

South Sudan - Media Landscape

Author(s): David Lomuria Eperit

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Overview

The world's youngest nation, South Sudan, gained independence in 2011, following a lengthy civil war pitting the Muslim-Arab dominated north against the Christian majority south. The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in Naivasha, Kenya between President Omar Al-Bashir's Sudan government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) led by the late Dr. John de Mabior Garang paved way for a referendum for self-determination and independence. The secession of South from Sudan opened minimal space for expression and press freedom leading to a sharp rise in the number of media institutions. But, hardly two years into independence, South Sudan plunged into its own civil war that has killed hundreds of thousands and displaced at least 4.5 Million civilians according to United Nation High Commission for Refugees (2019). At independence, South Sudan relied hugely on oil revenue to finance up to 90 percent of its government functions but the ensuing war decimated the country's social economic infrastructure leading to an economic turmoil exacerbated by the civil war. The media landscape in South Sudan has thus hugely been affected by political and economic fragmentation in the country. Media organisations face immense logistical, technical and financial challenges worsened by conflict and violence across the country. A new wave of civil war, which began in 2013, led to a political and economic crisis, resulting in broken government structures which negatively impacted mass media growth and development. The ongoing Coronavirus pandemic has dealt a further blow to the country which only just signed a peace agreement and formed a Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) made up of the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) government and opposition parties into a coalition government headed by president Salva Kiir and five vice presidents representing the opposition and rebel factions.

Even before the outbreak of conflict in 2013, South Sudan ranked high among countries with a harsh environment for journalists and curtailed freedom of expression and free press (Freedom House 2019). The country's authorities, mainly the National Security Service, employed heavy-handed approach and violent tactics including arrests, torture and punitive laws, similarly to the previous Khartoum regimes which used to censor journalists and suppress freedom of expression. Open violence against journalists only worsened as the war continued. Reporters Without Borders estimates that at least 10 journalists have been killed in South Sudan between 2014 and 2016 while others remained under arrest without charge. Furthermore, the continued sporadic fighting among various warring factions hindered access to many parts of the country, causing a sharp drop in mass media circulation which has in effect locked out a majority of South Sudanese from access to news and information.

Media are heavily controlled by government authorities. The public broadcaster, South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation (SSBC), operates a chain of FM radio stations and a television which have since been used by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) regime to voice its views and opinions. Government officials openly warned journalists and media organisations from reporting the views of the opposition parties and armies. Any attempt to attaining critical or balanced

reporting of the conflict have been met with violent attacks, arrests and shutdowns. A few private media institutions operate from the capital, Juba, but they have had to practice self-censorship or face shutdown. Consequently, many South Sudanese journalists have been forced to flee the country or quit the journalism practice. The latest available media survey in 2015 Media Survey commissioned by Internews Network - funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to promote access to information and media development - found that 3 out of 4 South Sudanese journalists do not hold journalism qualification or have refresher trainings.

The peace agreement of 2018, signed between president Salva Kiir and his former deputy turned rebel leader and current first vice president, Riek Machar, brings high hopes for the resolution of the conflict in South Sudan and a return to peace. South Sudan parliament passed a media bill in 2016 that introduced changes including establishment of South Sudan media authority and State owned South Sudan Television change to South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation (SSBC). At its inception, the media bill was hailed as a landmark boast for the country's media but it was soon criticised for failing to yield desired changes by the media and civil society groups.. New media legislation which meets international standards has been passed but is mostly not adhered to. Yet, freedom of expression is still not guaranteed as provided by the Transitional Constitution

As of 2020, parts of South Sudan are still controlled by various rebel and opposition factions. Continued sporadic attacks coupled up with weak transport networks have destroyed the country's economy further worsened by the novel coronavirus pandemic. . As a result, South Sudan's media landscape remains largely fragmented with minimal growth. . Political changes have influenced how media function in the South Sudan. . The media landscape has shrunk and expanded depending on the regime in power. Despite new progressive media and broadcast legislation being signed into laws in 2013, repressive strategies are still used to censor journalists and citizens with critical views of the government. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). regime has used government organs to suppress free speech by arresting local journalists and influencers, denying foreign journalists accreditation, shutting down media organisations and blocking access to online media reporting the views of the opposition. For instance, in March 2019, a court charged the activist Peter Biar Ajak with terrorism after over a 9-month solitary detention. The Harvard- and Cambridge-educated scholar was arrested in July, 2018 after making comments criticising the failure of the country's leadership to stop five years of civil war. Peter Ajak was released in January 2020 through a presidential pardon.

In the years leading up to the South Sudan referendum and independence, the transitional government of Southern Sudan encouraged vibrant media reporting to mobilise a popular vote for cessation. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in 2005 between Southern Sudan's SPLM and the Sudan government had led to Khartoum's regime relaxation of its grip on the Southern states, which opened up space for expressions and mass media growth. Hence, a number of privately owned radio stations and newspapers started mushrooming across the nation. Their existence, however, was short-lived. After independence, the SPLM regime reverted back to violent tactics to stifle freedom of expression and free press. The lack of legal framework to provide for free media and speech has further discouraged media growth. The government has used the punitive Penal Code Act (2008) to charge journalists and media institutions. The Penal Code, for instance, criminalised defamation and libel cases and imposed heavy fines and penalties including a jail term of not less than 20 years in prison. Meanwhile, government authorities publicly warned journalists from reporting the views of the opposition and threatened to arrest journalists and shutdown their media institutions. In effect, the broadcast output has heavily been influenced by the SPLM political views and rhetoric. This influence has, however, inversely led to the rise of vibrant online news establishments such as the Sudan Tribune and Radio Tamazuj, which despite shutdowns have continued to publish and broadcast balanced and critical reporting from both the government and the opposition positions. However, access to these websites has been blocked in South Sudan.

Until the late 1960s, there were no training institutions for journalists outside Sudan's capital Khartoum and in the Southern regions. A majority of practicing journalists in Southern Sudan were trained in colleges and universities in neighbouring Egypt, Kenya and Uganda. For this reason, the journalism profession has remained in its infancy with minimal to no growth. Following South Sudan's independence, Juba University introduced mass communication and development communications courses but the conflict induced shutdowns and logistical challenges, such as the dire lack of teaching resources and instructional materials to enable a robust professional training, hampered the capacity of the institution to offer journalism courses. Meanwhile, extreme censorship and targeting of journalists along with lack of working resources in media institutions have forced many experienced journalists to abandon the profession. The situation discourages mentorships in South Sudan newsrooms and transfers of knowledge to younger colleagues and non-journalism graduates.

