African Media and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Agenda for Africa's Emerging Democracies

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Abstract

The paper discusses the peculiar location and roles assigned to media of communication in the democratic ideal. It makes a modest attempt to identify the share of the media in the creation of the problems commonly identified by the leaders in the continent. There is also a critique of the roles assigned to the media on the defined path to recovery.

It begins with an examination of the model advanced by Habermas. This is a model based on the Libertarian principles upon which Western societies are founded. The paper identifies some of the contrasts between this Libertarian orientation and other theories of the press, and argues for what should be the ideal role of the media. To this end, it explores the location of the media in the aspirations of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Key terms: New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), media in emerging democracies

Résumé

Cette communication porte sur la position et le rôle particuliers des médias de la communication au sein de l'idéal démocratique. Elle débute par l'étude du modèle avancé par Habermas. Il s'agit d'un modèle basé sur les principes libertaires sur lesquels sont fondés les sociétés occidentales. Cet article explore les contrastes

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entre cette orientation libertaire et les autres théories des médias, dans le but d'établir le rôle idéal de ces derniers. Pour ce faire, cette communication analyse la position des médias dans le cadre des ambitions fixées par le Nouveau partenariat pour le développement africain (NEPAD). Cet article entreprend ensuite d'identifier la responsabilité des médias dans la création des problèmes généralement identifiés par les dirigeants africains. Il comporte également une critique du rôle assigné aux médias dans le cadre de la poursuite du développement.

Mots clés : Nouveau partenariat pour le développement de l'Afrique (NEPAD), les médias au sein des démocraties émergentes.

Introduction

Communication is a major enabler for individuals and societies. It is a lubricant for democratic governance which in turn facilitates national development. It is expected, then, that the initiative which seeks the development of the emerging western-type democracies in Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) would incorporate an important role for the media. In this paper, an attempt is made to examine the symbiotic relationship between the media and society. The context of communication is examined to highlight those social structures required for the democratic ideal to occur. The paper argues for an appreciation of those often neglected aspects of society that undermine the democratisation process. It is with due consideration for these that the media can engage in those tasks required to lubricate the wheels of the social system. The paper seeks, essentially to identify the responsibilities, opportunities and challenges to the media in Africa's emerging western models of democracy particularly, in supporting an accelerated development effort.

NEPAD and the Media

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has adopted a radical view of democracy which emphasises both political participation and economic development. It is radical by itself in that it is an initiative of African leaders themselves, rather than the effort of donors or civil society. The document has candidly outlined the challenge of underdevelopment that African states have to confront. It recognises the need to harness human, material and technical resources, and to adopt a style of leadership that will make for sustainable human development. The defined priorities require Africans to renew their mindset, and unite in order to rise above the limitations that had hindered the accomplishment

of development goals. The media has helped raise awareness of the problems that the partnership seeks to address, and media exposure of world events attests to the consistency of these goals with global trends. Media advocacy for good governance and better standards of living, and images from certain media spectacles (the fall of the Berlin Wall, riots at Tien-An-Men Square in China) are pieces of evidence of the winds of change that has been blowing around the world.

Although it must be criticised for its failure to spell out the role of the media in the programmes of action, NEPAD's agenda is largely consistent with the conditions of good governance. To further enhance this, distinct ways of engaging the media within the NEPAD development framework is hereby proposed. To start with, there should be an acknowledgement of fundamental issues, such as the challenge of the media in convincing the African people of the sincerity of the NEPAD initiative. Africans have been let down too often even by their leaders, and apathy to government initiative among media audiences is understandable but should not be condoned. A proactive role for the media would include providing constructive criticism instead of fanning scepticism. The media should help create awareness of the potential benefits of the programme, candid discussions of its chances of success, the critical players and stakeholders. The media should assist in making the policy and the programmes of action more accessible by interpreting and analysing these for less savvy constituents in the polity.

