



AFRICAN MEDIA BAROMETER

The first home grown analysis of the
media landscape in Africa

NIGERIA 2011



AFRICAN
MEDIA
BAROMETER

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The African Media Barometer (AMB)






The African Media Barometer (AMB) is an in-depth and comprehensive description and measurement system for national media environments on the African continent. Unlike other press surveys or media indices the AMB is a self-assessment exercise based on home-grown criteria derived from African Protocols and Declarations like the “*Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa*” (2002) by the “African Commission for Human and Peoples’ Rights”. The instrument was jointly developed by *fesmedia Africa*, the Media Project of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in Africa, and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) in 2004.

The African Media Barometer is an analytical exercise to measure the media situation in a given country which at the same time serves as a practical lobbying tool for media reform. Its results are presented to the public of the respective country to push for an improvement of the media situation using the AU Declaration and other African standards as benchmarks. The recommendations of the AMB-reports are then integrated into the work of the 19 country offices of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in sub-Saharan Africa and into the advocacy efforts of other local media organizations like the Media Institute of Southern Africa.

Methodology and Scoring System

Every two to three years a panel of 10-12 experts, consisting of at least five media practitioners and five representatives from civil society, meets to assess the media situation in their own country. For 1 1/2 days they discuss the national media environment according to 45 predetermined indicators. The discussion and scoring is moderated by an independent consultant who also edits the AMB-report.

After the discussion of one indicator panel members allocate their individual scores to that respective indicator in an anonymous vote according to the following scale:

1	Country does not meet indicator	
2	Country meets only a few aspects of indicator	
3	Country meets some aspects of indicator	
4	Country meets most aspects of indicator.	
5	Country meets all aspects of the indicator	

The sum of all individual indicator scores will be divided by the number of panel members to determine the average score for each indicator. These average indicator scores are added up to form average sector scores which then make up the overall country score.

Outcome

The final, qualitative report summarizes the general content of the discussion and provides the average score for each indicator plus sector scores and overall country score. In the report panellists are not quoted by name to protect them from possible repercussions. Over time the bi- or tri-annual reports are measuring the media development in that particular country and should form the basis for a political discussion on media reform.

In countries where English is not the official language the report is published in a bilingual edition.

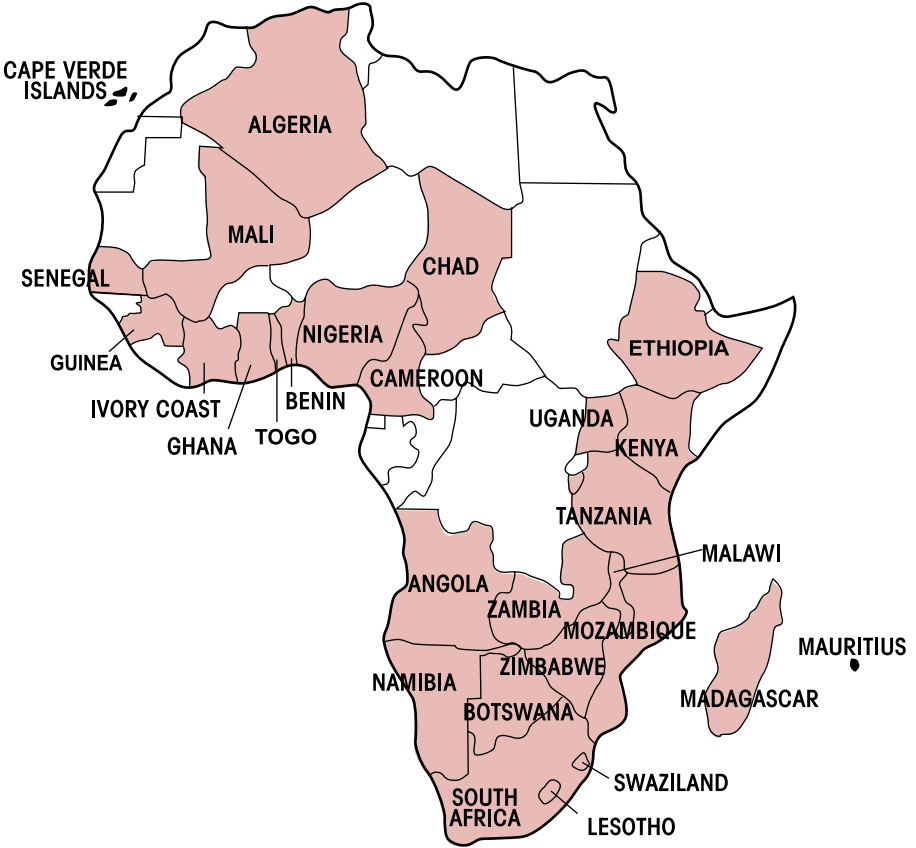
Implementing the African Media Barometer the offices of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and - in SADC countries the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) - only serve as a convener of the panel and as guarantor of the methodology. The content of the discussion and the report is owned by the panel of local experts and does not represent or reflect the view of FES or MISA.

At the end of 2008 the indicators were reviewed, amended and some new ones were added to address the rapid developments in Information Communication Technology (ICT).

By the end of 2011 the African Media Barometer has been held in 28 African countries, in some of them already for the fourth time.

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See above 28 AMB Countries (2005-2011)

AFRICAN MEDIA BAROMETER NIGERIA 2011

Summary

Nigeria's media has always been vibrant, with a steadfast commitment by journalists and other media professionals. Since the last Nigeria African Media Barometer (AMB) in 2008, there are a number of indicators that suggest that sustained effort is being made towards the preservation of these core values. The institution of the Ombudsman, which was established in 2009 by the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria [NPAN], is an initiative that underscores the desire by media professionals and proprietors to bring a greater sense of professionalism. By voluntarily choosing to submit the media to public scrutiny through the complaints received by the institution, the media is bringing accountability within its own ranks.

There are equally bright prospects for the media following the steady entrenchment of the newfound democratic culture in Africa's most populous nation. Government attitude towards the media has changed positively with a marked departure from the highhandedness of the past, to the use of legal recourse, when and if necessary, to check any excesses of the media. The 2009 decision by the late President Umaru Musa Yar Adua, to take *Leadership* Newspaper to court for a report he considered defamatory, is greeted within media circles as a positive 'First', because the natural reaction would simply have been to suspend or close the media house. This democratic environment is also promoting the emergence of new legislation that is media friendly. The passage of the Freedom of Information Act in 2011 and the Access to Information Act are two pieces of legislation that will make a tremendous impact on the development of the media and freedom of expression.

However, in spite of these positive changes there are a series of relatively new trends that could seriously undermine the development of the media in Nigeria, which has the reputation of being one of Africa's most robust media power houses.

Working conditions for journalists in both state and privately-owned media organisations are simply deplorable. Not only are salaries very low, but they are also paid intermittently, with a cross section of private media journalists being owed arrears of up to ten months. Corruption is eating deep into the fabric of the Nigerian media, and is unfortunately condoned by media proprietors, who sometimes encourage reporters to extort money from news sources in lieu of salaries. The situation is so bad that a panellist summed it by saying: "the integrity of the media is on trial." Nigeria also occupies the unenviable dark spot of a country where harassment of journalists is still common and where journalists still have to pay the ultimate price – being assassinated in the exercise of their

duties. The fact that the perpetrators of the 2008 murders of Abayomi Ogundeji and Godwin Agbaroko of *THISDAY* newspaper and the 2009 murder of *The Guardian's* Bayo Ohu have not been tracked down and brought to justice, is extremely worrisome for media professionals. With the perpetual fear of losing a job or of being kidnapped or killed, Nigerian journalists seem to have found a comfort zone called self-censorship.

There is consensus among experts with a keen attention on Nigeria that the country's media currently stands at a tipping point. How the positive and negative forces identified above eventually play out is left to be seen. Many agree though, that the welfare of journalists is critical to the direction the media will ultimately take, for better or worse.

SECTOR 1:

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

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

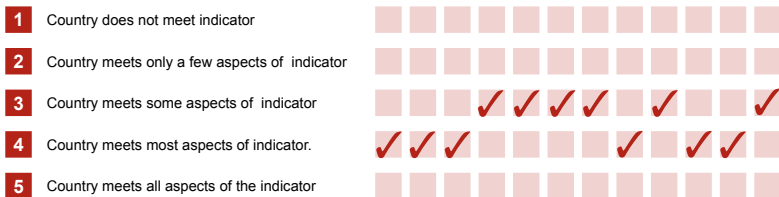
1.1 Freedom of expression, including freedom of the media, is guaranteed in the constitution and supported by other pieces of legislation.

Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recognises the role of the press, radio, television and other agencies of mass media to uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people. Section 39 (1) gives citizens the right to “freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference”. The Constitution further states in Section 39 (2) that “every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions”.

However, these freedoms are curtailed by other instruments in the same Constitution. Section 39 states that only the governments of the Federation or State; or their representatives and agencies can own, establish and operate or authorise a television or wireless broadcasting station “for any purpose whatsoever”. The Broadcasting code gives the government, through the Minister of Information, the power to issue and withdraw broadcasting licences. The government used this power to check freedom of expression when it closed Channels Television in 2010. “Through the Official Secrets Acts, the government is able to prevent the public from having access to certain information,” said one panellist. The 1966 Defamatory and Offensive Publication Act places the responsibility of proving innocence on the defence.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

3.5 (2008 = 2.3)

1.2 The right to freedom of expression is practised and citizens, including journalists, are asserting their rights without fear.

Nigeria has a vibrant press with government-run and privately-owned media outlets vigorously trying to outperform each other for audience and advertising revenue. The private press has improved over the years, and attempts to match international standards in terms of quality of production. With the advent of democracy, journalists and citizens have also become more daring and vocal in expressing their views. Even Federal and State-run news outlets now make an effort to air the opinions of all parties during political campaigns, albeit with much difficulty.

New media, especially social media, have given citizens more voice. The Internet (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube) and mobile phone text messaging were used extensively during the 2011 elections to share information and opinions about the polls with comparatively less fear than in past elections. Radio stations are also beginning to popularise call-in programmes, which give members of the public the opportunity to air their views.

“...most media outlets are owned by politicians, and journalists are often forced to comply with their dictates”.

“...people are yet to see themselves as free citizens”.

