Digital Media in Africa: Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa

MAJOR TRENDS

1. Access

- The digital divide is in many ways an access-to-electricity divide.
- Internet use remains largely urban, forming a significant part of middle-class news consumption and debate. However, it continues to ripple outwards to smaller towns and some rural areas.
- Citizens have access to an ever wider range of sources and news materials, most notably foreign news—especially about their own countries.

2. News and mobiley

- Local news sites are among the 20 most used websites in all three countries.
- Given the high level of mobile internet use for news and information, it is notable that all media output to mobile phones is a cut-down version of other output or the internet version seen on a small screen. Dedicated news products for mobile handsets are keenly awaited.

3. Entrenched influences

- Digital switch-over has proved particularly challenging across Sub-Saharan Africa as it requires government resources plus the ability to work with a stakeholder group that includes private broadcasters.
- Public broadcasting is state-run with the partial exception of South Africa. Viewers in Nigeria and Kenya have little trust in their state broadcasters. Nevertheless, the state broadcasters in Nigeria and South Africa are powerful players with significant resources.
- Relationships between politicians and the media, and between government as one of the largest advertisers and the media, are usually opaque. Politicians lurk in the shadows but there is no way of knowing who the beneficial owners of particular companies are.
- Lack of market data makes it impossible to know whether government advertising decisions are objectively grounded or reflect political and economic interests.

Mapping Digital Media is a project of the **Open Society Program on Independent Journalism** and the **Open Society Information Program**

The project assesses the global opportunities and risks that are created for media by the switch-over from analog broadcasting to digital broadcasting; the growth of new media platforms as sources of news; and the convergence of traditional broadcasting with telecommunications. These changes redefine the ways that media can operate sustainably while staying true to values of pluralism and diversity, transparency and accountability, editorial independence, freedom of expression and information, public service, and high professional standards.

The project, which examines the changes in-depth, builds bridges between researchers and policymakers, activists, academics and standard-setters. It also builds policy capacity in countries where this is less developed, encouraging stakeholders to participate in and influence change. At the same time, this research creates a knowledge base, laying foundations for advocacy work, building capacity and enhancing debate.

Covering 56 countries, the project examines how these changes affect the core democratic service that any media system should provide—news about political, economic and social affairs.

The **MDM Country Reports** are produced by local researchers and partner organizations in each country. Cumulatively, these reports provide a unique resource on the democratic role of digital media. In addition to the country reports, research papers on a range of topics related to digital media have been published as the **MDM Reference Series**.

These publications are all available at

http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/projects/mapping-digital-media.

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Context

Sub-Saharan Africa is the cockpit for change in terms of the global digital divide; in little over a decade it has gone from being largely unconnected to the internet to having millions of people using it. Because media have been relatively undeveloped—for a host of reasons, including education, income, and lack of access to electricity—the impact of the digital changes has been and may continue to be somewhat more dramatic than in countries where traditional media have been much better established. Data in the reports on which this study is based are from 2009–2011 and much has changed since that date.

The Mapping Digital Media project reported on three Sub-Saharan African countries: Nigeria (with 160 million inhabitants), South Africa (50 million), and Kenya (40.5 million). These countries represent the vanguard of the digital transition. South Africa is the most urbanized (61 percent) and the wealthiest (US$ 7,521 per capita) of the three, followed by Nigeria with a 48 percent urban population and a per capita GDP of US$ 1,753, and Kenya with only 33 percent urbanized and a GDP per capita of US$ 1,049. All three countries have considerable disparities of wealth and for Kenya and Nigeria agriculture is an important component of their economies in terms of employment, although it is mining and oil that give Nigeria and South Africa most of their wealth.

All three countries are ethnically very diverse. Nigeria has three main groups (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) that make up 68 percent of the population, but it also has many smaller communities. South Africa has eight main language groups and many more communities. Kenyans speak at least three languages (English, Kiswahili, and their mother tongue) and five ethnic groups make up 65 percent of the population.

The three countries represent the spectrum of media development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The digital divide is in many ways an access-to-electricity divide: 85 percent have such access in South Africa compared to a mere 20 percent in Kenya.

Table 1.