Paragraph 67 of the NEPAD document stresses the need for sustainable goals. It would be helpful for the media to promote behaviour change and the adoption of appropriate lifestyles that will endure particularly in poverty reduction, health, and food security. More rural based or at least decentralised media that will project the views, fears and aspirations of rural dwellers have been recommended in the past (Moemeka 1983, 1994). The radical complements or alternatives that ICTs present should be explored. As proposed in the policy, much of Africa's potential lies in the natural resources and the custodians of these are the rural dwellers. These segments of the population need, therefore, to be better connected with the wider world, so they can build up their knowledge base and be better able to engage profitably within the fiercely competitive trading environment. By getting their case on the media agenda, for information generation and dissemination, the chances of reducing urban bias in public spending may be improved. Improved media attention may also help attract and mobilise the much needed human and fiscal resources that will hasten development. Rather than the sporadic media campaigns or temporary synergies arranged within the industry for specific national or

continental events (All Africa Games, Festival of Arts) there should be greater cooperation on a continuous and consistent basis.

As confirmed in the NEPAD agreement, there are enough challenges that pervade the continent[1], albeit in varying proportions. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are opportunities for the media to be proactive in promoting the actualisation of the collective aspirations. Creative means of appraising, and communicating the desirability of expected outcomes is required. This may be better served by a media that is perceived by the populace as independent, not merely the masters' voice.

Conflict prevention and management is one of the key objectives identified by NEPAD. Without doubt progress is possible in an atmosphere of peace and stability. So far, the media have demonstrated their weakness in preferring the spectacular to the substantive. They are wont to ignore discourses of discontent that fester as undercurrents, whilst a semblance of normalcy is maintained (Kellner 2003; Fiske 1996). The pattern of reporting that fails to raise alarm about impending conflicts is not acceptable any more. Accordingly, a paradigm shift in news practices and deployment of resources within the media is required. The media need the infrastructure to support them in the discharge of such a crucial surveillance role. They equally need the clout and the capabilities to generate rational discussion and debates. Media institutions should be strengthened along with selected regional and sub-regional institutions in the four key areas—conflict prevention, management, resolution as well as peace making, keeping and enforcement. Other areas are post-conflict reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. The integration of the indigenous modes of communication could be valuable in this regard, especially with conflicts that are at the local level and still at the embryonic stages.

There is much to be said about the democratic ideal media system that is relevant to the initiatives of governance. Just as individuals need role models, institutions and societies adopting democracy require mentors for their political and economic programmes. Though they are to evolve their plans of action, exposure to the experiences of others can liven up the discussions in the public sphere. African media should generate interest in these issues at different levels of governance.

Media advocacy in the global arena is also required to address and foster understanding of African concerns such as trade imbalances, international finance and the gap in technology as pertains to the digital divide. Even when they are supportive, Western leaders are still accountable to their citizens, hence the need to extend the advocacy on

the continental programmes to citizens of the rich industrialised nations, who can put pressure on their leaders.[2] In turn, African leaders ought to appreciate that they are still accountable to their citizens, even where there is external support from the industrialised countries. The media can assist in fostering such continental and international dialogues by taking advantage of the global revolution facilitated by ICTs.

Communication and democracy

Democracy, with a vibrant media at its core, is the form of governance that has the capacity to liberate the Third World from underdevelopment. At least, that is what international financing agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund would want one to believe by instituting it as conditionality for funding programmes in critical sectors such as health, education, water and communication as well as good roads that will facilitate trade. Actually, NEPAD seems to have assumed that democracy is the one distinct feature of advanced societies that should be emulated. Having adopted that thinking, it is backing democracy as the ideal form of governance that will facilitate the much desired development of the otherwise marginalised continent. For example, Paragraph 71 of the NEPAD policy document states:

> African leaders have learned from their own experiences that peace, security, **democracy, good governance,** human rights and sound economic management are conditions for sustainable development. They are making a pledge to work, both individually and collectively, to promote these principles in their countries and sub-regions and on the continent [my emphasis] (NEPAD Policy 2001: 18).

Recent experiences in the Republic of Togo suggest that military regimes in whatever guise are no longer tolerated in Africa (BBC News, February 11, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4243477.stm [viewed 2005–03–14]).

Other nations from around the world, including nations in transition from Eastern Europe, and more recently the Middle East, have imbibed this thinking and are also struggling to adopt or adapt this prescribed model of governance. So crucial is this that deliberations on the quality and attainment of democracy have become the focus of the comity of nations. There have been five International Conferences on New or Restored Democracies, with more than 100 countries in attendance at the fifth session which was held in Mongolia. At that conference six critical benchmarks required of members to be democratic is that their society should:

- be just and responsible,

- be inclusive and participatory,

- promote and protect the rights and freedoms of all its members,

- be open and transparent,

- function under agreed rules of law and accountability regardless of the challenges they may face,

- show solidarity toward others (Ulaanbaatar Declaration, Fifth ICNRD September, 2003) .