It can be said that journalists in Nigeria take advantage of the rights and freedoms granted to them by the constitution, but this is often not without fear. “Public officials, media owners and interest groups like advertisers, often interfere with the work of journalists through threats, harassment, abductions and even assassinations,” according to a panellist. Another panellist added that “most media outlets are owned by politicians, and journalists are often forced to comply with their dictates”. It is common for a public official or advertiser to put pressure on a media owner to sack a reporter because of a negative report. Many are thus forced to practice self-censorship, both for their personal safety and job security.

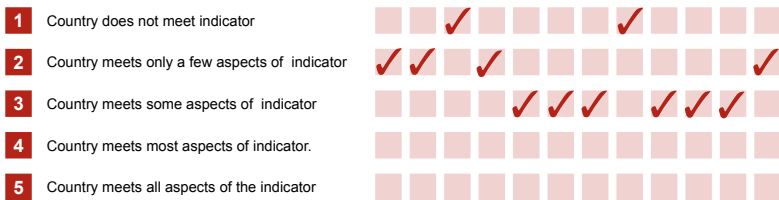
Additionally, journalists lack basic insurance coverage and are often unwilling to take risks.

The highly sensitive nature of the Nigerian public, particularly to religious and ethnic issues, also means that journalists are unable to report every story, for fear of provoking angry reactions. The Miss World crisis of 2002 and the recurrent religious clashes continue to haunt the Nigerian media and public in 2011. According to Nigerian Red Cross officials, at least 100 people died in the northern city of Kaduna following two days of rioting in protest at the Miss World beauty

contest. The suggestion by a newspaper that the Prophet Mohammed would have probably chosen to marry one of the Miss World contestants if he had witnessed the beauty pageant sparked the protests, which subsequently spread to other cities. One panellist also said that “people are yet to see themselves as free citizens in a democratic society, and continue to suffer from the hangover of decades of military rule characterised by intolerance and brutality, which contributed to instilling perpetual fear in citizens.”

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 2.3 (2008 = 2.4)

1.3 There are no laws restricting freedom of expression such as excessive official secret or libel acts, or laws that unreasonably interfere with the responsibilities of media.

The media in Nigeria is unable to fully exercise its role in holding the government and public officials accountable because of several laws that negate freedom of expression. An Official Secrets Act passed in 1962 makes it illegal to disseminate or obtain information considered “classified”. The law is vague about what constitutes classified information and does not state whether or not information becomes declassified at some point. The Act places further restrictions on photographing, sketching or describing a “protected” place, which applies to defence dispositions during a period of emergency.

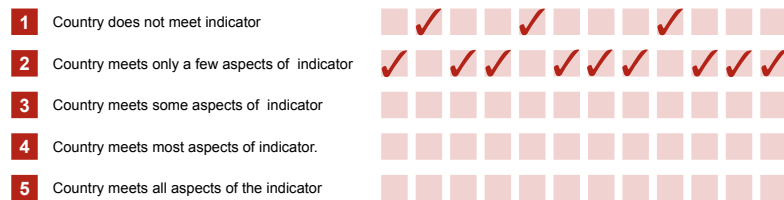
Criminal libel is upheld in Nigeria’s Defamatory and Offensive Publication Act. Under this Act, a member of a security force can arrest a suspect without a warrant, and it prescribes a punishment of up to three months imprisonment and/or a fine of N100 (US\$ 0.60). The court may also order the confiscation of equipment and recorded material.

Some laws that infringe on freedom of expression have been invalidated by the courts but are often still invoked by the government and public officials. For example, a panellist cited a case whereby the law on Sedition, which the Appeal Court invalidated in 1985 has been repeatedly invoked when the government finds itself under attack. He pointed out that in 2006, it was used in a suit against *AIT (African Independent Television)*, privately owned television station, following the broadcast of a programme about the purchase of a presidential plane that turned out to be defective. Authorities said that the discussion was capable of bringing the government into disrepute.

Acts establishing public broadcasting and the regulation of the broadcasting sector give several powers to the Minister of Information, who can use them to control programme content, particularly of state-owned broadcasters.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

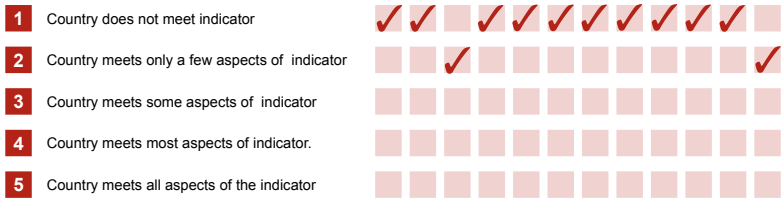
1.8 (2008 = 1.5)

1.4 Government makes every effort to honour regional and international instruments on freedom of expression and the media.

Nigeria has only made minimal effort in respecting regional and international protocols and conventions on freedom of expression and of the media. The little that has been done, is the result of advocacy and pressure from the civil society. According to some panellists, the government appears to feel threatened by instruments that seek to strengthen freedom of expression and the media. In many respects, the government has tightened its grip on the media, particularly state-owned radio and TV stations, and is resistant to recommendations to transform them into truly public service broadcasters. Advocacy for the promotion of community radio has been ongoing for nine years, but as of June 2011, not a single community radio station had been licensed in Nigeria, except for the campus radio stations, which operate at some universities.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 1.2 (2008 = n/a)

1.5 Print publications are not required to obtain permission to publish from state authorities.

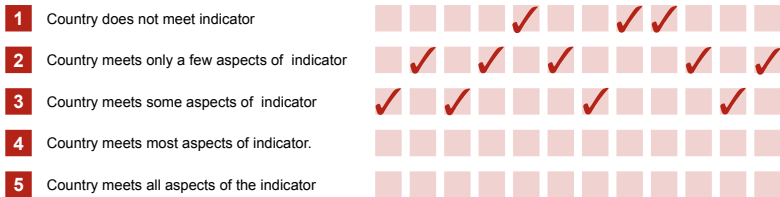
“...the board has been set up mainly to ensure full control over the content of publications.”

Authorisation is required for print publications to be considered legal in Nigeria. Newspapers generally obtain licences from either the Federal or State governments, while publishers of books are required to obtain an ISBN number from the National and State libraries. Some states insist on receiving a draft of the publication before issuing an ISBN number. In the state of Kano, a board has been set up to look through print material before it is published. According to one panellist, “the board has been set up mainly to ensure full control over the content of publications.” In Lagos State, authorities require new publishers to submit a dummy copy of their newspaper or magazine before the publication is launched.

But panellists said many publishers generally ignore the licence requirements and go ahead to publish. They carry on unperturbed with their business until they commit an “offence”, and the noncompliance is then used against them.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 2.1 (2008 = n/a)

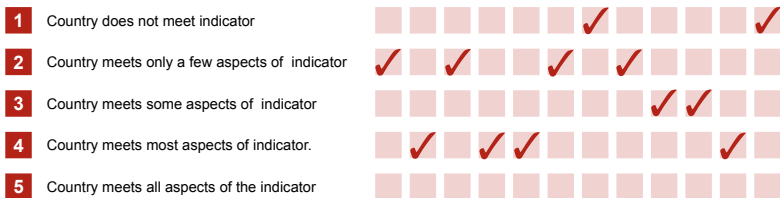
1.6 Entry into and practice of the journalistic profession is legally unrestricted.

It is generally easy to become a journalist and to practice in Nigeria. However, the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) is making attempts to regulate entry into the profession with the introduction of requirements such as minimum formal qualifications, arguing that it is important in order to guarantee professionalism.

In 2010, the government was forced to seek appeal after a high court rendered null and void the Press Council Act, an instrument which among other things sets conditions for becoming a journalist. Currently, minimum requirements for recruitment are at the discretion of publishers. The result, in the opinion of the majority of the members of the panel, has been an influx of what has been referred to as “quack journalists” into the profession.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 2.7 (2008 = 3.4)

1.7 Confidential sources of information are protected by law and/or the courts.

Nothing in Nigeria's media laws gives journalists the right or privilege to conceal their sources. Nonetheless, two Appeal Court rulings in favour of the protection of journalists' sources have given legal backing to the protection of sources. One panellist cited the example of the the Senate vs. Tony Momoh case, in which the Appeal court said the fundamental right of the journalist must be upheld.

Other panellists believe that the passing of the Freedom to Information Act (FIA) in 2011 would ease the protection of sources by journalists. The FIA promises to protect public officials from the adverse consequences of releasing certain categories of information.

Scores:

Individual scores:

1	Country does not meet indicator	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓							
2	Country meets only a few aspects of indicator		✓		✓		✓						✓	
3	Country meets some aspects of indicator				✓									✓
4	Country meets most aspects of indicator.												✓	
5	Country meets all aspects of the indicator													

Average score:

1.9 (2008 = 1.1)

1.8 Public information is easily accessible, guaranteed by law, to all citizens.

Nigeria passed its first Freedom of Information Act in May 2011, in what is considered within media circles across the continent as a groundbreaking move.

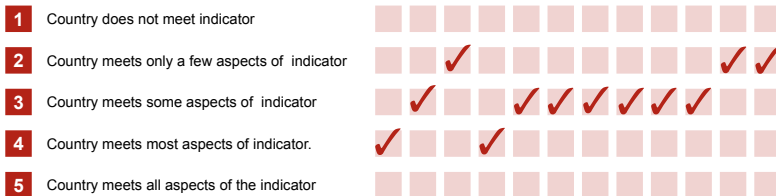
The Act came as a result of many years of advocacy by civil society groups and media-based associations such as the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Newspaper Proprietors' Association of Nigeria (NPAN) and the Nigerian Guild of Editors. The introductory note of the Bill tabled before parliament states that the purpose of the act is to make "public records and information more freely available, provide for public access to public records and information, protect public records and information to the extent consistent with the public interest and the protection of personal privacy, protect serving public officers from

adverse consequences of disclosing certain kinds of official information without authorization and establish procedures for the achievement of those purposes and for related matters.” Section 4 of the Act obliges public authorities to make information available to an applicant within seven days, with the possibility of a further seven-day extension. Public authorities or institutions face a fine of up to N500, 000 (US\$3,156.80) if guilty of “wrongful denial” of information, under Section 7 (5) of the FIA.

