence.

Additional factors to consider when monitoring paid political advertising:

- Does the station offer the same fee structure to all political contestants or are favored parties given discounts? Do stations give equal access to all parties to purchase ads?
- Does the use of paid political advertisements unfairly disadvantage candidates or parties with far fewer financial resources than others? How big is this disparity and its impact? (E.g., can parties with differing interests afford to purchase political ads?)

Answers to the above questions can be gathered by interviewing parties, candidates, station owners and government authorities and can be presented in the project's reports.

**Public Affairs Programming**

Television and radio stations might air regular political discussion shows; special programs devoted to election coverage; coverage of debates; so-called "town meetings;" broadcasts from party conventions or rallies; round table discussions; moderated interview shows; or call-in commentary shows. If research indicates these are important sources of information for voters, they should be monitored.

The goal of monitoring public affairs programs is to determine whether all parties or candidates are given equal opportunities and if they are treated fairly by moderators.

## COUNTRY NOTE

### Zimbabwe—MMPZ Monitoring Public Affairs

In the run-up to the 2000 constitutional referendum, Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe (MMPZ) monitored media coverage related to the referendum, with a particular focus on current affairs programming. During this project, MMPZ found that both television and radio stations confused current affairs programming with direct access or political advertising by broadcasting documentary-like programs on the referendum that were blatantly promoting



Time spent on ZBC TV current affairs programmes 3 Jan to 15 Feb 2000

either the government-endorsed "yes vote" or the opposition-supported "no vote." Furthermore, the state-owned ZBC TV heavily favored programs supporting the government position and provided almost no unbiased information on the complex question of the proposed constitutional changes. During the six week monitoring period prior to the referendum, ZBC TV broadcast 16.12 hours of current affairs programming that favored the government position, ("pro-CC" programs), 1.33 hours that favored the opposition position ("pro-NCA" programs) and only 1.28 hours that gave general unbiased information about the referendum.
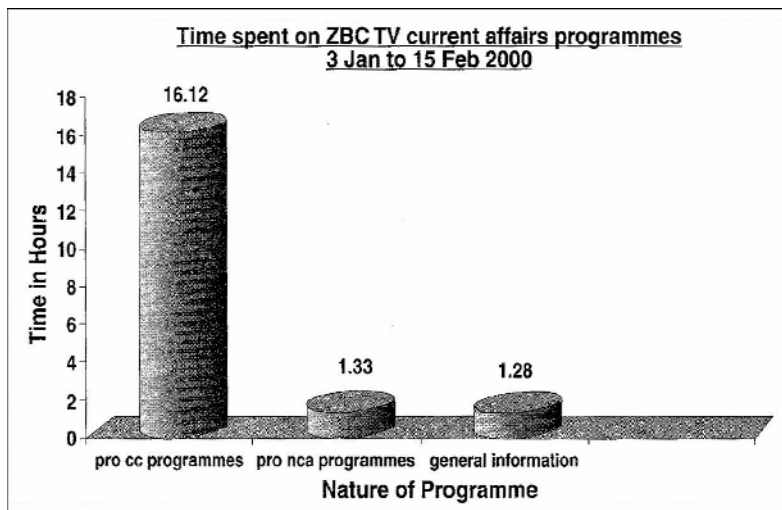
**44** The goal of monitoring public affairs programs is to determine whether all parties or candidates are given equal opportunities and if they are treated fairly by moderators. In shows where candidates are allowed to personally appear, the main considerations should be:

• Whether all relevant political subjects are given equal opportunity to appear on the program and to speak on their own behalf during the show;

• Whether moderators, producers, directors or commentators treat parties or candidates with equal fairness; and

• Whether presentations on camera (camera angles, etc.) were similar for all of the political subjects.

Time allotted to different subjects also should be monitored and reported in the same manner as done with broadcast news programs. Additionally, fairness can be monitored and reported by describing specific instances of bias, distortion or other content-based factors.

There may be no pretense that such programs offer news, and it may be clear that they present commentary, debate or an opportunity for competing interests to offer their opinions directly. In these situations, an opportunity for different subjects to present views is more important than the accuracy or balance of the information presented.

The demeanor and political views of the moderator or host should be noted by monitors. The aggressiveness of questions and to whom they are directed and the overall fairness with which guests are treated also are important considerations. Monitors should look for moderator bias, equitable and sufficient time to parties and candidates, the time given to prepare for the program, camera angles, lighting and positioning of participants. All of these factors can be summarized in the textual analysis presented in media monitoring reports. Public affairs programs also may be monitored for incidence of inciting hatred and violence, as well as compliance with existing campaign codes of conduct.

## Civic Education Programming

Knowing when, where and how to register to vote, knowing how to verify the accuracy of the voter registry and knowing when, where and how to vote are central to democratic elections in every country. Helping voters to understand the importance of voting also is critical to genuine elections. This is particularly true when electoral laws and procedures have changed.

Certain segments of the population may traditionally have been excluded or denied equal access to the political process, and special efforts through the media may be needed to encourage their full political participation. These could be minority groups that are under-represented in government or groups that speak a different language than is common on
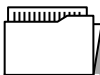
## COUNTRY NOTE

**Cambodia—COMFREL**
**Monitoring Civic Education Programming**
During the 2002 Commune Council elections, the Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL) ran an extensive media monitoring program. As part of this effort, COMFREL monitored the broadcast of civic and voter education on state and privately owned television and radio stations. Monitors recorded the total duration of civic and voter education programming produced by the National Election Commission and civic groups, including COMFREL. The monitors carefully noted any violations of the election law. COMFREL's emphasis on voter education—both as a monitoring body and a source of voter information—came from its concern that voters be able to receive fair, unbiased information, counteracting some of the impact of biased media operating in a non-independent media environment.

television and radio or in newspapers. They could be women in a society dominated by male political leaders, or they could be youth and first-time voters who have been marginalized in post-conflict or other societies.

Whatever the reason, in many countries it is important that there be some attempt to explain to all voters the basic information necessary to cast their vote. Therefore, monitoring the amount and content of voter and civic education programming in the media is important. It may also be significant to note the source of such messages to determine whether civil society organizations are afforded an opportunity to encourage citizen participation in the election process.

> Methods need to be devised to assess the adequacy of voter information messages both in terms of the time devoted to them by the mass media, the languages in which such programs are delivered, the times and stations on which they are broadcast and the accuracy of the information presented.

Monitoring such programming is different from monitoring news coverage. Methods need to be devised to assess the adequacy of voter information messages both in terms of the time devoted to them by the mass media, the languages in which such programs are delivered, the times and stations on which they are broadcast and the accuracy of the information presented. Monitoring these messages or programs for political bias also is necessary.

Monitors could view these programs and compare their content with the actual facts about how, when and where to register and to vote. Monitors also should determine whether these messages are presented in a way that improperly discriminates against certain population groups or that favors cer-

tain political interests over others. All these data can be compiled into a report analyzing the adequacy of such programs.

**Entertainment and Sports Programming**

Entertainment and sports programs can be used to influence viewers in an election. Government officials or candidates may appear on morning talk shows, at football games, in guest appearances on game shows or even on popular drama or comedy shows. Popular entertainment figures may deliver politically relevant messages in subtle or overt ways. These can be important considerations for monitoring, but comprehensive monitoring of all programming requires a great deal of human resources and money. Furthermore, these data might be more difficult to interpret. Still, monitors and others should be encouraged to watch for and report on such effects during their normal viewing of television and radio programming. Research into the use of such extra-news programming for political purposes is important and might require comment from a monitoring organization even if full monitoring is impossible.



FIGURE 5-1: COVERAGE ON STATE-CONTROLLED TELEVISION OF THE 2000 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN "LAUNCH" OF THE FOUR LEADING CANDIDATES, SHOWING FUJIMORI WITH 18 MINUTES, 28 SECONDS, ANDRADE WITH 1 MINUTE, 55 SECONDS AND BOTH TOLEDO AND CASTAÑEDA WITH ZERO COVERAGE.

**Monitoring Media Complaint Mechanisms**
The monitoring project's analysis of the legal frame-work surrounding media conduct will address the issue of whether there are effective complaint mechanisms to which political competitors, citizens or journalists may turn for redress of violations of political rights by the media, inappropriate governmental interference or failure to protect press freedoms. Where such mechanisms exist (by law or through voluntary media associations), media monitors should report on the functioning of the media complaint mechanisms. This contextual issue can be an important indicator of media conduct. (See Appendices 7A-B for examples of a voluntary media code and mandatory procedures.)

CHAPTER SIX

# REPORTING YOUR RESULTS:

## Releasing Reports & Press Relations

The three main questions that a media monitoring project attempts to answer are: "Do voters have accurate and unbiased information upon which to make an informed political choice?" "Do political contestants have a fair opportunity to present their campaign messages to the electorate?" "Are the media free to perform their responsibilities as 'watch dogs' of the public's interest in the electoral context?" By providing an impartial and accurate answer to these questions in measurable and graphic form, a media monitoring project sets the stage for advocating for proper media conduct. This is the reason for reports, and these questions should be kept in mind when presenting the project's findings.

> The tone and language of monitoring reports are extremely important if they are to have influence. Reports should be impartial, carefully worded—with verifiable findings—and presented professionally.

Media monitoring reports must be thorough yet easy to read, so that findings and comparative data can be taken from them quickly by the press and others. (See Appendix 8 for sample media monitoring reports from Bulgaria, Peru, Slovakia, and Togo.) In addition to the report, a press release should be prepared presenting the main message that the project determines should be projected about the monitors' findings. Press releases should be no longer than one-page or one-and-one-half-pages.

A report should include several types of information that will be useful to those who are interested in the project. Among them are the following:

- A brief description of the sponsoring organization(s), if any, and of the media monitoring project itself;
- A summary of the media monitoring project's mission statement, concerning the purpose of the project, addressing why media monitoring is important and why the project is being conducted;
- A summary of the highlights of the findings and conclusions for the time period that the report covers;
- The particular media being monitored and why those outlets were chosen;
- A description of the monitoring methodology;
- A reasonably detailed discussion of the findings from the monitoring period;
- Graphs and charts showing amounts of coverage and positive and negative assessments of how subjects were portrayed by each media outlet monitored;
- Appropriate recommendations for improving media conduct and/or government conduct toward the media; and

- Acknowledgments of the project's volunteers, staff, funders and partners.

Charts and graphs should accompany the report and separate explanations should be provided for them. Conclusions should be drawn about basic factors such as media access, impartiality versus bias, sufficiency and accuracy of coverage.

The tone and language of monitoring reports are extremely important if they are to have influence. The report should be impartial, carefully worded—with verifiable findings—and presented professionally. Credit should be given for positive developments in media conduct, as well as showing the media's shortcomings and failures to perform properly. Reports should also address the government's treatment of the media and the election authority's responsibility to provide adequate voter education.

> In addition to periodic reports on results from the ongoing monitoring activities, the project should be prepared to issue urgent action reports if events demand them.

In addition to periodic reports on results from the ongoing monitoring activities, the project should be prepared to issue urgent action reports if events demand them. Special statements could be issued if there are attacks on the media or acts of censorship.

Background reports on the legal framework for media conduct and other contextual issues, such as a history of censorship during conflicts or states of emergency and/or natural disasters, should be prepared and released separately from periodic monitoring reports. In addition, a "final" comprehensive report on media conduct should be published soon after the election process is completed. (See Chapter Four: *The Basics of Monitoring,* section entitled "Final Reports on Election Coverage" at page 32.)

## LANGUAGES

An important question to address is whether to translate the reports into other languages. If the project is intended to convey a message to the international community or to minority language populations in a country, translation will be important to the project, but it will add significantly to the time required for report preparation. In cases where time and resources are limited and other languages are judged to be important, the project might consider releasing a summary of findings in those languages.

## THE INTERNET

If possible, the project should create a website where all reports and diagrams are made available immediately following press conferences. In addition to presenting each of the project's reports, the website can provide other information in a lively format. The address of the project can be made widely available in your country and around the world and can be linked to the websites of partner organizations. Linkages can be established between your website and those of other organizations. (See Appendix 1 for the website addresses of established media monitoring projects; also see Chapter 2, section entitled "Monitoring Political Coverage on the Internet.")

E-mail groups also should be set up for distributing notices of press conferences, urgent action reports, press releases and periodic reports following press conferences. These distribution groups should include the main offices outside the country of key international media, as well as key international non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

## PRESS CONFERENCES

The manner in which reports are released is critical. Often, holding well-organized press conferences is the best way to ensure that the project gets attention and that monitoring reports have a significant impact. There are many considerations that must be addressed with regard to press conferences. The project's press and public relations secretary must

prepare files of the names, addresses, e-mail addresses, telephone and fax numbers, radio and television dial numbers, as well as times of newscasts, and deadlines for submission of information for all relevant international and national media outlets. The files, best set up in a notebook as well as stored electronically, should also include the names of publishers, editorial board members, assignment editors and journalists who are likely to cover the media monitoring project's work.

These materials will be valuable for organizing press conferences. They also will be useful for setting up meetings with editorial boards and inviting the press to become familiar with the project's operations. Similar information should also be compiled about journalist associations, human rights and other interested civic organizations, media regulatory and oversight bodies (including parliamentary committees and ministries), electoral authorities, embassies, relevant international organizations and funding agencies, all of which should be part of a reporting and media strategy.

The press and public relations secretary should develop professional relationships with assignment editors and journalists who cover the media monitoring project's work—being mindful that these are professional, rather than social, relationships. The press secretary must always speak as a representative of the project and keep in mind that the project cannot open itself to the accusation that it favors specific journalists. These relationships will be important over time in seeking coverage of monitoring findings and following up with media outlets to ensure accurate coverage of the project's work.

Among the main additional factors to consider in organizing a press conference are the following points.

### Timing

Carefully consider the best day and time to hold your press conference. Having an established time and place for your regular press briefings will increase the turnout. In selecting the time, consider questions like: When are the journalists' deadlines? Are other newsworthy events held reg-

ularly on specific days with which the project might not want to compete (such as, a weekly press conference by the Prime Minister or the release of periodic economic data)?

### Attendees

Consider in advance the media outlets, specific journalists and others from the domestic and international communities to invite to press conferences and have their contact information organized for fast notification and follow-up contacts. Send out a press notice/advisory several days prior to the event, and make follow-up phone calls the day before to remind potential attendees of the time and place of the press conference.

### Venue and Set-Up

The press conference location should be well known and convenient to the press. All of the media monitoring project's press conferences should be held at the same place, on the same day and time each week or every other week or other regular interval. The room must be the right size to accommodate a reasonable audience and not be too big. A better sense of interest is created if the room is little crowded than is created in a room so large that it appears "empty." The room must be set up to display results on a projector, and it must accommodate a microphone and sound system. It should be arranged with a table at the front of the room for the speakers and perhaps include a podium for the introducer and the presenter of the report, depending on the number of spokespeople and their speaking style. Have the logo and name of the media monitoring project as a large backdrop, keeping in mind that it will appear in film footage and photos of the conference. Also, keep this visual image in mind when placing the speakers at the table.

Set up a sign-in table just outside the entrance to the room or just inside if that is not possible. Have a sign-in sheet for the press and others, as well as a press packet (discussed below). The reports themselves may be included in the press packet, but reporters may take them and not stay for the session itself. If the press conference is at a time that

> The spokesperson must be keenly aware of the main message that the project determines is important to present about the monitoring findings and must consistently present that message.

allows for easy filing of reports by journalists' deadlines, then copies of the project's reports could be distributed at the conclusion of the press conference or after the findings have been presented. In addition, a table with materials (such as, the media monitoring project's mission statement and prior reports) should be set up. Also, a table with refreshments should be provided, which will be appreciated by the attendees.

### Press Packets

Press packets should be prepared in advance for distribution at press conferences. They also are valuable to have at other times to give to journalists and others who express an interest in learning about the media monitoring project. Press packets should contain: the project's mission statement; a description of the project's sponsoring organizations, if any, and its board of directors or board of advisors, if any; an explanation of the project's methodology; and the press release concerning the media monitoring report to be released at the press conference.

### Spokesperson(s) and Press Conference Presentations

The official spokesperson(s) for the media monitoring project must be carefully chosen to establish and maintain the credibility of the project (as noted in Chapter Three). This person must be an excellent public speaker and be able to present the project's findings succinctly and clearly at press conferences. This must include presentation of charts and graphs. Moreover, the spokesperson must be adept at answering questions from the media.

Presentation of media monitoring reports also requires discipline. The spokesperson must be keenly aware of the main message that the project determines is

important to present about the monitoring findings and must consistently present that message—in opening presentations and in answering questions from the journalists. In other words, the spokesperson(s) must "stay on message." Journalists will likely have intense interest in the findings of the project—after all, the findings concentrate on their media outlets and those of their rivals. Spokespersons therefore must be polished at fielding questions, challenges and even accusations from the press. They must be comfortable defending reports and the project's methodology, based on facts and without becoming defensive or argumentative.

This requires focused attention, doing homework before press conferences and practice. Spokespersons should receive the media monitoring report and corresponding press release well in advance of the press conference, so that she or he can study it and prepare remarks. The spokesperson(s) should also work with the technical personnel before the press conference to be sure that projection of graphs can be done easily and in the proper order of presentation. It is also wise to have the project director and team leaders involved in press conference preparation and for the director to sit at the table during the press conference to help in answering questions if necessary. If the project director serves as the official spokesperson, another respected figure, who is thoroughly familiar with the project's operations and the report's findings and who is a clear and disciplined speaker, should sit at the table. It is always wise to have a back-up spokesperson and a second person at the table to help ensure that nothing important is missed or misrepresented.

### Press Conference Simulations

It is wise to conduct simulated press conferences before the media monitoring project is prepared to issue its first report. This is fun and valuable for all participants, particularly spokespersons. Even after the project is underway, practice sessions should be organized before each press conference to go over technical issues, as discussed above, and for a few people to simulate questions from the press to the spokespersons concerning the report that is about to be released.

**Follow-Up**
There are significant follow-up activities to accomplish after press conferences. The sign-in sheet must be examined to determine whether any important media representative or representatives from other sectors were absent. Copies of the report and corresponding press release must be delivered immediately to all such persons, by hand, fax or email.

The press and public relations secretary also must be sure that the media are monitored for coverage of the media monitoring project itself. Monitoring forms should be filled out by the monitoring teams, noting any coverage of the project. (See Appendix 6 for sample forms.) A separate analysis should be made of this coverage and should be given to the project director and the press and public relations

secretary. The project should analyze this data for internal purposes of determining impact and how media outlets conduct themselves toward the project. This coverage should not become part of the project's periodic reports. However, it, as well as improvements in coverage of electoral competitors and positive action on laws, regulations, media self-regulation and other factors, can be important for evaluating the impact of the project over time.

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## HELPFUL INFORMATION

**If successful, the project reports should serve to:**

- Raise public confidence in the media to the degree warranted and reassure political contestants of the fairness of the media's performance.
- Alert voters to any concerns and to the need to question biased information they may get and, perhaps, seek additional information from other sources.
- Alert journalists, editors and owners of media outlets of their shortcomings or failures and prompt them to take corrective action.
- Alert government regulatory bodies of problems that might be correctable by existing enforcement mechanisms or cause them to explain their failings in this regard.
- Alert government authorities of the need to institute reforms that could correct the problems.
- Alert political contestants of problems that they can seek to correct by their own activities.
- Alert journalists' associations or societies of problems that might be addressed through membership rules or codes of conduct.
- Alert the international community of problems in the pre-election environment that should contribute to their assessment of the nature of the election process; or seek their assistance on problems that can be addressed through existing international agreements.
- Alert other civic groups about information they need to conduct their civic programs related to the elections or human rights.

