

Building Media Capacities for Peace in 2012

Fundamentals of Journalism

PURPOSE OF JOURNALISM

Conventional View

- “The primary purpose of journalism is to **provide citizens** with the **information they need** to be free and self-governing.”
- Journalism’s first obligation is the truth
- Its first loyalty is to the citizens
- Its essence is the discipline of verification
- Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover
- It must serve as an independent monitor of power (Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel)

- Regarding news “put it before them (the people) briefly so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it, picturesquely so they will remember it and, above all, accurately so they will be guided by its light” (Joseph Pulitzer)

Why Media is Important in Peace and Conflict

- Conflict basic constituent of life
- Media important stakeholders
- Journalism plays crucial role in democracy
 - Provides common sphere of dialogue
 - Moderates contestation among diverse social groups as well as political and economic interests
- How they mediate information and debate on conflict influences perceptions of conflict

- Conflicts are partly what the media make them to be.
- “The media can shape military strategies and the intensity of fighting...war is ascribed to situations by journalists in such a way as to accord them a degree of status.
- Often use of the term implies that killing is at least partially acceptable, and sometimes a choice about referring to violent events as war has a political dimension (Allen and Seaton 2002)

Media and Politics of Belonging

- Racism & ethnicity issues of concern for media
- Media have assumed a partisan, highly politicised, militant role in Africa. They have done so by dividing citizens into the righteous and the wicked, depending on their political party, ideological, regional, cultural or ethnic belonging polarisation in the press and at how the media have shaped and been shaped by the politics of belonging (Francis Nyamjoh, 2010).

Identity Politics

- Identity politics thrives on forcing on others exclusion justified with porous arguments, stereotypes, stigmatisation and scapegoating
- Tendency to define and confine
- Belonging and identity seen in terms of cultural differences, with little regard to reality of interconnections and ongoing relationships forged across communities by individuals

- Identities complex, negotiated, relational and determined by dynamic experiences
- Xenophobia arises from the failure by politicians, policymakers, media, intellectuals and other key social actors in public life to problematise both taken-for-granted assumptions of similarity (belonging together) and difference (not belonging together) and preconceptions of peoples and cultures as tied to particular places and spaces (Francis Nyamjoh, 2010).

- Media must avoid politics and frozen claims of nativity, authenticity, indigeneity or citizenship, premised narrowly around cultural difference and the centrality of culture.

Media roles during conflict

- Before, during and after a conflict news media have enormous potential for good or evil.
- They provide news and information that a democracy needs in order to work through conflict situations
- They play role in opinion formation
- They promote reconciliation and long-term sustainable conflict management

- They can be used to stir up hatred
- They play role in conscious and intentional persuasion and propaganda
 - Public relations activities intensified during conflict.
 - Lies and rumours flourish like mushrooms in the darkness

Media as Victims

- Media practice and practitioners can and do become casualties of war and conflict.
- Conflict increases the likelihood of censorship and other restrictions and control of the media (2002 censorship attempt over Dagbon crisis)
- Journalists covering conflict and war zones victims of acts of violence and deliberate attacks in violation of humanitarian law

Media as Catalysts for Conflict

- Media accused precipitating conflict situations (Mohammed Beauty Contest controversy in Kaduna, Nigeria)
- Media accused of cheerleading
- Media as protagonists in war: journalists have been jailed for role they played in conflicts.

Examples of Ignoble Media

- Rwanda: Radio Milles Collines executives jailed by the UN tribunal in Arusha for inciting 1994 genocide.
- Sierra Leone: Several journalists, including BBC African Service Hilton Fyle, and former head of state radio, Gipu Felix-George sentenced to death in 1998 for supporting Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) military government. Fyle accused of lending his FM radio as mouthpiece.
- Kenya: Radio Journalist Arap Sang among 6 indicted by ICC for post election violence
- Ghana: Kennedy Agyapong indicted for treason for ethnic incitement outbursts