Given its recent passing, the law is still to be tested. However, journalists and citizens have already noted some defects in its formulation. For example, an authority can refuse to release certain information or parts of it and in some cases, the applicant for information is required to convince the court that he/she needs that information. Panellists pointed out that with the practice whereby most government documents, records and correspondences are often stamped “confidential” or “secret”, some holders of public information can also hide behind the Official Secrets Act to deny information to the public.

Scores:

Individual scores:



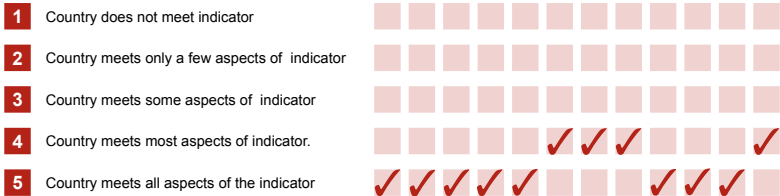
Average score: 2.9 (2008 = 1.6)

1.9 Websites and blogs are not required to register with or obtain permission from state authorities.

The blogosphere is thriving in Nigeria. There are no known laws requiring any form of authorisation or permission to set up websites or publish on the internet. In the absence of apparent restrictions, panellists affirmed that individuals and institutions simply build their websites, find a host of their choice and start publishing. According to panellists, the public would frown at any attempt by the government to impose restrictions on the use of the internet because “Nigerians feel that it is one of the domains where they enjoy near-total freedom”.

Scores:

Individual scores:



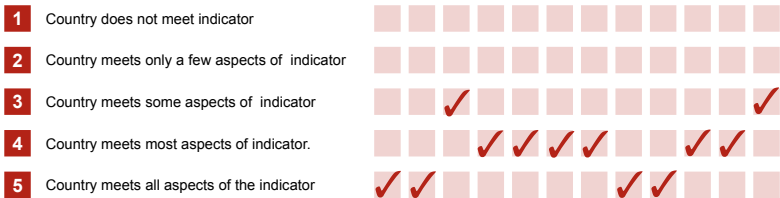
Average score: 4.7 (2008 = n/a)

1.10 The state does not seek to block or filter Internet content unless laws provide for restrictions that serve a legitimate interest and are necessary in a democratic society.

There are indications that the government is monitoring public internet access points such as cybercafés, to combat “advance fee fraud” - popularly referred to as 419 scams. There is also a cyber crime law in the works, which would address issues like electronic fraud and pornography. But in the meantime, there are no known reports of internet content filtering or attempts to block certain sites.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 4.2 (2008 = n/a)

1.11 Civil society in general and media lobby groups actively advance the cause of media freedom.

Nigeria's new Freedom of Information Act is one example that best illustrates the role played by media organisations and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in shaping the country's media landscape. Advocacy for media freedom, led by civil society, has been felt in the country over the past 11 years, following Nigeria's return to civilian rule. Civil society groups have been at the forefront of initiatives aimed at the repeal of repressive laws and the introduction of new legislation that guarantees greater freedoms through public awareness building, advocacy and stakeholder lobbying activities. Though implementation has been slow, there have been initiatives such as the Media Rights Agenda, a proposed bill to revise the broadcasting regulation, efforts to amend laws that infringe on free speech and freedom of expression, and advocacy for the development of community radio.

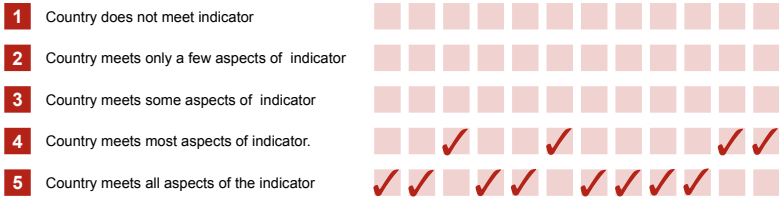
The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), which has members throughout the country, is the umbrella body that caters for the welfare of all journalists. It is currently in the process of reforming itself from a trade union to a professional association. The Union runs an insurance scheme for journalists and has come out with a journalists' salary scale, which it hopes media owners will implement.

There was consensus among panellists that the NUJ is often at the forefront of defending the interests of journalists, especially when they come under attack. For instance, regional chapters have boycotted the coverage of some State Houses to protest the arrest and abuse of journalists.

International organisations such as Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Reporters Without Borders, Committee to Protect Journalists, International Centre for Journalists, and the International Federation of Journalists, amongst others, are actively involved in defending the cause of journalism in Nigeria by exposing and denouncing abuse, providing training and spearheading advocacy for a freer media.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 4.7 (2008 = 4.4)

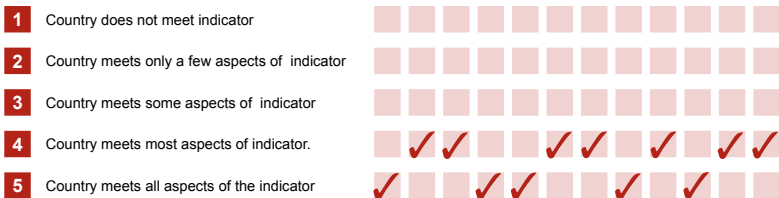
1.12 Media legislation evolves from meaningful consultations among state institutions, citizens and interest groups.

The Freedom of Information Act is the result of years of meaningful consultations and advocacy through the civil-society-led Freedom of Information Coalition. Over the past few years, public authorities have become less hostile to FOI.

The Minister of Information, for example, has publicly spoken in favour of the Act. Panellists said there is also evidence that a great deal of consultation preceded the passing of the National Broadcasting Code in 2008.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 4.4 (2008 = n/a)

Average score for sector 1: 3.0 (2008 = n/a)*

* The indicators were reviewed, changed and shifted in 2009. Therefore the scores of some indicators and sector scores are not comparable to scores of previous AMBs.

SECTOR 2:

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

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

2.1 A wide range of sources of information (print, broadcasting, Internet) is available and affordable to citizens.

A wide spectrum of media platforms are available to Nigerians, even though access may be restricted by cost, technology, circulation and other factors such as lack of electricity in some parts of the country.

As far as the print media is concerned, Nigeria has a flourishing newspaper industry, with about 20 to 25 national dailies and weeklies and a multiplicity of regional publications at the level of each of the 36 States of the Federation. Circulation has, however, dwindled over the years for economic reasons. While urban centres are awash with the day's papers, newspapers hardly reach rural readers and when they do, it is often several days after the publication date. Publishers find no incentive in incurring extra costs of pushing circulation into the rural areas, where the market is largely nonexistent. Most have adopted "strategic marketing" techniques like targeting hotels, airports and offices.

On average, newspapers cost US\$1 and magazines cost about US\$2. These prices are generally considered expensive for the ordinary Nigerian.

In broadcasting, the number of radio stations in Nigeria has been growing rapidly. There are an estimated 192 radio stations in the country, with more stations springing up in cities, towns and on school campuses.

Radio is considered the medium with the widest reach. Through cheap battery-powered transistor radio sets, residents in the most remote parts of the country are able to stay connected to what is going on, and can even participate in programming.

Dozens of free-to-air television stations broadcast across Nigeria. The cost of television sets has been on a steady decline, but remains largely unaffordable to the vast majority of poor Nigerians. In addition, panellists said except for the main public networks, TV signals are also usually weak, leaving swaths of the country underserved or in complete blackout. Frequent power outages mean that even those with access to TV signals often spend weeks without watching television.

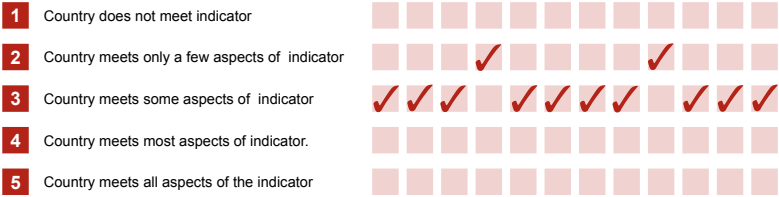
Pay TV services such as DSTV and MY TV are more popular in bigger towns and cities, but only the rich can afford them. Most of the channels broadcast entertainment programmes, especially international soaps and sports, but there are a few that offer local content such as Africa Magic and MNet.

Nigeria has an impressive mobile phone penetration. There are believed to be more than 80 million subscribers in this country of some 150 million inhabitants. Nearly every village in Nigeria has a mobile telephone network. Though the cost of telecommunication remains high for many subscribers, the mobile phone still serves as a primary source of information access.

Internet is becoming increasingly popular, though it is only available in big towns and cities. Most Nigerians access the internet at cybercafés where they pay between US 50 cents to US \$1 per hour for the service. While only a small proportion of the population has internet at home, most offices are equipped with computers with relatively high speed internet connection. Mobile phones have increased internet access options, but the potential impact is restrained by the high costs associated with this access.

Scores:

Individual scores:



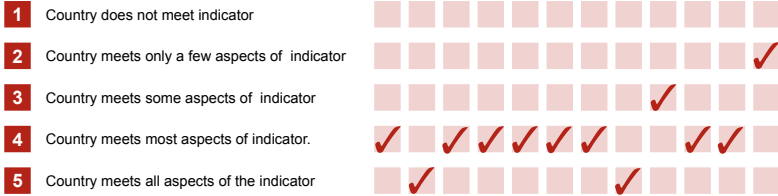
Average score: 2.8 (2008 = 3.4)

2.2 Citizens’ access to domestic and international media sources is not restricted by state authorities.

A wide range of media sources is available to Nigerians via free-to-air, cable and satellite television. Citizens are not restrained as to what they can access, so long as it is available and affordable. However, some panellists pointed out that there are rules in place that bar local television stations from relaying live newscasts from foreign stations. Two years ago, the government encrypted Big Brother Africa, a reality TV show aired by a foreign station, arguing that public taste, decency and cultural conflict justified this decision.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 3.9 (2008 = 4.5)

2.3 Efforts are undertaken to increase the scope of circulation of the print media, particularly to rural communities.

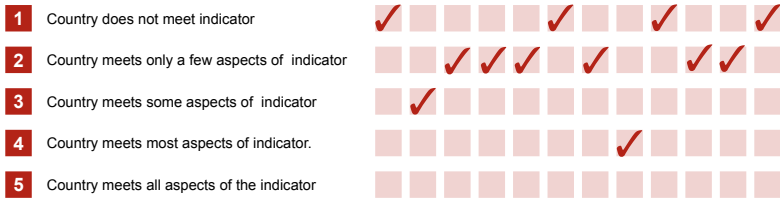
Newspaper circulation generally targets urban centres where there is a demand and the cost of distribution is low. Circulation to rural areas is usually marginal and at best irregular, curtailed by factors such as the high cost of production, poor road infrastructure, insecurity, and the unreliability of vendors.