A number of institutions such as Internews, BBC Media Action and Journalists for Human Rights (JHR) have stepped in, to improve the journalistic skills of editors and reporters. But, the lack of overall basic skills in research, writing and editing among many reporters and editors has hindered these attempts of professional development. Government authorities have used the lack of professionalism among journalists to justify censorship. While it is not uncommon for government authorities to directly intervene in media operations, political interference is so ingrained in the media system that many South Sudanese journalists have learned and mastered self-censorship, with detriment to their professionalism. During the 2018 National Media Roadmap Forum held in Juba, Alfred Taban, the late founding editor and publisher of Juba Monitor said; reporters and editors routinely avoid reporting on issues which they deem likely to upset the government and civilians on their part desist from commenting on news, thus frustrating efforts to attain balanced and objective reporting.

The vast majority of the South Sudanese, however, still depend on a few radio stations, newspapers and the state-run South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation (SSBC) for news and information. There are a few operational independent media houses but they have drastically decreased in numbers since 2013. Many South Sudanese have consequently been left with no alternative options for news and information outside government channels and pro-government press. The government has continued to censor the media to such an extent that even comments reflecting opposing views from radio listeners have led to arrests and shutdowns of media houses. For example, in 2009, following on-air broadcasts of a phone-in comment that was deemed critical of the government, security agents raided independent radio stations in Juba, such as Liberty FM and Bakhita Radio, run by the Catholic Church. Also, as of 2016, the National Security Services of South Sudan placed agents in printing presses to review and pull-out critical newspaper placements before they go to press.

Journalists are still working in a difficult and challenging environment which hinders a robust growth of media institutions. The horrors of the lengthy civil war and the lack of guaranteed freedom of expression have deterred civilians from active engagement with media and from expressing themselves on the press, due to fear of reprisals and attacks. Mistrust in technology has also hurt media operations in South Sudan, especially for broadcast media, as it emerged during the First National Media Symposium of 2018, where many journalists reported that in various instances people, especially in areas outside Juba, reacted strongly when cameras were pointed at them. The mistrust in broadcast equipment have been heightened by the horrors and traumas of the war associated with former Khartoum regime surveillance.

Media

Print

At South Sudan's independence, there were over 10 newspapers circulating in the country, including The Citizen, The Juba Post, Sudan Mirror, The Southern Eye, The Star, The New Times, The Hero and the New Nation, but all of them have since been shut down either due to pressure from the government or financial constraints. In 2017, there were five daily newspapers in circulation in the capital, Juba, read by a majority of English-speaking residents of the city. Today, the print media market is dominated by Juba Monitor which is partially supported by the USAID's Viable Support to Transition and Stability (VISTAS) program. Founded in 2011, Juba Monitor remains a popular newspaper read by mostly educated and professional elites. The newspaper which was formerly known as the Khartoum Monitor, was founded by the late veteran South Sudanese journalist Alfred Taban, who in 2016 joined the legislative assembly of South Sudan as a nominated member of parliament by the opposition. The way media welcomed foreign aid has not been met lightly by the government. During the 2018 symposium, the Minister for Information and government spokesperson, Michael Lueth Makuei, dismissed all media receiving support from international agencies and donors as mouthpieces for western democracies advocating for regime change in South Sudan. The other English-language daily newspaper, The Dawn, is largely perceived as a pro-government newspaper. Arabic-language newspapers in circulation within Juba included Al-Watan and Al-Mogif. Other newspapers in Arabic, Al-Maseer and Al-Istiqlal, publish in Juba but lack consistency.

The economic turmoil has heavily impacted mass media growth. Even though the media industry in South Sudan saw a sharp rise in the number of newspapers in circulation since independence, newspaper revenue has been on a free fall. In 2012, the editor and owner of The Citizen newspaper (which has since closed down) said the newspaper industry in South Sudan was wilting down. At the time there were about 15 daily and weekly newspapers which were set mostly in major towns around the country, but many have since been shut down due to financial difficulties caused by high operational costs amid reduced advertising revenues.

Circulation of newspapers is currently limited to Juba city. A 2015 survey (We're Still Listening: A Survey of the Media Landscape in the Accessible Areas of South Sudan in 2015), commissioned by Internews, indicated a rise in newspapers reach with a weekly reach of 44 percent in Juba and parts of the former Central Equatorial state. However, 14 percent of the people interviewed in the survey said they did not regard newspapers as trusted source of reliable information. In 2015, three English-language newspapers dominated the daily circulation in Juba with weekly reach of The Citizen (23 percent), The Juba Monitor (22 percent) and The Juba Telegraph (9 percent).

Literacy levels, which remain remarkably low, have impacted newspaper readership. The 2013 and 2015 Internews surveys in accessible areas of South Sudan (including the Central Equatorial, Western Equatorial, Western Bahr el Ghazal, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warap states) indicated that among youths of the 15-24 age group, literacy levels were much higher, at 43 percent among male and 57 percent among female. Among the population with low literacy level, the survey indicated that 26 percent of those with no basic education trusted information relayed by word-of-mouth from family members and relatives, opinion leaders such as religious leaders and community elders.

Radio

Radio is the most largely consumed and trusted media in South Sudan. In Juba city alone, 66 percent of the population have access to radio with men being more likely (70 percent) to have listened to radio than women (62 percent) according to Internews (2015). But, just like other media, radio has come under huge pressure to broadcast pro-government information or at worst became a mouthpiece for the government and military regimes. The operations and reach of radio stations has also been impacted by the conflict, by huge operation costs and diminishing revenues.

