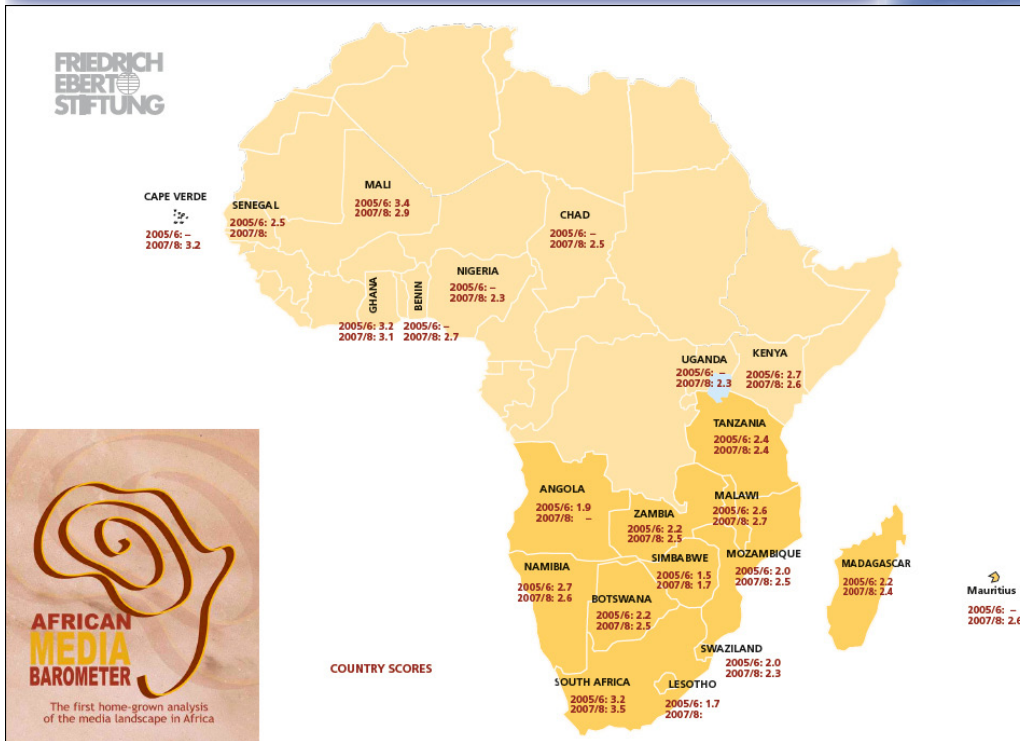


The African Media Barometer (AMB)



Project Description:

The African Media Barometer, founded in 2005, is the first 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 homegrown 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" (ACHPR). It takes up the idea of the African Peer Review Mechanism

(APRM) on good governance – where African leaders conveniently forgot to include the media! – and applies it to the media at a national level.

At the same time the AMB 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 as a benchmark. They are then integrated into the advocacy work by the "Media Institute of Southern Africa" (MISA) and into the program of the local FES-offices in sub-Saharan Africa.

Africa

Methodology:

Every two years a panel of experts, consisting of five media practitioners and five representatives from civil society, meets to assess the media situation in their own country. For two days they discuss the national media environment according to 42 predetermined indicators on which they have to score in an anonymous vote on a scale from 1 to 5. The indicators are formulated as goals which are derived from African Political Protocols and Declarations: if the country does not meet the indicator the score would be 1 (one); if the country meets all aspects of the indicator it would be a 5 (five), which is the best score possible. The discussion and scoring is moderated by a FES-trained consultant who also edits the country report.

This final, qualitative report summarizes the general content of the discussion and provides the average score for each indicator plus the overall country score. Over time the biennial reports are measuring the media development in that particular country and form the basis for a political discussion on media reform.

Partners:

- Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) (in the SADC-region)
- FES-offices (in West- and East-Africa)

Specific Objectives of the Project:

- to assess the media landscape of a country over time
- to provide civil society with a strategic advocacy tool for media reform

Output and Impact of the Project:

- 37 country reports from 22 countries (2005-2008)
- numerous follow-up activities by MISA and FES-offices
- pinpointing the drivers of change and obstacles to media reform
- raising public awareness for media protocols and declarations signed by governments but not implemented through national law
- raising awareness among NGOs of the importance of media issues for "good governance"
- providing the basis for a reform agenda to media NGOs



ENoP MEMBER FOUNDATION:

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