# CHAPTER SEVEN
# Conclusion

Media monitoring is an exacting, time-sensitive exercise. It demands meticulous efforts by monitors, careful analysis by team leaders and astute judgments by those who prepare and present monitoring reports. Where findings demonstrate that the media are contributing to genuine, democratic elections, media monitoring can help develop public confidence in the mass communications media, as well as in government protection of freedom of expression and the election process itself. Media monitoring also can have a significant impact on improving the environment in which journalists operate and can contribute to improving media conduct toward political contestants and toward providing accurate and balanced information upon which informed and free political choices are made by the public.

Media monitoring by its nature addresses relatively complex questions. There is more than one method for conducting credible media monitoring. Moreover, those organizing a media monitoring project must adapt monitoring methodologies to address the particular conditions of their country.

This handbook stresses specific issues related to media coverage in the electoral context. Elections provide a critical opportunity to examine media conduct, just as they provide an opportunity to examine a wide range of institutions and processes that surround elections. This is because – while genuine elections are a fundamental human right and a right that, if realized, helps to reinforce systems that protect and promote other fundamental rights – genuinely democratic elections cannot be achieved unless other civil and political rights can be freely exercised. Freedom of expression, and the media's role in it, is an essential part of this mutually reinforcing dynamic. Media monitoring to promote democratic elections therefore is important for human rights and democracy advocates in any country.

There are many reasons to monitor the media before and after elections. The problems that arise as a consequence of manipulation of the media by public or private interests can threaten the health of a vibrant democratic nation and significantly hinder democratic progress elsewhere. Most citizens groups in nascent democracies, and in countries where democratic progress is stalled or threatened, focus initially on media conduct in the electoral context. They often expand their media monitoring to other times and may monitor media coverage of political processes and governmental affairs on a permanent basis.

Active citizens shining the spotlight on actions that corrupt the proper role of the media and on the media's presentation of inaccurate, biased or incomplete information can help those seeking to remedy these important problems. Media monitors can play a vital role in advocating for improved media laws and regulations and for effective governmental action to promote and protect press freedoms, the right of political competitors to seek public support through the media and the right of the population to receive accurate, balanced and complete coverage of political processes and governmental affairs. Media monitors can also encourage media and journalist associations to improve self-regulation by promoting adherence to professional standards. Media monitors thereby can help ensure that all citizens have the information they need to make the important decisions that democracy requires of them. It is hoped that this handbook will contribute to such efforts.

# Appendices

**APPENDIX 1**

## LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT MONITOR MEDIA CONDUCT IN ELECTIONS OR ASSIST MEDIA MONITORING BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

### National Organizations:

| | |
|---|---|
| Albania | Society for Democratic Culture (SHKD) |
| Bangladesh | Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) |
| Bulgaria | Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR) www.bia-bg.com/Business/directory/bschigp_english.htm |
| Cambodia | The Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL) www.bigpond.com/kh/users/comfrel/ |
| Kenya | Kenyan Human Rights Commission (KHRC) www.hri.ca/partners/khrc |
| Kosovo | Kosova Action for Civic Initiatives (KACI) www.kaci-kosova.org |
| Mexico | Academia Mexicana De Derechos Humanos (Mexican Academy of Human Rights—AMDH) and Alianza Cívica (Civic Alliance) www.unam.mx/amdh; http://www.laneta.apc.org/alianza/ |
| Montenegro | Association of Young Journalists of Montenegro (AMN) www.amncg.com/amn |
| Peru | Transparencia (Transparency) www.transparencia.org.pe |
| Romania | Asociatia Pro Democratia (Pro-Democracy Association—APD) www.apd.ro |
| Slovakia | MEMO'98 www.memo98.sk |
| South Africa | Media Monitoring Project (MMP) www.sn.apc.org/mmp/index.html |
| Sri Lanka | Center for Policy Alternatives and INFORM www.cpalanka.org |
| Ukraine | Committee of Voters of Ukraine (CVU) www.cvu.kiev.ua |
| Zimbabwe | Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe (MMPZ) mmpz.icon.co.zw |

**International Organizations:**

Article 19, the Global Campaign for Free Expression
www.article19.org

Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS)
www.eris.org.uk/

European Institute for the Media (EIM)
www.eim.de

European Union (EU)
europa.eu.int/comm/development/index_en.htm

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)
www.ndi.org

Osservatorio di Pavia (Pavia Institute)
www.osservatorio.it/

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)
www.osce.org/odihr

Reporter sans frontières (Reporters Without Borders—RSF)
www.rsf.org

The Asia Foundation (TAF)
www.asiafoundation.org

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
www.undp.org

## ASSESSING THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK CONCERNING MEDIA AND ELECTIONS

### Legal Framework

- What are the relevant constitutional and legal provisions? Review them and understand the rights and obligations as they relate to freedom of expression, including freedom of the press and the right to seek, receive and impart information. Are there court decisions that might help in the interpretation of these rights and obligations? Have the opinions of the courts been respected?

- What are the libel and defamation laws in your country and what is their history of enforcement? Are there laws relating to hate speech? Does an aggrieved party have any right to reply to defamatory speech? Have these laws been used by government officials or private individuals to pressure or interfere with journalists or media owners who have been critical?

- Are there references in the election law to rights and obligations of the media during an election? Are there provisions requiring accurate and balanced news coverage of political contestants and prohibiting political bias? Are there provisions to allow for free direct access to programming by parties or candidates during an election? How are time slots allocated? Are paid political advertisements allowed? Are there requirements concerning publication of voter education? Are there any restrictions on broadcasting or printing news or information at any time leading up to or during an election? Is there a mechanism for obtaining a remedy if the rights of political contestants are violated by the media? Does the law give the election commission any authority over the media in the electoral period?

- Has your country signed international treaties or other commitments that obligate it to protect the right to genuine democratic elections, freedom of expression, freedom of the press and the right to information?

- Are there laws on broadcast and/or print media, media ownership and licensing or other relevant matters, such as importation of necessary equipment and supplies?

### Licensing

- How do broadcasters acquire licenses in your country? Review these requirements and history of how existing licensees acquired their stations and the right to broadcast on them. When do licenses expire and what is required for renewal? How can licenses be revoked and by whom? Does this process seem fair?

- Is there a licensing requirement for print media, for importing, owning or operating a printing press, regulations pertaining to the import or pricing of newsprint or distribution of printed materials?

- Is there a regulatory body with responsibility for state-controlled and/or private media? What are its powers and history? Review any printed regulations that have been promulgated as well as decisions made and fines levied.

## Censorship

- Is there a history of official government censorship of the media in your country (e.g., related to civil conflict or other matters)? If so, are there any lingering effects on media freedom?
- Is there a history of physical attacks against journalists, editors or media owners in your country? Has the government brought the perpetrators to justice? Are there any effects on media coverage as a result of such attacks or threats of attacks?
- Are there any credible reports of self-censorship in the media as a result of any of the factors listed above or other factors? If so, what is the likely impact of this on electoral-related coverage?

## Ownership and Influence

- Does the government own or control any media outlets? Learn who controls these stations. Are there independent boards for such outlets? If so, who is on them, and how were they appointed?

- Who owns or controls private media outlets in your country? Are they identified with certain partisan or other influential individuals or organizations?

- What are the government and private sources of income for media outlets? Review government subsidies and advertising revenues. To what degree are various media outlets dependent on government advertising or subsidies for their financial well-being or survival?

## Self-Regulation

- Is there an association of media owners or publishers? What are the criteria for membership? Does it have a code of ethics or similar document? Is there a board or committee that considers violations of the code? Does it have the power to censure, suspend or revoke membership? Can a non-member bring a complaint to the board? Does the board have the power to order a correction, right of reply or similar remedy?
- Is there a national press council or an association of journalists? Does it have a code of professional responsibility, code of conduct or similar document? Are members required to adhere to the code, or do they pledge to do so? Is there a complaints committee or press "ombudsoffice" or similar place for citizens to take complaints about journalists' conduct? Does the complaints committee have the power to censure, suspend or expel a journalist from the council or association?

## INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS PROVISIONS ON DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

### Universal Declaration of Human Rights

*Article 2*

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

*Article 19*

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

*Article 21*

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

2. Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.

3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

### International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

*Article 2*

1. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

2. Where not already provided for by existing legislative or other measures, each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take the necessary steps, in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the present Covenant, to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the present Covenant.

3. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes:

   a. To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity;

b. To ensure that any person claiming such a remedy shall have his right thereto determined by competent judicial, administrative or legislative authorities, or by any other competent authority provided for by the legal system of the State, and to develop the possibilities of judicial remedy;

c. To ensure that the competent authorities shall enforce such remedies when granted.

*Article 19*
1. Everyone should have the right to hold opinions without interference.

2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

3. The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:

a. For respect of the rights or reputations of others;

b. For the protection of national security or of public order *(ordre public),* or of public health or morals.

*Article 25*
Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in Article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions:

a. To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;

b. To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;

c. To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country.

**International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**
*Article 5*
In compliance with the fundamental obligations laid down in Article 2 of this Convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without

distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights:

…

c. Political rights, in particular the rights to participate in elections – to vote and to stand for election – on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, to take part in the Government as well as in the conduct of public affairs at any level and to have equal access to public service;

d. Other civil rights, in particular;

…

viii. The right to freedom of opinion and expression… .

### Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

*Article 7*

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;

(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;

(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

*Article 8*

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

### Convention on the Political Rights of Women

*Article I*

Women shall be entitled to vote in all elections on equal terms with men without any discrimination.

*Article II*

Women shall be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies, established by national law, on equal terms with men, without any discrimination.

*Article III*
Women shall be entitled to hold public office and to exercise all public functions, established by national law, on equal terms with men, without any discrimination.

## African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

*Article 9*
1. Every individual shall have the right to receive information.

2. Every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law.

*Article 13*
1. Every citizen shall have the right to participate freely in the government of his country, either directly or through freely chosen representatives in accordance with the provisions of the law.

## American Convention on Human Rights

*Article 13. Freedom of Thought and Expression*
1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and expression. This right includes freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing, in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of one's choice.

2. The exercise of the right provided for in the foregoing paragraph shall not be subject to prior censorship but shall be subject to subsequent imposition of liability, which shall be expressly established by law to the extent necessary to ensure:

   a. respect for the rights or reputations of others; or

   b. the protection of national security, public order, or public health or morals.

*Article 23. Right to Participate in Government*
1. Every citizen shall enjoy the following rights and opportunities:

   a. to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;

   b. to vote and to be elected in genuine periodic elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and by secret ballot that guarantees the free expression of the will of the voters; and

   c. to have access, under general conditions of equality, to the public service of his country.

2. The law may regulate the exercise of the rights and opportunities referred to in the preceding paragraph only on the basis of age, nationality, residence, language, education, civil and mental capacity, or sentencing by a competent court in criminal proceedings.

## American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man

*Article IV.*

Every person has the right to freedom of investigation, of opinion, and of the expression and dissemination of ideas, by any medium whatsoever.

*Article XX.*

Every person having legal capacity is entitled to participate in the government of his country, directly or through his representatives, and to take part in popular elections, which shall be by secret ballot, and shall be honest, periodic and free.

## Inter-American Democratic Charter

*Article 1*

The peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it.

…

*Article 3*

Essential elements of representative democracy include, inter alia, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, access to and the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law, the holding of periodic, free, and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage as an expression of the sovereignty of the people, the pluralistic system of political parties and organizations, and the separation of powers and independence of the branches of government.

## European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

*Article 10*

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.

2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are proscribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of infor-

mation received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

## Protocol (No. 1) to the [European] Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
*Article 3*
The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature.

## Document of the 1990 Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension (the 1990 Copenhagen Document)
...
[The participating States] recognize that pluralistic democracy and the rule of law are essential for ensuring respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the development of human contacts and the resolution of other issues of a related humanitarian character. They therefore welcome the commitment expressed by all participating States to the ideals of democracy and political pluralism as well as their common determination to build democratic societies based on free elections and the rule of law.

...
In order to strengthen respect for, and enjoyment of, human rights and fundamental freedoms, to develop human contacts and to resolve issues of a related humanitarian character, the participating States agree on the following:

...
(3) They reaffirm that democracy is an inherent element of the rule of law. They recognize the importance of pluralism with regard to political organizations.

...
(5) They solemnly declare that among those elements of justice which are essential to the full expression of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all human beings are the following:

(5.1) - free elections that will be held at reasonable intervals by secret ballot or by equivalent free voting procedure, under conditions which ensure in practice the free expression of the opinion of the electors in the choice of their representatives;

...
(5.10) - everyone will have an effective means of redress against administrative decisions, so as to guarantee respect for fundamental rights and ensure legal integrity;

(6) The participating States declare that the will of the people, freely and fairly expressed through periodic and genuine elections, is the basis of the authority and legitimacy of all government. The participating States will accordingly respect the right of their citizens to take part in the governing of their country, either directly or through representatives freely chosen by them through fair electoral processes.

(7) To ensure that the will of the people serves as the basis of the authority of government, the participating States will

(7.1) - hold free elections at reasonable intervals, as established by law;
…
(7.5) - respect the right of citizens to seek political or public office, individually or as representatives of political parties or organizations, without discrimination;

(7.6) - respect the right of individuals and groups to establish, in full freedom, their own political parties or other political organizations and provide such political parties and organizations with the necessary legal guarantees to enable them to compete with each other on a basis of equal treatment before the law and by the authorities;
…
(7.8) - provide that no legal or administrative obstacle stands in the way of unimpeded access to the media on a non-discriminatory basis for all political groupings and individuals wishing to participate in the electoral process;

(8) The participating States consider that the presence of observers, both foreign and domestic, can enhance the electoral process for States in which elections are taking place. They therefore invite observers from any other CSCE [now OSCE] participating States and any appropriate private institutions and organizations who may wish to do so to observe the course of their national election proceedings, to the extent permitted by law. They will also endeavour to facilitate similar access for election proceedings held below the national level. Such observers will undertake not to interfere in the electoral proceedings.

(9) The participating States reaffirm that

(9.1) – everyone will have the right to freedom of expression including the right to communication. This right will include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. The exercise of this right may be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and are consistent with international standards. In particular, no limitation will be imposed on access to, and use of, means of reproducing documents of any kind, while respecting, however, rights relating to intellectual property, including copyright… .

(10) In reaffirming their commitment to ensure effectively the rights of the individual to know and act upon human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to contribute actively, individually or in association with others, to their promotion and protection, the participating States express their commitment to

(10.1) - respect the right of everyone, individually or in association with others, to seek, receive and impart freely views and information on human rights

and fundamental freedoms, including the rights to disseminate and publish such views and information;

…

(10.3) - ensure that individuals are permitted to exercise the right to association, including the right to form, join and participate effectively in non-governmental organizations which seek the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including trade unions and human rights monitoring groups;

(10.4) - allow members of such groups and organizations to have unhindered access to and communication with similar bodies within and outside their countries and with international organizations, to engage in exchanges, contacts and co-operation with such groups and organizations and to solicit, receive and utilize for the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms voluntary financial contributions from national and international sources as provided for by law.

(24) The participating States will ensure that the exercise of all the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out above will not be subject to any restrictions except those which are provided by law and are consistent with their obligations under international law, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and with their international commitments, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These restrictions have the character of exceptions. The participating States will ensure that these restrictions are not abused and are not applied in an arbitrary manner, but in such a way that the effective exercise of these rights is ensured.

Any restriction on rights and freedoms must, in a democratic society, relate to one of the objectives of the applicable law and be strictly proportionate to the aim of that law.

*In addition to the provisions of these international human rights instruments, which create obligations for the states that are parties to them, there are a number of other significant declarations and documents of associations of states and of the associations of the legislative branches of governments. Included among those that are directly relevant to democratic elections are the following: The Harare Commonwealth Declaration (1991) of the Commonwealth of Nations; Documents of the Summit Meetings of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe subsequent to the 1990 Copenhagen Document; the 2001 Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region adopted by the Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum; and the 1994 Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. In addition, interpretation of the provisions of international human rights instruments and opinions and decisions on individual cases by international tribunals provide important sources of law concerning democratic elections and freedom of expression.*

**SAMPLE ORGANIZATIONAL TIMELINE FOR MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT**
(Many Items Listed Will Be Ongoing Tasks and Interrelate)

### Month One—Founding Tasks

- Setting Organizational Goals
- Developing the Strategic Plan
- Creating the Mission Statement
- Deciding Upon the Project's Name and Logo
- Framing Organizational Structure
- Recruiting the Oversight or Advisory Board, If Appropriate
- Selecting the Project Director
- Securing Initial Funding

### Month One—Initial Organizational Tasks

- Analyzing the Legal and Regulatory Framework
- Deciding What Outlets to Monitor
- Deciding What Subjects to Monitor
- Considering Monitoring Methodologies
- Developing a Public Relations and Media Strategy
- Locating Appropriate Space
- Hiring Team Leaders
- Securing Expert Assistance

### Month Two—Setting Up Operations

- Acquiring Equipment and Supplies
- Deciding on Data to Be Collected, Methodologies to Employ and Setting Up Computer Programs
- Writing Monitoring Forms and Training Materials
- Developing Training Techniques
- Deciding on Monitoring Schedule and Staffing Needs
- Recruiting and Training Monitors and Other Staff and Volunteers
- Practicing Use of Computer Software
- Deciding on Report Formats and Languages of Publication
- Selecting and "Training" Spokesperson(s)
- Developing Contact Lists, Email Groups and Other Communications Tools
- Setting Up a Website
- Continuing Fundraising Efforts
- Organizing Senior Staff Meetings to Evaluate Progress

### Month Two—Beginning Monitoring Operations

- Assigning Monitors and Others to Teams and to Monitoring/Analysis and Report Development Schedules
- Setting Up Simulation Exercises for Monitoring, Analyzing Data, Developing Reports and Practicing Public Presentations

- Arranging Meetings with Media Outlets, Editorial Boards, Media Council, Journalist Association, Media Oversight Board, Political Parties and Candidates and Electoral Authorities to Introduce the Project
- Inviting Those Listed Above to Visit the Project and Become Acquainted with the Methodologies and Operations
- Conducting a Full Week's "Dress Rehearsal" Exercise to Test All Systems and Evaluate Operations
- Launching First Media Monitoring Cycle
- Setting Up First Periodic Press Conference and Presenting Initial Periodic Report and Any Separate Background Reports on Contextual Issues

## Month Two Through Immediate Post-Election Period—Periodic Monitoring & Reporting

A Typical Weekly Schedule:

### *Monday:*

- Begin Weekly Monitoring; Monitors Turn In Daily Forms
- Team Leaders Collect Data from Previous Week's Monitoring and Prepare Weekly Tally Sheets and Analysis
- Begin Report Drafting Process
- Hold Meeting of Team Leaders/Senior Staff to Evaluate Status of Operations
- Send Out Press Notice about Thursday's Press Conference and Monitoring Report

### *Tuesday:*

- Continue Monitoring and Turning in Forms
- Enter Data from Weekly Tally Sheets into Computer Spreadsheet Software
- Start Initial Preparation of Charts and Graphs
- Continue Report Drafting Process

### *Wednesday:*

- Continue Monitoring and Turning in Forms
- Complete Charts and Graphs on Previous Week's Monitor Findings
- Complete Report on Previous Week's Findings
- Develop Recommendations and Include in Report, If Appropriate
- Write Press Release Communicating Main Message about Findings
- Meet with Partners and/or Board, If Applicable, to Review and Approve Report and Press Release
- Translate Press Release and Summary of Report into Additional Necessary Languages for Distribution

*Thursday:*

- Continue Monitoring and Turning in Forms
- Hold Press Conference and Release Report
- Distribute Report and Press Release to Email Groups and Post on Website
- Follow-Up with Important Journalists and Others on Report

*Friday and Saturday:*

- Continue Monitoring and Turning In Forms
- Complete Follow-Up on Report Distribution and Reactions to Report
- Evaluate Whether Any Appropriate Advocacy Efforts Are in Order Following the Report and Recommendations and Plan Such Actions

*Sunday:*

- Continue Monitoring and Turning in Forms
- Begin Process of Compiling Data into Weekly Tally Sheets
- Begin Analysis for Next Report

**Month Two through Post Election Period—Ongoing Tasks & Future Planning**

- Evaluating Status of Operations and Steps to Improve Them—Including Encouraging Staff and Volunteers
- Improving Communications Networks and Outreach
- Determining Whether Law and/or Regulatory Reforms and/or Journalist Self-Regulatory Improvements Are Needed and Planning Effective Advocacy Campaigns
- Continuing Fundraising Efforts Appropriate to Needs and Plans
- Developing Urgent Action Reports and Reports on Contextual Issues, as Needed
- Preparing a Comprehensive Post-Election Report with Recommendations and Potentially Link It to Roundtable Discussions and/or Advocacy Efforts
- Conducting Lessons Learned Activities and Communicating Them Internally and to Other Monitoring Organizations
- Revising Strategic Plan in Light of Potential Longer-Term Activities and Possibilities for Monitoring Additional Aspects of Media Conduct, Freedom of Expression for Political Contestants and Citizens' Right to Information

**Media Monitoring Pledge**

I hereby pledge that:

1) I will serve as a nonpartisan media monitor or otherwise work with _____ [the name of the project or organization conducting the media monitoring effort];

2) I am not a candidate nor am I an activist for any candidate, political party or other association that is seeking public office in the upcoming elections;

3) I do not intend to become a candidate in the upcoming election nor do I intend to use any nonpartisan election monitoring organization as a basis for supporting my candidacy in any future election;

4) I will maintain strict nonpartisanship throughout the election process, by remaining impartial in all activities concerning the elections, refraining from expressing publicly any preference for or against any candidate, political party or other association seeking public office, and rejecting all favors offered or threats issued by any of the political contestants or their agents;

5) In all media monitoring activities, I will work diligently to be impartial and accurate in monitoring, analyzing, reporting and representing the media monitoring project to others, without regard to who wins or loses the elections and putting aside my personal views about those seeking public office, except when I exercise my right to cast a ballot in the secrecy of a polling booth;

6) I will attend media monitoring training sessions and will act in all media monitoring activities to the best of my abilities; and

7) I have read and understood the "Code of Conduct for Media Monitoring for the Upcoming Elections," and I agree to promote its goals and principles and to follow its requirements.