According to two surveys (Internews 2013, 2015), Radio Miraya, run by the United Nations mission in South Sudan

(UNMISS), remains the only station with the capacity to reach the corner-most regions of South Sudan's former 10 states. Eye Radio, funded by the USAID was the most listened-to radio station in the country. Founded in 2006 and formerly known as the Sudan Radio Service, Eye Radio was broadcasted on shortwave out of Nairobi, Kenya in English and Arabic. Following the independence, the station moved operations to Juba and changed its name to Eye Radio. The station mainly broadcasted news and information in English and other local languages spoken in the country such as Dinka, Nuer, Shilluk, Bari, Moru, Zande and Toposa. The radio maintained the same output of news and information programs, public service announcements and educational programmes, most of which include daily phone-in segments. The radio, which gained popularity over the years, has become an epicentre of news and current affairs in South Sudan. Throughout the conflict, it continued broadcasting even during the heavy fighting in Juba in 2013 and 2016.

The UN-run Radio Miraya has a wider geographic reach than any other FM station in the country. It broadcasts from Juba on FM frequencies and across the country through a network of 26 relay stations linked by satellite. Most of Radio Miraya's programmes are broadcast in English and Juba Arabic, a simple Arabic dialect spoken in South Sudan. The station disseminates news and information throughout the country; It was set up in partnership between the UN Mission in South Sudan and the Swiss-based Hironnelle Foundation in 2006.

The government of South Sudan operates a loosely coordinated network of local radio stations across the country under the umbrella of South Sudan Radio. Many of them broadcast on FM and can be heard within the vicinity of the towns where they are based. The broadcast output of South Sudan Radio's FM stations is heavily dominated by views and commentaries of the SPLM political leaders and senior administrators in local states. At least 30 FM stations have been set up across the country with the encouragement of the SPLM.

Despite the proliferation of FM stations in recent years, many remote areas still rely on shortwave broadcasts. Some of the more popular news and information radio on shortwave include Bakhita Radio which was founded in 2006 under the auspice of the Catholic Radio Network (CRN). Bakhita radio claims that it has a potential audience of one million people. The station broadcasts religious programming and news, but in the past it varied its output depending on the political climate. Between 2012 and 2014, Bakhita used to produce a popular morning show called Wake Up Juba which engaged South Sudanese on debates around issues of politics and governance. The program was shut down following a government authorities' directive.

Just like other media outlets, radio operations and reach are concentrated in Juba city. As of 2015, the radio stations weekly reach in 5 major towns besides Juba were: Radio Miraya (66 percent), Eye Radio (48 percent), Radio Bakhita (31 percent), BBC World Service in English (27 percent), Classic FM (21 percent), City FM (21 percent), Radio Juba (17 percent), BBC World Service Arabic (17 percent), Liberty FM (14 percent) and Capital FM (13 percent) according to an Internews Network survey.

Television

The growth and development of television in South Sudan has largely been hampered by economic hardship and inflation amid huge cost of operations and production caused by limited electricity and telecommunication infrastructures. As of 2018, the state-run *South Sudan Television* (SSTV) which was since renamed to *South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation* (SSBC) is the only station operating in the country. SSBC broadcasts news and current-affairs programming, music and entertainment via the Arabsat Badr-4 Satellite, Multichoice DSTV and some online streaming services. The use of digital satellite technology has a limited reach, regarding slightly above 10 percent of the South Sudanese according to Internews surveys. Thus, a large percentage of the population remains unreached by television.

Lack of electricity and power sources was top among reasons that prevent South Sudanese from accessing television.

According to Internews survey (2015), less than 29 percent of South Sudanese had at least one source of power and only 8 percent had television sets in their household. In regards to nationwide television penetration, even the most popular station had a reach of less than 5 percent, with South Sudan Television dominating the TV market (47 percent), followed by *Al Jazeera Arabic* (35 percent) and *Al Jazeera English* (28 percent).

Despite the enacting of media legislation from 2013 which provided for the establishment of a public broadcaster, leading to the state-run South Sudan Television (SSTV) switch to SSBC, the national broadcaster remains largely a government entity with journalists there focused on reporting government activities and events. Between 2012 and 2016, there were other television stations such as the privately-owned *Citizen TV* and *Equator Broadcasting Corporation* (EBC), run and managed by the former Central Equatorial government. But as of 2018, both have been switched off due to either excessive government censorship and/or huge costs of operations amid lack of revenue to maintain sustainability.

In 2018, new TV stations namely *Junubna* and *Africa 360* were established in Juba targeting younger and more youthful audiences. The two stations have not been fully operational but represents a significant growth of privately owned televisions. However, their existence and success would highly depend on the government provision for free media environment and freedom of expression.

Gender and education level influence television viewership in South Sudan, according to the 2015 Internews survey. In the former Central Equatorial state, female viewers (17 percent) were less likely to watch *Al Jazeera English* compared to men (34 percent). Similarly, 16 percent of South Sudanese without education have ever watched English channels compared to 30 percent viewers with some level of education. The latest interview survey also found it more common for people with some education to watch SSTV (43 percent), compared to those with no education (34 percent).

Digital Media

Limited Internet access across South Sudan means that only few people living in Juba and major towns and the diaspora are able to access digital media. Some media organisations manage to have a presence online, but government censorship has hindered them as a source of news and information for the population. Excessive government control and a violent approach in dealing with journalists and media institutions, have not only discouraged critical digital reporting, but also citizen journalism. Access to the various vibrant online news sites and blogs has been blocked in South Sudan. *Sudan Tribune*, *Gurtong Trust* and *Radio Tamazuj* are digital outlets broadcasting and publishing news and information, but their reporting, which provides a critical balance of news, is only accessible to the South Sudanese of the diaspora. As of 2015, among the South Sudanese who use Internet to access digital media services for news and information, *Sudan Tribune* was consulted by 42 percent of the people surveyed. Other popular websites were *Eye Radio* (31 percent) and *BBC News* (23 percent). As of 2018, *Eye Radio*, *Hotinjuba*, *Voice of America* (VOA) and *SBS Dinka* were the most popular digital media services accessible from within the country.

The International Telecommunication Unit (ITU) estimated a 12 percent Internet penetration in South Sudan in 2017, while other research findings, such as the 2015 Internews survey, indicated that the average Internet use was much higher when only the capital Juba was considered. The survey indicated a higher Internet usage in the former Central Equatorial state - where the capital is situated at 23 percent compared to the national average of 9 percent of the population in 2015. The survey further indicated that among those with Internet access, 53 percent accessed Internet at home and 47 percent accessed from the offices. When it comes to gender gap in Internet use and access to digital media, only 5 percent of women in five states of South Sudan used the Internet to access news and updates compared to 14 percent of men. Male youths are the most likely to have used Internet (17 percent) while adult women (3 percent) are the least likely.