Within the past three years, some national newspapers have taken steps to print in different cities at the same time, so as to ease circulation. But panellists said this has had a minimal impact on rural markets. A few vendors take the trouble of carrying newspapers to remote corners of the country but it is a lame effort.

Newspaper sales are generally low in urban centres and editors find rural areas even more unattractive. Preference is also given to those parts of the country that have been carved out as huge niches by advertisers. Many publishers have adopted a strategic marketing system in which hotels, airports, offices and shopping malls are the priority destination for newspapers.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

1.9 (2008 = 2.1)

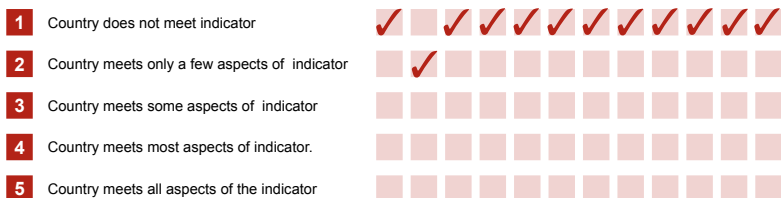
2.4 The editorial independence of print media published by a public authority is protected adequately against undue political interference.

State-run newspapers in Nigeria exist essentially to promote the agenda of public authorities, and enjoy no protection against influential politicians. Editorial interference is both direct and indirect. In addition to public authorities reprimanding editors or reporters for negative reports, editors and reporters feel compelled to practice self-censorship to protect their jobs. It is common for state media journalists to cover a story that will never be published because of the sensitive nature of the subject, whether or not it is in the public interest. “State correspondents generally do not write anything that is negative against the state, the governor or that promotes the agenda of the opposition parties within the state,” said a panellist. In several instances, public authorities employ journalists for the sole purpose of guarding their political interests.

“State correspondents generally do not write anything that is negative against the state...”

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

1.1 (2008 = 1.1)

2.5 Adequate competition legislation/regulation seeks to prevent media concentration and monopolies.

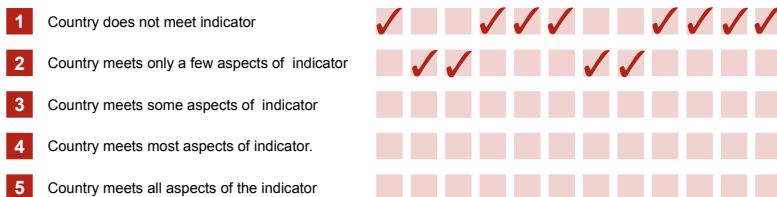
...there is strong competition in the Nigerian media market place, but “it is between few key players.”

Under the National Broadcasting Commission Decree (Section 9.5), it is “illegal for any person to have controlling shares in more than two television stations.” Beyond that, there is literally an open field for media monopolies and cross-ownership in Nigeria, which has led to media concentration in the hands of a few, usually powerful politicians. A former governor of Lagos state, for instance, owns *TV Continental*, *Radio Continental* and *Adaba FM*, as well as *The Nation* and the *National Life* newspapers. Business mogul Jimoh Ibrahim owns *National Mirror*, *Daily Sketch* and has just recently acquired *News Watch*. Nonetheless, there

is strong competition in the Nigerian media market place, but “it is between few key players.”

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 1.3 (2008 = 2.9)

2.6 Government promotes a diverse media landscape with economically viable and independent media outlets.

Nigeria has a diverse media landscape but it is a struggling one. Operators and journalists alike feel that the government is not doing enough to promote a strong and independent media, and believe that there is “no level playing field” for state-owned and privately-owned media outlets to compete.

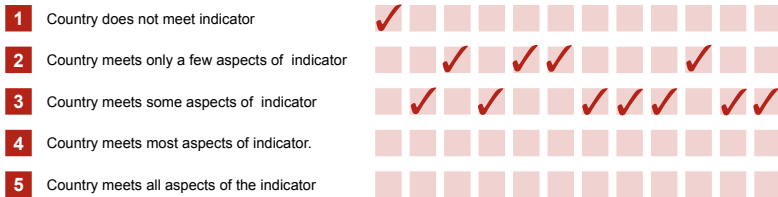
“Advertising is skewed in favour of the public media...”

While the government gives subventions to state-run outlets, it has failed to release the private media’s share of revenue generated by the collection of broadcast licence fees as required by law. Discussions to prevent subsidised state-run media from accepting advertising have equally been stalled for years. “Advertising is skewed in favour of the public media, which can afford to charge very economically unsustainable rates thanks to the subsidies they receive from the state”

In addition to “unfair” competition from the public media, private media are also facing rising costs of production since tax waivers that have been introduced to support media development are often not respected. The government is also issuing very few broadcast licences despite the high demand for them. Even though authorities have agreed in principle to authorise private network radio stations, not a single license has been issued thus far. Community broadcasting has also been hindered by delays in issuing licenses.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

2.5 (2008 = n/a)

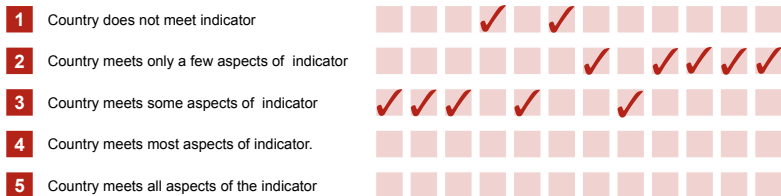
2.7 All media fairly reflect the voices of both women and men.

There is increasing awareness in the Nigerian media of the need to give women a voice. Women are increasingly being sought for interviews, and the number of specialised programmes and reports that depict women in a negative way are steadily decreasing. But many obstacles, including social, cultural, religious and even political stereotypes still stand in the way of real progress in gender mainstreaming in the Nigerian media. As it emerged from the 2011 elections, women running for public office often get less coverage than their male counterparts or opponents. Rampant “cash and carry” journalism (a reference to reporting that is conditioned and driven by the amount of money paid by a news source or an interested party in a story to the reporter on the beat to distort or kill the story) also means that women who are generally less financially well to do are consequently less attractive as news sources compared to their rich male counterparts. Panellists pointed out women’s voices have also been weakened by the attitude of women themselves, as few are outgoing and/or willing to stand under media scrutiny. “The media do not sit down and decide to relegate women. Women simply do not want to talk,” said one panellist.

“The media do not sit down and decide to relegate women.”

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

2.3 (2008 = n/a)

2.8 All media fairly reflect the voices of society in its ethnic, linguistic, religious, political and social diversity.

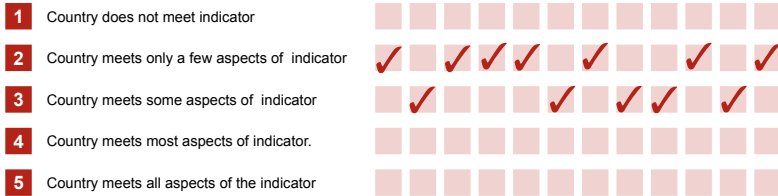
Ethnicity and religion remain highly sensitive and divisive issues in Nigeria, and this is often reflected in the media. The media in some predominantly Muslim states do not run Christian programmes, while some in largely Christian-dominated states find Islamic programmes too sensitive to air. Journalists are therefore extremely cautious when reporting on issues that could lead to violent religious and ethnic reactions. The Nation is still haunted by the Miss World and Sharia crises of 2002 and 2003 respectively.

Political diversity is also not as visible in the media as it should be, since politicians in office tend to dominate newspaper pages and the airwaves. During the 2011 electoral season, a study commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme found that political bias in the media had worsened, with the ruling party getting 93% of airwaves compared to just 7% for its rivals.

Gaps also exist in the coverage of rural communities, compared to urban centres. “Unless there are big scandals or some bomb blast in rural areas, they are generally given very little attention.” News is largely elitist; focussing on government action, business and influential people. According to a panellist “there are always the same people in the media and ordinary people are hardly reported.”

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

2.4 (2008 = n/a)

2.9 The country has a coherent ICT policy, which aims to meet the information needs of all citizens, including marginalised communities.

The Nigerian government has taken steps to sync with a rapidly evolving information and communication technology (ICT) sector. Several government agencies such as the Nigerian Communication Commission, the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission and the National Information Technology Development Agency were created over the past years to promote and regulate the sector. This was followed by initiatives to accelerate broadband access through the deployment of fibre optic cables, a plan to ensure universal access to ICT services, the announcement of a computer for all project, and a bold plan to digitalise Nigeria's public administration.

“People in the rural areas are left to depend on informal sources for information, such as town criers, rumour and gossip.”

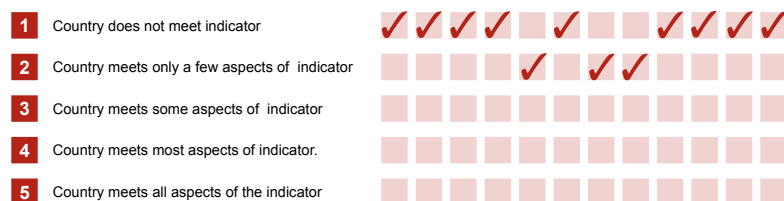
But meaningful progress is hampered by the lack of a comprehensive ICT policy and inconsistencies in the implementation of existing initiatives. Even though the Communication and Information Ministries have now been merged, the government is yet to deliver on a promise to fuse all existing ICT regulatory agencies. Major initiatives such as plans to digitalise the public administration and pursue a computer for all policy have been similarly delayed.

In spite of the proliferation of technologies and services, most Nigerians are yet to take full advantage of ICTs. Up to 70 percent of the country's approximately 150 million citizens live in rural communities where ICT access is weakest as a result of

undeveloped infrastructure and high costs. Ten years ago, the government initiated a national “TV watching” programme in rural areas to reduce the information gap between city dwellers and rural folk. The “TV watching” programme has since collapsed. There is no visible effort on the part of the government to increase ICT access to disadvantaged groups like women, children, people living with disabilities, the uneducated, and rural populations. “People in the rural areas are left to depend on informal sources for information, such as town criers, rumour and gossip” a panellist asserted.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

1.3 (2008 = n/a)

2.10 Government does not use its power over the placement of advertisements as a means to interfere with editorial content.