..................................................... Signature ....................................... Date
..................................................... Printed Name in Block Letters
..................................................... Address
..................................................... Other Contact Information
..................................................... Interests and Skills that Apply to Media Monitoring
.............................................................................................................................
.............................................................................................................................
.............................................................................................................................
.............................................................................................................................

**SAMPLE MEDIA MONITORING CODE OF CONDUCT**

### Code of Conduct for Media Monitoring for the Upcoming Elections

We, individuals and members of civic organizations who have agreed to conduct nonpartisan monitoring of media conduct in the upcoming elections:

Recognizing that the will of the people is the basis of authority of any democratic government and that genuine, democratic elections are a fundamental human right, and recognizing further that, in order for elections to be genuine, the will of the people expressed at the ballot box must be based on a free and informed choice;

Acknowledging that the mass communications media are critical to the population receiving adequate accurate information upon which to make electoral choices and appreciating that contestants for political office must have a fair opportunity to present their messages to the public via the media in order to win electoral office and realizing that the mass media must be free to conduct their proper role as sentinels of governmental and political processes;

Being aware of the role that nonpartisan election monitoring plays in ensuring genuinely democratic elections and being concerned with safeguarding the integrity, impartiality and effectiveness of monitoring efforts, agree to abide by this code of conduct for media monitoring.

#### WE WILL BE IMPARTIAL AND NONPARTISAN

Everyone who conducts activities with this media monitoring project shall in all cases act, write and speak without prejudice or preference towards: any political party, candidate or association that seeks electoral office; any region of the country; any ethnic group or persons; or any media outlet, publisher, editor, journalist, media oversight body or electoral authority.

#### WE WILL REPORT IN AN IMPARTIAL, ACCURATE AND VERIFIABLE MANNER

Monitors must report impartially and accurately on all news coverage, direct access messages by political contestants (political parties, candidates or others), whether in paid political advertisements or unpaid messages, public affairs programs, civic or voter education messages or any other broadcast programs or printed stories or ads – no matter what the subject of these may be. The events, issues and subjects must be recorded properly and records maintained so that all findings will be verifiable.

#### WE WILL ANALYZE DATA AND PRESENT IT IN AN IMPARTIAL, ACCURATE AND VERIFIABLE MANNER

Everyone who analyzes and presents data compiled by the monitors will do so impartially and accurately and will record analysis and written reports of findings in a verifiable manner.

## WE WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH THE NEWS MEDIA, JOURNALISTS, ELECTION AUTHORITIES, POLITICAL CONTESTANTS OR VOTERS

No one involved with this media monitoring project will interfere with the activities of any media outlet, publisher, editor, journalist, political contestant, election authority or media oversight body. No one involved in this media monitoring project will attempt to influence voters in a partisan manner nor will they direct or obstruct the election process.

## WE WILL OBSERVE ALL RELEVANT LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS

Everyone involved with this media monitoring project must know the laws, rules and regulations that guide the conduct of elections and of the media and must strictly adhere to these laws and regulations in the performance of their functions.

The media monitoring project and its spokespersons may bring improper media conduct or improper conduct of governmental authorities toward the media to the attention of relevant authorities and to the public.

## WE WILL MAINTAIN A CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH MEDIA OUTLETS, MEDIA OWNERS, PUBLISHERS, EDITORS, JOURNALISTS, MEDIA OVERSIGHT BODIES, POLITICAL CONTESTANTS AND ELECTION AUTHORITIES

Everyone involved with this media monitoring project shall maintain a respectful and principled relationship with media outlets, media owners, publishers, editors, journalists, media oversight bodies, political contestants and election authorities.

No one involved with this media monitoring project must ever accept any reward or favor from someone involved with the media, political contestants, media oversight bodies, election authorities or others that might in any way be seen as an attempt to influence her or his activities with this media monitoring project. Anyone involved with this project who receives an offer of such a reward or favor or any threat from anyone that could be seen as an attempt to influence his or her activities with the project must report this immediately to the project's leaders.

## WE WILL COOPERATE IN OBSERVING THE ELECTIONS

Everyone involved with this media monitoring project will endeavor to work together with organizations conducting nonpartisan monitoring programs and with international election observers by sharing reports of media monitoring findings.

# Television News Monitoring Form — Headline Segment

### *Please write very clearly!!!*

**Monitor Number** _____

**Broadcast Outlet Monitored** _____

**Program Name** _____

**Date** _____ **Time Start** _____ **Time End** _____

**News Item: Word-for-word headlines in order of presentation**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

| Subject of the Headline | Length of Time of the Headline | Type of Graphic or Picture Presented with the Headline | Monitor's Impression of the Headline: Pos., Neg., Neutral |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 1. | 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. | 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. | 3. | 3. |
| 4. | 4. | 4. | 4. |
| 5. | 5. | 5. | 5. |
| 6. | 6. | 6. | 6. |
| 7. | 7. | 7. | 7. |
| 8. | 8. | 8. | 8. |

# Television News Program Item Summaries Form

*Score for each RELEVANT news item only.*
*Use separate sheet for each news item.*

**Monitor Number** _____     **Outlet** _____

**Program Name** _____     **Program Date/Time** _____

1. **Item Number/title** (from news program headlines) _____

2. **Item Start Time**_____ **End Time** _____ **Elapsed Time** _____ min. _____ sec.

3. **Transcribe the opening line, word-for-word**

   _____
   _____
   _____

4. **Summary of Main Theme of Item**

   _____
   _____
   _____

5. **Name and organizational affiliation of individuals on camera, in order of appearance** (do not include reporter)

| Name/Affiliation Gov't/Party/Other | Picture/Voice (P/V) Voice Only (V) Picture Only (P) | Time on Camera Minutes/Seconds | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |
| 6. | | | |
| 7. | | | |

6. **Name and organizational affiliation of individuals/organizations quoted or cited but not on camera, in order, and by time**

| Name/Affiliation | Time | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |
| 6. | | |
| 7. | | |

# Television News Program — Brief Commentary Form

**Monitor Number** _____          **Outlet** _____

**Program Name** _____     **Program Date/Time** _____

**1. Were any important News items of the day NOT reported?**
(if it was reported in other media, please identify that media here)

_____

_____

_____

**2. Did you note any "Media Effects" that could indicate bias or distortion?**
(please cite item and time, and describe fully)

_____

_____

_____

**3. Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful or prejudicial against certain individuals or groups.**
(please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

_____

_____

_____

**4. Were there any descriptions or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? Please be as specific as possible.**
(please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

_____

_____

_____

**Please feel free to use the back of this sheet for additional comments.**
**Please be sure to note date, time and name of any program mentioned.**
**Please be as specific as possible in your comments. Thank you!**

# Television News Daily Top Stories

**Date** _____

**TOP 5 TELEVISION STORIES**

**State Television 1**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**State Television 2**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Private Television 1**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Private Television 2**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Private Television 3**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

# Television Weekly Tally Sheet

**Station Monitored** _____

**Monitoring Period**    From ___ / ___ / ___    Through ___ / ___ / ___

**GOVERNMENT**

| Date | Time | | | | # Positive | # Negative | # Neutral |
|------|------|---|---|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|
|      | P/V  | P | V | Not on Camera |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |

**Total Time** [      |     |      |                    ]  **=** [                    ]  **(add 4 totals)**

**PARTY 1**

| Date | Time | | | | # Positive | # Negative | # Neutral |
|------|------|---|---|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|
|      | P/V  | P | V | Not on Camera |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |

**Total Time** [      |     |      |                    ]  **=** [                    ]  **(add 4 totals)**

**PARTY 2**

| Date | Time | | | | # Positive | # Negative | # Neutral |
|------|------|---|---|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|
|      | P/V  | P | V | Not on Camera |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |

**Total Time** [      |     |      |                    ]  **=** [                    ]  **(add 4 totals)**

**MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT/INDIVIDUALS**

| Date | Time | | | | # Positive | # Negative | # Neutral |
|------|------|---|---|---------------|------------|------------|-----------|
|      | P/V  | P | V | Not on Camera |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |
|      |      |   |   |               |            |            |           |

**Total Time** [      |     |      |                    ]  **=** [                    ]  **(add 4 totals)**

# Radio News Monitoring Form — Headline Segment

*Please write very clearly!!!*

**Monitor Number** _____

**Broadcast Outlet Monitored** _____

**Program Name** _____

**Date** _____ **Time Start** _____ **Time End** _____

**News Item: Word-for-word headlines in order of presentation**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

| Subject of the Headline | Length of Time of the Headline | Music or Sound Effect with the Headline | Monitor's Impression of the Headline: Pos., Neg., Neutral (1-5) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | 1. | 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. | 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. | 3. | 3. |
| 4. | 4. | 4. | 4. |
| 5. | 5. | 5. | 5. |
| 6. | 6. | 6. | 6. |
| 7. | 7. | 7. | 7. |
| 8. | 8. | 8. | 8. |

# Radio News Program Item Summaries Form

*Score for each RELEVANT news item only.*
*Use separate sheet for each news item.*

**Monitor Number** _____      **Outlet** _____

**Program Name** _____ **Program Date/Time** _____

1. **Item Number/title** (from news program headlines) _____

2. **Item Start Time**_____ **End Time** _____ **Elapsed Time** ____ min. ____ sec.

3. **Transcribe the opening line, word-for-word**

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. **Summary of Main Theme of Item**

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. **Name and organizational affiliation of individuals on radio, in order of appearance** (do not include reporter)

| Name/Affiliation Gov't/Party/Other | Voice Only (V) | Minutes/Seconds | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |
| 6. | | | |
| 7. | | | |

6. **Name and organizational affiliation of individuals/organizations quoted or cited but not heard, in order, and by time**

| Name/Affiliation | Time | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |
| 6. | | |
| 7. | | |

# Radio News Program — Brief Commentary Form

**Monitor Number** _____          **Outlet** _____

**Program Name** _____          **Program Date/Time** _____

1.  **Were any important News items of the day NOT reported?**
    (if it was reported in other media, please identify that media here)

    _____
    _____
    _____

2.  **Did you note any "Media Effects" that could indicate bias or distortion?**
    (please cite item and time, and describe fully)

    _____
    _____
    _____

3.  **Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful or prejudicial against certain individuals or groups.**
    (please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

    _____
    _____
    _____

4.  **Were there any descriptions or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? Please be as specific as possible.**
    (please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

    _____
    _____
    _____

**Please feel free to use the back of this sheet for additional comments.
Please be sure to note date, time and name of any program mentioned.
Please be as specific as possible in your comments. Thank you!**

# Radio News Daily Top Stories

**Date** _____

**TOP 5 RADIO STORIES**

**State Radio 1**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**State Radio 2**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Private Radio 1**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Private Radio 2**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Private Radio 3**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

# Radio Weekly Tally Sheet

**Station Monitored** _____

**Monitoring Period**     From ___ / ___ / ___     Through ___ / ___ / ___

**GOVERNMENT**

| Date | Time | | # Positive | # Negative | # Neutral |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Voice Heard** | **Voice Not Heard** | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

**Total Time** [    |    |    |         ] = [            ] **(add 4 totals)**

**PARTY 1**

| Date | Time | | # Positive | # Negative | # Neutral |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Voice Heard** | **Voice Not Heard** | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

**Total Time** [    |    |    |         ] = [            ] **(add 4 totals)**

**PARTY 2**

| Date | Time | | # Positive | # Negative | # Neutral |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Voice Heard** | **Voice Not Heard** | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

**Total Time** [    |    |    |         ] = [            ] **(add 4 totals)**

**MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT/INDIVIDUALS**

| Date | Time | | # Positive | # Negative | # Neutral |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Voice Heard** | **Voice Not Heard** | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

**Total Time** [    |    |    |         ] = [            ] **(add 4 totals)**

# Print Media Monitoring Form — Front Page Coverage (page 1 of 4)

### *Please write very clearly!!!*

**Monitor Number** _____

**Newspaper Monitored** _____

**Date** _____

**News Item: Word-for-word headlines in order of size on front page**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Front Page News Articles**

|   | Subject | Square CM | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |

**Front Page News Photos**

|   | Subject | Square CM | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |

# Print Media Monitoring Form — Inside Coverage (page 2 of 4)

### *Please write very clearly!!!*

**Monitor Number** _____

**Newspaper Monitored** _____

**Date** _____

## Headlines Not on Front Page (word-for-word)

|     | Subject | Pg. # | Square CM | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|-----|---------|-------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 2.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 3.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 4.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 5.  |         |       |           |                         |

## Other Articles Not on Front Page

|     | Subject | Pg. # | Square CM | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|-----|---------|-------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 2.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 3.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 4.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 5.  |         |       |           |                         |

## News Photos Not on Front Page

|     | Subject | Pg. # | Square CM | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|-----|---------|-------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 2.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 3.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 4.  |         |       |           |                         |
| 5.  |         |       |           |                         |

**APPENDIX 6—CONTINUED**

## Print Media Monitoring Form — Front Page References (page 3 of 4)

*Please write very clearly!!!*

**Monitor Number** _____

**Newspaper Monitored** _____

**Date** _____

**List total number of references to a political figure or political party on the front page of this newspaper, in alphabetical order.**

| Name | # of References |
|---|---|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |
| 9. | |
| 10. | |
| 11. | |
| 12. | |
| 13. | |
| 14. | |
| 15. | |
| 16. | |
| 17. | |
| 18. | |
| 19. | |
| 20. | |
| 21. | |
| 22. | |
| 23. | |
| 24. | |
| 25. | |

# Print Media Monitoring Form — Inside References (page 4 of 4)

### *Please write very clearly!!!*

**Monitor Number** _____

**Newspaper Monitored** _____

**Date** _____

**List total number of references to a political figure or political party on the inside pages of this newspaper, in alphabetical order.**

| Name | # of References |
|---|---|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |
| 9. | |
| 10. | |
| 11. | |
| 12. | |
| 13. | |
| 14. | |
| 15. | |
| 16. | |
| 17. | |
| 18. | |
| 19. | |
| 20. | |
| 21. | |
| 22. | |
| 23. | |
| 24. | |
| 25. | |

# Newspaper Coverage Brief Commentary Form

**Monitor Number** _____

**Newspaper Name** _____ **Date** _____

**1. Were any important News items of the day NOT reported?**
(if it was reported in other media, please identify that media here)

_____

_____

_____

**2. Did you note any "Media Effects" that could indicate bias or distortion?**
(please cite item and time, and describe fully)

_____

_____

_____

**3. Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful or prejudicial against certain individuals or groups.**
(please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

_____

_____

_____

**4. Were there any descriptions or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? Please be as specific as possible.**
(please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

_____

_____

_____

**Please feel free to use the back of this sheet for additional comments.**
**Please be sure to note date, time and name of any program mentioned.**
**Please be as specific as possible in your comments. Thank you!**

# Newspaper Daily Top Stories

**Date** _____

**TOP 5 NEWSPAPER STORIES**

**Newspaper 1**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Newspaper 2**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Newspaper 3**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Newspaper 4**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

**Newspaper 5**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

# Newspaper Coverage by Outlet
## Weekly Tally Sheet*

**Date** _____ **Outlet** _____

**Subject** _____

| # | Date | Reference<br>Individual/Affiliation or Organization (including the media monitoring project) | Space (Square CM)<br>Front Page Headline (F/H)<br>Front Page Photo (F/P)<br>Front Page Article (F/A)<br>Inside Headline (page #/H)<br>Inside Article (page #/A)<br>Inside Photo (page #/P) | Positive/Negative<br>(1-5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | | |
| 2. | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |
| 4. | | | | |
| 5. | | | | |
| 6. | | | | |
| 7. | | | | |
| 8. | | | | |
| 9. | | | | |
| 10. | | | | |
| 11. | | | | |
| 12. | | | | |
| 13. | | | | |
| 14. | | | | |
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\*   A Weekly Tally Sheet should be completed for each political subject, for each publication. Over time coverage of each subject can be tracked in each publication, and their treatment can be compared across various publications.

# Newspaper Coverage by Political Subject
# Weekly Tally Sheet

**Dates (week of)** _____

**Newspaper** _____

**Name of Individual or Organization Covered** _____
**(including the media monitoring project)**

**FRONT PAGE**

| Item | Space (SQ CM) | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|---|---|---|
| Front Page Headline (F/H) | | |
| Front Page Photo (F/P) | | |
| Front Page Article (F/A) | | |
| **Front Page SQ CM Subtotal** | | |

**INSIDE**

| Item | Space (SQ CM) | Positive/Negative (1-5) |
|---|---|---|
| Inside Headline (F/H) | | |
| Inside Photo (F/P) | | |
| Inside Article (F/A) | | |
| **Inside SQ CM Subtotal** | | |

**SQ CM Total**

**Positive Total**

**Negative Total**

## SAMPLE MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT—GUYANA

### A MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT
**for reporting and coverage of Elections in Guyana in 2001**
*Agreed to on 9th October 2000 at the "Media Code of Conduct Roundtable" at Le Meridien Pegasus, Old Seawall Road, Georgetown, and signed by:* Andaiye, Mark Bhagwandin, Anthony Calder, Hugh Cholmondeley, Rockliff Christie, Karen Davis, David De Caires, David De Groot, Patrick Denny, Omar Farouk, Martin Goolsaran, Alex Graham, David Granger, Albert Henry, Catherine Hughes, Julia Johnson, Sharief Khan, Prem Misir, Kit Nascimento, Compton Peters, Abraham Poole, Khrishna Ramdhani, Rudy Saul, Lalan Shewcharan, Savitree Singh, Henry Skerret and Colin Smith.