Main Media Metrics in South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya, 2010

Country	TV set ownership (% of total number of households)	Radio set ownership (% of total number of households)	PC ownership (% of total number of households)	Number of internet subscribers	Broadband penetration (% of total number of internet subscribers)
South Africa	82.0	77.2	18.3	1,560,000	29.4
Nigeria	60.0	43.5	5.5	n/a*	n/a
Kenya	30.0	79.0	7.9	6,150,000	35.9

Notes: n/a – not available; * no reliable figures

Source: Mapping Digital Media reports

In terms of the transition to digital broadcasting, Nigeria is the most advanced of the three, with between 5 percent and 10 percent of the population having access to digital television. South Africa has not started the process and at the time this report was written, the numbers in Kenya were negligible.

Introduction

The main trends across the three countries—which to some extent mirror trends in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa—are as follows:

- There is undoubtedly a wider range of media sources available, particularly online. However, despite much wider access to the internet (largely on mobile) there is still a "media deficit": people in rural areas have a much narrower choice of media outlets.

- As elsewhere, printed newspaper circulations are falling or stagnating, and the presence of online news 24 hours a day is exerting the same pressures on journalists as found elsewhere.
- The use of internet and social media sites for news consumption and social activism has risen, although South Africa does not seem to have a well-developed digital activist space.
- Given the high level of mobile internet use for news and information, it is surprising that no media platforms designed specifically for mobile phones have yet emerged. Even with mobile internet access, the small screen size and the limits on text reading mean that a complete rethink may be necessary to get effective mobile media.
- All three countries have experienced difficulties in making the digital transition in broadcasting, but only South Africa has put in place a clear policy for dealing with those households which are unable to afford a set-top box.
- There are high levels of political interference in media regulation and law, and in the PSBs, which in reality are state-run, with the partial exception of SABC. Viewers in Nigeria and Kenya have low levels of trust in their state broadcasters. Nevertheless, in both Nigeria and South Africa, the state broadcasters are powerful players with significant resources.

1. Risks

There is a significant risk to newspapers from the same kind of pressures that have built up in the developed world. Local news sites in all three countries are among the 20 most used websites. It is less clear what direct impact this has on print readership. It could either be a supplement to print readership or—more likely over the medium term, as internet use grows—a substitute for reading the print version.

In Kenya, for example, the Nation Media Group sells an online subscription that is cheaper than the print version; take-up has been low for a number of reasons, including the presence of a free version online and the lack of credit cards. In South Africa, however, year-on-year figures over the last decade show newspaper circulation is in decline.

While it is not possible to track frequency of use on online news sites in Sub-Saharan Africa, the number of users is often close to the number of print readers. Online consumption is still secondary to print, but in time it may overtake it. The difficulty for media groups producing newspapers is that most of the income is currently attached to the print sector of their business and it has proved very hard to generate online revenues, despite the growing online readership.

According to journalists in all three countries, the pace of the news cycle and the quantity of potential material available digitally seems to have led to a decline in news quality. The chief complaint is the lack of time available to check stories that are published online in general, and on social media in particular. This causes particular problems when the news published on websites is the same as appears in the print or broadcast versions. Otuma Ongalo, a senior editor in charge of quality at the *Standard* newspaper, put it succinctly: "The online material is not subject to the high standards expected of print or broadcast journalism in Kenya."

Journalists also rely increasingly on online content and user-generated content (UGC) rather than first-hand reporting. This problem is most acute in Kenya and Nigeria. The country reports also raise the issue of plagiarism where journalists simply cut and paste material from the internet without crediting or paying for it. As the Nigeria report notes, the specialized nature of foreign, business, and sports reports renders them particularly vulnerable to plagiarism. But while there is now, for example, a great deal more government information available on which to base investigative reporting, there is also far more effective surveillance of mobile phones and e-mail.

In terms of the public broadcasters, all three suffer from significant problems. South Africa has the most well developed public broadcasting but it is increasingly challenged by the government. While views about SABC are very varied there is a strong perception that SABC news differs from (the private broadcaster) e.tv news and from community television news; it is seen as including more content about the government, and as taking a sympathetic stance toward the ruling party—even though it does regularly feature opposition party criticisms of the government.

After the 2007 elections in Kenya, the European Union's Election Monitoring Mission reported that the public broadcaster KBC had failed to fulfill even its minimal legal obligations as a public service broadcaster (set out in the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Act and the IPPG agreement 1997). KBC Radio's English and Kiswahili language services showed a high level of bias and granted a combined total of 76 percent of coverage to the PNU coalition partners. This high-profile assessment gives some idea of the kind of coverage that makes viewers trust it less than other news sources.