The type of society described above, resonates with the order in the model of the public sphere presented by Habermas (1996). For Habermas (1996), the ideal democratic state requires a process through which individual positions can contribute to the construction of pubic opinion. Furthermore, there should be processes which ensure that public opinion helps to maintain the collective existence in the social formation. This order of participation and collective self-determination is crucial to achieving the democratic ideal. In the final analysis, the Harbemasian democratic system consists of the government, those with responsibility for managing the society, and individuals who have rights as citizens. The assumption is an egalitarian society, where there is equity among members within the community.

In his model of democracy, Habermas (1996: 55) considers the media as central in the constitution of the public sphere because of the large and complex organisation of social life in contemporary times. It is assumed that there would be a freedom of assembly, of expression and dissemination of the views formed therein. In Habermas' (1996) words 'access to the sphere is open in principle to all citizens.' Consequently, assumptions can be made about certain rights that individuals who participate in the sphere possess. Citizens should not be subjected to political coercion, and the dealings in the free market place should be free from social forces.

In spite of these liberating characteristics, one can argue that the Habermas (1996) model is not as inclusive as its chief advocate would have liked, for there is the assumed premise that every member of the society will be accepted as a citizen. This is not always the case. In reality, there are formal and informal criteria for assessing citizenship. Though universal suffrage had been in existence in many societies by middle of 20th century there were still barriers in the path of certain segments of the population. This was often due to their social class, race, ethnic

affiliation, or gender. At the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, it was agreed that

> Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace. (Paragraph 13, Beijing Declaration and UN Platform for Action 1996)

In paragraphs 181–189 of the same document the obstacles to the effective participation of women in the public arena and decision making organs in the polity were discussed. An indication of the magnitude of institutionalised discrimination against women in different societies, in spite of their declared citizenship is evident in that section of the UN document. Paragraph 182 for example, speaks of the under-representation of women at most levels of government. Similarly, Section J documents the inaccessibility of the media to women. One can deduce that the dominant discourses proceeding from the media marginalise the viewpoint of the woman. But, the actualisation of the citizenship rights of the woman cannot be ignored. There, indeed, has been some progress in the actualisation of women's citizenship rights since the 1995 Beijing Conference, though the situation is still far from the democratic ideal.

Another assumption implicit in the Habermas' (1996) model of the public sphere is that people in positions of authority will recognise the trust that accompanies the office that they hold. Accountability of officials rigorously enforced through the guarantee of press freedom is an expected attribute of democratic governance. From the print media through the broadcast media to current ICT-based communication systems, including the Internet, the media must be alive to the duty of monitoring and holding public officers in check, lest they adopt authoritarian tendencies. This requires the survival and well-being of the media institutions themselves.

Organising the media for development in the Context of NEPAD
There are a number of advantages to be found in the traditional liberal model of the media in a democratic society that was advanced by Habermas (1996). It has often been regarded as the ideal, but it has also been subject to critique. In Curran's (2000) view, it is a limited model of the democratic system. He described as archaic, the view which assumes that the political system is made up primarily of government and individuals, and that does not give adequate attention to the variety of mediating institutions in operation in the body polity of contemporary societies. These organisations have differing political, cultural and

commercial interests.

For instance, Sobowale (1985) acknowledges the critical role of Christian missionaries in the development of the press in Nigeria in the nineteenth century. From the religious inceptions, the press in Nigeria was both commercial and political as Omu (cited in Adebanwi 2004) shows. The press was subject to pressures that were not accounted for in Habermas's (1996) initial conception of the public sphere. If the distinction between political and social life was a criterion to be followed to the letter, those earlier incarnations of the press would not constitute a form of the public sphere. In that case, the contribution of much of the indigenous forms of communication that served African societies politically would also be disregarded, as their operations occurred in other social institutions besides the political.

Ugboajah (1985), however, demonstrates how these were crucial and are still relevant in the process of governance. His oramedia[3] forms include the marketplace, which is more than a venue for trading in material goods.

> Marketplaces in Africa in themselves are veritable communication forums... Market places are not just where people go to buy or sell but are diffusion forums for important social interaction . . . vogues are copied in marketplaces. They also constitute places of censure (Ugboajah 1985: 169).