WAR V. PEACE JOURNALISM

- War and conflict reporting staple of news reporting
- What makes news?
- Conflict and Controversy taught and considered as key news values
- Journalism conventions orient journalists to report in certain ways.
- “Struggles between people, among nations, or with natural forces, make fascinating reading (Missouri Group, 2005)

PEACE JOURNALISM

- Journalists (media practitioners/gatekeepers) make choices about what to report and how to report.
- The peace journalist acts as third party that can facilitate peace and conflict resolution by:
 - Representing all sides in non-aggressive manner,
 - Highlighting the sources of conflict and social and cultural differences/similarities between parties so they understand one another;
 - Focusing on peace and human creativity to uphold human rights
 - Helping readers become aware of the situation as it really is and not as propaganda would have them believe.

Elements of War journalism

- Journalism about conflict
- Biased towards violence and violent groups (embedded journalists)
- Leads audiences to overvalue violent responses to conflict and ignore non-violent alternatives
- Focuses on physical effects of conflict
- Ignores psychological impacts
- Privileges elite positions
- Bias in favour of official sources

- Tends to report differences between parties, rather than similarities, previous agreements, and progress on common issues
- Reports in the moment (the here and now)
- Ignores causes and outcomes
- Non-critical reporting of official sources
- Bi-polar story telling – good guys –bad guys
- Focuses on divisive issues

Elements of Peace Journalism

- Conflict is covered in ways that create opportunities for society to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict.
- Focuses on conflict solutions; non-violence alternatives
- Reports behind the scene, unofficial efforts at peace
- Builds confidence in readers and listeners that change is really possible
- Provides balance, accuracy and fairness.
- Provides analysis on conflict

Comparing Peace and War Journalism

PEACE JOURNALISM	WAR JOURNALISM
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="193 548 1047 836">1. Proactive (anticipates, starts reporting long before war breaks out)<li data-bbox="193 852 1047 1214">2. Reports also on invisible effects of war (emotional trauma, damage to society and culture)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1052 548 1902 836">1. Reactive (waits for war to break out, or about to break out, before reporting)<li data-bbox="1052 852 1902 1295">2. Reports mainly on visible effects of war (casualties, dead and wounded, damage to property)

PEACE JOURNALISM

3. People-oriented (focuses on common people as actors and sources of information)
4. Reports the areas of agreement that might lead to a solution to the conflict
5. Reports causes and consequences of the conflict

WAR JOURNALISM

3. Elite-oriented (focuses on leaders & elites as actors and sources of information)
4. Focuses mainly on differences that led to the conflict
5. Focuses mainly on the here and now

PEACE JOURNALISM

6. Avoids labeling of good guys and bad guys
7. Multiparty orientation (gives voice to many parties involved in conflict)
8. Nonpartisan (neutral, not taking sides)
9. Win-win orientation (many goals and issues, solutions)
10. Stays on and reports aftermath: reconstruction, rehabilitation, implementation of peace treaty

WAR JOURNALISM

6. Dichotomizes between the good guys and bad guys, victims and villains
7. Two-party orientation (one party wins, one party loses)
8. Partisan (biased for one side in the conflict)
9. Zero-sum orientation (one goal: to win)
10. Stops reporting with peace treaty signing and ceasefire and heads for another war

Language

PEACE JOURNALISM	WAR JOURNALISM
<p>11. Avoids victimizing language; reports what has been done and could be done by people, and how they are coping</p> <p>12. Avoids demonizing language, uses more precise descriptions, titles, or names</p> <p>13. Objective and moderate. Avoids emotive words. Reserves the strongest language only for the gravest situation. Does not exaggerate</p>	<p>11. Uses victimizing language (e.g. destitute, devastated, defenseless, pathetic, tragic) that tells only what has been done to people</p> <p>12. Uses demonizing language (e.g. vicious, cruel, fanatic)</p> <p>13. Uses emotive words (e.g. genocide, assassination, massacre).</p>

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- FINDING RIGHT SOURCES IS KEY:
 - Elite sources/Officialdom
 - The Affected
 - Mediators
 - Combatants
 - Documentary sources
 - Electronic Sources (Internet, SMS, Blogs, Social Media)