In Nigeria too, there is a disparity between the letter of the law and the practice of public broadcasting at federal and state levels. Government interference has always undermined broadcasters' ability to operate impartially. According to a 2006 report by the BBC World Service Trust, "there are no public service broadcasters in radio or television, but rather government-owned radio and television outlets directly accountable not to the public but to state officials."

The digital transition in broadcasting has proved particularly challenging for most Sub-Saharan African countries as it involves the need for a mixture of government resources and attention and the ability to work with a wider stakeholder group including private broadcasters. In each of the three countries, the process has been flawed. In Nigeria, where 5 percent to 10 percent of the population has access to digital television, the transition came about through a commercial agreement between the Chinese pay-TV operator Star Times and the federal broadcaster NTA. Government policy—which should ensure a level playing field for all involved—has been slow to catch up with this initial move.

In Kenya, the government decided to move from the DVB-T standard to DVB-T2 and has failed to mount an effective public information campaign. As a result, it is now threatening to switch off the analog signal to an unrealistic timetable, leaving viewers in the dark. In South Africa, the process was meant to be underway by the 2010 World Cup but disagreements between the private stakeholders and with the government have delayed the process. However, South Africa is the only country to have made provision for subsidizing those who are unable to afford the cost of the digital set-top box, which might be as high as US$40–60.

The legal and regulatory framework for media ownership is very different across all three countries. Ownership and advertising placement in Kenya and Nigeria, as in many other Sub-Saharan African countries, are far from transparent. There is no legislation on cross-media ownership in Kenya and as a result, major media houses are able to own newspapers and television and radio stations. This concentration, according to Daniel Obam of the National Communications Secretariat, is harmful to plurality and diversity of opinion. Almost more damagingly, the decision-making on advertising placement is concentrated in a series of agencies owned by a single company that has over three-quarters of the advertising revenues in the country under its control. This level of cross-media ownership is much less of an issue in Nigeria and South Africa.

Two sets of relationships are usually opaque: the relationship between politicians and the media, and the relationship between government in its role as one of the largest advertisers and the media. Politicians lurk in the shadows but there is no way of knowing who the beneficial owners of a particular company are. In Nigeria, the broadcast regulator requires licensees to provide information on ownership but is under no obligation to make this information public.

Likewise in the case of advertising placement; the lack of market data in general makes it impossible to know whether the government's advertising decisions are soundly based or simply reflect political support for their friends or media they own.

In the case of Nigeria, the MDM report raises an issue that can be found in many Sub-Saharan African countries: the threat of physical violence against reporters. Although the number of deaths of reporters in Nigeria is relatively small, this form of violence has a knock-on effect. According to the report, civil society activist groups such as the Media Rights Agenda have indicated that physical attacks are on the rise. As a result, many journalists have resorted to self-censorship.

As the news process becomes increasingly digital, there has been an increase in the number of cases of hacked websites and hijacked email and social media accounts belonging to journalists; the Nigeria report argues that these incidents have had a significant impact on journalism and the safety of individual journalists. African media businesses, which are relatively new to digital work processes, are vulnerable when needing to protect both their personnel and technical infrastructure.

The Kenya report highlights a gap in news coverage that may also apply to the other two countries. Television stations dedicate substantial time to local news and current affairs. However, given that they broadcast 24 hours a day, the allocation to local news and current affairs is only a small percentage of the total content. This may change as the new constitution decentralizes budgets to new centers of local government.

2. Opportunities

Many of the negative risks of digitization cannot be separated from countervailing positive opportunities. For example, digital multimedia increase the pressure on journalists to do more things but, in turn, there is often far more material available quickly online than when print was the only medium for documents.

An Ipsos-Synovate survey showed that Kenyan internet users spent on average about 70 minutes on the internet per visit. "This level of media usage is close to the average time spent on television daily. We are seeing significant shifts in the way people receive content, and this could have implications for traditional media going forward," said Joe Otin of Ipsos-Synovate.

While internet use continues to grow rapidly, it remains a largely urban phenomenon. However, infrastructure and use continue to ripple outwards to include smaller towns and some rural areas. It already forms a significant part of the news consumption and debate for the middle class.