The fact that marketplaces are a forum for the convergence of women, from different classes is a compelling reason why such forum should be seriously considered if institutionalised marginalisation of almost half of the population is to be avoided.

Other examples of the oramedia cited include the songs, drum beats, dances, parables, riddles and even the town crier which all help to create a sense of worth for the individuals and the community. A lot of these are still in use particularly in rural parts and urban squatter settlements, but they may face stiffer competition in the urban areas with the adoption of more expensive and less culturally appropriate mass media. Whilst much of the oramedia may be effective for communicating within groups, attempts to use them to communicate between groups in the context of inevitable global media operations may be more challenging. Still these are not insurmountable challenges with a bit of creativity. Using oramedia forms could in deed be opportunities to present the African societies more accurately to wider audiences. The biggest advantage here will be if the audiences appreciated the relevance of the forms.

Comparative media models

The foregoing discussion demonstrates the weakness of a model that discounts the importance of taking a comprehensive view of the social system, to the political system. Delineating politics from other aspects of social life, has contributed to the misjudgement of what media service should be. The democratic ideal calls for media service that does more than privilege politics and politicians; it should not marginalise significant proportions of society. Since politics had been construed in a particular male domain at the time captured in the model, there is a sense in which prioritisation of politics in the media had worked against women and the less powerful members of society. This prioritisation becomes a mechanism for classification of both media forms and their consumers (audiences). And as Bourdieu (2000) would show, it is evidence of a struggle. Fiske demonstrates that there is a hegemonic struggle implied in the dichotomy between news and social entertainment; what has been classed as serious versus trivial aspects of media service, and the public sphere model fails to account for this. By so doing, the model fails to acknowledge audience behaviour, and the complex sorts of *debates* that occur in the public sphere.

> . . . there is a continuous and necessarily uneven and unequal struggle by the dominant culture, constantly to disorganise and reorganise popular culture; to enclose and confine its definitions and forms within a more inclusive range of dominant forms. There are points of resistance; there are also moments of suppression. This is the dialectic of cultural struggle. In our times it goes on continuously, in the complex lines of resistance and acceptance, refusal and capitulation, which make the field of culture a sort of constant battle field. A battlefield where no once-for-all victories are obtained but where there are always strategic positions to be won and lost. (Hall 1981: 233)

This model is thus deficient in addressing the needs of a democracy in contemporary times when there is so much tied to such extensive cultural industries. Acknowledging the variety of cultural forms and the tensions that exist around them, both at the moments of production and reception, now becomes even more crucial if as current consumption patterns suggest, the society places a high premium on them, though political communication that defines what is significant in politics ignores a good proportion of the masses.

Irrespective of the forms that they adopt, the media have the duty to circulate information that will enlighten the citizens and facilitate their rational and critical deliberation of issues of public interest. Individuals

can then perform their civic duties, whether this be the choice of suitable candidates for office, or the ratification of options presented by office holders (as in the case of a referendum on public issues or those with more personal dimensions), they can make informed choices that are in the best interest of all.

The libertarian system assumes that individuals are rational and sensible enough to moderate the market place of ideas, by giving heed to that which is ***useful***, what is the ***truth***, thus set the standards of acceptable values collectively, and regulating the excesses within the society and its media system. On the surface, it will appear that power, in such a society is with the people. This view resonates with Golding and Murdock's (2000) account of Adam Smith's concepts of the efficiency and moral superiority of the market place. But the flaw in this position has been highlighted in the foregoing discussion, and the Social Responsibility theory of the press. Besides, there are potential merits in a measure of Authoritarianism which have not been discussed here, but what these point to is the need for a clearer framework of the power relations within the media. Barnett (1997) discusses the contradictions evident in the experiences and orientations favoured in African states. There are differences within and between states over which philosophy to subscribe to and what routes to embark on for development. Suffice to say that the role assigned to the media in these varying paths may have been contradictory.