DEALING WITH SOURCES

- Rely on multiple sources of information
- Avoid manipulation by sources
- Avoid 'conduit' journalism
- Give voice to ordinary people, minorities, women
- Beware tips and leaks and rumours
- Beware the internet and new media
- Cross-check and verify
- Ask tough questions, instead of letting sources say what makes them look good

COVERAGE

- Research background/context
- Provide reliable accurate information
- Stick to the issues
- Avoid giving personal opinions
- Avoid partisanship
- Don't take sides: Inform impartially, since identifying too closely with any one side, even the victims, can put you at risk.
- Provide equal time and space for all voices- victims protagonists, mediators

INTERVIEWING

- Under the guise of objectivity a lot of reporting ends up as war propaganda. When you interview people in conflict stories keep in mind they have a special agenda. Ask probing questions
- usual questions, “How many were killed today?” and “Who is winning?” by asking two additional ones: “What is this conflict about?” and “What are possible solutions?”

Evaluate claims of leaders before quoting

Analyse the interests that lie behind the positions taken by the protagonists

- Identify common ground
- Beware of exaggerating controversy
- Show impact
- Strive for comprehensiveness

- Promote non-destructive debates
- Monitor peace agreements.
- Search for voices of peace and reconciliation and feature them
- Show possibilities of non-violent outcomes and peaceful resolutions
- Don't demonize; humanize

COVERING PRESS CONFERENCES

- Don't let the audience/readers be misled or tricked
- Be impartial
- Be selective: which ones to report?
- Watch for contradictions: Different words for different people, at different times?
- Be skeptical: Is it true?
- Seek balance by asking other leaders and affected people to comment on what was said in a press conference or speech.

REMEMBER

- Peace journalism tries to open the doors of objectivity by showing both positive and negative efforts from both sides of the conflict and very consciously adopts its own agenda, that of peace and conflict resolution

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

- Contention about speech rights and hate speech
- Growing sense that people should be held responsible for communication that incites hatred and promotes genocide
- What is Hate Speech?

All forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred based on intolerance (including religious, ethnic, racial, sectarian, gender, sexual orientation)

Offensive language

- Analyse Language of insults; swear words
- Language that is melodramatic or sensational
- Casting aspersions
- Language that humiliates and violates
- human dignity,
- Language that is discriminatory
- Stereotypes
- Local language interpretation
- Amplification and impact

ADJECTIVES/QUALIFIERS/LABELS

- Avoid words, adjectives that are judgmental and labeling:
- E.g. vicious, cruel, brutal, barbaric, inhuman tyrant, savage, ruthless, terrorist, extremist, fanatic, fundamentalist, tragic, destitute, devastated, defenseless, pathetic, demoralized, genocide, assassination, massacre, carnage
- Use facts to describe
- Strive for reality without embellishment

- In live programming, it is difficult for broadcasters to prevent the use of potentially offensive language, on the occasions that this happens. However, in such circumstances, listeners would expect to see quick action from the broadcaster by way of apology for and/or challenging the contributor about the use of the offensive language (Ofcom)
- Remember children are listening and watching too.

VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS

- PICTURES: A picture is worth a thousand words
- Show sensitivity with pictures
 - Pictures of victims
 - Pictures of healing
 - Pictures of atrocities and gratuitous violence
- You can show conflict without shocking and sickening people
- Words and pictures can graphically illustrate how much people have in common (Mahama and Bawumia; Kufuor dancing with Konadu)