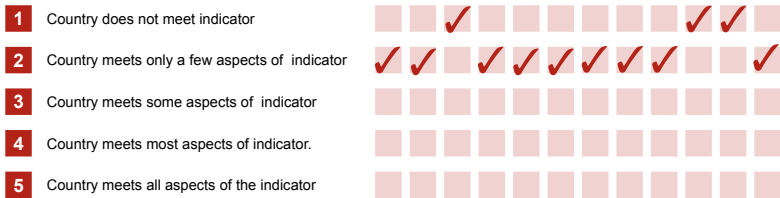
Aided in part by the tough business climate for the media in Nigeria, public officials and politicians have found advertising to be a powerful tool in shaping editorial content to their advantage. By either refusing or granting advertising, government officials often succeed to force the media to promote their agenda. A culture of “retentions”, whereby news outlets receive regular amounts of money from public officials and politicians to undertake “special reporting projects”, makes it difficult for the media to fully play its role of holding public authorities accountable. It is common to find “Special Issues” that run cover-to-cover sweet-coated reports on an official or institution on the stands. “A he-who-pays-the piper-calls-the-tune relationship has thus emerged between public authorities and the media in Nigeria.”

“A he-who-pays-the piper-calls-the-tune relationship has thus emerged between public authorities and the media in Nigeria.”

There have been reports of state officials using their position to block the flow of advertising to “unfriendly” media outlets. For example, in 2009, the Kano state government cancelled more than N30 million (US\$189 408) worth of advertising contracts to Freedom Radio due to the radio station’s “unfriendly” reporting. The contracts were reinstated after Freedom Radio apparently accepted to moderate its tone.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

1.8 (2008 = 1.4)

2.11 The advertising market is large enough to support a diversity of media outlets.

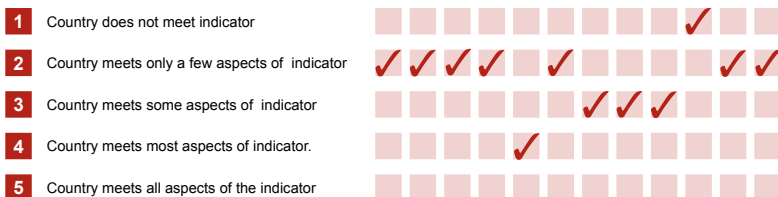
The advertising market in Nigeria is believed to be worth N19 billion (US\$ 119 959 000) and projected to reach N20 billion (US\$ 126 272 000) by the end of 2011. This revenue, which the media shares with billboard and other advertising formats, is widely considered to be insufficient to support Nigeria’s media industry.

With a weak manufacturing sector, the bulk of advertising comes from three sectors: government, telecoms and financial services. In addition to its small size, the advertising market is replete with problems such as low rates, extraordinarily long delays in payment of advertising bills and the unpredictability of advertising campaigns. Barter agreements - a practice whereby media organisations pay for services like travel, hotel accommodation and communication for media personnel with an advertisement, has become standard practice in business transactions. This deprives media houses of the cash needed to finance other important expenses.

With this situation it is not surprising that most media enterprises are in dire straits, with more than 80 percent struggling to pay salaries and other running expenses.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

2.3 (2008 = 2.6)

Average score for sector 2:

2.1 (2008 = n/a)*

* The indicators were reviewed, changed and shifted in 2009. Therefore the scores of some indicators and sector scores are not comparable to scores of previous AMBs.

SECTOR 3:

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

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

3.1 Broadcasting legislation has been passed and is implemented that provides for a conducive environment for public, commercial and community broadcasting.

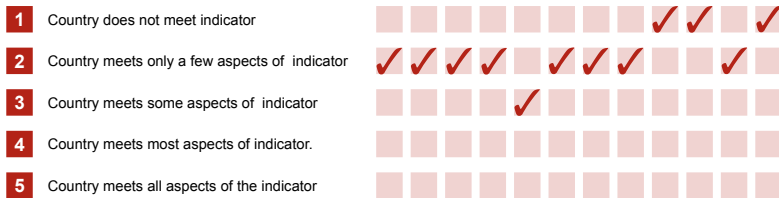
The decree establishing the National Broadcasting Commission is the principal legislation governing the broadcasting sector in Nigeria. Among other duties, the Commission, which dates back to the years of military rule, advises the government on broadcast policy, makes proposals for the issuing of licenses, “regulates and controls” the broadcast industry, and listens to complaints. In spite of the existence of a legislative framework, there are still challenges for the broadcast media to develop.

The Minister of Information remains a powerful official as far as shaping the media sector is concerned. He appoints the chief executives of state-run broadcasting organisations, over which he exerts control. There is no true public service broadcaster in the country since “public” radio and television stations are managed much like parastatals. Commercial broadcasting also faces many difficulties, the most pressing of which are the power of state authorities to issue and withdraw licences, and the high cost of licences fees. In states like Lagos and Abuja, the broadcast licence runs as high as N20 million (US\$ 126 272), with the average for the rest of the country at about N15 million (US\$ 94 704). In addition, broadcasters are required to pay 5% of their annual turnover to the state.

After years of inaction on the issue, the government finally set up a panel to examine the development of community radio in 2006. However, to date, no legislation has been enacted to govern community broadcasting. In a major development, the government gave its approval for community radio to become operational, but not a single licence has been issued to bring this to fruition.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 1.8 (2008 = 2.9)

3.2 Broadcasting is regulated by an independent body adequately protected by law against interference whose board is appointed – in an open way – involving civil society and not dominated by any particular political party.

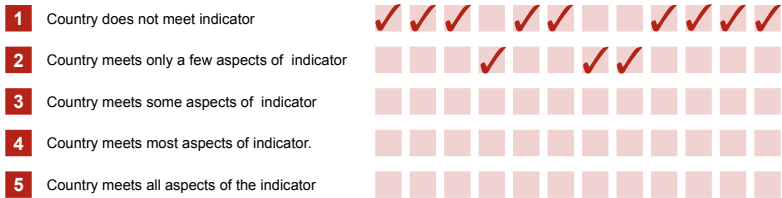
The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) is a body under the authority of the Minister of Information. Section 3 of the Decree establishing the NBC states that members of the commission shall be people of “proven integrity, experience and specialised knowledge in the broadcast industry”. However, the same Section states that their appointment is possible only if they are qualified “in the opinion of the Minister”. Section 4 further gives the President absolute powers over the composition of the Commission by stating that:

“A member of the Commission may be removed from office by the President, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, if he is satisfied that it is not in the interest of the commission or the interest of the public that the member should continue in office.”

Members of the Commission are meant to be drawn from diverse backgrounds, including law, business, performing arts, education, social science, media and public affairs. However, in practice, these are usually civil servants with well-established political leanings, according to panellists. In 2011, the membership of the board was made up mostly of well-known ruling party officials. There is no evidence of open consultation of any kind in the appointment of members of the Commission.

Scores:

Individual scores:



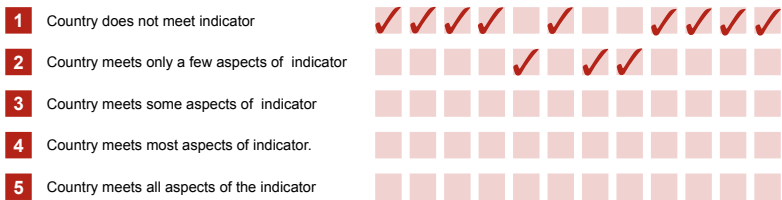
Average score: 1.3 (2008 = n/a)

3.3 The body regulates broadcasting services and licences in the public interest and ensures fairness and a diversity of views broadly representing society at large.

The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission has no authority in matters of issuing of licences, as its role is limited to receiving and processing applications, and then forwarding them to the Head of State to make a final choice. The NBC’s independence is also seriously compromised because its decree empowers the Minister of Information to give the Commission directives. By law, the issuing of licences should be based on the availability of frequencies, but panellists pointed out that the process is often viewed as one-sided and serving the interest of public authorities instead. For example, before leaving office, former President Olusegun Obasanjo allegedly allocated himself 5 to 10 radio and television broadcasting licences.

Scores:

Individual scores:



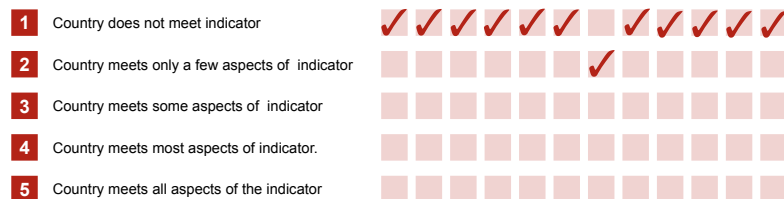
Average score: 1.3 (2008 = 1.8)

3.4 The state/public broadcaster is accountable to the public through a board representative of society at large and selected in an independent, open and transparent manner.

The state broadcaster exists to promote government action, and this is visible from its operations. The law empowers the Minister to give “general directives” to the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN). Members of the board of the state broadcasting organisations are often appointed to serve the interests of state authorities. Panellists were unanimous that there is no due diligence process to ensure social representation. Most of the laws governing public broadcasting were enacted by military regimes, and even though they have been amended, little has changed.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

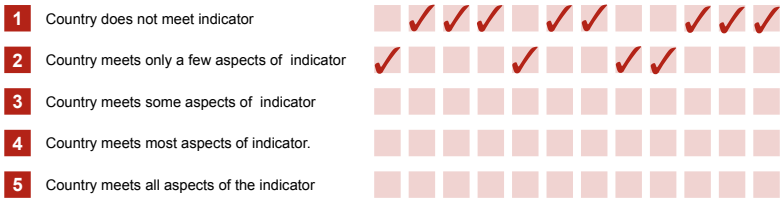
1.1 (2008 = 1.2)

3.5 Office bearers with the state and political parties, as well as those with a financial interest in the broadcasting industry, are excluded from possible membership on the board of the state/public broadcaster.