The most notable instance of digital activism in these three countries has been the Occupy Nigeria movement. The South Africa report suggests that online activism could be seriously lagging in terms of reaching mobile internet users and tapping into their UGC. This was underlined by the experience, in July 2009, of U.S. President Barack Obama successfully eliciting more than 200,000 messages when he reached out to MXit users ahead of his visit to Africa. While activist groups say they are seeking to harness digital communications technologies, some opportunities are being missed. The issues of language and mobile customization are often inadequately dealt with by both activists and political players who use digital platforms.

Internet availability in Kenya and Nigeria has given citizens access to a far wider range of sources and news materials, most notably foreign news—especially foreign news about their own countries. However, in Nigeria, in terms of online news there is a preference for local news outlets, with the exception of the BBC Hausa site.

This preference is also seen in the rise of so-called vernacular radio stations (mother tongue and pidgin), which is also a trend across Sub-Saharan Africa. These stations are shifting media consumption patterns. The example of Kenya—where the trend may be most developed—gives some idea of where things may be heading. Ipsos-Synovate research indicates that 70 percent of radio audiences listen to Swahili stations compared with 68 percent and 52 percent to vernacular and English radio stations, respectively. The rise of local-language stations has undoubtedly contributed to the popularity of Royal Media Services, which has eight vernacular stations in addition to its two Swahili and one English stations.

Vernacular television stations have also launched but have been slower to take off because their audiences are to some extent a niche within a niche in the media landscape. The language used in media will become a big issue in the next five to 10 years, with increasing fragmentation of audiences in both of what elsewhere would be described as mass media—radio and television. As with many digital developments, this offers both risks and opportunities.

Media organizations in the three countries and in many other countries across the continent have developed an effective online news presence. Initially, these sites were much used by diaspora communities but in more recent years—as internet access has improved—they have increasingly been used locally. Mobile operators have also played a part in this process by promoting news headline services from local media companies by SMS. Services of this kind have had significant uptake.

The internet has also changed the pattern of newspaper distribution in Nigeria. Previously, copies went out by road across this vast country and companies produced separate editions for Lagos and the West, the east, and the north. The now defunct Concord Press used to produce two editions, for instance, with the Lagos-West edition as the second, more up-to-date edition. Nowadays, three of the leading newspapers use Virtual Private Networks (VPN) to transmit the final copy of editions to printing presses across the country. Nevertheless, each edition has to be regionally tailored to cater for the diverse audiences across the country.

As well as creating a media landscape with far more sources and material, the internet has led to a significant amount of UGC. All three of these African countries are among the biggest users of social media. Social media have many functions for their users, and news is only one of them. According to one study, however, Kenyans are the heaviest users of Twitter in Sub-Saharan Africa and a great deal of tweeting relates to news and political issues.

A blogging culture has developed in Nigeria, with blogs by enthusiastic individuals who have developed strong followings. According to Nigerianblogawards.com, there were at least 885 Nigerian blogs in July 2011. Although often poorly designed, content is becoming richer and the best of them attract lively conversations through comments. Blogs that focus on news have grown in popularity. The same is true of Kenya where they have filled particular niches like technology news: some show signs of turning into businesses that attract advertising.

Most media organizations have sought to get to grips with the arrival of social media by using them as tools for audience engagement and also as channels for encouraging citizen journalism. Community media in Kenya such as Pamoja Radio, Radio Mang'elete, and Ghetto Radio often use digital technologies in their broadcasts. Even though these are small organizations, the combination of social media and mobile phones calling in to talk shows ensures a livelier and arguably deeper engagement with their audiences than before.

This use of social media by media organizations is matched by the increasing use of it by government, the private sector, and NGOs. (In Rwanda, government ministers all have Twitter accounts and post regularly.)

Although this was only highlighted in the Kenya report, the mobile handset continues to increase in influence both as a platform for delivering other media (such as radio and television) and increasingly as a medium in its own right. According to a 2011 Ipsos-Synovate report: “Mobile as a media now rivals radio.”

Market research from a range of Sub-Saharan African countries shows that a significant minority of those sampled used their mobile for news and information in the previous week. This is disproportionately true for those in the 16–34 age range, most of whom are much more comfortable with accessing the internet on their phone. With an increasing proportion of phones (so-called smart and feature phones) having access to the internet, these users will have access to news on a more detailed basis than simply SMS headlines. One of the leading handset manufacturers (producing for all segments of the market) told us that all of its phones would have internet access except for the most basic one.