### I. PREAMBLE
Given the desirability for a fair, peaceful and well-regulated election and the avoidance of the aggravation of ethnic tension and unnecessary political discord,

> We *agree and accept* that a Code of Conduct for the Media—taken to mean newspapers and radio and television stations—generally respected and observed, will contribute to the holding of a free and fair election.

> We *agree to accept, to subscribe to,* and, to the very best of our ability, *to comply with* this Code of Conduct and to take all reasonable steps to ensure its observance.

> We *accept and subscribe to* this Code of Conduct on the clear and unqualified understanding that the government or any of its agencies and the Elections Commission, will not impose nor seek to impose any prior restraint or censorship on any publication by the media.

### II. THE CODE OF CONDUCT
1. The Media in its coverage and reporting of the elections during the period of campaigning agree:

 i. to refrain from the publishing or broadcasting of any matter with the potential for, or likely to promote or incite racial hatred, bias or contempt or any matter with the potential for, or likely to, promote or cause public disorder, pose or become a threat to the security of the nation;

 ii. to refrain from ridiculing, stigmatising or demonising people on the basis of gender, race, class, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation and physical or mental ability;

 iii. to hold themselves independent and free of any, or all, government and political opposition control and direction;

 iv. to hold themselves independent and free of any, or all, control and direction from any of the political parties officially registered to contest the elections;

v. to hold themselves free of any, or all, control and direction from any individual, group, or organisation representing or promoting the special interests of any of the political parties officially registered to contest the elections.

2. The Media in the exercise of their constitutional right of free expression, and in recognition of their consequential social responsibility to the society which they serve, will at all times endeavour to:

i. provide a truthful, comprehensive, accurate, balanced and fair account of events in a context which gives them meaning;

ii. serve as a forum for the exchange of public comment, opinion, discussion and criticism in a balanced and reasonable manner;

iii. offer an accurate picture of the constituent groups, organisations and parties contesting the elections and of the society in general;

iv. present and clarify, as far as possible, the goals and values of the constituent groups, organisations and parties contesting the elections and of the society in general.

3. The Media, in accepting the principle of "fair and balanced" reporting, recognise that:

i. No story is fair, if it omits facts of major importance or significance and is therefore incomplete;

ii. No story is fair, if it includes essentially irrelevant information, rumour or unsubstantiated statements at the expense of significant facts;

iii. No story is fair, if it consciously or unconsciously misleads or even deceives the reader, listener or viewer.

4. The Media, in accepting the principle of "accuracy and balance" in reporting, particularly during periods of campaigning for elections, acknowledge that these two main characteristics, accuracy and balance, seek to distinguish good journalism from bad, and journalism from propaganda. From this perspective, we accept that:

• **Accuracy** requires the verification (to the fullest extent possible) and presentation of all facts that are pertinent and necessary to understand a particular event or issue, even if some of the facts conflict with a journalist's, or a broadcaster's particular beliefs and feelings;

• **Balance**, or impartiality, requires the presentation of all the main points of view or interpretations of an event or an issue, regardless of whether the journalist, reporter, broadcaster, editor or the audience agrees with these views.

5. The Media further acknowledge that both these ingredients—accuracy and balance—are necessary for citizens to gain a full and realistic picture of the issues during election campaigns, as well as of the world around them. Democracy, which requires the active participation of informed citizens, depends on journalists and broadcasters to keep citizens informed about major issues.

6. The Media accept that omitting relevant facts and points of view from the reporting of major issues of public interest inevitably distorts the view of reality a journalist, reporter or broadcaster presents and so misleads and misinforms the public.

7. The Media acknowledge that the deliberate distortion of reality so as to lead the public to a particular understanding of events and issues, without regard for reality can poison the processes of democracy.

8. The Media support the establishing of an independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel with the requisite resources empowered to monitor and receive complaints and pronounce on the performance of the media. The Media agree to publish the findings of the panel on all complaints received by it.

### III. GUIDELINES
***These GUIDELINES were examined on 1st November 2000 at the "Draft Guidelines: Media Code of Conduct Roundtable" at Le Meridien Pegasus, Old Seawall Road, Georgetown.*** *This Roundtable was attended by Mark Benschop, Anthony Calder, Andrew Carmichael, Hugh Cholmondeley, Rockliff Christie, Dennis Cuffy, Karen Davis, David de Caires, David DeGroot, Patrick Denny, Omar Farouk, Martin Goolsarran, Alex Graham, David Granger, Nicole Griffith, Adam Harris, Catherine Hughes, Mike James, Glenn Lall, Margaret Lawrence, Marie Maltais, Prem Misir, Roger Moore, Kit Nascimento, Rawle Nelson, Abraham Poole, Christopher Ram, Lalan Shewcharran, Savitree Singh, Colin Smith, Oneidge Waldrond, Bert Wilkinson, Vivian Williams and Enrico Woolford.*

1. *"Inciting Racial Hatred and Promoting Public Disorder."*
Media organisations may not censor, or edit any material or materials submitted by political parties, or their agents, for either free, or paid for, publication in newspapers or broadcast on radio or television stations.

However, media organisations observing the law and exercising editorial judgment in favour of good taste and a respect for public safety and decency, should refuse any material submitted by political parties, or their agents, likely to be hateful, ethnically offensive, to promote public disorder or threaten the security of the State.

In all cases of such refusal, the concerned political party must be immediately informed of the reasons for rejection, and, assuming that time permits, the concerned party, or its agent, must be given the opportunity to modify the rejected material in order to conform to acceptable legal, moral and other standards.

The media shall not publish or broadcast any report, which, by its content, carries a clear risk of inciting ethnic hatred or political disorder without having the accuracy and authenticity of the report confirmed by at least 2 (two) independent sources.

2. *"Free space and time for political parties AFTER Nomination Day."*
In the period *after* Nomination Day, and in the interest of even-handed treatment for all political parties, the media agree to make available an equal amount of free space and time for all political parties that have met the legal criteria for contesting the election.

Print and broadcast media will make available, free of charge, their technical facilities such as layout and printing, basic studio, audio and video recordings for the production and presentation of articles and programmes, but not including the provision of editing, talent, or outside production or broadcast facilities, or reproduction and distribution for use by any other media organisation.

3. *"Equal access to Paid Political Advertising."*
Media organisations acknowledge their obligation to provide equal access and opportunity to all political parties without discrimination, to purchase space in newspapers and prime time on radio and television stations to promote their respective views during the period of electioneering.

In this regard, the media will make available to contesting political parties full information about space and time availability for advertising and their published advertising rates to be available to all public relations firms, advertising agencies and the proposed Independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel to be established for the purpose of monitoring adherence to the Code of Conduct and these Guidelines.

4. *"News Reports and Current Affairs programmes."*
All media organisations agree that news reports and current affairs programmes may, at any time, subject to the Media Code of Conduct, deal with any issue, cause, organisation or individual. However, given the large number of contesting parties, coverage of election campaign events and other related issues will be limited by the capacity of media organisations to assign staff for these activities. The allocation of free and paid-for time and space for political parties to present their views in the media is a response to this constraint.

Editorial judgments therefore continue to rest solely with the respective organisations. These judgments aim to subscribe to the highest principles of impartiality, fairness and integrity, always separating fact from inference in matters of political and other controversy and supported by eye-witnessed and attributable official statements and other sources to corroborate facts in particular stories.

5. *"Political activities of media functionaries and the likelihood of charges of bias."*
Media organisations agree that individual owners, full-time staff members,

part-time employees or other individuals contracted to write, produce or present articles, scripts, programmes, commentaries or other material intended for public dissemination and who (a) **are publicly identified as candidates for election to Parliament;** or, (b) **hold office in a political party,** are likely to be open to charges of bias. Accordingly, media organisations agree that such individuals will, in the performance of their functions, refrain from using their programmes for the purpose of promoting political objectives during the period beginning with the date of signature of the Media Code of Conduct and its accompanying Guidelines, and ending the day after the results of elections will have been declared.

6. *"Errors of Fact."*
The media undertakes to deal responsibly with any complaints received in respect to reports published or broadcast and containing errors of fact, and where, in their opinion, these are justified to publish or broadcast appropriate corrections.

7. *"Coverage on the day of Polling."*
Media organisations agree that no coverage of any activity by the political parties shall take place for a period to begin 24 (twenty-four) hours prior to the opening of Polling Stations on the day of Polling and continue to the close of Polling Stations.

8. *"The Monitoring of Media Performance."*
Media organisations agree to the establishment of an Independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel for the overall purpose of being a point of reference for the submission of complaints about performance in the reporting and coverage of events during the election campaign.

Media organisations expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Guyana Elections Commission and other donors to identify and secure resources to support this work.

Media organisations however agreed that the terms of reference, functions and structure as well as the articulation of sanctions and other measures aimed at improving performance should be formulated by those media organisations which have signed the Media Code of Conduct and its accompanying Guidelines and stand ready to work collaboratively with the Guyana Elections Commission to achieve the objective of a functional Independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel.

**THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA MONITORING AND REFEREEING PANEL**
*These **TERMS OF REFERENCE** were examined on 8th November 2000 at the Third and Final " Media Code of Conduct Roundtable" at Le Meridien Pegasus, Old Seawall Road, Georgetown.* This Roundtable was attended by Mark Benschop, Hugh Cholmondeley, Dennis Cuffy, Karen Davis, David de Caires, David de Groot, Martin Goolsarran, Alex Graham, Nicole Griffith, Cathy Hughes,

*Mike James, Marie Maltais, Prem Misir, Kit Nascimento, Bob Norris, Compton
Peters, Abraham Poole, Savitree Singh, Colin Smith and Enrico Woolford.*

## I. BACKGROUND

*The domestic context*
Some forty-odd media owners and practitioners in Guyana, between 9th
October and 1st November 2000, attended and participated in two Roundtable
Sessions. The deliberations were sponsored by the Guyana Elections Commission
(GECOM) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and
convened by Mr. Hugh Cholmondeley. The objective of the Roundtables was
the formulation of a Media Code of Conduct and accompanying Guidelines
that would enhance the performance of media organisations during the cam-
paign leading up to General Elections in 2001. The domestic context for these
deliberations was set by:

- the absence of regulations governing standards and performance of the
  electronic media;

- the absence of an Electoral Code of Conduct for Political Parties con-
  testing the 2001 elections; and,

- the recognition that cooperative action by media personnel provided the
  best opportunity for improving performance standards during the elec-
  tion campaign period.

Following a consensus on the Media Code of Conduct, and the accompany-
ing Guidelines, media representatives recommended establishment of an
**Independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** that
would serve as a point of reference for the submission of complaints and other
views by the public, contesting political parties and others about media per-
formance in the reporting and coverage of events during the campaign period.

*The international context*
The deliberations and conclusions of the Roundtables are within an interna-
tional Human Rights context set by three important developments.

(i) In 1990, the United Nations Secretary General cautioned:

"We cannot be unmindful of the fact that, while democracy is a nec-
essary condition for the recognition of basic human rights, it is not in
itself sufficient to ensure the actual enjoyment of those rights. Indeed,
genuine political democracy has little chance to survive, and stability
is bound to prove elusive, without social justice. Such justice to be con-
solidated needs the help of those who can rightly encourage it, though
too often, they abandon it just after it has been brought about."

(ii) In 1991, the General Assembly of the United Nations (Res: 46/137 of 17
December 1991) stressed that …

"Periodic and genuine elections are a necessary and indispensable element of sustained efforts to protect the rights and interests of the governed and that, as a matter of practical experience, the right of everyone to take part in the government of his or her country is a crucial factor in the effective enjoyment by all of a wide range of other human rights and fundamental freedoms, embracing political, economic, social and cultural rights."

(iii) In 1991, the Secretary General of the United Nations (Report A/46/609) stated …

"Elections in and of themselves do not constitute democracy. They are not an end, but a step, albeit an important and often essential one on the path to the democratization of societies and the realization of the right to take part in the governance of one's country as enunciated in major international human rights instruments. It would be unfortunate to confuse the end with the means and to forget that democracy implies far more than the mere act of periodically casting a vote, but covers the entire process of participation by citizens in the political life of their country."

*SCOPE OF WORK*

The scope of work of an **Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** for elections in Guyana in 2001 should therefore be also seen from an international perspective of UN Human Rights standards regarding elections in general, and more specifically, media access and regulation. The following extract is taken from "Human Rights and Elections" the handbook on the Legal, Technical and Human Rights Aspects of Elections published in 1994 by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in Geneva.

"Arrangements for fair media access by candidates and parties are an important focus of electoral law. This is especially evident where the major information media are government-controlled. Media regulations should provide for safeguards against political censorship unfair government advantage and unequal access during the campaign period.

"Fair media access implied not only equality of time and space allotted, but also attention to the hour of broadcasting (i.e. prime-time versus late broadcasting) and the placement of printed advertisements (i.e. front page versus back page). Fair media use implies responsibility on the part of all persons or parties delivering messages or imparting information via the mass media (i.e. truthfulness, professionalism and abstaining from false promises or the building of false expectations).

"A valuable mechanism for assuring fair and responsible broadcasting during elections periods is an independent body charged with monitoring political broadcasts, civic education programmes and allocation of time to various political parties, as well as receiving and acting upon

complaints regarding media access, fairness and responsibility. This function might be discharged by representative transitional bodies, by the electoral administration, or by a separately constituted media commission.

"Securing responsible electoral broadcasting and publication in the media can, in part, be served by agreement on a code of conduct for the media. Such codes may be preferable as a method of media regulation (i.e. self-regulation) to legislative or governmental action, which might raise the issue of impermissible censorship and interference with the human rights of freedom of information and expression.

## II. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The **Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** will collaborate with media owners and practitioners with the specific objective of improving the quality of reporting and coverage by newspapers and radio and television stations during the campaign leading to elections in 2001. More generally, the Panel's work should also contribute to the process of adoption and maintenance of higher standards of performance in periods outside of elections. Consequently, through the sharing of knowledge and experience during the campaign a learning process would be engaged that would assist in increasing skills and improving competencies of media practitioners.

Specifically, the **Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** will serve as the point of reference for assessing the performance of media organisations and practitioners who have endorsed the Media Code of Conduct and its accompanying Guidelines. The Panel has no statutory, legal or other powers.

Its moral strength and integrity would therefore be derived from the principles on which the Code of Conduct is founded, together with the practices that have been adopted in its Guidelines. It would receive complaints submitted by members of the public, duly accredited representatives of political parties or candidates contesting the elections, officials of the Guyana Elections Commission, or representatives of domestic, regional or international election observers. In this regard, during the election campaign period the Panel will:

i.   monitor, review and analyze the output of newspapers, radio and television stations in order to determine adherence to the standards set in, and implied by, the wording, spirit and intent of the Code and its Guidelines;

ii.  receive complaints, commendations and other communications on the performance of newspapers, radio and television stations and issue appropriate public statements;

iii. obtain or collect all relevant documentation including correspondence, articles, scripts, audiotapes, videotapes or other materials concerning any complaint formally submitted for its consideration;

iv. undertake a review of all relevant materials and other information to determine, in the Panel's discretion, whether or not the complaint constitutes non-adherence of the Code of Conduct, or non-compliance with its Guidelines, and therefore justifies an investigation of the performance of the particular medium;

v. undertake an investigation, by whatever appropriate means, including interviews with representatives of the concerned medium and the complainant, of any complaint formally submitted;

vi. submit its findings and conclusions regarding any investigation which the Panel may have undertaken in response to a particular complaint and issue these findings and conclusions to all media organisations that have formally endorsed the Code of Conduct and its Guidelines so that prominence may be given to publication and broadcast of the Panel's views.

### III. COMPOSITION OF THE PANEL

It is recommended that membership of the **Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** be approved by media owners and practitioners who have endorsed the Media Code of Conduct and Guidelines. It is envisaged that the Panel's functions would cover the official period of campaigning from Nomination Day to, say, one week after the results of the elections would have been declared.

The Panel should be comprised of a full-time Chairperson and two part-time members. The Chairperson should be a Caribbean national with substantial national and regional experience in radio and television broadcasting. The second member could be either a local or Caribbean journalist with substantial experience in the print media and the third member could be a local attorney-at-law.

*Accommodation arrangements*
The Panel should be housed in an appropriate office with access to basic office equipment including a desktop computer, printer, telephone, facsimile and Internet facilities. An assistant to perform administrative functions; a secretary fully competent in word processing applications and a budget to cover office supplies, transportation and contingencies is also envisaged.

*Operational arrangements*
It is essential that the Panel has unfettered access to an efficient technical facility with the capacity to listen to, view, record, play-back and copy the output of Guyana's radio and television stations. It is also important for the Panel to have access to current and future programme schedules for radio and television stations, as well as a small team of resource personnel capable of tracking, monitoring and cataloguing media output on a continuous basis throughout the campaign period.

It is noted that within the Guyana Elections Commission's overall responsibilities for the administration and conduct of elections in 2001, the Joint Assistance Programme to GECOM has made available resources for a Media Monitoring Adviser to the Commission. In addition to providing for a team of technical personnel to undertake monitoring-related tasks, resources have also been allocated for acquiring essential instruments such as radios, television sets, videotape machines and other equipment.

*Organizational arrangements*
In order to avoid duplication of human resources and equipment, it is suggested that the Elections Commission, the Joint Assistance Programme to the GECOM and the Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel should aim to reach formal agreement on specific terms of reference and a detailed work programme for the technical monitoring team.

The aim should be to ensure transparency and the team's technical independence to deliver professional services of the highest quality to both the Commission and the Panel. In this manner, the Panel's work would benefit from the resources made available for media monitoring by the donor community. Additionally, the services of media organisations that have formally endorsed the Code of Conduct and Guidelines would also support the work of the Panel.

**MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION**
**Procedures for media coverage of Parliamentary and Presidential Elections**

**Purpose**
These Procedures apply to electronic media (the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation in particular) and in specified instances to the Press. Their purpose is to ensure that full and fair coverage is given, without censorship, to the campaigns of all registered Political Parties during the period of campaigning and up to the close of the poll in Parliamentary and Presidential elections.

The purpose of the procedures is also to ensure that the media provide the public with the necessary programme of civic education and information on every relevant aspect of the electoral process and on each citizen's electoral rights. Such support for the electoral system by publicly owned media is at the heart of democracy.

The procedures are based upon the authority given to the Electoral Commission and the Parliamentary and Presidential Elections Act 1993.

*Section 1 News Coverage*
*Section 2 Election Education and Information Programme*
*Section 3 Party Political Broadcasts (Direct/Free Access)*
*Section 4 Opinion Polls*
*Section 5 Monitoring of Coverage*
*Section 6 Complaints Procedure*

*1 News and Current Affairs Coverage*
1.1
Publicly-owned media (this currently refers exclusively to the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation) are required to provide fair and balanced reporting of the campaigns, policies, meetings, rallies and press conferences of all registered political Parties during the period of campaigning and thereafter to provide news of the electoral process up to the close of poll.

1.2
This duty also requires the broadcasters to devise, by arrangement with the Parties, a range of special election programmes - public debates, interviews with Party leaders and phone-in debates in which all registered political Parties are given equitable treatment and in which the same editorial balance and fair dealing apply as in news bulletins and news reports.

1.3
The debates will be organised in the following way:

The Election Commission and the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation will arrange a series of six debates with the registered political Parties; two in Mzuzu, two

in Lilongwe and two in Blantyre with all eight Parties represented in one or other of the programmes in each city. Each debate will have a moderator, two journalists and four of the eight political parties. The party participants for each debate will be determined by a rotational method.

Dates are to be arranged.

The debates will be a ticketed event in each of the cities, and the venue will hold 200 people. Community organisations, Church and Mosques will be given 100 tickets. The four political parties participating in the debate will each be given 25 tickets.

The debate questions will be determined by the six journalist-panellists. The questions will differ for each debate, but each question will have equal weight and importance on a major issue facing Malawi.