There are no known laws that seek to exclude people with conflicting interests from sitting in the board of state or public broadcasting outlets. In fact, board members are generally members of the ruling party, and appointments often look like favours to compensate henchmen, who helped public officials to win elections. The chairmanship of the Nigerian Television Authority is a classic example: Mohamed Buba, the owner of New Age Television, a cable TV distributor, is the chairman of the NTA.

Scores:

Individual scores:



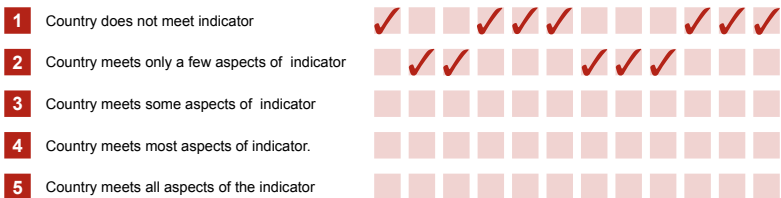
Average score: 1.3 (2008 = 1.2)

3.6 The editorial independence of the state/public broadcaster from political influence is guaranteed by law and practised.

State or public broadcasters are under the authority of the Minister of Information, who is empowered to give them general directives. Because the state/public media exists to promote government action, reporting on government action and public officials is obligatory and often takes precedence over other more newsworthy events. During the 2011 Senate election in Anambra State for instance, the returning officer resigned, complaining that he was under pressure to rig the vote in which the sitting governor was contesting. After running the story along with other news outlets, the state-owned RNN was forced to take the report off the air and broadcast a disclaimer every 30 minutes. The editor was redeployed as punishment for allowing the report to go on air.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 1.4 (2008 = n/a)

3.7 The state/public broadcaster is adequately funded in a manner that protects it from arbitrary interference through its budget and from commercial pressure.

Public authorities, including the Federal and State governments, generally provide subvention to state broadcasters in the form of the payment of employees' salaries and other overhead costs. The total amount of state subvention is around N22 million (US\$ 138 899) annually. But this amount is insufficient and stations have to cope with long delays before the disbursement of funds. Local stations that belong to the national network of the state broadcaster are also required to generate additional income through advertising. As a result of insufficient state-funding, state broadcasters are engaged in "a mad rush" for advertisement with significant consequences on programme content and the use of prime time. Local stations keep a chunk of the advertising revenue, which they generate for their operational expenses, while 7% is paid into the coffers of their organisation.

Scores:

Individual scores:

1	Country does not meet indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Country meets only a few aspects of indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Country meets some aspects of indicator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Country meets most aspects of indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Country meets all aspects of the indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Average score:

1.9 (2008 = n/a)

3.8 The state/public broadcaster is technically accessible in the entire country.

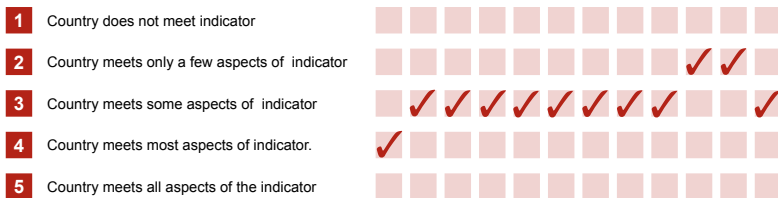
In addition to the Federal networks, each Nigerian state runs its own broadcasting outlet. However, the technical quality of these stations' signal is usually poor, leaving many parts of the country with limited coverage. In the big cities, some stations are unable to reach everyone, and cover only half the population. Remote border towns

"...many are forced to follow radio and television programmes from neighbouring countries like Cameroon."

and villages are the hardest hit in terms of broadcast coverage, and are often left without any signal. One panellist said many are forced to follow radio and television programmes from neighbouring countries like Cameroon.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 2.9 (2008 = 3.2)

3.9 The state/public broadcaster offers diverse programming formats for all interests.

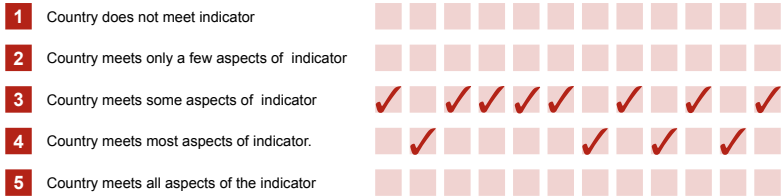
Nigeria’s state or public broadcasters offer a wide range of programming targeting different interests. Many run programmes in the major local languages, which vary from state to state and city to city. Stations based in rural communities tend to pay attention to issues that affect those communities. Call-in shows are becoming increasingly popular, and give ordinary people a chance to speak up and be heard. Some stations run specialised programmes for unique segments of the audience.

Radio Nigeria Enugu, for example, runs a show on which people with disabilities who are actively involved in a business or a trade can share their stories with listeners, in the hope of challenging and inspiring their peers.

However, lapses also exist. The vast majority of programming is directed at an urban audience. Furthermore, panellists were of the view that even though there is an effort to use local languages on air, it is hard to satisfy the more than 300 different languages and ethnic groups. Significant segments of the public are ignored with the absence of the use of techniques such as sign language on television. The lack of skilled personnel also limits the extent to which programming can be diversified.

Scores:

Individual scores:



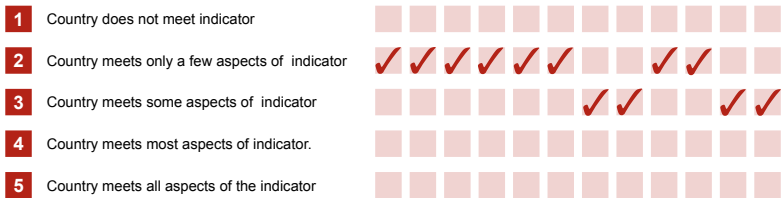
Average score: 3.3 (2008 = 3.1)

3.10 The state/public broadcaster offers balanced and fair information in news and current affairs, reflecting the full spectrum of diverse views and opinions.

The government, public authorities and the ruling party dominate the airtime of state media, especially during election campaigns. Opposition voices are often blocked from some public stations, especially those run and controlled by state governments. However, there are visible efforts to provide balance and fairness in news and public affairs reportage and commentary – partly as a result of competition from privately-run media. The Nigeria Television Authority, for example, beat many private rivals to reporting the June 2011 suicide bombing at the Nigerian Police Force headquarters in Abuja.

Scores:

Individual scores:



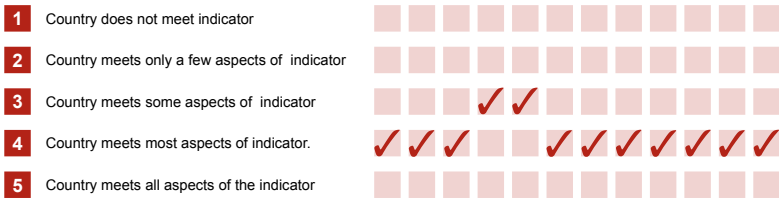
Average score: 2.3 (2008 = 2.4)

3.11 The state/public broadcaster offers as much diverse and creative local content as economically achievable.

Nigeria's state broadcasters complain that they are underfunded. However, in the face of competition from private media, they make an effort to undertake as much local and diverse programming as possible with their scarce resources. Reasonable progress has been made in this area over the years.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

3.8 (2008 = 2.4)

3.12 Community broadcasting enjoys special promotion given its potential to broaden access by communities to the airwaves.

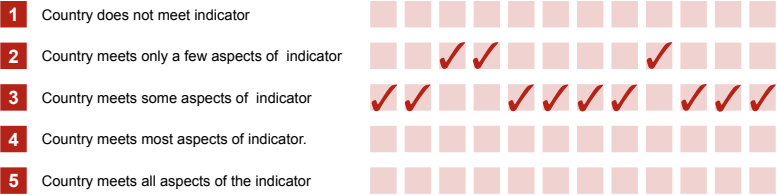
Previous military regimes all perceived community radio as a potential source of unrest, particularly since campus radio stations run by universities operated in the volatile university milieu, where students were prone to contesting government decisions. Radio was therefore feared to be a potential weapon in the hands of 'reckless' students. With the advent of democracy, successive governments have shown more sympathy towards the development of community radio. In synergy with civil society, the government now has a policy document for rolling out community radio. In 2010, authorities opened the door for community radio to be authorised to function, but no licences have been issued as yet, except for campus community radio stations, which are operational in some university campuses.

Frequent changes at the helm of the Information Ministry have contributed to slowing the development of the sector. New ministers often need time to study the files, but leave office before taking action or even developing strong interest

in community broadcasting. The National Broadcasting Commission seems to be more enthusiastic about the sector and has already prepared and forwarded a list of potential licence candidates to the Ministry of Information.

Scores:

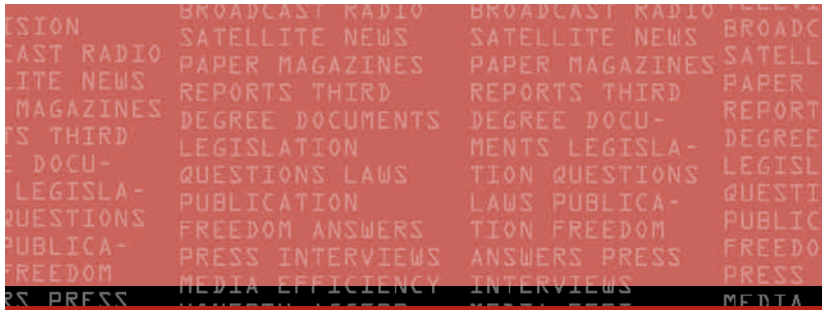
Individual scores:



Average score: 2.8 (2008 = 1.0)

Average score for sector 3: 2.1 (2008 = n/a)*

* The indicators were reviewed, changed and shifted in 2009. Therefore the scores of some indicators and sector scores are not comparable to scores of previous AMBs.



SECTOR 4:

The media practise high levels of professional standards.



The media practise high levels of professional standards.

4.1 The media follow voluntary codes of professional standards, which are enforced by self-regulatory bodies that deal with complaints from the public.

Since 2008, there have been significant developments in the standard of journalism, although various problems remain.