At present, all media output to mobile phones is either a cut-down version of other output or the internet version seen on a small screen. The tantalizing possibility is that someone will eventually create a news media product specifically designed for consuming and engaging with on a mobile handset. The current magazine-style output of Every1Mobile gives some idea of what might be possible, and the scale of following it might attract.[1]

All three country reports highlight the importance of digital media in allowing a voice to minority groups, whether for gay rights or for smaller ethnic groupings, to make themselves heard—for example, by using SMS to organize rallies and share updates, blogspots, listservs, and existing websites. The listservs constitute a means of information-sharing among subscribers and others who may be interested in their affairs. This has helped to internationalize campaigns at a faster pace than before. The authors of the Nigeria report believe it has also helped to create a global public sphere for Nigerians, enabling issues to be exposed that might otherwise have been suppressed by legal or other constraints. The attraction of online content is that it allows these groups to publish their own content and can act as a reference point for mainstream media.

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1. A. Williams, “Every1Mobile on its African mobile social networks, the most popular of which is SmartSex,” at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMgi1FL5fzo.

3. Digital Champions

Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa are among the most advanced and progressive countries in the region. Even so, all three are a work in progress. Other countries of note would include Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda. Making generalizations of this kind is hard, as more general progress with digital media and online access is rarely matched by regulation or law that encourages wider expression.

Until relatively recently, governments in Africa did not take the internet seriously as a media platform; as a result, it is still much less controlled than other platforms or types of media. This will not last. Governments have already sought, usually unsuccessfully, to control access to social media sites like Twitter (in Cameroon) and Facebook (in Uganda). As mobile internet turns phones into a medium in its own right, the endeavors to control what is available on it will undoubtedly increase.

In Kenya, the last president promised that the government would make greater use of the internet to reach out to the people to communicate policy, because this medium has "become an integral part of the modern world." The current president is equally committed to this approach. The government has invested in an international fiber cable (TEAMS) and built its own national fiber network (operated by Orange). The regulator CCK has also allowed a high level of competition amongst service providers. As a result, retail internet prices have fallen. This has all laid the foundation for a thriving online community of internet and social media users.

Kenya also prides itself on having very liberalized media ownership. Despite the lack of legislation on cross-media ownership, noted above, many radio and television stations are in competition, including in several of the country's vernacular languages.

Most television stations, including public broadcaster KBC, have devoted significant space since 2005 to discussing key issues such as proposed changes to the constitution and their implications for the country, the government, and citizens. Similarly, the concerns surrounding the post-election violence of 2007–2008 and the attendant consequences have been widely aired. Public broadcaster KBC has devoted one of the new digital broadcasting channels to showing live debates in Parliament. KBC also runs numerous local-language radio stations which broadcast news content to audiences across the country. Some 52 percent of viewing time is spent on news. The country has a not very commercially successful news channel called K24.

Nevertheless, the transition to digital broadcasting has been problematic for a number of reasons and the government has postponed completion until June 2014. More than 60 applicants have applied for licenses to start broadcasting—a number well beyond the existing 20 existing channels. The government has a provision that 40 percent of all content should be locally produced but there has been no attempt to enforce this quota. In news terms, however, there is a range of locally produced news programs and talk shows.

Kenya's Nation Media Group operates one of the most successful online news sites on the continent, both with the diaspora and local users. Kenyans are the second highest tweeters in Africa, much above their population size and there is what is claimed to be the largest blogging community on the continent. Kenya is home to several well-known blogs, and some of the bloggers like the Kenyan Pundit (written by Ory Okelloh), Afromusing, Bankelele, Gathara's World, Joseph Karoki, Mama Junkyard's, Mental Acrobatics, Kumekucha, Thinker's Room, and Mzalendo (Kenya Parliament Watchdog) often carry news commentary. Kumekucha boasts of having published exclusive news that mainstream media won't touch.

There is significant online activity in Kenya. Civil society activists, politicians, and other actors constantly use the internet to campaign for various issues, although its efficacy has yet to be determined. For example, Mzalendo (Kiswahili for "patriot"), a Kenya Parliament Watchdog, has been used particularly during election periods to let citizens know about the performance of their representatives. Mzalendo was particularly useful in revealing the amount of work parliamentarians did and their contributions in the House prior to elections. The referendum on the constitution in Kenya in 2010 was another good example of how mobile telephony and especially SMS can be used to mobilize the people.