DataReportal (2019) indicated that as of January 2019, the Internet penetration rate in South Sudan had grown 0.5 percent year on year between 2018 and 2019 and currently stands at 17 percent equal to 2.23 million users. Mobile Internet users represent 16 percent of the population or 2.13 million users, meaning that roughly 95 percent of Internet users access it through mobile phones. Levels of education affect how the South Sudanese use the Internet. The Internews survey indicated that only 1 percent of those with no education have ever used the Internet compared to 16 percent of those with some level of education.

Social Networks

Social media have grown in popularity in South Sudan, particularly Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. During the war, social media tools were reported to have played a significant role in the escalation and de-escalation of conflicts. On one hand they are providing space for South Sudanese to share news and information and creating a platform for interaction and engagement on issues developing in the country. But, on the other hand, the platforms have been used to fuel or instigate rumours and in some cases to incite violence, according to the 2016 UN report on freedom of opinion and expression in South Sudan since the 2016 crisis.

Much of online media are consumed via social networks, mainly Facebook, Twitter and Instagram which remain accessible mostly in major towns. According to Internet World Stats (2019), active social media users in South Sudan have grown by 21 percent year on year between 2018 and 2019 and currently stand at 230,000, representing 1.8 percent of the total population. Slightly more than 220,000 social media users access the networks from their mobile devices. In terms of the platforms, Facebook is used by an estimated 214,201 users as of April 2019, making it the most popular social media. Instagram is used by 10.9 percent of active social media users and LinkedIn by 12.6 percent. Twitter and Snapchat have a small (almost insignificant) number of users in the country.

Year on year behaviour between 2018 and 2019, shows that Facebook users have had an insignificant change, while Instagram users have dropped by 3.8 percent and LinkedIn users have increased by 7.4 percent. This rate includes populations in far-flung and remote areas with limited access to social media where they are having a significant impact. Facebook in particular has allowed individuals in South Sudan to share videos, photos and updates within groups. For instance, the closed Facebook group *Jinubins* is popular among South Sudanese who share and discuss news updates and developments in the country.

Increased accessibility of inexpensive smartphones led to a sharp rise in WhatsApp popularity, which has become a popular tool for communication and also plays a major role in disseminating videos and photos on WhatsApp groups and on other social media platforms, majorly by South Sudanese of the diaspora who have a pervasive presence on most of the major networks. Those who live in the country have access to digital technologies such as smartphones which they use to share information with their friends and relatives both inside and outside the country. YouTube is also popularly used to disseminate and share news. The SSBC has for instance used the platform to share its news programming. The majority of social media users, however, are concentrated in Juba and show little to no gender gap according to Action Against Hate's Gender-Based Hate Speech Report (2018).

Even though the numbers of connectivity are slowly increasing across the country, low literacy levels have hampered accessibility. Social media was found to have largely been used as a conduit to spread word-of-mouth news and opinion resulting to misinformation, disinformation, hate speech and echo chambers. The proliferation of hate speech and fake news on social media led to the rise of online campaign #defyhatenow, aimed at mobilising civic action against hate speech and incitement to violence via social media. The project was supported by a German-based organisation with funding from the

German Institute for Foreign and Cultural relations and managed by Berlin-based R0q.ad, an agency for open culture and critical transformation. It was initiated in response to the many cases where social media was used to fan the conflict that erupted in South Sudan in December 2013, and again in July 2016. Since the launch of the program in 2015, #defyhatenow has provided extensive training, workshops, sports and music events to raise awareness on the impact of online and offline hate speech.

Gender-based hate speech was recorded in 2018. Screen of Rights, an organisation working under the auspice of Action Against Hate released a Gender-Based Hate Speech Report, indicating that hate speech was being widely used against women in positions of power. In a recent campaign in Juba to sensitise civilians against gender-based hate speech under the slogan #NaMaraSakit (not just a woman), women of all ages and walks of life detailed instances where they were openly dismissed on social media as being 'just a woman' with no right to speak.

Opinion Makers

Despite the heavily controlled media landscape and limited freedom of expression, politicians from both sides of the political divide, religious leaders, military factions' heads, social interest groups, tribal leaders, rights activists and politicians are the public figures making the headlines in South Sudan. Opinion makers have used various platforms including religious gatherings and traditional functions such as weddings and sports events to voice their opinions.

The rise in popularity of social media has created an alternative space for expression. In recent years there has been a sharp rise of civil society groups which have continued to advocate for social justice through initiatives led by communities, groups of women and citizens, such as #AnaTaban and the South Sudan We Want campaign, to voice alternative views to the ones of the regime. Their voices have challenged the dominant narratives by the SPLM. In the diaspora, various groups have emerged such as professional associations and academics who use platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook groups to voice their opinions. These groups actively engage followers on social media, online news platforms and blogs, but access to national radio and television remains beyond their reach.

In 2019, some of the most popular South Sudanese opinion makers included: Michael Makuei Lueth (politician), Emmanuel Jal (author and musician), Mabiior Garang (politician), Ateny Wek Ateny (president Salva Kiir's spokesperson), Lul Ruai Koang (SPLA spokesperson), Lual Acuek Deng (author), Jok Madut Jok (co-founder of the Sudd Institute), Dr Majak D'Agot (former political detainee), Mading Ngor (journalist), Sisi Majok (blogger), Jacob Bul (activist), Edmond Yakani (activist), Ayak Chol Abyei (activist), Apuk Ayuel Mayen (writer and poet), Joseph Oduha (Journalist), and Akuch de Garang (team leader, Girls' Education South Sudan - GESS).

Religious leaders, however, have remained the most vocal and trusted opinion leaders especially in rural areas. Their voices are also getting inroads into media and policy makers. For instance, in 2016, Bishop Paul Yugusuk of the Anglican Church used various media platforms and religious gatherings to call for justice for the victims of the Kubi rape. His efforts led to the establishment of a military investigation task force which resulted in the trial of the soldiers who participated in the raping of women in Kubi.

Sources

Links are to websites when available or to Facebook pages, as many traditional media find it hard to maintain an online presence outside social media.