Each party will be given 1'30" to respond to each question from the journalists. At the moderator's discretion, a party can be given 30 seconds to respond to a direct challenge by an opposing party.*

The debate will not be edited for content unless there is a violation of the Code of Conduct by any of the participants. The approximate debate format will be:

| Introduction | Moderator | 3 Minutes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question 1 | Journalist 1 | 1 Minute |
| Answer 1 | Four Parties | 6 Minutes |
| Question 2 | Journalist 2 | 1 Minute |
| Answer 2 | Four Parties | 6 Minutes |
| Question 3 | Journalist 1 | 1 Minute |
| Answer 3 | Four Parties | 6 Minutes |
| Question 4 | Journalist 2 | 1 Minute |
| Answer 4 | Four Parties | 6 Minutes |
| Question 5 | Journalist 1 | 1 Minute |
| Answer 5 | Four Parties | 6 Minutes |
| | | |
| Closing | Four Parties | 8 Minutes |
| Closing | Moderator | 1 Minute |
| | | **Total: 47 minutes** |

Each programme will be given two transmissions at the weekend following each recording.

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* NDI does not endorse any specific debate format. Appropriate formats vary, depending to a reasonable degree on national conditions. For instance, one minute and 30 seconds for responses, as used here, may be sufficient where citizens are already familiar with parties and their positions and where party spokespeople are experienced and well-trained. In other circumstances, a longer time may be required. In addition, there is a variety of acceptable ways to structure question presentation and response formats.

1.4

The editorial responsibility for the maintenance of balance and equitable coverage by the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation rests with the Head of News. In this respect he is responsible to the Electoral Commission. (See complaints procedure section 6 below).

1.5

Party Press Conferences will be reported on by MBC in their normal news programmes. The continuous recordings currently broadcast will be replaced by the range of special election programmes,

- a. Debates (see 1.3)
- b. Phone-ins
- c. A series of Meet Your Candidate face to face interviews in which Party leaders will be invited to explain their political philosophy and plans in a 30 minute conversation each.
- d. Party Political Broadcast (see 3.1 - 3.10 and Schedule).

1.6

MBC must scrutinise all material for broadcast during the period up to the close of poll to ensure that no Party uses general programmes (other than recognised direct access Party Political Broadcasts, specific election news coverage or special election programmes) to promote its electoral interests.

1.7

MBC staff, as public service broadcasters, may not broadcast their own political opinions. Any commentaries or assessments must be clearly identified as such and carefully balanced to avoid bias.

1.8

In this context, newspapers are also required to identify editorial comment to separate it from news.

*2 Election Education and Information*
2.1

Publicly-owned media are required, throughout the election campaign and up to the close of poll, to provide education and information on the electoral process designed to ensure a maximum poll by a well-informed electorate.

2.2

This duty also requires newspapers to take positive steps to inform their readers about their electoral rights and to make a vigorous contribution to the public education programme.

2.3

Such informational and educational programmes and material, whether broadcast or published in a newspaper, may not contain any material intended to further the electoral prospects of any Party contesting the election.

2.4

The number, duration and frequency of such broadcasts may be negotiated between the production agencies and the MBC, always providing that the resulting service meets the goals envisaged by the Electoral Commission.

*3 Party Political Broadcasts (Direct/Free Access)*

3.1

The broadcasters are required to provide each registered political Party with a series of broadcast time-slots of an equal number, frequency, maximum duration and equitable time placement (see schedule below.) At these times each political Party may broadcast pre-recorded programmes, in a language of their choice, free of MBC or any other outside editorial control (subject to the conditions and monitoring mechanisms set out in section 5 below).

3.2

The decisions about duration, time placement and frequency of Party Political Broadcasts rests with the Electoral Commission. Time placements will include an equal variety of time-slots in the broadcasting day including prime time.

3.3

Such programmes must be recorded to professional standards. Equal free studio production and editing time will be provided each week at MBC for those Parties wishing to take advantage of it. The programmes will be recorded under the editorial control of the Party representatives delegated to produce the programme. Programmes may be made at professional studios outside MBC if any Party so wishes. This would be at the expense of that Party. MBC will reserve the right to assess the technical standard of any material recorded elsewhere and brought to the studio by the Party concerned. If any such material fails to meet the MBC's required technical standard it may not be included in the programme.

3.4

A member or members of the Electoral Commission will attend the recording of all those Party Political Broadcasts which are recorded at MBC to ensure that the producing Party has been given equal treatment and resources. The Commission member's role is to ensure that the programme to be broadcast conforms to these procedures and that there is no legal objection to its broadcast. If material or a complete programme submitted by a Party for transmission does not meet the technical standards, it will not be accepted for broadcast.

3.5

Such programmes may not exceed the agreed maximum duration. MBC is not permitted to broadcast any programme which exceeds the limit set. MBC must

give the Party concerned the opportunity within the production period allocated to edit any such programme down to the maximum duration allowed. MBC may not take upon itself the decision to make any cut in a Party Political Broadcast for any reason. Any such decision can only be made by the Party concerned or on the specific instruction of the Electoral Commission. The Commission will take no such decision unless it decides that the programme is in breach of either the Law or these procedures.

3.6
Such programmes, being free of editorial control or censorship, other than by the individual Parties making them, must nevertheless avoid incitement to public disorder, violence or war and meet the CODE OF CONDUCT. This restriction applies equally to broadcasting and newspapers.

3.7
Party Political Broadcasts, set out in the schedule below, may be used at each Party's discretion as Presidential Candidate Broadcasts. Only in the case of independent Presidential Candidates being registered will there be an allocation of specific broadcast time for those independent Presidential candidates. That allocation will be decided by the Electoral Commission following the close of Presidential candidate nominations.

3.8
No Party is allowed to buy air-time on MBC during the period up to the close of the poll.

3.9
Completed programmes ready for transmission must be handed over to MBC at the end of the scheduled production time in each case. No programme may be released until after its final transmission. If however a Party wishes to withdraw their programme in the course of a week, it may do so but will not be allowed to replace it until the following week's scheduled transmission. Programmes made outside MBC must be handed in at MBC at the production time allotted to that Party so that the Electoral Commission representative on duty at that time can listen to it with the Party's representative to confirm that it falls within the Electoral Law. An MBC Engineer will be present to confirm that the programme meets the necessary technical standard.

3.10
No Party Political Broadcast, related to the Elections taking place on 17th May, may be transmitted after 6am on Sunday 15th May 1994.

Party Political Broadcasts must take account of the limitations on the use of OPINION POLLS set out in section 4.1 below.

SCHEDULE OF PARTY POLITICAL BROADCASTS

The number of such broadcasts available to each Party over an eight week will be 12.* These will be recorded at weekly production sessions and transmitted at the frequency set out below in the course of the following week.

Each Party will be offered the following in the eight-week period Sunday March 20th 1994 - Saturday May 14th 1994

Week 1.          1 programme / 2 minutes / 5 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 2.          1 programme / 2 minutes / 5 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 3.          1 programme / 2 minutes / 5 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 4.          1 programme / 2 minutes / 5 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 5.          1 programme / 3 minutes / 3 times per day / 7 days per week
                 1 programme / 1 minute / 3 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 6.          1 programme / 3 minutes / 3 times per day / 7 days per week
                 1 programme / 1 minute / 3 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 7.          1 programme / 4 minutes/ 2 times per day / 7 days per week
                 1 programme / 1 minute / 4 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 8.          1 programme / 4 minutes/ 2 times per day / 7 days per week
                 1 programme / 1 minute / 4 times per day / 7 days per week

Totals           12 programmes per Party
                 Combined total of 26 minutes recorded material per Party.
                 10 hours 16 minutes transmission time per Party.
                 308 transmissions per Party.

*4 Opinion Polls*
4.1
The result of Opinion Polls must be used by all media with great care. The results should only be broadcast or published if there is reason to believe that they are statistically sound. In any case, all relevant information must be broadcast/published including identification of the organisation that conducted the poll, the Party or other organisation that commissioned and paid for the Poll, the methodology, the sample size and location of the survey, its date and margin of error. This care must be exercised by Newspapers too.

4.2
Opinion Polls may not be published or broadcast after the period of campaigning i.e. during the 48 hours from that point until the close of poll.

*5 Monitoring of Election Coverage*
5.1
MBC must maintain full records of all news bulletins and recordings of all other programmes related to the election, including Party Political Broadcasts. They

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\*  NDI does not endorse any specific format for direct messages, unpaid or paid, for direct party or candidate access to deliver direct messages to the public.

must institute a close and meticulous monitoring system to ensure balance throughout the campaign and up to the close of poll.

5.2

MBC must be prepared to provide the Electoral Commission at any reasonable time with all such records, information and recordings as the Commission may require to fulfil its monitoring role. Newspapers may be required to provide the possibility for the Commission to inspect back copies in the event of a complaint.

*6 Complaints Procedure*

6.1

Any candidate or Party making a reasoned complaint of unfair treatment or coverage in the course of the election campaign, should send it in writing to the Commission. Any complainant asking the Head of News at MBC or the Editor of a newspaper to correct a mistake should send a copy to the Electoral Commission. These professional journalists, working to these procedures, will respond to those complaints appropriately, but will in any case report all such complaints to the Electoral Commission.

6.2

Where, in the case of either MBC or a newspaper, a right of reply is necessary, a retraction or the correction of a matter of significance, such a response will be placed in a position of equal prominence and given comparable space or time.

6.3

In the event of an unresolved dispute over a complaint of unfair media coverage, the Electoral Commission will be the final arbiter.

Justice Mrs Msosa, Chair

**MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION
8TH MARCH 1994**

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Anna Nogova         Project Coordinator:
                                                    Marek Mracka

Association for Support of Local Democracy, Andrej Bartosiewicz

### REPORT ON MEDIA COVERAGE OF SLOVAK POLITICS
#### Week Two: July 20, 1998 through July 26, 1998
Released on July 30, 1998

MEMO'98 is an independent and non-partisan effort -- formed by the Helsinki Citizens Assembly and the Association for Support of Local Democracy -- to systematically monitor the media coverage of the Slovak parliamentary elections scheduled for September 25 and 26, 1998. MEMO'98's findings are offered not to support any one candidate or political party. By following a well-defined and rigorous methodology, MEMO'98 seeks to present information that helps the Slovak public gain information it needs to make the well-informed choices demanded of citizens in a democratic society.

After the second week of monitoring news broadcasts on the two major television stations and the two major radio stations, and after the first week of monitoring five major newspapers, MEMO'98 found a wide difference in the type of news presented by different outlets as well as major differences in the ways that major political entities are portrayed.   Following is the second of periodic reports that MEMO'98 will issue through the September elections.

### HIGHLIGHTS

**The second week of monitoring television and radio produced data that confirm trends revealed during the first week.  If anything, differences in the amount of coverage and the portrayal of relevant political subjects appeared more dramatic in the second week.**

➢     **48% of the time given to politically significant stories on STV news last week was devoted to the incumbent government with another 28.6% devoted to HzDS. Coverage of political parties not part of the ruling coalition totaled 13.3% of the relevant news coverage.**

➤ STV continued to portray the incumbent government and ruling coalition in a positive light and opposition parties mostly in a negative light. STV also frequently neglected to air contrary views.

➤ TV Markiza offered 26.4% of their relevant news coverage to government activities and an additional 8.5% to HzDS. Parties outside the ruling coalition received a total of 37.6% of total significant news coverage.

➤ TV Markiza offered generally negative portrayals of HzDS and more negative than positive coverage of the government. They aired consistently positive or neutral views of opposition parties, and of SNS.

➤ Of the five newspapers monitored, Slovenska Republika stood alone in devoting the majority of its space to HzDS and the government while consistently portraying both subjects in a positive light.

## TELEVISION

Slovaks who watch Television Markiza news receive a dramatically different view of politically significant events than do viewers of STV. During the week ending July 26, 1998, STV offered significantly more coverage of the government and ruling coalition parties than Markiza. This difference was even more dramatic than in the first week of monitoring. Markiza, in turn, reported much more on the SDK, SDL and SOP than did STV. More important than the amount of coverage, however, was the ways significant political parties and government activities were portrayed.

➤ STV consistently portrayed the Government and HZDS in a positive light while usually portraying SDK, SOP and SDL in a negative or neutral light. Markiza offered both positive, negative and neutral coverage of the government. Their portrayal of HzDS is more often negative than positive. Positive views of SDK, SDL, SMK and SOP were the norm on Markiza. They also presented SNS in either a positive or neutral manner.

There continued to be differences in the balance within each story on these television stations. Markiza, on at least one occasion, presented a story in a way favorable to itself without giving the complete story.

➤ 23.7. 1998 19:00 - During a presentation of the MEMO'98 results for the week ending July the 19th 1998, Markiza presented the data as showing that its news cast was the most objective. This was not an accurate portrayal of our conclusions. We suggested only that preliminary data revealed a possible trend that merits additional examination.

STV seems to present stories in a one-sided or unfair manner even more frequently. Following are examples from last week:

➤ 22.7., 24.7., 26.7. 1998 19:30 - In a series of stories concerning the successes of various Slovak governments in the area of paid debts for privatized companies, for two weeks STV has presented statistical data without citing other economic factors or opposition opinions.

➤ 23.7. 1998 19:30 - STV dedicated extensive coverage to the presentation of a petition concerning non-privatization of selected companies. The stories appeared to be promoting HzDS. STV returned to the story of this petition on July the 25th and 26th.

➤ 24.7. 1998 19:30 - In a story on the floods in Eastern Slovakia,. STV cited opinions of the government and its expert as "correct". They then aired file footage and editorial commentaries that made other parties' opinions sound false.

➤ 26.7.1998 19:30 - In a story analyzing the involvement of SDK Vice-chairman Volf in a motoring accident, Mr. Volf was presented in an extremely negative light and the story was accompanied by file footage of a wrecked car. Mr. Volf was not given an opportunity to comment on the event.

➤ 20.7, 25.7.1998 - "Nazory" (Opinions), "Poznamka" (Comment) - In a series of stories, the opposition was presented in a negative light. To support this view, STV used materials gathered from other media outlets, and only negative portrayals were chosen.

## RADIO

In the week ending July 26, 1998 Slovak Radio offered slightly more coverage of the government and the ruling coalition than did Radio Twist. Radio Twist offered much more coverage of SDK and SDL. Slovak Radio's portrayal of the government and HzDS was much more often positive than negative. Radio Twist offered both positive and negative portrayals of the government and HzDS. Both stations aired numerous stories considered by our monitors to be neutral. SDK was often portrayed positively by Radio Twist and both positively and negatively by Slovak Radio.

Our monitors also noticed particular instances when Slovak Radio appeared to seek opportunities to give the government additional favorable news coverage or failed to offer opportunities to opposing views.

➤ 20.7. 1998 12:00 – Radiozurnal aired a story concerning the visit of a representative of the Croatian Parliament to Slovakia. He was met by members of the Slovak government and HzDS deputies to Parliament. This information was repeated 4 times in the same

program, providing much more coverage to the government than was offered to others in equally important news stories.

➤ 22.7. 1998 18:00 - Vice-Prime Minister Kalman spoke about the fact that the social situation in Slovakia is peaceful, our nation has better than average minority policies and that the integration of Slovakia into NATO is a success. No space was given to opposing opinions.

➤ 23.7. 1998 18:00 - Vice-Prime Minister, Sergej Kozlik blamed the privatization of Nafta Gbely on the Voucher privatization launched by Mr. Carnogursky's government. The information was unbalanced because other parties were not given an opportunity to express their opinions.

**NEWSPAPERS**

MEMO'98 expanded our media monitoring project in the week beginning on July 20, 1998 to include five major newspapers: Novy Cas, Sme, Pravda, Praca and Slovenska Republika.. Our data reveal that four of the newspapers monitored tend to portray the government and HzDS in a negative light. Slovenska Republika stands out as strongly pro-government and consistently favorable to HzDS.

➤ Pravda dedicated 13% of their relevant news space to the government, which was portrayed most often in a negative light. 29.5% of politically important news was devoted to HzDS with much more negative news than positive. SDK was granted 12.7% of the coverage and was most often portrayed positively. ZRS received 20.7% of coverage, most of it negative. Other parties received less coverage.

➤ Sme offered much more coverage to HzDS last week (46.4%), but most of it was negative. News about the government took up 20% of relevant space, and the news was also more often negative. 12.6% of relevant space was devoted to SDK with consistently positive or neutral portrayals.

➤ Novy Cas also portrayed the government and HzDS in a negative light much more often than positively. The government received 7.3% of relevant coverage and HzDS 48.2%. SDK and SDL were consistently portrayed positively or neutrally. SDK was granted 13% of relevant space and SDL 3.6%. Novy Cas offered SMK 16.4% of their pertinent space, all in a two-page interview rated as neutral by our monitors.

➤ Praca gave 30.1% of their coverage to the government, with most stories rated as negative. 29% of relevant space was devoted to HzDS. The great majority of these were also negative portrayals of HzDS. Stories about SDK took up 11.2% of the relevant space in Praca last week. Most of these stories were rated positive or neutral. SDL and SOP were given much less coverage, but they were portrayed in a consistently positive

light.

➤ Slovenska Republika offered far more coverage to HzDS than any other news source. Fully 57.8 percent of relevant coverage was devoted to HzDS, and all stories were ranked either positive or neutral. Another 14.7% of space was devoted to the government, and all of these stories were also either positive or neutral. All opposition parties combined received 21.7% of relevant space and all but one of these stories were negative (one neutral rating was attributed to a reference to SMK). Included in one issue during the week was an 8 page insert of the HzDS weekly newspaper.

## CONCLUSION

Data from the second week of media monitoring by MEMO'98 reveals wide differences in the way political subjects are portrayed and in the amount of coverage provided to different political subjects. Two weeks of monitoring indicate that not all media outlets follow the same standards of balance and fairness. Our data continue to show that STV frequently neglects to offer Slovaks opposing views on particular stories. MEMO'98 will gather data throughout the pre-election period to determine if this is a consistent trend. Our next report will be issued two weeks from today and will contain cumulative data for a full four weeks of monitoring.