CARTOONS

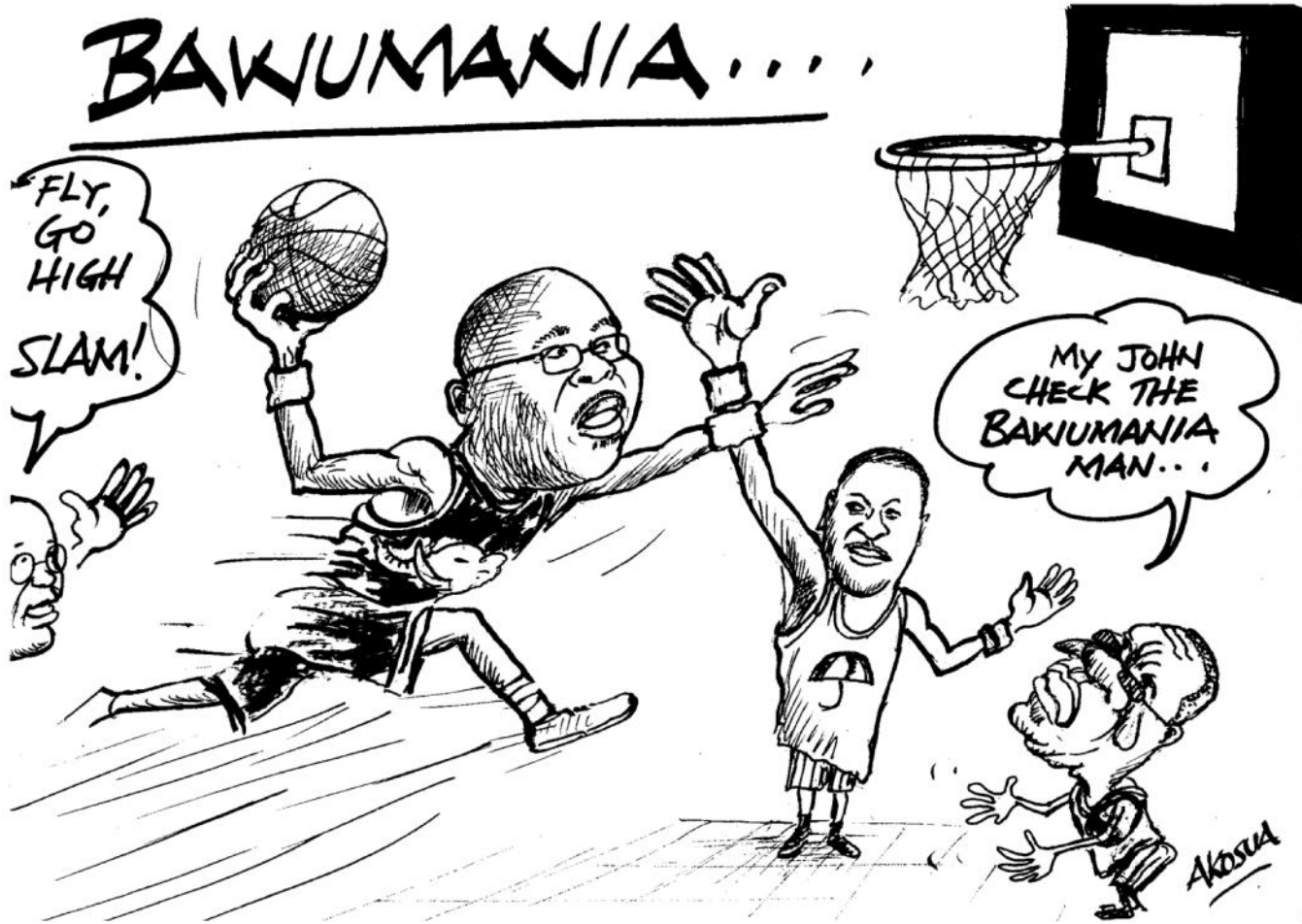
- Very powerful means of communicating
- Symbolic and representational
- Metaphors subject to varied interpretations
- Constructions of reality through visuals,
- Use stereotypes, symbols and analogies, with humour and/or ridicule as the basic vehicle.
- 'Nation
- Comments and reflects what is in the news
- **Kufuor Commends Akosua Cartoons**
- **ET Mensah sues cartoonist over sheep cartoon**







BAKUMANIA.....