Newspapers

- [Al-Masir](#)
- [The Dawn](#)
- [The Juba Monitor](#)

Radio

- [City FM](#)
- [Classic FM](#)
- [CRN](#)
- [Eye Radio](#)
- [FRI](#)
- [Radio Miraya](#)
- [Radio One](#)
- [Sama FM](#)
- [SSBC](#)
- [Top Fm](#)
- [Voice of America](#) (VOA)

Television

- [Equator Broadcasting Corporation](#)
- [Junubna](#)
- [South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation](#)

Digital Media

- [PaanLuel Wel](#)
- [Radio Tamazuj](#)
- [SudanTribune](#)

Opinion Makers

- [Akuch de Garang](#)
- [Ateny Wek](#)
- [Ayak Chol](#)
- [Dr. Majak D'Agot](#)
- [Edmund Yakani](#)
- [Emmanuel Jal](#)
- [Jacob Bul](#)
- [Jok Madut Jok](#)
- [Lual Acuek Deng](#)
- [Lul Koang](#)
- [Mabior Garang](#)
- [Mading Ngor](#)
- [Michael Makuei Lueth](#)
- [Sisi Majok](#)

Organisations

Trade Unions

The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan provides for freedom of labour movements and the formation and membership to unions. Many trade unions and workers' associations are registered to advocate for a better work environment and resolve disputes. In 2017, the Ministry of Interior established labour laws that sought to mediate in labour-related disputes in order to protect workers' rights and provide guidelines for employment in foreigner-operated organisations. Before these laws were established, South Sudan used the labour law of Sudan despite repeated lobbying by labour unions since 2010.

As of 2019, there are two vocal trade unions in South Sudan, the Employers Association of South Sudan (EASS) and the South Sudan Workers Trade Union Federation (SSWTUF). The two organisations started operations after independence, effectively replacing the former trade union established under the Sudan regime but they immediately faced many challenges. Their freedom has been drastically reduced during the years of civil war and industrial actions, such as strikes, have been suppressed with violence. Similar acts have since discouraged citizens' participation in civil actions. The two trade unions seek to negotiate and mediate disputes between employers and employees.

Other trade unions like the South Sudan Women Union have been on the forefront advocating for gender inclusion in governance.

Journalist Associations

The Union of Journalists of South Sudan (UJOSS) was established in 2004 and is the key association representing journalists in the engagements with the government and other organisations in the country. The association holds a database of both journalists working in media organisations and freelancers. UJOSS, which was registered and legally accredited in 2008, claims to advocate for a better working environment for journalists. The association has also represented journalists

during harassment and arrests by government authorities.

Oliver Modi, the association's chairperson said they have negotiated disputes between journalists and the government or employers. In 2015, UJOSS condemned the murder of a journalist, Peter Moi, who was killed in Juba near *The Corporate Weekly* newspaper's office where he worked. UJOSS has also continued to call for justice for journalists killed or arrested without charge.

The new South Sudan Media Authority has required membership from UJOSS for South Sudanese journalists seeking accreditation to practice the profession. According to Oliver Modi, speaking during the 2018 First National Media Symposium, the capacity for the association to advocate and represent journalists has been effectively frustrated by the lack of sufficient sources of revenue to cover its operations.

News Agencies

South Sudan has more than 50 registered news agencies operated by South Sudanese journalists who work intermittently. Due to fear of censorship and shutdowns, many news agencies provide limited coverage and self-censored reporting. Other South Sudanese media agencies run social media pages which are usually not updated for weeks or even months.

The South Sudan News Agency (SSNA) maintains regular reporting pushed by a diaspora group in the United States. The site which publishes news updates but has no known reporters in the country and their website holds no address or details of editors and publisher.

International news agencies, such as Reuters, VOA, FSN, AFP and AP have freelance stringers and correspondents, facing censorship and threats just like South Sudanese journalists. Most foreign correspondents have either been denied accreditation or deported. In 2018 and 2019, there were only three foreign journalists reporting from the country.

International media organisations such as China Global Television (CGTN) and Al Jazeera English and Arabic have maintained a presence in the country despite the harsh working environment for journalists. The operations of Al Jazeera English were briefly shut down in 2017.

Audience measurement organisations

There are no audience measurement organisations in South Sudan. The ensuing war and lack of resources have made it extremely difficult to conduct nationwide household surveys measuring how the South Sudanese consume or use media. Existing surveys have been conducted on behalf of two important players, Internews and *Radio Miraya*.

Lack of data and research on audience insights, media reach and circulation has made it extremely difficult to analyse the South Sudan media landscape. The available surveys by Swiss-based organisation, Hirondelle Foundation (2007) and Internews (2013 and 2015) are limited to only parts of South Sudan. The surveys used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research to gather data from sections of South Sudan but limited access remained a hinderance.

Other available survey findings and data are outdated. The latest research conducted on behalf of various South Sudan government departments dates up to the first decade of the century. For instance, the South Sudan household baseline survey was conducted in 2009.

Sources

Trade Unions

- [Employers Association of South Sudan](#) (EASS)
- [South Sudan Women Union](#)
- [SSWTUF](#)

Journalist Associations

- [AMWISS](#)
- [UJOSS](#)

News Agencies

- [Alhurra](#)
- [Aljazeera](#)
- [Reuters](#)
- [South Sudan News Agency](#)
- [VOA South Sudan Infocus](#)

Policies

Media legislation

The harsh laws governing media and journalists' operations in South Sudan have drastically changed over the years but more in theory than in practice. President Salva Kiir signed into law the Media Authority Act (2013), the Broadcasting Corporation Act (2013) and the Right of Access to Information Act (2014), providing the legal framework for the promotion press freedom and access to information.

The Media Authority Act enshrines the principle that the right to freedom of expression, including the public right to a pluralistic media, is a fundamental human right, protected under Article 24 of the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan. This new legislation is a stark contrast from the Penal Code Act (2008), which holds laws that govern freedom of expression and press. This legislation limits space for the free operation of media and criminalises defamation and libel cases. Under the code, heavy fines and penalties have been imposed on journalists and media institutions.