The media have been cast in roles that have called them to deploy different performance strategies. Olukotun (2000) speaks of two of these: heroic crusaders that seek to obstruct authoritarian governments and the facilitators of civil governance. 'One luxuriates in defiance, rebellion, rough tackles, the other requires agenda setting in an intra-mural context, enlightenment, advocacy and networking' (Olutokun 2000: 95). There are other dilemmas about the degree of media involvement in a democratic dispensation. This is as imposed by the ethics of the journalism profession that require objectivity, accuracy, fairness, and balance between responsibility and profitability, creative consideration of the vested interests of proprietors and operators. These are long standing and fairly universal concerns (Golding and Elliot 1976).

With regard to the organisation of the media, there have also been differences between print and broadcast media; between private and public (government) owned. In any case, there are too many unseen hands that have not been accounted for. Adebanwi (2004) in his analysis of the press of coverage of the Ogoni in the Nigerian press illustrate the complexity of the struggle of the media to facilitate the democratic ideal. This included

professional dilemmas encountered in raising the voices of a marginalised minority to speak up against the dominant political elite's in a culturally diverse society; and the facilitation of debates within a global context. The role of external social factors (such as business and civil society) as well as intrinsic professional factors (generic news conventions, narrativisation) was highlighted along with the usual factors of ownership and control that had been subject of scholarly concern. His discussion of the hegemonic struggle also calls attention to the importance of giving due consideration to the audience.

The liberal model proposed by Habermas had assumed that there is equal access to the media through which information is disseminated. This raises quite fundamental questions about audience practices, for it is after all, the audience who will adjudge the utility of the message, or the veracity of the truth. The polysemic nature of messages need to be taken into account here, as much as the hegemonic struggles that occur at various points media reception. Semiotics shows the social constructedness of meaning in media messages. The encoding of messages relies on socially agreed patterns and conventions. The meaning that is conveyed in media messages is therefore not as transparent as the guarantees of openness in the sphere of communication will seek to purport.

Another assumption which the model makes is that the information available is adequate. Yet, by focusing on political communication in particular, the model adopts a restricted agenda of the media. From inception of societies, there have been a variety of messages in the public arena. Though politics may have been privileged, there were other aspects of life that captured the attention of the media. That selling and entertainment were featured in all four theories of the press, is sufficient basis for regarding these as important to the healthy functioning of society. This indicates the complexity of the performance of the media which audiences will have to judge. It calls attention to other influences which may impinge on the organisation of the media and the usefulness of the messages.

There is a danger implicit in any suggestion that the prevailing social system in more traditional or transitional societies is inappropriate to support a media system that facilitates the democratic ideal, especially if it is based on the possible assumption that citizens of such societies are incapable of being rational. This is not likely to be the case as there is no evidence of inherent incapacitation. Attention should therefore be directed the failure of the media systems to meet conditions of media ownership and organisation that should safeguard its freedom of the media to perform.

We should return our focus to the following basic questions.

- What constitutes the media of communication?

- Who owns the media and why?

- How are these media of communication organised (funding and regulation)?

- How are the priorities expressed because of the above?

The answer to these questions should give an indication of how free the media are to inform, convene, and represent the views of private citizens on issues of general concern, and to supervise the running of government—which is the democratic ideal.

The core tasks of the media remain consistent in the threefold mission (to inform, educate and entertain) though details of how these should be articulated need to be spelt out. Concluding on his revisit of the symbiosis between the media and democracy, Curran (2000) presents a complex set of requirements for a democratic media system. He identifies an improved model of the public sphere; one that acknowledges the intervening agencies in operation within the state and amongst the governed. These include institutions of governance (civil service, judiciary parliament, political parties and constituted government), the institutions with delegated regulatory authority, other groups, unions and organisations that wield an influence in public life and moderate the power blocs. The new view of the public sphere suggests more clearly that it is a network for communication, information and expression of opinions and views. It shows that there is disparity in the proximity of the interested parties to the government and its direct agencies which are at the core. For the ideal to be achieved these have to be considered. From this we can deduce that the media should

- empower and inspire people irrespective of their identity or location within the sphere;

- monitor and give access to the known sectional interests existing in society,

- articulate coherently the diverse positions within such groups;

- explore, evaluate, protect and promote the viewpoints of the underclass,

- transmit social concerns from the periphery of the sphere to the centre.

With these, the media system may ensure that collective decisions are founded on 'open working through of difference, rather than a contrived consensus based on elite dominance' (Curran 2000:148). These are some of the key issues that the new initiative seeking to establish the democratic ideal (NEPAD) ought to address.