DANCE PALAVER

ELEMBELE

WE NO GO
GREE ANULMENT
BIARA...

PAA AKOKO
BE SNAKE IN
MONKEYS' SHADOW

ELEMBELEBLAY
FOREVER AND EVER!

JEALOUSY
GO SHAME



THE MISSING TRAIN...

3 CHUKUCHAKA COACHES
(FULLY NYAMNYA)
4 AUTOMATIC ENGINES
CONTRACT: NOV 2007
COST: 21.7 BILLION DOLLARS
DATE OF ARRIVAL: TEMA-FEB
LAST SEEN: TEMA SPECIAL
2009
UNDER COVER GARAGE
WHO SEE AM 0000



NAKE I COVER AM WELL FOR
CAMPAIGN PROMISE YES I DO!



GOD BLESSING
NA DOUBLE
DOUBLE 00

CRITIQUE GUIDELINES

- What role do the journalists assume in the stories you are critiquing ?
- Angle/Agenda
- War or Peace journalism?
- Sources - who is given voice
- Facts
- Language
- Images
- Comprehensiveness
- Accuracy, Balance, Fairness

Promoting Responsible Journalism

- Professionalism and ethics key
- Familiarize yourself with ethical guidelines:
- GJA
- NMC
 - Print
 - broadcast
 - Political journalism
 - State-media
 - Local language
- Giba

Reviewing Ethical Guidelines

GJA Code of Ethics

- **ARTICLE 1: PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO TRUE INFORMATION**
The duty of every journalist is to write and report the truth, bearing in mind his/her duty to serve the public. The public have the right to unbiased, accurate, balanced and comprehensive information as well as express themselves freely through the media. A journalist should make adequate enquiries and cross-check his/her facts.
- **ARTICLE 2: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**
In collecting and disseminating information, the journalist should bear in mind his/her responsibility to the public at large and the various interests in society.

- **ARTICLE 6: RESPECT FOR NATIONAL AND ETHNIC VALUES**

A journalist should not originate material, which encourages discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, color, creed, gender or sexual orientation.

- **ARTICLE 9: CORRECTIONS**

Whenever there is an inaccurate or a misleading report, it should be corrected promptly and given due prominence. An apology should be published whenever appropriate.

- **ARTICLE 10: REJOINDERS**

A fair opportunity should be given to individuals and organisations.

Any report or a write-up affecting the reputation of an individual or an organisation without a chance to reply is unfair and must be avoided by journalists

- **ARTICLE 11: SEPARATING COMMENTS FROM FACTS**

While free to take positions on any journalists should draw a clear line between comment, conjecture and fact.

- **ARTICLE 14: VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT**
Journalists should avoid identifying victims of sexual assault.
- **ARTICLE 15: DEALING WITH THE UNDER-AGED**
Journalists should protect the rights of minors and in criminal and other cases secure the consent of parents or guardians before interviewing or photographing them.
- **ARTICLE 16: PERSONAL GRIEF OR DISTRESS**
In case of personal grief or distress, journalists should exercise tact and diplomacy in seeking information and publishing.

- **ARTICLE 17: HEADLINES & SENSATIONALISM**

Newspaper headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles they accompany.

Photographs and telecasts should be give an accurate picture of an event and not highlight an incident out of context.

NMC Guidelines on Political Journalism

- **4 PROMOTING PEACE**

- Peace is the bedrock of progress and development. Political journalism must therefore aim at promoting peace. This demands active and purposive search for ideas that promote peace and national cohesion.
- 4.1 In covering politics, the media must endeavour to identify the critical issues that can trigger conflict and encourage dispassionate discussion. Such issues may include questions of marginalization, identity politics based on religion, ethnicity, etc.

- 4.2 Views that have the potential to promote violent conflict, especially relating to political, social, cultural, racial, ethnic and religious sensibilities, should be handled with great sensitivity.
- 4.3 In covering political conflicts, analysis of the causes and issues involved in the conflict must be balanced with efforts towards promoting peace. Institutions and individuals involved in efforts at resolving the conflict must be given opportunities to highlight efforts at peace building.