Attached are graphic presentations of the amount of coverage offered to significant political entities by each of the outlets monitored. Also attached are charts illustrating the tendencies of these media outlets to portray these entities in either a positive or negative light.
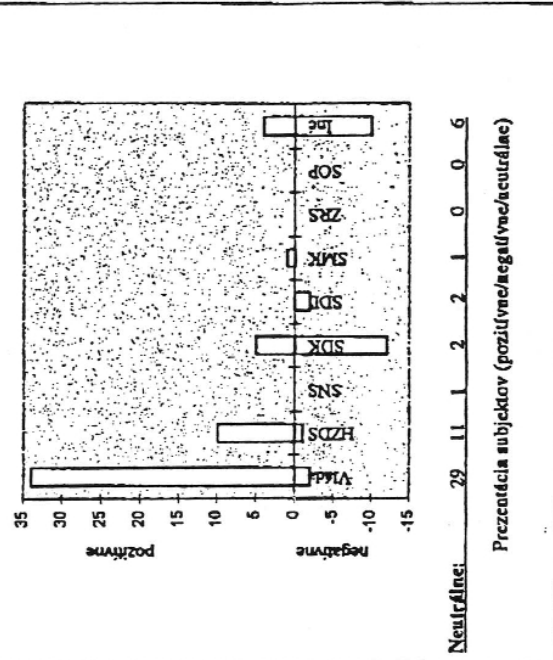
memo

Vysielanie Novín STV
od 20. 7. do 26. 7. 1998
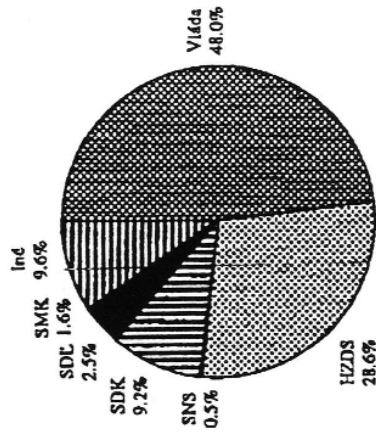
Priestor venovaný jednotlivým politickým subjektom
(v percentách z celkového času poskytnutého jednotlivým subjektom)
(100% = 31 mln 41 s)

Vláda
48.0%

HZDS
28.6%

SNS
0.5%

SDK
9.2%

SDĽ
2.5%

SMK 1.6%

Ind
9.6%

05/08/1998

Prezentácia subjektov (pozit/vne/negatí/vne/neutrálne)

Neutrálne:

Ind

SOP

ZRS

SMK

SDĽ

SDK

SNS

HZDS

Vláda

pozitívne

negatívne

35 30 25 20 15 10 5 0 -5 -10 -15

29 11 1 2 2 0 0 6

memo

Denník Slovenská republika
od 20. 7. do 25. 7. 1998



Prezentácia subjektov (pozitívne/negatívne/neutrálne)

Neutrálne:

Priestor venovaný jednotlivým politickým subjektom
(v percentách z celkového času poskytnutého jednotlivým subjektom)
(100% = 20712 cm²)
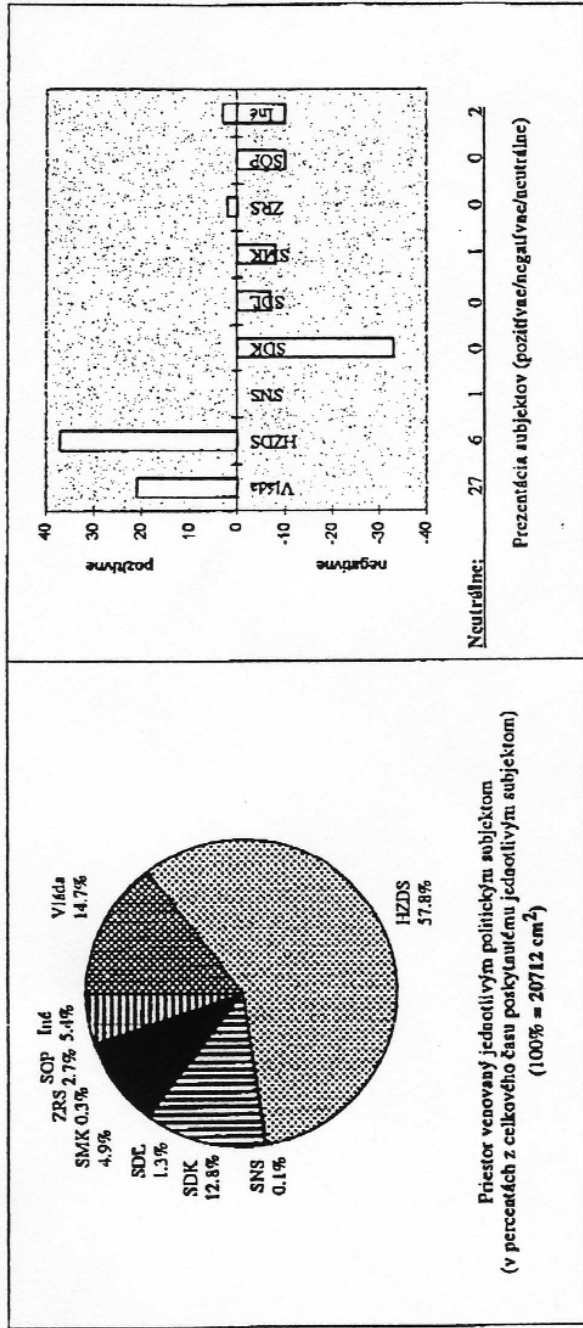
03/08/1998

**SAMPLE MEDIA MONITORING REPORT—BULGARIA**
*(Included with permission of BAFECR.)*

# MIRROR '97

## THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AS MIRRORED IN THE MEDIA

EXPRESS PUBLICATION OF THE
BULGARIAN ASSOCIATION FOR FAIR ELECTIONS
AND CIVIL RIGHTS

19 APRIL 1997

# Monitoring of the media coverage of the election campaign for the 38th National Assembly during the period from 24.03. to 18.04.1997

The Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights conducted a monitoring study of the mass media during the election campaign. *Its aim was to establish whether the media assures balanced access to voters for the contending coalitions and parties, as well as whether the media creates conditions for an informed choice.*

The monitoring covered **the seven national dailies** with the largest circulation: 24 Chassa, Troud, Standart News, Continent, Zemya, Novinar and Pari, as well as the dailies of the two main political forces: Demokratsiya and Douma. It also covered **Channel 1 and Air 2 of Bulgarian National Television (BNT)** (the daily broadcasts after 17.00 hours), **the Horizont and Hristo Botev programs of Bulgarian National Radio (BNR)** (daily from 06.30 to 11.10; 12.00 to 15.10, and from 18.00 to 20.35).*

The monitoring was conducted by specially trained BAFECR volunteers according to a methodology developed by the AVRA sociological team.

During the monitored period (24.03. - 18.04.1997), a total of **4,002 information units**\*\* were registered in the press, on radio and on television. Of these, 2,912 (72.8%) were found in the press, 725 (18.1%) on BNR and 365 (9.1%) on BNT.

The largest share of "information units" among the nationl dailies in the monitoring effort is accounted for by Demokratsiya (16.5%), followed by Troud (15.4%), Douma (14.9%), 24 Chassa (12.5%), Standart News (11.3%), Novinar (8.5%), Continent (8.4%), Zemya (6.7%) and Pari (5.8%).

Of the registered information units on **Bulgarian National Television**, broadcasts on Channel 1 exceed those on Air 2 three times - 271 to 94 respectively.

On **Bulgarian National Radio** 654 information units were registered on the Horizont Program and 71 on the Hristo Botev Program.

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* The introductory and concluding addresses in which there is no media interference, as well as the debates in which the role of journalists as moderators is strictly regulated, are excluded from the monitoring of the national electronic media.
** An "information unit" is a story or broadcast containing a political force's name or a synonym associated with it.

# INFORMATION FLOW

The interest shown by the news sources in the contending coalitions and parties differed in the press and the national electronic media (charts 1 and 2).

Number of publications about coalitions/parties

A total of 77.3% of all stories in the **press** concerned the five leading political forces: the Bulgarian Business Bloc (BBB), the Alliance for National Salvation (ANS), the Democratic Left, the United Democratic Forces (UtDF) and the Euro-Left. Of this 77.3%, the BBB received 1.5% of the coverage, the ANS received 2.5%, the Democratic Left 5%, the UtDF 7%, and the Euro-Left 1%. Only 5.6% of the publications were directed to the other registered parties.
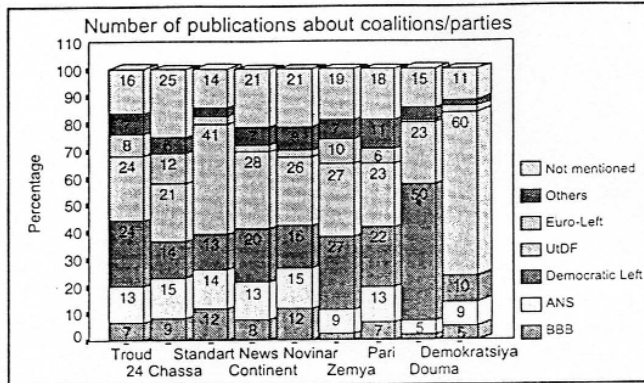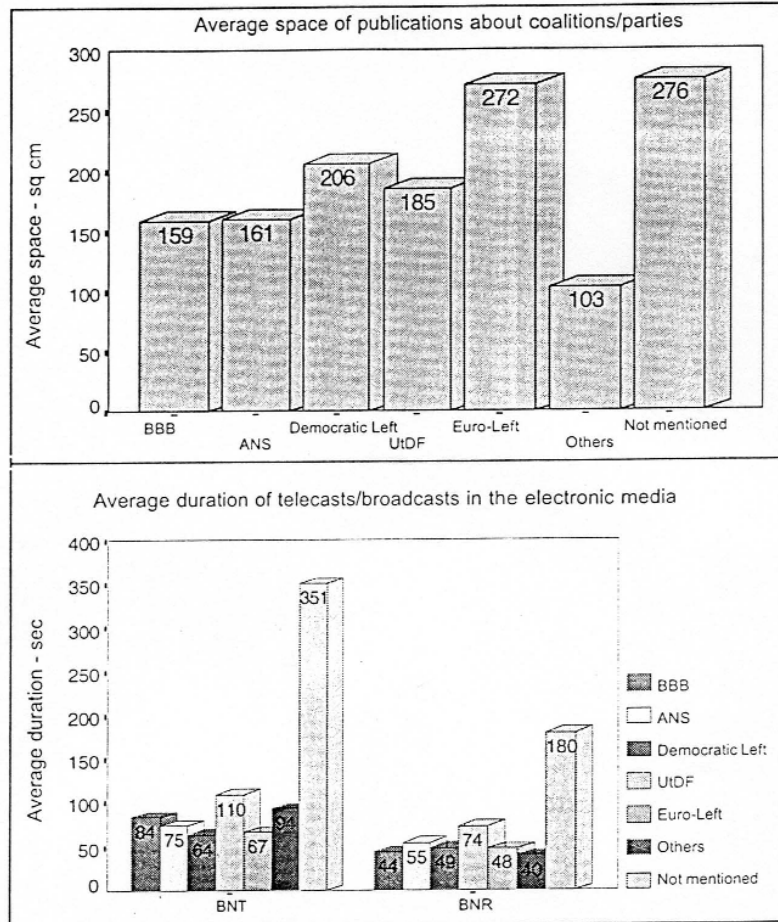
The study also differentiated the publications according to focus on one political force or another. The largest number of news stories in 24 Chassa and Novinar did not focus on a leading coalition or party. Materials that did focus on a specific political force were prevalent in Douma, Demokratsiya and Standart News. Materials devoted to more than one political force were most prevalent in the other dailies.

The conduct of the electronic media also showed qualitative differences. More than half the broadcasts on Channel 1 and on the Horizon Program were devoted to parties and coalitions other than the above-mentioned five. CEC decision N 135*** regulated electronic media access this year.

Number of telecasts/broadcasts in the electronic media
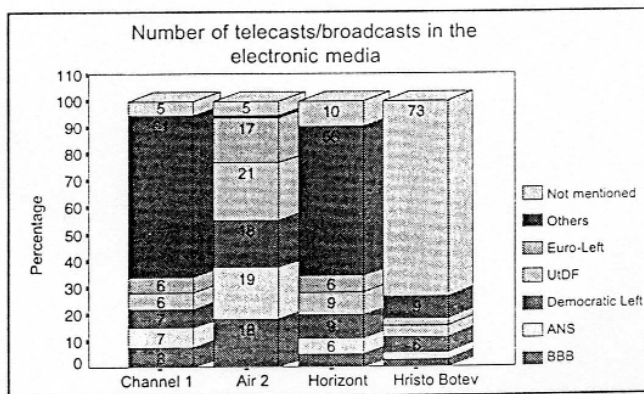
*** Decision N 135 of 20.03.1997 determines the media participation of the parties and coalitions on BNT and BNR, whereby the BBB, ANS, the Democratic Left, the UtDF and the Euro-Left form Block A, and the other registered parties and coalitions Block B. In the conducted study the parties and coalitions in Block B are included in the general group "others".

*Marked differences with regard to the duration of broadcast materials were observed between radio and television, as well as between their programs.* In the case of Channel 1, more than half the broadcasts were up to one and a half minutes long, whereas broadcasts of less than one minute dominated on Air 2. 25.2% of the broadcasts on Channel 1 exceeded the time specified by the CEC. The respective share on Air 2 was significantly lower - 10.9%.

Average space of publications about coalitions/parties



Average duration of telecasts/broadcasts in the electronic media



Materials of less than one minute predominated on the Horizont Program of BNR - 73.7%, whereas more than half the materials (60.5%) on the Hristo Botev Program were more than one and a half minutes long, which contradicts the CEC decision. This mainly concerns the presentation of the Euro-Left and the ANS — the broadcasts about these political forces exceeded the set time in all cases. 75.0% of the broadcasts about the Democratic Left also exceeded the admissible time limit.

All monitored media devoted *the largest space or longest duration to materials which did not mention a concrete political force (charts 3 and 4).* Only the publications about the Euro-Left were of a comparable size. Compared to the other parties in Block A, it is the political force to which the **press** devoted the largest space, despite the smallest number of materials.

# THE ATTITUDE TO COALITIONS AND PARTIES

Regardless of public opinion polls, which during the course of the election campaign invariably confirmed the priority of one political coalition, **the national electronic media** maintained a balance in the average duration of broadcast materials about the separate parties and coalitions in Block A.

Compared to the presidential elections, the **national electronic media** now show a stronger trend towards refraining from direct suggestion in the presentation of the separate parties and coalitions (charts 5 and 6).

The share of unbiased broadcasts on BNT and **BNR** exceeded 70% (with the exception of the Hristo Botev Program - 53.5%). The unbiased press stories were significantly fewer - 26.8% (chart 7).

The UtDF was presented most positively in **the press**, followed by the Euro-Left. Positive suggestions about the UtDF, the Euro-Left and the Democratic Left dominated on **BNR**. The largest share of biased material on **BNT** were about the Euro-Left, followed by the ANS and the UtDF.



BNR broadcasts about coalitions/parties according to type of suggestion



BNT broadcasts about coalitions/parties according to type of suggestion



Publications about coalitions/parties according to type of suggestion

The negative presentation of the parties and coalitions in the national electronic media was insignificant. In the **press**, however, every fifth publication carried a negative suggestion. Most unfavourably represented was the BBB, followed by the ANS and the Democratic Left.

# THE THEMATIC DIRECTIONS OF THE CAMPAIGN

This election campaign continued the trend of widely commenting and thoroughly discussing the contenders, rather than the content of their election campaign. Concerning the subject-matter of the election campaign broadcasts, the focus on **television** was placed on *national consent for the future of the country, political responsibility*
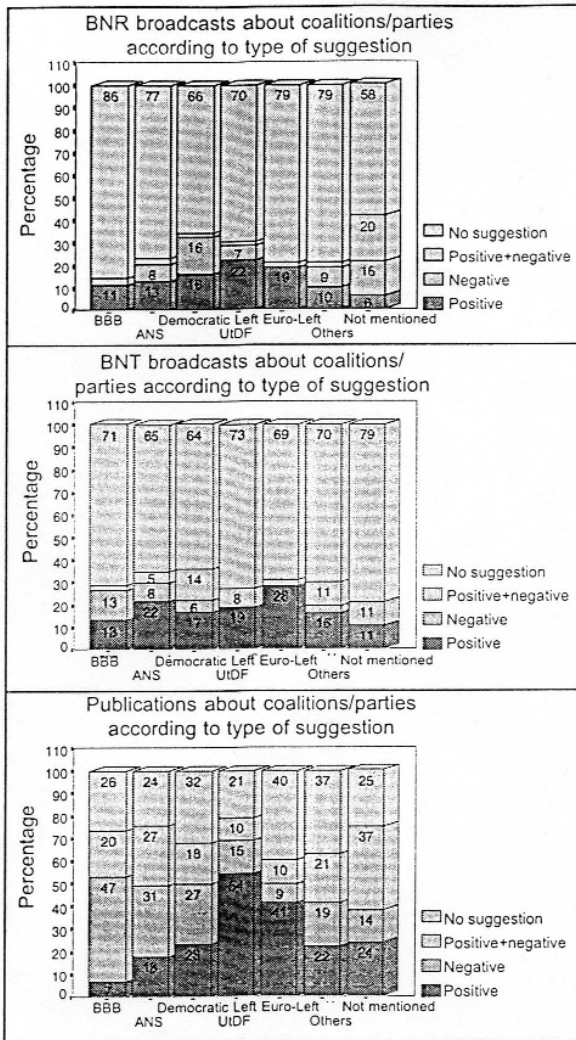
*and guilt, and the restructuring of the economy.* **BNR** also added the discussion of Bulgaria's *foreign policy orientation.* Depending on the main theme, the monitored **dailies** showed the following preferences: 24 Chassa and Novinar to the theme of national consent, Douma, Zemya and Troud to political responsibility, crime and the currency board, Pari, Demokratsiya, Standart News and Continent to social assistance and foreign political orientation.

With regard to lay-out, Douma and Zemya front-paged nearly half of the publications relevant to the study. The other papers carried the materials linked with the election campaign mostly on the inside pages: in 24 Chassa - 93% of the materials, Pari - 93%, Demokratsiya - 89 %, Troud - 88%, Standart News - 85% and Novinar - 78%.

Both the national as well as private media continued the trend of not showing whether a given material was paid for. The media continued to foster an image of independence and non-commerciality, advertising the claim of serving the public interest. In practice, however, they conceal facts of financial relations with parties and coalitions from public attention.

## BASIC CONCLUSIONS

● *Compared to the 1996 presidential elections, the national electronic media and private printed publications pursued a different strategy in the 1997 parliamentary elections. Compared to 01.10 - 03.11.1996, the broadcasts on BNT for the period between 24.03 - 17.04.1997 decreased nearly four times, and on BNR almost nine times, whereas publications in the press prior to the parliamentary elections almost doubled (24 Chassa - 2.4 times, Troud and Standart News - 1.7 times, Continent - 1.5 times).*

● *The coverage of the parliamentary race is unevenly distributed between the programs on the national air. The broadcasts on Channel 1 occurred three times more than those on Air 2, and more than nine times more on Horizont than on Hristo Botev. In practice, Air 2 and the Hristo Botev Program played a satellite role in the presentation of the parties and coalitions.*

● *In the course of the parliamentary election campaign, the journalists in the national electronic media were once again transmitters rather than mediators, reporters rather than people present with their own opinion. The aim to preserve neutrality in the broadcast materials on the national electronic media harmed journalism. Neutrality remains high, but at the expense of diversity - both with regard to genre, subject-matter and manner of tabling information.*

● *This campaign, too, continues the negative trend, dangerous for civil society, of concealing the fact that a given publication/broadcast has been paid for.*

● *The media contributed to an informed choice mainly regarding the parties and coalitions included in Block A. Those in Block B had but a small presence in private printed publications and were presented mainly during times with a smaller audience in the national electronic media.*

**SAMPLE MEDIA MONITORING REPORT—PERU**
*(Included with permission of Transparencia.)*

**TRANSPARENCIA**

Dirección de Comunicaciones

# INFORME DE MONITOREO DE MEDIOS MARZO 2001

El monitoreo de medios realizado por la Asociación Civil Transparencia tiene como fin revelar el comportamiento de los medios de comunicación, especialmente la prensa escrita y la televisión, con relación a los candidatos a la Presidencia de la República.

El trabajo contempla la realización de un análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo de la cobertura de los candidatos en los medios.

El informe estudia la cobertura periodística de los ocho candidatos a la Presidencia de la República (Marco Antonio Arrunátegui, de Proyecto País; Carlos Boloña, de Solución Popular; Lourdes Flores, de Unidad Nacional; Ciro Gálvez, de Renacimiento Andino; Alan García, del Partido Aprista Peruano; Ricardo Noriega, de Todos por la Victoria; Fernando Olivera, del Frente Independiente Moralizador, y Alejandro Toledo, de Perú Posible)[1] en los principales medios de comunicación escrita y televisiva del país.