Despite the new provisions, government authorities such as the National Security Services (NSS) are involved in continuous violations. For instance, the NSS has imposed regulatory agents on press facilities, who review and eventually remove articles from the publication before newspapers go to press. In 2017 the US-based watchdog, Freedom House reported that the NSS has almost unlimited powers to detain and interrogate suspects, as a result of dysfunctions and lack of capacity in the justice system, leading to indefinite detention without charge in many cases. Continuing violations by government organs, mostly NSS and state administrators, have not only discouraged reporting outside Juba city but also deterred Non-Governmental Organization from aiding journalists access to far flung regions of South Sudan. Thorough checks and Media Authority clearance have been required for journalists to access local flights, such roadblocks have further frustrated media operations in the country.

The Media Authority Act provides for digital media registration and regulation. However, the Media Authority of South Sudan, the body established to oversee media operation in South Sudan, has summoned and sanctioned the digital press in various occasions. In 2017, the South Sudanese Ministry of Information and Broadcasting blocked access to two online media, *Sudan Tribune* and *Tamazuj* and two blogs *Paanluel* and *Nyamapile*. Such acts have undermined the provisions for free press and the freedoms of expression.

Accountability systems

Pursuant to the Media Authority Act, complaints filed against media entities are treated as civil offences and subject to review and investigation by the Press and Broadcast Complaints Council and the Media Appeals Board. The Press and Broadcast Complaints Council is mandated to impose administrative sanctions envisaged in Article 29 of the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan. However, in cases “where malicious intent or recklessness is shown and damage is serious”, offenders will be subjected to a prison term of up to five years by a competent court.

Specific provisions in the Media Authority Act defining hate speech and incitement of violence are generally in compliance with the international human rights standards. For example, Article 29-2 requires that a nexus must be established between the words and an actual or probable act of violence or discrimination. This is to avoid, for example, limitations on the use of offensive or insulting language under the pretext of prohibiting hate speech, according to the 2016 OHCHR report on Rights to opinion and expression.

The report further claims, the National Security Service Act (2014) granted the South Sudanese National Security Agent sweeping powers with respect to surveillance, arrest and detention in situations where the national interest could be threatened. It also allowed security agents to arrest individuals without a warrant. This provision has been used against journalists and other individuals for exercising their legitimate right to freedom of expression. Moreover, while the NSS Act requires that individuals arrested and detained by the NSS be brought before a magistrate within 24 hours, in practice, people are frequently held without any access to the court system.

Regulatory authorities

The Media Authority Act (2013) provides for the establishment of an autonomous oversight body, the Media Authority, to regulate, develop and promote an independent and pluralistic media industry in the country. It was created in 2016 and started operations in 2017. The establishment of the Media Authority was met with enthusiasm by many media practitioners and journalists. However, today media professionals are sceptical of the Authority’s mandate. Many believe the Media Authority acts on behalf of the NSS instead of defending media freedom and the ability of journalists to exercise the profession.

While on paper South Sudan’s media laws offer adequate protection and a conducive environment for journalists, the opposite is indeed true when applied to the daily coverage of news and current affairs. In 2017, 20 foreign journalists were barred by the media authority from entering the country and reporting. On 7 January, 2019 the Media Authority summoned the editor-in-chief of the Arabic-language newspaper *Al-Watan*, Michael Christopher. The Authority issued a warning to the paper to “stop with immediate effect writing anything on topics relating to the ongoing protests in Sudan, which is an internal political issue (sic) of a friendly neighbouring country.” Various local and regional media groups interpreted the warning written by the Authority’s Managing Director, Sapana Abuyi, as a blanket warning to all South Sudanese media not to cover the protests. In the letter, Sapana said “the media in South Sudan should not write or broadcast or instigate statements and comments about [the protests in Sudan].” The Commission for the Protection of Journalists CPJ said the gag on *Al-Watan*

newspaper exposed South Sudan's hostility toward its citizen's right to information.

Sources

- [Media Authority Act](#) (2013)
- [National Security Service Act](#) (2014)
- [Penal Code Act](#) (2008)

Education

Universities and schools

Journalism education in South Sudan has been heavily affected by the ongoing conflict. Juba University remains the only university that has seemingly maintained consistency through the conflict. There have been minimal shutdowns following clashes amongst the student body, (protests and infighting, mostly caused by the ethnic-motivated conflicts in the country). The university was established in 1975 and offers courses including Mass Communication and Development Communication. The training provided lacks practical elements and is based more on theory. Graduation rates are significantly lower than enrollment. The challenging work environment, with episodes of harassment, intimidation and imprisonment of journalists by the government and other authorities, has discouraged the progression into journalism careers. However, there has been a number of graduates who succeeded in entering the profession, working for both local and international press. Juba University, much like the other 26 registered public universities in the country, lacks both didactic material and lecturers, a scarcity which is exacerbated by the deepening economic crisis. The economic turmoil in the country has had a serious impact on the ability to hire and retain lecturers. As a result, the faculty to student ratio is abysmally low. Students outnumber teachers with a ratio of up to 50 to one.

South Sudan's minimal Internet infrastructure and the scarcity of instructors have hampered the ability to offer online courses. Also, with independence, the country switched the official language of instruction from Arabic to English, with a direct impact on knowledge delivery and learning. The majority of instructors, who were trained in the Khartoum system which is primarily Arabic-based, have had to switch their mode of training to English. Many faculty members have since had to take up English as a new language of instruction, which has severely impacted the delivery of knowledge. The change of curriculum, the language transition and the conflict are the main reasons behind the low rates of enrollment into university, with the consequence that matriculations and graduations have drastically reduced.

Professional development

South Sudan media organisations and professional associations such as UJOSS, the Association of Media Women in South Sudan (AMWISS), and the Association of Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS), hold regular trainings and seminars to impart professional journalism practice and ethics. The Media Development Initiative, run and managed by AMDISS started operations in 2017 and has been training journalists with short-span courses. The first batch of students graduated in 2018 and a majority have consequently entered journalism and continued working in newsrooms across South Sudan.

International organisation such as Journalists for Human Rights (JHR), BBC Media Action and Internews have also held

trainings in the country. Many South Sudanese journalists have also benefited from training opportunities abroad, supported by United Nation agencies. The South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation (SSBC) has for instance benefited from a partnership between the government of South Sudan and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which has not only provided newsroom capacity building but also equipped the national broadcaster with state of the art technologies aimed at improving the broadcast output.