- **15 ACCURACY AND INDEPENDENCE**
- 15.1 Journalists must check their facts, avoiding inaccurate, gratuitously malicious, scandalous or defamatory publications.
- 15.2 Journalists should not solely depend on handouts in view of the possibility of promoting “conduit journalism,” that is, passing of news without filtration, refinement or editing of any kind.

16. LANGUAGE

- 16.1 Hate Speech – Media must avoid Hate Speech
- 16.2 Any statements and press releases of political parties that contain insulting language or sentiments that could lead to public unrest or breach of peace should not be published aired.
- 16.3 All quotations, especially when they are politically controversial or are defamatory in language and terms, for example, jargons, technical abbreviations and political euphemisms not clearly or easily understandable, should be verified and fully explained.

- 16.4 Controversial or offensive references to opponents must be avoided, if at all possible, unless there is a clear justification defensible in a court of law.
- 17.4 Media practitioners must not use statements and releases containing insulting undignified or intemperate language that could lead to public unrest or breach of peace.

- 19.2 Police and other accredited security agents have duties to perform in protecting certain categories of officials and public property that might be endangered. The media should respect legitimate policy orders to, for example, clear away from a particular scene when ordered to do so by law enforcement authorities.

GIBA CODE OF CONDUCT

- **Article (2) Professionalism**
- Ensure professional and ethical conduct grounded on the pursuit of the truth, focus on facts and issues, integrity, fairness, decency, transparency, balance, non-discrimination and the common good.

- **Article (5) Objectionable Broadcast Material**

- Preview, accept or refuse to broadcast any political party election material or live/delayed utterance that is seen to be objectionable for any of the following reasons:
- Against public order or morality, offends national unity, infringes any law of the land, insensitive to the reputation, rights and freedoms of others.

- **Article (7) Right to Reply**
- Guarantee right to reply and to be aired/broadcast appropriately at the next opportunity after a complaint is received. Keep record and details of all complaints received and redress given.

- **Article (10) Hate, Incitement and Insulting Speech**
- Not to fan and not to inflame by broadcast of programmes; language, passions and activities that may lead to violence, disrupt the electoral process, compromise the integrity of the vote of individuals.

- **Article (14) Cross Check Allegations of Malpractices**
- To cross check all alleged polling station electoral malpractices with EC officials and or head of official security detail at the relevant polling station and secure as far as is possible, the view of both sides, and or third persons, in any electoral dispute before it is put on air.

- **Article (16) Good Conduct Commitment by Political Talk Show Panelists**

- To bind in writing, panelists/discussants on particularly, live elections related programmes to a strict and sanction-able (name, shame and or evict) code of conduct that will promote free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections.
- To serve as a deterrent to notorious offending panelists; member stations should collaborate to deny any such repeated offenders access to the airwaves.

Major Offences

- Infraction of any of the under listed Articles of this Code of Conduct shall constitute a major offence that will result in the expulsion of the offending member station from GIBA under Article (18) Clause 5 immediately preceding. All other infractions shall constitute minor offences with marching sanction.
- **Applicable Articles:**
- **Article (5) Objectionable Broadcast Material**
- **Article (10) Hate, Incitement and Insulting Speech**
- **Article (13) Cooperation with Electoral Commission**
- **Article (16) Good Conduct Commitment by Political Talk Show Panelists**

NMC Local Language Broadcasting

- 1.7 Incitement
- Local language broadcast must not, under any circumstances, carry content that can incite people. Content which can incite people may include the following:
 - 1.71. Words that have a direct tendency to cause acts of violence by the group to whom the comment concerns

- 1.7.2 Words that can result in a breach of the peace, a fight or a riot
- 1.7.3 Threatening, demeaning, or dehumanizing expressions against groups or individuals;
- 1.7.4 Words that are likely to stir hatred against a group or individual
- 1.7.5 Invectives attacking individuals or groups because of their race, ethnic background, religion, gender or political affiliation.