Conclusion

It is noteworthy that ICT is the only aspect of the media that was mentioned specifically in the programme of action in the NEPAD policy. Even then, there is some ambiguity in the reference. It appears that the provision of new technologies has been stressed without consideration of the more complementary media of mass communication. Mass media are experts at disseminating standardised messages and these can foster social cohesion. Production practices within these media organisations can be strengthened by improved ICTs. This may mean they are better able to serve the marginalised, expand the scope for discussion, document, and analyse public opinion. It may also improve the working conditions of the staff, the aesthetic quality of media output can be improved and perhaps there can be more experimentation with different formats of presentations. On the other hand the ICT provision may aim to facilitate direct access to the end users. It may thus help to construct more insular communities and when these fail to engage in dialogue or debate, the gulfs in society increase, and the democratic ideal remains a mirage. A clear articulation of a media programme can prevent such ambiguity. This is one conspicuous difference between NEPAD and the Africa Commission Report (ACR)[4] given the scope of this paper.

Having identified the inadequacy of good intentions, in Paragraph 44, of chapter 4, the ACR speaks of the need to provide mechanisms that will ensure voices of all citizens are heard in the interest of accountability of powerful groups. The report also adopts a wider definition of powerful groups so that this is no longer restricted to those in government alone. With regard to participation, as has been argued in this paper, the ACR reiterates the importance of participation in decision making. A unique contribution made on that subject is the call for a reverse in orientation within message production in which experts know best. The report acknowledges the culpability of the speed and routines of production, as they constrain flexibility in the identification of other sources. Thus as argued earlier, the paradigms in news production in particular should be reviewed to enable media explore the merits in the contributions from less usual sources. This will convey some respect on the views of the less

powerful members of society, and may make their citizenship status more meaningful. This may help redress the systematic exclusion of groups on the fringes of the sphere such as ethnic minorities, women and children, migrant populations, refugees, and the rural dwellers.

The media may be credited for their effort in harnessing their potential for nation building. This is evident in the emergence of democracy over oppressive authoritarian African regimes. The Togolese example mentioned earlier is a case in point. Progress recorded in Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa are just a few of the examples of the workability of these ideas, when there is adequate support. Much of the success can be attributed to the determination of the media, civil society and entrepreneurs in the sector.

There has been an acknowledgement of the variety of channels through which information flows within Africa and the obstacles within the system. This confirms the wisdom in the argument advanced above for an integration of different forms of expression including traditional media, community radio and new ICT. The appropriate media mix must be practical, logical and culturally relevant. Media programmes for development work tend to reflect these. Even political campaigns do too. Information about Africa also needs to be communicated abroad to correct the poor balance of coverage of the continent and help nations within to find opportunities for trade and economic activities. African programming can now be received in Europe and America via satellite channels. Likewise, publications are available in specialised outlets. But perhaps the most radical medium has been the Internet. Within Africa, there is evidence of improved cooperation and networking as exemplified by the TV Africa initiative. This is still very restricted to a few countries. Greater government support will be welcome. In the spirit of NEPAD, the leaders should now match their political will with real action by adopting a clear media programme of action.

As has been argued here, the Africa Commission Report identified the media as a catalyst for change, along with being an instrument for education, and a key source of information. If properly supported and organised, media are critical to the actualisation of the development goals and they should have sector goals and clearly articulated plan of action. This should cover issues of media independence, responsibility, funding, and regulation as discussed above. Training and networking will further facilitate professionalism, and elevate consideration for audiences, particularly the oft ignored segments. Audiences can then be brought into the centre of media service. The media can be made to represent a wider shade of interest groups besides the political elites. These are issues

for further academic consideration.

Notes

1 This includes but is not limited to issues of poverty, HIV /AIDS, marginalization of women, educational attainment, gender inequality, competitiveness and globalization.
2 The Make Poverty History campaign preceding the July 2005 G8 summit in the U.K is an example.
3 'Oramedia or folk media are grounded on indigenous culture produced and consumed by members of a group. They reinforce the values of the group. They are visible cultural features, often strictly conventional, by which social relationships and a world view are maintained and defined. They take on many forms and are rich in symbolism.' (Ugboajah 1985: 166)
4 The Africa Commission is an independent group set up by British Prime Minister to define the challenges facing Africa, and make recommendations on how best to support the poverty reduction initiative for the African continent.

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