Media Development Organisations

There are a number of developmental associations focused on developing and strengthening media in the country. The most prominent one is AMDISS, which is focused on advocacy, training and media development. Its main objectives include working towards the establishment of a viable environment for the development of media in post-conflict South Sudan and advocating for human rights guarantees in accordance with the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan and the International norms of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Foreign missions such as the so-called TROIKA (including USA, UK and Norway) together with United Nations agencies (mainly UNESCO) have been working towards achieving the establishment of a viable environment for the development of media and in particular, independent media in post-conflict South Sudan. Organisations such as AMWISS provide capacity building and advocacy geared towards promoting women representation in media, to increase visibility of women and girl's issues in the media and in building up the capacity for women journalists.

Internews and the BBC Media Actions are also involved in training journalists and capacity building operations. Journalists for Human Rights (JHR), funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), has also been strengthening media in the country by providing in-house and on-the-job media mentors training journalists on covering human rights stories and providing overall support in the news production cycle.

Sources

Universities/schools of journalism

- [University of Juba](#)

Media development organisations

- [AMDISS](#)
- [BBC Media Action](#)
- [Internews](#)
- [Journalists for Human Rights](#)

Telecommunications

Mobile network ecosystem

Mobile networks coverage is limited to the major towns in South Sudan, cutting out a large chunk of the population in far and hard-to-reach areas. Ongoing conflicts and limited access to parts of the country have made it extremely difficult to find accurate data on mobile coverage and accessibility. Although there has been seemingly a growth in the popularity of Internet

services, population displacements, destruction of telecommunications infrastructure, inflation and economic spending have discouraged investment in the telecommunication infrastructure, thus hampering its expansion.

However, there have been positive changes in the industry. In 2015, South Sudan joined the One Area Network which drastically reduced international calling and roaming costs to Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda by about 60 percent. The country has also revisited its plan to join the marine fibre-optic cable through its neighbouring country Uganda. Should this plan be actualised, there will be a potential huge shift in mobile usage and connectivity in South Sudan.

It's important to note that limited data and statistics of mobile ownership, subscription and Internet usage within the country mean that the current estimates might be lower than actual connectivity. For instance, many families in South Sudan share mobile phones, which might imply that there may be a higher number of usage than indicated.

Company profiles

Years of conflict have decimated mobile networks and the communication infrastructure in parts of South Sudan, while in many other areas the mobile networks were shut down by government authorities during the conflict. The complicated taxation system and fluctuating licensing fees and tariffs have caused some telecommunications companies to roll back investment in the country. In 2018, disputes over taxes led to the shutdown of Vivacell, the country's largest mobile network company accounting for one third of an approximate 3 million subscribers. The National Communication Authority of South Sudan shut down the company over claims of unpaid taxes amounting to US\$66m in license fees. The exit of the company owned jointly by the secretariat of the ruling party, SPLM and Lebanon's Fattouch Investment Group, meant that some 900,000 subscribers were locked out of communication overnight. There are also claims that the Vivacell network was shut down due to its close association with former SPLM general secretary and political detainee, Pagan Amum.

South Africa's MTN and Kuwait's Zain mobile networks are the only mobile companies operating in South Sudan as of 2019. These two companies have both reduced local investments and downsized their operations due to the economic turmoil that has impacted communication spending. The exorbitant taxes and licensing fees imposed by the South Sudan Communication Authority, coupled up with local state-imposed tariffs, have not only discouraged the expansion of current networks but also barred new players seeking to enter the market. This has made mobile communication very difficult. Although calling rates remain relatively inexpensive, Internet accessibility is poor due to extremely limited infrastructure amid growing demand.

Main trends

Limited Internet coverage has hampered technological innovation in South Sudan. Despite this, the use of smartphones is encouraged by their inexpensiveness, but only limited to the capital city, Juba. Elsewhere in the country, humanitarian organisations use Very Small Aperture Technology (VSAT) satellites which are costly and therefore only limited to specific users.

Even if the extensive government censorship has limited the ability to utilise various tools available to innovate and develop Internet enterprises, the use of social media is fast increasing in popularity, which somehow exacerbated the conflict. In 2007, the Southern Sudan Human Rights Commission (SSHRC) detailed hate speech cases that were encouraged by the use of social media. Facebook for instance has been used to send threats and abusive messages which only worked to encourage the escalation of the conflict, according to the *2016 Report on right to freedom of opinion and expression in South Sudan since 2016* by the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Following the report, the government of South Sudan employed a heavy handed approach to curtail such communications.

The lack of digital capabilities among many South Sudanese has further reduced the ability for the innovation of digital services in the country, where there are no recorded visible technology advancements.

Smartphone technology has helped to foster the popularity of social media, with groups sharing videos and photos in Facebook and YouTube, further opening up space for expression. This new trend has been encouraged by access to more inexpensive smartphones which have saturated the market, especially amongst the middle class and youthful South Sudanese. As a result, social media continue to rise in popularity. Open source data indicate that the growth rate tops 21 percent, however still barely 2 percent of the population access social media, limited by infrastructures and illiteracy.

Mobile banking services are also available, but mainly in the capital, Juba. This innovative service is not used by many South Sudanese in areas outside Juba, as they still prefer sending money via relatives and friends. Other available money services such as Dahabshiil continue to grow in popularity. These services involve physical collection of money from bureaus available in Juba. In 2018, the communication authority announced it will register the first money transfer and delivery service which is set to change how South Sudanese send and receive money. Other popular services included Kenya's Mpesa services which is used by South Sudanese travelling between Kenya and South Sudan.

Mobile coverage

Mobile networks in South Sudan are limited to major towns (about 20 percent of the country), cutting out the population of remote areas. Mobile coverage was much higher before conflict, but the ensuing war led to the switch of telecom masts especially in areas controlled by the rebel forces. The World Bank estimates that the mobile cellular subscription in South Sudan has dropped from 22 percent in 2016 to only 12 percent in 2017. Although, some towns have been reconnected as the government gained more control of rebel positions.

At only 12 percent, also the Internet penetration rate of South Sudan remains low compared to other countries in the eastern Africa region. Although there has been seemingly a growth in the popularity of Internet services in the country, the continued conflict and low investments in telecommunication infrastructure have affected their expansion. Open source data indicate that 2.2 million of the country's population are connected to the Internet, accounting for only 17 percent of the country's population estimated at 12.5 million.