Este tercer Informe de Monitoreo de Medios abarca el período entre el 1 y el 31 de marzo de 2001.
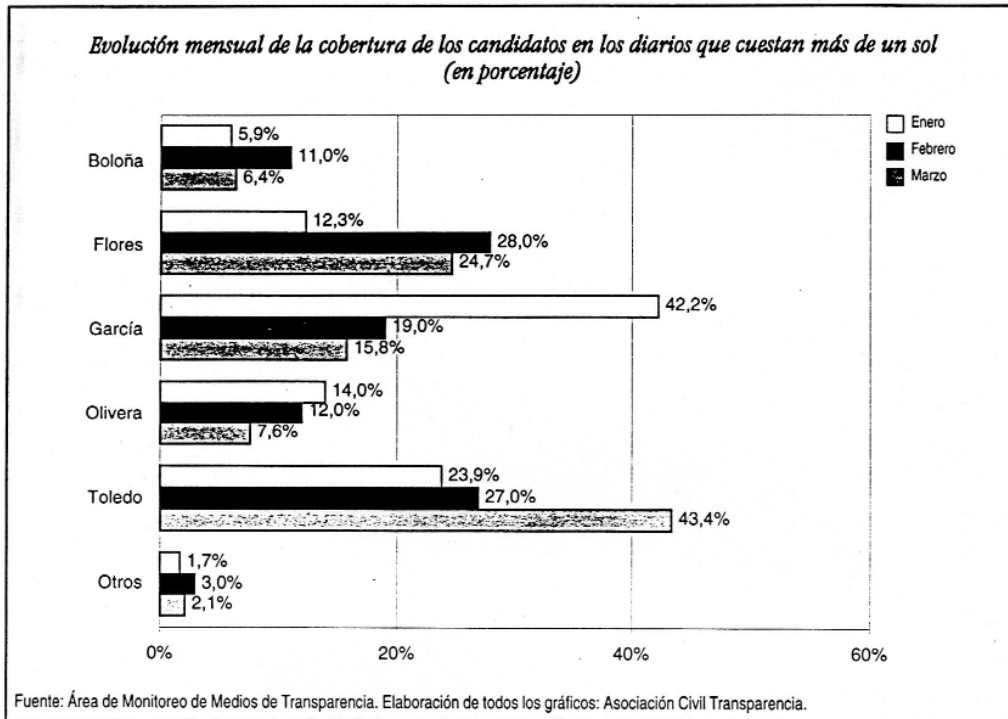
## I. RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

### 1.1 Diarios que cuestan más de un sol

• Toledo es el candidato con más volumen de apariciones (43,4%) en los diarios que cuestan más de un sol. En segundo lugar se ubica Flores (24,7%), seguida de García (15,8%).

• Con la excepción de El Comercio y El Peruano, los demás diarios que cuestan más de un sol replican, en su secuencia de candidatos por volumen de apariciones, el orden de la mayoría de las encuestas publicadas en marzo: Toledo en primer lugar, Flores en segundo y García en el tercero.

• El volumen de cobertura de los candidatos presidenciales en marzo aumentó 2,2 veces con relación al volumen de febrero, y 4 veces con relación al de enero en los diarios que cuestan más de un sol.

• Las apariciones sin sesgo o "neutras"[2] son las que tienen mayoría en los diarios que cuestan más de un sol (40%). Las menciones de sesgo positivo llegan a 37%, y las de sesgo negativo, a 23%.

• Toledo obtiene el más alto porcentaje de apariciones de sesgo positivo (40%). Boloña encabeza la lista de menciones de sesgo negativo (32%). El candidato con más apariciones "neutras" es Olivera (48%).

• La República es el diario que dedica más espacio a la cobertura de los candidatos presidenciales (72.015,9 cm$^2$ y 21,4%). El diario que les brinda el menor espacio es Ojo (24.032,9 cm$^2$ y 7,1%).

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[1] De aquí en adelante, toda mención a los candidatos consignará sólo su primer apellido: Arrunátegui, Boloña, Flores, Gálvez, García, Noriega, Olivera, Toledo.
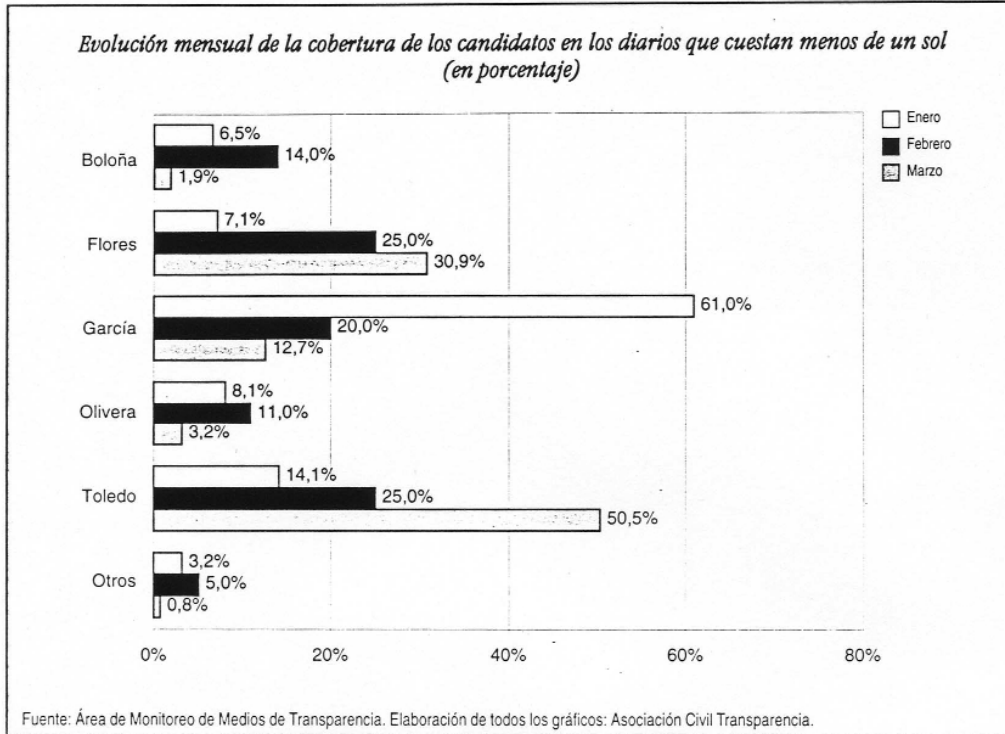[2] Los términos "neutralidad" y "neutro" aparecen entre comillas a lo largo del informe, para subrayar el hecho de que se usan bajo una acepción especial. Todas las definiciones de sesgo figuran en la sección final del presente informe.

*Evolución mensual de la cobertura de los candidatos en los diarios que cuestan más de un sol*
*(en porcentaje)*

Legend: □ Enero ■ Febrero ▨ Marzo

**Boloña**
- 5,9%
- 11,0%
- 6,4%

**Flores**
- 12,3%
- 28,0%
- 24,7%

**García**
- 42,2%
- 19,0%
- 15,8%

**Olivera**
- 14,0%
- 12,0%
- 7,6%

**Toledo**
- 23,9%
- 27,0%
- 43,4%

**Otros**
- 1,7%
- 3,0%
- 2,1%

Axis: 0%   20%   40%   60%

Fuente: Área de Monitoreo de Medios de Transparencia. Elaboración de todos los gráficos: Asociación Civil Transparencia.

- El volumen de apariciones de Olivera en el diario Ojo desciende notoriamente, desde un 31% que le dio el primer lugar de cobertura en febrero, hasta un reducido 3% que hace que se le agrupe en el rubro "Otros".

- En cuanto al "agenda setting", el eje temático electoral es el que aparece con mayor frecuencia (20%) en las portadas de los diarios que cuestan más de un sol. El eje temático político ocupa el segundo lugar con el 17%.

- Expreso es el diario que dedica más espacio en su portada al eje temático electoral (30%). Gestión, con 6%, es el que menos espacio le dedica en portada.

## 1.2 Diarios que cuestan menos de un sol

- Toledo ocupa poco más de la mitad (50,5%) del espacio que los diarios que cuestan menos de un sol dedican a la cobertura de los candidatos presidenciales. Le siguen Flores (30,9%) y García (12,7%).

- En todos los diarios que cuestan menos de un sol, la secuencia de candidatos ordenados según su volumen de apariciones replica el orden de la mayoría de las encuestas de opinión durante el mes de marzo: Toledo en primer lugar, Flores en segundo y García en el tercero.

- El volumen de cobertura de los candidatos presidenciales en marzo aumentó 1,8 veces con relación al volumen de febrero, y 2,3 veces con relación al de enero en los diarios que cuestan menos de un sol.

- Todos los diarios que cuestan menos de un sol redujeron considerablemente su cobertura de Boloña, hasta el punto en que el candidato fue agrupado en el rubro "Otros" por tener 3% o menos del total de apariciones.

*Evolución mensual de la cobertura de los candidatos en los diarios que cuestan menos de un sol*
*(en porcentaje)*



Fuente: Área de Monitoreo de Medios de Transparencia. Elaboración de todos los gráficos: Asociación Civil Transparencia.
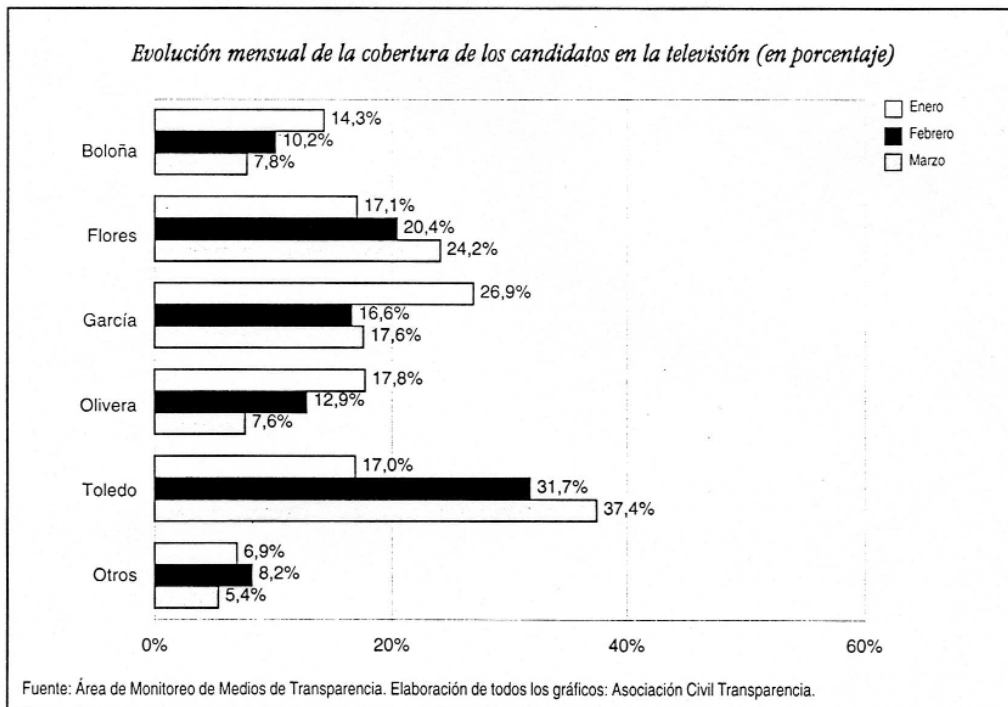
- Las apariciones de sesgo positivo son las que exhiben el mayor porcentaje en los diarios que cuestan menos de un sol (42%). Las menciones que no tienen sesgo o son "neutras" tienen 32%, y las que son de sesgo negativo llegan a 26%.

- Flores es la candidata con más apariciones de sesgo positivo (48%). En las de sesgo negativo, lleva la delantera Toledo (45%). Olivera encabeza la lista de menciones sin sesgo o "neutras" (65%).

- Correo es el diario que dedica más espacio a la cobertura de los candidatos presidenciales (49.913,4 cm$^2$ y 38%). El diario que les brinda el menor espacio es Ajá (8.875,5 cm$^2$ y 6,8%).

- En línea con el previsible comportamiento de los diarios que cuestan menos de un sol, el eje temático de espectáculos es el que aparece con más frecuencia en la portada de estos medios (27%), seguido por el local (16%). El eje temático electoral ocupa el cuarto lugar con el 13%.

## 1.3 Televisión

- Toledo es el candidato que mayor tiempo de cobertura recibe en la televisión durante el mes de marzo (39 horas, 8 minutos y 48 segundos), con un porcentaje de 37,4%. En el segundo lugar se ubica Flores, con 24,2% del total.

- Sólo Panamericana Televisión y Canal N replican, en la secuencia de porcentajes de la cobertura de los candidatos, el orden de ubicación de los postulantes presidenciales en la mayoría de las encuestas de opinión a nivel nacional publicadas durante el mes de marzo: Toledo en primer lugar, Flores en segundo y García en tercero.

- El volumen de cobertura de los candidatos presidenciales en marzo aumentó 2,3 veces con relación al volumen de febrero, y 1,9 veces con relación al de enero en los canales de televisión.

- Toledo es el candidato con mayor porcentaje de apariciones de sesgo positivo en televisión (55%). Boloña, con 17%, es el que registra el mayor porcentaje de apariciones de sesgo positivo. En cuanto a las apariciones "neutras", se da un empate entre Boloña y Olivera con 48%.

- Las apariciones de candidatos en televisión son mayoritariamente de sesgo positivo (49%). Las "neutras" alcanzan el 41%, y las de sesgo negativo registran sólo el 10%.

- Canal N es el que da mayor cobertura a los candidatos presidenciales (46 horas, 47 minutos y 50 segundos, que representan un 44,7% del tiempo total). El canal que les da menor cobertura es ATV, con 2 horas y 49 minutos, lo que significa un 2,7% del total.

- El grueso de la cobertura de los candidatos en televisión se da a través de los noticieros (76%) y programas periodísticos o de debate (15%). La transmisión de mítines en vivo o en diferido, en su conjunto, representa solamente el 3% de la cobertura electoral de los canales.

- Toledo es el candidato cuyos mítines se transmiten con mayor frecuencia en el conjunto de los canales de televisión (28% del total de mítines transmitidos). En el segundo lugar se encuentran los mítines de Flores y de García (20% cada uno).

- El canal que transmite más mítines, proporcionalmente al conjunto de su programación sobre temas electorales, es Red Global (13%). En términos absolutos, el canal que transmitió más mítines en marzo fue Canal N (63).

*Evolución mensual de la cobertura de los candidatos en la televisión (en porcentaje)*

Fuente: Área de Monitoreo de Medios de Transparencia. Elaboración de todos los gráficos: Asociación Civil Transparencia.

## III. MONITOREO DE TELEVISIÓN

### 4. Programas televisivos

#### 4.1 Panorama general

Los candidatos presidenciales ocupan un tiempo total de 104 horas, 44 minutos y 3 segundos en los programas de televisión de los canales incluidos en el monitoreo.

El canal que más tiempo da a la cobertura de los candidatos es Canal N (46 horas, 47 minutos y 50 segundos, con 44,7% del total), seguido de Red Global (12%), Panamericana (10,7%), Cable Canal de Noticias (9,6%), Televisión Nacional (6,7%), Frecuencia Latina (6,1%), Canal A (4,8%),[18] América Televisión (2,7%) y Andina de Televisión (2,7%).

El candidato que recibe la mayor cobertura en televisión es Toledo, con un 37,4% del total. Le siguen en orden descendente Flores (24,2%), García (17,6%), Boloña (7,8%), Olivera (7,6%) y los agrupados en "Otros" con 5,4%.[19]

*Apariciones de candidatos en la televisión*

| Candidato | Tiempo | Porcentaje | Apariciones |
|---|---|---|---|
| Boloña | 8h 08m 19s | 7,8% | 284 |
| Flores | 25h 23m 34s | 24,2% | 658 |
| García | 18h 24m 40s | 17,6% | 484 |
| Olivera | 8h 00m 00s | 7,6% | 347 |
| Toledo | 39h 8m 48s | 37,4% | 789 |
| Otros | 5h 38m 42s | 5,4% | 187 |
| **Total** | **104h 44m 03s** | **100,0%** | **2.749** |
| **Otros** | | | |
| Arrunátegui | 1h 44m 44s | 1,7% | 77 |
| Gálvez | 1h 34m 33s | 1,5% | 43 |
| Noriega | 2h 19m 25s | 2,2% | 67 |
| **Total** | **5h 38m 42s** | **5,4%** | **187** |

*Candidatos en la televisión (%)*



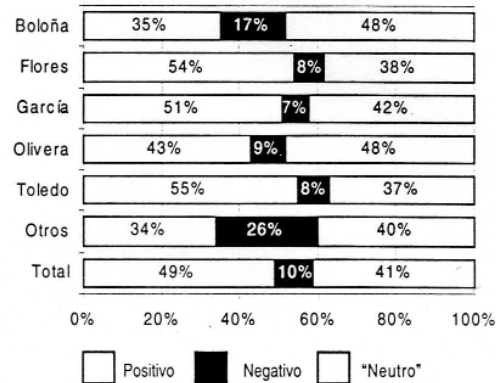Otros 5,4% — Boloña 7,8% — Flores 24,2% — García 17,6% — Olivera 7,6% — Toledo 37,4%
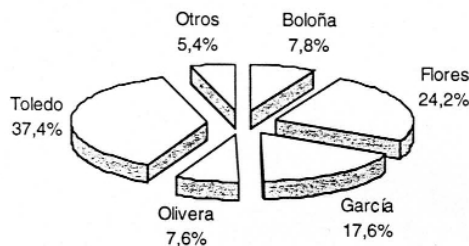
[18] Canal A se incluye en el monitoreo a partir de marzo, mes en que lanzó un programa periodístico *(Ida y vuelta,* de corta vida) y el noticiero *Así estamos.*

[19] Candidatos con 3% o menos del total de apariciones en los programas periodísticos de la televisión: Noriega 2,2%, Arrunátegui 1,7%, Gálvez 1,5%.

Toledo es el candidato con mayor porcentaje de menciones de sesgo positivo (55%), seguido de Flores (54%). En menciones de sesgo negativo, el primer lugar es para Boloña (17%), seguido de Olivera (9%). El mismo Olivera y Boloña encabezan la lista de apariciones "neutras", empatados con 48%.

*Sesgo por candidatos en la televisión*



| | Positivo | Negativo | "Neutro" |
|---|---|---|---|
| Boloña | 35% | 17% | 48% |
| Flores | 54% | 8% | 38% |
| García | 51% | 7% | 42% |
| Olivera | 43% | 9% | 48% |
| Toledo | 55% | 8% | 37% |
| Otros | 34% | 26% | 40% |
| Total | 49% | 10% | 41% |

La evolución diaria de la cobertura de candidatos presidenciales en televisión muestra una evolución bastante irregular, con altibajos muy marcados. El rango de apariciones está entre 27 y 165 menciones diarias. En líneas generales, la proporción de menciones de candidatos es menor durante los fines de semana que en el resto de los días. La tendencia es, a pesar de los altibajos, estacionaria.

*Evolución de cobertura en la televisión*
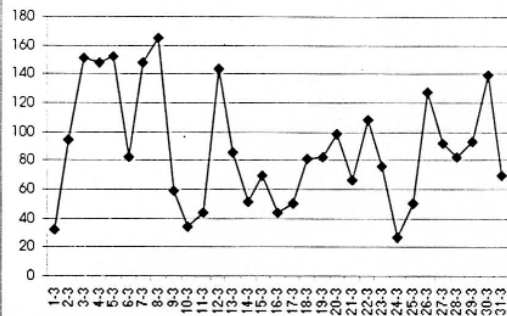


#### 4.2 Canal por canal

##### a. Frecuencia Latina

El tiempo total cubierto por los candidatos en Frecuencia Latina es de 6 horas, 23 minutos y 50 segundos.