Any news provider has to have a license from the regulator CCK to disseminate news, whether on the internet or on mobile phones. The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (Revised) Act of 2009 and the Kenya Information and Communications (Amendment) Act of 2009 do not fit a converged world and make no mention of online.

The internet in Nigeria reaches 16 percent of the population—a huge number of people—but it remains largely an urban phenomenon. The regulator NCC supported a competitive market for international fiber landing stations, of which the country now has five. But while it now has considerable bandwidth at the coast, it has been far less successful in connecting it to the cities inland. The government has sought to encourage the spread of the internet through laptop purchase schemes for civil servants, the computerization of passport and car license applications, and the creation of a Universal Service Fund. But it has been far less successful than the much smaller Kenya.

State broadcasting had dominated the media landscape in the country, with both federal and state level radio and television stations. State broadcaster NTA has a total of 95 stations and reaches over 90 million viewers. But there is now a considerable number of private broadcasters, although very few have national reach. In a 2010 survey, over 60 percent of the population cited news as their most popular program, a significant increase over previous years, possibly encouraged by the wider range of private news sources available. The country has a news-only channel called Channels TV. According to the NBC's broadcasting code, its radio stations must have 80 percent local content.

The digital transition in broadcasting had reached 1.8 million people by February 2014—probably the largest number in any country in Sub-Saharan Africa, although this total is still quite small relative to the overall population and to the total number of television households (24 million). This was brought about through a joint venture between a Chinese company Star Time and the state broadcaster NTA. Until relatively recently, no policy was in place governing the whole process.

Five of the top 20 websites in Nigeria are news sites. Like Kenya, Nigeria has a significant blogosphere but the quality varies enormously. According to Nigerianblogawards.com, there were at least 885 Nigerian blogs in July 2011. The majority of the best known and most used sites are not news-oriented.

There have been isolated examples of digital activism, most prominently the Occupy Nigeria movement that fought against the removal of subsidies on fuel.

In 2011, the Freedom of Information Act increased access for investigative journalists. The Act's passage was probably bought about in part by online campaigning. Recent legislation has opened up the airwaves to community radio.

South Africa has extremely high levels of mobile penetration and one of the highest levels of internet penetration in Sub-Saharan Africa; one-third of South Africans have some form of internet access, largely on their mobile phones. However, despite various government policies over the years, the country has not yet been able to get low-cost access to higher speed broadband. There is a significant gap at the local access level in the network. However, this is likely to change quickly over the next two years.

South Africa also has one of the highest levels of broadcast television penetration on the continent, but only a relatively small number of private sector broadcasters compared to Kenya and Nigeria, which is surprising given its size and relative wealth. By contrast, there are 138 radio stations across the country, including community radio stations. The public television broadcaster, SABC, is fairly dominant in the television broadcast field, but a series of political disputes over its management and a lack of resources relative to its ambitions have curtailed its impact. A relatively high proportion of the population (compared to other countries on the continent) access pay-TV by satellite. At the time the MDM report was written, there was no dedicated news channel.

The digital transition in broadcasting was supposed to have taken place for the World Cup in 2010 but it has still not been launched. Delays have been caused by uncertainties, now resolved (about the broadcast standard to be used and with the broadcast sector itself about who gets access to which DTT platform and how). Nevertheless, it is the only country in Sub-Saharan Africa with a clearly stated policy of subsidizing those who cannot afford the set-top box.

Online news sites based on their print counterparts are widely used by the middle class. The internet is likely over time to allow new entrants into the digital space and will be to some extent harder to control than other forms of media.

Social media are extremely widely used among those with internet access, especially Facebook and MXit, a local platform. However, these new media have not become new carriers because there is a fairly well used print and broadcast media, with the former performing an agenda-setting function. The use of digital media for social activism has been limited compared to Kenya and Nigeria.

Although the post-Apartheid government has in place public consultation processes for new policy and law, the long-established ANC Government has sought to try and control the media in various ways, including by independent statutory regulation and also existing press self-regulation structures.

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The Program on Independent Journalism (formerly the Media Program) works globally to support independent and professional media as crucial players for informing citizens and allowing for their democratic participation in debate. The program provides operational and developmental support to independent media outlets and networks around the world, proposes engaging media policies, and engages in efforts towards improving media laws and creating an enabling legal environment for good, brave and enterprising journalism to flourish. In order to promote transparency and accountability, and tackle issues of organized crime and corruption the Program also fosters quality investigative journalism.

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