Mobile ownership

According to the International Telecommunication Unit (ITU 2018), research estimates indicate that only 12-20 percent of the South Sudan population have access to mobile communication. This data does not account for the drastic reduction in the overall population of the country due to a massive conflict-related exodus. In late 2017, UNHCR estimated that it was receiving close to 2,000 new South Sudanese arrivals a day in neighbouring Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo, totalling over 2 million refugees. In a country of 12 million, 4 million are displaced. This makes it challenging to access accurate data reflecting the current mobile usage.

Limited data and statistics of the mobile ownership, subscription and Internet usage within the country have also affected the current estimates. The Internews survey *We Are Still Listening: Media Landscape survey in the Accessible Areas in South Sudan in 2015*, indicates there is a low mobile use and Internet penetration rate but it warns that some South Sudanese in far flung areas own mobile phones and use them intermittently. The survey also indicates that many families in South Sudan share mobile phones, meaning that more people maybe using mobile phones even though they don't own one.

Sources

- [Internet Live Stats](#)
- [UNHCR](#)
- [World Bank](#)

Innovation

Landscape analysis

The South Sudan technological landscape is marred by the reduced investment in communication technology caused by the ensuing conflict and violence in the country. However, despite the challenges, there has been remarkable growth in the use of technology and a fast-growing mobile phone penetration. In 2013, only 3 percent of South Sudanese had access to the Internet, while in 2018, this number had tripled to about 9 percent, despite the outbreak of civil war and the economic turmoil. The rising popularity of Internet has been overshadowed by the limited Internet resources and access for a majority of South Sudanese, which has hindered technological innovation in the country. Lack of ICTs penetration, of fundamental infrastructure and of human and technical capacity have hindered innovative ways to use of social media technology and its development.

In 2015, the first Information Communication Technology for Development Conference (ICT4D) took place in Juba. The forum brought key technological investors and policy makers together and promised to embark on plans of investment that would spur technological and innovation solution. Following the forum, a new Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Center was opened at the University of Juba, hoping it would enable to provide technical skills for the development and innovation of technology. The centres also promise to use ICTs in promoting gender equality in the country.

Profiles of main tech parks, accelerators, hackathons

The most recent efforts of technological innovation in South Sudan have focused on providing solutions to benefit those who have no access to electricity and Internet. Many of the initiatives in the country have focused on imparting technological know-how to enable savvy citizens with computing skills to develop innovative solutions.

In 2015, Kapital Movie Industry Corporation (KIMC) held a #PeaceHackCamp which brought South Sudanese youth from across to the capital Juba to learn skills in coding techniques and the use of open source Internet resources. The initiative was run by Kapital Movie Industry Corporation was the first of its kind in South Sudan. This peer-to-peer learning initiative imparted various skills such as sustainable agriculture, designing mobile applications and provided support to youth entrepreneurship.

Low literacy among the population and lack of access to electricity and communications infrastructure have limited the exchange of knowledge around innovation and new skills to the capital city, deepening the digital divide.

Sources

- [ICT4D Juba](#)
- [World Bank](#)

Traditional forms of communication

Summary

Many South Sudanese communities in regions unreachable by mass media continue to use traditional forms of communication such as drum beating, horn blowing, smoke signals, songs, dances, ululations and runners. These forms of communication have been practiced and mastered over years of civil war in South Sudan and have proved to be effective, becoming the preferred choice of communication for many. The costs and mistrust attached to technology, coupled up with limitations in the digital and print communication, have given rise to the use of traditional communication even in areas where traditional mass media are available.

The displaced people and those fleeing conflict in South Sudan use non-verbal communication such as horn blowing and smoke signals to warn others of imminent dangers. As South Sudan currently has 64 different ethnic groups, there is no cross-cutting communication tool used across the country but the methods mentioned above are similarly used depending on context and time of the year. For instance, methods used during the rainy season are different from the ones used in the dry season. The communication forms also vary depending on gender. Women are known to use ululation and shouting whereas men mostly employ horn blowing and feet thumping.

According to a 2017 survey by the Reach Initiative conducted in partnership with Internews, word-of-mouth (relayed via mobile phones and opinion leaders) maintained a popular trend. The survey indicates that among those who primarily received information in person or on the phone, friends and relatives were the most trusted source of information. Throughout the years of civil war, communication infrastructures were either destroyed and/or shutdown which gave rise to the use of known forms of communication to send warning messages and signals.

South Sudanese cultures and languages have traditionally been enriched by dances and songs. In the capital, Juba, the South Sudan Theatre Organisation has continued to stage performances with songs and dances that illuminate the narratives of the war. The rise in popularity of stage performances has gained traction to the other mass media forms. Generally, the huge cost of mass media and the lack of interactivity using non-verbal cues have given rise to traditional forms of communication in communities where huge values is placed on communications cues.

Sources

- [South Sudan Theatre Organisation](#)

Conclusions

Conclusion

The South Sudan media landscape faces challenges caused majorly by the horrors of the war. Government censorship, minimal infrastructure development, low levels of Internet penetration and literacy are among the top factors hampering a fast growth and the development of the media sector. It's also important to note that media are facing significant financial burdens, caused by heavy operational costs and exacerbated by a sharp surge of fuel prices and printing costs. The lack of

advertising revenue through traditional methods, amid rising popularity in social media marketing, has forced many media to depend heavily on external funding from diplomatic corps, international non-governmental organisations and UN agencies in order to survive.

Many South Sudanese, however, continue to rely heavily on mass media for information critical to decision making, especially at times of conflict. The trust level placed on media is significantly higher than in many countries in the eastern and Horn of Africa region. In a country where about 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas, media, especially, radio have become a crucial tool for information access, education and cohesion in the social fabric.

New media legislation and the constitutional provision which uphold the role of vibrant media and free press as important in the country's growth and development, have the potential to positively change the media landscape. However, for these freedoms to be achieved, South Sudan needs to uphold and practice its own laws, something which has not been effectively adhered to by both state and non-state authorities. The fragmented political structure has made it difficult for authorities to enforce the rule of law and deliver government services across the country. Yet, many of the positive changes expected require the return of peace and the respect and upholding of the rights to freedom of expression, opinion and free press.

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