Flores es la candidata que más aparece en Frecuencia Latina (30% del total). Le siguen, empatados, Olivera y García

(23,9% cada uno), Toledo (20%) y los agrupados en "Otros" con 2,2%.[20]

*Apariciones de candidatos en Frecuencia Latina*

| Candidato | Tiempo | Porcentaje | Apariciones |
|---|---|---|---|
| Flores | 1h 58m 28s | 30,0% | 53 |
| García | 1h 31m 28s | 23,9% | 51 |
| Olivera | 1h 31m 44s | 23,9% | 43 |
| Toledo | 1h 16m 02s | 20,0% | 63 |
| Otros | 6m 08s | 2,2% | 17 |
| Total | 6h 23m 50s | 100,0% | 227 |
| Otros | | | |
| Arrunátegui | 0m 03s | 0,1% | 1 |
| Boloña | 3m 59s | 1,0% | 13 |
| Gálvez | 0m 03s | 0,1% | 1 |
| Noriega | 2m 03s | 1,0% | 2 |
| Total | 6m 08s | 2,2% | 17 |

*Candidatos en Frecuencia Latina (%)*
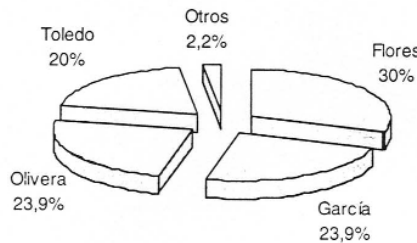


Toledo es quien exhibe la mayor proporción de menciones de sesgo positivo (70%), seguido de García (65%). En cuanto al sesgo negativo, encabezan la lista Flores (13%) y Olivera (12%). El mayor porcentaje de apariciones "neutras" lo tiene Olivera (32%), seguido de García (29%).

*Sesgo por candidatos en Frecuencia Latina*



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Flores | 58% | 13% | 28% |
| García | 65% | 6% | 29% |
| Olivera | 56% | 12% | 32% |
| Toledo | 70% | 6% | 24% |
| Otros | 29% | 42% | 29% |

☐ Positivo  ■ Negativo  ☐ "Neutro"
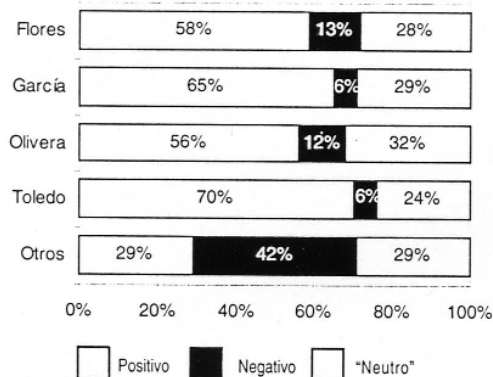
___
[20] Candidatos con 3% o menos del total de apariciones en Frecuencia Latina: Boloña 1%, Noriega 1%, Arrunátegui 0,1%, Gálvez 0,1%.

Después de un pico al inicio del período estudiado, la evolución de la cobertura de los candidatos mostró una tendencia estacionaria durante casi todo el mes, para iniciar una curva ascendente en los últimos días de marzo. El rango de apariciones fluctúa entre 1 y 50 menciones diarias.

*Evolución de cobertura en Frecuencia Latina*
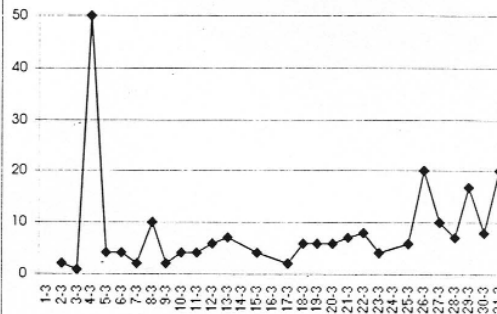


## b. América Televisión

El tiempo total de cobertura a los candidatos en América Televisión es de 2 horas, 49 minutos y 29 segundos.

Flores es la candidata más aparece en América (29% del total). Detrás de ella se ubican Toledo (26%), García (18%), Olivera (12%), Boloña (11%) y Noriega (4%). Arrunátegui y Gálvez nunca aparecen en América Televisión.

*Apariciones de candidatos en América Televisión*

| Candidato | Tiempo | Porcentaje | Apariciones |
|---|---|---|---|
| Boloña | 19m 18s | 11% | 3 |
| Flores | 48m 40s | 29% | 20 |
| García | 31m 13s | 18% | 15 |
| Noriega | 6m 27s | 4% | 2 |
| Olivera | 19m 53s | 12% | 11 |
| Toledo | 43m 58s | 26% | 22 |
| Total | 2h 49m 29s | 100% | 73 |

*Candidatos en América Televisión (%)*
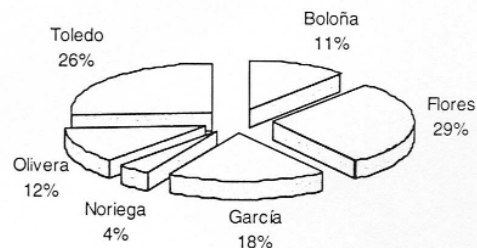


Boloña, con 100%, es quien tiene el mayor porcentaje de menciones de sesgo positivo; le sigue Flores (75%). La mayor proporción de menciones negativas es para Flores

**SAMPLE MEDIA MONITORING REPORT—TOGO**
*(Included with permission of RSF.)*

REPORTERS SANS FRONTIERES

Lomé, le 12 juin 1998

Communiqué de presse

Elections présidentielles au Togo

# Les médias publics ne respectent pas la loi

## Le traitement des différents candidats est totalement déséquilibré

L'information sur les médias publics n'a pas respecté le principe d'égalité entre les différents candidats, normalement en vigueur depuis le début de la campagne électorale. C'est ce qui ressort de l'observation de TV Togo, Radio Lomé, Radio Kara, Togo Presse et l'Agence Togolaise de Presse menée par Reporters sans frontières (RSF) entre le vendredi 5 juin à 0 heure et le jeudi 11 juin à 24 heures. Comme il est de règle, cette observation des médias d'Etat ne prend pas en compte les messages diffusés dans le cadre de la campagne officielle.

A l'image de la pré-campagne électorale, le candidat du RPT, M. Gnassingbé Eyadéma, a été avantagé, bénéficiant d'un temps d'antenne largement supérieur à celui accordé à chacun de ses challengers. Si des candidats - MM. Léopold Gnininvi et Jacques Amouzou - sont correctement traités, d'autres sont marginalisés, voire pratiquement ignorés, comme c'est le cas pour M. Gilchrist Olympio (cf. annexe). Cette attitude des médias publics fausse délibérément les règles du jeu. En choisissant ce comportement, les responsables des médias publics et leur ministère de tutelle violent la loi togolaise.

En effet, pendant la campagne électorale, les médias publics doivent accorder le même temps d'antenne et le même espace rédactionnel aux six candidats à l'élection présidentielle. C'est ce que précise l'article 2 de l'arrêté du 20 avril 1998 : «Tous les candidats à l'élection présidentielle figurant sur la liste arrêtée et publiée par la Cour constitutionnelle reçoivent un traitement égal dans l'utilisation des organes publics de presse écrite, de radiodiffusion et de télévision». Un arrêté qui reprend l'article 130 de la Constitution affirmant que «la Haute Autorité de l'Audiovisuel et de la Communication (...) veille (...) à l'accès équitable des partis politiques et des associations aux moyens officiels d'information et de communication» et l'article 133 du code électoral qui stipule que «la Haute Autorité de l'Audiovisuel et de la Communication assure l'égalité entre les candidats dans l'utilisation du temps d'antenne».

Cette inégalité de traitement réservée aux différents candidats est en contradiction avec la volonté affichée par les pouvoirs´ publics d'organiser des élections transparentes et démocratiques. Elle nie le droit de chacun d'être informé le plus complètement et le plus honnêtement possible des enjeux du scrutin du 21 juin. Les chiffres attestent du traitement privilégié dont bénéficie le candidat-Président G. Eyadéma.
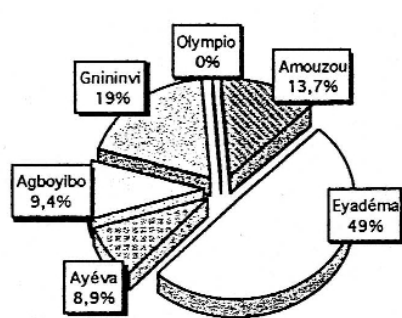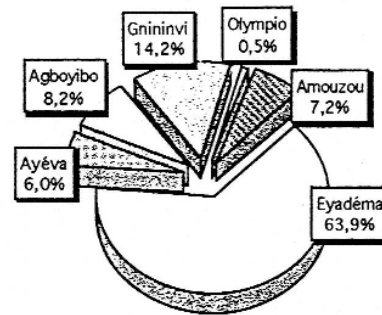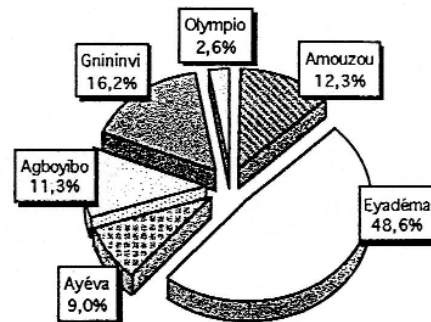


TV Togo
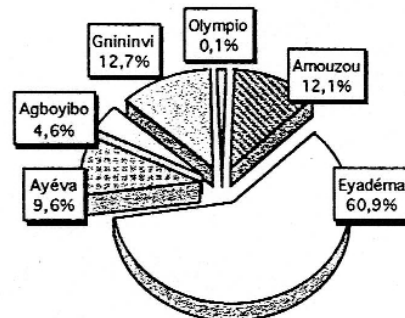


Radio Lomé
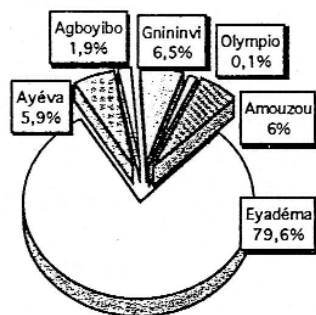


Radio Kara



Togo Presse



ATOP

De plus, certains journalistes des médias publics violent l'article 7 de l'arrêté du 20 avril 1998 qui précise que «le personnel des organes de presse d'Etat est tenu pendant la campagne électorale d'observer la plus stricte neutralité et de s'obliger (...) au respect des règles de déontologie de leur profession». Plusieurs éditoriaux sont, en fait, des appels à peine déguisés à voter pour le candidat du RPT. Et certains «reportages» n'ont d'autre objectif que de dénigrer tel ou tel parti de l'opposition, comme le prouve la diffusion d'un «témoignage» d'un repenti accusant un responsable de l'opposition d'avoir fait assassiner un député et les propos d'une jeune femme se présentant comme la fille d'un candidat en lice et mettant en cause l'honneur et l'honnêteté de celui-ci.

Face à ce comportement des médias publics, manifestement discriminatoire à l'égard de plusieurs candidats à l'élection présidentielle (M. Eyadéma est le seul à avoir bénéficié, en tant que candidat, de la «une» de Togo Presse et de plusieurs «ouvertures» des journaux de la télévision et des radios) et devant le silence complice de la Haute Autorité de l'Audiovisuel et de la Communication, RSF appelle la Commission Electorale Nationale à se saisir de cette question, comme les articles 139 et 133 alinéa 1 du code électoral lui en donnent la possibilité. Le premier stipule en effet que celle-ci «veille au respect du principe d'égalité entre les candidats dans les propagandes d'informations des organes de presse d'Etat». Le second ajoutant qu'elle «intervient, le cas échéant, auprès des autorités compétentes pour que soient prises toutes les mesures susceptibles d'assurer cette égalité».

Depuis le 8 mai - date du début de l'observation conduite par RSF -, les médias publics ont sensiblement évolué. Ils sont aujourd'hui beaucoup plus ouverts aux différents partis et sensibilités politiques. Mais, si rien n'est fait dans les huit jours de campagne électorale à venir pour changer le comportement encore partisan des médias publics, il sera impossible, pour quiconque, d'affirmer que les candidats en lice auront bénéficié des mêmes conditions de campagne et donc, que le vote se sera déroulé dans la transparence. La communauté internationale devra alors en tirer toutes les conséquences.

L'opération d'observation des médias publics menée par RSF bénéficie de l'appui financier de la Commission européenne.

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Pour toutes informations complémentaires, vous pouvez contacter Reporters sans frontières (Hôtel Palm Beach - Tel 21 85 11 - chambre 902).
Vous pouvez retrouver l'ensemble des communiqués de presse de Reporters sans frontières concernant l'opération d'observation des médias publics togolais à l'occasion des élections présidentielles sur l'Internet : www.rsf.fr

## Annexe

**Campagne électorale du 5 juin à 0 heure au 11 juin à 24 heures**

|  | Agboyibo (CAR) | Amouzou (ULI) | Ayéva (PDR) | Eyadéma (RPT) | Gnininvi (CDPA) | Olympio (UFC) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TV Togo (en minutes) | 18' 01'' | 26' 04'' | 17' 00'' | 1h 33' 23'' | 36' 17'' | 0 |
| Radio Lomé (en minutes) | 11' 22'' | 30' 07'' | 23' 52'' | 2h 31' 34'' | 31' 39'' | 0' 06'' |
| Radio Kara (en minutes) | 7' 04'' | 22' 46'' | 21' 51'' | 4h 57' 12'' | 24' 27'' | 0' 10'' |
| Togo Presse (en cm$^2$) | 707,3 | 619,1 | 512,9 | 5494,8 | 1222,4 | 43,2 |
| ATOP (en mots) | 916 | 1007 | 728 | 3949 | 1317 | 211 |

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Schnellinger, Lisa. *Free & Fair: A Journalist's Guide to Improved Election Reporting in Emerging Democracies*. Washington DC: International Center for Journalists, 2001.

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Robert Norris** is a long-time advisor to NDI. He is a Staff Director for the United Nations Foundation and The Better World Campaign. Mr. Norris has worked over the last decade as a political researcher and analyst, representing candidates for numerous national and state offices. He served for five years on the staff of U.S. Congressional Representative Barney Frank (Massachusetts). He also has served as NDI resident representative in Yemen and Slovakia and has assisted NDI programs in a number of other countries. Mr. Norris directed NDI's effort to support the Slovak media monitoring organization MEMO '98, from its inception prior to Slovakia's 1998 elections through the post-election period. He has worked with several other NDI programs, concerning media monitoring and broader electoral support activities. In addition, he served as the principal advisor to media monitoring programs in Guyana with the United Nations Development Program and in Uganda with the Electoral Reform International Services, a London-based nonprofit organization. Mr. Norris received his law degree from The Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law and completed his undergraduate education at The College of the Holy Cross.

**Patrick Merloe** is NDI's Senior Associate and Director of Programs on Elections and Political Processes. He oversees the NDI's electoral programs concerning constitutional and law reform, nonpartisan domestic election monitoring, political party efforts to ensure electoral integrity and international election observation. He has participated in or led more than 90 NDI delegations and assistance teams to more than 50 countries, which included assistance to several media monitoring projects. He was co-author, with Sandra Coliver, of *Guidelines for Election Broadcasting in Transitional Democracies,* published by Article 19, the Global Campaign for Free Expression (London), and was co-editor with Ms. Coliver and Ann Naughton of Article 19's volume entitled, *Press Law and Practice: A Comparative Study of Press Freedom in European and Other Democracies,* both of which are designed to assist those concerned with law reform and campaigns for free expression. Prior to joining NDI, Mr. Merloe was an attorney with Heller Ehrman White & McAuliffe, one of San Francisco's largest law firms. Mr. Merloe has taught at the University of San Francisco School of Law and the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He received his law degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, conducted graduate studies at the Institute for Policy Studies and completed his undergraduate education at Temple University.

# SELECTED NDI PUBLICATIONS
# ON ELECTION MONITORING

**NDI Handbook on How Domestic Organizations Monitor Elections: An A to Z Guide (1995).** This handbook provides a comprehensive overview of how to organize a nonpartisan domestic election monitoring effort. It covers: planning and organizational issues; recruiting, training and logistical issues in building a communications network for reporting; various subjects to monitor in the pre-election, election day and post-election periods; and considerations for how the organization and skills developed through monitoring efforts can be applied to non-election activities. The guide is designed for election monitoring by civic organizations but can be used by political parties in designing their efforts to ensure electoral integrity and protect their vote.

**Promoting Legal Frameworks for Democratic Elections: An NDI Guide for Developing Election Laws and Law Commentaries, by Patrick Merloe (2002).** This guide addresses the importance of developing legal frameworks that promote democratic elections; why it is important for political parties, civic organizations and others to analyze the strengths and weakness of existing and proposed laws affecting election processes; the importance of developing an open and inclusive political process to address those laws so that political competitors may agree on the "rules of the game" and the public can develop confidence in the process. The guide presents the main issues to examine when evaluating the legal framework and over 300 questions to consider, as well as sources of international law on the subject and samples of NDI election law commentaries.

**Building Confidence in the Voter Registration Process: An NDI Monitoring Guide for Political Parties and Civic Organizations, by Richard L. Klein and Patrick Merloe (2001).** This voter registration monitoring guide addresses: the role of voter registration and the principle types of voter registration systems; why it is important for political parties and civic organizations to monitor these systems; and specific techniques for monitoring processes for collecting names, creating a voter registry and polling station voter lists, correcting errors in the lists and use of the lists on election day.

**The Quick Count and Election Observation: An NDI Handbook for Civic Organizations and Political Parties, by Melissa Estok, Neil Nevitte and Glenn Cowan (2002).** This handbook addresses the importance of developing systematic observation of vital election day processes, including the quality of voting, ballot counting and tabulation of election results, as well as the projection of electoral results with extremely narrow margins of error and high degrees of statistical confidence. It covers planning and organizational issues, recruiting and training, communications systems, developing a random statistical sample of polling stations for rapid and exacting analysis, analytical techniques and the considerations for the release of quick count findings. The handbook is designed for civic organizations but can easily be used by political parties. It also is designed for use by civic organizations that decide not to undertake projection of electoral results. As an organizer's guide, it reviews many of the issues covered by NDI's 1995 "A to Z" handbook.

*In addition to these materials, NDI has produced over 300 reports, papers and statements concerning ways in which to promote democratic elections generally and concerning the election process within specific countries. See NDI's website: www.ndi.org "Access Democracy" and "Global Programs/Elections and Political Processes" for more information about these and other NDI publications*

**WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF THE MEDIA TO DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS?**

Democratic elections cannot be achieved unless voters exercise a free and informed choice at the ballot box. The mass communications media provide information that is essential to the choice of most voters. It is therefore important to assess whether the media are meeting their responsibilities to the electoral contestants and the public.

**WHY IS MEDIA MONITORING AN IMPORTANT ACTIVITY?**

Media monitoring can help demonstrate that political competitors and the public at large should have confidence in the media, electoral authorities and the government that is responsible for providing genuine elections. Shortcomings in media conduct can be identified through monitoring in time for corrective action. Abuse of the mass media's power to affect voter choices also can be documented, which allows the population and the international community to appropriately characterize the true nature of the electoral process.

**HOW CAN MEDIA MONITORING BE ORGANIZED, AND WHAT METHODOLOFIES CAN BE USED?**

This handbook takes a step-by-step approach to organizing a media monitoring project. It covers considerations in deciding whether to initiate a project, the project's planning and organization, as well as monitoring methodologies. The appendices present examples of monitoring forms, nonpartisanship pledges and codes of conduct, relevant international human rights provisions and sample reports from several media monitoring efforts.

**HOW CAN CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS AND JOURNALIST ASSOCIATIONS ACT TO PROMOTE PROPER MEDIA CONDUCT AND A FAIR ELECTION ENVIRONMENT?**

The handbook is intended for those concerned with freedom of expression and electoral integrity to help them develop capacities to monitor media conduct and factors affecting the media in electoral contexts. Readers interested in additional election monitoring issues should also refer to NDI's Handbook on How Domestic Organizations Monitor Elections: An A to Z Guide, and other NDI publications.