

Governance and Development

Report prepared for the State of the Media Report under the Media for Development Initiative

The report consists of two parts:

- A Media Content Analysis; and
- A Media and Civil Society organization Data Survey.

The Media Content Analysis deals with news, current affairs, and documentary content produced by a sample of Papua New Guinea (PNG) media organisations that use radio, print and television for the purpose of disseminating content on governance and development. The content analysis involved an intensive three-week period of data collection and coding of material from 23 different media, government departments/agencies and CSOs.

The second stream of the project involved a media, government department/agency and CSO data survey of organisations that produce media content on governance and development. This database will provide MDI with information on the capacity of these organisations to produce media content (print, radio, television, video, and online) for governance and development.

Governance, in this analysis, is defined as *transparency and accountability*, supported by appropriate and necessary *consultative and participatory processes*. The media are vital for attaining governance objectives as they have the ability to inform government, private sector, and civil society about issues of importance to each sector and to generate informed public debate. While the ‘watchdog’ role of the media is often emphasised in relation to governance, it should also be stressed that the media, if effective, are uniquely placed to facilitate inter-sectoral information flows, which are essential for the development of society.

The study defines *media governance content* broadly. This includes all public policy areas, such as economic and political reform, national security, health, education, agriculture, the environment, women’s and children’s issues, and human rights and national development issues.^[1]

Development is seen as movement towards qualitative change in the lives of the majority of citizens. It promotes poverty reduction, capacity building, local ownership, human security and sustainable lifestyles, while being sensitive to culture and aware of ideological and political restraints.

1.1 MDI background

MDI believes that the media in PNG have the potential to further promote development and good governance by:

^[1] *Informing Citizens: Opportunities for Media and Communications in the Pacific*, PMCF, AusAID, 2005, p.1.

- Giving voice to the poor by providing usable information, a platform for discussion, and feedback loops between government and citizens;
- Improving media content by reporting on socio-economic and development issues, and by enhancing information flows surrounding public health, education, agriculture, and other development interventions; and
- Increasing access between the media and the public through improved services and communications.

The strategy of supporting the improvement of media voice, content and access to assist in achieving the development goals of poverty reduction and good governance underpins the design of the MDI.

MDI is a five-year AusAID funded development assistance project managed by the Media Council of Papua New Guinea (MCPNG). Its purpose is to increase the provision of quality media services that contribute to PNG's stability and prosperity.

The SOMR provides crucial baseline data that will be utilised to inform the shape and targeting of MDI Component 1 activities. Subsequent media content surveys using a similar methodology will be commissioned to assess progress towards MDI Component 1 goals and objectives.^[2]

There are a number of reasons why the SOMR forms an integral part of MDI Component 1:

- There is currently no comprehensive database of PNG media, government departments/agencies and CSOs that produce media content, their locations, contact details, publications/programmes and distribution networks. Lack of comprehensive data on media operations and distribution networks limits the capacity of government, the media (public, commercial and community-based) and civil society to plan for and target media services and programming which ensure all Papua New Guineans, especially those in rural communities, have access to accurate information and debate on matters of livelihood and wellbeing. Closing the information divide in areas such as agricultural methods, health, unemployment, education, drug and alcohol abuse, HIV/AIDS and other social, economic, and governance issues is a central concern of MDI.
- A media content analysis of this scope that seeks to establish the frequency and magnitude of reporting on development and governance issues has not been undertaken in PNG. The content analysis will assist MDI to prioritise activities that seek to overcome current deficiencies in these areas, and provide MDI and its stakeholders with sound information from which they can identify priorities and target future MDI activities.
- MDI is a long-term strategy and baseline data on media content, organisational profiles and distribution networks will allow progress and impact to be measured over time.^[3]

^[2] MDI Component 2 aims to enhance the effectiveness of PNG's public broadcaster, the National Broadcasting Corporation.

^[3] MDI's RFT SOMR Document 2006, p.10.

Further details of the survey's findings will be added to the website after they have been officially presented to MDI.