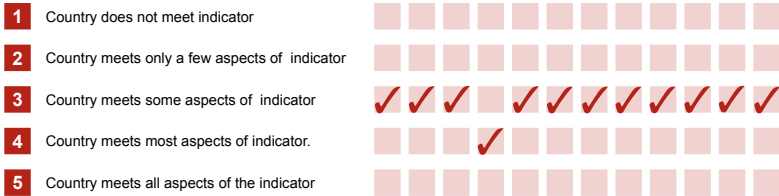
The Newspaper Proprietor's Association, supported by the Editors' Guild, appointed an Ombudsman in 2009. This presents a major step in improving the quality, ethics and standards of journalism in the country. Unfortunately, the public is not yet sufficiently informed about the existence of the institution; as such relatively few complaints have been received from the public so far. Newspapers are taking steps to educate their employees and the public on issues of ethics. Some of them publish excerpts from the Code of Conduct in their newspapers regularly. Media Trust Co., the owner of *Daily Trust*, *Weekly Trust* and *Sunday Trust*, has a zero tolerance to bribery and corruption of staff. The company's "No Thanks" policy consists of publishing a 'NO THANKS' section in the newspaper that clearly states that its staff is paid salaries and gratification, and should therefore not be given a Naira by any person. It further invites anyone from whom any of the newspaper's reporters asks for any financial compensation, to report such reporter to the management of the newspaper. The state media have also developed internal codes.

The Nigerian Press Council, an initiative of the government, is a highly controversial body. It is a government-appointed board to regulate the media sector and to listen to complaints. It is placed under the authority of the Minister of Information, and has little respect within the media.

In spite of efforts spearheaded by both the government and the industry to uphold professional standards, the response from the vast majority of media owners and journalists has not been strong. Poor and irregular wages has made compliance with existing ethical codes difficult. Some media owners believe the professional card is a pass for reporters to raise money through tips and bribes.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 3.1 (2008 = 2.6)

4.2 The standard of reporting follows the basic principles of accuracy and fairness.

The development of journalism in Nigeria has followed two paths over the past 50 years. Though there is evidence that some editors and journalists make an effort to get all sides to a story and present facts and opinions accurately, there is equally strong evidence of floppy journalism. There has been a marked fall in the number of complaints and libel suits against media, which might suggest that respect for the basic principles of journalism has improved. Critics, however, point out that there is no adequate and visible attempt by journalists to provide balanced reports or to fact-check nine out of ten stories.

Attaining acceptable standards of accuracy and fairness is hampered by factors that include the inability of journalists to grasp the essence and even the basic facts of news events. Many journalists do not have the basic skills required for news reporting, and are totally unaware of the ethical principles of the profession.

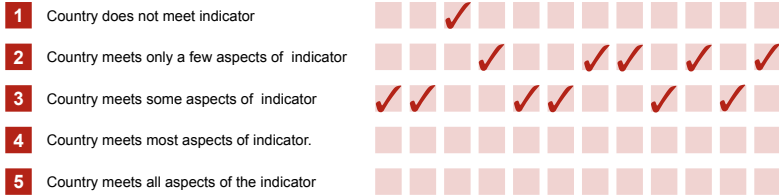
Reporters do not question the statements made by news sources, thus reducing themselves to no more than copy clerks of what in some instances sound like aberrations. Laziness has also crept in, allowing “armchair journalism” to prosper.

Because of this approach, reporters have resorted to an abusive use of “anonymous sources”, which in many instances simply means imaginary sources. The different appellations used to describe these so called sources range from “most trusted” to “impeccable”. Journalists also often fall victim to manipulation by powerful politicians and businessmen and women who want to settle personal or political scores. “The culture in Nigeria is to get outside your means, if need be, to achieve an end” and this is often reflected in the way journalists work. A panellist recounted the story of a reporter who turned in a story on event that he/she never attended.

The story was published, with quotes and vivid descriptions, even though the event never took place. This was only discovered when the event organisers called the publisher to express their disgust with the report.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 2.4 (2008 = 2.8)

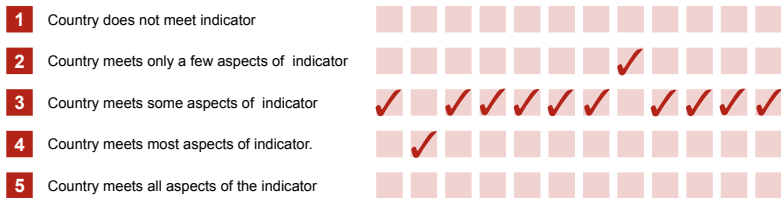
4.3 The media cover the full spectrum of events, issues and cultures, including business/economics, cultural, local and investigative stories.

The Nigerian media covers almost every aspect of national life, but politics, government affairs, defence and business are the dominant beats.

Little attention is paid to investigative journalism across the industry because it requires more commitment and resources. Only a few media outlets attempt to undertake investigative projects, using techniques like embedding undercover reporters. Next newspaper, for instance, is noted for its thoroughly researched and in-depth follow-up reports. Civil society tries to encourage investigative journalism by providing incentives such as training and awards. The ‘Wole Soyinka Award for Investigative Reporting’ is the Nobel laureate’s contribution to the promotion of this journalistic genre, which has huge potential for promoting values such as transparency, accountability and good governance. It is widely expected that the passing of the Freedom of Information Act in 2011 will make investigative journalism easier and boost interest.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 3.0 (2008 = 4.0)

4.4 Equal opportunities regardless of race, social group, gender/sex, religion, disabilities and age are promoted in media houses.

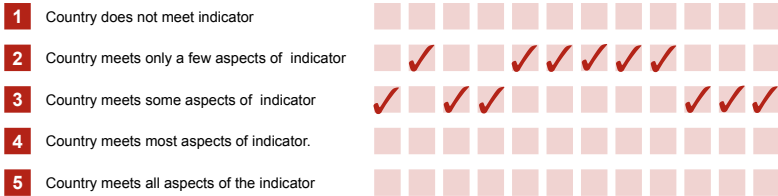
There is no evidence of stated policies to promote equal opportunities within media houses. Even though industry insiders say doors are open to all, the employment and promotion of media workers is often influenced by factors such as family relationship or ethnicity. It is also common for politicians and public officials to impose workers from their constituencies for vacancies in state-owned media organisations as a means of granting favours to their supporters. Oftentimes, job openings are not even made public.

Nevertheless, there has been a significant increase in the recruitment of women into the media industry over the last few years. With fewer men seeking public service jobs in the state media (which is generally considered less financially attractive), more room has become available for women in the industry. The growing interest of women in journalism is reflected in the increased enrolment of women at journalism school enrolment each year.

Even though top positions are still dominated by men, women are getting increasingly important assignments. At Nations Newspapers Group in the Muslim-dominated Kaduna state, the State Assembly is covered by a Christian woman.

Scores:

Individual scores:



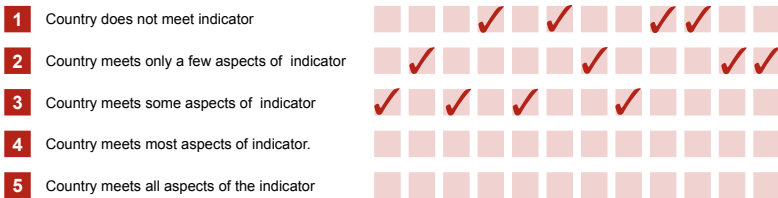
Average score: 2.5 (2008 = n/a)

4.5 Journalists and editors do not practise self-censorship.

Often faced with threats and pressures from media owners, politicians, advertisers, and even armed groups, Nigerian journalists and editors have found safety in self-censorship. Journalists are aware that running or investigating certain stories could result in them losing their jobs. Newsrooms sometimes “kill” stories because they are sensitive to certain interests that are closely linked to the publication, such as advertisers and political ‘godfathers’ (a code word for political patrons), it emerged from discussions. Journalists covering government institutions are careful not to lose their accreditation, which is a standard practice when an official gets uncomfortable with the reporting of a particular journalist. The fear of losing perks such as monthly stipends for covering State houses, and the use of free facilities such as the telephone, fax and internet access for filing their stories also forces journalists to practice self-censorship.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 2.0 (2008 = 1.3)

4.6 Owners of established mainstream private media do not interfere with editorial independence.

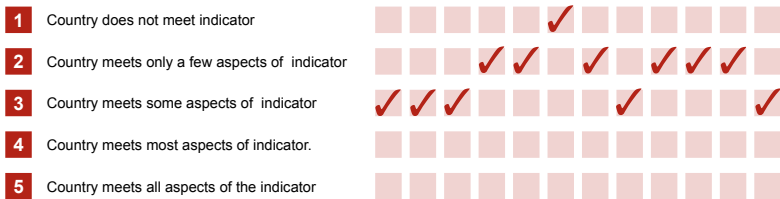
Editorial independence from owners is difficult to maintain within the Nigerian media landscape. In most cases, owners are also managing directors and even managing editors, and so are closely associated with the development and implementation of editorial policies. In trying to balance editorial credibility of media houses, on the one hand, and their economic interest personal agendas on the other hand, media owners frequently interfere with the daily editorial decision-making process.

The degree and form of this interference varies from one media house to the other.

In some cases, it is checked by the fear that some journalists could resign and cause the media houses to face public criticism. In a few instances, interference is “positive”, with media owners taking the lead in directing the editorial team to make room for more voices, in order to ensure balanced and fair reporting.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

2.3 (2008 = 1.2)

4.7 Journalists and media houses have integrity and are not corrupt.

Working conditions are generally tough for Nigerian journalists and this has pushed many to trade their integrity in order to survive. Corruption and the acceptance of tips in cash and in kind are rampant within the industry. “Greed” also pushes even well-paid journalists to demand and accept money from news sources with a clear understanding that in return they will either promote the agenda or cover-up the wrongdoings of their benefactors. It is common practice

“...the Nigerian media is corrupt and its integrity is on trial.”

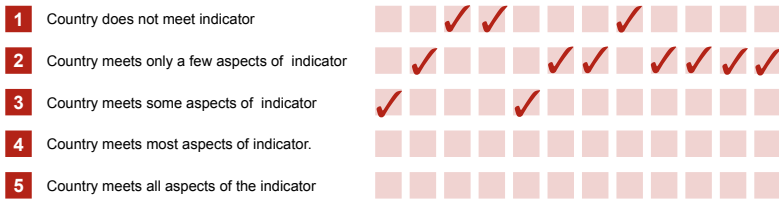
for media houses to demand “fuel” or “transport money” to cover news events. Unable to pay salaries, some media owners encourage journalists to extort money from news sources in lieu of salaries. The situation is so bad that a panellist summed it thus: “the Nigerian media is corrupt and its integrity is on trial.”

While this is a true picture of the level of corruption within media circles, panellists were also quick to point out that this is a reflection of a vice that has eaten deep into the much larger Nigerian society, where people have generally developed a taste for a life of opulence, and are ready to do just anything to attain it.

There are a few exceptions to the rule, however, and a handful of journalists are well-known to be incorruptible.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 1.9 (2008 = n/a)

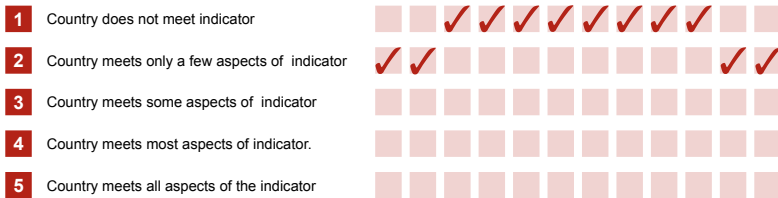
4.8 Salary levels and general working conditions for journalists and other media practitioners are adequate.

Across the industry, working conditions for Nigerian journalists and other media professionals are poor. Salaries are low, irregular and in some cases, inexistent. This is not only true of private media organisations. Even journalists of state-owned media are underpaid and complain of a lack of career prospects. Many workers in the state-media are also recruited as casual staff and work under even more pathetic conditions. Because of large variations, it is difficult to know what the average pay across the industry is. Entry level salaries range from about N23 254 (US \$150) for state media to about N 46 509 (US \$300) for the private media.

Poor working conditions are generally blamed for the rampant corruption in the media. “The system has created the environment for journalists to be corrupt,” said one panellist. Journalists and NGOs have been advocating better working conditions in the industry for years. State media journalists go on strike often to demand better pay and the “monetisation” of benefits such as housing.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

1.3 (2008 = n/a)

4.9 Media professionals have access to training facilities offering formal qualification programmes as well as opportunities to upgrade skills.

Almost all the major state and private universities, as well as the polytechnics, have journalism departments which attract tens of thousands of students every year. An increasing number of privately run post-secondary institutions also offer formal journalism training across the country. With the advent of the Internet, distance learning and online training has also become more accessible.

Journalists also have numerous opportunities for on-the-job training both at home and abroad. Media houses run in-house training and mentoring programmes.

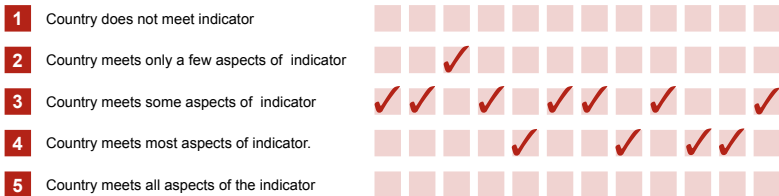
Some, like the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) run well-established training institutions, primarily for in-house training of their staff. They are, however, increasingly taking in journalists from other newsrooms. Some journalists are enrolled in schools as part-time students. NGOs also conduct regular training workshops for working journalists, who also have numerous opportunities to grow their experience through seminars, workshops and fellowships. So many opportunities abound, that one panellist believed that “it is difficult to find a journalist who has worked for four years without undergoing some kind of training.”

“...it is difficult to find a journalist who has worked for four years without undergoing some kind of training.”

However, there are serious problems with the quality of journalism practiced in the country, which is believed to be declining as a result of the high enrolment of students, the lack of teaching material and the doubtful capacity of some private institutions, which offer formal training. Because of over population, even highly qualified trainers have a hard time turning in good results. Funding for journalism programmes is also inadequate and this has a negative impact on the quality of training. In many institutions, both the curricula and training equipment are considered archaic.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score:

3.3 (2008 = 3.5)

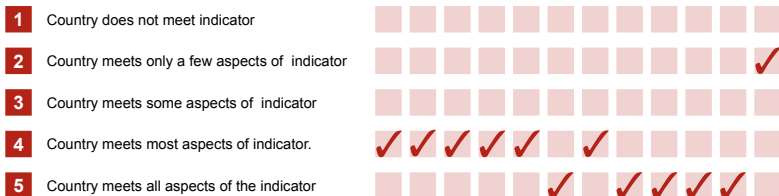
4.10 Journalists and other media practitioners are organised in trade unions and/or professional associations.

The Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) is the umbrella organisation defending the interests of journalists, and is in the process of being transformed from a purely trade union movement into a professional association. The NUJ has been active in promoting the welfare of journalists and currently runs an insurance scheme for members.

There are numerous other organisations such as the Newspapers Owners Association, The Editors' Guild, the Radio, Television and Theatre Workers Union, the Nigerian Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) and the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN). Reporters covering certain beats such as sports, business and politics or institutions like the Federal and State governments have also organised themselves into associations.

Scores:

Individual scores:



Average score: 4.3 (2008 = 4.6)

Average score for sector 4: 2.6 (2008 = n/a)*

OVERALL COUNTRY SCORE: 2.5 (2008 = 2.3)

* The indicators were reviewed, changed and shifted in 2009. Therefore the scores of some indicators and sector scores are not comparable to scores of previous AMBs.

What were the developments in the media environment in the last two / three years?

Positive Developments

- The passing of the Freedom of Information Act in 2011 is arguably the most important positive development in Nigeria's media environment. It guarantees the citizen's right to public information, obliging public officials to keep public records and to provide requested information within seven days (renewable for another seven days). The Act also criminalises the destruction of public records.
- Nigerian newspaper owners appointed an ombudsman in 2009 to control and regulate the practice of journalism. The Ombudsman also takes complaints from the public.
- The Nigerian Union of Journalists launched an insurance scheme for journalists in 2009. For a policy, costing N6750 (US\$ 42) per year for NUJ-registered journalists, the insurance covers Temporary Total Disability at N750 000 (US\$ 4 735), Permanent Disability at N1.5 million (US\$ 9,470) and death at N3 million (US\$ 18 940). Some state governors are reported to have paid such insurances for all journalists working within their states.
- The voice of the media has grown stronger, and public authorities' respect for the media has increased. The state broadcasters NTA and Radio Nigeria played a more "positive" role in election reporting.
- Appropriation of technology by most journalists is aiding the development of the profession. In spite of hardships, more journalists work with gadgets like recorders, laptops and ipads.
- The government took steps to diversify media outlets. After an official go-ahead, the delivery of the first private radio and television network and community radio licences are in process. Licences were issued to open on-campus broadcasting stations with around 18 operating in 2009, up from 8 in 2008.
- The relationship between the government and the media has improved considerably. Clampdown on the media witnessed a significant drop, and public authorities made efforts to follow due process in dealing with press "offenses". For the first time, the president took journalists to court in 2009 and 2010, instead of resorting to arbitrary closure. The court struck out the case, since the president, who enjoyed immunity, could not be cross-examined.

Negative Developments

- Journalists remained a major target of violence, with some being either assassinated or kidnapped. The police did little to unravel the mystery surrounding the assassination of three journalists on the same day in April 2010.
- The welfare of journalists is still deplorable. There are still no Collective Bargain Agreements in the sector and journalists continue to receive very low pay. Many journalists have gone for many months without pay. Journalists of some private media were owed up to ten months' in salary arrears.
- A huge gap continues to exist between the quality of formal training, and industry-needs. Journalism schools were understaffed, underequipped and often failed to meet basic requirements for accreditation.
- Newspapers experienced a continued decline in circulation, resulting from low advertising revenue and the high cost of production. The circulation of the country's leading magazine, News Watch, which used to be about a million when it launched is down to about 40,000. Newspapers, which had individual print-runs of between 500,000 to 800,000 some 10 years ago have struggled with a combined print-run of less than 500,000. Many were unable to sell even 10,000 copies per issue.
- State-owned newspapers such as Chronicles, Nigerian Statesman, and Observer were shut down. Governors and other politicians opened their own media houses to compete with underfunded state media.
- Even though some progress was made in following due process in dealing with media offenses, the government used its overbearing powers to close Channels TV after it reported that late President Yar'Adua was contemplating to resign for health reasons.
- The state broadcaster continued to be generally biased in its reporting for the 2011 elections. It gave more air time to the ruling party and sometimes refused to run paid campaign adverts from opposition parties

What kinds of activities are needed over the next two years?

- Journalists' welfare continues to be the biggest threat to the development of professional journalism in Nigeria. All efforts to provide training and other support to the industry are wasted unless the underlying problems of low pay and poor working conditions are addressed. The panellists agreed that this was an area where urgent action was needed through continued advocacy for better working conditions for journalists.

- Only a few months old, the new Access to information Act is still to be tested. However, it is important to build the capacity of journalists on how to take advantage of the legislation, which could make their work easier and more effective.
- ICTs – and the growth of new media like cell phones and social media platforms – offer alternative outlets that can help journalists overcome the problem of self-censorship, and report stories with more boldness. Given this advantage, it is important to encourage more journalists to make use of the new storytelling tools available.
- Given the important role of public broadcasting, panellists agreed that it is important to educate public authorities on the need to transform state-run broadcasters into veritable public service outlets – which give everyone a voice.
- Panellists recommended that civil society organisations need to maintain and step up the pressure for the transformation of the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission into a truly independent regulatory body.
- Two committees were set up to develop action plans around the most urgent needs, in association with the rest of the panel. They are:
 - (i) The welfare of Journalists
 - (ii) The launch of the Nigeria 2011 African Media Barometer (AMB).

The Panel:

Name	Function
Auwal Babangida	Unionist
Amaechi Anakwue	Journalist
Dr Lydia Umar	Civil Society
Tukur Abdulrahman	Journalist
Miriam Menkiti	Journalist
Emmanuel Anyaegbunam	Civil Society/ Lawyer
Lanre Arogundade	Civil Society
Dr Abigail Ogwezzy-Ndisika	Lecturer /Communication expert
Mazi Anariochi Ezuma	Civil Society
Akin Akingbulu	Media representative
Innocent Azih	Civil Society

Moderator:

Emmanuel Wongibe

Rapporteur:

Eugene N Nforngwa

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